Explaining the impact of team-based financial incentives and rewards from the perspective of process theory: a qualitative research synthesis

MASTER THESIS BA

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PREFACE

The master thesis that you are about to read has been written as a final part of my Master's programme in Business Administration at the University of Twente. The path to completion of this master thesis has been long and challenging but has also been very interesting and rewarding. I can honestly say that I had a great time and learned a great deal at the University of Twente. It is also with great pleasure that I can finally say that I can move on to the next chapter in my life.

After many months of intensive research, the moment has arrived to present the resulting findings in this report. Through this research, I learned a great deal about team-based financial incentives and rewards, about the distinctive features of process theory and narrative data, about how to conduct a qualitative research synthesis in a transparent and thorough manner, and particularly about how to synthesize and convert qualitative findings into a dynamic inductive model. Hopefully, the intellectual journey I have made will arouse your enthusiasm and provide you with some interesting and useful insights.

Obviously, I would like to express my gratitude to my first supervisor, Dr. T. de Schryver, for his great patience and for always providing me with interesting and valuable feedback. Of course, I also want to thank my second supervisor, Dr. A.M. von Raesfeld-Meijer, for her contribution and supervision. Finally, I am especially grateful to my family for their endless support and for always keeping faith in me.

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The contemporary rapidly changing environments, the prevalence of teamwork, and the increasing adoption of teams as primary work units and corresponding team-based rewards bring about that the question of who should be incentivized and rewarded becomes increasingly important. This study constituted an attempt to provide some insight into this question by examining team-based financial incentives and rewards. Numerous primary studies, literature reviews, and meta-analyses were conducted on possible relationships between team incentives and various dependent performance variables. In examining these relationships, the numerous studies in question more or less embodied variance theory. This study adopted a different approach and examined team incentives from a process theory perspective. Process theory is concerned with understanding *how* things evolve over time and *why* they evolve in this way. Event sequence is central to process theory and this study therefore focused entirely on the chain of events that was set in motion by team incentives, leading to the following research question:

Which events occur after implementing team-based financial incentives and rewards within Western-based companies?

In this study, we built process theory and attempted to answer this research question through the use of narrative data and rich, thick description. The main reason for using narrative data was that narrative embodies event sequence and time, and is therefore naturally suited to the development of process theory and explanations. In the search for process studies, a qualitative research synthesis was conducted. In a qualitative research synthesis, a *qualitative synthesis* approach to synthesizing *qualitative research* is used. A qualitative research synthesis also fits relatively well with process theory because of the approach its nature to understand human behaviour and its interest in 'how' and 'why' questions. To ensure the necessary transparency of the synthesis, the ENTREQ statement was applied. This statement serves to promote explicit and comprehensive reporting of qualitative syntheses and consists of numerous items that synthesists must explicitly document.

Several electronic databases with similar search interfaces were used to identify and obtain process studies. The titles, abstracts, and full-text articles of the resulting studies were thoroughly screened for relevance and eligibility for inclusion. Eight studies ultimately met all the inclusion criteria and became part of the final set of included studies. Before extracting, coding, and synthesizing the data and findings from these studies, the methodological quality of the studies was critically appraised. This critical appraisal process served to better interpret the findings that would ultimately arise from the included studies.

Synthesizing the findings from the studies resulted in a process model of the implementation and progression of a team incentive system. Subordinate team members who were subjected to such a system were sometimes given the opportunity to participate in the design of the system. However, team members frequently could not take full advantage of this opportunity because business owners often heavily protected their own financial interests during the design stage. As regards the actual implementation process, various themes were identified such as the dual role of accounting and the role of team manager as intermediary. After implementation, two types of events began to occur; team members began to develop perceptions of the system and subsequently responded to it, and certain team dynamics gradually began to emerge. Together, these two types of events were

ultimately responsible for the degree of success of a team incentive system. The *sense of power and control* of supervisors and subordinate team members, however, was the most promising emergent concept of this qualitative research synthesis. This sense of power and control was influenced in almost all stages before, during, and after implementation of a team incentive system and was largely responsible for the significant levels of staff turnover that were identified in the included studies.

This study resulted in various suggestions for future research. Researchers may consider developing and converting the emergent concepts of this study into measurable constructs. This suggestion is particularly applicable to the concept of sense of power and control. If the sense of power and control of employees could be measured, it should also be able to periodically evaluate it, which in turn may be particularly important for reducing high levels of staff turnover. Another suggestion for future research is to further reinforce the 'building blocks' and construction of the proposed process model. Some components of the model are rather thin in terms of findings and would embrace additional contributions from new process studies. Finally, researchers may consider examining who generally initiates and comes up with the idea of implementing a team incentive system. To date, this preliminary stage has remained a relatively unexplored area of research.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Call it what you will, incentives are what get people to work harder." —Nikita Khrushchev

1.1 Situation and complication

This thesis focuses on financial incentives and there is a reason why organizations apply them. In an attempt to remain competitive in the contemporary rapidly changing environments, organizations are trying hard to become more flexible, respond more quickly to innovations and demands from customers, restrain costs and act in a more efficient way, and deliver reliable solutions to complex cross-functional problems (Spink, 2000). So essentially, organizations aim to improve performance. Encouraging employees to display high performance and being able to continuously motivate them are key topics in organizational research (Garbers & Konradt, 2014). Providing financial incentives and rewards is a commonly used approach to get this job done.

Literature is slightly divided on the distinction between incentives and rewards. Garbers and Konradt (2014, pp. 102-103) argue that these concepts have somewhat different meanings by stating that "incentives refer to inducements offered in advance, intended to increase performance, whereas rewards are typically given after successful performance". On the other hand, DeMatteo, Eby, and Sundstrom (1998, p. 143) consider incentives and rewards as concepts that are more or less similar in nature, which relate to "any arrangement for a group of employees to receive a variable award based on increased performance against a target". When looking more closely, one can notice that the latter definition of incentives and rewards does not really differ from the first definition of incentives. 'Arrangement' and 'target' indicate an inducement offered in advance and in both cases the aim is to increase performance. In line with this argument and since it is common in the literature (DeMatteo et al., 1998; Garbers & Konradt, 2014), the terms incentives and rewards are used interchangeably and are both incorporated into this study. By combining the definition of team rewards and incentives by DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 142) with the definition of work teams by Sundstrom, De Meuse, and Futrell (1990, p. 120), a broad definition can be offered. Team-based financial incentives and rewards can be defined as reward and incentive systems in which team members' pay is at least partly contingent on the measurable performance of an interdependent collection of individuals who share responsibility for specific outcomes for their organization.

It can be argued that the aforementioned changing environments, the prevalence of teamwork (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006) and the increasing adoption of teams as primary work units and corresponding team-based rewards (DeMatteo et al., 1998) bring about that the question of who should be incentivized and rewarded becomes more important (Garbers & Konradt, 2014). This argument is further reinforced by the intellectual work of Rynes and Bono (2000), in which is stated that team-based rewards have become increasingly important. A while ago, DeMatteo et al. (1998) already paid extensive attention to team-based rewards by developing a framework of factors influencing their effectiveness. Some time later and fairly recently, also Garbers and Konradt (2014) devoted a great deal of attention to team-based financial incentives. But since the literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) dates from quite a while back and the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014) clearly aims to compare the effects of individual and team-based incentives, it is a promising opportunity to start a new research endeavour concerning the influence of team-based financial incentives and rewards. Though, reasons for re-examining team incentives originating from

the literature alone are not sufficiently satisfactory. Team-based incentives are meant to be used in practice, so reasons for their use should also be suggested and backed up by sources from practice.

Practice provides at least four noteworthy reasons why organizations should consider implementing team-based financial incentives and rewards. In short, the use of team incentives constitutes a steadily emerging trend that is being facilitated by government support (Bryson & Freeman, 2016), contributes to cultivating a strong group identity (Van Bavel & Packer, 2016), fits our strong desire for social gratitude and our fear of social pressure (Winter, 2015), and would be a more logical choice for companies that openly declare their commitment to teamwork, collaboration and a shared purpose (Boss, 2016a, 2016b; Schrage, 2015). In addition, although there still seems to be certain scepticism towards team incentives (Winter, 2015), the National Bureau of Economic Research conducted a massive research effort and concluded that team incentives and shared capitalism plans can and do work (Freeman, Blasi, & Kruse, 2010). This body of research also succeeded in largely removing three of the most prevalent concerns about team incentives (including the free rider and 'line of sight' problems) by showing that they do not seem to hold in practice.

The above enumeration of reasons makes clear that team-based financial incentives and rewards are becoming increasingly relevant as a subject of study. To be worth re-examining, it should also be considered what we have come to know so far about team-based incentives and more specifically whether there are suitable paths for future research. By taking a closer look at two of the most salient and relevant predecessors, the literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) and the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014), a potentially valuable research direction has been found. Already at an early stage, DeMatteo et al. (1998) pointed to two prevailing and alternative ways in which team-based rewards could influence group-level outcomes. Team reward systems may directly influence group outcomes or reward systems may exert indirect influence through several psychological processes. Based on research, DeMatteo et al. (1998) presume the latter and state that several psychological processes may be affected by team rewards and in that way mediate the consequences of the rewards. In line with this reasoning, they suggest that future research needs to focus on constructing theoretical models of the process by which team-based rewards affect team and ultimately organizational performance. Moreover, DeMatteo et al. (1998) are only referring to psychological processes, whereas there should also be many other types of processes.

Additionally, in their recent meta-analysis, Garbers and Konradt (2014) repeatedly argue that results and theories of the relationship between individual financial incentives and performance cannot be conclusively applied to team incentives, due to different goals and the influence of underlying group processes. In doing so, they subsequently do not explain what exactly these group processes imply or consist of. Garbers and Konradt (2014) do make mention of (i.a.) motivation loss processes in teams with equally distributed rewards and motivation losses due to social loafing processes, but these are rather general and vague terms that are more an indication of static variables than actual processes consisting of specific events. This trend is also reflected in the meta-analysis of Balliet, Mulder, and Van Lange (2011), in which phrases like perceived cooperative motives, perceived fairness of incentives, feelings of injustice and feelings of being gypped are referred to as underlying and potentially undermining processes. Even when repeating the importance of group processes in their concluding remarks, Garbers and Konradt (2014) do not clarify or further elaborate on these group processes. They state that their results reinforce the view that the effects of team incentives may be

divided into the individual effects of incentives on the one hand and group processes on the other. Therefore, Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 121) argue that "group processes should not be neglected when examining differences between individual and team-based rewards". Though, it has not been made clear what these group processes imply and, at least as important, whether and to what extent these processes are set in motion or affected by team-based rewards.

Despite the slight contradiction in that DeMatteo et al. (1998) emphasize psychological processes and Garbers and Konradt (2014) underscore the importance of group processes, it has become apparent that our new research endeavour on team incentives could and perhaps should take the direction of process research. "Process research is concerned with understanding *how* things evolve over time and *why* they evolve in this way" (Langley, 1999, p. 692). Focusing on the 'why' question is also suggested by Garbers and Konradt (2014) as a potentially beneficial research direction. Pentland (1999) provides a striking argument in favour of process research, also being referred to as process theory:

> We want to know how changing X will affect Y. Our literature is filled with statements about relationships between constructs that claim to offer an explanation (e.g., "this regression model explains 30 percent of the variance in Y"). But the explanation lies in the story that connects X and Y—not the regression model itself. Knowing that the relationship between X and Y is mediated by a complex, generative process that we cannot directly observe is an interesting and humbling insight. I think this insight is especially valuable when one is considering interventions to change or improve a process. (p. 722)

This quotation seems entirely applicable to team-based incentives and the corresponding hinterland of literature. There are numerous examples of researchers who have examined the relationship between team-based financial incentives/rewards and some kind of performance variable according to the typical approach described above. To start with, Guthrie and Hollensbe (2004) examined relationships among group incentives, spontaneous goal setting, chosen group goal level, goal commitment, and group performance, with three group incentive conditions: fixed-rate payment, low-variable pay, and high-variable pay. Román (2009) analysed changes to a team-based incentive plan and its effects on labour productivity, product quality, and worker absenteeism, with control variables such as overtime hours, training hours, and product defects. Stare (2012), on his turn, examined the impact of a project organizational culture and team rewarding on project performance. His results proved that a project organizational culture along with team rewards increase the motivation of team members and consequently reduce project delays and cost overruns. Naranjo-Gil, Cuevas-Rodríguez, López-Cabrales, and Sánchez (2012) analysed how both the financial incentive system (individual vs. group) and the team's predominant cognitive orientation (individualistic vs. collectivistic) influence team performance. In addition, Pearsall, Christian, and Ellis (2010) examined whether hypothesized benefits of hybrid reward structures over individual and cooperative (team) rewards were due to increased information allocation and reduced social loafing. Finally, Knight, Durham, and Locke (2001) examined the effects of goal difficulty, financial incentives, and team efficacy on the strategic risk, tactical implementation, and performance of teams, with team ability as a control variable. The examples mentioned merely constitute a small selection. All these examples have in common that they are characterized by an approach that more or less claims to offer an explanation but that in fact does not present a story that connects X and Y. Therefore, and in

order to provide a strong contrast to the approach described, this thesis will study team incentives from a process theory perspective.

Another thing that the quotation and examples subtly make clear is that literature mainly focuses on relationships between fixed independent and dependent variables. In this thesis, the construct of team incentives will remain irrevocably fixed, but the chain of events that is set in motion by these incentives could possibly lead to different outcomes than the dependent variables frequently proposed by literature. The majority of recent literature reviews on financial incentives either cling to (an equivalent of) task performance, a domain of job performance, as dependent variable (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002; Condly, Clark, & Stolovitch, 2003; Garbers & Konradt, 2014) or describe performance in more general terms, at most shifting levels of analysis (DeMatteo et al., 1998). This thesis intends to emphasize the process itself rather than attaching importance to a fixed dependent variable. It is quite possible that team incentives lead to a (partially convergent) divergent progression (Van den Daele, 1969) of events and subsequent outcomes. These outcomes may be unexpected/deviant and may relate to other domains of job performance than task performance (e.g., contextual performance). It is also quite conceivable that team incentives ultimately do not even result in statements about sharply demarcated domains of job performance but rather lead to more or less self-contained final events or outcomes. For these reasons, no specific emphasis will be placed on one of the three domains of job performance (Devonish & Greenidge, 2010) or on job performance in general. In process research, the events, activities, and choices of actors that are set in motion by team incentives should be able to progress freely without being forced into paths towards fixed and predefined dependent variables. Therefore, this latter line of thought will be pursued in the remainder of the thesis.

1.2 Research goal and research question [1]

Based on the problem situation and complication, the following research goal has been formulated:

Providing an explanation for the impact of team-based financial incentives and rewards within Western-based companies, from the perspective of process theory
by
conducting a qualitative research synthesis that involves analysing, synthesizing and interpreting recent primary studies on this topic.

The reason for applying a qualitative research synthesis will be discussed in the next section, but it is convenient to reveal that through the use of qualitative and narrative data, and structural methods of analysing these data, one should be able to build better process theory and better explanations in general (Pentland, 1999). This is desirable considering the process theory perspective that is being pursued.

In addition, emphasis is placed on *companies* instead of organizations because it seems most interesting to examine the impact of team incentives in situations in which teams really are exposed to a certain degree of pressure. These may include, for example, situations in which team members really have to meet common targets in order to make a profit or situations in which they have to collaborate intensively in order to meet a tight, hard deadline for a product launch. From this point of view, teams operating in for-profit companies seem significantly more interesting as objects of study

than teams that are part of government agencies, non-governmental organizations and non-profit organizations. Though, studies examining teams operating in (non-)governmental or non-profit organizations will not by definition be left out of consideration or excluded. This emphasis on for-profit companies functions purely as a point of reference. A deviant organizational context will not constitute a criterion for study exclusion, but studies and findings with such a deviant context will rather be of less value in answering the central research question.

Furthermore, emphasis is placed on *Western-based* companies because these were presumably the first companies to adopt teams as primary work units and corresponding team incentives and rewards. One of the main reasons for this statement is the increased interdependence between jobs. Changes in work design, the flattening of organizations, and changing technology have created interdependencies between jobs and tasks (DeMatteo et al., 1998), which makes it desirable to adopt teams and team-based rewards. These changes probably first occurred in Western-based companies and so it is likely that Western firms are also most familiar with team structures and incentives. However, the question may arise as to what exactly is meant by 'Western-based'. This question is not easily answered as there are countless definitions of what constitutes the Western world. In this thesis, the West is presented as a combination of the countries that make up the European Single Market (in order to also incorporate countries like Switzerland and Norway), and the Anglosphere set of countries (in its most restricted sense), consisting of the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, and the United Kingdom ("Anglosphere," n.d.). Ideally, we wish to examine and judge the implementation of team incentives in companies from these Western countries. However, also in this case, studies having a Western context is not a requirement or criterion for study inclusion. Studies with a Western context should simply be more capable of making a serious contribution to answering the central research question.

In order to pursue the research goal and taking into account the above two statements of scope, the following central research question (CRQ) has been formulated:

Which events occur after implementing team-based financial incentives and rewards within Western-based companies?

The central research question has been divided into the following sub-questions, which are to be answered in separate chapters/sections:

1. Which team-based financial incentives and rewards can be distinguished?
2. What is the impact of team-based financial incentives and rewards on job performance in general, according to quantitative literature?
3. What contribution can process theory provide in explaining the relevant impact?
4. What chain of events and generative mechanisms provide the explanation for the relevant impact?

The first three sub-questions will be addressed in the theoretical framework. The chain of events and generative mechanisms from the last sub-question should arise from the actual qualitative research synthesis process.

1.3 Research method [2]

As mentioned in the previous section, one should be able to build better process theory and better explanations through the use and structural analysis of qualitative data (Pentland, 1999). Hence, it is safe to assume that qualitative methods of reviewing the literature, such as qualitative research synthesis, fit relatively well with process theory. This favourable fit can largely be explained by the nature of qualitative research. Researchers pursuing the qualitative approach frequently seek to understand human behaviour. They often feel attracted to and inspired by the 'why' and 'how' questions, rather than the 'what' (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 182). The data they collect and present generally are thick in their description. This interest in 'why' and 'how' questions, and this use of thick description of the lived experience of study participants form a good foundation for providing true explanations, an important principle in process theory.

In addition to the seemingly natural fit with process theory, there are several other reasons for applying a qualitative research synthesis and formulating corresponding research questions. First, undertaking a qualitative research synthesis may arise from the author's own interest in a given question or a particular research method. At the outset of the study process, there was already a strong interest in team-based financial incentives and rewards, a subject that captures both financial and HR-related aspects. The author is particularly intrigued by the impact of team incentives and really intends to provide an explanation for this impact. Moreover, the author has developed an above-average interest in qualitative methods of reviewing the literature, such as qualitative research synthesis. These two areas of interest seem to be a proper combination since the nature of qualitative research to understand human behaviour lends itself well to the task of explaining a certain impact.

Secondly, the endeavour of a qualitative research synthesis may arise from previous research. An existing meta-analysis frequently is a good point of departure since qualitative studies generally are not considered as part of such a piece of work (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 45). Moreover, a meta-analysis may also serve as a good starting point because it generally addresses different questions than those appearing in qualitative literature reviews (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 93). In practice, a role as starting point could mean that one or multiple meta-analyses are elaborated on in the (preliminary) theoretical framework section of a qualitative research synthesis. In this way, the theoretical framework section can establish the context or provide a point of comparison or contrast. In this thesis, the urge to initiate a qualitative research synthesis arose from studying the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014). As a consequence, this meta-analysis will be given a prominent role in the theoretical framework chapter.

Finally, problems of practice may give rise to a qualitative research synthesis. Just like practice provided a variety of noteworthy reasons for implementing and examining team incentives, there are significant forces at work in practice that call for a qualitative synthesis. One of those forces is "the increased need for knowledge about the success or failure of interventions in professional practical arenas" (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 105). An example of this force and its call for synthesis is the growing interest in qualitative synthesis to inform health-related practice and policy (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009; Tong, Flemming, McInnes, Oliver, & Craig, 2012). Through its ability to reveal new ways of looking at a set of primary studies and through its distinctive focus on 'why' and 'how' questions, Major and Savin-Baden (2010) argue that a qualitative research synthesis can and should

play an important role in educating researchers, policy makers, and practitioners on the effects of interventions in their professional arenas. Furthermore, at first glance, health-related interventions may not seem to have much in common with team-based financial incentives and rewards. However, this statement seems unfounded when comparing team incentives with, for example, electronic health records (EHRs). Both interventions constitute a major change compared to their counterparts (individual financial incentives and written health records respectively), both interventions give a different meaning to the work and jobs of the practitioners involved, and both interventions still face considerable scepticism, resistance, and barriers to their acceptance (Boonstra & Broekhuis, 2010; Winter, 2015). Having argued that team incentives and electronic health records share similarities as interventions, it can be stated that a qualitative research synthesis can also be of great value in examining the former. A further elaboration on qualitative research synthesis as research method will be provided in the methodology chapter, as we now suffice with the research method rationale described.

1.4 Academic and practical contribution

By pursuing the main goal and addressing the research questions, the author aims to make a meaningful contribution to both the academic and business community, and in particular those fields of activity that are engaged in composing financial incentives and rewards. The contribution to these fields is directly related to the intended audience of this study. The intended audience consists of three groups of interest: researchers, especially those who are active in the fields of financial incentives and team behaviour/performance, and two groups of practitioners, namely company policy makers and actual recipients of financial incentive interventions.

The main academic contribution can largely be derived from the problem situation and complication. As mentioned earlier, most literature reviews on financial incentives examine relationships between independent and dependent variables. From a process theory perspective, these variables can constitute the antecedents and consequences of a process respectively. In daily research practice, these "antecedents and consequences are measured, correlations are computed, and results are reported" (Pentland, 1999, p. 718). Associated data sets frequently lack the information about the causal chain of events that explains why the variables are related. Sutton and Staw (1995) take this matter seriously and argue that without explanation there is no theory. This qualitative research synthesis follows the tradition of process research and distinguishes itself from comparable literature reviews by explaining *how* team incentives exert influence and *why* they exert influence in this way, instead of *if* and *to what degree*. In other words, by conducting a qualitative research synthesis, it can possibly be determined how findings differ when examining team incentives through the lens of process theory.

A closely related academic contribution refers to a broader trend. In a recent editorial comment, Delbridge and Fiss (2013) explicitly point to the abundant presence of the propositional style of theorizing in a respected journal. They express a concern that this dominance may drive out the narrative-based and typology-based styles, and that it may lead to linear, less diverse thinking about causality. It is reasonable that multiple journals suffer from this trend. This qualitative research synthesis symbolically contributes to restoring the balance by adopting a narrative-based style.

The other two main target groups of this study are constituted by practitioners engaged in composing financial incentives and practitioners actually receiving financial incentive interventions. The former group consists of company policy makers, and more specifically, HR managers and company management/leadership. It is in this group's interest to determine how and to what extent team incentives produce different events, processes and outcomes than individual financial incentives. The latter group consists of team members who receive financial rewards based on their common performance. For this group, it seems important to determine how team incentives might best be implemented. Obviously, it is desirable to prevent possible resistance from team members as much as possible during and after implementation. In short, providing these two target groups with insight and overview is the intended practical contribution, and perhaps also some of the aforementioned scepticism can be removed (Winter, 2015).

In addition, many financial and HR-related practitioners may feel overwhelmed by the volume and diversity of literature on financial incentives. Years ago, Bonner and Sprinkle (2002) already reported that financial incentives have widely varying effects on performance. Even now, in the contemporary body of literature on this subject, the image of widely varying effects and ambiguity persists. Conroy, Gupta, Shaw, and Park (2014), who study pay variation, state that research is abundant but also that the knowledge obtained from this research remains ambiguous. They make mention of contradictory theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, and a relationship that is found to be "positive and negative, linear and curvilinear, direct and moderated, and so on" (Conroy et al., 2014, p. 2). A qualitative research synthesis like this can help practitioners to bring some order out of chaos with regard to team-based incentives. Additionally, single primary studies generally do not provide definitive answers and are not conclusive enough to help practitioners solve complex problems. As a more comprehensive piece of work, a qualitative research synthesis should be better able to support practitioners in demanding decision making and problem solving. Finally, the practical contribution of this study consists of an attempt to answer questions that manager and policy makers face every day. It concerns questions about how to fit compensation programmes, structures or plans within an organization, and how to effectuate change in the performance of teams and individuals (Booth, Papaioannou, & Sutton, 2012).

1.5 Thesis outline

This thesis is characterized by a somewhat deviant structure and outline. In the first place because this thesis concerns a type of qualitative literature review instead of an ordinary primary study, but mainly because a qualitative research synthesis as a research method is still immature. "Many aspects of the methods for synthesizing qualitative research are in the early stages of development" (Tong et al., 2012, p. 181). This immaturity can best be exemplified by the confusion among users of qualitative syntheses that is caused by the different labels used to describe similar qualitative synthesis methods and the inconsistent use of terms to describe the different stages within qualitative syntheses (Tong et al., 2012). While acknowledging that there are differences in approaches and rationale for certain qualitative synthesis methods, Tong et al. (2012) also argue that there is a core set of techniques that most qualitative synthesis methods have in common. According to them, this core set of techniques does not imply that ultimately a standardised set of procedures will be developed, but they rather believe it is more probable that a 'methodological palette' will arise from which researchers can draw methods corresponding to the focus of their review. In light of this methodological palette and the apparent core set of techniques, the ENTREQ statement has

been developed. ENTREQ stands for "enhancing transparency in reporting the synthesis of qualitative research" (Tong et al., 2012, p. 181) and the statement serves to promote explicit and comprehensive reporting of this type of synthesis. The ENTREQ statement consists of 21 items, which are placed into five main domains: (1) introduction, (2) methods and methodology, (3) literature search and selection, (4) appraisal, and (5) synthesis of findings. The 21 items are each provided with a descriptor and are listed in Table 1. These descriptors are shown in brackets behind most headings and subheadings in order to indicate where the various ENTREQ items can be found in this thesis. In this way, it can be demonstrated in a transparent manner that the ENTREQ statement is consistently applied throughout the thesis. The ENTREQ statement more or less constitutes the blueprint and outline of the lion's share of this thesis.

