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Employees' organizational identification in a post-merger environment - a multifactor approach

Finnish Business Communication

Master's thesis

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2013

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Employees' organizational identification in a post-merger environment - a multifactor approach
Case: Aalto University Department of Architecture

Objective

The objective of this research is to gain an understanding on how the employees and students of the Aalto University Department of Architecture have identified themselves as organizational members after the department was extracted from the School of Engineering and integrated into the School of Arts and Design at the beginning of 2012. This shall be done by making use of a multifactor approach, whereby the most significant identification factors associated with the merger are identified.

Research methods and data

The research data was collected by making use of a mixed method approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative research. The quantitative data consists of four interviews conducted in the spring of 2012. The interviewees were students and staff members of the Department of Architecture, and they all had had a significant role in the merger process. The quantitative data was subsequently collected through a survey that was sent out to all the staff members and students of the Department of Architecture.

In analysing the research data, a multifactor approach was utilized. The identification factors associated with the merger were divided into six parts. By determining the relative significance of each of these identification factors, it is possible to see how the employees and students of the Department of Architecture have reacted to the merger and how it affects their organizational identity.

Findings

The most significant identification factors were Perceived opportunities and threats, Identification with organizational groups and Sense of continuity vs. Uncertainty. It became evident that the architects have a very strong professional identity, which has helped them adapt to the new organizational environment. Most architects still primarily identify themselves with the Department of Architecture as opposed to Aalto University or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture. The respondents were also concerned about whether external stakeholders would still appreciate the architects´ engineering skills.

Keywords: organizational identification, merger, multifactor approach, identity, organizational groups

Employees' organizational identification in a post-merger environment - a multifactor approach
Case: Aalto- yliopiston Arkkitehtuurin laitos

Tavoitteet

Tutkielman ensisijaisena tavoitteena on selvittää, miten Aalto-yliopiston Arkkitehtuurin osaston henkilökunta ja opiskelijat ovat sopeutuneet uuteen organisaatioympäristöön, joka muodostui Arkkitehtuurin osaston liityttyä Taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakouluun. Tutkimuksen painopiste on organisaatioidentiteetissä ja siinä, mihin organisaatioon Arkkitehtuurin laitoksen henkilökunta ja opiskelijat ensisijaisesti identifioituvat ennen yhdistymistä ja yhdistymisen jälkeen.

Tutkimusaineisto ja – menetelmät

Tutkimuksessa on hyödynnetty mixed method- lähestymistapaa, jossa tutkimusaineisto kootaan kvalitatiivisen ja kvantitatiivisen tutkimuksen kautta. Kvalitatiivinen aineisto koostuu neljästä haastattelusta, jotka toteutettiin kevään 2012 aikana. Haastateltavina olivat Arkkitehtuurin laitoksella johtavassa asemassa olevia henkilökunnan jäseniä sekä opiskelijoita. Kvantitatiivinen tutkimusaineisto puolestaan koottiin kyselyllä, joka lähetettiin Arkkitehtuurin laitoksen henkilökunnalle ja opiskelijoille sähköpostitse.

Tutkimusvälineenä hyödynnettiin Multifactor- lähestymistapaa, jossa yhdistymiseen liittyvät tekijät jaettiin kuuteen osaan. Määrittelemällä näiden tekijöiden keskinäinen merkitys yhdistymisen jälkeisessä identifitoitumisessa on mahdollista selvittää, millä tavoin yhdistyminen on vaikuttanut henkilökunnan ja opiskelijoiden organisaatioidentiteettiin ja arkkitehtien sisäiseen ammatti-identiteettiin.

Tulokset

Merkittävimpinä identifioitumiseen liittyvinä tekijöinä esille nousivat yhdistymiseen liittyvät uhat ja mahdollisuudet, identifioituminen organisaation sisäisiin ryhmiin sekä jatkuvuus/ epävarmuus. Arkkitehtien oma vahva ammatillinen identiteetti nousi tutkimuksessa voimakkaasti esiin, ja tämä vahva identiteetti myös auttoi arkkitehteja sopeutumaan uuteen organisaatioympäristöön. Suurin osa arkkitehdeista kokee edelleen identifioituvansa ensisijaisesti nimenomaan arkkitehtuurin osastoon, ei TaiK:iin tai Aalto- yliopistoon. Suurimpana epävarmuustekijänä koettiin se, millä tavoin ulkopuoliset toimijat tulevat näkemään arkkitehtien teknillisen pätevyyden TaiK:iin yhdistymisen jälkeen.

Avainsanat: organizational identification, merger, multifactor approach, identity, organizational groups

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1.INTRODUCTION

In recent years, mergers have become a widely used strategy for companies and organizations that wish to increase their efficiency and become more competitive. Merging two formerly separate organizations entails a great deal of risk and uncertainty, especially when it comes to helping the employees adapt to the new situation. The objective of this research is to gain an understanding on how the employees and students of the Aalto University Department of Architecture have identified themselves as organizational members after the department was extracted from the School of Engineering and integrated into the School of Arts and Design at the beginning of 2012.

1.1 Research problem

In a merger context, organizational members are often prone to express negative feelings towards the upcoming changes. This is especially the case if the merging organizations have an unequal organizational status. Furthermore, differences in organizational culture, uncertainty about the future of the organization and a lack of communication about the changes are all potential threats to successful employee identification in a merger. The primary focus of this research is on the employees and students of the Department of Architecture. More specifically, the aim is to find out how they perceive their organizational identity after the merger and whether they are satisfied with the manner in which the organizational changes have been implemented.

1.2. Research questions and objectives

The ultimate goal is to find out how the employees and students of the Department of Architecture have identified themselves as organizational members and whether this identity position has changed as a result of the merger. This problem will be analyzed by making use of a multifactor approach, whereby the organizational change associated with the merger has been divided into six identification factors. These

identification factors are: 1) Central, distinct and enduring characters, 2) Potential opportunities and threats, 3) Pre- merger status and dominant position,

4) Identification with organizational groups, 5) Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty and 6) Merger pattern. The objective is to determine which of these factors were the most significant in the architects´ post- merger identification.

In order to answer the main research question presented above, a more specific set of research questions is required. Therefore, this research shall be based on the following questions:

1. What do the employees and students of the Department of Architecture perceive as the major opportunities and threats regarding their identification with the new, post-merger school?

2. Do the employees and students of the Department of Architecture feel that the School of Arts and Design has been in a more dominant position during the merger?

3. Which organization do the employees of the department of Architecture identify with the most: Aalto University, Department of Architecture, or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture?

4. Has the organizational identity of the Department of Architecture changed as a result of the merger? Does this bring about a feeling of uncertainty?

First, it is important to identify what the organizational members consider to be the central and distinct characteristics in their organization. Subsequently, the research focus will be on the merger environment. This environment will be introduced through an analysis of the pre-merger status, dominant position and organizational identification as well as the merger pattern. Finally, the aim is to determine whether the merger has caused organizational identity change and/or brought about a feeling of uncertainty.

1.3. Key definitions and background

As the research is focused on particular organizations facing significant structural changes, it is important to first provide background information on the characteristics

of the organizations as well as on the circumstances in which the merger has eventually taken place. This information will shed some light on the problem at hand and serve as a basis for the subsequent analysis.

1.3.1. Aalto University

Aalto University is a multidisciplinary university consisting of six separate schools located in Helsinki and Espoo. Since its foundation in January 2010, it has already gone through significant structural changes. Originally, the university was created through a merger of three schools: *Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki University of Technology and University of Arts and Design Helsinki*. As of the beginning of 2011, Aalto University has been organized into six different schools that were established through the restructuring the three original schools. The main building of Aalto University is located in Otaniemi, Espoo, which is also home to five of the schools operating under the umbrella of Aalto University. The School of Economics is the only school that is still not located in Otaniemi: it continues to operate in central Helsinki. The current structure of Aalto University is depicted below.

FIGURE 1: *The current structure of Aalto University*

Aalto University

School of Chemical Technology

School of Science

School of Economics

School of Arts, Design and Architecture

School of Electrical Engineering

School of Engineering

(Author´s elaboration)

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Regarding the goals that Aalto University is striving to achieve through its interdisciplinary nature, the mission, vision and values are listed in the university´s official webpage as follows:

FIGURE 2: *Mission statement of Aalto University*

Mission

"The Aalto University strives to change the world through top-quality interdisciplinary research, pioneering education, surpassing traditional boundaries, and renewal. The Aalto University educates responsible, broadminded experts with a comprehensive understanding of complex subjects to act as society's visionaries".

Vision

"The best connect and succeed at Aalto University, an institution internationally recognized for the impact of its science, art, and learning".

Values

- *A passion for exploring boundaries.*
- *The freedom to be creative and critical.*
- *The courage to influence and excel.*
- *The responsibility to care, accept and inspire.*
- *Founded on high ethics, openness, and equality.*

The increasing societal impact of universities creates both challenges and opportunities, which can be summarized as follows:

- *Focusing of operations based on quality*
- *Making use of multidisciplinary expertise and partnerships to develop innovation know-how*
- *Internationalization*
- *Autonomy*
- *Professionalizing university services and exploitation of information technology*

http://www.aalto.fi/fi/about/strategy *(Author´s elaboration)*

1.3.2. Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture

The Aalto University School of Arts, Architecture and Design was established at the beginning of 2012, when the Department of Architecture was extracted from what used to be the School of Technology and was integrated into the School of Arts and Design. The primary objective was to form a new school that would successfully *"combine the areas of design and the implementation of human-oriented environments"* (http://arts.aalto.fi/en/about/). As the demand for more multi-disciplinary expertise is constantly growing, the professors and other officials working in the field of architecture decided that establishing a new school that successfully integrates the technical as well as the artistic aspects of architecture would provide a platform for a more coherent study of architecture.

According to the official webpage of the School of Arts, Design and Architecture, the interdisciplinary nature of the school is expected to encourage students to find new, innovative solutions that would facilitate the creation of user-centered human environments. Creativity and an international approach to research and education are also held in high esteem (http://arts.aalto.fi/fi/).

As for the timeline of the merger, the official process was carried out quite quickly, but the idea had been on the table for quite some time prior to the official initiative. According to the former Head of the Department of Architecture, the first informal discussions about the possibility of integrating the two schools took place between 2004 and 2005. Subsequently, in 2008, the professors from both faculties held several meetings where the first plans were laid out. As a result of these meetings, a formal proposal about integrating the two schools was presented to the Board of the Aalto University Foundation. Following the review of the proposal, the merger process was initiated in the spring of 2011, and by January 2012 the merger was completed to the degree that the new school was established (Siikala, 2012, interview).
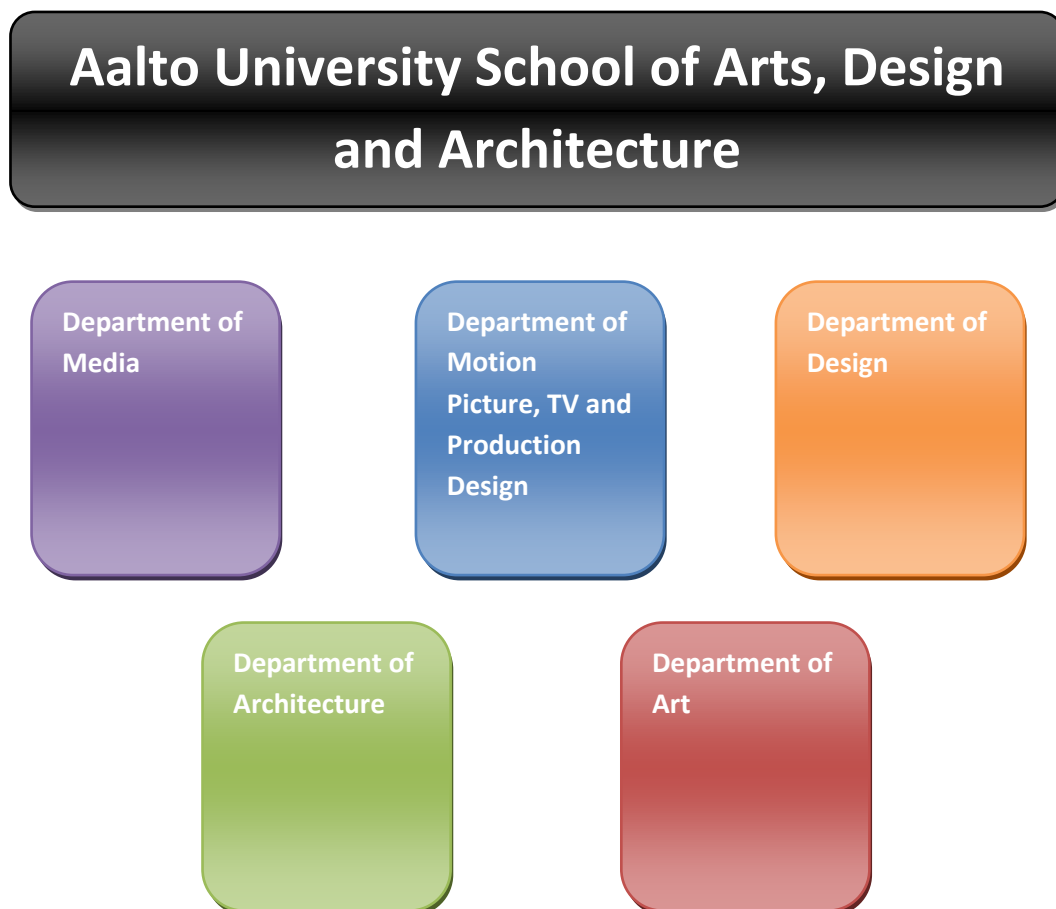
Currently the schools have separate campuses, but the students and personnel of the former School of Arts and Design will eventually move their facilities to Otaniemi,

Espoo, which is where the Department of Architecture is located. The new School of Arts, Design and Architecture will move to new facilities in 2015-2016, after the construction of the new building is finished.

Following the merger, the School of Arts, Design and Architecture employs a total of 183 teachers and professors and 222 other staff members. The school offers 20 different programs on the Bachelor´s level and 24 programs on the Master´s level. The number of degree students is close to 2 000, of which 50% are studying on the Master level. In 2010, the number of applicants was 3 839, of which 310 were accepted (http://arts.aalto.fi/en/about/statistics/).

The figure presented below offers an overview of the departments and programs that together form the School of Arts, Design and Architecture.

FIGURE 3: *Departments of the School of Arts, Design and Architecture*

Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture

Department of Media	Department of Motion Picture, TV and Production Design	Department of Design

Department of Architecture	Department of Art

http://arts.aalto.fi/fi/departments/ (*Author´s elaboration*)

1.4. Structure of the thesis

In order to provide a solid theoretical background for the research, a thorough examination of relevant literature on organizational identity theory and mergers is conducted. The literature search in Chapter 2 serves as a basis and a starting point for the subsequent research and analysis on the merger in question. After discussing the literature published on this topic, the research methodology shall be presented in Chapter 3.

