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**The relationship between ethics, trust and organisational success in  
knowledge-based organisations**

Organisational knowledge sustainability

PhD dissertation

**THESIS BOOK**

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## 1.Introduction

Traditional resources are increasingly being replaced by knowledge, which determines the direction of success and development. As Nonaka et al. put it as early as 1995, knowledge has moved from being a resource to being "the resource". Throughout human history, knowledge has always been a concern, but today's modern information technologies are creating a framework that puts knowledge management in organisations in a whole new dimension. Technology makes it easy to track, interpret and exploit the knowledge assets of an organisation (Keczer, 2016). It can be said that knowledge has become the greatest asset of organisations for success, development and long-term survival. In a constantly changing environment, organisations need to adapt quickly to new challenges and opportunities.

In order to substantiate the results of my dissertation, I consider it important to explore the most relevant literature in the theoretical part of my thesis through an extensive literature review.

The primary aim of my dissertation is to fill the gaps in the literature on knowledge sustainability through expert opinion, and to create a generally accepted definition and model.

Before starting the research process, I formulated my research questions, which I will try to answer in my dissertation and which provide the basis for my hypotheses. These questions are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1 Research questions**

<b>Q1</b>	How can organisational knowledge sustainability be characterised?
<b>Q2</b>	Which is the most critical element of the organisational knowledge sustainability process?
<b>Q3</b>	Is thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability influenced by national culture?
<b>Q4</b>	Based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, can differences be detected between Hungarians' and Swedes' perceptions of organisational knowledge sustainability?
<b>Q5</b>	Is there a difference in the motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability based on national culture?
<b>Q6</b>	Does knowledge management knowledge influence thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability?

Source: own editing

I chose the Delphi method, which is a vision forecasting method based on consensus, as the research method for my study. Using this method, I conducted my research with Hungarian and

Swedish respondents in order to investigate the impact of national culture on organisational knowledge sustainability.

In addition to the Hungarian respondents, I wanted to include members of a society where the concept of knowledge and sustainability is highly valued. Sweden is known for its commitment to the environment, with most Swedish universities having a department dedicated to some aspect of sustainability. Sweden is a knowledge-driven economy, where knowledge and innovation play a key role in economic growth.

The main line of my dissertation is to examine the validity of the hypotheses based on the concept and model of organizational knowledge sustainability, to identify research limitations, future directions and opportunities related to this topic, and to review the literature.

## 2. Literature review

*The only sustainable advantage you have over your competitors is if you can learn faster than them."*

*Arie De Geus*

### 2.1. The concept of organisational knowledge sustainability

Organisational knowledge sustainability is a multidisciplinary, complex area. To gain a broad understanding of the concept, I have reviewed recent research on organisational knowledge sustainability.

According to Liravinia et al. (2023), the goal of knowledge sustainability is the sustainable management and use of knowledge and information in the process of business planning and development. The sustainable management and use of knowledge and information in planning and development is a priority. Nurhas et al. (2022) argue that different generations can work together to share knowledge to promote sustainable business development and innovation. Intergenerational knowledge sharing and collaboration can be key to promoting sustainable business development and innovation. According to Karjanto (2020), ancestral local knowledge and wisdom contributes to sustainability and climate change adaptation in agricultural practices and helps local communities to manage the impacts of natural disasters. Knowledge sustainability is not only limited to new knowledge and technologies, but also to inherited knowledge and traditions that are important for sustainability. Chandrasenan et al. (2022) argue that through education and information, people can better understand the impacts of energy consumption and make choices that contribute to sustainable energy use and management. According to Bencsik (2022), the ability of organisations to retain and use their knowledge effectively over the long term is key to sustainable operations.

The long-term maintenance and transmission of educational programmes and materials play an important role in the sustainability of knowledge about sustainability (Connell, Kozar, 2012).

An analysis of the definitions of knowledge sustainability shows that the concept is multifaceted and very complex. Its key elements include cooperation, knowledge sharing, sustainability, generations and education.

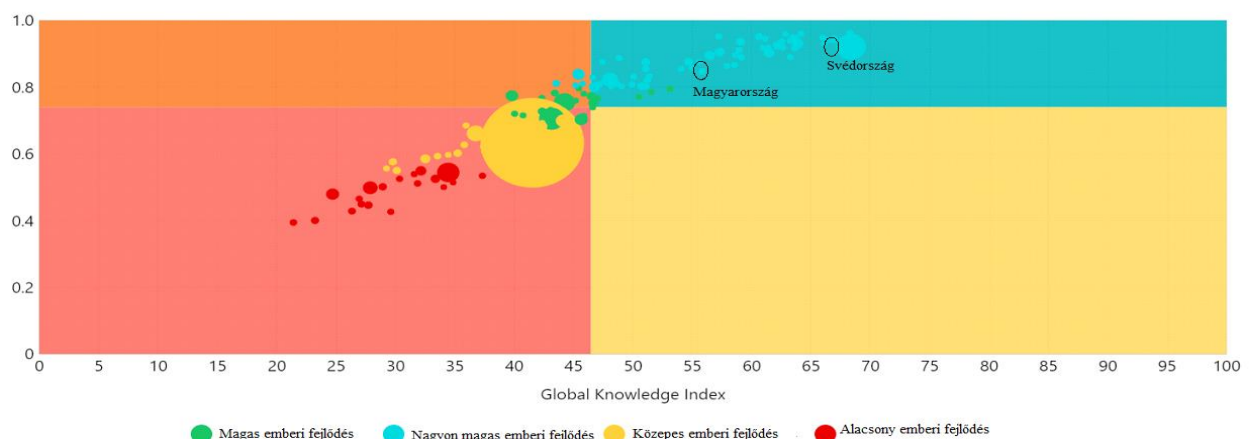
In the practical part of my research, I studied countries with different cultures, so in order to compare their main characteristics, I will present the two countries on the basis of the Global Knowledge Index and Hofstede's dimensions.

## 2.2. International comparison

### Global Knowledge Index

The Global Knowledge Index (GKI) is a set of indicators to assess knowledge development in relation to the global goals for sustainable human development (knowledge4all.com). The Global Knowledge Index covers 138 countries across 199 indicators in seven domains. These are: pre-university education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education, research and development, innovation, ICT, economy, and characteristics of the business environment (Csath, 2021). The Global Knowledge Index aims to provide updated and reliable data to help countries and policy makers address the challenges and transformations associated with knowledge-based development. Hungary ranks 33rd and Sweden 3rd in the Global Knowledge Index ranking in 2022. Figure 1 shows that Hungary and Sweden are in the very high human development category.