- **Table 1:** The ENTREQ statement (Tong et al., 2012, p. 181)

No	Item	Guide and description
1	Aim	State the research question the synthesis addresses.
2	Synthesis methodology	Identify the synthesis methodology or theoretical framework which underpins the synthesis, and describe the rationale for choice of methodology *(e.g. meta-ethnography, thematic synthesis, critical interpretive synthesis, grounded theory synthesis, realist synthesis, meta-aggregation, meta-study, framework synthesis).*
3	Approach to searching	Indicate whether the search was pre-planned (*comprehensive search strategies to seek all available studies)* or iterative (*to seek all available concepts until they theoretical saturation is achieved).*
4	Inclusion criteria	Specify the inclusion/exclusion criteria *(e.g. in terms of population, language, year limits, type of publication, study type).*
5	Data sources	Describe the information sources used (e.g. *electronic databases (MEDLINE, EMBASE, CINAHL, psycINFO, Econlit), grey literature databases (digital thesis, policy reports), relevant organisational websites, experts, information specialists, generic web searches (Google Scholar) hand searching, reference lists)* and when the searches conducted; provide the rationale for using the data sources.
6	Electronic Search strategy	Describe the literature search *(e.g. provide electronic search strategies with population terms, clinical or health topic terms, experiential or social phenomena related terms, filters for qualitative research, and search limits).*
7	Study screening methods	Describe the process of study screening and sifting *(e.g. title, abstract and full text review, number of independent reviewers who screened studies).*
8	Study characteristics	Present the characteristics of the included studies *(e.g. year of publication, country, population, number of participants, data collection, methodology, analysis, research questions).*
9	Study selection results	Identify the number of studies screened and provide reasons for study exclusion *(e.g, for comprehensive searching, provide numbers of studies screened and reasons for exclusion indicated in a figure/flowchart; for iterative searching describe reasons for study exclusion and inclusion based on modifications t the research question and/or contribution to theory development).*
10	Rationale for appraisal	Describe the rationale and approach used to appraise the included studies or selected findings *(e.g. assessment of conduct (validity and robustness), assessment of reporting (transparency), assessment of content and utility of the findings).*
11	Appraisal items	State the tools, frameworks and criteria used to appraise the studies or selected findings *(e.g. Existing tools: CASP, QARI, COREQ, Mays and Pope* [25]*; reviewer developed tools; describe the domains assessed: research team, study design, data analysis and interpretations, reporting).*
12	Appraisal process	Indicate whether the appraisal was conducted independently by more than one reviewer and if consensus was required.
13	Appraisal results	Present results of the quality assessment and indicate which articles, if any, were weighted/excluded based on the assessment and give the rationale.
14	Data extraction	Indicate which sections of the primary studies were analysed and how were the data extracted from the primary studies? *(e.g. all text under the headings "results /conclusions" were extracted electronically and entered into a computer software).*
15	Software	State the computer software used, if any.
16	Number of reviewers	Identify who was involved in coding and analysis.
17	Coding	Describe the process for coding of data *(e.g. line by line coding to search for concepts).*
18	Study comparison	Describe how were comparisons made within and across studies *(e.g. subsequent studies were coded into pre-existing concepts, and new concepts were created when deemed necessary).*
19	Derivation of themes	Explain whether the process of deriving the themes or constructs was inductive or deductive.
20	Quotations	Provide quotations from the primary studies to illustrate themes/constructs, and identify whether the quotations were participant quotations of the author's interpretation.
21	Synthesis output	Present rich, compelling and useful results that go beyond a summary of the primary studies (e.g. *new interpretation, models of evidence, conceptual models, analytical framework, development of a new theory or construct).*

All ENTREQ items listed above will be discussed in this thesis but not exactly according to the order shown in Table 1. As mentioned earlier, Tong et al. (2012) hold on to five main domains for

subdividing the 21 items. However, these specific domains will not be maintained in this thesis. For arranging and grouping the various ENTREQ items, the methodology sections proposed by Major and Savin-Baden (2010, p. 95) will be used, as can be seen in Table 2.

- **Table 2:** Structure of methodology

ENTREQ item	Methodology section
2	1. Justification of research design: an over argument for the choice of synthesis methods (§ 3.1).
3–7, 9–12	2. Article search, selection and appraisal: this section includes search protocols, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and a description of article appraisal (§ 3.2).
8, 13	3. Description of data set: a narrative description of the articles selected as well as a tabular comparison of studies (§ 3.3).
14–19	4. Description of data handling and analysis: a description of how documents were handled, how findings were extracted and how themes were developed (§ 3.4).
20, 21	5. Desired synthesis output and importance of thick description (§ 3.5).*

The methodology sections with an asterisk constitute an addition to the sections suggested by Major and Savin-Baden (2010) in order to further enhance the transparency of this study and the qualitative research synthesis process in general. Items 20 and 21 of the ENTREQ statement are dealt with in both the methodology and the findings chapter. In the methodology chapter, the *desired* synthesis output will be described and the importance of thick description will be discussed. The findings chapter, on the other hand, can be considered the *actual* synthesis output. This synthesis output should ideally be punctuated with data in the form of rich, thick description, which actually consists of detailed quotations from the primary studies (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Methodology section 5 has not been proposed by Major and Savin-Baden (2010) as useful section but may nevertheless be of value to the recurring structure of a qualitative research synthesis (hence the asterisk). To recapitulate, the five methodology sections and 21 ENTREQ items that have been put forward together constitute the blueprint and outline of this thesis.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK [2]

In addition to the research method rationale, the second ENTREQ item on the synthesis methodology also involves identifying the theoretical framework that underpins the synthesis. In this theoretical framework chapter, the orienting concepts will be provided and an overview will be given of relevant quantitative literature. The importance of discussing *quantitative* literature in a *qualitative* research synthesis will be addressed later in this chapter. First, team incentives are conceptualized and the chief bodies of literature on this concept are highlighted. At a later stage, process theory will be dealt with. It is important to become more familiar with these concepts in order to be able to consume and appreciate potential findings (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010), and because it is doubtful whether the practitioners among the intended audience have had much exposure to *team-based* incentives and process theory. Conceptualization of these key concepts should lead to adequate answers to sub-questions 1 and 3.

2.1 Team-based financial incentives and rewards

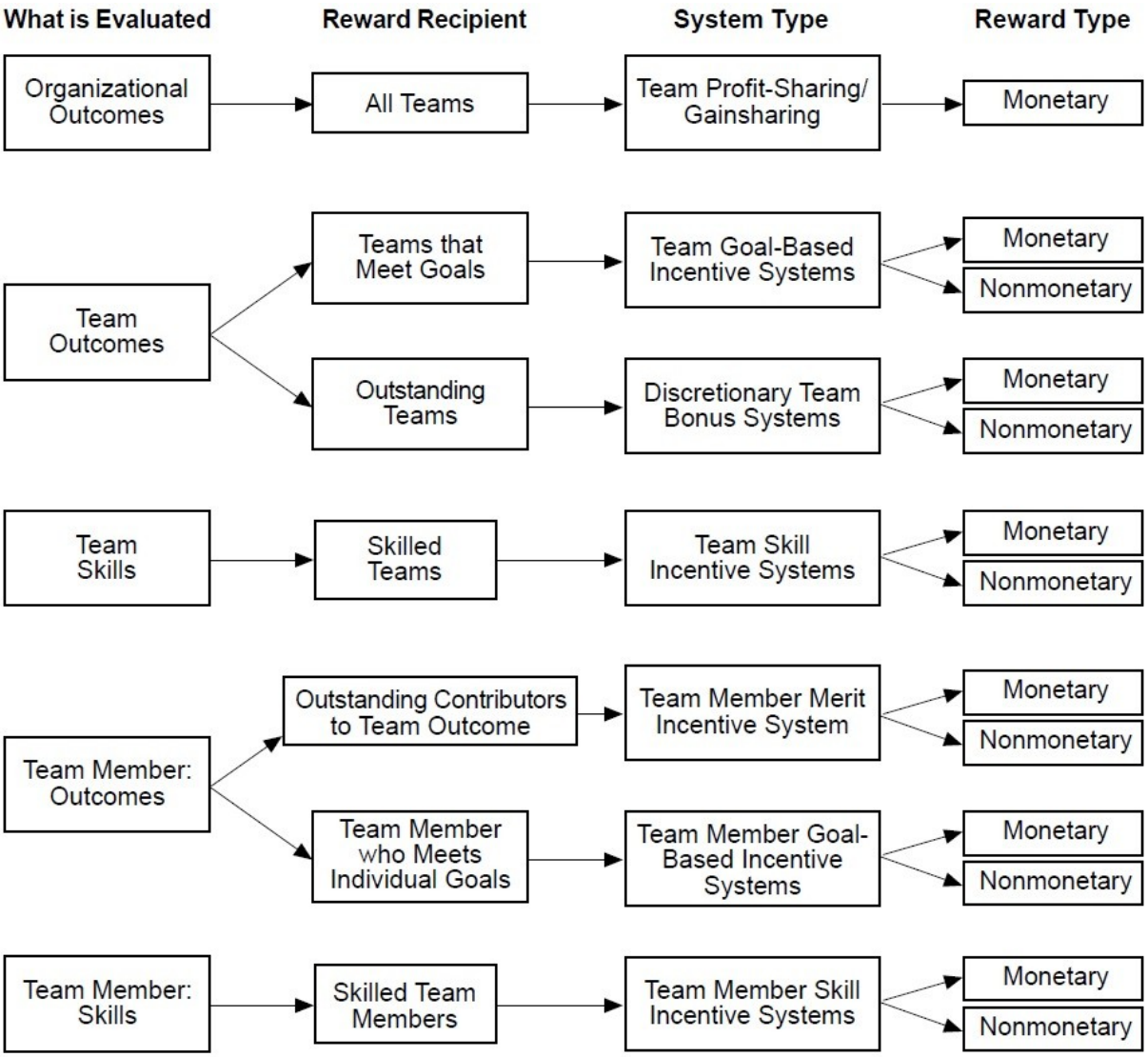
Financial incentives and rewards have been conceptualized in many different ways. Literature is slightly divided on the distinction between incentives and rewards and it is frequently argued that these concepts have somewhat different meanings, but incentives and rewards are generally also used interchangeably, as is the case in this thesis. Although used interchangeably, it may be enlightening to delve somewhat deeper into the distinction between the two concepts. As stated by Garbers and Konradt (2014, pp. 102-103), "incentives refer to inducements offered in advance, intended to increase performance, whereas rewards are typically given after successful performance". Following this line of thought, rewards can also very well be part of incentives and entire incentive systems, rather than being a separate or distinct concept. This notion of rewards and incentives is also often reflected in the literature (e.g., Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998).

In most cases, incentives can more or less be regarded as anticipated rewards that are actually received by employees upon (timely) achievement of pre-specified performance targets. In team goal-based incentive systems, for example, teams receive a predefined reward when meeting certain goals. Additionally, in team member skill incentive systems, members of a team can earn a reward for achieving predetermined levels of certain desired team skills and behaviours. In these examples, rewards are clearly part of an incentive system. However, there are also conceivable examples in which rewards at first glance do not seem to be part of an incentive system. These include team discretionary bonus systems and team member merit incentive systems. Unlike the aforementioned examples, these systems are not characterized by a predetermined performance standard that will guarantee the receipt of a specific predetermined reward (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Instead, when the organization feels that a team has done an outstanding job or feels that a team member has made an outstanding contribution to the team's performance, the employees concerned are recognized with monetary rewards. In these two systems, an incentive seems to be lacking in the sense of a stimulus that is given prior to actual performance and receipt of rewards. However, such systems can still have the same effect as a conventional incentive system since *unanticipated* rewards received after actual performance may raise expectations for the future and may provide an incentive for *future* performance. This incentive is significantly less defined but still represents an incentive. In short, rewards can very well be part of incentives and are often even inherent in incentive systems.

According to Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 104), two distinctions are essential to determine the effectiveness of financial incentives: "who should be rewarded (organizations, individuals, or teams) and how should people be rewarded (type of incentive scheme)". Although this thesis clearly does not aim to determine the *effectiveness* of financial incentives in a variance theoretical manner, it is certainly valuable to determine which specific incentives may be at the beginning of a chain of events and who exactly receive these incentives. The question of who should be rewarded is the most straightforward to answer. This thesis is mainly interested in improving the performance of teams by means of incentives, and the behaviours of and within these teams after implementing incentives. In short, teams are being examined and therefore incentives based on the performance of an entire team deserve the most attention. However, contrary to what the concept of team incentives might suggest, these incentives can also be targeted at individual team members. By making a greater individual contribution to the team and by increasingly showing desired team behaviours, team members can together achieve a higher level of team performance. Examples of incentive systems that are designed to increase individual contributions to the team and to encourage individual team-related skills and behaviours are team member goal-based, merit and skill incentive systems (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). In these incentive systems, individual team members are subjected to performance evaluation and are the actual reward recipients, rather than entire teams. To recapitulate, both teams and team members can be targeted when implementing team incentives to improve the performance of teams. There will be slightly more emphasis on rewarding entire teams because incentive systems that may focus on larger groups such as team profit-sharing and gainsharing systems should also be taken into consideration.

The question of how employees should be rewarded requires somewhat more elaboration. Hoffman and Rogelberg (1998, p. 22) distinguished seven major categories of incentive systems for rewarding teams: (1) team gainsharing/profit-sharing, (2) team goal-based incentive systems, (3) discretionary team bonus systems, (4) team skill incentive systems, (5) team member skill incentive systems, (6) team member goal-based incentive systems, and (7) team member merit incentive systems (see Figure 1 for an overview). Although incentive schemes are frequently designed as an additional bonus with the only risk of losing this bonus (Garbers & Konradt, 2014), Hoffman and Rogelberg (1998) described incentives in considerably more detail. The seven major categories of team incentive systems they put forward are briefly discussed in the section to follow.

First, in team profit-sharing and gainsharing systems, team incentives are linked to organizational outcomes such as organizational profit, organizational productivity, and customer satisfaction. In the specific case of team profit-sharing systems, the organizational outcome evaluated is of a financial nature, which generally means that teams are rewarded when the organization makes a certain profit (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 22). It is common in these systems that cash rewards are evenly distributed among all of the various teams in an organization. Contrary to the principle of profit-sharing, in gainsharing systems team incentives are tied to non-financial organizational outcomes such as improvements in quality, productivity, and customer satisfaction. In practice, six main variants of gainsharing can be distinguished, including Scanlon plans, Rucker plans, Improshare plans, Productivity and Waste Bonus plans, Group/Plant plans, and DARCOM plans. "These plans differ on a number of dimensions, including the focus of the plan" (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 23).



- **Figure 1:** Overview of team incentive systems (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 23)

The Scanlon, Rucker and Improshare plans can be considered the traditional forms and together demonstrate the roots of gainsharing (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007). The Scanlon plan is based on employment costs, which in turn are measured as a proportion of total sales. A standard ratio of employment costs/sales is determined and if labour costs fall below this proportion, the savings are shared between employees and the organization by means of a pre-established formula (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007, p. 385). The Rucker plan is also based on employment costs, but in this plan the employment costs are calculated as a proportion of sales minus the costs of materials and supplies, in other words as a proportion of value added. Unlike the Scanlon plan, the Rucker plan only provides a formula, with little regard for an improvement means to generate gains (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007, p. 385). Finally, the Improshare plan is based on an established standard that defines the expected hours required to produce an acceptable level of output. The established standard is derived from work measurement. Any savings arising from an increase in output in fewer than expected hours are distributed between employees and the organization on the basis of a pre-established sharing formula (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007, p. 385).

When deciding whether to implement team profit-sharing and gainsharing systems, there are several issues that need to be taken into account. First, if the basis for a reward becomes further removed from the immediate control of a team, as is the case with organizational profit, profit-sharing and gainsharing may become less effective in improving the performance of the team (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 23). In this well-known 'line of sight' problem, teams feel they cannot directly or significantly influence organizational profit or other outcomes, and consequently do not attempt to improve their performance. If this problem is likely to occur, a gainsharing plan that targets departmental objectives might be a better option since departmental outcomes may provide a team with a more tangible sense of control. Additionally, when implementing profit-sharing or gainsharing systems, frequent payouts are recommended, so that the relationship between team performance and the reward is clear (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 24).

Another issue to consider when implementing team profit-sharing or gainsharing concerns the reward distribution between *teams*. This issue can be kept relatively short. In highly interdependent organizations, in which inter-team cooperation is important, profit-sharing and gainsharing systems with equal reward distribution are recommended (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). However, when team interdependence is not a matter of importance in achieving organizational success, profit-sharing and gainsharing systems with equal payouts across teams may be less appropriate. More competitive structures, in which the size of a reward is contingent on team performance, may constitute a better alternative in such cases. When implementing competitive team profit-sharing or gainsharing structures, it is important that these structures are perceived as equitable and that feelings of unfairness are prevented. This means there should be a perception that each team could earn the same rewards if they put in the same amount of effort (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 24).

A similar issue that must be taken into consideration concerns the reward distribution between *team members* whose teams qualify for cash rewards. Once again, equality of reward distribution is recommended if task interdependence is high and if there is an increased need for cooperation, but it should be noted that in this particular case it is about intra-team cooperation. This cooperation among team members may include encouraging one another and pooling information and ideas. If team members perform similar functions, equal reward distribution is also recommended (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). However, if team member interdependence is not a determining factor in success, or if some team members clearly make more important contributions than others, this should be reflected by equitable reward distribution (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 24), as is also the case with low interdependence between teams. Equitable reward distribution among team members is based on the relative contributions of team members to team outcomes, and it is important that an organization ensures that these contributions can be measured effectively (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998).

The second category of team incentive systems to be discussed is the team goal-based incentive system. In this incentive system, an organization formulates goals or targets for each team that are believed to represent effective performance outcomes, such as predefined production objectives and customer service goals (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 25). These goals are frequently developed in conjunction with the team in question and may vary from very short- to long-term objectives. When the team meets the desired performance target, its members attain predetermined financial rewards in the form of bonuses or certain variable pay. In the case of bonuses, one-time cash rewards are

provided. In the case of variable pay, team members' base pay is reduced by a certain percentage, say five to ten per cent, with the omitted salary becoming a variable component. "If the team meets its target(s), team members earn their variable pay back; if the team exceeds its targets, variable pay can double or triple" (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 25). According to Hoffman and Rogelberg (1998), the effectiveness of the team goal-based incentive system is contingent on the type of team the system targets. To be precise, this system is considered most appropriate for full-time teams since these teams are likely to benefit most from clear, predefined performance targets, particularly because the activities of full-time teams should be clearly specified in advance (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 25). The system is considered less appropriate for teams facing ambiguous tasks, with pre-established goals that can quickly become obsolete, and for part-time teams, whose members spend a relatively large amount of time on individual tasks. It should be noted that when distributing monetary rewards among team members, the aforementioned considerations also apply to this incentive system. This means that equal reward distribution is recommended in case of high task interdependence between team members, and that equitable reward distribution is preferred in case of low team member interdependence.

The third team incentive category is constituted by the discretionary team bonus system. This system is similar to goal-based incentive systems in the sense that team outcomes are evaluated to determine whether a specific team should be provided with certain rewards (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). By way of contrast, however, a discretionary team bonus system is not accompanied by a predetermined performance standard that will guarantee the receipt of a specific predetermined reward. Instead, when an organization feels that a team has made an extraordinary achievement, the team in question is recognized with a monetary reward (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). As with team goal-based incentive systems, discretionary team bonus systems are suggested to be best for full-time teams, especially when there is no need for a high degree of cooperation between teams in an organization. However, when inter-team cooperation is necessary, such incentive systems may create conflict and resentment, and subsequently decrease a team's motivation to perform well (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 26). To be more specific, when teams must cooperate and only certain teams are recognized with rewards, those teams that are not granted such rewards may become less cooperative in the future. In the case of part-time teams, a bonus system should not be so enticing that team duties come into conflict with team members' individual tasks, their actual primary responsibility (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 26). Therefore, a bonus system is not always considered appropriate for part-time teams and is frequently avoided with such teams. Finally, the aforementioned considerations with regard to reward distribution also apply to discretionary team bonus systems. This means that the type of reward distribution should depend on the degree of cooperation that is required among team members.

Two other major categories of systems for rewarding teams are the team and team member skill incentive systems. To start with, team skill incentive systems differ from the previously discussed incentive systems in the sense that team skills, not team outcomes, form the basis for evaluation in determining whether a reward should be distributed (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). This means that a team is rewarded when a supervisor or other evaluator believes that the team as a whole has acquired or improved certain desired skills, regardless of the team's outcomes. This type of system is based on the notion that, in case of favourable conditions, a team equipped with the right skills and exhibiting the proper processes, such as collaboration and interpersonal understanding, will achieve

desired outcomes (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 27). In turn, the team member skill incentive system is logically similar to its team skill incentive equivalent. However, in this system the skills and competencies of each team member are evaluated, rather than those of the team as a whole. This means that team members are rewarded for acquiring team-related skills, as generally indicated by evaluations provided by other team members (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 27). Examples of team-related skills are oral communication, initiation of ideas, problem solving, leadership, and adaptability in the sense of learning the tasks of other team members. Team member skill incentive systems are capable of improving team performance because they target the ways in which individual team members contribute to effective team processes (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Developing skills by means of team and team member skill incentive systems may take a great deal of time and effort, and is therefore really only appropriate when it is certain that team members will spend substantial amounts of time within teams and on team activities. In case of high team member interdependence, such systems encourage members to learn each other's tasks, and subsequently facilitate high performance (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 27). Consequently, skill incentive systems are considered most appropriate for full-time, permanent teams. When team members spend little time in team roles, it is argued that it is unnecessary and sometimes even undesirable to focus on developing team-related skills. Put another way, encouraging employees to develop team skills that they will rarely use is probably a waste of resources (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, pp. 27-28).

The final two categories of team incentive systems are the team member goal-based and merit incentive systems. In a team member goal-based incentive system, team members are rewarded when they achieve individual goals that help improve the team's overall performance (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Examples of such individual goals are sales and customer service objectives. Goals are generally established in conjunction with team members and supervisors, and the progress team members make towards these goals is subsequently evaluated on a regular basis (e.g., twice a year) via performance appraisal. When deciding how to reward employees in a team member goal-based incentive system, it may be useful to know that variable pay and bonuses are the most common rewards (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Contrary to team member goal-based systems, a team member merit system is not accompanied by a definitive level of performance that will guarantee the receipt of a reward. Instead, when peer or supervisor evaluation in a team member merit incentive system indicates that a team member has made an outstanding contribution to the team's performance, the team member is recognized with financial rewards (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Examples of such rewards are bonuses and salary increases. In terms of effectiveness, team member goal-based and merit incentive systems are considered appropriate for both full-time and part-time teams. In the case of part-time teams, such systems enable an organization to place a stronger emphasis on team member performance. In the case of full-time teams, such systems enable an organization to reward differential member contributions. However, these team member incentive systems may be inappropriate for full-time teams in which substantial intra-team cooperation is desirable (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 28).

The rationale behind these seven categories of team incentive systems is that if an organization does not recognize teamwork with rewards, team members will not feel that their work within teams is valued by the organization. However, many organizations using teams have refused to acknowledge this rationale, assuming that team incentives are unnecessary and sometimes even ineffective. "Hence, the introduction of team incentive systems in the workplace has lagged behind the

introduction of teams" (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998, p. 29). To recapitulate, it seems that two basic factors need to be taken into consideration when choosing a team incentive system. Degree of team interdependence has to be considered, both between and within teams, and also team type, that is part-time or full-time. As suggested by Hoffman and Rogelberg (1998, p. 29), organizations with full-time teams consisting of highly interdependent team members should consider implementing a team goal-based or team skill incentive system with equal reward distribution among team members, and organizations with low interdependence between full-time teams might consider a discretionary team bonus system with equitable reward distribution among team members. These are just a few examples of team incentive systems and corresponding situations in which they could be effective.

2.2 Overview of quantitative literature

It can be argued that the questions of who should be rewarded and how people should be rewarded have been adequately discussed. These are important questions to answer at the outset of the process of implementing team incentives. Quantitative research, on the other hand, can provide a picture of the actual impact and outcomes of team incentives and what these incentives ultimately lead to, a certain time after implementation. By now, it should be clear that this thesis does not focus on examining ultimate outcomes of team incentives and static relationships between team incentives and certain dependent variables. This thesis focuses primarily on potential events that occur after implementing team incentives. Moreover, it is conceivable that team incentives ultimately do not even lead to sharply defined dependent variables. Instead, team incentives may also lead to more or less self-contained events, to resistance and failures after implementation, and even to a revision of the original compensation strategy. However, despite not adopting a process theory approach, *quantitative* research can certainly be of value in a *qualitative* research synthesis. Quantitative literature may serve as a good point of departure because it addresses somewhat different questions than those appearing in qualitative literature (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). That is, quantitative research is generally about impact- and outcome-related questions, whereas qualitative research is largely inspired by questions focusing on explanation and understanding. Because of this distinction, an overview of quantitative literature can help establish the context in which potential findings are to be interpreted, or can provide a point of comparison or contrast. Additionally, discussing quantitative literature also enables us to show where the literature bases overlap, and how and to what extent the qualitative studies extend and explain the quantitative findings (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010).

It was not the intention, however, to conduct a comprehensive search for quantitative literature. Meta-analyses already cover the findings of numerous quantitative studies and are therefore more convenient for this purpose. In addition, the urge to initiate a qualitative research synthesis arose from studying the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014). As a consequence, this meta-analysis will be given a prominent role in the upcoming section. The literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) will be used to complement the findings of this meta-analysis. Although the review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) is not explicitly quantitative in nature, the review is largely characterized by a variance theory perspective. The review identified and included studies that measured the effects of team-based rewards and that examined relationships between team rewards and dependent performance variables, and this review identified key factors in the effectiveness of team-based rewards. In addition to the fact that the review fits well into this overview of quantitative literature, the review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) also puts forward considerations that may be relevant at the outset of the implementation process.

2.2.1 Overall relationship between team incentives and performance

Garbers and Konradt (2014), who examined both team-based and individual rewards and who considered numerous moderator variables, concluded that the incentive-performance relationships were consistently positive in their meta-analysis. Their overall estimate of the relationship between financial incentives and performance was also substantively consistent with the earlier meta-analyses of Condly et al. (2003) and Jenkins, Mitra, Gupta, and Shaw (1998). In their meta-analysis, the results for team-based incentives were quite similar to the results for individual incentives, the only real difference being that the effect for team incentives on performance was higher than for individual incentives. This result is in line with the assumption that team incentives signalize that an organization values the performance of teams, and that team incentives are therefore capable of improving motivation and team performance (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Moreover, as suggested by goal-setting theory, team-based incentives motivate and reinforce individual performance, and in addition to individual incentives, they encourage cooperative team-level behaviour and therefore improve team performance (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 121).