Following the introduction of the research methodology, an analysis of the research findings shall be presented in Chapter 4. The findings are based on the information gathered in interviews and questionnaires conducted among employees involved in the merger. The research findings and their implications shall then be further discussed in Chapter 5.

Finally, the research findings and suggestions for further research will be summarized in Chapter 6.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following chapters, the aspects of organizational identity as well as employee commitment to an organization shall be discussed through examining relevant literature published on this topic. Moreover, the implications of organizational identity change and employee perceptions in the context of mergers shall also be addressed. The purpose is to build a solid theoretical basis for the subsequent examination of organizational identity change and employee identification in Aalto University School of Arts and Design. The discussion shall first focus on the basic theories and assumptions concerning organizational identity in general. Subsequently, for the purpose of this particular research, the discussion will take a more specific focus through examining organizational identity in a merger context from an employee perspective.

As this research is based on the premise of the multifactor approach, the literature review has been structured to build a theoretical framework that provides a lens through which the research shall be conducted. Therefore, each aspect of the multifactor approach shall be discussed in a separate chapter in this literature review.

2.1. Organizational identity vs. Organizational identification

Identity is what defines the essence of an organization and provides a solid background for organizational behavior. It is something that all the members of the organization should be able to relate to and it sets a framework within which the members can view themselves as an integral part of the organization. Thus, organizational identity can to a great extent be explained by examining how strongly employees and members identify with the organization. The difference between these two concepts is that **organizational identity** consists of the characteristics and values of the organization itself, whereas **organizational identification** refers to the degree to which an individual feels that his/her own values correlate with those of the organization. As Bartels et al. (2009:113) summarized, strong identification with the organization is associated with members´ favorable attitude with the organization. Moreover, strong identification decreases members´ willingness to leave and increases

job satisfaction. Collaboration within the organization is also more efficient and productive when members share a strong sense of identification (2009:113).

Building a strong and enduring organizational identity is by no means an easy task. People with different cultural and social backgrounds are occupying all levels of organizational activity, and organizational identity is in constant state of change (Albert et al. 2000:14). In today´s world of mass communication and constantly increasing media attention, organizations and companies are finding it more and more difficult to successfully express and to hold on to their identities (Hatch & Schultz, 2002:990). Information on organizational activities and processes can spread across the world in the blink of an eye, which forces organizations to pay particular attention to how their identity is viewed by the outside world. Moreover, due to this increased exposure, external stakeholders such as customers and the general public are more likely to develop a stronger sense of belongingness towards the organization. Thus, organizational members tend to hear more external opinions on their organization, which, in turn, adds a new dimension to the formation of organizational identity. It is not only the internal culture that defines the identity of an organization: the image that external stakeholders have about the organization has become increasingly important in shaping organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002:990). This relationship and interplay between organizational identity, image and culture shall be addressed in more detail later on in this chapter.

Much of the research on organizational identity has its roots in Albert and Whetten´s (1985) famous article *Organizational Identity,* whereby the authors introduce the core concepts that determine organizational identity. Their work was further elaborated by Margolis and Hansen (2002:277-303), who used the organizational identity theory as a basis for their own research on sustaining the identity during change. The key elements of these theories will be introduced in the following chapters. Furthermore, the significance of social identity theory in employee commitment to an organization will be discussed.

2.1.1. Central , distinct and enduring characters

Albert and Whetten (1985) contended that organizational identity is the combination of three dimensions, namely an organization´s *central character, distinctiveness* and *temporal continuity*. Of these dimensions, central character refers to the organizational members´ perception of what is the essence of the organization. Distinctiveness comprises the things that make the organization unique and distinguish it from other organizations that operate in the same field. The third dimension, temporal continuity, refers to those organizational attributes that the members consider to be enduring in the long term (Margolis and Hansen, 2002: 281). Regarding this third dimension, Gioia et al. (2000) elaborated on the concept and made a distinction between an *enduring identity* and an identity *that has continuity*. According to this conceptualization, enduring identity refers to an identity that has permanency and persists through the test of time. Identity having continuity, by contrast, may change in its meaning but simultaneously stick to core beliefs and values (Gioia et al. 2000:65).

2.1.2. Purpose and philosophy

Based on the three abovementioned criteria –central character, distinctiveness and temporal continuity- , Margolis and Hansen (2002:283) divided organizational attributes into two distinct categories, according to the degree to which these attributes met the three criteria determining organizational identity. The two categories are *core attributes*, which are those attributes that meet the organizational identity definition, and *application attributes*, which do not meet the organizational identity definition. These two main categories were subsequently divided further into five subcategories. According to Margolis and Hansen, the core attributes consist of *purpose and philosophy,* whereas the application attributes comprise *projections, practices and priorities.* The two core attributes- purpose and philosophy- are the ones that define the central character of the organization. Conversely, the three application attributes- projections, practices and priorities- do not meet the central character criterion of the organizational identity definition, and thus merely support the core attributes (Margolis and Hansen, 2002: 283).

FIGURE 4: *Organizational identity attributes (Margolis and Hansen, 2002:283)*

Core attributes that meet organizational identity criteria, sources of organizational identity change	→	**PHILOSOPHY**
	→	**PURPOSE**

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY ATTRIBUTES

	→	**PROJECTIONS**
Application attributes that do not meet organizational identity criteria	→	**PRIORITIES**
	→	**PRACTICES**
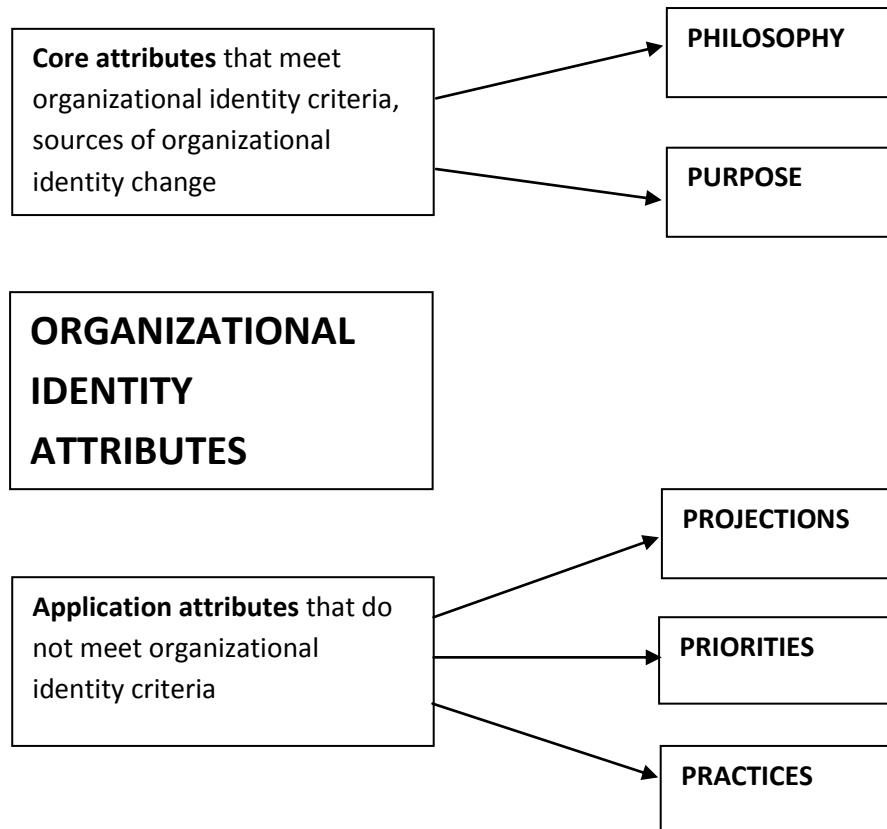
(Authors elaboration)

Regarding the process of sustaining organizational identity, Margolis and Hansen found that members considered the organizational identity to be safe and sustainable as long as the purpose and philosophy were left unchanged and as long as any changes that were made in the application attributes did not contradict the core attributes. Therefore, sustaining organizational identity is to a great extent a matter of ensuring that all members are aware of what constitutes the philosophy and purpose of the organization and that members review their actions accordingly (Margolis & Hansen, 2002: 284).

Since the core attributes and application attributes play a significant role in defining organizational identity, it seems relevant to take a more thorough look into what these attributes actually entail. Based on their research analysis, Margolis and Hansen defined the purpose of the organization as the "*reason for why it is important for the organization to exist*". The purpose is commonly viewed by the members as an

attribute that is central and enduring in their organization. It is the fundamental source for emotional attachment to work and provides a tool for individual members to bring their own contribution to a common cause (Margolis & Hansen, 2002:289). As for the philosophy, it has been defined as *"the source for how members do their work in a distinctive way"*. Therefore, it is what makes the organization unique and distinguishes it from all other organizations. Hence, when put together, these two core attributes comply with the three organizational identity criteria- central character, distinctiveness and temporal continuity and ultimately provide a basis for all organizational action (Margolis & Hansen, 2002: 284).

Regarding the application attributes, *priorities* were described as the key values of the organization. They were manifestations of purpose and philosophy and thus an important part of organizational identity, but members were nevertheless willing to adapt to changes in the key values if it was required for the company to survive. Examples of such key values are teamwork, customer service and casual atmosphere. Outside of these priorities is the second category of application attributes, namely *practices*. According to Margolis and Hansen, practices consisted of the products, services and business procedures that were used to put purpose, philosophy and priorities into force. As these practices were considered even less stable and enduring than priorities, members were inclined to accept changes in this field without any fear of losing the essence of organizational identity (Margolis & Hansen, 2002: 287-288).

Outside of practices is the third and final category of application attributes, *projections*. This category comprises the images (projections) of the organization that are visible to the general public. Examples of such images are name, logo, colors and the image of management. Symbols, such as the name and the logo, were intended to communicate to the public the values that the company represented. Therefore, changing the symbols constitute a change in how the organization shall be viewed from the outside, which might be difficult for some members or employees to come to terms with. However, if the old symbols have begun to bring out negative connotations due to, for instance, negative publicity, it may be necessary to renew the symbols in order to restore the favorable image in the eyes of the public. Margolis and

Hansen argued that even though losing the old symbols may be painful, most members understood that projections were not enduring and that changing the image and the symbols did not necessarily take away the essence of the organization (Margolis % Hansen, 2002:288-289).

In summary, the three criteria determining organizational identity are central character, distinctiveness and temporal continuity. These criteria are met by the two core attributes, purpose and philosophy. Purpose is the reason for why it is important for the organization to exist, and philosophy determines the way in which members do their work. If either one of these core attributes is changed, the essence and identity of the organization are also changed. However, it should be noted that the extent of change in organizational identity is fundamentally determined by the members of the organization rather than outsiders (290-291).

2.1.3. Social identity theory in organizational identification

As the objective of this research is to gain an understanding on how employees respond to the new merger situation in Aalto University, it is also relevant to discuss the theoretical background regarding employee commitment to organizational identity. Employees are the most important asset of an organization, which is why it is of paramount importance to ensure that they are committed to the organization and that they are consistently working towards common goals.

An important theory addressing employees´ organizational identification is the *social identity theory* (Tajfel and Turner 1986, in Giessner 2006 and van Knippenberg 2002), which attempts to explain how people define themselves not only through their individual characteristics but also through their membership in certain groups. Division of individuals into distinct categories can be based on several different criteria, such as age, gender, nationality or even favourite football team. According to the social identity theory, the stronger a person´s attachment to the group, i.e the more a person identifies with a particular group, the more the person´s attitudes, ideals and behavior are influenced and shaped by this group membership. Consequently, it can be stated that strong identification with the organization greatly increases the employees´ or

group members´ tendency to work towards what is best for the organization as a whole (van Knippenberg, 2002: 234).

In their article on SIT and organizational identification, Ashforth et al. (1989) contended that social categorization has two different roles. First, it provides a framework within which individuals see themselves as distinct from others. In other words, a person belongs to a specific group based on his/her characteristics, and defines other people based on whether or not they share the same characteristics. Second, social classification provides individuals with an opportunity to find their own place in the social environment. In social identity theory, an individual´s personal identity refers to looks, psychological attributes and personal interests, whereas social identity entails group classifications. Thus, *social identification* occurs when an individual experiences a sense of belongingness to a certain group of people. Moreover, SIT suggests that belongingness in a group also has the function of increasing an individual´s self-esteem (Ashforth et al, 1989:21).

As for the degree to which individuals identify with groups or organizations, Ashforth et al. discussed the three aspects that, according to SIT, have the most profound influence on group identification. The first aspect is the *distinctiveness* of the group with respect to other, comparable groups. It is something that distinguishes one particular group from all other groups and is the source of a unique identity. The more distinct the group´s values are from the values of other groups, the stronger the members´ identification with the group (Ashforth et al, 1989: 24).

The second aspect has to do with the suggested fact that social identification enhances self-esteem. Based on this theory, the SIT contends that the *prestige* of the group is strongly associated with the degree to which individuals identify with the group or an organization. It has been argued that people generally have a tendency to identify themselves with the winner or at least the side that is considered stronger. Thus, the higher the *perceived organizational prestige* of the group, the higher the probability that people will identify strongly with the group (Ashforth et al, 1989:25).

The third aspect affecting people´s identification with a group is *the salience of out-groups.* In other words, the more aware a person is of the existence of other groups, the more aware he becomes of his own in-group. An example provided by Ashforth et al. stated that when there were females included in a male-dominated group, the males started emphasizing masculine traits in order to highlight their distinction from the females (Ashforth et al, 1989: 25).

SIT provides a useful tool for examining individual members´ identification with an organization. It can also be used to examine how people are likely to react in organizational changes, such as mergers. The social identity theory in the context of a merger shall be discussed in more detail later on in this paper.

2.2. Organizational identification in a merger

In today´s rapidly developing world, mergers have become a common strategy for all sorts of companies and organizations. Often times the objective is to increase market share or to cut the costs and thus become more efficient. However, better performance often comes with a great cost: mergers have substantial ramifications for all the parties involved, and, if not executed with great precision and care, the plan could eventually turn against itself. According to Bartels et al. (2006:49), even two-thirds of all the mergers can to a certain extent be viewed as failures. The difficulties associated with mergers have been the subject of a great deal of academic discussion, and the following chapters are dedicated to presenting and analyzing the literature published on this topic.

2.2.1. Employee identification in a merger- perceived opportunities and threats

In a situation where two or more previously separate companies or organizations merge, the new organization is faced with a number of challenges. According to Giessner et al (2006), perhaps the most significant issue to be addressed in the context of a merger is the implementation of a new organizational identity that all the employees and other stakeholders find easy to identify with (339-340). In this respect, it is of great importance to acknowledge that people are prone to stick to their past. The way employees identify with their former organization **(pre-merger identification)** has been proven to have a substantial impact on how they identify with the new organization (**post-merger identification**) (Boen et al. 2007:381). Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that organizational members might have differing views on whether the merger should be seen as an opportunity or as a threat.