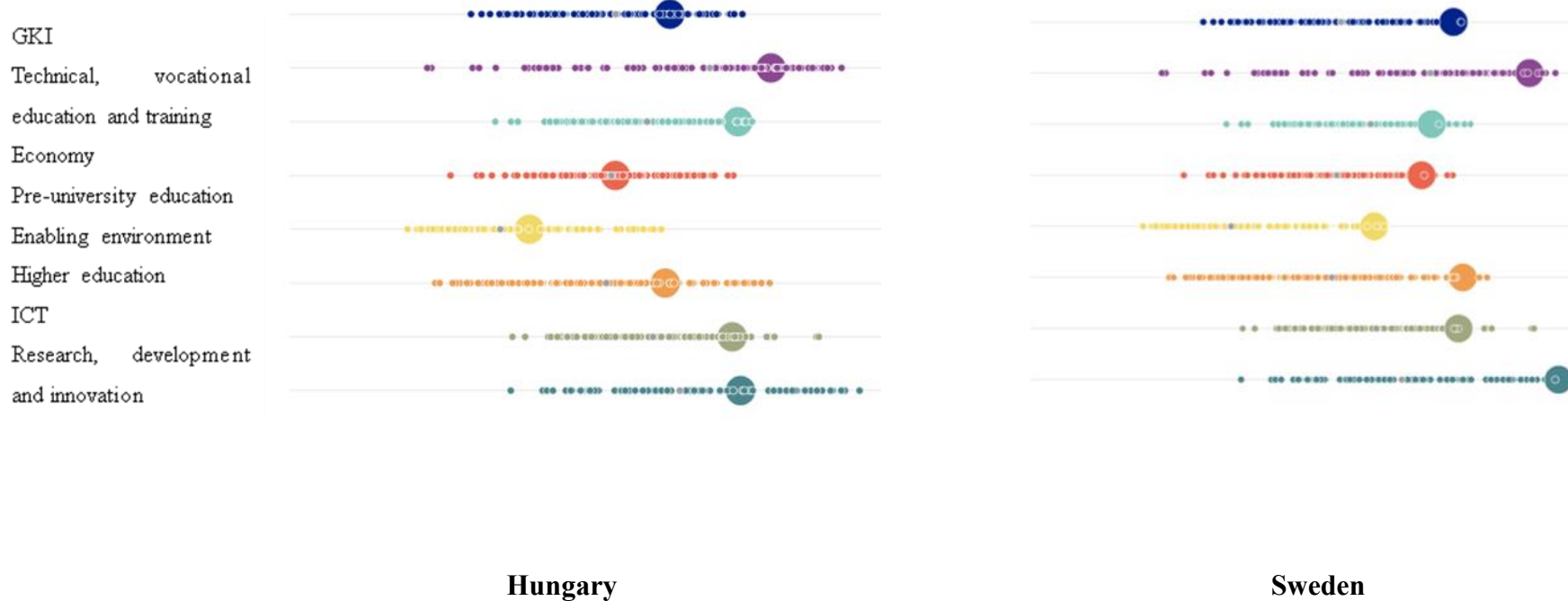
**Figure 1 Global Knowledge Index (2022)**



Source: knowledge4all.com/ based on own editing

Figure 2 shows the seven domains of the Global Knowledge Index for Hungary and Sweden. The biggest differences are observed in higher education, ICT and the business environment.

**Figure 2: Seven domains of the Global Knowledge Index for Hungary and Sweden**



**Hungary**

**Sweden**

Source: own editing based on [knowledge4all.com/](http://knowledge4all.com/)

The differences indicated by the Global Knowledge Index justify a deeper look at their cultural roots.

### **Hofstede's model of national culture**

Hofstede has developed a worldwide method for identifying the elements of the social norms of national and organisational cultures and, on this basis, for forming corporate culture groups. The model originally defined four (Hofstede, 1980) and later four types of organisational culture distinguished on a national basis on the basis of six work-related factors (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede's research started in the 1970s and has been developed over the years, so the model is well developed and reliable. Hofstede's dimensions allow for a good comparison and interpretation of cultural differences. The methodology is internationally accepted and widely used, and the scale is well validated, with several studies confirming the validity of the Hofstede dimensions (Kopfer-RÁCz et al., 2013).

In my research, Hofstede's dimensions allow the data to be well analysed and clearly interpreted, which enables a deeper understanding of cultural differences in relation to organisational knowledge sustainability.

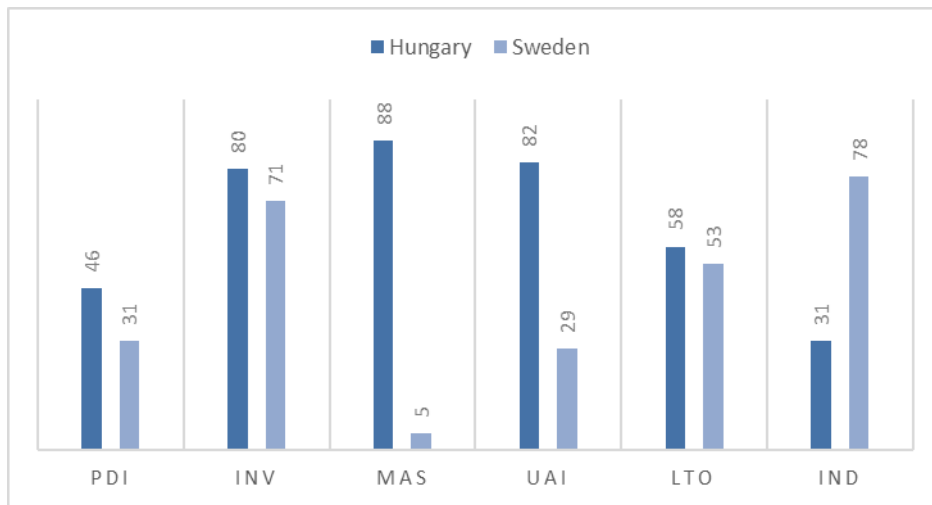
### **A comparison of Hungary and Sweden based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions**

Intercultural differences and cultural diversity are playing an increasingly prominent role in the life of organisations. Cultural differences arise from the diversity of cultural values (Bilro, Loureiro, 2023). Hofstede's dimensions - power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, time orientation, permissiveness - are extremely important in the design and implementation of knowledge management strategies, practices and processes. The analysis of these dimensions helps me to understand the differences and similarities between Hungarian and Swedish cultures, the impact of which on knowledge management practices.