2.2.2 Consideration of reward characteristics

Perhaps the most valuable finding of the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014) is that the effect for equitably distributed rewards was greater than for equally distributed rewards. This finding can be attributed to higher individual motivation and lower motivation losses in the case of equitable reward distribution. With respect to motivation and considered from a theoretical perspective, the results of Garbers and Konradt (2014) are in accordance with aspects of reinforcement and goal-setting theories rather than principles of expectancy and cognitive evaluation theories. In short, financial incentives may pose a threat to intrinsic motivation, but they are positively rather than negatively correlated with performance. With regard to the self-determination theory, the results of Garbers and Konradt (2014, pp. 120-121) provided support for the idea that rewards erode intrinsic motivation only under extremely circumscribed conditions. In light of reward distribution, we have to express a reservation regarding the greater effect for team-based rewards compared to the effect for individual rewards. Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 121) their stronger effects for equitably distributed rewards than for equally distributed rewards suggest that, even in team reward situations, individual rewards are more effective. This paradoxical finding can be explained by the amount of motivation loss processes that is higher in teams with equal reward distribution.

The result that equitably distributed rewards lead to higher performance than equally distributed rewards also indicates that managers and executives should design a team appraisal and feedback process. The managers and executives involved should provide feedback to a team and its individual members in a way that encourages members to reflect and adapt team processes and to create a climate of psychological safety in teams (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 122). When choosing between equitable and equal reward distribution at the initial stage of implementation, there seems to be another trade-off that needs to be made. Equitable distribution of team rewards may foster team productivity and maximize team performance, whereas equal reward distribution may promote cohesion, solidarity and cooperation among team members (DeMatteo et al., 1998). However, it is argued that firms do not necessarily have to choose between performance and cohesion. According to DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 156), the preferred allocation method may vary depending on the stage of development a team is in, with newly formed teams benefiting most from equally distributed rewards and with preference shifting towards equitable distribution as teams become more mature.

Additionally, the distinction between equal and equitable reward distribution may be less significant in practice where reward systems generally comprise a mixture of both equal and equitable reward components.

It may be worthwhile to delve somewhat deeper into the role of group development. Theories on group development suggest the presence of developmental shifts in internal group dynamics that may be critical to members' responses to team-based financial incentives and rewards. The widely cited models by Tuckman and Jensen (1977) and Gersick (1988) represent and correspond to a group learning curve in which teams show changes over time in internal processes, task performance, and external relations (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 162). As a team develops over time, its members may respond differently to team incentives. It is conceivable that members of a new team are in need of an incentive system that features an equal distribution of rewards, at least up to the point at which the team has worked out the roles and working relationships of its members. However, as a team becomes more mature, team members may perceive differential contributions by individuals in the team and may want differential allocation of team rewards to ensure a just reflection of these contributions (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 162). In essence, group development may give rise to a norm shift in the team from a quest for equality to a quest for equity.

In addition to reward distribution, reward size is another characteristic of rewards that may be taken into consideration. Larger rewards are suggested to result in greater performance improvement, and research on individual-based rewards showed that reward size is positively correlated with pay satisfaction and motivation (DeMatteo et al., 1998; Garbers & Konradt, 2014). Although there is relatively little research on the optimal reward size in team incentive systems, DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 155) stated that it is reasonable to expect that reward size and the amount of pay contingent on team performance will be related to higher motivation and team performance. In the event that larger amounts of pay are contingent on team performance, it is in the interest of a team to work cooperatively together to obtain higher bonuses and rewards. Unfortunately, there is no general rule or all-encompassing formula to determine how large a reward must be to influence motivation and performance. It is suggested that the actual amount needed varies considerably from individual to individual, may be a function of organizational and economic conditions, and may vary depending on the total compensation received (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 155). Irrespective of whether or not researchers manage to agree on the exact reward size that is needed to motivate individual workers, a more serious issue is the lack of research exploring this matter at the team level. Previous research on reward size focused almost exclusively on increases in individual pay raises and individual-based rewards in general. However, the reward size that is required in team-based incentive systems may differ from the size that is necessary in individual incentive systems. It is conceivable that team-based organizations can maintain a smaller size with their *monetary* rewards because they provide more or make more effective use of *nonmonetary*, recognition-based rewards such as social relationships with team members, positive feedback, and plaques (DeMatteo et al., 1998).

The final reward characteristic to consider is the frequency with which rewards are distributed among teams and their members, in other words the frequency of payout. Although Garbers and Konradt (2014) and DeMatteo et al. (1998) did not discuss this characteristic extensively, there is certainly something worth mentioning. According to DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 156), the stronger and more consistent the link between pay and performance, the more motivational power rewards have.

It is therefore recommended that rewards should be provided to team members frequently enough that the desired behaviours are reinforced.

2.2.3 Consideration of team characteristics

In addition to the finding that the effect for equitably distributed rewards was greater than for equally distributed rewards, Garbers and Konradt (2014) also showed with their results that the effect of team-based incentives depends on team size. In their meta-analysis, the effect sizes decreased as the number of team members increased. Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 119) put forward that in smaller teams, individual effort is easier to identify and motivation losses are therefore less likely. To be precise, according to expectancy-based theories of motivation, rewards carry more motivational potential at lower levels of aggregation because in those situations employees can see more clearly how their individual efforts translate into reward-generating outcomes (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 161). As the size of a team increases, individual performance is further removed from the amount of the reward, which in turn reduces the 'line of sight' between pay and performance. Hence, attaching incentives to the performance of smaller teams may increase an individual team member's sense of control over performance and consequently rewards. Logically, DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 162) raised the following question: if the line of sight between pay and performance, and hence the motivational potential of a reward, increases as the size of a team decreases, why do we not just use individual-based rewards? They find the answer to this question in the assumption that team incentives do something qualitatively different than their individual counterparts. The bottom line is that individual incentives may motivate individuals to achieve higher levels of performance, whereas team-based incentives may serve this purpose *as well as* encourage team members to engage in cooperative behaviour and to think as a unit, rather than as self-contained, competing individuals (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 162). To put it another way, those arguing for the use of team incentives state that the choice between team-based and individual incentives may involve a trade-off in which cooperation, information sharing, and helping behaviours at the team level are gained and reinforced at the expense of some motivation loss at the individual level (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 162). Team size may be a determining factor in making a choice and dealing with this trade-off.

Two other team characteristics to take into consideration are team type and team composition, beginning with the former. According to DeMatteo et al. (1998), team incentives are probably more effective for the type of team that works with clear, measurable goals and output, such as a project or self-managing team. In a similar manner, team incentives are more likely to be effective for teams with permanent assignments or whose work will continue for longer periods of time (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 163). When combining these findings, one can notice the overlap with the assumption of Hoffman and Rogelberg (1998) that team goal-based incentive systems with clear, predetermined performance targets are most appropriate for full-time teams. In addition to team goal-based systems, full-time and permanent teams are also thought to benefit from team (member) skill incentive systems and discretionary team bonus systems (in the case of low interdependence between teams). Goal-based and merit incentive systems targeting individual team members may also be appropriate for full-time, permanent teams, but in organizations characterized by substantial intra-team cooperation these systems may prove counterproductive. Contrary to what is the case with permanent teams, the utility of team incentives may decrease in teams with short life spans, as in parallel teams such as quality circles and advisory groups (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 163). Similarly,

incentive systems such as team goal-based incentive systems and discretionary team bonus systems are considered less appropriate for part-time teams. Members of part-time teams spend a relatively large amount of time on individual tasks, and in the specific case of discretionary team bonus systems, a bonus could be so enticing that team duties come into conflict with these individual tasks. Incentive systems such as team member goal-based and merit incentive systems, however, are considered more appropriate for part-time teams. In the case of part-time teams, such systems allow an organization to place a stronger emphasis on team member performance (Hoffman & Rogelberg, 1998). Finally, implementing team-based incentives may be beneficial to research and development teams, and on the other hand, team incentive systems may be difficult to manage effectively in teams with frequent turnover. In short, the more a team works with clear, measurable goals, has stable membership, and is self-contained, the more likely team incentives will be effective (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 163).

The final team characteristic to consider is team composition. Garbers and Konradt (2014) initially assumed that team composition (degree of gender heterogeneity to be precise) moderated the relationship between team-based rewards and performance, with stronger effects for homogeneous teams than for heterogeneous teams. Their results, however, showed that the effect of team-based rewards on performance was stronger in teams with gender heterogeneity than in teams with homogeneity of gender. At an earlier stage, DeMatteo et al. (1998) briefly defined team composition as the composition or mix of team members' personality, ability, and other characteristics. What they proposed was in line with the initial assumption of Garbers and Konradt (2014). According to them, the more team members differ on performance-relevant characteristics such as ability, the greater the likelihood of differential individual contributions. Consequently, the chance increases that some team members will see their contributions as disproportionate, which in turn leads to lower levels of motivation and team performance (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 163). However, DeMatteo et al. (1998) were unable at the time to substantiate this claim with significant evidence.

2.2.4 Consideration of task complexity and types of performance measures

In addition, Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 120) found evidence that the complexity of a task and the type of performance measure may moderate the relationship between (individual and team-based) financial incentives and performance. As regards task complexity, their results showed a stronger effect for complex tasks, which was in contrast to the hypothesized stronger effect for less complex tasks. This result also runs counter to research on goal-setting theory, indicating that goal-setting effects become weaker as a task grows more complex (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 121). Once again in contrast to the hypothesized effect, Garbers and Konradt (2014) their results showed a stronger effect for qualitative (behaviour-based) outcome measures than for the less subjective quantitative (results-based) outcome measures. This unexpected result could be explained by the complexity of the task, an explanation in which the two moderators task complexity and outcome type come together. Despite being more objective and reliable, quantitative performance measures may also be somewhat inadequate as indicators of the full range of expected performance. More complex tasks may reduce the possibility of enhancing performance quantity (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 121). The stronger effect for qualitative, behaviour-based performance measures may also be an indication of the potential of incentive systems such as team skill and goal-based incentive systems. In these systems, the desired skill levels and goals may very well resemble or take the form of qualitative performance criteria.

Despite exhibiting a stronger effect, qualitative performance measures do not always constitute the recommended type of performance measurement. As subtly mentioned above, quantitative, results-based measures are less susceptible to subjective judgment, whereas the subjectivity of qualitative, behaviour-based performance measures limits the ability to differentiate between workers (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 110). Because of their relative objectivity and reliability, employees would rather focus on meeting quantitative performance criteria than on satisfying qualitative criteria. Similarly, DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 164) argued that the use of objective, quantifiable measures of team performance/productivity is particularly important in group incentive plans in which the boundary between individual and team performance is frequently ambiguous and must be managed carefully to prevent feelings of injustice. In short, in discussing which type of performance measurement to use, Garbers and Konradt (2014) placed slightly more emphasis on the degree of objectivity, whereas DeMatteo et al. (1998) placed a little more emphasis on managing the boundary between individual and team performance. Finally, it should be noted that it is important to ensure that teams are able to influence the criteria on which they will ultimately be evaluated (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 164).

2.2.5 Consideration of individual differences

Individual differences between team members and employees in general may also be taken into consideration at the outset of the implementation process. Although Garbers and Konradt (2014) did not manage to incorporate individual characteristics of participants into their meta-analysis due to a lack of information in primary studies, these individual characteristics can be of vital importance for the effectiveness of financial incentives in organizations. One such important characteristic is the individual need for achievement. Garbers and Konradt (2014) put forward that the level of need for achievement affects an individual's preference for certain companies and entrepreneurs. Conversely, organizations may also be attracted to potential employees with a certain level of individual need for achievement. It is conceivable, for example, that individuals with a high need for achievement prefer organizations with multifarious rewards systems, which emphasize the importance of equitable and fair distribution of rewards (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 122). DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 166) went even further by stating that individuals with a high need for achievement are attracted mainly to jobs and organizations that offer individual-based pay systems rather than group-based pay systems. This means that team-based organizations, with team incentive systems in place, must consider carefully whether or not they should employ individuals with a very high need for achievement. In addition, "because need for achievement is associated with a competitive, contest orientation, there may be dysfunctional consequences as the number of team members who are high on need for achievement increases within a team" (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 166). If teams have been established for quite some time and predominantly consist of members with a high need for achievement, then team-based reward practices are probably less effective and hence less suitable for implementation.

Another individual characteristic to consider is individual ability, i.e. the perceptions team members have of their ability and/or contributions to the team's output (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 164). Where Garbers and Konradt (2014) did not really elaborate on individual ability, DeMatteo et a. (1998) certainly paid attention to the possible role of this individual characteristic. It is argued that the highest-ability team members or top performers in a team will react negatively to team-based incentive systems. Such high-ability team members may feel that they are carrying the weight of less able team members while receiving equivalent financial rewards (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 165). High-performing individuals are therefore more likely to leave an organization when team incentive

systems are in place. Lower performing team members, on the other hand, are more likely to leave their organization under individual incentive systems. What applies to individual performance also applies to self-efficacy. Talented individuals with high self-efficacy may be dissatisfied in firms using team-based incentives, less attracted to organizations using team incentive practices, and less likely to accept jobs in firms utilizing team-based pay systems (DeMatteo et al., 1998). However, these are predictions about the influence of ability at the individual level. Predictions about this influence at the team level are somewhat different. DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 166) argued that teams consisting mainly of high ability members will be more open to and satisfied with the use of team incentives because their higher performance levels will certainly result in larger or more frequent rewards for those teams. Teams consisting mainly of low ability workers, on the other hand, may receive smaller or less frequent rewards due to lower performance levels and may consequently be less willing to accept team incentive practices. Finally, concerns over the fairness of reward distribution are likely to be most prevalent in teams that are heterogeneous with respect to ability (i.e., some high and some low ability members) because in such teams the likelihood is maximized that high ability members will perceive free riding (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 166).

A final individual characteristic that may be taken into consideration and that can also be classified as an organizational characteristic is the degree of collectivism, i.e. the preference for working in teams. Collectivists are characterized by an orientation towards cooperation, team goals, deep attachment to and strong identification with the team, and concern for the team, whereas their individualistic counterparts prefer to work alone and tend to value individual goals and autonomy (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 167). According to DeMatteo et al. (1998), the extent to which the culture of an organization is collectivistic versus individualistic is likely to determine how willing employees are to accept reward structures based on team rather than individual performance. In an organizational culture that is highly individualistic, the introduction of teams and team-based compensation is likely to face considerable resistance, whereas team compensation is more likely to be embraced in a collectivistic organizational culture (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 158). Frequently, team-based incentive systems are already in place and the emphasis shifts to selecting appropriate team members with a certain degree of collectivism (or individualism), or team incentive systems are almost in place and the only decision left to make is which type of reward distribution to choose. In those cases, there is something to take into consideration. Because collectivists prefer to receive team-based recognition and do not appreciate being singled out among their fellow team members, collectivists are more likely to prefer a system with equal reward distribution in which differentiation among members is minimized (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 167). Individualists, on the other hand, are more likely to prefer a reward system with equitable distribution in which rewards are based on individual performance, particularly because of their desire for individual recognition. As a final comment on the individual differences between team members and employees in general, it should be noted that it may be important for an organization to collect personality data (e.g., during the personnel selection process) before implementing a new reward system in order to ensure the system's effectiveness (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 122).

2.2.6 Consideration of organizational characteristics

Whether employees appreciate team incentives depends on whether a team incentive system is consistent with the other management systems and the culture and philosophy of the organization. To begin with culture, DeMatteo et al. (1998, p. 158) put forward four types of organizational culture

based on the extent to which an organization is mechanistic versus organic and based on whether the relative emphasis is on internal maintenance or external positioning. In short, the culture of an organization can be described as a *clan* (focus on teamwork, cohesiveness, and participation), an *adhocracy* (focus on entrepreneurship, creativity, and adaptability), a *market-oriented* culture (focus on competitiveness and goal achievement), or as a *hierarchy* (focus on rules, order, and regulation) (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 158). Based on these culture types, it seems that the set of values that are characteristic of a clan culture would most closely match the philosophy underlying the use of team-based compensation. More generally, cultural values of communication and information sharing, and a commitment to developing team members and employees may be important to the success of team incentives (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 158).

Another organizational characteristic that may be important to consider is the congruence between team incentive systems and other management systems within the firm. When there is incongruence among multiple subsystems within an organization, a situation of conflict may arise in which team members and employees in general experience a serious lack of clarity about the desired behaviours (DeMatteo et al., 1998). In the event that different organizational subsystems (e.g., performance appraisal system and compensation system) suggest different desired behaviours (e.g., individual achievement versus team performance), it is conceivable that performance is sacrificed to the extent that employees receive conflicting feedback about what behaviour is expected and valued by the firm (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 159). Such cases may give rise to team conflict, perceptions of role ambiguity, and may contribute to lower team effectiveness.

A final characteristic that may be taken into consideration is the size of an organization. DeMatteo et al. (1998) stated that as an organization becomes larger, it has to deal with increasingly complicated structures, an increasing need for coordination mechanisms, and a greater call for specialization. These features of larger firms may also give rise to increasing complexity in the process of designing and implementing management systems. This suggests that small organizations may be able to implement and monitor team incentive systems in a more effective way than larger organizations (DeMatteo et al., 1998, p. 160).

2.2.7 Main practical implications and remaining considerations

On the basis of their results, Garbers and Konradt (2014) put forward three important practical implications. First, organizations and their leaders should implement individual-based incentive systems (with either equitably distributed team rewards or truly individual rewards) in team working contexts to improve motivation and performance (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 122). Secondly, if there is already a reward system in place for teams, team members should be selected on the basis of the specific type of reward system used and according to the type of task. In firms with equality-based reward systems and less complex tasks, where performance quantity is needed, homogeneous teams are likely to be more successful than heterogeneously composed teams (Garbers & Konradt, 2014). By the same token, firms with mainly heterogeneous teams should implement high complex tasks and use equitably distributed or individual performance-based rewards, and vice versa. In addition, if a reward system is already in place, the size of the teams to be formed should be dependent on the minimum number of team members required to ensure the optimal effect of the reward system used. Thirdly and finally, employees as well as managers should be encouraged by their organization to implement new or improve existing reward systems in accordance with their

teams, tasks, and existing structures in order to ensure appropriate, adaptive reward systems are in place (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 122).

In addition, Garbers and Konradt (2014) reported that two aspects of performance were under-represented in the research on the effectiveness of financial incentives at the time of conducting their meta-analysis. There was little research on the influence of counterproductive behaviour on the effects of financial incentives, and little research was conducted on the potential role of extra-role behaviour such as proactivity. Perhaps process theory can fill this gap in the literature by highlighting extra-role and counterproductive events, activities, and choices of actors. Furthermore, Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 119) their results indicated that the effect of team-based and individual financial incentives is moderated by a study's setting. The relationship between incentives and performance was stronger for field studies than for their laboratory counterparts. This suggests that experiments are unable to fully reflect the complex conditions that occur in authentic, real-world situations. Additionally, it is stated that experimental findings may appear more rational and oriented towards performance than findings from organizational settings (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 120). The stronger moderating effect for field studies may also suggest that the impact of team incentives and rewards is even greater in the daily practice of a typical team-based organization. This idea should remove some scepticism/resistance before and during the implementation of team incentives.

2.2.8 Role of processes in literature reviews

By elaborating on the intellectual work of Hoffman and Rogelberg (1998), we hope to have supported our intended audience of company policy makers and researchers in answering the questions of who should be rewarded and how people should be rewarded. Again, these are important questions to answer at the outset of the process of implementing team incentives. The considerations put forward by DeMatteo et al. (1998) may also be highly relevant at the outset of this implementation process. Moreover, by discussing the quantitative review of Garbers and Konradt (2014), we hope to have provided a picture of the actual impact and outcomes of team incentives and what these incentives ultimately lead to, a certain time after implementation. In this way, the periods before and well after implementation should be adequately covered. However, the question remains as to what happens during and shortly after implementing team incentives, i.e. the specific events that occur after implementation. At this stage, the question is whether the aforementioned literature reviews are able to tell us something about the processes arising from team incentives.

We can be brief about the role of these processes in the literature reviews. There is not much more to say about these processes than has already been done in the problem statement. Garbers and Konradt (2014, p. 103) repeatedly argued that due to different goals and the influence of underlying *team processes*, results and theories of the relationship between individual financial incentives and performance cannot be conclusively applied to team incentives. However, they subsequently did not explain what exactly these team processes imply or consist of. In addition, Garbers and Konradt (2014) did mention motivation loss processes in teams with equal reward distribution and motivation losses due to social loafing processes, but they limited themselves to these general and vague terms rather than describing actual processes consisting of specific events. Even when stressing the importance of team processes in their concluding remarks, Garbers and Konradt (2014) did not clarify or further elaborate on these team processes. They merely argued that the effects of team incentives

may be divided into the individual effects of incentives on the one hand and team processes on the other, and that team processes should therefore not be neglected when examining differences between individual and team-based incentives (Garbers & Konradt, 2014, p. 121). Once again, they did not make clear what these team processes imply and, perhaps even more important, whether and to what extent these processes are set in motion or affected by team incentives. DeMatteo et al. (1998), in turn, presumed and stated that several *psychological processes* may be affected by team rewards and in that way mediate the consequences of the rewards. In line with this reasoning, they suggested that future research should focus on constructing theoretical models of the process by which team rewards affect team and ultimately organizational performance. However, DeMatteo et al. (1998) did not make a serious attempt to elaborate on these psychological processes. Moreover, they referred only to psychological processes, whereas there should also be many other types of processes. Despite a slight difference in that Garbers and Konradt (2014) stressed the importance of team processes and DeMatteo et al. (1998) emphasized psychological processes, the literature reviews are similar in the sense that they did not adequately manage to tell us something about the processes arising from team incentives.

Some time ago, Rynes, Gerhart, and Parks (2005) already noticed a lack of research on the processes arising from team incentives. According to them, authors in the strategic human resource management literature frequently called for research that would help illuminate the so-called black box between various HR practices (e.g., 360-degree feedback or profit-sharing) and organizational outcomes (e.g., growth or profits). Rynes et al. (2005, p. 592) stated that although economists and strategic management researchers conducted numerous studies correlating various HR practices with organizational outcomes, most of these studies left the reader guessing about the causal processes involved and consequently about how to improve practical effectiveness. At the time of performing their literature review, few studies had conducted cross-organizational research that simultaneously measured pay and evaluation policies, employee reactions and behaviours, and unit performance. Rynes et al. (2005, p. 592) argued that researchers needed to begin measuring matters such as employee reactions and behaviours in order to identify causal processes as well as to provide guidance on how best to implement various pay-for-performance programmes.

Studies on intervening processes, especially longitudinal studies, can particularly be used to reveal more about the difficulties of successfully implementing and maintaining new pay-for-performance practices. To highlight the latter, Rynes et al. (2005, p. 592) stated that many gainsharing and other incentive programmes were discontinued due to implementation difficulties. In a study by Petty, Singleton, and Connell (1992), for example, despite better performance on a variety of objective and perceptual performance measures, the gainsharing plan was discontinued due to disagreements between the union and management about how to distribute the gains among employees if the plan were to be applied in other units. In another study by Pritchard, Jones, Roth, Stuebing, and Ekeberg (1988), despite productivity improvements of up to 75%, the combined group-based feedback, goal-setting, and incentive intervention was practically discontinued after the arrival of a new manager who was fundamentally opposed to the use of incentives. In this study, there was also resistance from people who argued that personnel should not receive an additional reward for doing what they are already supposed to do, as well as from several supervisors who believed that the incentive system would undermine their power and prerogatives to reward individuals and units in an informal way (Pritchard et al., 1988, p. 354). These two study examples illustrate the difficulty of managing

perceived conflicts of interest between individuals (both managers and regular employees) and the broader organization, and the difficulty of aligning their respective goals and objectives. Moreover, both studies are exemplary in that they present important information on both causal processes and practical implementation challenges (Rynes et al., 2005, p. 592). Unfortunately, the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014) and the literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) did not include studies that examined such processes and implementation challenges with regard to team incentive systems. The two aforementioned study examples, however, nourished the expectation that process studies on team incentives would be out there to be explored and examined.

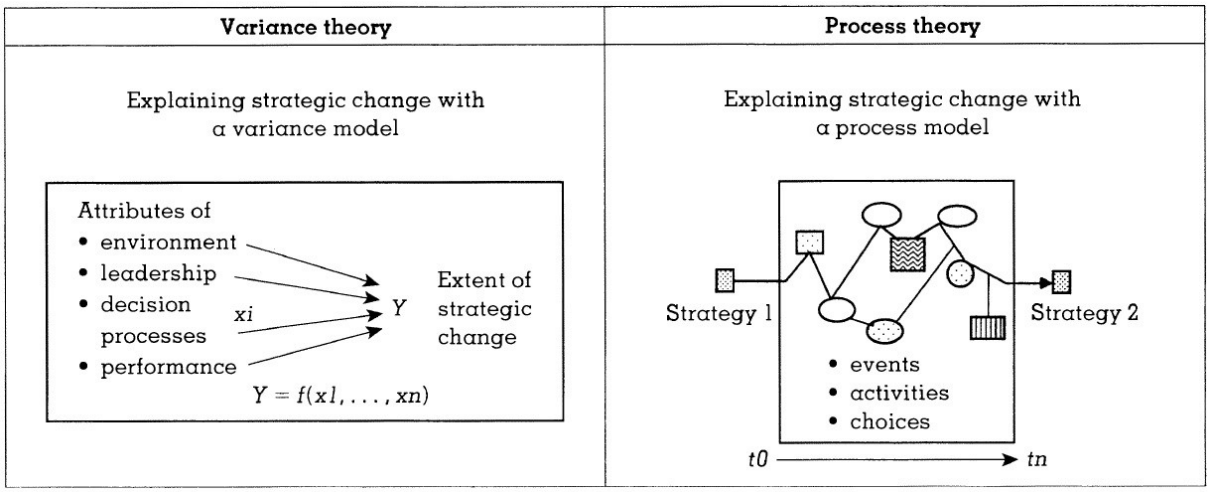
2.3 Process theory

In the search for process studies and in the pursuit of process theory, it may be worthwhile to delve somewhat deeper into the contribution process theory can provide in explaining the impact of team-based financial incentives and rewards.