An important concept regarding organizational members´ identification with a new, post-merger organization is the *expected utility of the merger*. This refers to the degree to which members feel that the merger will actually benefit the merging parties and result in a more efficient and productive organization (Bartels et al. 2006:54). In their research on employee identification with the new organization, Bartels et al. found that the higher the members´ expected utility of the merger, the more likely they are

to identify positively with the post-merger organization. In fact, this turned out to be the most significant factor in predicting member identification with the new organization (58-59).

Despite the fact that the merger is usually aimed at improving the performance of the organization, many employees may show a certain degree of resistance to the new situation. This resistance can be attributed to a variety of factors, such as uncertainty about future employment, but the most fundamental reasons for resistance to change can often be traced back to *organizational identification*, *social identity theory* and a *sense of continuity*. People are prone to feel a certain attachment to their former, pre-merger organization, which is why the merger is likely to have a profound psychological effect on those involved (van Knippenberg et al, 2002:233).

As already mentioned in the previous chapters, social identity theory plays a crucial role in explaining organizational identity and members´ commitment to the organization. In the context of a merger, the social identity theory can be applied in projecting the degree to which the merger might raise negative feelings in the members of the organizations (Ashforth et al, 1989:21- 25). Since people are prone to feel a strong emotional attachment to the organization that they have been working for, a merger with another organization often brings out an us versus them attitude, which is likely to put the success and viability of the merger in question (Giessner et al. 2006:339).

According to social identity theory, a part of individuals´ self-definition comes from their membership of different groups and organizations. In case of a merger, the dynamics and identity of these groups are inevitably changed, which forces organizational members to consider their own identity (Ashforth et al, 1989:25). Consequently, members who perceive the new organizational identity as distinct from their individual identity are likely to show resistance to the merger (Giessner et al. 2006: 340). Furthermore, employees and organizational members feel a stronger identification with an organization that represents the same values as they themselves do. When an individual feels that the organizational identity is similar to his/her own identity, he/she is more likely to develop a high commitment to the organization. In

addition, it is important that members have a feeling that they are an important and acknowledged part of the organization (Bartels et al. 2006:52). However, in a merger situation, people must re-examine both the organizational identity and their own identity.

The significance of social identity theory in a merger context was aptly summarized by Boen et al. (2007:381). According to them, there are two ways in which mergers pose a challenge for members´ organizational identification. First, a merger causes people from two distinct groups to interact with each other more than before, which in turn increases the tendency to compare the two groups according to their status differences. The second challenge is that employees involved in a merger might get the idea that they are being forced to abandon their pre-merger identity and adapt to a new, post-merger identity (Boen et al, 2007:381). As the pre-merger status differences and identification with the former organization play an important role in the merger process, it is relevant to discuss these issues in more detail. As already mentioned above, van Knippenberg´s and Giessner´s research on status differences and identification have been widely quoted and, thus, provide a solid theoretical background for the discussion.

2.2.2. Pre- merger status and dominant position

The problem of member identification with the new organization can also be addressed from a *status difference,* or as van Knippenberg et al put it, *organizational dominance* perspective. One of the merging organizations usually has a higher pre-merger status or a dominant position which can be based on, for instance, size, revenue or market share. Consequently, the members of the high-status (dominant) organization might perceive the post-merger organization as *their* organization and expect that the new organization fundamentally assumes its characteristics from the high- status organization (van Knippenberg, 2002:236). Conversely, the group members coming from the organization with a lower pre-merger status (dominated organization) are more likely to find it difficult to identify with the new, post- merger organization. Therefore, it has been argued that pre-merger identification has a

significant influence on post-merger identification. Figure 3 illustrates the differences between the status groups regarding organizational identification.

FIGURE 6: *Post-merger identification (van Knippenberg, 2002:236-237)*

STATUS GROUPS´ IDENTIFICATION WITH THE POST-MERGER ORGANIZATION

HIGH PRE-MERGER STATUS GROUP	VS.	LOW PRE-MERGER STATUS GROUP
(Dominant group)		(Dominated group)
- Positive social identity		- Negative social identity
- More influence on identity building		- Less influence on identity building
- High sense of continuity		- Low sense of continuity
- Attempts to maintain status position		- Attempts to strengthen status position

(Author´s elaboration)

The distinction between dominance and status, according to van Knippenberg, is that dominance is more synonymous with power rather than status. It is often the case that the dominant partner is also the one with the higher status, but there are also exceptions to this rule. For instance, a large chain of department stores may acquire a high-esteem designer store, in which case the dominated partner has a higher status (van Knippenberg, 2002:237).

Giessner et al. combined the discussion on status differences with social identity theory by stating that when a person perceives himself to be a part of the low-status organization, he is unlikely to have a positive social identity. Conversely, people in the high-status group do have a positive social identity and will attempt to hold on to their current status position. Therefore, both these groups will strive to gain a more favorable position in the new organization: low-status group will attempt to change the prevailing situation by increasing their status position, whereas the high-status group will focus on keeping the status balance unchanged (Giessner et al, 2006.340).

2.2.3. Identification with organizational groups

Much of the literature on organizational identification in a merger addresses the issue of employee identification with their organization. However, as Bartels et al. (2009) pointed out, it is of equal importance to take into account all organizational levels with which employees and members may identify (123). An organization is not just one solid whole, but rather consist of a great variety of identities (Bartels et al. 2007:184).

Managers should be aware of the fact that some organizational members may create a very strong identification with their respective divisions and other subgroups. Earlier research by Bartels et al. (2007:184) revealed that when individuals identify strongly with their closest work groups (i.e. the ones that they operate in on a daily basis), it has a positive influence on their identification with other, more remote levels of the organization. Hence, allowing for these subgroups to exist even after the merger might facilitate the process of assimilation into the post-merger environment (Knippenberg et al. 2002:249).

2.2.4. Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty

When it comes to employees´ and members´ perceptions and feelings about the merger, the *sense of continuity* plays a significant role. This concept explains the specific consequences that the merger entails for the employees. In a merger situation, employees are often concerned about their future in the organization and are faced with fears of having to move or even being unemployed. Thus, sense of continuity is to a great extent associated with uncertainty and threats. In their article, Bartels et al. cited Terry and Callan (1998) by stating that perceived threat has multiple dimensions, such as stress and uncertainty about the impact of the merger (2006:54). In summary, when the employees have a high sense of continuity, they feel less uncertain and threatened by the merger and thus are more likely to take a positive attitude towards the merger. In contrast, low sense of continuity indicates high uncertainty and perceived threat, which in turn will evoke negative feelings towards the upcoming merger. Furthermore, there was a clear connection between organizational identification and perceived threat: when employees felt that the merger is likely to cause threats, they were less inclined to identify with the post-merger organization (Bartels et al. 2006:54).

In their research on dominance and status differences in merger situations, van Knippenberg et al. placed great emphasis on whether the merging partners felt a sense of continuity regarding their pre-merger and post-merger identities. The research was based on the assumption that members of the dominant group are more likely to feel a sense of continuity between pre-merger and post-merger identity than members of the dominated group. In their analysis they came to the conclusion that the hypothesis holds true and that dominant position is often associated with a stronger sense of continuity and that members of the dominated group are far less likely to feel that their pre-merger organizational identity is also present after the merger (van Knippenberg et al, 2002:247). This can be attributed to the fact that the dominant group, more often than not, is the one that gets to formulate the new identity for the merged organization. Moreover, van Knippenberg´s research indicated that if the group with a higher status is in a dominated position, the response will be more negative than in the case of the low-status group being dominated (van Knippenberg et al, 2002:249).

The three aspects discussed above- social identity, status groups and the sense of continuity - are important determinants of how members of the organization will respond to the merger. However, it is important to bear in mind that, as Margolis and Hansen (2002) stated, the extent of change in organizational identity is in the minds of the members involved: organizational identity change only occurs when members perceive that there has been an alteration in the core attributes- purpose and philosophy-, of the organization (Margolis & Hansen, 2002: 290-291). Therefore, merging organizations should attempt to establish a new organizational environment whereby all the members involved in the merger have an opportunity to contribute to the creation of organizational identity and thus make them feel like their pre-merger identity has not been completely eradicated. The theory on the different ways in which to approach identity building in a merger shall be discussed below.
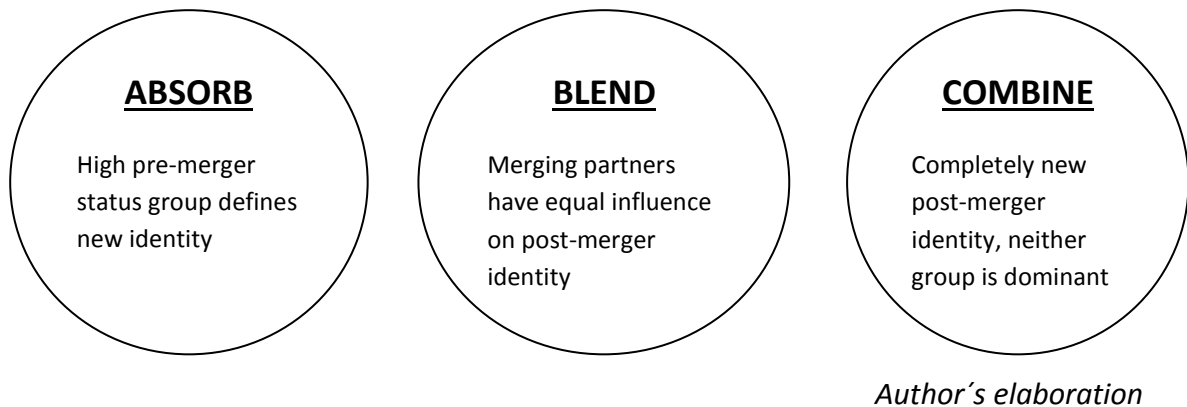
2.2.5. Merger patterns

Giessner et al. (2006) focused their research on the different patterns through which organizational identity change may be conducted. As the merger usually involves two

organizations that are not equal in terms of pre-merger status, it follows that there are also two differing views as to how the identity of the new, merged organization should be determined. Therefore, the way in which new organizational identity is defined has a profound influence on members´ tendency to support the merger. From the social identity theory perspective, it is likely that the members of the low-status group will have difficulties in gaining a positive social identity. Thus, their objective in the post-merger situation is to attempt to strengthen their status position. Conversely, members of the high-status organization have a more positive social identity in the post-merger situation, and will thus place their effort into maintaining their status position. Consequently, both groups are striving to improve their own position, which in turn is likely to cause turbulence in the process of identity building (Giessner et al, 2006:340). These arguments are in line with van Knippenberg´s model on status groups and post-merger identification: the members of the high-status group are in a better position to determine the identity of the new organization and therefore have a stronger sense of continuity. In contrast, members of the low-status group have much less influence on the new identity, which is why their sense of continuity is also lower (van Knippenberg et al. 2002: 247-249).

In order to gain a more thorough understanding on the identification process, it is crucial to recognize the different ways in which two organizations can merge. Giessner et al. referred to Schoennauer´s (1967) theory whereby he introduced three different merger patterns: *absorb, blend and combine*. In the absorb pattern, the group with the lower status will be assimilated into the high-status group. The blend pattern brings together the former identities of both organizations, thus creating a new identity where both status groups bring their pre-merger identities into the equation. The third pattern, namely the combine pattern, aims at creating a completely new group identity that has no connection to the old pre-merger identities. In this case, when forging a new identity for the merged organization, neither group has a dominant status in the initial stage of identity building (341).

FIGURE 7: *Merger patters (Giessner et al. 2006:341)*

ABSORB	BLEND	COMBINE
High pre-merger status group defines new identity	Merging partners have equal influence on post-merger identity	Completely new post-merger identity, neither group is dominant

Author´s elaboration

Based on the merger pattern differentiation, Giessner et al. took the conceptualization further and introduced two opposite integration patterns. The first option is integration by equality rule, whereby both merging partners have equal power in the new organization and have the same amount of influence in determining the new post-merger identity. Therefore, it is in essence similar to the blend and combine patterns. In contrast, the proportional integration refers to a situation where the merging partners´ influence on the new identity is determined by their pre-merger status (Giessner et al, 2006:341). In other words, proportional integration is in line with the assimilation pattern and thus provides an advantage for the high-status group.

In their research, Giessner et al came to the conclusion that pre-merger status has a significant impact on which merger pattern members prefer. As already stated above, both status groups strive to optimize their position in the post-merger organization. Therefore, members of the low-status group prefer integration-equality and combine patters since these patterns provide an equal status for both organizations and thus strengthen the position of the low-status group. Integration-equality pattern allows for the low-status group to bring their own contribution into the identity building and hence gives rise to a more positive identity (Giessner et al, 2006:348-349).

Regarding the preferences of the high-status group, Giessner et al. found that the integration-proportionality and assimilation patterns led to more positive responses. These patterns allow for the members of the high-status group to maintain their dominant status and thus provide a basis for positive identity building. Moreover, for the high-status group, a sense of continuity is strongly associated with the integration-proportionality rule (Giessner et al, 2006:348-349).

The results from Giessner´s research suggest that merger patterns have a very strong influence on how members respond to the merger, specifically in a situation where two unequal companies merge. As the social identity theory contends, people are prone to feel a strong attachment to the organization they are working for and even view themselves through their membership in this organization. Therefore, people want to hold on to their identity and are usually reluctant to adapt to the ways of other organizations (van Knippenberg, 2002:234). A merger is always a challenge for both parties since everybody wants to be a part of determining new organizational identity and different groups usually have differing views as to what the new identity should entail. Consequently, disregarding the preferences of one of the subgroups is likely to create resistance and can ultimately compromise the success of the merger (Giessner et al. 2006: 339).

2.2.6. Organizational communication in a merger

One of the key elements of success and employee satisfaction in an organization is communication. Literature on organizational communication introduces the concept of *communication climate*, which entails employees´ perceptions of the functioning of communication within the organization (Bartels et al. 2006:55). Smidts et al. (2001) found a strong correlation between information supply, communication climate and organizational identification. The more information was available for the employees, the more favorably they viewed the communication climate. Furthermore, Smidts et al. divided the perceived communication climate into three subcategories, namely *openness, participation and supportiveness*. According to their research, these factors proved to have a significant influence on employees´ identification with their organization. Based on these findings, Bartels et al. elaborated on the research and

found that the more satisfied the employees were with the communication climate, the more likely they were to conform to the identity of the post-merger organization (Bartels et al. 2006:55).

As for the communication in a merger situation, Bartels et al. found that the quality and amount of information had a correlation with employees´ post-merger identification. That is to say, by providing accurate and timely information about the upcoming changes (such as mergers), management can help the employees prepare for the new situation and thus decrease their feelings of threat and uncertainty. Making sure that the employees have no reason to resist change is considered vital to the success of mergers (Bartels et al. 2006:55).