Figure 3 shows a comparison of the cultural characteristics of Hungary and Sweden based on Hofstede's dimensions. The dimensions of power distance, individualism and time orientation score similarly, while the dimensions of masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and permissiveness show large differences between the two countries.



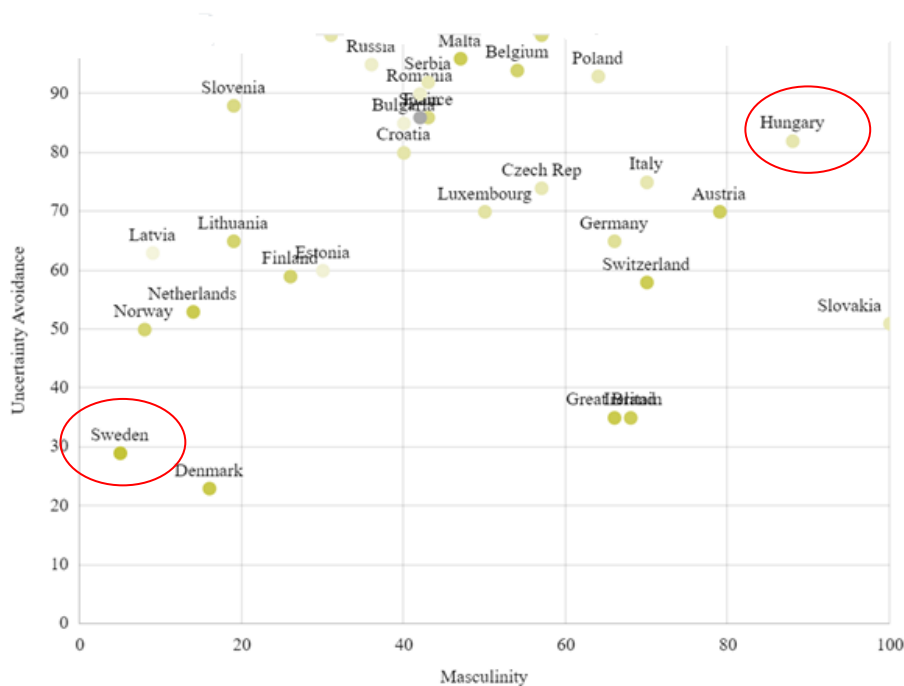
**Figure 3 Cultural comparison between Hungary and Sweden based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions**



Source: hofstede-insights.com based on own editing

Of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the most significant difference between Hungary and Sweden is in the case of masculinity, time orientation and permissiveness. On the map of European countries along these dimensions, Hungary and Sweden are diagonally opposite, as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4 Comparison of the dimensions of masculinity, time orientation and permissiveness for Hungary and Sweden**



Source: hofstede-insights.com/

I will conclude the literature part of my thesis by examining the concept of organisational success, as the goal of organisational knowledge sustainability is to achieve success. The understanding and analysis of organizational success is of paramount importance for the effective design and implementation of knowledge management practices and strategies.

### **2.3. The concept and measurement of organisational success**

In its simplest definition, success is the opposite of failure (Akbar et al., 2023).

In the literature, the concept of success is often not precisely defined, but is identified with meeting conditions that predict success. Different terminologies are used interchangeably to describe these conditions, including frameworks (Cohen and Andrade, 2018), foundations (Kim et al., 2021), criteria (Andreasen, 2002; Lynes et al., 2014; Liao, 2020), and principles (Lee, 2020; Carins, 2022).

Success criteria prepare organizations to adopt a new approach, enabling organizations to effectively meet their goals (Antony, 2014; Chugani et al., 2017; Kaswan, Rathi, 2021). Success criteria are essential for measuring success (Amies et al., 2023). Khan et al. (2013) defined success criteria as a dependent variable for measuring success. Success criteria are principles against which success can be assessed (Macheridis, 2022). Chan (2001) combined standard definitions of success and criteria and defined success criteria as principles or standards against which favourable outcomes can be achieved within a defined specification.

Different concepts have been used to express success, such as positive results, successful results, efficiency, competitiveness.

Dibb, Carrigan (2013) distinguish between short and long-term measures of success. In the short term, the focus is on achieving results and in the long term on sustaining results.

The literature suggests that success is a rather subjective concept, with many definitions and measures. It depends on the objective of the organisation which one you should use.

In my research, I identify organisational success with a learning organisation that is sustainable in the long term.

Becoming a learning organisation offers growth, efficiency and collaboration for its members. Becoming a learning organisation promotes innovative performance, knowledge management, human capital development and sustainable organisational development (Bhaskar et al., 2023; Cerasoli et al, Organizations can become learning organizations by investing in individual and group learning and in developing systems and processes that foster a learning culture (Patky, 2020). It is important that organisations create learning systems not only to find out where things go wrong, but also to correct them, improve their systems to prevent future mistakes, and

evaluate their learning mechanisms (Argyris, Schön, 1978). The results of the learning organization are multiplied across organizations, at individual, team, organizational and inter-organizational levels, as learning at all levels is intertwined to form a complex system (Sessa, London 2015).

### **3. Research methodology**

Research methods can basically be divided into two main groups, exploratory research methods and inferential research methods (Malhotra, Simon, 2017). In cases where the research problem is difficult to understand, the exploratory research design is the most appropriate. In contrast, in descriptive research, the problem is structured and well understood (Ghauri et al., 2016).

The approach of my dissertation is descriptive and exploratory, with the aim of examining the concept of organisational knowledge sustainability. The literature on this topic is largely limited and therefore an exploratory approach is required to research it. I use a multi-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The multi-method research approach allows for the use of deductive and inductive reasoning, which contributes to understanding the research area from different perspectives and provides a basis for theory building.

The Delphi method is a valuable method in academic research (Linstone, Turoff, 2011), offering many opportunities to use the method (Paré et al., 2013).

#### **3.1. Delphi method**

The Delphi method is a tool often used in futures research to gather expert opinions (Nyström, Kaartemo, 2022). It is an activity carried out by experts where group members initially carry out their activities in isolation from each other, and therefore may have a long lead time, but it is highly recommended for solving more complex problems (Veres et al, The Delphi method is a predictive method based on the collaboration of independent experts who independently fill out questionnaires to predict the course of a problem and then converge their assumptions by mutually shaping their opinions in several rounds (Borgulya, 2017). The advantage of the Delphi method is its anonymity, eliminating the disadvantages of the traditional meeting format (Józsa, 2016). The Delphi method results in a concrete, well-structured formulation of opinions, which are typically heterogeneous at first, and thus allows for a much more effective management of remaining differences of opinion and expectations (Gellén et al, 2016).