2.3.1 Contribution of process theory in explanation

In the introduction, it has been made clear that there are numerous examples of studies that have examined the relationship between team incentives and some kind of performance variable. Such studies develop purely instrumental theories that suggest a connection between variables, or between so-called antecedents and consequences, but that lack an explanation. Therefore, we need information on the causal chain of *events* that explains why the variables or the antecedents and consequences are related. Hence, it is argued that opening this black box requires greater attention to processes (Pentland, 1999). In short, process research is about understanding *how* things evolve over time and *why* things evolve in this way. Process data therefore consist largely of stories about what happened and who did what when. So basically, process data include events, activities, and choices ordered over time (Langley, 1999). Whereas variance studies examine phenomena in terms of static relationships between independent and dependent variables (e.g., more of X and more of Y produce more of Z), process studies aim to explain phenomena in terms of a sequence of events leading to an outcome (e.g., do A and then B to get C). The overall distinction between variance theory and process theory is best illustrated by Figure 2.

- **Figure 2:** Distinction between variance theory and process theory (Langley, 1999, p. 693)



As can also be seen in the figure, temporal ordering and probabilistic interaction between entities are important in process theory. Understanding patterns in events is thus essential for developing process theory. The question remains, however, what exactly events are and consist of. Events are quite different from the variables that dominate contemporary literature and methodology seminars, and that most researchers are used to manipulating in experiments and interventions. The analysis of process data therefore requires that events be conceptualized and that patterns are detected among them (Langley, 1999, p. 692). Despite the temporal precision that the word 'event' suggests, there are clearly different levels of events. An event may include a bad year, a merger or acquisition, a decision, a meeting, a conversation, and even a handshake. Given that events are quite different from variables and given the clearly different levels of events, it is not surprising that some researchers advocated an artificial separation of variables and events. However, Langley (1999, p. 693) argued that "the insistence on exclusion of variables from process research unnecessarily limits the variety of theories constructed". In some cases, it may be important to examine and understand the effect of certain events on the state of an entity (a variable) or, conversely, to identify the effect of a contextual variable on the progression of events. In short, although this thesis focuses on events and process theory, events and variables do not necessarily have to be mutually exclusive.

2.3.2 Use and features of narrative data

As mentioned in the introduction, one should be able to build better process theory and better explanations through the use and structural analysis of narrative data. Narrative embodies event sequence and time, and is therefore naturally suited to the development of process theory and explanations (Pentland, 1999, p. 717). Participants not only make sense of their world in narrative terms, but they proactively plan and create narratives that are in accordance with their values and expectations. Process explanations based on narrative data are particularly close to the phenomena they claim to explain (Pentland, 1999, p. 712). In addition, although time tends to play an important role because of the structure of narrative, a narrative strategy avoids commitment to any specific anchor point (Langley, 1999, p. 695). Also, this strategy avoids the necessity of clear definitions when boundaries are not entirely clear. Moreover, because of its focus on contextual detail, a narrative approach works best for one or a few cases. This was considered desirable as it was somewhat unclear at the outset of the actual qualitative research synthesis how many process studies were actually out there to be explored and examined.

Compared with other strategies for making sense of process data such as the quantification strategy and visual mapping strategy, the narrative strategy also has its drawbacks, which have to do with the categories of *accuracy*, *simplicity*, and *generality*. Some strategies tend to stick closely to the original data. This close data fitting reflects what is called 'accuracy'. Simplicity, in turn, refers to the number of elements and/or relationships in a theory. Finally, generality concerns the potential range of situations to which a theory may be applicable (Langley, 1999, p. 695). Of these categories, accuracy and simplicity are nearly always in opposition to each other, whereas the generality of an emerging theory will depend on other factors, such as the degree and scope of replication and the source of the conceptual ideas (Langley, 1999, p. 706). Table 3 shows how various sense-making strategies generally relate to one another with regard to the categories of accuracy, simplicity, and generality.

- **Table 3:** Accuracy, simplicity, and generality of sense-making strategies (Langley, 1999, p. 706)

Strategy	Accuracy	Simplicity	Generality
	High	Low	Low
Narrative	↑	↓	⋮
Grounded theory			
Temporal bracketing			
Visual mapping			
Synthetic strategy			
Quantification			
Computer simulation			
	Low	High	High

When a narrative strategy is applied, accuracy is expected to be high. However, this strategy does not in itself lead to either *simple* or *general* theory. While clearly acknowledging the usefulness of the narrative approach for communicating the richness of the context to readers, research is usually expected to offer theoretical interpretations that are more explicit and more far-reaching (Langley, 1999, p. 697). When relying solely on the narrative strategy, this could easily result in a rather thin conceptual contribution and an idiosyncratic story that is of marginal interest to those who were not involved. As stated by Langley (1999, p. 697), appealing process research needs to transcend mere authenticity and accuracy in order to make readers feel that they have learned something more far-reaching and of wider value. Based on the above reasoning, there is a strong case to be made for collecting both qualitative stories and quantitative time series in the same process research effort (Langley, 1999, p. 705). However, because of its closeness to participants and real-world phenomena and due to time constraints, it was decided to adopt only a narrative approach to developing process theory.

Unfortunately, the data to be collected are always limited to the surface, and there is no direct access to the underlying structure of the phenomena to be explained. Hence, a major challenge in organizational theory is how to move from surface structure to deep structure (Pentland, 1999, p. 712). The surface structure of a narrative consists of the actual *text* or *discourse*. The deep structure, in turn, is formed by underlying narrative structures, which are called *stories* or *fabula*. These underlying structures are used to explain and interpret the surface structure. To be precise, a fabula represents an objective version of the basic events and characters that are required to uniquely identify a particular story (Pentland, 1999, p. 720). As one moves from surface observations to the underlying narrative structures, one moves from description to explanation. In doing so, one moves towards better theory. At the very least, a narrative text must describe a progression or sequence of events, but narratives generally contain a great deal more than just sequence (Pentland, 1999, p. 712). It is argued that we need to pay the necessary attention to all aspects of narrative, not just sequence. Although event-sequence data are central to process theory, they are insufficient to tell a whole story (Pentland, 1999, p. 721). Moreover, focusing solely on event sequence may limit our ability to produce meaningful explanations. Table 4 presents an overview of all aspects of narrative to be considered.

- **Table 4:** Overview of narrative properties (Pentland, 1999, p. 713)

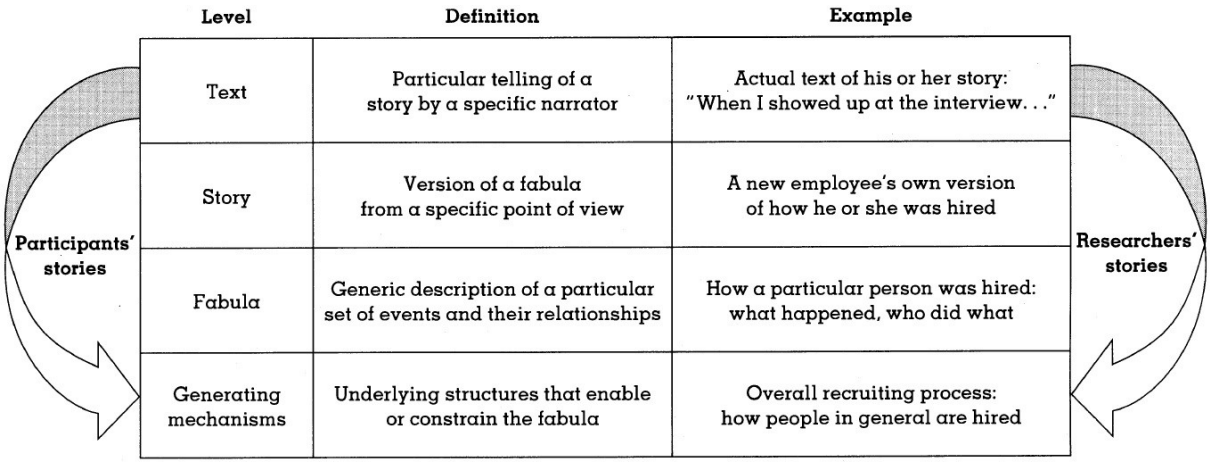
Narrative Property	Indicator for
Sequence	Patterns of events
Focal actor(s)	Role, social network, and demographics
Voice	Point of view, social relationships, and power
Moral context	Cultural values and assumptions
Other indicators	Other aspects of context

Obviously, *event sequence* is the core of narrative structure. Event sequence is part of the fabula of a story and hence part of the deep structure. Event sequence means that narrative should include a clear beginning, middle, and end. Although chronology is a central organizing device in narrative, the surface structure of a narrative does not necessarily have to be presented in sequence. Events are frequently rearranged for dramatic effect (Pentland, 1999, p. 712). Along with event sequence, *focal actors* constitute the fabula and deep structure in narrative. These are the characters and roles that tie the events in a story together and that provide a thread of meaning and continuity. Stories can be about individuals, teams, projects, or whole organizations. Therefore, from an organizational studies perspective, the focal actors determine the level and unit of analysis used in a study (Pentland, 1999, p. 714). This qualitative research synthesis focuses on narratives about teams and their members. In narrative, there are protagonists and frequently also antagonists who oppose them. Characters may not be developed or even identified by name, which makes it more difficult to recognize the focal actors. Although not fully developed or identifiable, we cannot simply replace one character or role with another because the identity of who performs an action may well be a relevant part of a story. As an example, Pentland (1999, p. 714) pointed to the difference between murder and suicide. More generally, data regarding the identities and relationships of the characters in the story (participants in a process) are required if one wishes to understand the role structure and social networks in which the process in question is embedded. In addition to the fact that you cannot simply *replace* one role with another, you better not have to deal with a *missing* role. If a particular role is missing, it is conceivable that certain processes cannot proceed (Pentland, 1999, p. 714). As a consequence, focal actors should not be omitted from a story.

In turn, *narrative voice* and *evaluative/moral context* form the surface structure. In contrast to deep structure, surface structure is directly observable and covers the actual text in studies. Narrative voice, to begin with, concerns the particular, possibly subtle point of view of storytellers, including researchers. A narrative is something that someone tells, so there should always be a recognizable voice doing the narrating (Pentland, 1999, p. 712). That voice reflects the particular point of view (or focalization) with which the events in the fabula are perceived and narrated. Since multiple points of view are always possible, narrative voice is generally not considered part of deep structure. As mentioned, researchers also tell stories. Researchers narrate the events they study, and focalize their subjects when choosing what to measure and what to report (Pentland, 1999, p. 720). Rather than letting their subjects do the talking, researchers create and sustain an impression of objectivity by telling the stories in their own scholarly voice. However, such things as focalization and scholarly

voice inherently involve subjectivity. To the extent that we strive for objectivity, focalization poses a threat to validity because it creates a selective, value-laden account of events. For this reason, purely event-based methods eliminate narrative voice to gain objectivity. On the other hand, there are also researchers who believe that many insights can be gained from a careful analysis of the same story from multiple, subjective points of view (Pentland, 1999, pp. 714-715). In addition to narrative voice, the surface structure consists of the evaluative and moral context of stories. Moral context simply means that narratives carry meaning and cultural values and assumptions, even without being explicit. A final feature of narrative is constituted by *other indicators of content and context*. It can be argued that narrative texts generally contain more than just the bare events (Pentland, 1999, p. 713). In particular, narratives contain a variety of textual devices that are used to indicate time, place, attributes of the context, attributes of the characters, et cetera. These include indicators of physical setting (e.g., a remote location), the demographic characteristics of the participants (e.g., country of origin, level of education, level of income), and the psychological states of the participants (e.g., fear, surprise, disorientation). As stated by Pentland (1999, p. 713), these indicators do not advance the plot, but they typically provide information that may be essential to the interpretation of the chain of events. The aforementioned thick description and detailed quotations from participants are most likely to provide these additional indicators of content and context.

When building process theory, one should work towards a fabula. To reiterate, a fabula represents an objective version of the specific events, characters, and their relationships that are required to uniquely identify a particular storyline. We explain the connection between variables or between antecedents and consequences by describing the events that connect them and by constructing the fabula. However, describing patterns of events does not in itself explain the underlying processes that generated the patterns (Pentland, 1999, p. 718). The fabula constitutes the process *description* and answers the 'how' question, but to truly *explain* a process and to answer the 'why' question, one needs to identify and gain insight into the so-called *generative mechanisms* that enable and constrain the process. These mechanisms, which are located at the deepest level, can be seen as an underlying process and should ultimately be identified and acquired in order to develop a truly explanatory process model. Generative mechanisms may take the form of an abstract process, such as variation and selective retention or goal seeking, or may take the form of a routine work process that repeats periodically, such as budgeting or recruiting (Pentland, 1999, pp. 719-720). Figure 3 reflects the different levels of structure that are to be found in narrative.



- **Figure 3:** Levels of structure in narrative (Pentland, 1999, p. 719)

3. METHODOLOGY

Now we have introduced the key concepts, have discussed the main bodies of literature regarding team incentives and process theory, and have provided an overview of relevant quantitative literature, the moment has arrived that we can delve deeper into the research methodology. The overarching goal of this chapter is to make the synthesis process transparent by describing the various specific steps that have been taken during synthesis. As mentioned earlier, the ENTREQ statement and items should reflect these steps and ensure transparency. In the next sections, each ENTREQ item will be carefully discussed.

3.1 Justification of research design

In the introduction, an initial rationale has been provided for choosing qualitative research synthesis as the main research method. However, as the phrase itself suggests, this initial rationale does not suffice as a full justification of the research method chosen. There are several other valid reasons for conducting a qualitative research synthesis.

3.1.1 Synthesis methodology [2]

In addition to the aforementioned increased need for knowledge about the success or failure of interventions in professional practical arenas, the added value of a qualitative research synthesis lies to a considerable extent in its ability to reveal new ways of looking at a set of primary studies (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 105). By applying a qualitative research synthesis, researchers can not only obtain a wide view of a particular issue under study but also a more detailed view (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). In this way, qualitative research synthesis distinguishes itself from ordinary literature reviews, which merely offer a wide view in most cases. Embracing qualitative research synthesis also provides qualitative studies with the potential to inform policymaking in ways that currently do not take place.

Moreover and most importantly, qualitative research syntheses examine and interpret studies that seek to research *with* people, and that seek to understand people's lives, rather than only relying on studies that begin with a hypothesis that is based on the researcher's assumptions and presumptions (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 109). Since the implications and recommendations of a qualitative research synthesis are user-generated (in an indirect way) and user-focused, the future policy arising from these recommendations should meet the needs of people more effectively. This is an important point in favour of qualitative research synthesis.

Closely related to this argument is the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative studies and findings are essentially very important, for example in determining the impact of certain interventions and their relationships with various dependent variables, but these quantitative pieces of research do not present rich, thick description of the lived experience of team incentive recipients in companies and organizations. In addition, the difficulty with quantitative types of literature reviews such as meta-analysis is that these reviews have a tendency to decontextualize material, ignore methodological difference, and to result in thin descriptions, which is in sharp contrast with the interpretative tradition of qualitative research synthesis (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 127). Logically, the latter seems most desirable in the pursuit of true explanations.

Despite the variety of valid reasons for conducting a qualitative research synthesis, there are also some cautions to be aware of when using this type of synthesis. First and foremost, if the included primary studies are not sound, neither will be the synthesis (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 111). In addition, the quality of the synthesis is contingent on the reporting and transparency of the process and on applying proper qualitative criteria for ensuring plausibility/credibility. Moreover, qualitative research synthesis requires interpretation and that means acknowledging that we as synthesists approach the work with a certain degree of subjectivity. This should not be a problem, however, since the aim is simply to discover the meaning that the authors and participants themselves have given to various findings, and since most efforts towards objectivity in qualitative research synthesis by nature are believed to require some interpretation and hence subjectivity (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 108).

Although qualitative research synthesis has a distinctive and favourable character, it is quite obvious to draw a comparison with similar approaches such as meta-ethnography. Qualitative research synthesis and meta-ethnography, in this particular case, share many similarities when it comes to methods and techniques. Both approaches only examine and include evidence from qualitative studies, apply predetermined exclusion criteria based on topic, research question and methodology, search for studies and collect data until (reasonable) saturation is achieved, and both present a combination of narrative and tables/figures to describe and reveal relationships (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Despite these similarities, it was decided to conduct a qualitative research synthesis and to hold on to the eponymous term. Since all of these approaches share a common goal of using *qualitative synthesis* approaches to synthesizing *qualitative research*, the term 'qualitative research synthesis' seems the most inclusive and thus the most effective construction (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 31).

Finally, meta-ethnography is characterized by 'objective idealism' and the pursuit of a ready-made theory that is almost universally applicable across contexts and populations (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009, p. 59). The aim of the approach is to explore and explain differences arising from context, rather than recognizing multiple realities. This does not entirely correspond with the line of reasoning that is being followed in this thesis. Although we seek to provide a 'whole', a process model based on team incentives, there should be some room for multiple realities. Therefore, and considering what has been argued by Major and Savin-Baden (2010, p. 95), qualitative research synthesis once again seems the most appropriate method and term: "the overarching goal is to tell the story of the multiple presenters and authors directly and plausibly to the audience, recognizing that the story is indeed that: a story that represents the multiple realities of the participants". To recapitulate, various valid reasons have been provided to justify the research method chosen. Also, attention has been paid to relevant cautions to bear in mind, and to why qualitative research synthesis is the most appropriate method and term.

3.2 Article search, selection and appraisal

Now the rationale for choice of methodology has been described, we can proceed to the more technical and specific parts of the methodology. We gradually work towards the inclusion criteria that studies had to meet, the data sources and electronic search strategy used, the actual study screening and selection, and the overall appraisal process for the final included studies, but first the basic approach to searching will be discussed.

3.2.1 Approach to searching [3]

Tong et al. (2012) state that it is of importance to indicate whether the search was pre-planned or iterative. In other words, it has to be indicated whether a comprehensive search strategy was used to seek all available studies, or whether the aim was to seek all available concepts (events and activities in this case) until reaching theoretical saturation. In this study, a middle ground, a balance between comprehensiveness and saturation was sought. Logically, the intention was to develop a (virtually) complete process model, but due to time constraints, a selection was made of several relevant data sources and electronic databases. Within these sources and databases, the goal was to identify as many relevant, accessible primary studies as possible. What exactly is meant by relevant study will be discussed in the following section on the inclusion criteria. Through thoroughly searching some of the most relevant databases, a considerable degree of comprehensiveness was pursued, and at the same time an attempt was made to achieve reasonable saturation and to construct a complete process model. This is important considering that ensuring a relative degree of saturation contributes to the overall thoroughness of the synthesis (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010).

In order to reach saturation, usually an iterative search process is required. The search strategy of this study also developed a somewhat iterative character. During the actual search phase, the author came across a research report (the appendix to be precise) by El Sherif, Pluye, Gore, Granikov, and Hong (2016) containing numerous relevant search terms and filters for identifying qualitative and mixed methods studies, studies that are basically closer related to process theory. In short, applying multiple of these search terms should yield more process studies and could result in additional pieces to compliment the process model (theoretical saturation). In this study, using the search terms and filters proposed by El Sherif et al. (2016) (as shown in Appendix 1) resulted in a large number of additional searches and new results/records. This suggests that there should actually always be some room for iteration in the search process.

Finding the right balance between comprehensiveness and saturation is not the only difficult task when it comes to searching. Closely related is the other difficult trade-off between richness and manageability. A comprehensive sample of studies and a potentially richer data set can be considered a good thing, but the data set can at some point also become too large for analysis, synthesis and interpretation, and may prevent sound iterative attempts in/during these stages (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). This is the main reason why in this study a selection was made of a limited number of highly relevant databases. Within this manageable selection of databases, comprehensiveness and a rich data set were pursued. As it was intended to obtain information-rich process studies, we limited ourselves to identifying qualitative and mixed methods studies exclusively (studies containing a qualitative empirical component), and we aimed for a relatively small sample size of studies. The latter sample size is recommended to range from 2–4 to 10–20 studies, but this synthesis aimed for the manageable range of 6 to 10 data-rich studies suggested by Major and Savin-Baden (2010, p. 54).

3.2.2 Inclusion criteria [4]

Searching should lead to identifying and obtaining the necessary studies. But before being added to the final set, studies must first meet certain predefined inclusion criteria. In this study, the following eight inclusion criteria were applied:

1. Study focuses on financial incentives rather than non-financial incentives or no financial incentives at all.
2. Study examines financial incentives at team level.
3. Study does not focus on developing and/or testing static relationships between independent and dependent variables.
4. Study contains its own qualitative empirical component.
5. Study uses adult populations and samples (18+ years or university students) rather than children.
6. Study was published between January 1985 and May 2017.
7. Study is reported in English.
8. Full text is available and accessible based on access rights of University of Twente.

The inclusion criteria are more or less ranked by importance but are in any case all relevant and must all be met. When screening and sifting the studies, it was first determined whether studies to a reasonable degree examined team-based financial incentives and rewards, the subject of this study, and whether studies showed characteristics of a primary process study, the desired study type to include for synthesis. We then gradually proceeded to inclusion criteria on obsoleteness, comprehensibility and obtainability. In order to function well and to specify exactly why studies were not included, the inclusion criteria were converted to exclusion reasons (as listed in Appendix 2). These reasons are not fundamentally different but are just slightly easier to use when excluding studies. In particular, inclusion criteria 3 and 5 seem more meaningful and more logically constructed when expressed as exclusion reasons.

In addition to the order of importance and the presence of exclusion reasons, it seems desirable to delve somewhat deeper into the inclusion criteria. Just like in Savin-Baden and Major (2007) their meta-ethnography on the influence of innovative approaches to learning on faculty understanding of teaching, the primary guide for inclusion was topic area. To be eligible for inclusion, studies had to examine financial incentives at team level. Team-based financial incentives and rewards did not have to be the primary focus of a study, but studies did have to say something about the events, activities, and choices of actors that are set in motion by team incentives. Therefore, merely mentioning team incentives did not suffice and led to exclusion. Additionally, studies focusing on non-financial incentives or not focusing on financial incentives at all, and studies not specifically examining financial incentives at team level were excluded from the synthesis. Some further noteworthy additions to inclusion criteria 1 and 2 are presented in Appendix 2.

Inclusion criteria 3 and 4 reflect, respectively, the types of studies that had to be excluded from the synthesis, and the studies that were desired to be included in the final set of primary studies. To begin with, inclusion criterion 3 relates to the more typical variance theory studies. This type of study focuses on developing and/or testing static relationships between independent and dependent variables (e.g., more of X and more of Y produce more of Z), whereas process theory studies aim to provide explanations in terms of the sequence of events leading to an outcome (e.g., do A and then B to get C) (Langley, 1999, p. 692). Understanding patterns in these events is essential for developing process theory. In line with this reasoning, many process theories are based on the idea that there are fundamental *similarities* in the patterns of event sequences across cases, whereas traditional techniques are designed and intended to 'explain' *differences* and variance, not to show similarities (Langley, 1999, p. 697). By means of the above fundamental distinction, variance theory studies were

attempted to be identified and excluded. However, sometimes it was difficult at first glance to determine whether a study adopted a variance theory approach. In those cases, an initial screening of the abstract and/or full text turned out to be inconclusive. Presence of the aforementioned traditional techniques then generally provided a decisive answer, as these techniques often prove to be indicators of a variance theory approach. Possible indicative techniques are correlation, regression, ANOVA, MANOVA, factor analysis, structural equation modelling, and path analysis.

In short, inclusion criterion 3 clearly influenced which primary studies were left out. Inclusion criterion 4, on the other hand, is threefold. First and foremost, inclusion criterion 4 was called into life to identify as many process studies as possible. Generally, when conducting a qualitative research synthesis, it is not entirely uncommon to focus solely on studies relying on in-depth participant interviews and in-depth interpretative data in order to concentrate on those studies in which it is possible to reanalyse data (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Solely focusing on such a type of in-depth study may also be considered desirable since synthesists should strive to use studies with similar approaches to data collection and management. However, in order to yield sufficient process studies, this was not the case with this synthesis. In this synthesis, inclusion criterion 4 was formulated in relatively general terms to also incorporate other widely used qualitative research methods such as case study research, focus groups, and participant observation. Studies such as case studies were incorporated since also these studies could contain qualitative data from in-depth participant interviews (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Additionally, less emphasis was placed on the ability to reanalyse and it was not considered a problem to be slightly further removed from the original narrative.

Secondly, inclusion criterion 4 and the requirement of an own qualitative empirical component were called into life to exclude secondary sources and literature reviews, studies that did not conduct their own empirical research. Qualitative studies may seem relevant and appropriate at first glance, but then they frequently turn out to be literature reviews. As this qualitative research synthesis was already a literature review by itself, we only wanted to include primary/original qualitative studies.

Thirdly and finally, inclusion criterion 4 served to exclude studies that were characterized by a quantitative, sequence-only approach to process analysis. In such a narrative positivist approach, raw narrative data are coded and reduced to their lowest common denominator in order to facilitate comparison, namely sequences of objectively coded events. "In the coding process, other aspects of narrative structure are systematically removed" (Pentland, 1999, p. 714). Corresponding quantitative sequence methods include the use of multidimensional scaling to identify 'typical sequences' across different cases, the use of optimal matching to estimate the proximity between sequences, and more commonly used techniques such as event-history analysis and dynamic simulation (Langley, 1999, pp. 697-698). Although these quantitative methods are not necessarily irrelevant or inappropriate, and although the event-sequence data they produce are central to process research, they are insufficient to present a whole story (Pentland, 1999). For this study, this meant that additional aspects of narrative were needed, such as focal actors, narrative voice, moral context, and other indicators of context. Qualitative studies containing rich, thick description were considered most likely to provide these additional aspects, and since it was preferred to conduct a qualitative research synthesis, the requirement of an own qualitative empirical component was established. In practice, this meant that studies relying solely on quantitative sequence methods were excluded, and that mixed methods

studies using both qualitative and quantitative process research methods did meet inclusion criterion 4.

Inclusion criterion 6, in turn, is somewhat more straightforward than the inclusion criteria already discussed. The difficulty with this inclusion criterion lies more in the question of why this specific time period was chosen. The main reason for covering such a considerable period of time was to yield at least a sufficient number of process studies. As is evident from the introduction, there are numerous variance studies and meta-analyses examining team-based financial incentives and rewards. However, it was questionable whether the body of literature on this subject contained sufficient process studies since hardly any relevant literature reviews of such studies could be identified. Because of this certain doubt, a large time period seemed desirable. The year 1985 was specifically chosen as the beginning of the inclusion time period because DeMatteo et al. (1998) were able to identify at least 14 primary studies on team-based rewards over a time period ranging from 1985 to 1997. It was therefore safe to assume that between 1985 and now, considerable studies on team incentives were conducted, and that process studies could be among them. Furthermore, DeMatteo et al. (1998) focused primarily on studies that *measured the effects* of team-level rewards, with the logical consequence that these studies frequently lacked specific recommendations for the design and *implementation* of team rewards, and that there was a clear opportunity for the synthesis of process studies. In addition to the fact that the year 1985 should go back far enough to yield sufficient process studies, studies conducted prior to 1985 were also not included because the study/organizational contexts of these studies might differ significantly from contemporary contexts and conditions. Finally, it was decided not to include studies published after May 2017 because, as of June 2017, no new or additional database searches were performed anymore.