Another study on communication in a merger situation was conducted by Schweiger and DeNisi (1991: 110-111). They focused on examining how the amount and accuracy of information about the merger affected employee´s perception of the merger. As pointed out in their article, managers of the merging organizations often show a great deal of reluctance to share their knowledge of the merger with their subordinates. Consequently, the employees are left uncertain about their future in the organization, which may cause even more stress than the changes themselves. Such uncertainty and stress may result in employees relying on rumors and other channels of informal communications to make up for their lack of information. However, since rumors often spread false and negative information, it is likely that they will further increase the feeling of uncertainty among the employees. Thus, Schweiger and DeNisi contend that the only way for managers to avoid losing trust in the eyes of their employees is to inform their staff about the upcoming changes as soon as possible (1991:110-111).

Through a comprehensive analysis of their findings, Schweiger and DeNisi came to the conclusion that uncertainty about the future increases employees´ stress and intention to leave and, conversely, decreases their job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. However, the results also indicated that accurate and timely communication about the changes will help the employees come to terms with the new situation and increase their views that the organization is operating honestly and with good intentions. Furthermore, Schweiger and DeNisi pointed out that even when

people are not happy with what the results of the organizational change might be, they are more willing to accept the changes when they have been informed about it. By giving the employees a chance to understand the change process through open communications is likely to decrease their dissatisfaction with the outcome itself (Schweiger & DeNisi, 1991:127-128).

3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to gain an insight into how the employees of Aalto University Department of Architecture perceive their position and identity after their department was integrated into the School of Arts and Design. More specific information on the objectives of the data gathering process is provided below.

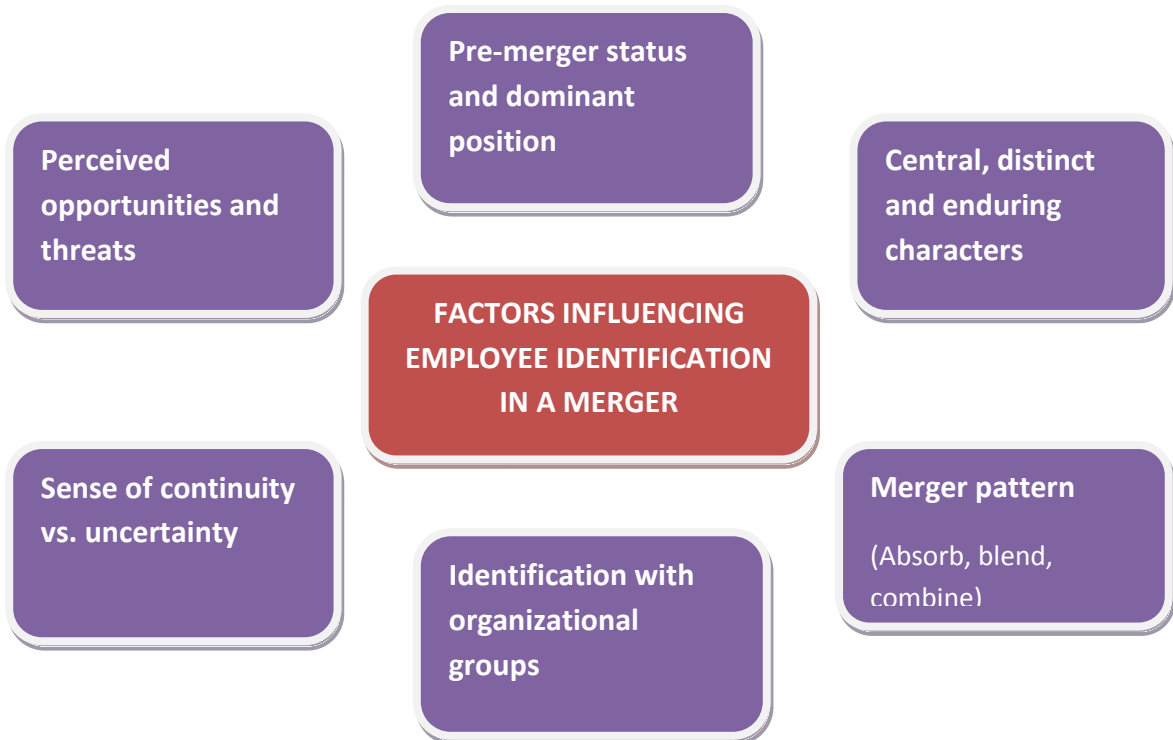## 3.1. Research objectives and methods

The purpose of the interviews was to gain an overall understanding of the entire merger process, ranging from the first informal discussions to the actual establishment of the new school. In the process of gathering information for the research, a mixed-method approach was employed. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data was gathered through a series of interviews and a survey.

The interviewees were chosen because of their pronounced role in the merger process, which provided them with a unique insight into the reasons and consequences of the merger. A more detailed description of the interviews shall be provided later in this chapter.

Based on the qualitative data gathered in the interviews, a questionnaire for the employees and students was composed. The aim was to gather information concerning the reactions of the employees and students as well as on their perceptions of the consequences of the merger. Subsequently, this information was to serve as a basis for determining which were the most important factors influencing employees´ and students´ identification in this particular merger. A more comprehensive account on the survey questions an respondents will be presented later in this chapter.

Based on the theories presented in the literature review, the impact of a merger on employee identification can be explained through six identification factors. These factors are illustrated in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8: *Factors influencing employee identification in a merger*

Pre-merger status and dominant position

Perceived opportunities and threats

Central, distinct and enduring characters

FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION IN A MERGER

Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty

Merger pattern

(Absorb, blend, combine)

Identification with organizational groups

(Author´s elaboration)

In this particular research, the aim is to point out which of these above mentioned factors are the most significant for the employees and students of the Department of Architecture as they are attempting to identify with the new organization. This shall be done through a comprehensive analysis of the data gathered in the interviews and questionnaires. After these most significant factors have been pointed out, a more specific analysis on how these factors affect the identification process shall be conducted in order to provide answers to the research questions.

3.1.3. Interviews

In the initial stage of the research process, four semi-structured interviews were conducted among the professors and students of the Department of Architecture. Three of the interviewees had been working in the Department of Architecture for a number of years, and they were also involved in the merger process in an advisory capacity. Among the interviewees were the current as well as the former head of the

28

Department of Architecture, both of which have been in this position during the actual merger process. The fourth interviewee was the President of the Architect Student Board.

The interviews took place in May 2012. A basic outline of the questions was sent to the interviewees prior to the interview in order to help them familiarize themselves with the topic. However, the interviews were more discussion- like and informal than mere questions and answers. The purpose was to give the interviewees the opportunity to openly share their views without any strict pre- determined restrictions. This was more convenient for the purpose of this research since the organizational identity of the architects is a combination of a variety of different factors.

Interviewee A: The first interviewee was mr. Lauri Lehtoruusu, who at the time of the interview was the President of the Student Board of the Department of Architecture. The interview took place on the of May on the campus of the University of Technology in Otaniemi. The purpose was to gain an understanding of the identity of the architects from the student perspective and to build a basis for the subsequent interviews. This was a more informal meeting in nature, so the discussion was not recorded. However, valid observations were pointed out, and Mr. Lehtoruusu also provided advice on who among the staff might be in the best position to answer questions regarding the merger. The interview took place on the 20th of April 2012 in Otaniemi.

Interviewee B: The second interviewee was mr. Antti- Matti Siikala, who is the former Head of the Department of Architecture. Mr Siikala currently works at an architect agency in Helsinki, and he has been involved in the merger process from the very beginning. The first informal discussions on the possibility of the merger took place in 2008, and at that time Mr. Siikala was working as a professor in the Department of Architecture. Subsequently, following the retirement of the former Head of the Department, mr. Siikala took on the position as Head of the Department of Architecture for the duration of the merger. Thus, mr. Siikala has a long- term perspective on the process, and his position has allowed him to actively participate in the planning process. Moreover, his long career in the field of architecture has

provided him with a strong insight regarding the professional identity of the architects and the organizational identity in the Department of Architecture.

The interview was conducted on the 3rd of May, 2012 in mr. Siikala´s office, and it lasted one hour and 10 minutes. The conversation was recorded and later turned into text. The text version of the interview comprised five full pages.

Interviewee C: The third interviewee was mr. Antti Ahlava, who is the current Head of the Department of Architecture. The interview was conducted on the 3rd of April at a cafeteria in Helsinki, which gave the discussion a more natural and informal nature. The purpose was to get an insight into the implementation of the merger process and to find out if there had been any major setbacks. In his role as the Head of the Department, mr. Ahlava has had an important role in the implementation of the merger. Thus, he was in an optimal position to observe the potential changes in architects´ organizational identification.

The interview lasted one hour and 15 minutes, and the discussion was recorded. The text version comprised six pages.

Interviewee D: The fourth and last interviewee was ms. Saija Hollmen, who is a teacher at the Department of Architecture. The purpose was to get a more specific picture on how the teachers and staff members who have not been closely involved in the merger have reacted to the change in their organizational environment. This interview was particularly interesting in the sense that it brought up many questions that were subsequently used in the survey. The interview took place in Ms. Hollmens´ office on the 16th of May.

In any further references to the interviews, the interviewees shall be referred to as interviewee A, B, C and D.

3.1.4. Survey

Subsequently, based on the information gathered in the interviews, a survey examining the perceptions of the employees concerning the merger was conducted. The survey consisted of a mixture of multiple choice and open-ended questions, and it was sent to all the employees working in the Department of Architecture. Moreover, in

order to gather a more comprehensive sample and to increase the validity of the research, the same questionnaire was also sent to the students of the Department of Architecture.

The four interviews played an important role in forming the questions for the survey. During the interviews, the basic outline of the merger process was built, which then helped gain an insight in the potential opportunities and threats of the merger. Moreover, the identification factors that together formed the professional and organizational identity of the architects were pointed out in the interviews. This, in turn, facilitated the process of forming the research questions that addressed the changes in the organizational identification. The survey questions are presented in Appendix 2.

The questionnaire was sent to the employees, students and alumni of the Department of Architecture. A reminder of the survey was sent out one week after the first message was sent. A total of 47 responses were collected. The link to the survey was forwarded to the employees by the Head of the Department Antti Ahlava. T

4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the data gathered in the interviews and questionnaires will be presented and analyzed. In order to provide a valid theoretical basis for the analysis, the results will be mirrored through the multifactor approach presented in the literature review. The ultimate goal is to point out which of the factors influencing employee identification in a merger were the most prominent in the case of the employees and students of the Aalto University Department of Architecture.

The results will be addressed by first analyzing each identification factor (pre-merger status, expected utility, sense of continuity, identification with organizational groups, merger pattern and communication) separately. With the help of this analysis it will be possible to distinguish which factors have played the most significant role in the merger process. Subsequently, this information will be used to answer the research questions presented in the introduction.

A copy of the web-based survey can be found in Appendix 1. In addition, a complete summary of the results and survey data is displayed in Appendix 2.

4.1. Factors influencing identification in a merger

In the following chapters, the information gathered in the interviews and questionnaires will be analyzed through the lens of the identification factors. Each identification factor and its significance in the merger process will be addressed separately, after which the most prominent factors will be brought together and analyzed more thoroughly.

4.1.1. Central, distinct and enduring characters (Purpose and philosophy)

In order to be able to address the issues of potential identity changes in a merger, it is vital to first identify the factors that have defined the organizational identity in the past. Here, it is relevant to make use of Albert and Whetten´s (1985) theory on organizational identity and Margolis and Hansen´s theory that were discussed in the literature review. According to Albert and Whetten, organizational identity is a combination of central, distinct and enduring characters. Based on this theory, Margolis and Hansen (2002:283) further divided organizational identity into five

distinct categories. These categories were discussed in great detail in the literature review, but in this analysis the focus lies on the core attributes, namely the purpose and philosophy of the organization. As a concept, the purpose of the organization explains why it is important for the organization to exist. The other core attribute, philosophy, is what makes the organization unique and distinguishes it from other similar organizations. Therefore, the purpose is the central characteristic of the organization, while the philosophy is similar to the distinct and enduring characters explained in Albert and Whetten (1985)

Purpose. During the research, the respondents were asked to provide their perception of the identity of the Department of Architecture. For the employees of the Department of Architecture, the central character of their organization was defined through the strong professional identity of architects in general. Architects were described as "experts of constructed human environments" and "main planners of construction processes". According to the respondents, the fact that architects had a significant influence on what urban environments look like provided them with a unique and strong identity. In this context, the respondents contended that the purpose of the Department of Architecture was to *"educate innovative and creative architects that can manage a wide variety of construction processes".* Moreover, it was considered vital that the Department of Architecture provides the students with adequate skills that will help them cope with the changes that are occurring in the architectural field. According to the respondents, the primary purpose has not changed as a result of the merger.

Another important aspect regarding organizational identity was that practically all the interviewees as well as a number of the survey respondents contended that the Department of Architecture had been sort of an outsider in the former University of Technology as well as in the School of Engineering. This perception was attributed to the fact that architecture as a discipline combines features of engineering skills and artistic values. Therefore, architects were seen as professionals who stood between two different communities: engineers and academics of art. This combination had created a significant distinction between the architects and the other departments of

the University of Technology, which in turn led to a situation where the Department of Architecture had become a somewhat isolated unit. Consequently, collaboration with other departments had reduced to practically zero. One of the respondents even stated that "the parking lot between our department and the facilities of the Department of Civil and Structural Engineering is like a Berlin Wall: nobody ever goes to the other side".

In general, the distinction between the architects and the other departments was seen as one of the most conspicuous characters of the Department of Architecture. Interviewee C stated that *"when it comes to the identity of the architects, there is an unresolved dispute about whether we are engineers or academics of art."* (Ahlava, 2012, interview) Furthermore, he also remarked that the merger had given rise to a new phenomenon whereby the architects in fact wanted to emphasize their roots in the engineering community. In the past, while still a part of the University of Technology, the architects wanted to distinguish themselves from the other departments by drawing attention to the artistic nature of their discipline. Therefore, the architects place themselves between the two communities and are used to being a distinct group. Getting closer to the arts community has thus encouraged them to emphasize their engineering roots in order to hold on to their unique identity position (Ahlava, 2012, interview). Figure 10 below further demonstrates the identity position of the Aalto University Department of Architecture.