#### **Expert panel**

The Public Delphi method I use is a subtype of the Delphi method, which involves non-experts. By using this method, in addition to the opinions of experts, the views and comments of stakeholders with different perspectives, expertise and backgrounds are obtained (Heiszer et al., 2014).

The target groups of my research are knowledge management experts, business professionals and non-experts (in the field of knowledge management), who approach the topic of knowledge

management from different perspectives. Knowledge management experts are experts in the field, usually with a detailed and in-depth knowledge of knowledge management methods and tools. I expect that the answers given by knowledge management experts are detailed, precise and often theoretical. Corporate experts are usually well versed in the operation of a company's internal knowledge management system and answer on the basis of their practical experience. Their answers are more specific, often focusing on their own experience and the corporate environment. Non-experts (in the field of knowledge management) tend to be less knowledgeable on the subject of knowledge management and their answers tend to be more general and less detailed. Their answers are extremely valuable for my research as they are part of the organisational environment, sharing their experiences and observations from their work. On the topic of knowledge management, the answers given by each group may differ in terms of depth of theoretical knowledge, practical experience and general or specific approach. The answers given by the different groups complement each other to form a complete picture of organisational knowledge sustainability. The panel groups are composed of experts with different backgrounds, experiences and areas of expertise, allowing for a diverse and comprehensive collection of opinions, perspectives and information. The diversity of the different panel groups helps to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. Furthermore, experts in different panel groups may represent different opinions and views, which allows for the identification of contradictions in the research topic. The establishment of panel groups allows for a wide and comprehensive expert feedback, reliability and diversity. The experts in this research are divided into two panel groups. The first panel group is defined according to the main source of the respondent expert's opinion, on the basis of which three panels have been defined: knowledge management experts, business experts and non-experts in the field of knowledge management. This group of panels is key because my aim is to explore the differences in perspectives, viewpoints and thought patterns between panels, on the basis of which I can formulate panel-specific conclusions and recommendations.

The second group of panels is made up of two further panels, depending on the country from which the expert's views come, which I have used to distinguish between feedback from Hungary and feedback from Sweden. The second group of panels is also relevant to the research, as people from different countries live in different cultural, social and economic contexts. These differences may have an impact on opinions, attitudes and preferences. The panels allow the identification of cultural and contextual differences, which can contribute to the reliability and relevance of the research. In addition, certain issues or problems may be site-

specific, as they affect people in different countries in different ways. Including perspectives from different countries allows for a broader understanding and perspectives.

Experts are selected using the multi-stage approach proposed by Okoli and Pawlowski (2004). A "knowledge source identification worksheet" is used to identify the relevant background and skills of the experts. Before starting the first query, I asked the respondents to provide me with relevant information related to their professional background.

In my research, questionnaires were sent out online and experts were selected internationally. I completed both rounds of the survey after about 3 months.

### **3.2. Data collection method**

Based on a detailed study of the Delphi method, I concluded that this method is the most suitable for examining opinions and ideas about organizational knowledge sustainability. Before selecting the experts, I determined the type of knowledge and expertise required to participate in the research. The criteria included factors such as knowledge management, management, communication, technology, innovation and digitalisation skills. I then identified the profiles of experts that are in line with the objectives of the research. I then searched for experts who fit the defined profile. The query was carried out using an online questionnaire. The advantages of this method are the speed of sending, the shorter response time (compared to paper) and the guarantee of anonymity. In order to find the experts interviewed, I visited the websites of Hungarian and foreign journals, international conferences, universities and companies related to knowledge management, sustainability, organisational behaviour and technological innovation.

Following the search, I contacted the experts concerned. The questionnaire was sent directly to the experts' e-mail addresses in the form of an e-mail. The Delphi method was implemented in two rounds.

The questionnaire for the first survey was sent out by January 2023 and the second questionnaire by April 2023. Experts had two weeks to respond to both surveys. The first round of the Delphi method consisted of open-ended questions in order to explore perceptions on organisational knowledge sustainability. I asked the experts to express their views on the issue of "sustainable knowledge for a successful, sustainable future".

The second questionnaire was based on the statements made in the first round, which I returned to the experts I had previously sought. The format of the second questionnaire follows the procedure of the "ranked" Delphi surveys as defined by Schmidt (1997). Within the framework of this questionnaire, the experts were asked to assess the degree of agreement for each

statement, as I asked them to rank the statements in the questionnaire individually and independently using a five-point Likert scale.

After an overview of the data collection method, I will describe the data analysis method used in my study.

## 4. New scientific results

The chapter provides an insight into the main conclusions on this topic.

I answered the research questions taking into account the research findings. Theses based on the research findings were then formulated. The chapter concludes with an overview of the limitations of the research and possible future directions.

### Answering the research questions, hypotheses, theses

#### 4.1. First research question

The first research question is how to characterise organisational knowledge sustainability.

In subsection 4.1 of my dissertation, I examined in detail the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability (based on the prerequisites of the knowledge management system) based on the results of the first round of research. The results of the study are summarised in Table 2.

**H1: The prerequisites of a knowledge management system underpin the process of knowledge sustainability.**

**Table 2 Examining the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability**

Elements of the model	Hungarian respondents	Swedish respondents
<b>Ethics</b>	Not published	Published on
<b>Trust</b>	Published on	Published on
<b>Motivation</b>	Published on	Published on
<b>Knowledge acquisition/sharing</b>	Published on	Published on
<b>Knowledge development</b>	Published on	Not published
<b>Knowledge preservation</b>	Published on	Published on
<b>Organisational memory</b>	Not published	Published on
<b>Knowledge Management</b>	Published on	Published on

Source: own editing



Three elements of knowledge sustainability appeared in the responses of one of the two countries (ethics, knowledge development, organisational memory) and five elements appeared in the responses of both countries (trust, motivation, knowledge acquisition/sharing, knowledge retention, knowledge sustainability, knowledge management). The model consists of 8 elements, which were tested for respondents from both countries (16 elements tested). 10 elements tested appeared in the responses. The results of the research show that elements of the organisational knowledge sustainability model can be detected in the responses.

The results show that hypothesis H1 is supported.