The remaining inclusion criteria do not really need extensive elaboration. Inclusion criterion 5 has already received some additional attention in the additions to inclusion criteria 1 and 2 in Appendix 2. Furthermore, studies had to be reported in English because in this way a considerable degree of consistency could be ensured in terminology and language in general. Inclusion criterion 8, to conclude with, implied that the full text of a study had to be available and accessible based on the access rights of the University of Twente. An abstract did not suffice for final inclusion and when the full text of a study could not be obtained through the corresponding electronic database, the full text was attempted to be obtained via Google Scholar. In some cases, the full text of a study was not available online at all, regardless of the access rights. This was especially true for relatively old research articles.

3.2.3 Data sources [5]

When reading the previous section, it may seem like all literature searches were conducted after determining the inclusion criteria. However, this was clearly not the case since the literature itself further delineated the problem statement and area, and should serve as input for well-defined inclusion criteria. The search stage actually consisted of two separate stages: a preliminary scoping search and the search stage of the actual qualitative research synthesis.

The scoping search, to begin with, involved an initial search of the literature and served several purposes. First, an attempt was made to identify existing relevant reviews that could familiarize us with the subject at hand, and grey literature and representative magazine/news articles were sought

that could further shape the problem statement. The latter data sources consisted of (i.a.) papers from a massive shared capitalism research project by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), and articles from Harvard Business Review and Forbes. Relevant literature reviews were attempted to be identified by using Google Scholar. After entering various search strings related to team-based financial incentives and rewards in Google Scholar, the literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) and the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014) repeatedly returned in the top search results. For verification, similar searches were also performed in the Scopus database, and again the meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014) stood out. Subsequently, Garbers and Konradt (2014) their reference list was examined, which led to other relevant reviews (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002; Condly et al., 2003) and numerous primary studies for further exploration of the field of team incentives.

Further on in the scoping search stage, after examining all this new material, it was decided to adopt a process theory perspective. Consultation with the thesis supervisor and studying relevant material from process research workshops made clear that, in this case, author searching could best be applied (Booth et al., 2012). Searching for influential authors like Langley, Van de Ven, Poole, and Pentland resulted in several key papers that were ultimately used for shaping the theoretical framework, identifying the key search terms, and determining the search strategy. The authors themselves also returned in a variety of search strings. Helping develop and refine the search strategy was another major contribution of the scoping search. Table 5 presents an overview of the different types of searching that were applied during the scoping search stage, and the data sources that were subsequently sought and identified.

- **Table 5:** Overview of scoping search stage

Type of searching	Which/who?	Data sources sought/identified
Generic web searching		• Grey literature (papers from NBER's Shared Capitalism Research Project) • Magazine/news articles (Harvard Business Review & Forbes)
Database searching	Google Scholar & Scopus	• Existing relevant reviews (DeMatteo et al., 1998; Garbers & Konradt, 2014)
Reference list checking	Garbers & Konradt, 2014	• Other relevant reviews (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002; Condly et al., 2003) • Numerous primary studies on team incentives
Author searching	Langley, Van de Ven, Poole, & Pentland	• Several key papers on process theory

After completion of the scoping search and drawing up the search strategy, we proceeded to the search stage of the actual qualitative research synthesis. In this stage, the search process relied solely on the use of electronic databases. Generic web searching, grey literature searching, and reference list checking were no longer applied. Beforehand, it was decided not to examine reference lists of included primary studies, partly due to time constraints and partly because of relevance. Checking the reference lists of one or several literature reviews clearly takes significantly less time than scanning the reference lists of numerous primary studies. In addition, as previously demonstrated,

there are various reviews that focus entirely on team incentives. Without doubt, this also applies to several primary studies, but there are undoubtedly also many primary studies in which team incentives play a more modest role. For example, one can think of studies in which healthcare or IT-related teams receive incentives as part of a major new work system or simply as part of a larger whole. Such studies place less emphasis on team incentives and their reference lists will therefore logically contain fewer studies that entirely revolve around team incentives. In short, the reference lists of these studies are less relevant to examine.

Furthermore, grey literature was no longer searched for because it could pose a threat to the transferability and confirmability of the qualitative research synthesis. Although qualitative studies and thus corresponding syntheses rarely seek to be generalizable to a larger population (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 21), it was intended to achieve at least some degree of transferability. This did not necessarily mean generating transferable results but rather a transferable synthesis method since methods may be more easily transferable to other contexts/settings than results (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Databases such as Scopus and EBSCOhost that mainly contain articles from peer-reviewed journals seem to have a similar structure with regard to the search engine and interface, and have similar settings, filters, and limiters. As a consequence, a similar search strategy and similar search strings could be applied to each database, and this search strategy should largely be transferable to process research syntheses with a subject other than team incentives and syntheses using other databases.

Another reason for no longer applying grey literature searching was that at least some degree of confirmability and quality control had to be achieved. Since this synthesis was not performed by multiple reviewers and was not subjected to peer examination, the findings of this synthesis would not be confirmed by others and no inter-rater reliability could be established. In this synthesis, certain confirmability was attempted to be achieved by focusing on studies that were likely to be reviewed and supported by others, studies from peer-reviewed journals to be precise. Because of the peer review process, these studies have at least one layer of quality control built in (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, pp. 48-49). Although grey literature, unpublished studies, and their findings might contain rich, thick description, they were not used because they were less likely to be reviewed and confirmed by others. In short, confirmability was sought by focusing on peer-reviewed *primary studies*, not by ensuring inter-rater reliability and the like of the *synthesis itself*.

In addition to the previously mentioned example of the (NBER) research project papers, grey literature may also consist of conference proceedings, dissertations, master theses, et cetera (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). These grey literature studies did not correspond with the primary studies that we had in mind. Therefore, and for the above reasons, such studies were filtered out and excluded (in case they still emerged).

Now it has been made clear why reference list checking and grey literature searching were no longer applied, the use of electronic databases will be discussed. As mentioned earlier, this study aimed for a balance between comprehensiveness and saturation, and between richness and manageability. A selection was made of a limited number of highly relevant databases, to subsequently identify as many relevant, accessible primary studies as possible. Through thoroughly searching some of the most relevant databases, a considerable degree of comprehensiveness was pursued, and at the same

time an attempt was made to achieve reasonable saturation and to construct a complete process model. By deliberately choosing a manageable selection of databases, it was expected that the data set would become neither too large nor too small for further processing.

To date, it remained unclear which databases were part of this selection. Nevertheless, it is important to describe the specific databases and to provide a rationale for their use. For this synthesis, the electronic databases Scopus, ScienceDirect, and EBSCOhost were used. Scopus, to begin with, was chosen because it is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature, with approximately 22,800 titles from more than 5,000 international publishers and over 69 million core records ("Scopus Content Coverage Guide", 2017). The great advantage of Scopus is that it contains titles from all major publishers, including renowned publishers such as Elsevier, Springer, Wiley-Blackwell, Taylor & Francis, SAGE Publications, and Emerald Publishing (see Appendix 3 for a coverage overview). This meant that the databases/platforms of these publishers themselves, such as SpringerLink and Emerald Insight, did not have to be used.

Secondly, ScienceDirect was chosen because it contains primarily full-text journal articles. These articles are rigorously peer reviewed and the journals they originate from are guided by eminent editorial boards ("ScienceDirect Facts & Figures", 2018). A major, already known advantage of ScienceDirect was that the database was well in line with the access rights of the University of Twente, so that in the end relatively many full-text articles could be accessed and obtained. Moreover, it quickly became apparent that the search engine of ScienceDirect acted in a slightly different way than Scopus its search engine, and that this would result in slightly different search strings. Because it was known beforehand that Scopus would frequently yield abstracts of full-text articles from ScienceDirect (both concern Elsevier research platforms), it was interesting to see to what extent these two databases yielded the same Elsevier publications and whether Scopus might miss some results. In this way, ScienceDirect constituted an adequate control mechanism for Scopus.

Thirdly, EBSCOhost was chosen to complement the final selection of databases. Actually, EBSCOhost should rather be considered a database portal, and for that reason a variety of databases can be called upon when applying EBSCOhost. EBSCOhost resembles Scopus in the sense that it contains the scientific work of various databases, but it also differs from Scopus in that it provides you with the opportunity to really choose and select specific databases, databases that fit well with the subject at hand. Because of time constraints and because not every database was considered equally relevant, also in this synthesis several specific databases were selected. Since team incentives as a subject capture both financial and HR-related aspects, the electronic databases Business Source Elite, EconLit, and PsycINFO were selected. Business Source Elite and EconLit mainly cover the economic literature and business publications, whereas PsycINFO is devoted to the peer-reviewed literature in behavioural science and mental health. Obviously, Business Source Elite and EconLit seemed appropriate since *financial* incentives constitute an economic, business-like subject. In addition, PsycINFO was chosen because incentives and stimuli are naturally related to behaviour and mental state. Hence, this also applies to team-based incentives and rewards. Furthermore, with the selection of PsycINFO the line of Garbers and Konradt (2014) was followed. In contrast to Garbers and Konradt (2014), database ERIC was not selected since its education literature and resources seemed somewhat less relevant to the subject at hand. Appendix 3 presents a complete overview of the EBSCOhost databases that were applied and those that were not.

3.2.4 Electronic Search Strategy [6]

After determining the electronic databases to be used, the electronic search strategy was developed that had to be applied within these databases. One of the key requirements for achieving uniformity in the searches was the use of relatively similar search interfaces. Although Scopus, ScienceDirect, and EBSCOhost differed somewhat in terms of layout, it was managed to create a certain degree of uniformity in the search terms and strings, the Boolean operators, and the search filters and limiters. By using the 'Document search' interface in Scopus, the 'Journals' section within the 'Advanced search' interface in ScienceDirect, and the 'Advanced Search' interface in EBSCOhost, the search interfaces and their corresponding Boolean operators, search field options (e.g., article title, abstract, keywords, references), et cetera remained relatively similar.

Since the focus was on obtaining articles from peer-reviewed journals, this was taken into account when selecting the content, publication and document types to be included. A complete overview of these types (both included and not included), the study methodologies selected, and special limiters can be found in Appendix 4. Although the focus was on *full-text* articles of *primary studies*, abstracts and review articles were not necessarily excluded. Abstracts may in fact be accompanied by links to full-text articles in other databases and review articles do not always turn out to be actual literature reviews. The author experienced the latter a few times during the preliminary scoping search. To be included, abstracts and review articles subsequently had to meet the usual inclusion criteria.

In addition, EBSCOhost offered the opportunity to select specific study methodologies. As mentioned earlier, focus was not only on in-depth participant interviews but also on case studies, focus groups, participant observation, and other widely used qualitative research methods. This line of thought was also maintained when selecting specific study methodologies in EBSCOhost. Furthermore, qualitative methods and studies were attempted to be identified by using the search terms of El Sherif et al. (2016) in the search strings. Besides common keywords such as qualitative research, case study and focus group, somewhat less obvious keywords proposed by El Sherif et al. (2016) were also used, such as narrative/narration, grounded theory, participatory action research, and mixed methods. Using these keywords and search terms resulted in a large number of additional searches and new results/records.

In addition to qualitative studies, the main goal was actually to identify as many process studies as possible. In terms of search strategy, this goal was attempted to be achieved in two ways. First, keywords derived from the process research literature were used to develop appropriate search terms and strings. One should think of keywords such as process theory, event, activity, sequence, implement, and barrier. Secondly, articles were searched for that referred to influential authors in the field of process research such as Langley, Van de Ven, Poole, and Pentland. If possible, this was attempted by using the search field option 'References' and by subsequently combining this search field option with a search string regarding team incentives. After all, team incentives were examined, not process theory in general.

The search strings regarding team incentives were twofold. First, search terms were developed that were representative of financial incentives and rewards. This was done on the basis of keywords such as incentive, reward, compensation, bonus, and profit-sharing. Despite the fact that compensation is not an exact equivalent of financial incentives, bonuses and incentives may very well be part of an

employee's compensation package. Keywords like 'financial' and 'monetary' were omitted to prevent an overcomplication of the search strings or the need for countless additional and unnecessary search strings. Secondly, search terms were established that clearly indicated that incentives were provided at the team level. We limited ourselves to using the keywords 'team' and 'group' since keywords such as department, division, and (business) unit could be an indication of the higher hierarchical levels we were not aiming for. Subsequently, proximity operators were used to connect the search terms regarding financial incentives to the search terms relating to the team level. In this way, it was attempted to create search strings that could adequately represent team-based financial incentives and rewards.

The use of Boolean and proximity operators served different purposes. The Boolean operator AND was mainly used to combine search strings on team incentives with search strings on process theory and qualitative research methods. The Boolean operator OR, in turn, was mainly used to embed multiple similar and synonymous search terms in a single search string. In this way, the already large number of search strings (and hence searches) could remain somewhat limited. In addition, proximity operators were used to construct and reflect phrases, such as 'group incentives', 'implementation of team-based rewards', and 'process research', and logically to ensure that certain search terms would be located near / within a certain distance from each other. A complete overview of the exact search terms, search strings, Boolean operators, and proximity operators can be found in Appendix 4.

3.2.5 Study screening methods [7]

Once a search was performed, the resulting studies were screened for relevance and eligibility for inclusion. An approach was chosen in which the selected databases were completed one by one. Just like in the aforementioned meta-ethnography of Savin-Baden and Major (2007) on innovative approaches to teaching and learning, the primary guide for inclusion was topic area. To be relevant and eligible for inclusion, studies—at least to a certain extent—had to examine team-based financial incentives and rewards. The requirement of examining team incentives was particularly reflected in the first step of screening, namely screening study titles for relevance. Study titles had to mention or reflect team incentives either directly or indirectly by (subtly) suggesting the presence of an organizational context in which team incentives could very well be implemented. In case of doubt, it was decided to proceed to screening of the abstract. It was considered beneficial if a study title provided an early indication of a process theory approach, but this was certainly not an immediate necessity. All titles and corresponding studies that were not considered relevant were excluded but were also not specifically documented due to time constraints.

If a study was deemed relevant after screening its title, a second step of abstract screening followed. Abstracts were screened not only for relevance but also and above all for eligibility for inclusion. In this step, the inclusion criteria therefore made their appearance. Abstracts were examined to assess whether studies did not adopt a variance theory approach and to determine whether studies contained their own qualitative empirical component. It was also further examined whether studies actually paid the necessary attention to team incentives. In the event that an abstract clearly did not meet one or more of the eight inclusion criteria, the corresponding study was excluded. In all other cases, full-text assessment followed. Each study that was excluded after screening the abstract was consistently documented along with the main reason for its exclusion.

The third and final stage of screening involved that the remaining studies were fully assessed for eligibility. Full-text articles were carefully examined to determine whether all inclusion criteria were met. As mentioned earlier, team incentives did not have to be the primary focus of a study, but the full text did have to say something about the events, activities, and choices of actors that are set in motion by team incentives. Therefore, merely mentioning team incentives did not suffice and led to exclusion. Additionally, studies not specifically examining *financial* incentives at *team* level were also excluded from the synthesis (see Appendix 2 for details). Furthermore, if there was any remaining doubt about meeting the other criteria, and inclusion criterion 3 regarding the undesirable variance theory approach in particular, once again exclusion followed. Finally, it should be noted that only the author as a reviewer screened the studies. No other independent reviewers were involved in the screening process.

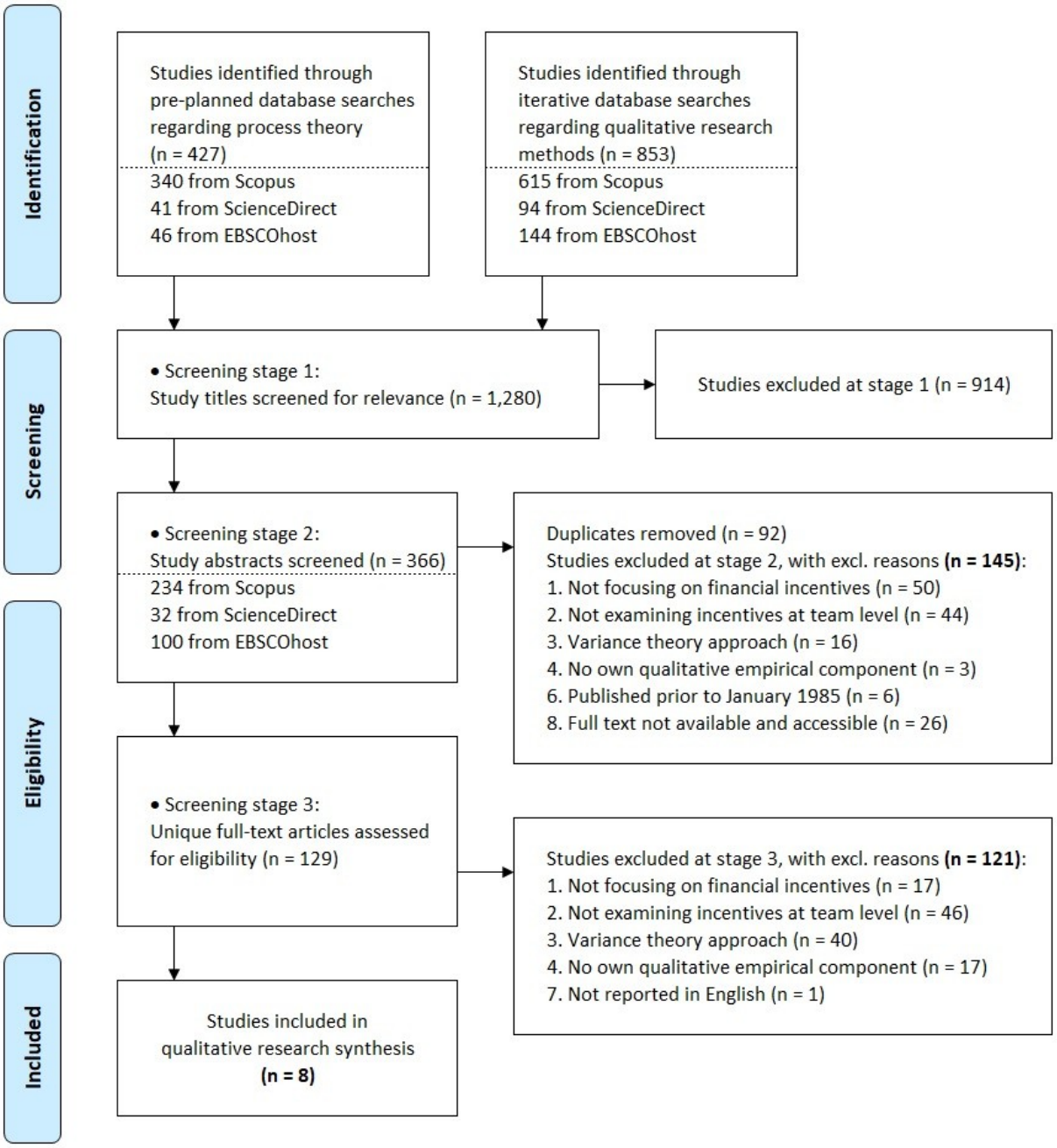
3.2.6 Study selection results [9]

Now the study screening process has been described step by step, the moment has arrived to reveal the actual study selection results. Although a balance was sought between comprehensiveness and saturation, the approach to searching leaned slightly more towards a comprehensive search strategy. In the case of comprehensive searching, the ENTREQ statement recommends that the study selection results be presented in a flow chart (Tong et al., 2012). The PRISMA flow diagram was chosen to serve this purpose as this diagram is recommended for reporting the different phases of searching, screening and identifying studies for inclusion in a qualitative synthesis (Tong et al., 2012, p. 181). The PRISMA flow diagram provides a clear picture of the number of studies identified, included and excluded, and the reasons for exclusions (Booth et al., 2012, p. 212). The PRISMA flow diagram is presented in Figure 4. In the PRISMA flow diagram, the identification and screening process is presented as a succession of stages. However, as previously stated, the selected databases were more or less completed one by one. The study titles and corresponding abstracts were screened one by one, whereas the full-text assessment was in fact only carried out after performing all searches in the three selected databases. The different screening stages were called into life for the sake of overview and simplicity, and may therefore give a somewhat distorted impression of the actual screening process.

As regards the study selection results, the pre-planned database searches regarding process theory yielded a total of 427 potentially relevant studies, including duplicates. Through the iterative database searches regarding qualitative research methods, another 853 studies were identified (again including duplicates). What is striking here is that the iterative searches based on the search terms of El Sherif et al. (2016) yielded twice as many records as the pre-planned searches. In hindsight, it was therefore not an illogical decision to leave open the possibility of iterative searches. Of the total 1,280 studies, 955 studies were identified in Scopus, compared with only 190 studies in EBSCOhost and 135 in ScienceDirect. A smaller contribution from ScienceDirect was to be expected considering its role as control mechanism and the fact that it contains Elsevier publications only. The share of EBSCOhost in the total number of studies identified, on the other hand, was significantly smaller than expected. Given their apparent relevance, the databases Business Source Elite, EconLit, and PsycINFO were expected to yield more records. However, it should be noted that the titles of the studies from EBSCOhost in themselves were relatively relevant. After title screening, more than half of the EBSCOhost studies proceeded to the second stage of abstract screening, 100 out of 190 to be

precise. In Scopus and ScienceDirect, fewer than a quarter of the studies passed the title screening stage (234 out of 955 and 32 out of 135, respectively).

- **Figure 4:** PRISMA flow diagram



Also striking is the overall large number of studies that were excluded after screening the title for relevance. This was mainly due to the homonymous nature and multi-interpretability of certain keywords that were used for constructing the search strings. Compensation, for example, may also refer to (financial) compensation for damage, loss, injury, or distress. In a considerable number of study titles, the keyword compensation was interpreted in this manner. Another homonymous and multi-interpretable keyword was incentives, which in many cases also referred to incentives for increasing the participation in a research study or in the labour market, incentives for increasing the purchase and consumption of goods and services, and non-financial, psychological incentives. This

multi-interpretability issue also affected the stage of abstract screening, as demonstrated by the relatively large number of studies that were excluded based on exclusion reason 1 (50 out of 145).

In the second screening stage, the abstracts of a total of 274 unique studies were screened for relevance and eligibility, of which 145 studies were ultimately excluded. In addition to exclusion reason 1, many abstracts were also excluded based on exclusion reason 2. Quite frequently, an abstract did not give any indication that a study examined financial incentives at the team level, or the abstract clearly indicated that the focus was on *individual* incentives and rewards. Merely mentioning team incentives did not lead to exclusion at this stage since an abstract offers only limited space for elaboration on (and hence understanding of) concepts. Furthermore, relatively few abstracts were excluded on the basis of adopting a variance theory approach. At the stage of screening an abstract, it is simply difficult to ascertain whether or not a study applies a variance theory approach. In many cases, it was therefore necessary to proceed to the decisive stage of full-text assessment. Finally, there were also relatively few studies that were excluded on the basis of a full text that was not available and accessible (n = 26).

In the third screening stage, the full texts of 129 unique studies were screened and assessed for eligibility for inclusion. In this final stage, exclusion reasons 2 and 3 constituted the main reasons for exclusion (46 and 40 out of 121, respectively). Many studies did not specifically address the events, activities, and choices of actors that are set in motion by team incentives. In addition, several studies were excluded because they failed to meet the definition of teams by Kozlowski and Bell (2003) or because in those studies financial incentives were not related to the team level *within a company* (e.g., incentivization of macro-level groups). Moreover, many studies after full-text assessment were classified as variance theory studies. Static relationships between independent and dependent variables, and the presence of traditional variance techniques generally enabled classification. In the event that a study seemed to have adopted a variance theory approach but this could not be determined with certainty, the study was also excluded. Finally, a reasonable number of studies were excluded because they did not contain their own qualitative empirical component (n = 17). These include purely quantitative studies, studies with a quantitative, sequence-only approach to process analysis, and studies that actually turned out to be secondary sources and literature reviews. Specific details of all excluded studies are not included in this thesis and are available on request.

After examining the full texts, only 8 studies met all the inclusion criteria and became part of the final selection of included studies. Since this synthesis aimed for a relatively small and manageable sample size of 6 to 10 studies, this final selection of 8 studies was considered quite optimal. However, as stated earlier in the methodology, the aim was also to identify and obtain *data-rich* process studies. The assumption was that a complete process model could only be developed with data-rich studies. The stages of study appraisal, data extraction, and coding therefore had to demonstrate whether the eight included studies actually constituted an optimal, data-rich selection.

3.2.7 Rationale for appraisal [10]

Conducting a critical appraisal of each included study is considered one of the key features of a qualitative research synthesis (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Critical appraisal involves an evaluation of 'fit' based on both applicability and quality. Recent syntheses that used the approach of meta-ethnography (similar to qualitative research synthesis) only referred to studies being excluded on the

basis of a lack of relevance or 'simply' because they were not of sufficient quality (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). Judgment based on relevance and a basic measure of quality is particularly reflected in the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) tool (Tong et al., 2012). However, in this synthesis the aim was to go beyond mere relevance and a basic measure of quality, partly because studies were already assessed for relevance by means of the inclusion criteria. This synthesis aimed for both an assessment of the conduct of each included study and an assessment of the content and utility of the findings of each study. In practice, this meant that we had to search for an appraisal tool with criteria related to aims, context, data collection and analysis methods, trustworthiness/validity, and credibility/believability.