Figure 10: *Identity position of the Aalto University Department of Architecture*

University of Technology and the engineering community

School of Arts, Design and Architecture and the arts community
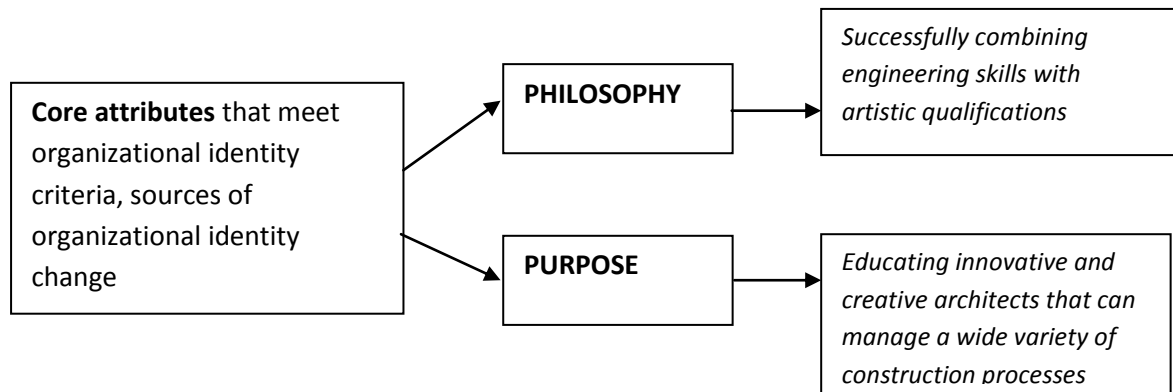
Aalto University Department of Architecture
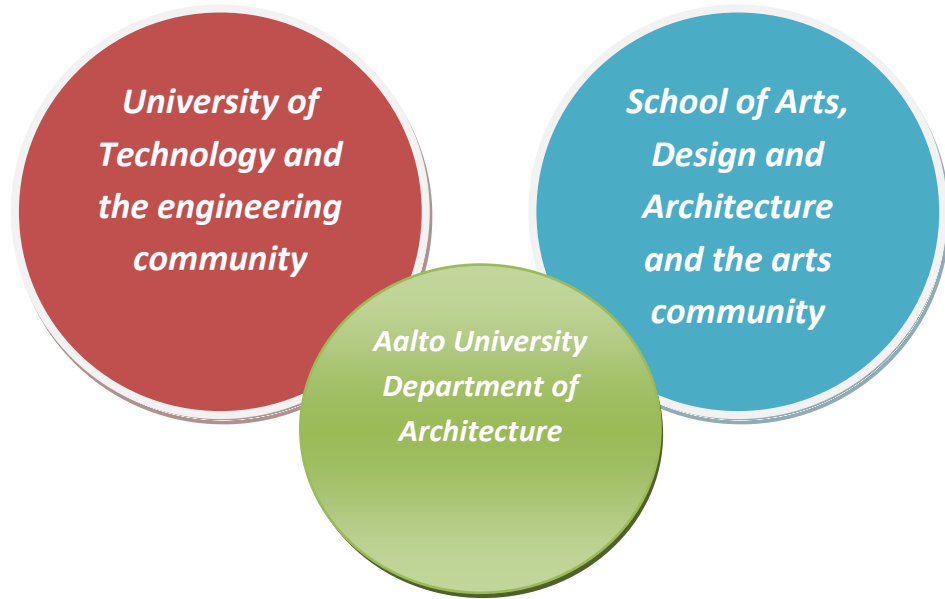
(Author´s elaboration)

Interviewee B addressed the reasons behind the distinction between the architects and other engineering departments. He stated that the most distinctive feature in architecture is the fact that it is not an exact science. Other departments in the University of Technology based their education on scientific research, whereas architecture cannot be expressed in scientific terms: it is difficult, if not even impossible, to measure architectural variables and to use the results to produce data that is scientifically valid (Siikala, 2012, interview).

Philosophy. Regarding the characteristics that distinguish the Aalto University Department of Architecture from other departments of architecture in Finland, the connection to the arts community again played an important role. In the open-ended questions *(What are the characteristics that distinguish Aalto University Department of Architecture from other departments of architecture in Finland)*, a number of respondents stated that while the other departments generally have a strong technical and engineering focus, Aalto University is practically the only place in Finland where the architects have a connection with the arts community. Thus, it would appear that

the *"unresolved dispute about whether we are engineers or academics of art"* (Ahlava, 2012, interview) is partly a result of the merger process.

Figure 11: *Purpose and philosophy of Aalto University Department of Architecture (Margolis and Hansen 2002:283)*

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┌─────────────────────────┐                                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Core attributes that     │         ┌──────────────┐          │ Successfully combining    │
│ meet organizational      │────────▶│ PHILOSOPHY   │─────────▶│ engineering skills with   │
│ identity criteria,       │         └──────────────┘          │ artistic qualifications   │
│ sources of               │                                    └──────────────────────────┘
│ organizational identity  │         ┌──────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ change                   │────────▶│ PURPOSE      │─────────▶│ Educating innovative and  │
│                          │         └──────────────┘          │ creative architects that  │
└─────────────────────────┘                                    │ can manage a wide variety │
                                                                │ of construction processes │
                                                                └──────────────────────────┘
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(Author´s elaboration)

In summary, the respondents did not expect the purpose of the Department of Architecture to change as a result of the merger. Regarding the philosophy, the respondents stated that it is actually the tight connection that their organization has with the arts community that distinguishes it from other departments of architecture in Finland. Thus, the merger is not expected to change the philosophy, but rather to provide better means for implementing it.

4.1.2. Employee identification in a merger- perceived opportunities and threats

One of the key questions of this research is whether the employees and students of the Department of Architecture see the merger with the School of Arts and Design as an opportunity or as a threat. The interviewees were asked to provide their perceptions, and based on these views a survey was conducted where the respondents were requested to point out which factors they saw as beneficial or threatening. The data gathered on the perceived opportunities and threats will be discussed below.

In general, the interviewees were strongly in favor of the merger. They emphasized the synergy benefits achieved through the merger and considered it to be a natural step for the architects. This can be partly attributed to the fact that both interviewee B and

interviewee C had been involved in the merger process for quite some time and therefore were more familiar with the ramifications. However, the results of the questionnaire indicate that not all the employees and students are quite as convinced of the positive effects the merger is supposed to have on their department. The research results are discussed in more detail below.

Opportunities. The opportunities of a merger can be theorized with the concept of *expected utility of the merger.* As discussed in the literature review, this refers to the concrete benefits that the organizational members expect to gain as a result of the merger (Bartels et al. 2006:54). In this particular research, the expected benefits (opportunities) can be divided into three different categories according to the type of benefit that the respondents expect to gain: *academic, structural* and *image-related* benefits.

The ***academic benefits*** have to do with how the architects will be able to broaden their area of expertise in the new school. As Interviewee B expressed it:

"*In the past, the area of Arts and Design ranged from small details to interior design. At the same time, architecture starts at the level of interior design and goes all the way up to cities and communities. However, as a result of the merger, the entire scale of the human environment can be studied in one school. This makes it easier to manage the planning processes from an environmental perspective*" (Siikala, 2012, interview)*.*

The very same justification was also offered by Interviewee C, who also expected there to be more interdepartmental cooperation in the new school than in the former University of Technology. This, according to him, would lead to a "*positive sense of unity*" that would contribute to the creation of an innovative academic environment (Ahlava, 2012, interview). However, it appears that the employees and students do not share these high expectations unequivocally. Less than one third (30%) of the respondents felt that the merger would help the graduates of the Department of Architecture to reach a higher level of professional expertise.

As for the **structural benefits,** 35 % of the respondents expected the Department of Architecture to have a stronger role as a department within the new school. As already stated above, the architects formed a rather isolated community in the University of Technology. However, since the Department of Architecture is one of the largest departments in the post-merger school, the employees expect the architects to have more influence on the identity of the new organization. Moreover, due to the strong connection between architecture and artistic design, many respondents expected there to be more interdepartmental co-operation than in the University of Technology. In fact, Interviewee C stated that one of the most important reasons behind the merger was the fact that

"the education offered at TaiK (School of Arts and Design) is much closer to our profession than the education offered at TKK (University of Technology)" (Ahlava, 2012, interview).

Another structural benefit that the respondents expected to gain from the merger was a more extensive network of stakeholders. Almost half (48%) of the respondents felt that the merger was a good opportunity for the Department of Architecture to find new channels for cooperation and to establish connections in fields where they did not use to have access to.

The third category consists of the **image-related benefits**. This aspect was first brought up by Interviewee C, who stated that the merger could provide the Department of Architecture with an opportunity to take advantage of the reputation of the top units at the School of Arts and Design. That is to say, some departments in the former School of Arts and Design are widely acknowledged and thus are held in high esteem in the academic circles (Ahlava, 2012, interview). Following the merger, the Department of Architecture might also enjoy some of that esteem since they are a part of the same school. However, as Interviewee C pointed out, in order for this to happen

"there has to be a genuine desire within the new school to let other departments utilize your own success" (Ahlava, 2012, interview).

The respondents disagreed with Interviewee C in the sense that only 40% expected the merger to increase the appeal of the Department of Architecture in the eyes of potential new students. Furthermore, only 25 % expected the merger to strengthen the position of Aalto University Department of Architecture against other architect schools in Finland. Table 1 below summarizes the expected benefits.

Table 1: *Expected benefits of the merger (Respondents could choose more than one option)*

The new school provides the architects with a more extensive partnering network	**48%**
As a result of the merger, the Department of Architecture at Aalto University will be more appealing to potential new students	**39%**
The Department of Architecture will have a stronger position in the new school than it did in the University of Technology	**33%**
As a result of the merger, those who graduate from the Department of Architecture have stronger and broader professional expertise	**30%**
The merger will strengthen the position of Aalto University Department of Architecture against other departments of architecture in Finland	**25%**
As a result of the merger, the Aalto University Department of Architecture will gain more esteem on an international scale	24%
The merger will increase the independence of the Department of Architecture	20%
The merger will help me achieve my professional goals	15%
The merger will increase the sense of unity within the Department of Architecture	11%
The merger will increase the professional esteem of the architects	7%

Threats. Merging two of more formerly separate organization often entails uncertainty and threats. In the case of the merger of the Department of Architecture and the School of Arts and Design, the interviewees and respondents were asked what they perceived to be the major threats brought about by the merger.

As already stated above, Interviewee B and Interviewee C were strongly in favor of the merger. During the interviews, both emphasized the synergy benefits gained as a result of the merger. However, both agreed that the merger and the change process have not been completely devoid of confrontation. Interviewee B stated that the most conspicuous threat to the successful implementation of the merger is that the merging parties are not viewed as equals:

"When discussing the potential threats, the biggest concern is that people start thinking that the Department of Architecture is being absorbed by the School of Arts and Design. This is a dangerous way of thinking. We should be more concerned about how to make the new school visible as a coherent entity." (Siikala, 2012, interview)

Furthermore, Interviewee B also addressed the issue of changing identity position. As already stated earlier, the Department of Architecture was a somewhat isolated unit in the University of Technology due to its strong connection to the arts community. Conversely, now that the Department of Architecture is a part of the School of Arts, Design and Architecture, there is a possibility that the connection with the engineering community will cause the Department of Architecture to become isolated in the new school as well. However, he only considered this to be a "theoretical problem" which, according to him, is not likely to become an issue (Siikala, 2012, interview).

However, the questionnaire indicated that the employees and students were significantly more concerned with the potential threats the merger might entail. The biggest concern among the respondents was that as a result of the merger, the architects will have less cooperation with engineers. This was considered a major threat since 73% of the respondents shared this view. In addition, 57% thought that along with the merger, the Department of Architecture will place too much focus on artistic qualifications. These numbers are consistent with the fact that 57% of the respondents felt that the merger will have a negative effect on the architects´ professional credibility. Therefore, it can be concluded that the employees and students are concerned that the merger will cause the architects to lose sight of their

engineering roots, which in turn will have an adverse effect on their reputation as skilled professionals.

What is perhaps even more interesting is that 65% of the respondents expressed their concern over the fact that the merger will alienate the architects from their existing partnering network. However, at the same time 48% of the respondents felt that the merger might be beneficial in that it would provide access to more extensive networking opportunities. Therefore, while the employees and students expect to gain from the merger in the form of new partners, they are still far more concerned about whether the Department of Architecture will be able to sustain their existing connections. At this stage of the merger process, it is more important for the employees and students to avoid losing existing partners than making new ones.

Another interesting point is the issue of how the Aalto University Department of Architecture compares against other departments of architecture in Finland. When asked about the opportunities of the merger, 25% of the respondents expected the merger to strengthen the position of Aalto University Department of Architecture against other departments of architecture in Finland. However, at the same time, 43% of the respondents were of the opinion that the merger will in fact have a negative effect in that the position will be weakened. This is consistent with the respondents´ concern over the professional reputation of the Department of Architecture. In the open-ended questions, one respondent elaborated his answer by stating that

"…moving further away from the University of Technology will only lead to a situation where the architects in Aalto University are profiled as professionals of art. I do not expect the employees and students in the Department of Architecture at the University of Oulu or at the Tampere University of Technology to have this same problem".

In general, according to the respondents, losing touch with the engineering community and the chance of losing their professional credibility due to the increased cooperation with the arts community were the major threats to the Department of Architecture. A detailed summary of the expected threats is provided below in Table 2.

Table 2: *Expected threats of the merger (Respondents could choose more than one option)*

As a result of the merger, the architects will have less cooperation with engineers	**73%**
The new school will alienate the architects from their existing partnering network	**65%**
As a result of the merger, the Department of Architecture places too much focus on artistic qualifications	**57%**
The merger will have a negative effect on architects´ professional credibility	**57%**
The merger will weaken the position of Aalto University Department of Architecture against other departments of architecture in Finland	**43%**
The merger will make it more difficult for me to achieve my professional goals	30%
As a result of the merger, the Department of Architecture will be less independent	30%
The Department of Architecture will have a weaker position in the new school than it did in the University of Technology	28%
The merger will cause confrontation within the department	28%
I feel that my job is in jeopardy because of the merger	15%

At the end of the first part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked the following question: *"In your view, has the merger been more beneficial of more harmful for the Department of Architecture".* This turned out to be an issue that is dividing the Department of Architecture in half: 24 respondents (52%) felt that the merger has been more beneficial, and 22 respondents (48%) felt that the merger has been more harmful. Thus, a considerable proportion of the people at the Department of Architecture view the merger as a threat to the future of their organization. Moreover, it should be noted that when the respondents were asked to point out the potential opportunities and threats from the list provided, the percentages were considerably higher on the *Threats*-list. This indicates that the employees and students

are more concerned about the adverse sides of the merger than they are excited about the potential benefits.

A slightly larger proportion of the respondents considered the merger to have been more beneficial than harmful, but at the same time, a considerable proportion viewed the merger as more harmful. Furthermore, when asked to point out potential opportunities and threats from a list, a higher percentage of the respondents pointed to the potential threats than to the opportunities.

4.1.3. Pre- merger status and dominant position

As already discussed in the literature review, the pre-merger status refers to the perception of which of the merging partners has a higher status (van Knippenberg, 2002:236). In the case of the merger of the Department of Architecture and School of Arts and Design, one partner (architects) was merely a department in a larger unit (School of technology) whereas the School of Arts and Design was already a coherent, independent unit. Thus, the School of Arts and Design would appear to have a higher status, but as it was pointed out in the interviews, the architects did not accept this perception. All the four interviewees were of the opinion that, at least at the beginning of the merger process, both parties were equal. Interviewee B stated that *"there had been surprisingly little confrontation between the merging parties"* (Siikala, 2012, interview). He attributed this to the fact that the initial plan for the merger was made in cooperation between the two merging partners. He also believed that there might have been more resistance and confrontation if some outside authority (namely, the university) had forced the two schools into executing the merger (Siikala, 2012, interview).