#### **4.2. Second research question**

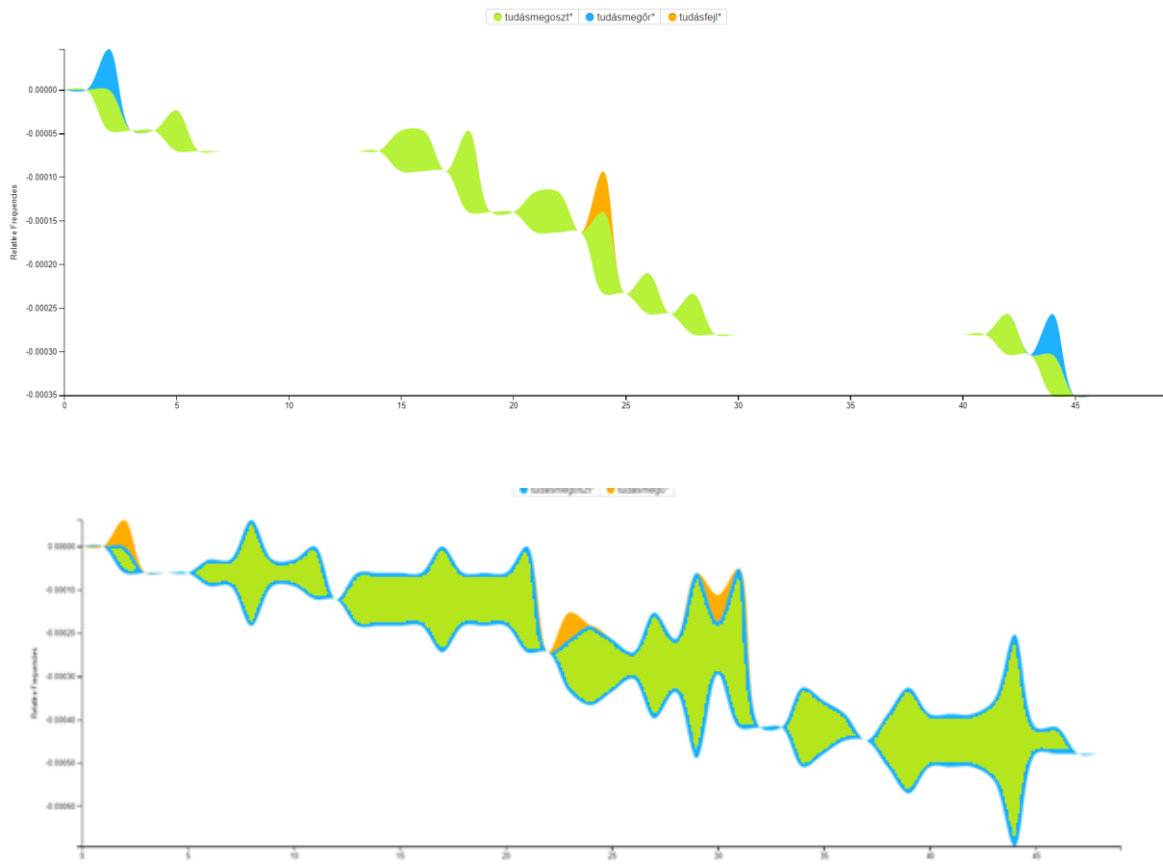
The second research question asks which organisational process is the most critical in the process of knowledge sustainability.

**H2: Knowledge sharing is the most critical element in the process of knowledge**

Based on the results of round 1 of the research, I examined the elements of the knowledge management system process using the Stream Graph feature of Voyant Tools.

The elements of the knowledge management system process were analysed by country. The upper part of Figure 5 shows the picture generated from the Hungarian and the lower part from the Swedish responses.

**Figure 5 Testing the elements of a knowledge management system**



Source: own editing

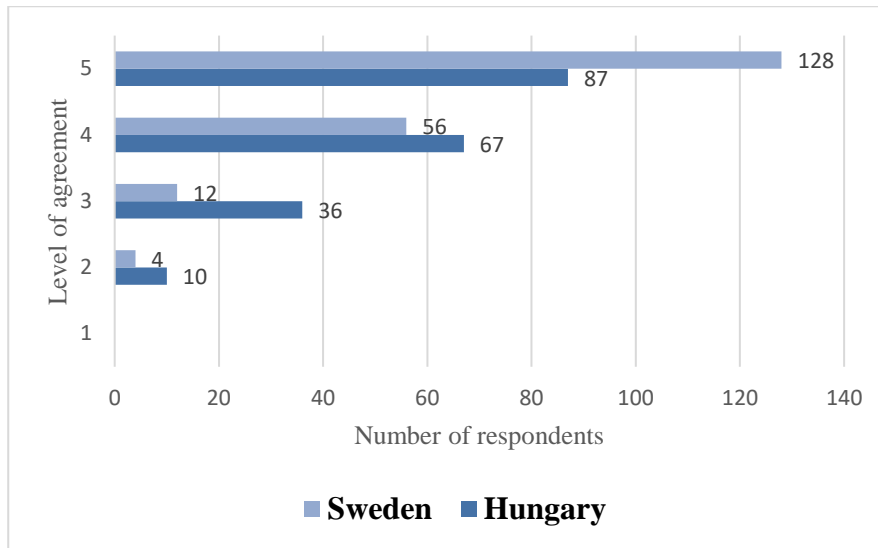
The results show that knowledge sharing is the most critical element of the knowledge management system process for organisational knowledge sustainability.

For Swedish respondents, the term knowledge sharing is even more dominant.

I then examined the results of the 2nd round of the survey. The questionnaire of the 2nd round contains the following statement "Knowledge sharing can be said to be one of the most critical points in organizational knowledge management processes".

In Figure 6, I show the results by country. The results of the chart reflect the high level of agreement among respondents.

**Figure 6 The importance of the role of knowledge sharing in knowledge sustainability**



Source: own editing

I then analysed the mean and standard deviation of this statement by country and respondent group. The values show a high level of agreement with the statement (Table 3).

**Table 3 Mean and standard deviation of the statement on knowledge sharing**

	TM experts					
	English			Swedish		
	N	Average	Source	N	Average	Source
TM experts	70	4,23	0,78	70	4,34	0,80
Business professionals	80	4,36	0,82	70	4,39	0,91
Not experts	50	4,50	0,71	60	4,52	0,65
<b>Total</b>	200	4,4	0,77	200	4,4	0,79

Source: own editing

Finally, I examined the median and IQR values of this statement (Table 4). Based on the median and IQR results, it can be stated that there is a consensus among respondents on the statement.