3.2.8 Appraisal items [11]

After narrowing down the search for a critical appraisal tool, there were three alternatives left: the Evaluation Tool for Qualitative Studies (ETQS), the Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument (QARI), and the CASP tool. The ETQS provides detailed instructions on how to interpret criteria (Hannes, Lockwood, & Pearson, 2010), but it was quickly decided not to apply this tool because the tool was considered too extensive (about 40 evaluation questions per study) and because the tool could not easily be used to compare studies due to the relatively large number of open questions. To make a choice between the QARI and the CASP tool, it was necessary to delve somewhat deeper into what we exactly wanted from an appraisal tool. The desired tool at least had to be consistent with the aim of this synthesis to build process theory through the use of narrative and thick description. This meant that an appraisal tool had to be selected with criteria related to context, narrative voice, researcher reflexivity, believability, and adequate/accurate representation of participants. Strikingly, these criteria were essentially concerned with two types of validity, namely descriptive validity and interpretative validity. Descriptive validity concerns the degree to which descriptive information such as events, behaviours or characteristics of participants, setting, time, and place have been accurately reported (Hannes et al., 2010, p. 1740). Descriptive validity is closely related to appraisal criteria with regard to context and the influence of the researcher on the research. The impact of the investigator is evaluated in both the QARI and the CASP tool. A context-related criterion, however, is only to be found in the QARI. Context can help in developing interpretations and criteria related to context are therefore important to include in the appraisal of a study. Consequently, the lack of context-related criteria was not a point in favour of the CASP tool. Interpretative validity, in turn, concerns the degree to which participants' points of view, thoughts, intentions, and experiences have been accurately understood and reported (Hannes et al., 2010, p. 1740). Interpretative validity is closely related to appraisal criteria with regard to believability. The QARI contains such a criterion in the form of the question whether participants and their voices are adequately represented. However, as far as believability is concerned, the CASP tool once again lacks an appropriate criterion. Moreover, the CASP tool places a relatively strong emphasis on generalizability. Ensuring generalizability was not exactly the primary concern of this synthesis. The latter two points of criticism with respect to the CASP tool and the suitability and good overall coherence of the QARI made us decide to apply the QARI. Table 6 presents an overview of the QARI and its appraisal criteria (see Appendix 5 for the original form used).

- **Table 6:** Overview of QARI critical appraisal criteria

Criteria for appraisal
1. There is congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology.
2. There is congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives.
3. There is congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data.
4. There is congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data.
5. There is congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results.
6. There is a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically.
7. The influence of the researcher on the research, and vice versa, is addressed.
8. Participants, and their voices, are adequately represented.
9. The research is ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies, there is evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body.
10. Conclusions drawn in the research report do appear to flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data.

3.2.9 Appraisal process [12]

Syntheses frequently establish a minimum threshold or cut-off score to consider studies for inclusion (Hannes, Raes, Vangenechten, Heyvaert, & Dochy, 2013). In this synthesis, however, it was decided not to use such a threshold or cut-off score. Since only one reviewer was involved in the appraisal process, a somewhat less thorough and weighty judgment could be made about the quality of the included studies. Because of this 'thinner' judgment, it was considered undesirable to exclude studies on the basis of quality appraisal. In addition, we did not want to further reduce the already relatively small set of eight included studies, unless studies were fatally flawed. Another reason not to exclude studies on the basis of quality appraisal was provided by Major and Savin-Baden (2010). Major and Savin-Baden (2010, p. 52) argued that weaker studies may still be of value if they have something to add to the synthesis or have something of value that enhances the synthesist's ability to interpret data. Moreover, and in line with the above, Major and Savin-Baden (2010) recommended that the synthesist use great care when making a decision to exclude a study on the basis of quality.

However, the question remains as to what exactly happened with the appraisal results. The included studies were neither excluded nor explicitly weighted after appraising them. There are similarities here with the emphasis on Western contexts that was highlighted in the introduction. As mentioned, studies with a Western context should simply be more capable of making a serious contribution to answering the central research question. In a similar manner, high-quality studies should be more capable of making a serious and meaningful contribution to developing the desired process model and should play a more significant role in interpretation than weaker / low-quality studies. Especially in the case of an inconsistent or even contradictory finding, it is valuable to know whether the finding originates from a high-quality or low-quality study. This knowledge can help interpret such a finding and its place in the larger whole. In practice, this meant that a first-order finding was provided with a descriptor / study number that corresponded with the study from which the finding was obtained. In this way, we did not clearly differentiate between weights of the findings of the included studies, but the descriptors at least made clear whether a finding (or a subsequent theme, dimension, et cetera)

arose from a stronger or weaker study methodology. In short, the processing of the appraisal results involved a more subtle and implicit weighting of studies rather than an explicit weighting.

In fact, all studies that met the inclusion criteria needed to be subjected to rigorous appraisal by two critical appraisers ("Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research", 2017). In this qualitative research synthesis, however, the included studies were appraised by only one reviewer. There was no second reviewer who independently appraised all included studies or a random sample of the included studies. A second appraiser was not deemed necessary as it was decided not to exclude studies on the basis of quality appraisal. The presence of multiple appraisers might only have led to a more balanced interpretation of the appraisal instrument and the quality of the studies. In addition, although less valid as a reason, this synthesis concerns an individually executed master thesis project.

3.3 Description of data set

Before presenting study characteristics and the results of the quality appraisal, the final set of included studies is provided. The eight included studies and their descriptors are listed in Table 7.

- **Table 7:** Final set of included studies

#	Study title
1.	Collins, D. (1995). A Socio-Political Theory of Workplace Democracy: Class Conflict, Constituent Reactions and Organizational Outcomes at a Gainsharing Facility. *Organization Science*, *6*(6), 628-644.
2.	Edwards, A., & Langley, A. (2007). Understanding how general practices addressed the Quality and Outcomes Framework of the 2003 General Medical Services contract in the UK: a qualitative study of the effects on quality and team working of different approaches used. *Quality in Primary Care*, *15*, 265-275.
3.	Eriksson, P. E. (2010). Partnering: what is it, when should it be used, and how should it be implemented? *Construction Management and Economics*, *28*(9), 905-917.
4.	Ezzamel, M., & Willmott, H. (1998). Accounting, Remuneration and Employee Motivation in the New Organisation. *Accounting and Business Research*, *28*(2), 97-110.
5.	Greene, J., Hibbard, J. H., & Overton, V. (2014). A Case Study of a Team-Based, Quality-Focused Compensation Model for Primary Care Providers. *Medical Care Research and Review*, *71*(3), 207-223.
6.	Greene, J., Kurtzman, E. T., Hibbard, J. H., & Overton, V. (2015). Working Under a Clinic-Level Quality Incentive: Primary Care Clinicians' Perceptions. *Annals of Family Medicine*, *13*(3), 235-241.
7.	Länsisalmi, H., Peiró, J. M., & Kivimäki, M. (2000). Collective stress and coping in the context of organizational culture. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *9*(4), 527-559.
8.	Suchan, J., & Hayzak, G. (2001). The Communication Characteristics of Virtual Teams: A Case Study. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, *44*(3), 174-186.

3.3.1 Study characteristics [8]

Table 8 summarizes the main characteristics of the eight included studies. What is immediately noticeable about the study characteristics are the geographical regions in which the studies and corresponding team incentive interventions were conducted. All included studies were conducted in

desired Western countries, namely the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Finland. In the introduction, it was stated that we wished to examine and judge the implementation of team incentives in companies from specific Western countries. All eight studies are characterized by such a Western context and there is no study that deviates in this respect. The methodologies of the studies are also similar with a majority of the studies using a case study design (n = 6). Two studies differ slightly with one study being an explorative qualitative study and the other adopting a grounded theory methodology. However, the data collection methods of these two studies are again similar to those of the other studies, with methods consisting mainly of interviews and document studies.

When delving somewhat deeper into the settings of the included studies, it can be argued that there is more or less a dichotomy between studies that were conducted in the healthcare sector (n = 3) and studies that were conducted in industrial and manufacturing companies (n = 4). The remaining study was conducted in a very large high-technology consulting firm. As far as organization size is concerned, most of the studies were conducted in fairly large companies or systems, including the latter Fortune 500 consulting firm, a multinational company operating in the field of metal industry, a large Swedish mining company, two fairly large UK manufacturing companies, and Fairview Health Services, a large non-profit healthcare delivery system. The remaining two studies were conducted in a non-union, privately owned manufacturing facility and in Welsh general practices. Relatively large organizations are presumably more accustomed to working with team structures, work groups, work units, et cetera, and should logically have more HR and finance professionals capable of composing adequate team incentive systems. As regards participants, some studies (with descriptors 1, 3, and 7) achieved a certain balance by interviewing ordinary team members as well as team managers and higher-level managers, some studies (2 and 4) limited themselves to interviewing managers, and in some studies (8) only regular team members were interviewed. A situation in which both managers and team members are interviewed seems most desirable because in that case the implementation of team incentives can be viewed and judged from both sides, resulting in a more balanced and broad-based narrative about team incentives.

Without detracting from the aforementioned points, there are also more important differences to be noted in view of the study characteristics. These differences relate to the degree of attention and the size of the role that team incentives receive from a study, and also to the time frame of a study, particularly its time frame of data collection. To begin with the latter, we wanted to know whether a study was really conducted after an actual implementation of team incentives (or that team incentives were already present), how long after implementation the study was carried out, and whether data were collected at multiple points in time. Studies that examine the implementation of team incentives over a period of several years and at multiple different points in time should logically be better able to provide a complete picture of this implementation. The majority of the studies (1, 2, 4, 5, and 6) were conducted after an actual implementation of some kind of team incentive system. In some studies (7 and 8), a team incentive system already seemed to be present in the organization or setting, or it was unclear at what point in time team incentives were implemented. In line with what was deemed desirable, certain studies (1, 2, 5, and 6) collected data at multiple, clearly defined points in time. Fortunately, most of the studies (1, 2, 5, and 6) were clear about how long after implementation or at which specific points in time they collected data (i.e., interviewing or observing participants). Some studies (4 and 8) clearly stated the specific period of time during which data collection occurred but failed to mention the specific points in time at which data were collected,

and there was a study (7) that only referred to a rather vague period of data collection. In addition, certain studies collected data over a period of several years (studies 4 and 6) or several years after implementation (study 1). These studies should be better able to reflect and outline the longer-term progression of an implementation of team incentives. On the other hand, there are also studies (2 and 5) that should be able to provide a picture of what happens and which events occur shortly after implementation. Finally, study 3 did not report anything about its time frame of data collection, which as a result remained entirely unclear.

Moreover, the included studies differ with respect to the degree of attention and the size of the role they gave to team incentives. In several studies, team incentives were the primary phenomenon of interest (studies 4, 5, and 6) or were given a significant role in the narrative (studies 1 and 2). These studies should be able to provide a more comprehensive and detailed picture of the chain of events that is set in motion by team incentives. These studies should also reflect a greater variety of events and should provide more context around these events. Studies in which team incentives have been assigned a central or significant role are likely to carry greater weight in the synthesis. This is not a problem as long as studies are of sound methodological quality. The methodological quality of the included studies will be addressed in the next section. In the remaining three studies (3, 7, and 8), team incentives received relatively little attention and played a more modest role. These three studies revolved around the following phenomena: the definition and implementation of partnering (study 3), collective interpretations of well-being, sources of collective stress, and collective coping mechanisms to alleviate such stress (study 7), and the communication characteristics of virtual teams (study 8). It could be argued that these phenomena are quite different from the phenomenon of implementing team incentives. This means that potential team incentive-related events must be seen in the light and context of these somewhat deviant phenomena.

- **Table 8:** Main characteristics of included studies

#	Methodology	Data collection methods	Time frame of data collection	Phenomena of interest	Country	Setting	Participants	Data analysis methods	Main themes, concepts, and findings identified by authors
1*	Longitudinal case study	Preliminary telephone interviews, semi-structured interviews, meeting observations, and archival research of suggestion logs, meeting minutes, and company newsletters	Semi-structured interviews and meeting observations were conducted after four years of operating under gainsharing, archival research was based on these four years	The role of class conflict and group processes during the transitional stage of an organization experimenting with a high involvement management system and a group-based bonus	US	A non-union, privately owned manufacturing facility, mainly producing hydraulic cylinders and located on the outskirts of a small Midwestern town	Semi-structured interviews: 7 managers and 7 non-management employees. Observations: gainsharing teams and review board. Preliminary telephone interviews: 11 gainsharing coordinators from 11 different non-union manufacturing facilities	Grounded theory	Empirical support for the explanatory power of socio-political theory in examining the phenomenon of employee involvement programmes in general and gainsharing in particular, situations where workplaces are democratized. Each facility's unique history, power players, and power games impact the consequences of the democratic intervention
2	Exploratory qualitative study	Semi-structured interviews	Interviews were conducted after the first year of contract and incentive scheme implementation	To identify how general practices addressed the Quality and Outcomes Framework of the 2003 General Medical Services contract, in particular the nature and degree to which incentive schemes were used, and to explore their perceived influence on team working and staff morale within the practices	UK	Fourteen general practices in Gwent, a county in south-east Wales. The study area is geographically diverse, divided between urban and post-industrialized rural areas	Interviews: 12 female and 2 male practice managers, one practice manager per general practice (team)	Content analysis, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding	Increased workloads due to the introduction of the new contract affected team working and morale. Team incentives provided motivational advantages in some practices but not in others, where perceived unfairness caused resentment and staff leaving. Increasing team size, involvement of the team in change, and good leadership motivated teams and were perceived to improve quality of care

#	Methodology	Data collection methods	Time frame of data collection	Phenomena of interest	Country	Setting	Participants	Data analysis methods	Main themes, concepts, and findings identified by authors
3	Multiple-case study design	Semi-structured interviews and document studies	Not stated	Partnering: what is it, when and to what extent should it be used, and how should it be implemented?	Sweden	Four partnering projects procured by a Swedish mining company, consisting of two large pelletizing plants (Projects A and B), a new main mine level (Project C), and flotation facilities (Project D)	Interviews: 35 respondents from the client's project organizations, including the director of the construction project department, first-level project managers of the four projects, second-level project managers in Projects A and B, procurement managers, quality managers, design managers, and various specialists involved in time scheduling and quality control. 15 respondents from the partner/supplier organizations, including site managers, contract manager, design consultants, and engineers	Cross-case pattern analysis, pattern-matching analysis, visual mapping strategy, and synthetic strategy	Main contribution is a developed definition of partnering: a cooperative governance form that is based on core and optional cooperative procurement procedures to such an extent that cooperation-based coopetition is facilitated
4	Multiple-case study design	Semi-structured interviews and document studies	Interviews were conducted over the period 1993–1995, at the time of the interviews a new remuneration system had just been introduced (at least in 'Heavy Metal')	The role of accounting in redesigned remuneration systems	UK	Two fairly large UK manufacturing companies, 'Heavy Metal' and 'StitchCo', with the former serving industrial and agricultural markets and the latter manufacturing fabrics and furniture	Interviews: senior and middle managers, including managing director, finance director, works director, technical manager, production coordinator, management control systems coordinator, computer services manager (all from Heavy Metal), financial accountant, treasurer, HRM director, buying and production director, factory manager, cutting manager (all from StitchCo)	Not stated	Despite the complementing of financial with non-financial forms of reward and the emphasis on peer pressure from team members as a source of motivation, the language and calculations of accounting remain central and pervasive in developing, justifying, and mobilizing support for new, team-based reward systems

#	Methodology	Data collection methods	Time frame of data collection	Phenomena of interest	Country	Setting	Participants	Data analysis methods	Main themes, concepts, and findings identified by authors
5	Mixed methods case study design	In-depth interviews and online survey	Interviews were conducted 8 months after implementing the new model, survey was conducted 16 months after implementation	A team-based compensation model designed to improve quality of care, patentient experience, and cost containment, as well as to broaden the types of patient–clinician interactions and bring in more patients	US	Fairview Health Services, a large non-profit healthcare delivery system in Minnesota with 44 primary care clinics, 7 hospitals, and a range of specialty services	Interviews: 18 primary care providers (PCPs) and 3 administrators. Survey: 156 PCPs completed the survey (response rate of 55%), the majority of whom were family practice physicians	Thematic analysis	PCPs reported a shift in orientation towards improving quality of care, working more collaboratively with their colleagues, and focusing on their full panel of patients. However, the comprehensive change did result in lower fee-for-service billing and reductions in PCP satisfaction
6	Mixed methods case study design	In-depth interviews and online survey	First round of interviews was conducted 6 months after implementing the new model, second round was conducted a year later (unclear whether the authors meant a year after implementation or a year after the first round). Survey was conducted 2 years and 4 months after implementation	The benefits and challenges of a team-based, quality-focused compensation model	US	Fairview Health Services, a large non-profit healthcare delivery system in Minnesota with 44 primary care clinics	Interviews: 46 primary care clinicians. Survey: 150 primary care clinicians completed the survey (response rate of 56%), the majority of whom were family practice physicians	Thematic analysis	The benefits of the clinic-based quality incentive were quality improvement for the team and less patient 'dumping', or shifting patients with poor outcomes to other clinicians. The challenges were clinicians' lack of control and colleagues riding the 'coat-tails' of higher performers. As regards team dynamics, although clinicians reported greater interaction with colleagues, some described an increase in tension

#	Methodology	Data collection methods	Time frame of data collection	Phenomena of interest	Country	Setting	Participants	Data analysis methods	Main themes, concepts, and findings identified by authors
7	Grounded theory	Individual thematic interviews, group interviews using critical incident technique, participant observations, and document studies	Individual thematic interviews were conducted over a period of 3 months, group interviews were conducted over a period of 1 month, observations were conducted during 22 days at the worksite and 2 additional days in each division	To identify collective interpretations of well-being, sources of collective stress, and collective coping mechanisms to alleviate such stress	Finland	Three economically independent divisions (A, B, and C) and a work unit (X) of a multinational company operating in the field of metal industry. Although the multinational company formed a common context to all divisions, these rather independent organizational units operated in very different business environments	Individual thematic interviews: 63 informants representing all divisions, different professional groups and hierarchical levels, both sexes, and different age groups. Group interviews (n = 32): 90 informants in groups of 2 or 3 persons representing again the entire sample	Inductive analysis and open coding	The more hectic the organizational context, the more permissive the collective conception of well-being was. Collective stress emerged as a response to two types of signals: (1) imperfect adaptation to the environment of the division or work unit, or (2) friction inside the community. A large proportion of the corresponding coping mechanisms were found to be collective, learned uniform responses to remove the stressor, to change the interpretation of the situation, or to alleviate negative feelings
8	Case study	Preliminary interviews, semi-structured interviews, and examination of company databases	Semi-structured interviews were conducted between January and October 1998	The communication characteristics of virtual teams	US	The customer support virtual team of a Fortune 500 consulting company, a team providing wide-ranging customer support for a robust software product that automates all phases of a complex procurement process	Semi-structured interviews (n = 28): 18 of the 31 team members were interviewed, located at the Virginia, Florida, Pennsylvania, Washington, California, and Hawaii branch offices	Not stated	An organization's systems must be aligned to support virtual teams, its culture must support information sharing and member growth, and team members must develop a mindset about communication that fosters creative, artful use of media to complete project tasks and maintain relationships

* The descriptors refer to the included studies listed in Table 7.

- **Table 9:** Appraisal results of included studies

#	Study title	Critical appraisal criteria*									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Collins, D. (1995). A Socio-Political Theory of Workplace Democracy: Class Conflict, Constituent Reactions and Organizational Outcomes at a Gainsharing Facility. *Organization Science*, *6*(6), 628-644.	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
2.	Edwards, A., & Langley, A. (2007). Understanding how general practices addressed the Quality and Outcomes Framework of the 2003 General Medical Services contract in the UK: a qualitative study of the effects on quality and team working of different approaches used. *Quality in Primary Care*, *15*, 265-275.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3.	Eriksson, P. E. (2010). Partnering: what is it, when should it be used, and how should it be implemented? *Construction Management and Economics*, *28*(9), 905-917.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
4.	Ezzamel, M., & Willmott, H. (1998). Accounting, Remuneration and Employee Motivation in the New Organisation. *Accounting and Business Research*, *28*(2), 97-110.	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
5.	Greene, J., Hibbard, J. H., & Overton, V. (2014). A Case Study of a Team-Based, Quality-Focused Compensation Model for Primary Care Providers. *Medical Care Research and Review*, *71*(3), 207-223.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
6.	Greene, J., Kurtzman, E. T., Hibbard, J. H., & Overton, V. (2015). Working Under a Clinic-Level Quality Incentive: Primary Care Clinicians' Perceptions. *Annals of Family Medicine*, *13*(3), 235-241.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
7.	Länsisalmi, H., Peiró, J. M., & Kivimäki, M. (2000). Collective stress and coping in the context of organizational culture. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *9*(4), 527-559.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
8.	Suchan, J., & Hayzak, G. (2001). The Communication Characteristics of Virtual Teams: A Case Study. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, *44*(3), 174-186.	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y

Y = Yes; N = No; U = Unclear.

* The numbers refer to the critical appraisal criteria listed in Table 6.

3.3.2 Appraisal results [13]

Not only the main characteristics but also the methodological quality of a study says something about how to interpret its findings. In this qualitative research synthesis, it was decided to apply the QARI to appraise the methodological quality of the included studies. The QARI contains a number of criteria on the congruity between the research methodology on the one hand and some other study section or component on the other (i.e., congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology or congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data). To determine whether there was congruity, it was important that both the research methodology and the other study section/component were clearly present. If there seemed to be congruity but a study section or component was not described sufficiently clearly, then the corresponding criterion would be provided with the final verdict 'unclear' (U). If all components of a criterion were clearly present but there was clearly no congruity or an affirmative answer to the respective question (see Appendix 5 for the exact questions), then the criterion would be provided with the final verdict 'no' (N). This verdict logically also applied to criteria in which components were not defined or described at all. In the case of clearly present congruity or a clearly affirmative answer to the question, criteria were provided with the verdict 'yes' (Y). The appraisal results that arose from this approach to the QARI are presented in Table 9.

On the whole, all included studies showed good congruity between the different study components, and in all studies the conclusions clearly flowed from the views and words of the participants and the analysis, or interpretation, of the data. Interpretation is placed between commas because in some studies (4 and 8) we only had access to the authors' interpretation of the data. These studies failed to describe how and according to which procedures data were analysed. Moreover, these two studies lacked congruity between the stated methodology and how they placed and interpreted their results in a broader research perspective (e.g., an attempt to generalize from a single case study). The fact that studies 4 and 8 failed to meet both appraisal criterion 4 and 5 made clear that the findings of these studies had to be treated with caution. An exception to the rule of good congruity was criterion 1 on the congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology. Only study 7 managed to meet this criterion.

However, the QARI also contained criteria that deserved more of our attention, the aforementioned criteria regarding believability, context, and the influence of the researcher on the research. Criterion 8 on the adequate representation of participants and their voices is closely related to believability and is perhaps the most important in a qualitative research synthesis like this. The majority of the included studies (n = 6) met this criterion. However, this positive appraisal result was partly offset by the less favourable results for criterion 9 and in particular criterion 7. The latter criterion concerns the influence of the researcher on the research and may also be regarded as an important appraisal criterion in a qualitative research synthesis. Most of the studies (n = 6) failed to meet criteria 7 and 9. This meant that although believability was created by an adequate representation of participants, these studies could have been conducted in an unethical way and, above all, the researcher(s) might have exerted considerable influence on the research. Another relevant criterion was criterion 6 on the cultural and theoretical orientation of the researcher. This appraisal criterion contributes to providing some context and a slight majority of the studies (n = 5) managed to meet this criterion. When criteria 6, 7, 8, and 9 are considered together as the figurative watchdogs for believability, context, and minimized investigator impact, it can be concluded that study 2 stands out from the

others and that study 7 clearly makes the worst impression (and study 3 to a lesser degree). When the overall methodological quality of the studies is considered and we simply count the number of instances of 'yes' and 'no', it can be stated that studies 1 and 2 are of sound methodological quality and that the methodological quality of studies 3, 4, 7, and 8 may raise questions, to say the least.

Finally, when the main study characteristics and the appraisal results are considered together, some further noteworthy comments can be put forward. Study 4, to begin with, examined team incentives as the primary phenomenon of interest and therefore devoted a great deal of attention to team incentives and the events they set in motion. Although study 4 achieved good appraisal results for the criteria related to believability and context, its overall methodological quality was relatively low. This combination of examining team incentives as the primary phenomenon of interest and having a somewhat weaker methodology meant that potential findings arising from study 4 had to be treated with caution. In a similar manner, studies 3, 7, and 8 also attracted attention. These studies showed a relatively low overall methodological quality and ended up with poor appraisal results for the criteria related to believability, investigator impact, and ethics (study 8 to a lesser degree). In addition, these studies paid relatively little attention to team incentives and corresponding events, and therefore they were likely to carry less weight in the synthesis. Also, the three studies were unclear about their time frame of data collection and the specific points in time at which data were collected. That studies 3, 7, and 8 paid relatively little attention to team incentive-related events and did not clearly state how long after implementation these events could have occurred made the contribution of these studies and their findings less valuable. Combined with the presence of a somewhat weaker methodology, it was not necessarily considered a bad thing that these studies were not able to make a greater contribution.

3.4 Description of data handling and analysis

Now the included studies have been characterized and appraised, we can provide a description of how documents were handled, how findings were extracted, and how themes were developed.

3.4.1 Data extraction [14]

Before data were actually extracted, it had to be decided what exactly would count as data. Synthesists are quite divided on this matter. According to Major and Savin-Baden (2010, p. 58), at one end of the spectrum, some researchers argue that everything from the study title to the discussion counts as data and should be considered since all of these could contain important messages. At the other end of the spectrum, synthesists advocate stricter adherence to only original data presented in the findings/results sections. Major and Savin-Baden (2010) suggested that there is a middle ground. They argued that study contexts are important and can play a relevant role in synthesis and interpretation, but they also argued that the primary focus should be on ensuring that studies contain rich, thick description in the form of quotations from the original data. These quotations are considered essential for data analysis. This qualitative research synthesis followed the tradition of Major and Savin-Baden (2010) and counted thick description in the form of quotations from participants as data. Thick description had to be related to team incentives in order to be extracted. Moreover, we extracted literal descriptions about events, activities, actions, and choices of actors that are set in motion by team incentives. Events and the like were eligible for extraction if they were either directly or indirectly triggered by team incentives, as long as the connection was clear. Specific events related to the design and implementation of team incentives were also

extracted. However, highly specific events that only related to the setting in which the study was conducted and could hardly be compared with events from other settings were not eligible for extraction (e.g., increasingly referring patients to chronic care education and support in a healthcare setting). In short, participant quotations and literal event descriptions related to team incentives were extracted.

When the included studies were thoroughly screened for potential findings, not all sections of a study were examined. We limited ourselves to examining sections on findings, results, conclusions, implications, recommendations, and discussion. In case of doubt or in the case of a slightly deviant study structure, all sections following (coming after) the methods section were examined. All tables and boxes referred to in the aforementioned sections were also screened for potential findings. Finally, data from appendices were not examined and extracted. Overall, the data extraction process of this qualitative research synthesis constitutes a middle ground in that relatively many sections of a study were screened for process data but certainly not all of them.