The survey results indicate that pre-merger status and dominant position raised mixed feelings among the employees and students. When asked about this, 40 % of the respondents stated that the school of Arts and Design had been in a dominant position, whereas only 5 % considered that the Department of Architecture had been in a dominant position. However, it is noteworthy that 50 % of the respondents thought that neither side had dominated the merger process. This view is in line with those of the interviewees, who considered both parties to have been equal.

Interviewee C remarked that the architects were the ones who had been proactive in the initial stage of the merger process, which provided them with a certain amount of leverage when creating the new school. However, he also admitted that along the course of the merger process, the School of Arts and Design has been slightly more influential due to its greater size and status as an acknowledged university (Ahlava, 2012, interview).

In summary, 40 % of those who responded to the survey were of the opinion that the School of Arts and Design had been in a dominant position. However, as half of the respondents thought that neither side had been in a dominant position, it can also be concluded that pre-merger status and dominant position did not play such a significant role in the merger process.

4.1.4. Identification with organizational groups

With regard to their identification with different organizational levels, the respondents were asked the following question: "*Which organization do you identify with the most: Aalto University, Department of Architecture, or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture?*" Since there are several organizational levels and brands, employees and students might get confused as to which organization or brand they represent. Along with the merger, it is possible that people start identifying with a different organizational group.

The interviews with the former and current Heads of the Department brought about an interesting difference of opinion. The former Head contended that the members of the Department of Architecture primarily identify themselves as members of the Aalto University. According to his statement, Aalto University has already established itself as a strong brand and that people are taking great pride in working and studying at Aalto University. He also mentioned that "I am quite surprised at how quickly the TKK (University of Technology)- brand was forgotten, considering the fact that it is 140 years old. I don´t miss TKK at all, and I also think that the students as well view themselves as students of Aalto rather than students of TKK".

Conversely, the current Head was of the opinion that due to the strong professional identity within the architectural community, the members of the Department of Architecture will continue to view themselves as architects rather than members of Aalto University or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture. At the same time he admitted that Aalto is becoming a larger part of employees´ identity, while the School of Arts, Design and Architecture does not yet have such a significant role:

"The SADA is still such a new concept that it doesn´t really make any sense to say that I come from the Department of Architecture at SADA. But I do believe that the top units at TaiK (School of Arts and Design) could also help us in becoming more widely acknowledged outside of the university".

The survey conducted among the employees and students of the Department of Architecture confirms both views to a certain extent. Prior to the merger, most respondents identified themselves with the University of Technology and the Department of Architecture. Only five percent felt that Aalto University was the organization they identified with the most. As was to be expected, after the merger none of the respondents identified with the new School of Arts, Design and Architecture. Those who previously had identified themselves with the University of Technology shifted to Aalto University and Department of Architecture. Therefore, the merger has indeed increased employees´ and students´ identification with Aalto University, which is what the Interviewee B expected to happen. However, this is mostly due to the fact that the merger is still too recent for the employees and students to develop a strong connection with the new school.
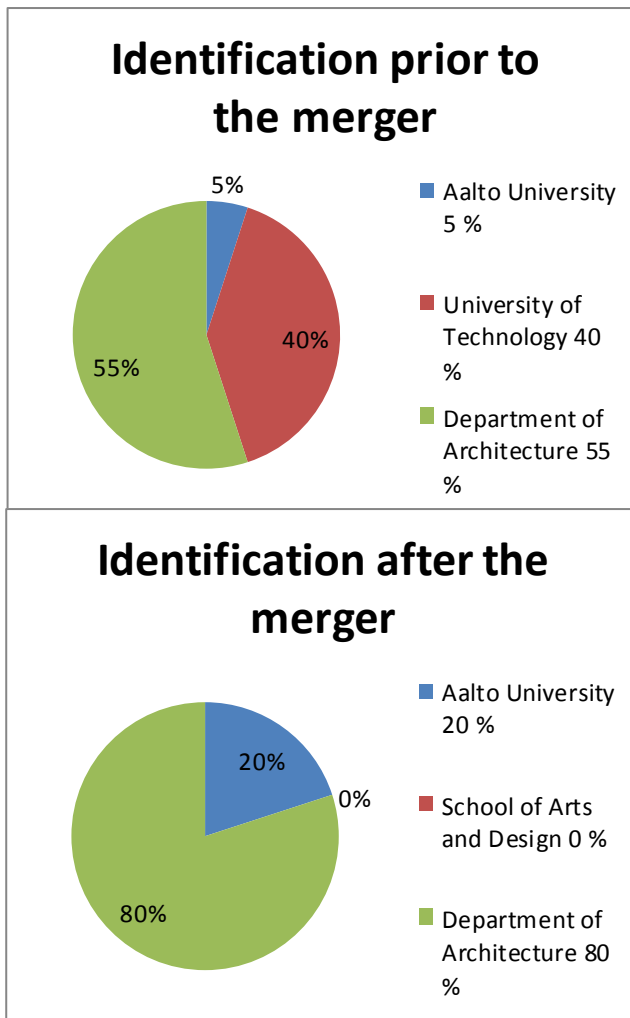
According to the survey results, 55 % of the respondents primarily identified themselves with the Department of Architecture before the merger was executed. After the merger, the number had gone up to 80 %. This supports the view of Interviewee B, who stated that *"architects primarily identify themselves with the department and will continue to do so even after the merger"* (Siikala, 2012, interview)*.*

40 % of the respondents had identified themselves with the University of Technology before the merger. Consequently, as the Department of Architecture was extracted

from the University of Technology, these 40 % were forced to reevaluate their organizational identification.

Table 3 below illustrates the survey results in a chart form.

Table 3: *Identification with organizational groups*

Identification prior to the merger

- ■ Aalto University 5 %
- ■ University of Technology 40 %
- ■ Department of Architecture 55 %

5%
40%
55%

Identification after the merger

- ■ Aalto University 20 %
- ■ School of Arts and Design 0 %
- ■ Department of Architecture 80 %

20%
0%
80%

4.1.5. Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty

The sense of continuity plays an important role in employees´ feelings about the merger. When the employees have a high sense of continuity, they feel less uncertain and threatened by the merger and thus are more likely to take a positive attitude towards the merger. Conversely, low sense of continuity implies high uncertainty and more negative feelings about the merger (Bartels et al, 2006:54).

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Regarding the feelings about the merger among the employees and students of the Department of Architecture, it appears that there are still some conflicting arguments. Due to the fact that the merger is still quite recent and that those involved have not had much time to observe the effects, it is difficult to point out the true ramifications. However, there were some issues that were addressed quite frequently by the interviewees and the respondents.

As already stated above, the architects have a strong professional identity. Therefore, among the respondents, there was no apparent concern about losing their organizational identity since it was considered to be deeply rooted in the professional identity. In addition, since architecture has always been close to the field of Arts and Design, people working at the Department of Architecture generally did not expect the merger to have a significant effect on the organizational identity of the Department of Architecture. However, as Interviewee B pointed out, this confidence was not so apparent among some other stakeholders. The Architect Union as well as some agencies expressed their concern about the declining level of engineering skills. Consequently, the board of Aalto University set a condition: the merger of the Department of Architecture and School of Arts and Design is not acceptable unless cooperation between architects and the engineering departments is secured. Thus, a group of representatives from both the architect and the engineering communities was put together. They initiated a program where the purpose is to maintain and strengthen the link between the two communities. Therefore, there has been a strong top-down pressure to ensure that engineering skills continue to play an important role when educating architects in the post-merger school (Siikala, 2012, interview).

At the same time, the architects themselves have also felt a desire to emphasize their engineering connection in order to differentiate themselves from the rest of the departments in the new school. In some way this may be viewed as an urge to feel a sense of continuity. At the University of Technology, the architects were distinct from other departments because of the artistic nature of their discipline. Following the merger, it seems that the architects wish to hold on to their distinctive position and thus are rediscovering their roots in the engineering community. This tendency is

consistent with the "unresolved dispute" that Interviewee C mentioned when asked about the central character of the architects.

In conclusion, due to the strong professional identity, the architects did not consider the merger to have a significant effect on their organizational identity. However, due to the recent nature of the merger, there were some outside stakeholders who were still unsure about how the future of the Department of Architecture unfolds and how the merger will affect the architects'' technical expertise.

Moreover, part of the respondents felt that the sense of continuity will overrule the uncertainties associated with the merger, whereas the other part was more on the uncertain side. In fact, it would appear that during the time that the research was conducted, it was still too early to determine in absolute terms whether sense of continuity or uncertainty prevails.

4.1.6. Merger pattern

The concept of merger pattern refers to the degree to which one of the merging partners controls the creation of a new identity. As already discussed in the literature review, there are three different merger patterns: *absorb, blend and combine*. In the absorb pattern, the group with the lower status will be assimilated into the high-status group. The blend pattern brings together the former identities of both organizations, thus creating a new identity where both status groups bring their pre-merger identities into the equation. The third pattern, namely the combine pattern, aims at creating a completely new group identity that has no connection to the old pre-merger identities (Giessner et al, 341).

In this particular merger, the interviewees were strongly of the opinion that the merger followed the combine pattern. Especially the current and former Heads of the department wanted to emphasize that the merger is not about assimilating the Department of Architecture into the former TaiK (School of Arts and Design), but rather about creating a new school where all partners have an equal status. In fact, according to Interviewee B, the thought of the Department of Architecture being absorbed by the former TaiK is one of the greatest threats to successful

implementation of the merger: *"Thinking that we are being absorbed into another entity is a key mistake; I think it is a poisonous thought. That is exactly how you crash a healthy identity".* Moreover, he added that the challenge of creating a new identity is mutual: "I would not say that the challenge is to make the Department of Architecture a visible part of TaiK (School of Arts and Design). The real challenge is to make the new school visible as a coherent entity" (Siikala, 2012, interview).

Therefore, both the former and the current Heads were strong advocates of the integration by equality rule introduced by Giessner et al (341). In this theory, both merging partners have an equal amount of influence on the creation of a new, post-merger identity. However, both admit that there has been some concern among the faculty and staff members as to what kind of a position the Department of Architecture will assume in the new school.

5. DISCUSSION

The results derived from the research data can be used to point out the factors that the employees and students considered to be the most vital when identifying to the post-merger organization. In this chapter, the results will be summarized and their implications will be discussed in more detail. The purpose is to present a succinct and coherent model that explains how the employees and students have identified with the merger as well as with the new organization.
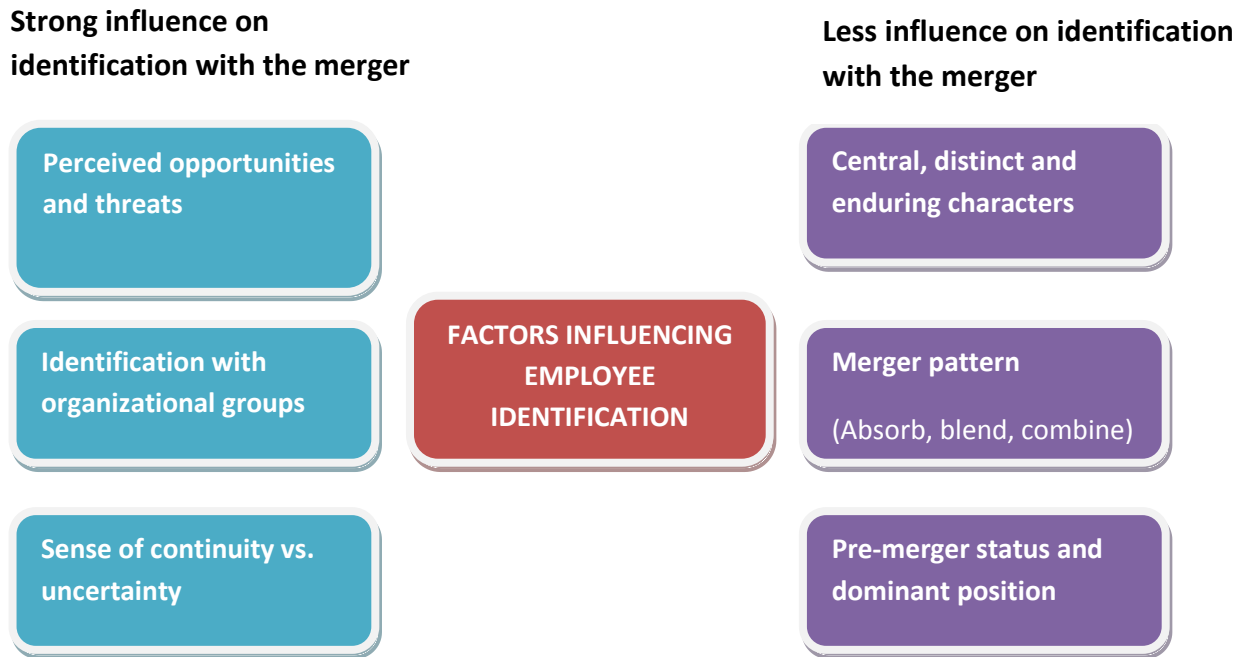
5.1. Prominent factors influencing employee identification

After analyzing the data gathered through the interviews and the survey, it has become evident that the students and employees of the Department of Architecture view certain factors to have a significant influence on their attitude towards and identification with the merger. As discussed in the methodology section (page 26), the objective was to find out which factors were considered to be the most important. These factors will subsequently serve as a basis for a more detailed account on the identity position that the architects have had during the merger process.

The findings and the analysis show that out of the six pre-determined factors presented in the Methodology, the most significant factors as viewed by the employees and students of the Department of Architecture were *1) Opportunities and threats, 2) Identification with organizational groups and 3) Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty*. Conversely, in this particular case, *Central, distinct and enduring characters, Pre-merger status and dominant position* as well as the *Merger pattern* were viewed as less important in influencing employees´ and students´ identification with the merger.

In order to better understand employees´ and students´ perceptions of the recent merger, it is important to try to analyze why they considered certain factors to have more influence on their attitudes and identification. In the following chapters, the issue of what it was that has made certain factors more significant will be discussed in more detail.

FIGURE 12: *Factors with a strong / less influence on identification with the merger*

Strong influence on identification with the merger

Less influence on identification with the merger

Perceived opportunities and threats		Central, distinct and enduring characters
Identification with organizational groups	**FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION**	Merger pattern (Absorb, blend, combine)
Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty		Pre-merger status and dominant position

(Author´s elaboration)

5.1.1. Factors having a strong influence on identification with the merger

Through an extensive analysis of the research data, it can be concluded that when discussing employee and student identification with the merger of the Department of Architecture and the School of Arts and Design, the most important factors were Opportunities and threats, Identification with organizational groups and Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty. As mergers often entail a great deal of change and, thus, uncertainty about the future, it was to be expected that these factors would play an important role in this particular case as well.