**Table 4 Median and IQR values of the knowledge sharing statement**

TM experts				Business professionals				Not experts			
English		Swedish		English		Swedish		English		Swedish	
Median	IQR	Median	IQR	Median	IQR	Median	IQR	Median	IQR	Median	IQR
4	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1

Source: own editing

The results of the quantitative research supported the results of the qualitative research.

It can be concluded that knowledge sharing is the most critical element of the knowledge management system process for organisational knowledge sustainability.

Based on the results, the hypothesis H2 is proven.

*T1: The prerequisites of a knowledge management system underpin the process of knowledge sustainability, of which knowledge sharing is a critical element.*

The integration of the knowledge management process into organisational operations provides the framework for organisational knowledge sustainability. The foundation is provided by ethics and trust, as ethical organizational functioning is a sine qua non for successful organizational functioning (Akhavan et al., 2013; Al-Ameedee, 2023), and trust is necessary for all elements of knowledge management processes (Tarnovskaya, Chernatony, 2011). The necessary condition for the process is the learning organization pillars (personal excellence, thought patterns, shared visions, group learning, system-level thinking) as formulated by Senge (1998).

Ethics and trust provide the basis for motivation (Irshad et al., 2020). Motivation can be defined as the desire to achieve goals (Chiang, Hsiao, 2015). Motivation can be organization-based and individual motivation (Jin et al., 2015). Organization-based motivation is influenced by culture, norms, leadership. One of the most powerful organization-based motivation is trust.

This is followed by what I consider to be the most important elements for knowledge sustainability, highlighted from the steps of the Probst model, which are knowledge acquisition/sharing, knowledge development and knowledge preservation.

Knowledge sharing is one of the most critical aspects of organisational knowledge management processes. Knowledge sharing requires motivation (Powel, 2023).



knowledge retention. Then, through the analysis of the responses, I wanted to arrive at the most critical element of the organisational knowledge sustainability model.

Today, knowledge has become the core value of organisations. The competitiveness of organisations depends on their ability to share knowledge. Knowledge sharing means that employees are willing to share their knowledge with other members of the organisation.

Knowledge sharing has numerous benefits, helping to reduce production costs, speed up new product development projects and improve team performance. It is positively correlated with corporate innovation capacity, sales of new products and services, and increased corporate revenues. Knowledge sharing among employees is an important source of organisational knowledge.

There can be many organisational barriers to knowledge sharing, some of which are management failures, others rooted in organisational culture.

Culture has a significant impact on knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing requires a specific culture and workplace atmosphere. It cannot be achieved without knowledge-oriented individual attitudes in line with it, in which cooperation and trust play a central role. The right organisational culture can support the willingness to share knowledge and to use the knowledge of others. In order to have employees who are willing to learn and share knowledge in an organisation, they need to be motivated. To promote learning, the organisational culture must foster an atmosphere in which learning and knowledge are valued.

National culture has a significant impact on knowledge sharing. In masculine cultures, workers feel less encouraged to share knowledge. Hungarian workers fear that knowledge sharing may weaken their position or lose its value, due to the high level of uncertainty avoidance in Hungarian culture and the high level of position protection and hierarchy in masculine cultures. Feminine societies traditionally have supportive, caring and relationship-oriented characteristics. In these societies, the role of leadership is prominent in relation to knowledge sharing. Leaders need to recognise and value sustainability expertise and promote a culture based on knowledge sharing. Collaboration and communication between groups is critical for effective knowledge sharing and use.

The general aims of knowledge sharing are similar, but local culture, organisational customs and context can greatly influence how knowledge sharing is thought about and interpreted.

### 4.3. Third research question

In the third research question, I sought to answer whether thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability is influenced by national culture.

**H3: National culture influences the way of thinking about knowledge sustainability.**

The answers to the second round questionnaire were tested using a two-sample t-test. The averages of the responses to each category of the questionnaire on knowledge sustainability are shown in Table 56. The averages show that respondents had positive views on all six topics. There are differences in the averages of the responses of Swedish and Hungarian citizens for each category of the questionnaire. Based on the two-sample t-test, for all six variables, Swedes are significantly more in agreement with the statements in the established categories than Hungarian respondents.

**Table 5 Examining differences in responses to the categories of the questionnaire on knowledge sustainability by nationality**

Categories of the questionnaire	Hungarian respondents (n=200)		Swedish respondents (n=200)		Two-sample t-test	
	average	Dispersion	average	Dispersion	t	p
Examining the concept	4,26	0,59	4,47	0,68	3,31	< 0,01
Testing the model	4,35	0,63	4,55	0,60	3,17	< 0,05
The role of informatics	4,06	0,83	4,45	0,73	4,97	< 0,01
Development opportunities	4,09	0,62	4,41	0,67	4,95	< 0,01
Level to be tested	3,73	0,75	4,30	0,67	8,12	< 0,01
Relevance	3,60	0,64	3,75	0,54	2,45	< 0,05

Source: own editing

I then examined the events of the first round, a detailed analysis of which can be found in subsection 4.1 of my thesis.

The results of the content analysis revealed differences between the Hungarian and Swedish responses. Ethics and organisational memory appeared in the Swedish responses, but the development of knowledge was observed in the Hungarian responses.

Trust, knowledge acquisition/sharing, knowledge retention and knowledge management were also present in the responses of Hungarians and Swedes.

The results of the qualitative research confirmed the findings of the quantitative research, that national culture influences thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability.

The results show that hypothesis H3 is supported.

*T2: National culture influences the way of thinking about knowledge sustainability. Swedish respondents significantly more agreed with the statements in all categories of the questionnaire than Hungarian respondents.*

#### **4.4. Fourth research question**

In the fourth research question, I asked whether Hofstede's cultural dimensions reveal differences in the perceptions of Hungarians and Swedes about organisational knowledge sustainability.

#### **H4: Hofstede's cultural dimensions reveal differences in the perceptions of Hungarians and Swedes about organisational knowledge sustainability.**

H4/a In thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, Hungarians show elements of masculine culture.

H4/b In the Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, elements of feminine culture are present.

H4/c Hungarians' thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of high uncertainty avoidance.

H4/d The Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of low uncertainty avoidance.

#### **H4/a In thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, Hungarians show elements of masculine culture.**

The Hungarian respondents' ideas about knowledge retention included elements typical of masculine cultures, such as achievement orientation, competition and ambition. Proactivity and autonomy in knowledge acquisition can be attributed to the masculine nature of Hungarian culture, as initiative and achievement are rewarded in masculine cultures.