3.4.2 Software [15]

For the sake of meaningful interpretations, the processes of analysis, synthesis, and interpretation were largely performed by hand. Doing data analysis, synthesis, and interpretation by hand helps to avoid oversimplification during synthesis and interpretation that can be compounded by the use of specialized computer software. This kind of software generally tends to break data down into themes and words in a way that results in deconstruction rather than reconstruction of the data (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 70). Therefore, no specialized software was used in this qualitative research synthesis for coding and analysing data. The only software programs that were really used in this synthesis were Microsoft Word and Excel. Microsoft Word was obviously used for drawing up the report, whereas Microsoft Excel was used to process and keep track of all database searches and to store and process all extracted data.

3.4.3 Number of reviewers [16]

The number of reviewers involved in a synthesis has everything to do with establishing validity or trustworthiness, and in particular with ensuring confirmability. As mentioned earlier, trustworthiness increasingly replaces validity in ensuring credibility in qualitative research. One of the most common techniques for establishing trustworthiness or validity is peer examination. This technique involves multiple authors each reviewing and coding articles, and makes use of multiple raters to establish inter-rater reliability (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). However, such techniques as peer examination and inter-rater reliability reflect a positivist perspective that may belie and threaten the interpretative nature that is necessary for synthesis. In this qualitative research synthesis, certain confirmability was sought by focusing on peer-reviewed primary studies, not by ensuring inter-rater reliability and the like of the synthesis itself. Moreover, this study concerns a master thesis. A master thesis in the form of a qualitative research synthesis is generally not conducted by multiple reviewers.

3.4.4 Coding [17]

The process of coding actually consisted of three stages, namely descriptive coding, open coding, and axial coding. Descriptive coding will be discussed first. In the stage of descriptive coding, sometimes called factual coding, we coded for concrete facts, processes, events, activities, actions, and choices

of actors (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). In this stage, all these codes together formed the first-order codes. Each first-order code was provided with a *level of evidence*. This approach categorizes the validity of qualitative evidence and is based on the following three levels of evidence:

Box 1: Levels of evidence (Pearson, 2004, p. 52)

- *Unequivocal:* the evidence is beyond reasonable doubt and includes findings that are factual, directly reported/observed and not open to challenge.
- *Credible:* the evidence, while interpretative, is plausible in light of the data and theoretical framework. Findings can be logically inferred from the data but, because they are essentially interpretative, the findings are open to challenge.
- *Unsupported:* findings are not supported by the data and none of the other level descriptors apply.

In this synthesis, unequivocal evidence consisted of direct participant quotations that were directly reported. Credible evidence, in turn, consisted of interpretations of researchers that were plausible in light of the data and could be logically inferred from the data. Because this evidence concerned interpretations of researchers, it could be challenged. Unsupported findings were not supported by the data and were more or less loose, unsubstantiated statements. First-order codes could consist of both participant quotations and researcher interpretations. The levels of evidence assigned to these codes are to be found in the data structure (see Appendix 6 for the data structure figures, in which unsupported findings are denoted by the letter 'N'), which will be discussed at a later stage. In addition to a level of evidence, each first-order code was provided with a time indication of occurrence. If there was no specific indication of when an event occurred, the first-order code in question was provided with the time frame of data collection of the corresponding study. In this way, we were able to build a picture of the overall sequence of events and to determine whether events occurred before, during or after implementation of a team incentive system. The different features of narrative data were explicitly reflected in this stage of coding. The time indications of occurrence embodied *event sequence*, the detailed participant quotations constituted *thick description*, and the interpretations of researchers reflected *narrative voice*. After providing a first-order code with a level of evidence and time indication of occurrence, the code was converted into a shorter, more manageable version of the event and actors involved. The resulting code constituted the *fabula*. In the case of direct participant quotations, it was attempted to retain the expressions, phrases, and words of participants as much as possible. In the case of a researcher interpretation, it was attempted to convert this interpretation into a more objective version that essentially consisted of an event and the actors involved, logically with the aim of eliminating narrative voice.

3.4.5 Study comparison [18]

The second stage of coding consisted of open coding. All 111 first-order codes were grouped and categorized on the basis of commonality. If first-order codes shared a significant degree of similarity, the respective codes were translated into each other, in an act called reciprocal translation analysis, or the code was selected that best covered and represented the codes in question. This approach ultimately led to a set of 63 first-order *categories*. It should be noted that the chosen approach was not really characterized by concrete comparisons within and across studies. In our approach, we did not want to be restricted too much by existing categories, themes, dimensions, and concepts. It was

therefore decided to lump all first-order codes from all studies together and to begin the stages of open coding and axial coding with a 'fresh' set of codes.

3.4.6 Derivation of themes [19]

The third and final stage of coding consisted of the derivation of themes and the subsequent process of axial coding. The first-order categories were, again on the basis of commonality, reduced to second-order themes and ultimately to the necessary aggregate dimensions. Although a list was made of existing themes that could be identified in the included studies, these themes were only incorporated into the data structure if they best covered and represented a subset of first-order categories. In all other cases, thus in general, new themes were established. The first-order categories, the second-order themes, and the aggregate dimensions together constitute the data structure, which is presented in Appendix 6. However, the data structure was merely a static picture of a dynamic phenomenon. Therefore, a dynamic inductive model had to be developed in which the precise connections between the themes and aggregate dimensions were revealed. This concerned the final step of axial coding.

The chosen approach of building a data structure and developing a dynamic inductive model was based on the methodology of Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton (2013). Gioia et al. (2013, p. 15) presented a "systematic approach to new concept development and grounded theory articulation that is designed to bring 'qualitative rigor' to the conduct and presentation of inductive research". Their methodology was considered particularly appropriate and relevant because of the desire to achieve a certain degree of qualitative rigor. In the findings chapter, we will further elaborate on the methodology of Gioia et al. (2013) and the significance and value of the data structure and dynamic inductive model to the findings.

3.5 Desired synthesis output and importance of thick description

As announced in the introduction, the *desired* synthesis output and the importance of rich, thick description will be discussed in this methodology chapter, in the upcoming section to be precise. The findings chapter, in turn, covers the *actual* synthesis output.

3.5.1 Desired synthesis output [21]

Before data were actually extracted, coded and analysed, an image had to be created of the desired synthesis output that we wanted to work towards. Since the aim was to build process theory through the use of narrative, it quickly became apparent that we had to work towards a narrative of the discoveries made. At its most fundamental level, this narrative had to be a story or an account that depicted events and experiences (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). So essentially, the assignment was to create a story about the events, activities, actions, and choices that are set in motion by team incentives, along with the main actors and characters that are affected by these incentives. This story had to be plausible and compelling, and had to adequately reflect the lived experience of research participants and real-world team incentive recipients. This stage of constructing a narrative provided an interesting challenge in that there was no direct access to the participants' narratives; rather, only the primary researchers' narratives could be accessed. In such a case, the development of a narrative for a synthesis is twice removed from the original source. This removal is likely to result in concerns about representation. However, the overarching goal of a qualitative research synthesis is to tell the story of multiple authors and presenters directly and plausibly to the audience, recognizing that the

story is indeed that: simply a story that represents the multiple realities of the participants involved (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 95).

Major and Savin-Baden (2010) argued that it is possible to construct a plausible, compelling narrative by applying a logical structure, relying on thick description, and using visual displays. The importance of thick description will be discussed in the next section. Major and Savin-Baden (2010) distinguished various narratives structures from which we could initially choose: (1) narrative logic, (2) natural presentation, (3) organizing the narrative around a central concept, (4) presenting concepts from most important to least important, (5) arranging and building up findings from most simple to most complex, or (6) using a conceptual/theoretical framework to guide the narrative and interpretations thereof. Eventually, it was decided to aim for a natural presentation or narrative logic. A natural presentation is particularly suitable for presenting findings that demonstrate a process. In this narrative structure, the findings are arranged in a way that reflects the process, so that a natural sequence of events and actions is created (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 96). The process may or may not have a linear character, but its key elements are identified and presented in sequence. A narrative logic, in turn, involves a narrative ordering of the synthesis. The idea behind this structure is that there is an overarching story hidden in the primary studies that should be told (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 96). Frequently, chronology is the device used to order the narrative. The two narrative structures mentioned (or a combination of both) were considered particularly suitable for structuring the potential findings from the data-rich process studies that this synthesis aimed for.

3.5.2 Importance of thick description [20]

The above strategies are logical ways to structure findings, but it quickly became clear that they could only be effective if they were accompanied by striking exemplars. Exemplars are frequently specific events, actions, observations, details, or examples that illustrate a synthesist's accuracy in interpreting the data. Major and Savin-Baden (2010) argued that exemplars are best conveyed through the use of thick description. This meant that the desired narrative had to be punctuated with data, data that ideally had to be included in the form of rich, thick description. Some time ago, Denzin (2001) explained perfectly what thick description entails, why it is relevant, and what contribution it can make. Denzin (2001) argued that thick description:

> does more than record what a person is doing. It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. It enacts what it describes. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience or sequence of events for the person or persons in question. In thick description the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard, made visible. (p. 100)

Given their intrinsic characteristics, thick descriptions in the form of quotations from original articles were considered particularly suitable for supporting interpretations. In addition, thick description also contributes to ensuring validity, as does the aforementioned technique of peer examination. The use of detailed quotations from original studies was expected to contribute to a dense description of findings, which in turn could enhance the transferability of the synthesis. In this way, an attempt was made to achieve at least some degree of transferability with respect to the findings. Furthermore,

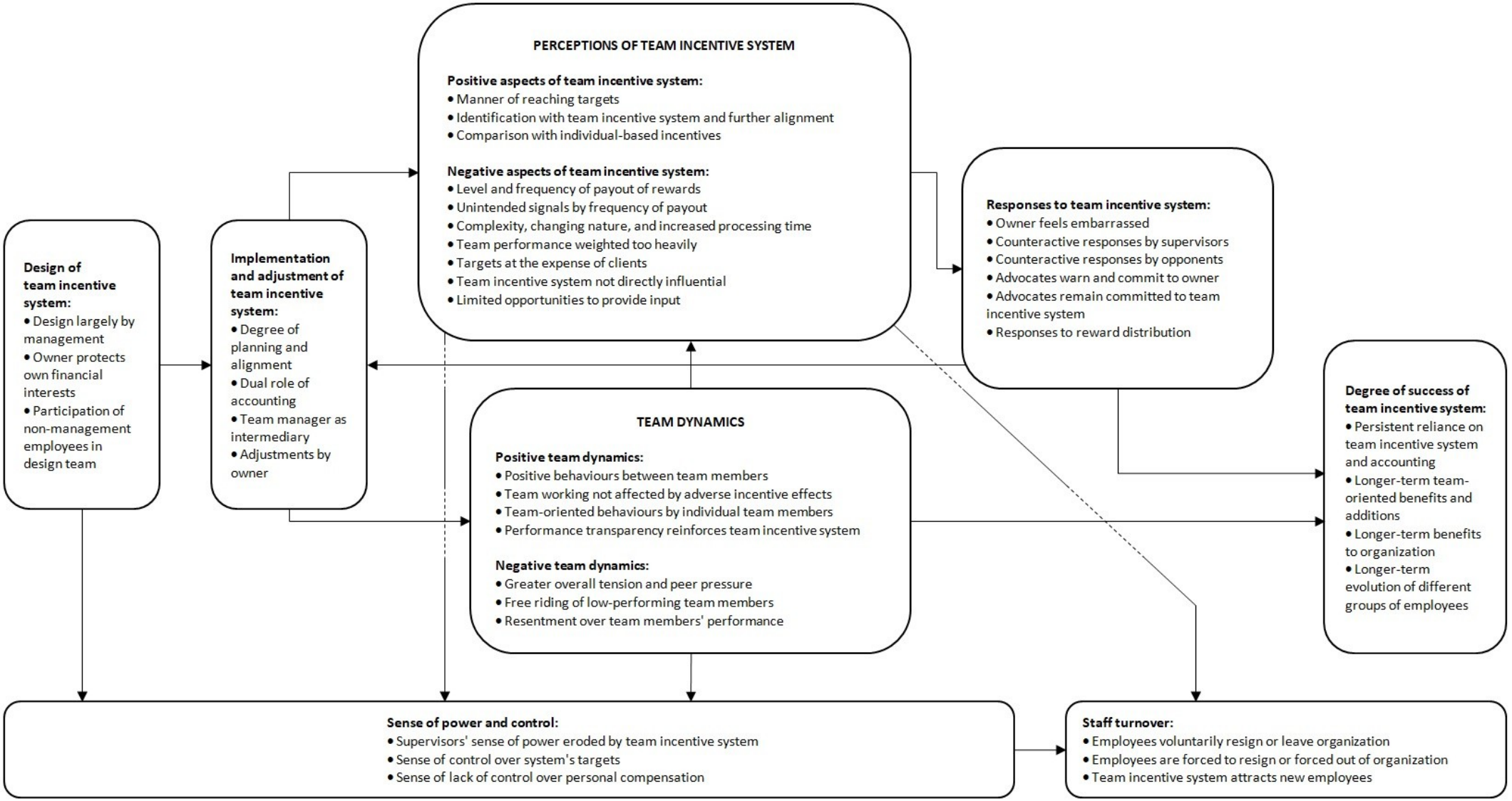
thick description was supposed to contribute to the vividness of this qualitative research synthesis, a criterion that is related to the plausibility of a synthesis. Vividness is about creating an animated picture of the phenomenon under study and about presenting data through rich and compelling descriptions, without going into excessive detail (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). To recapitulate, thick description was supposed to support interpretations and to increase the transferability and vividness of the synthesis.

4. FINDINGS [20, 21]

In the methods chapter, we elaborated on the methodology of Gioia et al. (2013) and the importance of building a data structure. The data structure constitutes a key component in demonstrating rigor in qualitative research and a graphical representation of how we progressed from data and first-order codes and categories to second-order themes and aggregate dimensions. With the extensive set of categories, themes, and dimensions, it was possible to build a data structure. However, the data structure is of such extent that it consists of multiple figures. For this reason, the data structure and corresponding figures are not included in this findings chapter but presented in Appendix 6.

Moreover, as important as the data structure may be, it is merely a static picture of a dynamic phenomenon. Process research does not actually investigate processes unless the static picture can be converted into a motion picture (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 22). The data structure in itself is not really suitable for presenting and providing insight into a chain of events and interactions among concepts. A process model, however, is believed to be more suited to this task. The value and perhaps even necessity of developing a process model is best expressed by Gioia et al. (2013, p. 22): "speaking in classic boxes-and-arrows terms, this process amounts to assembling the constellation of boxes with a special focus on the arrows. It is the arrows that 'set everything in motion'". This findings chapter revolves around the transformation of the static data structure into a dynamic inductive model that describes and explains the processes and phenomena under investigation, in the case of this qualitative research synthesis the implementation and progression of a team incentive system. The process model is presented in Figure 5, whereas its components and corresponding findings are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Before delving deeper into findings, the components of the model, and the connections between these components, a final comment has to be made on event sequence and time. Although it was attempted to present a truthful and accurate sequence of events by providing first-order codes with a time indication of occurrence, this *qualitative* research synthesis did not adopt a *quantitative* approach to event sequence and clearly had no ambition to pursue an extremely accurate sequence of events. The stages and events before, during and after implementation, as depicted in the process model, should be able to provide a realistic representation of an actual implementation of a team incentive system.



- **Figure 5:** Process model of implementation and progression of team incentive system

4.1 Design of team incentive system

The implementation of a team incentive system begins with its design. Without design and without a rationale behind them, team incentives will probably not make a long-lasting positive impression and contribution. Generally, the design of a team incentive system is largely conducted by management, as was the case in study 4. However, owners sometimes also interfere with the design process. In study 1, the owner of a non-union, privately owned manufacturing facility heavily protected his own financial interests during the design stage. In many cases, the owner even ignored and acted against the recommendations of a consultant in order to protect his own interests. To be precise, the owner proposed several suggestions that allowed him to control and minimize bonus payouts and to keep room for manoeuvre. The owner, for example, proposed a bonus calculation with countless cost factors and ratios, many of which were beyond the control of the non-management employees and very difficult to surpass, rather than a limited number of cost factors that employees could directly influence. The design team subsequently approved the suggestions made by the owner and thus allowed the owner to protect his own interests. Already at an early stage of implementation, these interests constituted a major barrier to fully implementing a team incentive system.

In addition to the owner's interference, there was also participation of non-management employees. Team members could be elected by their peers to represent their team and participate in the design team. In most cases, team members elected advocates and supporters of a team incentive system because they trusted advocates to adequately represent their interests and because opponents of a team incentive system were expected to shirk during meetings of the design team. However, electing advocates frequently did not have the desired effect for the group of non-management employees. Instead of representing their interests, the advocates in the design team gave their approval to the unfavourable bonus suggestions made by the owner. For advocates, the prerogative to participate in decision making outweighed the sense of duty to do something about the less favourable bonus conditions. They believed the bonus calculation and conditions were a matter of owner discretion and that it was his money that was being redistributed. In short, despite participating in the design team and the opportunity to exercise power over the design of the team incentive system, the non-management advocates gave their approval to numerous cost factors and ratios that were beyond the control of them and their peers. In other words, the advocates did not take the opportunity to increase their sense of power and control.

Unfortunately, the findings on the design stage and process almost entirely arose from a single study, namely study 1. This was not necessarily a bad thing considering the sound methodological quality of study 1, but it did result in a somewhat one-of-a-kind account of the design process that is more difficult to apply to other settings. This development was also reflected in the responses to a team incentive system, a component of the process model that will be discussed at a later stage. In addition to the fact that the findings arose from a single study, it was also the deviant setting of study 1 that clearly contributed to the somewhat one-of-a-kind character. The setting of this study consisted of a non-union, privately owned manufacturing facility, which was relatively small compared to the other setting organizations in the final set of included studies. The facility from study 1 only had a single owner and it would have been desirable to compare this facility with significantly larger organizations. In that case, the question would be whether a large group of shareholders (characteristic of larger organizations) would protect their own financial interests just as heavily during the design stage as the owner did in study 1.

4.2 Implementation and adjustment of team incentive system

Once a team incentive system has been fully designed and constructed, the system is ready to be implemented. Strikingly, organizations sometimes acted in an unprepared or reactive manner with regard to planning and administering team incentive schemes, as was the case in study 2. Study 4 stressed that it was a difficult but important challenge to establish a clear link between performance and rewards in certain parts of the organization. A clear performance–rewards link is likely to provide team members with a greater sense of control over potential rewards. In addition, study 8 stressed the importance of aligning the team incentive system with strategy and structure at the outset of the implementation process. According to study 8, if a team incentive system is aligned with strategy and structure, team members are more likely to actively and authentically communicate with each other, to feel ownership of their work, and to feel commitment to the team, project, and organization. It should be noted, however, that this finding related to virtual teams and was relatively unsupported in terms of data and evidence. Also striking was the dual role of accounting in the implementation process. In study 4, accounting played a crucial role in implementation by establishing team targets, measuring performance, determining level of rewards, and quantifying all these aspects. Moreover, accounting-inspired arguments were deployed by management to promote the newly introduced team incentive system. Again, this finding should be treated with caution because the authors of study 4 failed to describe how they analysed and interpreted data, and did not include a statement about their influence on the research. Moreover, the importance of accounting in implementation was put forward more by the authors themselves than by the interviewed participants.

One of the most surprising themes arising from this qualitative research synthesis was the role of team manager as intermediary. At the outset of the synthesis, it was not expected that many events would arise regarding the role of team mangers in the implementation of a team incentive system. The role of team manager as intermediary was more or less threefold, ranging from an active to a more passive interpretation of the role. First, team managers may feel personally responsible for the implementation of a team incentive system and whether the system in question is well received by the subordinate team members. In study 2, some team managers felt personally accountable for their team's performance under the new system and thus their team's incentive payment, which resulted in feelings of pressure and loneliness:

> When the contract came in the partner wanted his wife to run the new contract and I said "No, it's my job and I want to do it". I was sent to Coventry by the partners for a few weeks because of it … I was told I had to succeed in it so I felt like I was on a test the whole of the year. I had been with the practice nearly 25 years and everything we had done so far I had always been heavily involved in and I have always made sure we had got there so I didn't feel very trusted… . I just felt alone at the beginning, it was a bit terrifying. The nurses … knew the pressure I was under and my assistant manager, and I think we then became the team that would take it forward… . My target was if I didn't get over 800 points I would have failed in his opinion. (a general practice manager from study 2, p. 269)

Secondly, team managers may feel that they have a certain influence on the implementation process. In study 2, team managers felt they had specific influence on the planning of the team incentive scheme, including sometimes exerting pressure to give financial rewards to team members. Thirdly, there is sometimes room for managerial discretion, a more passive interpretation of the role of team

manager as intermediary. In study 4, a team incentive scheme in a large manufacturing company was presented by management as being well defined and fairly objective, but in fact there was still considerable scope for the exercise of managerial discretion. Such an opportunity for managerial judgment generates uncertainty and invites bargaining but also paves the way for moral appeal to team managers. In short, team managers embraced different ways of acting as an intermediary between management and subordinate team members.

Finally, the owner(s) or management of an organization sometimes made the necessary adjustments to the original design of a team incentive system. Adjustments were deemed necessary when team members' responses to the system in question were of a very negative and persistent nature, and were about to offset some of the constructive work climate changes made. The owner from study 1 also made several adjustments to the team incentive system but did this in a rather half-hearted way. The owner did make bonus conditions more favourable to non-management employees but did this either at the expense of other rewards or after waiting for clarity about possible disappointing profits. The process of implementing a team incentive system, the development of perceptions of and responses to this system, and the process of making adjustments to the original design together form a feedback loop in the process model.

4.3 Perceptions of team incentive system

A certain time after implementation, two types of events began to occur; team members began to develop perceptions of the implemented team incentive system and certain team dynamics gradually began to emerge, the former of which will be discussed first.

4.3.1 Positive aspects of team incentive system

Team members developed both positive and negative perceptions of a team incentive system. To begin with positive perceptions, a team incentive system provided team members with a sense of more aggressively willing and trying to reach targets, thereby also standardizing and optimizing their primary way of working to get the best results (study 5, henceforth only study numbers will be referred to). In addition, the team-based nature of the incentive system enabled teams to identify more closely with the financial indicators to which their rewards were linked (4). These financial indicators of the team incentive system also constituted a numerical view of reality that motivated employees to enhance their efficiency and align their efforts with corporate objectives. The benefits of this numerical view were best expressed by a financial accountant from study 4:

> At the beginning of the week the shop manageress stands up at a team meeting and says, "right, our target for this week is…" bang, that's what we have got to do. Here, this is where we are to date and we are going for our quarter's commission. We had individuals earning in a quarter £400 commission. OK? It can be big money for them. (p. 105)

A final major positive perception was that a team incentive system smoothed out short-term income fluctuations more than individual-based incentives such as piece-rate systems. Moreover, the overall perception was that individual- and team-based incentive systems could very well coexist (2, 4).

4.3.2 Negative aspects of team incentive system

Team members' negative perceptions of team incentive systems were somewhat greater in number. First, team members were generally very dissatisfied with the level and frequency of payout of rewards. Team members believed bonuses were too low, not paid out frequently enough, and they perceived small bonus increases as an inadequate substitute for other compensation components (1, 4). According to study 3, bonus opportunities are considered more influential with regard to affecting attitudes and behaviour if bonuses are relatively large. Secondly, unintended signals were given by the frequency of payout. A lack of bonus payouts sometimes signalled that team incentives might be eliminated, whereas too many payouts led to concerns about team incentives coming to be viewed as automatic by team members (1, 2). Thirdly, a major frustration of team members was the team incentive system's complexity, changing nature, and increased processing time. As a result, team members found the new system hard to understand and found it difficult to know how to increase their income. A primary care provider from study 5 explained that, unlike the previous fee-for-service system in which he could compute how much he had made/earned at the end of the day, things were clearly different now: "I'll get to the end of the day and say, 'I don't know" (p. 217). Another regularly recurring negative perception of team incentive systems was that team members perceived the heavy weighting of team performance as unfair because of free riding of low-performing peers (5, 6). In short, they believed that team performance was weighted too heavily. In this way, the negative team dynamic of free riding of low-performing peers affected the perception formation process and resulted in a specific negative aspect of team incentive systems. Team incentive systems, however, did not always lead to perceptions of unfairness. A group of primary care providers from study 5 actually experienced increased job satisfaction because of the new system because they believed it was more fair. Fifthly, the target-driven nature of team incentive systems could also turn into a negative aspect. Team members were sometimes dissatisfied and uncomfortable with chasing targets at the expense of clients' (financial) interests or immediate needs: "can I honestly tell that patient with a straight face that having your LDL [two points lower] is *so* much healthier for you that it's gonna justify the extra 25 bucks a month [on medication]?" (a primary care provider from study 5, p. 214). Apart from the characteristics and nature of a team incentive system, team incentives were not always perceived as directly influential in achieving higher performance. Appreciation, team motivation, and a collective sense of working together to address new challenges were considered more important:

> It was a token of appreciation. A "thank you" and a "well done" would have sufficed. I don't think anybody was driven by the money and in actual fact I think the girls on the desk would say: "QOF, what is that then?" (a general practice manager from study 2, p. 272)

Finally, some team members were frustrated about not having enough opportunities to provide input into the team incentive system (5). These limited opportunities to provide input into the system and the aforementioned difficulty of knowing how to increase your own income did not exactly lead to team members having a greater sense of control over personal compensation. To add some nuance to the above negative aspects of a team incentive system, it should be noted that team members were often dissatisfied with certain elements of the system but not its overall direction (5). The findings that together form this section on perceptions arose mainly from studies 1, 2, 4, and 5. As is known, findings arising from study 4 should be treated with caution. However, the fact that the above findings largely arose from studies 1, 2, and 5 is a positive observation. In an elaboration on

participant perceptions, it seems particularly important that a researcher's reporting corresponds to the actual perceptions of participants, and that participants are adequately represented. The studies mentioned achieved good overall appraisal results and good results for the criteria on participant representation and investigator impact. This means that we can assume with at least some degree of confidence that the findings from these studies, and thus also the findings presented in this section, are close to the actual perceptions of research participants.