As for the ***Opportunities and Threats***, it was quite interesting to notice that the organization was practically divided into two opposing groups. Half of the respondents were of the opinion that the merger would entail more opportunities than threats, whereas the other half thought the opposite. This can to a certain extent be attributed to the fact that the sample group was rather heterogeneous, consisting of both employees and students of all ages with different organizational backgrounds. Moreover, it also seemed that the more the person had been involved with the

implementation of the merger, the more positive the attitude. People in high administrative positions such as the Heads of the Department were inclined to view the merger as a natural step, whereas some employees and students who had only been with the department for a shorter time had yet to see the potential benefits of the merger. In addition, it should be noted that even though half of the respondents saw the merger more as an opportunity than as a threat, there were some discrepancies as the opportunities and threats were cut down to specifics. As many as 70% of the respondents thought the merger would cause the architects to have less cooperation with the engineers. This was considered to be the greatest threat brought about by the merger. On the other hand, the greatest expected benefit was that the merger would provide the architects with an access to a more extensive partnering network. This view was supported by 48% of the respondents. Therefore, it appears that the respondents are more concerned with the potential threats than they are excited about the potential benefits. This is understandable when taking into account the fact that the merger is still quite recent and there are several unanswered questions concerning the future ramifications.

Another factor that was deemed crucial by the respondents was the ***identification with organizational groups.*** Prior to the merger, 55% primarily identified themselves with the Department of Architecture, while the numbers for University of Technology and Aalto University were 40% and 5%, respectively. After the merger, 80% identified themselves with the Department of Architecture and 20% with the Aalto University. Thus, there have been significant changes in the way the respondents viewed themselves as organizational members. As the merger is still quite recent, it was to be expected that the employees and students would still be reluctant to view themselves as members of the new school. However, as the former University of Technology ceased to exist, 40% of the respondents were forced to reconsider their identification. As it turned out, a majority of these respondents felt they were more inclined to view themselves as members of the Department of Architecture than Aalto University. This is consistent with the presumption provided by Interviewee C that architects have a strong professional identity and that they are not hesitant to let it be known. Moreover, the results also suggest that the Aalto brand is still not quite as strong

among the employees and students. This somewhat contradicts the view by Interviewee Bthat the *TKK (University of Technology) brand has already been forgotten and that the Aalto brand is now the one that the employees and students relate to* (Siikala, 2012, interview).

The third factor that the employees and students considered important in their identification to the merger was the issue of ***Sense of continuity vs. uncertainty.*** As already discussed above, this concept refers to the degree to which the organizational members perceive the merger as a continuum to their earlier organization. The more the organizational environment changes as a result of the merger, the stronger the sense of uncertainty about the future. In this particular case, the concern over maintaining the organizational identity is apparent in the fact that three-thirds of the respondents felt that as a result of the merger, the architects might lose their connection to the engineering community. As Interviewee C pointed out, this concern has led to a situation where the employees and students are working to emphasize the fact that they still have roots in the engineering community as well as the artistic community (Ahlava, 2012, interview). This can be seen as an attempt to increase the sense of continuity and to reduce the feeling of uncertainty in the face of an organizational change. The desire to feel a sense of continuity also becomes visible in the fact that those employees and students who formerly identified themselves with the University of Technology now identify with the Department of Architecture instead of Aalto University or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture. The organizational members were more willing to hold on to something traditional that they already knew, rather than attempting to forge a new identity as a member of a university that has only been in existence for two years.

In addition, it is noteworthy that maintaining cooperation with the engineering community was one of the prerequisites set by the Board of Aalto University for endorsing the merger. Other stakeholders, such as the Architect Union, were also concerned about preserving the strong engineering tradition in the Department of Architecture. Therefore, it is conceivable that the feeling of uncertainty about the

merger is to a certain extent a result of the pressure that the outside world has applied on the Department of Architecture.

It appears that the perceived threats and the feeling of uncertainty can to a certain extent be attributed to a lack of communication. The survey results indicated that 62% of the respondents were not satisfied with the way they had been informed about the merger and its consequences. This problem becomes evident in the fact that 73% of the respondents feared that the architects will have less cooperation with the engineers because of the merger. Therefore, it would seem that the respondents had not been made aware of the fact that Aalto University had established a group whose only purpose was to find new ways to strengthen the cooperation between the architects and the engineers after the merger. Regular and informative communication about new developments in the merger process is one of the key elements of successful implementation of a merger, but in this case, the organizational members have felt that the communication between the employees and those involved in the implementation of the merger has been insufficient.

5.1.2. Factors having less influence on identification with the merger

When it comes to the other three pre-determined factors (merger pattern, pre-merger status and dominant position, central, distinct and enduring characters), the research suggests that they were less significant in influencing the employees´ and students´ identification with the merger. This is rather surprising considering the fact that these issues often play an important role in determining organizational members´ attitudes towards a merger. However, the unique conditions of each merger bring forward differences in the way the organizational members perceive the change.

Regarding the *Merger pattern*, those respondents who had been closely involved in the implementation of the merger (Heads of the department) deemed it crucial that the Department of Architecture is not being absorbed by the School of Arts and Design. Instead, according to them, a new school with a new identity is being created. Thus, the merger is following the "blend" pattern. The survey results indicated that the employees and students were not worried about their department being absorbed by another, larger entity. This was also the case when discussing the issue of *pre-merger*

status and dominant position. Neither merger partner was considered to have been in a dominant position during the merger process, which is why the pre-merger status and merger pattern did not have a significant influence on employees´ and students´ identification with the merger.

As for the ***central, distinct and enduring characters*** (or, as discussed above, the purpose and philosophy of the organization), the employees and students did not expect the merger to cause any significant changes. Even though the Department of Architecture is being integrated into a new entity, the respondents felt that the major characteristics that define the identity of an organization remain intact. Regardless of which school the Department of Architecture is a part of, the employees and students felt that the purpose of the Department of Architecture was to *"educate innovative and creative architects that can manage a wide variety of construction processes".* As for the philosophy, or the distinct and enduring characteristics, it became apparent that the employees and students of the Department of Architecture view their position between the engineering and the arts community as an important distinguishing quality. Previously, the architects emphasized their connection to the arts community in order to become more distinct in the University of Technology. However, along with the merger with the School of Arts and Design, the architects have started to emphasize their engineering roots in order to distinguish themselves from the rest of the arts community. Therefore, the distinct and enduring characteristic of the Department of Architecture is their unique position between the arts community and the engineering community, and it has not changed as a result of the merger.

The fact that the purpose and philosophy of the Department of Architecture was considered to remain intact is consistent with the earlier findings suggesting that the architects have an extremely strong professional identity, one that is not lightly altered. The significance of this strong identity in a merger context will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter.

5.2. Architects´ organizational identification after the merger

The information gathered in this research indicates that the merger of the Department of Architecture and the School of Arts and Design has been met with a mix of enthusiasm and uncertainty among the employees and students of the Department of Architecture. When analyzing the research data through the six factors that can potentially influence employee identification with the merger, it became apparent that there is one common denominator that has a significant effect on how the employees and students identify with the merger: the strong professional identity of the architectural community.

Throughout the interviews and the questionnaires, the employees and students declared that the architects have a unique identity that is a mix of engineering skills and artistic values. This position is something the architects are reluctant to give up, which has encouraged them to emphasize their roots in the engineering community during the merger process. This strong feeling of professional identity and belongingness has to a certain extent facilitated the process of identifying with the merger: the respondents did not expect the purpose and philosophy of the Department of Architecture to change, nor did they fear that the Department of Architecture would have less independence in the new school. Moreover, after the merger, 80% of the respondents felt that they primarily identify themselves with the Department of Architecture, instead of Aalto University or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture. Consequently, it can be stated that the merger has strengthened the architects´ professional pride and encouraged them to hold on to their unique identity. This, in turn, has facilitated the process of viewing the merger in a more positive light, even though there are still some unanswered questions about the future. Indeed, a majority of the respondents feared the merger would alienate the architects from the engineers, but at the same time, this has caused the architects to put more effort into sustaining their connection to the engineering community. However, as the merger is still quite recent, it is difficult to determine whether the employees´ and students´

post-merger identification with the organization deviates from their pre-merger identification.

The pronounced desire of the employees and students of the Department of Architecture to hold on to their unique, pre-merger identity is not uncommon in a merger situation. As discussed in the literature review, people are prone to feel a certain attachment to their former, pre-merger organization, which is why the merger is likely to have a profound psychological effect on those involved (van Knippenberg et al, 2002:233). Therefore, the fact that half of the respondents viewed the merger more as a threat than an opportunity is actually quite a natural reaction at an early stage of the merger process. As the situation develops and the organizational members become more familiar with the merger environment, the more likely it becomes that they will develop a more positive attitude towards the merger (Bartels et al. 2006:58-59).

Another aspect of merger processes that should be taken into account is organizational communication. 62% of the respondents felt that they had not received enough information about the developments of the merger process. Some respondents remarked that while there was information available about the merger process, it failed to explain the concrete benefits that the merger was expected to entail. The organizational members not only want to know what is being done, but also how it is being done. An example of this would be the issue of having less cooperation with the engineers: a great majority of the respondents feared losing their connection with the engineers, which implies that they were not aware of the concrete actions that had been taken to avoid this alienation.

In general, it can be stated that the employees and students of the Department of Architecture have had quite a reasonable reaction to the merger. Despite the perceived threats and uncertainties, many respondents were willing to look at the potential benefits and to wait for the future to determine the true ramifications of the merger. Whenever an organization is going through a major structural change, a certain amount of uncertainty is always involved.

6. CONCLUSIONS

As a concluding note, the discussion and the findings based on the findings acquired through the interviews and the survey will be summarized.

6.1. Mergers as a medium for change

Mergers have become an increasingly popular restructuring method for organizations that wish to improve their efficiency and strengthen their position against their competitors. This applies not only in a business context, but also in the academic world. Schools and universities around the globe are aiming at widening their area of expertise and becoming more multidisciplinary. In order to achieve this goal, schools that were formerly separate and operated in different fields are now combining their forces.

Mergers and other forms of organizational change have been the subject of a great deal of academic research. Several articles and publications have suggested that mergers often have a negative effect on the working ethics and organizational identification of those involved. Employees often feel a strong attachment to the organization they are a member of, so anything that might put the existence and central character of that organization in jeopardy is likely to bring about a feeling of uncertainty and resistance towards change. The threats that employees often associate with mergers are, for example, uncertainty about future employment, domination by the merger partner, changes in working environment and culture and loss of professional prestige.

In this research, the focus was on the merger of the Aalto University Department of Architecture and Aalto University School of Arts and Design. These two formerly separate entities were merged at the beginning of 2012. As a result, a new school called Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture was formed. The aim of this research was to determine how the employees and students of the Department of Architecture have identified with the merger and how their organizational identification might have changed as a result of the merger.

6.2. Summary

In this research, the attitudes of the employees and students of the Department of Architecture were examined through interviews and a questionnaire. Subsequently, the research data was analyzed based on the theories presented in the literature review. In order to determine the nature of employee and student identification with the merger, a model consisting of the six most important factors influencing identification was introduced. These factors were *perceived opportunities and threats, merger pattern, identification with subgroups, sense of continuity vs. uncertainty*, *pre-merger status and dominant position* and *central, distinctive and enduring characters.*

The research data indicated that the merger has been met with both enthusiasm and uncertainty. In the data analysis, it was shown that the most important factors influencing employee identification with the merger were perceived opportunities and threats, identification with subgroups and sense of continuity vs. uncertainty. Conversely, in this particular merger, the pre-merger status, merger pattern and central, distinctive and enduring characters had less influence on employee and student identification.

As for the research questions, the analysis of the research data can be summarized as follows:

1) The question of whether the merger is a threat or an opportunity caused the respondents to divide into two opposing groups. One groups saw the merger as an opportunity to widen the network and to become more innovative, whereas the other half were concerned that the architects would grow apart from the engineering community.

2) 40% of the respondents felt that the School of Arts and Design had been in a more dominant position during the merger, while 50% felt that neither side had been in a dominant position during the merger. However, the results also indicate that this aspect was not considered to have such a major influence on the employee identification.

3) After the merger, 80% of the respondents identify themselves primarily with the Department of Architecture.

 4) Due to the strong professional identity, the architects did not consider the merger to have a significant effect on their organizational identity.

5) Due to the recent nature of the merger, some respondents were still uncertain about how the future of their organization unfolds. It seems that it is still too early to determine whether the merger will be met with a sense of continuity or uncertainty. For now, the respondents were divided into two groups where the other group sees the merger as a natural continuance, while the other group views the merger as a source of uncertainty about the future.

6.3. Practical implications

It was interesting to notice that half of the respondents still considered the merger to be more of a threat than an opportunity. This uncertainty was strongly related to the fear of losing connection with the engineering community. It became evident in the research that the architects have a very strong professional identity, and that they are not willing to give up their unique identity position between the engineering and the arts community. Therefore, after the merger, 80% of the employees and students primarily identify themselves with the Department of Architecture rather than with Aalto University or the School of Arts, Design and Architecture.

This strong professional identity and sense of belongingness has led to a situation where some employees and students view this organizational change as a threat. However, the same strong identity can also help the architects get through the uncertainty that they might still be feeling. As the study indicated, the employees and students did not expect the central character of their organization to change, nor did they think that they are being absorbed by a more powerful organization that has a higher status.

The study also revealed that the employees and students were generally not satisfied with the way they had been informed about the merger and its consequences. This lack of communication might also be one of the reasons behind the perceived

uncertainty. In the interviews and questionnaires, it seemed obvious that the more information the person had about the merger, the more positive his/her attitude was. It seemed that part of the sense of uncertainty and dissatisfaction among the employees and students can be attributed to the fact that they had not enough information about the merger process or the full ramifications of this organizational change.

In conclusion, the merger has been met with mixed feelings among the employees and students of the Department of Architecture. Their strong professional identity and close identification with their own department is likely to help them adapt to the organizational change, but the very fact that their identity is so strong makes the threat of losing it seem even greater.

6.4. Limitations and suggestions for further research

Since this research was conducted at a time when the merger was still quite recent, there is plenty of room for further research on this topic in the future. The responses gathered from the employees and students also raised some interesting questions that should be addressed in more detail. Suggestions on potential research topics are provided below.

First, it should be noted that this research did not make a clear distinction between the responses by the employees and the students. However, in the open-ended questions, it became apparent that these two groups might have differing views on some of the aspects of the merger. Therefore, in order to determine whether there are inconsistencies in the way employees and students view the consequences of the merger, a research which divides the respondents into more specific groups should be conducted.

Another interesting topic that merits academic research is the identity position of the architects. In this research, the employees and students of the Department of Architecture in Aalto University contended that their organizational identity is a mix of engineering and artistic qualities, and that this combination makes them unique both in the arts community as well as in the engineering community. However, the findings

from this research are not applicable to other Departments of Architecture in Finland. Therefore, a similar research should be conducted in other universities providing architectural education in order to determine whether they share the same identity position.