**H4/b In the Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, elements of feminine culture are present.**

The Swedish respondents' ideas on knowledge preservation included elements typical of feminine cultures, such as cooperation, helping each other, sharing ideas, learning together, and social responsibility. Feminine societies tend to place a strong emphasis on equality and human rights. Swedish respondents stress the importance of harmony and sustainability.

**Table 6 Comparison of Hungarian and Swedish responses on the masculinity-femininity dimension**

	<b>Hungarian answers</b>	<b>Swedish answers</b>
<b>Masculinity - femininity</b>	achievement orientation, competition, ambition, fear, position protection, self-learning, hierarchy, proactivity, autonomy	equality, harmony, sustainability, cooperation, helping each other, sharing ideas, learning together, social responsibility

Source: own editing

**H4/c Hungarians' thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of high uncertainty avoidance.**

The Hungarian responses show elements of high uncertainty avoidance.

A sense of security and procedures play an important role, as people in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tend to feel comfortable in structured environments. Fear plays a key role, as Hungarian respondents fear that sharing knowledge may weaken their position or lose its value.

The elements to be found in the answers are past orientation, tradition, security. There is a sense of structure, a need for a controlled environment.

**H4/d The Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of low uncertainty avoidance.**

Swedish responses reflect the low level of uncertainty avoidance that characterises Swedish society. Swedish respondents show a high tolerance for change and uncertainty. Innovation,

development and change are prominent in their feedback. Their reactions show that Swedish people tend to accept and deal with mistakes openly and constructively.

**Table 7 Comparison of Hungarian and Swedish responses on the uncertainty avoidance dimension**

	<b>Hungarian answers</b>	<b>Swedish answers</b>
<b>Uncertainty avoidance</b>	security, procedures, structured environment, fear, past orientation, traditions	innovation, development, change, future orientation, open and constructive acceptance and management of mistakes

Source: own editing

In the analysis, the Hungarian responses focused on masculine values, while the Swedish responses focused on feminine values. This confirms Hofstede, Hofstede's (2008) classification of Hungary as a masculine society and Sweden as a feminine society. Most research (Hofstede, 1994; Bakacsi, 1996; Varga, 2008; Falkné, 2008) classifies Hungary as a country with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance. The results of the present study confirm this.

T3: Hofstede's cultural dimensions reveal differences in the perception of organisational knowledge sustainability between Hungarians and Swedes

*T3/a In thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, Hungarians show elements of masculine culture.*

*T3/b Hungarians' thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of high uncertainty avoidance.*

*T3/c In the Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, there are elements of feminine culture.*

*T3/d The Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of low uncertainty avoidance.*

#### **4.5. Fifth research question**

In the fifth research question, I sought to find out whether there is a difference in the motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability based on national culture.

**H5: Motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability vary by national culture.**

**Table 8 Comparison of Hungarian and Swedish responses based on motives related to the elements of the organisational knowledge sustainability model**

Elements of the model	Motif	
	Hungarian answers	Swedish answers
<b>Ethics</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safety and security</li> <li>- Sustainable knowledge practices</li> <li>- Ethical use and conduct</li> <li>- Legal obligations</li> <li>- Social responsibility</li> <li>- Ethical business practices</li> <li>- Effective governance structures</li> </ul>
<b>Trust</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mutual trust</li> <li>- Sense of security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation in the field of</li> <li>- Transparency</li> </ul>
<b>Motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning</li> <li>- Development</li> <li>- Competitiveness</li> <li>- Culture of sustainability</li> <li>- Common sense</li> <li>- Mutual trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning, growth</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge acquisition/sharing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fear of losing your position</li> <li>- Fear of an employee leaving</li> <li>- Organisational culture</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainability</li> <li>- Cooperation in the field of</li> <li>- Technology</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Communication</li> </ul>
<b>Developing knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Original tasks</li> </ul>	
<b>Preservation of knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainability of knowledge</li> <li>- Corporate culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainability of knowledge</li> <li>- Organisational climate</li> <li>- Leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Organisational memory</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning management systems</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interorganisational knowledge management</li> <li>- Business management</li> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Competence Inventory</li> <li>- Welfare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainability of knowledge</li> <li>- Targeting</li> <li>- Knowledge management strategy</li> <li>- Knowledge management exercises</li> <li>- Technology</li> <li>- Verification</li> <li>- Facts</li> <li>- Organizational memory</li> <li>- Business strategy</li> <li>- Data analysis</li> </ul>

Source: own editing

The results show that there are differences in the motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability across national cultures.

*T4: There is a difference in the motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability between Hungarian and Swedish responses based on national culture.*

#### 4.6. Sixth research question

In my sixth research question, I sought to find out whether thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability is influenced by the provision of knowledge management knowledge.

**H6: There is a difference between the thinking of experts and outsiders who apply knowledge management at a theoretical/practical level in relation to organisational knowledge sustainability.**

I examined the first round of data using VoyantTools. I created word clouds based on the responses of knowledge management experts, business professionals and non-experts (in the field of knowledge management).

**Figure 8 Organisational knowledge sustainability word clouds by study group**



Source: own editing

I then analysed the words most frequently used by the groups surveyed (Table 9).

I have indicated in dark blue and boldface type the words that appeared in the responses of all three groups surveyed, in light blue and boldface type the words that were used by at least two groups and in white the words that appeared in the responses of one group surveyed. 60% of the words most frequently used by the three groups are identical.

**Table 9 Most frequently used words by survey group**

	<b>TM experts</b>	<b>Business professionals</b>	<b>Not experts</b>
1.	<b>sustainable</b>	<b>sustainable</b>	<b>sustainable</b>
2.	<b>learning</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>essential</b>
3.	<b>Future</b>	<b>essential</b>	<b>Cooperation</b>
4.	<b>required</b>	<b>learning</b>	<b>learning</b>
5.	<b>culture</b>	man	<b>Future</b>
6.	<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>culture</b>	<b>Development</b>
7.	<b>essential</b>	<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>required</b>
8.	<b>Development</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>culture</b>
9.	<b>digital</b>	Individuals	identify
10.	Education	<b>digital</b>	knowledge assets
11.	<b>today</b>	Company	valuable
12.	valuable	industry	investment
13.	humanity	apply	<b>today</b>
14.	fluctuation	industry 4.0	<b>Success</b>
15.	<b>Success</b>	<b>competitive advantage</b>	<b>digital</b>

Source: own editing

Building on the data from the second round, I examined whether there was a difference when I split my sample into knowledge management experts, business experts and non-experts (in the field of knowledge management). I used analysis of variance to examine the difference between the means of the three subsamples (Table 10).

I tested homogeneity using the Levene test. With  $p > 0.05$ , this means that the variances are not equal. Although the analysis of variance requires a normal distribution, this does not prevent the test from being performed (Falus, 2008).

**Table 10 Knowledge sustainability by study group in three subsamples**

Sustainability of knowledge	Group examined						ANOVA		Differences between subsamples
	(1) TM experts (n=140)		(2) Business professionals (n=150)		(3) Non-experts (n=110)		F	p	
	Average	Source	Average	Source	Average	Source			
Concept	4,27	0,63	4,39	0,61	4,45	0,69	2,66	0,71	-
Model	4,39	0,60	4,49	0,61	4,45	0,67	0,95	0,39	-
Informatics	4,20	0,79	4,28	0,84	4,28	0,78	0,39	0,69	-
Development opportunities	4,20	0,68	4,27	0,63	4,29	0,70	0,81	0,44	-
Level to be tested	3,94	0,75	3,98	0,76	4,16	0,77	2,89	0,06	-
Relevance	3,64	0,56	3,69	0,59	3,70	0,64	0,40	0,67	-

Source: own editing

There is no difference in the perception of each of the aggregate variables.

The results of the qualitative research confirmed the results of the quantitative research, that experts and outsiders who apply knowledge management at theoretical/practical level have similar views on organisational knowledge sustainability.

Based on the results, hypothesis H4 is rejected.

*T5: Experts and outsiders who apply knowledge management at theoretical/practical level in Hungary and Sweden have similar views on organisational knowledge sustainability.*

Based on the results of the research, it can be said that, in general, experts and outsiders who apply knowledge management at theoretical and practical levels have similar views on organisational knowledge sustainability.

This may be because all three groups surveyed consider the issue of knowledge sustainability to be important. In today's rapidly changing environment, there is a growing recognition that effective knowledge management is key to success and long-term survival. This indicates the growing importance of knowledge sustainability in the organisational environment.

Similar thinking may be due to the fact that they are influenced by similar global trends, e.g. technological development and digitalisation, demographic changes, the rise of artificial intelligence.

**Table 11 Summary of research questions, hypotheses and theses**

Research question	Hypothesis	Hypothesis verification alk. method	Result	Thesis
<b>Q1:</b> How can you describe organisational knowledge sustainability?	<b>H1:</b> The prerequisites for a knowledge management system underpin the process of knowledge sustainability.	Content analysis	Adopted by	<b>T1:</b> The prerequisites of a knowledge management system underpin the process of knowledge sustainability, of which knowledge sharing is a critical element.
<b>Q2:</b> Which is the most critical element of the organisational knowledge sustainability process?	<b>H2:</b> Knowledge sharing is the most critical element in the process of knowledge sustainability.	Content analysis Descriptive statistics	Adopted by	
<b>Q3:</b> Is thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability influenced by national culture?	<b>H3:</b> National culture influences mindsets on knowledge sustainability .	Two-sample t-test	Adopted by	<b>T2:</b> National culture influences the way of thinking about knowledge sustainability. Swedish respondents significantly more agreed with the statements in all categories of the questionnaire than Hungarian respondents.
<b>Q4 :</b> Based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, are there differences in the	<b>H4:</b> Hofstede's cultural dimensions reveal differences in the perception of	Content analysis	Adopted by	<b>T3:</b> Hofstede's cultural dimensions reveal differences in the perceptions of



<p>perceptions of Hungarians and Swedes about organisational knowledge sustainability?</p>	<p>organisational knowledge sustainability between Hungarians and Swedes.</p> <p>H4/a In thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, Hungarians show elements of masculine culture.</p> <p>H4/b In thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, Hungarians show elements of high uncertainty avoidance.</p> <p>H4/c In the Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, elements of feminine culture are present.</p> <p>H4/d The Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of low uncertainty avoidance.</p>			<p>Hungarians and Swedes about organisational knowledge sustainability .</p> <p>T3/a In thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, Hungarians show elements of masculine culture.</p> <p>T3/b Hungarians' thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of high uncertainty avoidance.</p> <p>T3/c In the Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability, there are elements of feminine culture.</p> <p>T3/d The Swedish way of thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability shows elements of low uncertainty avoidance.</p>
<p><b>Q5:</b> Is there a difference in the motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability</p>	<p><b>H5:</b> Motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability differ by national culture.</p>	<p>Content analysis</p>	<p>Adopted by</p>	<p><b>T4:</b> There is a difference in the motives related to the conditions for organisational knowledge sustainability between Hungarian and Swedish responses based on national culture.</p>

based on national culture?				
<b>Q6:</b> Does the availability of knowledge management skills influence your thinking about organisational knowledge sustainability?	<b>H6:</b> There is a difference between the thinking of experts and outsiders who apply knowledge management at theoretical/practical level in relation to organisational knowledge sustainability.	Content analysis, Analysis of variance	Rejected	<b>T5:</b> Experts and outsiders who apply knowledge management at theoretical/practical level in Hungary and Sweden have similar views on organisational knowledge sustainability.

Source: own editing

## **5. Summary**

The primary aim of my dissertation is to develop a generally accepted concept and model of organisational knowledge sustainability.

As a prerequisite for achieving my goal, I conducted an extensive literature review of the research area, both nationally and internationally, after defining the research questions. I introduced the concept of organisational knowledge sustainability, compared Hungary and Sweden on the basis of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, and then described the concept of organisational success and its measurement possibilities.

Following the theoretical overview, the methodology used in the research was presented, with emphasis on a detailed overview of the data collection and data analysis processes.

During the data collection, I conducted a two-round questionnaire survey, using the Delphi method as a tool.

After the first round of queries, I conducted a content analysis using ATLAS.ti and Voyant Tools text analysis software. Based on the results of the second round of queries, statistical analyses were performed using IBM Statistics 25 statistical software.

In the next part of my thesis, I present the main results of the survey.

Based on the scores obtained in the survey, I concluded that the respondents I interviewed reached a consensus, i.e. they agreed with the statements I made.

The results of the test of the validity of my hypotheses are presented after the presentation of the results. In order to test the hypotheses, content analysis, two-sample t-test and analysis of variance were performed.

The results supported my view that a definition and model of organisational knowledge sustainability can be defined.

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