Finally, as this research was conducted in an initial stage of the merger process, it was still difficult to determine the full and concrete effect the merger had on the identity of the employees and students of the Department of Architecture. Thus, a follow-up research should be conducted two-three years after the merger in order to find out how the organizational members have accustomed to the new organizational environment and how it has influenced their identity and how the longer temporal perspective has changed their attitude towards the merger.

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Interviews

3.5.2012 Antti- Matti Siikala, former Head of the Department of Architecture at Aalto University

3.5.2012 Antti Ahlava, current Head of the Department of Architecture at Aalto University

20.4.2012 Lauri Lehtoruusu, President of the Student board of the Department of Architecture

16.5.2012 Saija Hollmen, teacher at the Department of Architecture

Questionnaires

Kysely arkkitehtuurin laitoksen yhdistymisestä Taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakouluun
Created on 30.5.2012,
Available at:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?pli=1&formkey=dF80YmFpZHRQMV9
UekdpYnVhandVaWc6MQ#gid=0

Webpages

http://www.aalto.fi/fi/about/strategy

http://arts.aalto.fi/fi/).

http://arts.aalto.fi/fi/departments/

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Structure of the survey

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, mitä mieltä Aalto-yliopiston arkkitehtuurin laitoksen henkilökunta ja opiskelijat ovat laitoksen yhdistymisestä Taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakouluun. Kysely koostuu monivalintakysymyksistä sekä vapaaehtoisista avoimista kysymyksistä. Aikaa vastaamiseen kuluu noin viisi minuuttia.

Yhdistymisen tuomat mahdollisuudet ja uhat

Kyselyn ensimmäisessä osassa käsitellään yhdistymisen mukanaan tuomia mahdollisuuksia ja uhkia.

YHDISTYMISEN MUKANAAN TUOMAT MAHDOLLISUUDET *

Merkitse, mitä seuraavista mahdollisuuksista yhdistyminen voi mielestäsi tuoda mukanaan. Voit merkitä niin monta vaihtoehtoa kuin haluat.

- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitokselta valmistuvilla on laajempi ammatillinen osaaminen
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitos on houkuttelevampi uusille opiskelijoille
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitos saa laajempaa kansainvälistä arvostusta
- [ ] Arkkitehtuurin asema osana uutta koulua on vahvempi kuin sen aiempi asema osana Teknillistä korkeakoulua
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksen asema Suomen muihin arkkitehtuurin laitoksiin nähden vahvistuu
- [ ] Yhdistyminen auttaa minua saavuttamaan paremmin ammatilliset tavoitteeni
- [ ] Uusi koulu laajentaa arkkitehtien sidosryhmäverkostoa
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä arkkitehtuurin laitoksen itsemääräämisoikeus lisääntyy
- [ ] Yhdistyminen vahvistaa laitoksen sisäistä yhtenäisyyttä
- [ ] Yhdistyminen lisää arkkitehtien ammatillista arvostusta
- [ ] Muu: _____

YHDISTYMISEN MUKANAAN TUOMAT UHAT *

Merkitse, mitä seuraavista uhista yhdistyminen voi mielestäsi tuoda mukanaan. Voit merkitä niin monta vaihtoehtoa kuin haluat.

- [ ] Yhdistyminen vähentää arkkitehtien ammattiuskottavuutta
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä arkkitehtien insinööriyhteistyö vähenee
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksella keskitytään liikaa taiteelliseen osaamiseen
- [ ] Arkkitehtuurin asema osana uutta koulua on heikompi kuin sen aiempi asema osana Teknillistä korkeakoulua
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksen asema Suomen muihin arkkitehtuurin laitoksiin nähden heikkenee
- [ ] Uusi koulu vieraannuttaa arkkitehtuurin laitosta aiemmasta sidosryhmäverkostosta
- [ ] Yhdistyminen vaikeuttaa omien ammatillisten tavoitteideni saavuttamista
- [ ] Yhdistyminen aiheuttaa eripuraisuutta laitoksen sisällä
- [ ] Koen yhdistymisen uhkana työpaikkani kannalta
- [ ] Yhdistymisen myötä arkkitehtuurin laitoksen itsemääräämisoikeus vähenee
- [ ] Muu: _____

Onko yhdistymisestä kaiken kaikkiaan mielestäsi enemmän hyötyä vai haittaa arkkitehtuurin laitokselle? *

- ( ) Enemmän hyötyä
- ( ) Enemmän haittaa

Ole hyvä ja perustele halutessasi vastauksesi

Yhdistymisen vaikutukset organisaatioidentiteettiin

Kyselyn toisessa osassa käsitellään yhdistymisen vaikutuksia arkkitehtuurin laitoksen organisaatioidentiteettiin. Tässä yhteydessä organisaatioidentiteetillä tarkoitetaan niitä keskeisiä ja pysyviä piirteitä, jotka erottavat arkkitehtuurin laitoksen muista vastaavista organisaatioista.

Mikä on mielestäsi arkkitehtuurin laitoksen keskeisin tarkoitus ja tavoite organisaationa? Ovatko nämä muuttuneet yhdistymisen myötä?

Arkkitehtuurin laitoksella oli vahva ja muista laitoksista erottuva identiteetti ennen yhdistymistä *

Merkitse mielestäsi parhaiten sopiva vaihtoehto: 1= täysin eri mieltä, 5= täysin samaa mieltä

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	○	○	○	○	○	Täysin samaa mieltä

Arkkitehtuurin laitos on säilyttänyt keskeiset identiteetin määrittelevät piirteensä yhdistymisen jälkeen *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	○	○	○	○	○	Täysin samaa mieltä

Taideteollinen korkeakoulu on luonnollisempi ympäristö arkkitehdeille kuin Teknillinen korkeakoulu *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	○	○	○	○	○	Täysin samaa mieltä

Ennen yhdistymistä identifioiduin ensisijaisesti: *

○ Aalto-yliopistoon
○ Teknilliseen korkeakouluun
○ Arkkitehtuurin laitokseen

Yhdistymisen jälkeen identifioidun ensisijaisesti: *

○ Aalto-yliopistoon
○ Taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakouluun
○ Arkkitehtuurin laitokseen

Mitkä ovat mielestäsi merkittävimmät tekijät, jotka erottavat Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksen Suomen muista arkkitehtuurin laitoksista?

Yhdistymisen suunnittelu ja toteutus

Kyselyn viimeisessä osassa käsitellään yhdistymisen suunnittelua sekä käytännön toteutusta.

Taideteollinen korkeakoulu on ollut yhdistymisessä hallitsevampi osapuoli *

Merkitse mielestäsi parhaiten sopiva vaihtoehto: 1= täysin eri mieltä, 5= täysin samaa mieltä

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Täysin samaa mieltä

Arkkitehtuurin laitos on ollut yhdistymisessä hallitsevampi osapuoli *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Täysin samaa mieltä

Yhdistymisprosessista tiedottaminen on ollut riittävää ja tapahtunut tarpeeksi ajoissa *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Täysin samaa mieltä

Työntekijöiden ja opiskelijoiden mielipiteet on otettu riittävässä määrin huomioon yhdistymistä koskevassa päätöksenteossa *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Täysin samaa mieltä

Yhdistymisen mahdolliset epävarmuustekijät on otettu riittävässä määrin huomioon *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Täysin eri mieltä	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Täysin samaa mieltä

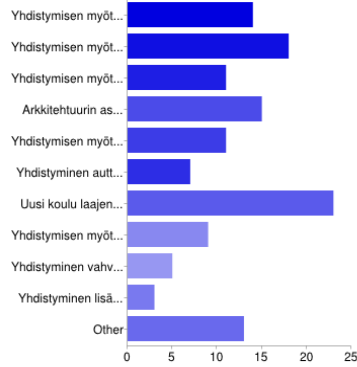**Miten yhdistymisen suunnittelussa ja toteuttamisessa on mielestäsi onnistuttu?**

Lähetä

APPENDIX 2: Summary of the survey results

Yhdistymisen tuomat mahdollisuudet ja uhat

Kyselyn ensimmäisessä osassa käsitellään yhdistymisen mukanaan tuomia mahdollisuuksia ja uhkia.

YHDISTYMISEN MUKANAAN TUOMAT MAHDOLLISUUDET

Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitokselta valmistuvilla on laajempi ammatillinen osaaminen	14	30%
Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitos on houkuttelevampi uusille opiskelijoille	18	38%
Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitos saa laajempaa kansainvälistä arvostusta	11	23%
Arkkitehtuurin asema osana uutta koulua on vahvempi kuin sen aiempi asema osana Teknillistä korkeakoulua	15	32%
Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksen asema Suomen muihin arkkitehtuurin laitoksiin nähden vahvistuu	11	23%
Yhdistyminen auttaa minua saavuttamaan paremmin ammatilliset tavoitteeni	7	15%
Uusi koulu laajentaa arkkitehtien sidosryhmäverkostoa	23	49%
Yhdistymisen myötä arkkitehtuurin laitoksen itsemääräämisoikeus lisääntyy	9	19%
Yhdistyminen vahvistaa laitoksen sisäistä yhtenäisyyttä	5	11%
Yhdistyminen lisää arkkitehtien ammatillista arvostusta	3	6%
Other	13	28%

Käyttäjät voivat valita useamman kuin yhden valintaruudun, joten prosentit voivat nousta yli 100 %:iin.

YHDISTYMISEN MUKANAAN TUOMAT UHAT

Yhdistyminen vähentää arkkitehtien ammattiuskottavuutta	28	60%
Yhdistymisen myötä arkkitehtien insinööriyhteistyö vähenee	33	70%
Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksella keskitytään liikaa taiteelliseen osaamiseen	26	55%
Arkkitehtuurin asema osana uutta koulua on heikompi kuin sen aiempi asema osana Teknillistä korkeakoulua	14	30%
Yhdistymisen myötä Aallon arkkitehtuurin laitoksen asema Suomen muihin arkkitehtuurin laitoksiin nähden heikkenee	19	40%
Uusi koulu vieraannuttaa arkkitehtuurin laitosta aiemmasta sidosryhmäverkostosta	32	68%
Yhdistyminen vaikeuttaa omien ammatillisten tavoitteideni saavuttamista	14	30%
Yhdistyminen aiheuttaa eripuraisuutta laitoksen sisällä	14	30%
Koen yhdistymisen uhkana työpaikkani kannalta	7	15%
Yhdistymisen myötä arkkitehtuurin laitoksen itsemääräämisoikeus vähenee	15	32%
Other	5	11%

Käyttäjät voivat valita useamman kuin yhden valintaruudun, joten prosentit voivat nousta yli 100 %:iin.
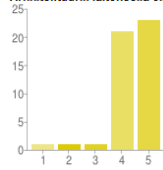
Onko yhdistymisestä kaiken kaikkiaan mielestäsi enemmän hyötyä vai haittaa arkkitehtuurin laitokselle?
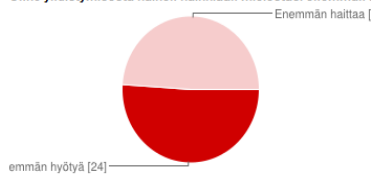
Enemmän hyötyä	24	51%
Enemmän haittaa	23	49%

Arkkitehtuurin laitoksella oli vahva ja muista laitoksista erottuva identiteetti ennen yhdistymistä

1 - Täysin eri mieltä	1	2%
2	1	2%
3	1	2%
4	21	45%
5 - Täysin samaa mieltä	23	49%

Täysin eri mieltä   Täysin samaa mieltä

Arkkitehtuurin laitos on säilyttänyt keskeiset identiteetin määrittelevät piirteensä yhdistymisen jälkeen
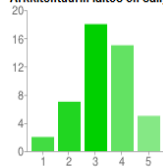
1 - Täysin eri mieltä	2	4%
2	7	15%
3	18	38%
4	15	32%
5 - Täysin samaa mieltä	5	11%

Täysin eri mieltä   Täysin samaa mieltä

Taideteollinen korkeakoulu on luonnollisempi ympäristö arkkitehdeille kuin Teknillinen korkeakoulu
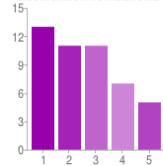
1 - Täysin eri mieltä	13	28%
2	11	23%
3	11	23%
4	7	15%
5 - Täysin samaa mieltä	5	11%

Täysin eri mieltä   Täysin samaa mieltä

Ennen yhdistymistä identifioiduin ensisijaisesti:

urin laitokseen [25]

korkeakouluun [20]

Aalto-yliopistoon [2
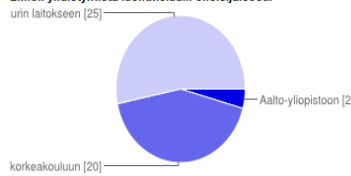
Aalto-yliopistoon	2	4%
Teknilliseen korkeakouluun	20	43%
Arkkitehtuurin laitokseen	25	53%

Yhdistymisen jälkeen identifioidun ensisijaisesti:

urin laitokseen [37]

Aalto-yliopistoon [1
Taiteiden ja suunni
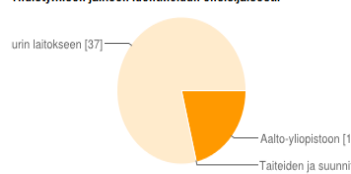
Aalto-yliopistoon	10	21%
Taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakouluun	0	0%
Arkkitehtuurin laitokseen	37	79%

Yhdistymisen suunnittelu ja toteutus

Kyselyn viimeisessä osassa käsitellään yhdistymisen suunnittelua sekä käytännön toteutusta.

Taideteollinen korkeakoulu on ollut yhdistymisessä hallitsevampi osapuoli

1 -	Täysin eri mieltä	1	2%
2		4	9%
3		21	45%
4		11	23%
5 -	Täysin samaa mieltä	10	21%

Täysin eri mieltäTäysin samaa mieltä

Arkkitehtuurin laitos on ollut yhdistymisessä hallitsevampi osapuoli

1 -	Täysin eri mieltä	8	17%
2		12	26%
3		24	51%
4		3	6%
5 -	Täysin samaa mieltä	0	0%

Täysin eri mieltäTäysin samaa mieltä

Yhdistymisen mahdolliset epävarmuustekijät on otettu riittävässä määrin huomioon

1 -	Täysin eri mieltä	14	30%
2		18	38%
3		12	26%
4		2	4%
5 -	Täysin samaa mieltä	1	2%

Täysin eri mieltäTäysin samaa mieltä
Täysin eri mieltäTäysin samaa mieltä

Työntekijöiden ja opiskelijoiden mielipiteet on otettu riittävässä määrin huomioon yhdistymistä koskevassa päätöksenteossa

1 -	Täysin eri mieltä	11	23%
2		20	43%
3		12	26%
4		2	4%
5 -	Täysin samaa mieltä	2	4%

Täysin eri mieltäTäysin samaa mieltä

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