4.4 Responses to team incentive system

After developing perceptions of a team incentive system, team members began to respond to the system in a certain way. At some point, the owner from study 1 began to feel embarrassed for constantly having to announce that no bonuses were paid out despite the fact that profits were made. Supervisors generally felt that the team incentive system eroded their power base, which logically did not result in feelings of satisfaction. As a consequence, some supervisors refused to participate in team incentive system-related activities and discouraged non-management employees from participating. In addition to these counteractive responses from supervisors, there were also counteractive responses from opponents of the team incentive system. In study 1, non-management opponents openly opposed the owner and persuaded 'fence sitters' (employees with a wait-and-see attitude) to counteract the team incentive system until actual financial recognition of their improved performance. After financial recognition, these team members usually resumed cooperating. Out of guilt and complicity, the non-management advocates who participated in the design team refused to tell their opponent peers how the owner manipulated the bonus calculation to his advantage. Moreover, this group of advocates warned the owner in the event that other non-management employees were becoming disillusioned. In addition to committing to the owner, the advocates also remained committed to the team incentive system itself. Despite low and infrequent bonus payouts and supervisor resistance, the advocates remained committed to the team incentive system because they clearly enjoyed its challenges. At some point, advocates even began to act proactively without needing the system's incentive. This may pose a threat if team members are overstepping, make and follow their own rules, and threaten to undermine the team incentive system.

Finally, in study 2 both equal and equitable reward distribution led to some adverse reactions, usually causing tensions and lower morale. Unfortunately, the responses to team incentive systems presented in this section almost entirely arose from a single study, namely study 1. As noted earlier, this may result in a somewhat one-of-a-kind account, in this case an account of the responses to a team incentive system. It would be interesting to see which groups of employees arise in organizations of a different nature and order of magnitude, and how these groups of employees subsequently respond to a team incentive system.

4.5 Team dynamics

Some time after implementation, certain team dynamics gradually began to emerge. As with the perceptions of a team incentive system, both positive and negative events occurred. The former will be discussed first.

4.5.1 Positive team dynamics

After implementation of a team incentive system, positive behaviours between team members began to occur and increase. Team incentives clearly enhanced the teamwork, collaboration, and

interaction between team members and did not provide them with an incentive to sub-optimize their own performance (2, 3, 5, 6). Moreover, team incentives made team members actively reach out to low-performing peers to develop, train, coach, and assist them (4, 6, 8). A family physician from study 6 described how she helped her partner:

> I've been on him, but in a nice way, like okay, I ran your list, here's what I did, here's what you could do if you did this, you would get just as much credit as if you had seen 10 patients. (p. 238)

In addition, team incentives sparked more learning from high-performing peers. An internist from study 6 described reaching out to high-performing team members to learn, asking them: "what are you guys doing that's different than I'm doing?" (p. 238). A physician assistant, again from study 6, also described finding a high-performing colleague: "… who's doing really well—you can lean on that person… . I view it as a [way] to improve myself. If I see my numbers aren't as good, for me it's a motivating thing" (p. 238). The enhanced team-working behaviours mentioned above were not obviously affected by adverse incentive effects on morale due to perceived inequity because team working was felt to be dependent on more long-lived influences such as strength of relationships and support within the team (2).

In addition to positive behaviours *between team members*, there were also team-oriented behaviours *by individual team members*. After implementation of a team incentive system, team members improved their own performance to avoid hurting their peers' compensation, worked harder on peers' clients, and felt less pressure to shift clients with poor outcomes to peers (6). This was best expressed by a family physician from study 6: "now everyone's looking at my quality, not just if I get a bonus, my quality really impacts my partners' livelihood, so I'd better kick it in gear" (p. 238). An internist added: "I don't wanna be the guy that costs my partners money" (p. 238). In short, positive team-oriented behaviours occurred both *between* team members and *by* individual team members. Finally, introducing transparency in peers' performance reinforced team incentive systems and encouraged team members to improve their own performance towards targets (5). This principle applied in particular to certain types of employees and professional groups: "physicians in general tend to be fairly high achievers and want to do well, and [are] used to being somewhat competitive" (a primary care provider from study 5, p. 220).

4.5.2 Negative team dynamics

Implementation of a team incentive system also resulted in several negative team dynamics. Team incentives led to greater overall tension and peer pressure among team members (5, 6). Moreover, team incentives led to free riding of low-performing team members, which subsequently resulted in suspicion, tension, and conflicts between team members (6, 7). A family physician from study 6 stated: "my colleagues who… don't have numbers as good as mine, ride on my coattails because I up the average" (p. 239). An internist in an even more detailed fashion:

> … since it's the clinic quality score that determines your pay, if your numbers are higher, you're being punished two ways. Number 1, the clinic average brings you down [and] your pay decreases. Number 2, you bring those who have poor quality numbers up, so they're

> being paid more, and they don't have any incentive to improve. This system is benefitting them without doing extra work. (study 6, p. 239)

Study 4 attempted to add some nuance to the negative team dynamic of free riding. In study 4, it was suggested that high-performing employees' concerns about being subject to lower performing employees' performance are removed if high-performing employees organize and cajole other team members to maximize team productivity, and thereby secure a good level of bonus. However, this statement was not clearly acknowledged by the participants, and so the question remains as to what the value of such a statement is. Free-riding problems and team incentive-related problems were typically resolved by watching and carefully controlling peers and by making life difficult for free riders (7). Closely related to the free riding of low-performing team members was the resentment over team members' performance. Team incentives led to resentment over peers' performance and way of working, and frustration over not being able to improve their performance (6). A family physician from study 6 explained:

> Physicians… tend to do things a certain way… it's hard to break out of those habits and molds… . You can encourage them and give suggestions, but when push comes to shove, they're in the patient's room with their patient, they do their thing… and it's hard for other people to really influence that to a large extent. (pp. 238-239)

Another frustrated clinician explained:

> I cannot change my colleagues' habits at all. It has not happened in the 5 or more years we have been working on quality, so it is not going to happen now. Unless they are losing pay, some are never going to work aggressively on quality. (study 6, p. 239)

In short, there was not only frustration over peers' performance but also over not being able to improve their performance.

4.6 Sense of power and control

Matters such as the aforementioned resentment over not being able to exert influence on peers' performance did not exactly lead to team members having a greater sense of power and control over the situation they were in. Sense of power and control is perhaps the most promising emergent concept of this qualitative research synthesis. The sense of power and control of team members was influenced in almost all stages before, during and after implementation of a team incentive system. This component of the process model has already been discussed earlier to a certain extent. In the design stage, non-management employees were given the opportunity to increase their sense of power and control by participating in the design team for the team incentive system. However, they did not exactly take full advantage of this opportunity since they agreed to numerous cost factors and ratios that were beyond the control of them and their peers. The non-management employees had been given some power in decision making but subsequently lost some control over their own compensation. Moreover, the negative perceptions of a complex system and limited opportunities to provide input into the system, and the difficulty of exerting influence on peers' performance and thus the team's incentive payment did not lead to a greater sense of control over personal compensation.

The aggregate dimension of sense of power and control comprises three themes. First, supervisors' sense of power was eroded by team incentive systems. Supervisors felt that a team incentive system eroded their power base and might even take away their entire reason for existence (1, 4):

> There was also resistance to the new system by supervisors and first line managers who felt threatened by the change, as the scrapping of the piece rate system was depicted as "taking away their entire reason for existence" and, indeed, most of them were "weeded out". (phrases by a buying and production director from study 4, pp. 105-106)

This prevailing feeling among supervisors actually made perfect sense. In individual-based incentive systems, supervisors generally need to monitor, evaluate, and manage employees' performance, and need to motivate employees to improve their performance. In team incentive systems, supervisors' responsibilities are likely to be replaced by principles and mechanisms such as internal peer pressure, peer evaluation, self-managed teams, and increased development, training, coaching, and assisting by high-performing team members themselves. Secondly, there was the sense of control over the targets of a team incentive system. Team members who were relatively close to the targets of the system were more likely to support change and improve their performance towards targets, whereas the opposite applied to team members who were far away from the system's targets (2).

Thirdly and finally, there was a general sense of lack of control over personal compensation. This specific sense of lack of control was more or less threefold. Team members experienced a lack of control over their own compensation due to the aforementioned complexity of the system and not knowing how to increase your own income, the team-based nature of the system, and the limited opportunities to provide input into the system (5, 6). A family physician from study 6 was particularly frustrated about the team-based nature of the incentive system: "my main frustration is the quality numbers that they base my salary on are [the] clinic's quality numbers, not mine. So I can be just a rock star at everything and it doesn't matter at all" (p. 239). An internist who was also highly frustrated with this aspect of the system added: "I don't have any control over my compensation. I do my job, and I don't get paid for my job" (p. 239). Moreover, team members experienced a lack of control over their own compensation due to the difficulty of influencing their peers' performance and the difficulty of influencing unwilling or non-cooperative clients (5). Finally, some team members experienced a lack of control over their own compensation due to the deliberate exclusion from incentive payments despite being a member of the team (2).

4.7 Staff turnover

The concept of sense of power and control played a very important role in this qualitative research synthesis not only because this concept was influenced in nearly all stages before, during and after implementation, but also because the sense of power and control was almost entirely responsible for the staff turnover in the setting organizations. We actually observed three different types of staff turnover. First, there were employees who *voluntarily* resigned or left an organization. Some team members left their organization out of extreme dissatisfaction with the team incentive system, due to either perceived unfairness or a perceived lack of control over the own compensation (1, 2, 5). In addition, many supervisors who experienced an eroded power base left their organization because the team incentive system was not abandoned after a certain period of time (1). Secondly, there were employees who were *forced* to resign or who were forced out of the organization in question.

Many supervisors and first-line managers were forced to resign or forced out of their organization after being made redundant by the team incentive system (4). Thirdly and finally, team incentive systems 'attracted' new employees. Some new employees chose to work at an organization because of the team incentive system that was in place and the particular focus the system had (5). A primary care provider from study 5 stated that he was intrigued by "the idea of focusing on quality of care for patients" (p. 217). The findings presented in this section on staff turnover and sense of power and control arose mainly from the methodologically sound studies 1, 2, and 5, and can therefore be considered relatively reliable and credible.

4.8 Degree of success of team incentive system

A certain time after implementation, it is possible and perhaps even necessary to take stock of a team incentive system, to determine which events, benefits, and challenges ultimately resulted from the system, and to determine to what extent the current state of affairs differs from the status quo ante. In this section, we will elaborate on four themes that together should be able to shed some light on the degree of success and longer-term potential of a team incentive system, given the final set of included studies and corresponding findings that were at our disposal.

In study 4, two cases of a team incentive system implementation were examined. In this study, after several years of operating under a team incentive system, there was a *persistent reliance on the system and the use of accounting*. Even though team incentive systems were buttressed by non-financial practices such as empowerment and investment in people, they remained an important part of the compensation package. In addition, accounting calculations continued to be relied upon to establish team targets, measure performance, determine level of rewards, and to quantify all these aspects. In short, team incentives and the supportive use of accounting became a stable part of the overall remuneration system.

Secondly, several *longer-term team-oriented benefits and additions* could be distinguished. These benefits and additions had to do with either team dynamics or the team incentive system itself. Team dynamics-related benefits and additions consisted of improved communications, increased training and development, and group dynamics training (1). Team incentive system-related benefits and additions included a greater voice in decision making (from the perspective of an ordinary team member) and new performance evaluation procedures (1).

Thirdly, we were also able to distinguish several *longer-term benefits to the organization*. These longer-term benefits to the organization consisted of a better alignment between the targets of the different teams and between their corresponding hierarchical levels, a better synchronization of supply and demand levels, the organizational orientation shifting from volume to quality, and more flexibility to meet customer needs (4, 5). A primary care provider from study 5 described how they worked before the orientation shifted from volume to quality: "you work hard, you see patients, you get patients through, and you get compensated for that. You know, it didn't have anything to do with quality" (p. 212). Additional longer-term benefits to the organization included significant cost and energy savings, better production and service processes, and less resistance to changes to these processes (1). It should be noted, however, that the *team-oriented benefits* are more relevant in relation to a team incentive system and its degree of success than the *benefits to the organization*. Logically, when a team incentive system is buttressed by non-financial practices such as investment

in people and empowerment, and there are also other (external) factors exerting influence, then it is extremely difficult to determine the exact contribution of the team incentive system to the *benefits to the organization*.

The final question concerned whether there was a *longer-term evolution of the different groups of employees* that we distinguished in the design stage and the stage of responses to a team incentive system. We can be brief about this. Long after implementation, all three groups of non-management employees were still evident (1). Advocates wanted the team incentive system to work and did not want management to revert to the old way of doing things (1). However, opponents and fence sitters argued that management had not yet earned their trust because bonus payouts were still low and infrequent despite the fact that profits were made (1). Many constructive work climate changes were offset by this lack of bonus payouts (1). Finally, through increased social interaction with the non-management employees, the owner from study 1 became more sensitive to their interests and fairness claims. Unfortunately, only study 1 contributed to this theme of the longer-term evolution of different groups of employees. It would be interesting to see which groups of employees would arise in setting organizations of a different nature and size, and how these groups of employees would evolve after implementation of a team incentive system.

5. CONCLUSION

Now the synthesis findings have been presented, the moment has arrived to draw the necessary conclusions. In this chapter, the findings that are most relevant in answering the central research question and key emergent concepts that are promising and surprising will be highlighted. In order to return to the central research question, it may be convenient to repeat it:

Which events occur after implementing team-based financial incentives and rewards within Western-based companies?

In the design stage of a team incentive system, before actual implementation, the owner of a manufacturing facility heavily protected his own financial interests by proposing suggestions that allowed him to control and minimize bonus payouts. The owner proposed a bonus calculation with countless cost factors and rations, many of which were beyond the control of the non-management employees. Non-management advocates of a team incentive system were given the opportunity to participate in the design team, and hence the chance to do something about the less favourable bonus conditions, but they simply agreed to the suggestions proposed by the owner. The advocates cherished their prerogative to participate in the design team and therefore allowed the owner to protect his own interests. It became clear that all actors involved had their own agenda and acted accordingly. Management could and perhaps should have played a key role in striking a balance between the different interests at stake.

In addition, there was the dual role of accounting in the implementation process. This theme did not consist of clearly tangible events but was certainly an important emergent theme in this qualitative research synthesis. First, accounting played a crucial role in the implementation while establishing team targets, measuring team performance, determining the level of rewards, and quantifying all these aspects. The second role involved that accounting-inspired arguments were deployed by management to promote the newly introduced team incentive system. To conclude, accounting was both an integral part of a team incentive system and a means to promote the system.

In addition to the dual role of accounting, team managers also had a very specific role to play, namely the role as intermediary between management and subordinate team members. Team managers felt personally accountable for their team's performance under management's new team incentive system and whether the system was well received by the subordinate team members. Moreover, team managers felt they had specific influence on the implementation and planning of the system, including sometimes exerting pressure to give monetary rewards to team members. Finally, there was sometimes room for managerial discretion. Such an opportunity for managerial discretion not only generates uncertainty and invites bargaining but also paves the way for moral appeal to team managers. In short, team managers approached and fulfilled their role as intermediary in different ways.

Also striking were the predominantly negative responses to team incentive systems. These negative responses included an owner who felt embarrassed but did not significantly increase bonus payouts, counteractive responses by supervisors and non-management opponents, and negative responses to both equal and equitable reward distribution. These were pronounced reactions to a perceived lack of bonus payouts and to other negative aspects of a team incentive system. The relatively large

number of negative responses makes clear that if no early intervention occurs (e.g., adjustment of the number of cost factors and ratios in a bonus calculation) in the case of predominantly negative perceptions of a team incentive system, then responses to these negative perceptions can be of an extreme and prolonged nature. It should be noted, however, that the events related to the negative responses almost entirely arose from a single study, namely the study by Collins (1995). Therefore, it may be wondered whether this argumentation is not a one-of-a-kind account of responses to a team incentive system that is not applicable to other settings.

Finally, the sense of power and control is perhaps the most promising emergent concept of this qualitative research synthesis. This sense of power and control was influenced in almost all stages before, during and after implementation of a team incentive system. Before implementation, non-management employees were given the opportunity to increase their sense of power (a greater voice in decision making) and control (over their own compensation and the system's targets) by participating in the design team for the team incentive system. However, they agreed to a bonus calculation that reduced their sense of control over personal compensation. Moreover, negative perceptions of a complex system in which it was difficult to know how to increase your own income and in which there were hardly any opportunities to provide input led to an even greater sense of lack of control over personal compensation. Furthermore, the resentment over not being able to exert influence on peers' performance also did not lead to team members having a greater sense of power and control over the situation they were in. In addition to subordinate team members, the sense of power and control of supervisors was also affected. Supervisors felt that a team incentive system eroded their power base and might even take away their entire reason for existence.

The aggregate dimension of sense of power and control did not necessarily consist of clearly tangible events. Logically, feelings and perceptions are not equal to events. However, a very strong sense of lack of power and control led to staff turnover, an aggregate dimension that did consist of tangible events. In this way, the sense of power and control constituted a generating mechanism and 'motor' for the events related to staff turnover. Employees either voluntarily resigned and left their organization or were forced to resign and forced out of their organization. The former group of employees consisted of team members who left their organization due to perceived unfairness or a perceived lack of control over compensation, and supervisors who left their organization due to a strongly eroded power base. The latter group consisted of supervisors who were forced out of their organization after being made redundant. A team incentive system, however, sometimes also 'attracted' new employees.

To recapitulate, all actors involved in the design process had their own agenda and acted accordingly, the dual role of accounting and the role of team manager as intermediary were of great importance in the implementation process, and the promising emergent concept of sense of power and control acted as a generating mechanism for the staff turnover-related events. It can be concluded that before, during and after implementation of a team incentive system, the various actors involved seek to protect their own interests and would like to have a certain degree of power, control and influence over the system and their colleagues, and that a lack thereof can lead to significant levels of staff turnover and negative perceptions, responses and events.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Sense of power and control

This first section of the discussion chapter revolves entirely around the sense of power and control, the most promising emergent concept of this qualitative research synthesis. The sense of power and control is central to the description of a team incentive system and is influenced in virtually all stages before, during and after implementation of such a system. How the sense of power and control of supervisors and subordinate team members progresses is largely in owners' and management's own hands as they are able to positively and negatively influence this sense in multiple ways. Because the sense of power and control is such a promising and key emergent concept, it is worthwhile to delve somewhat deeper into the concept, to provide it with some guiding propositions, and to present several interesting lines of thought.

A first theme of the concept that arose from this synthesis was that supervisors' sense of power was eroded by team incentive systems. Supervisors felt that a team incentive system eroded their power base and might even take away their entire reason for existence. This eroded supervisor power base led us to formulate the following guiding proposition:

Proposition 1: Supervisors operating under a team incentive system are more likely to experience an eroded power base and reduced sense of power than supervisors who operate under an individual-based incentive system or who do not operate under an incentive system at all.

What is interesting about this reduced sense of power of supervisors is that it cannot be stated with absolute certainty what leads to this particular sense. It is probably a certain perception of a team incentive system that supervisors begin to develop some time after implementation leading to a reduced sense of power, but it would be interesting for researchers to dig a little deeper into this matter. The fact that, with the introduction of a team incentive system, supervisors' traditional role of monitoring, evaluating and managing employees' performance is likely to be replaced by principles and mechanisms such as internal peer pressure, peer evaluation and self-managed teams may well lead to negative perceptions of a team incentive system and subsequently a reduced sense of power. However, it is also entirely possible that other events are largely responsible for this particular sense. In addition, it would also be interesting to examine the sense of power and control of supervisors when they would be assigned a different role. Examples of such roles are presented in the section on recommendations for policy and practice.

A second theme of the concept that was identified in this synthesis was team members' sense of control over the targets of a team incentive system. In light of this theme, the following proposition could be formulated:

Proposition 2: Team members who are relatively close to the targets of a team incentive system will have a greater sense of control over the system's targets and are more likely to support the associated change and to improve their performance towards the system's targets than team members who are relatively far away from the system's targets.

When taking healthcare organizations as an example, a primary care provider or general practitioner is probably closer to the targets of a team-based, quality of care-focused compensation model than the receptionist at the front desk. Practitioners and professionals responsible for the implementation of a team incentive system may simply take for granted that some team members are closer to the system's targets than other team members. Logically, some teams can be quite large and can be assigned very specific goals (e.g., improving quality of care). In such teams, team members who are relatively far away from the system's targets may not immediately see how their individual efforts make a difference and contribute to the targets of the system and hence the team. However, it would be an interesting challenge for practitioners to ensure that these team members are closer to the targets of a team incentive system and for researchers to examine how this can be achieved and whether this actually has the desired effect and leads to the desired events. This study proposes two suggestions for this interesting challenge. First, practitioners and professionals may be able to make team targets more manageable and tangible by complementing them with more concrete sub-targets that certain team members can better identify with and that can still lead to the desired team behaviours. Secondly, practitioners may also accept that some team members are slightly further away from the targets of a team incentive system and attempt to educate these team members about the importance of the system's targets for the performance of the rest of the team and thus indirectly their own compensation. Researchers, in turn, may delve deeper into the potential value of these suggestions or may explore and examine other ways of getting 'distant' team members closer to the targets of the team incentive system under which they operate.

The third and final theme of the concept that was identified in this synthesis was team members' sense of lack of control over personal compensation. This particular sense of lack of control was already apparent in the design stage of a team incentive system. In the study by Collins (1995), non-management employees were given the opportunity to increase their sense of control over personal compensation by participating in the system's design team, but once participating they agreed to numerous cost factors and ratios that were beyond the control of them and their peers. In this study, the owner of a manufacturing facility heavily protected his own financial interests by proposing suggestions that allowed him to control and minimize bonus payouts. However, this is probably not a typical case of the participation of subordinate team members in the design of a team incentive system. Management is generally expected to strike a better balance between the different interests at stake. Therefore, the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 3: Team members participating in the design of a team incentive system will have a greater sense of control over personal compensation than team members who do not participate in the design of a team incentive system.

It would be interesting to establish whether evidence can be provided in support of this proposition if we were to examine setting organizations that are owned by a large group of shareholders rather than a single owner. Above all, team members experienced a sense of lack of control over personal compensation due to the specific characteristics of a team incentive system. First, team members perceived a lack of control over their own compensation due to the team-based nature of the system. This finding can be translated into the following, rather general proposition:

Proposition 4a: Team members operating under a team incentive system will have a lesser sense of control over personal compensation than team members who operate under an individual-based incentive system or who do not operate under an incentive system at all.

Another characteristic of a team incentive system that led to team members having a reduced sense of control over personal compensation concerned the complexity and changing nature of the system. In light of this second characteristic, the following guiding proposition could be formulated:

Proposition 4b: The greater the complexity and changing nature of a team incentive system, the less sense of control over personal compensation team members will have.

Unfortunately, complexity is sometimes necessary in order to incentivize a wide range of outcomes, and changes in the system are logically necessary to make adjustments and respond to unintended consequences (Greene, Hibbard, & Overton, 2014). Researchers and practitioners may take into consideration several suggestions regarding the *participation*, *preparation*, and *education* of team members when it comes to the complexity and changing nature of a team incentive system. If team members are allowed to *participate* in the system's design, team members are given a voice in establishing the compensation components of the system (e.g., bonus calculation and conditions, cost factors and ratios, et cetera) and consequently partially control the complexity of the system. Moreover, if management continues to insist on the inclusion of certain complex compensation components, then team members who also participate in the design team have the opportunity to ask management to explain what the significance of these components is, what purpose they serve, and why they are included in the incentive system. In addition to the participation of subordinate team members, practitioners may consider *preparing* team members for the changes that lie ahead of them. The transition to a team incentive system is in itself a complex change and the sometimes necessary adjustments after implementation may also be perceived as complex by team members. Before implementation, practitioners may consider explaining to all team members who will be subjected to the system which compensation components the incentive system consists of, how they can manage these components, and how they can influence them to their advantage and desired direction. Finally, in all stages before, during and after implementation of a team incentive system, practitioners may consider *educating* team members on how to calculate and increase their own income, and how they can influence their peers to the benefit of the team's performance and thus the team's incentive payment. The latter phrase of the suggestion is not entirely related to the complexity and changing nature of the system but has more to do with team members' frustration over peers' performance and not being able to improve their performance. Some team members actually perceived a lack of control over their own compensation due to the difficulty of influencing peers' performance.

A final characteristic of a team incentive system that led to team members having a reduced sense of control over personal compensation concerned the limited opportunities to provide input into the system. It would be interesting to examine whether greater opportunities to provide input would lead to an enhanced sense of control over personal compensation, whether management would take the input and feedback from subordinate team members seriously and would act accordingly, and whether subsequent adjustments would lead to a more successful system leading to less resistance

and fewer negative perceptions. This third and final system characteristic let us to formulate the following proposition:

Proposition 4c: The more opportunities team members have to provide input into a team incentive system, the greater the sense of control over personal compensation that team members will have.

More generally, the sense of power and control is a somewhat elusive and intangible concept. It would be worthwhile and valuable for both researchers and practitioners to operationalize the concept and to determine how best to measure it. If the sense of power and control of subordinate team members could be measured, it should also be possible to periodically evaluate it. Periodic evaluation of the sense of power and control may be particularly important for reducing high levels of staff turnover. If measurement and evaluation reveal that the overall sense of power and control of team members is low, management can act accordingly and make necessary adjustment to the system before and to prevent that valued team members leave the organization. Finally, in addition to significant levels of staff turnover, it would be interesting to examine whether the sense of power and control also leads to other important/serious matters and whether the significance of this concept is perhaps even greater. More concrete suggestions on the sense of power and control will be discussed in the section on recommendations for policy and practice.

6.2 Comparison with quantitative literature

The meta-analysis of Garbers and Konradt (2014) showed that the effect for equitably distributed rewards was greater than for equally distributed rewards. Garbers and Konradt (2014) attributed this result to higher individual motivation and lower motivation losses in the case of equitable reward distribution. This quantitative result was not difficult to reconcile and actually quite consistent with this synthesis' qualitative findings. In the case of equitable reward distribution, it is likely that team members experience fewer instances of free riding of low-performing peers and less resentment over peers' performance. Logically, reward distribution is equitable, so free-riding peers and stubborn peers who are difficult to influence are less likely to affect your paycheck. In addition, this may also mitigate negative perceptions of a team incentive system. In this synthesis, some team members perceived the heavy weighting of team performance as unfair because of free riding of low-performing peers. Equitable reward distribution is likely to mitigate this negative perception of unfairness. Weaker negative perceptions and a lesser degree of negative team dynamics may very well lead to higher individual motivation, lower motivation losses, and ultimately to higher team performance. In short, this synthesis' findings explain to some extent the greater effect for equitably distributed rewards that was found by Garbers and Konradt (2014).

In addition, DeMatteo et al. (1998) suggested that the size of a team reward and the amount of pay contingent on team performance are likely to be related to higher motivation and team performance. With the size of a team reward we mean the size of the reward given to the team as a whole rather than the portion that each individual team member receives since the latter has more to do with reward distribution (equal vs. equitable). According to DeMatteo et al. (1998), in the event that larger amounts of pay are contingent on team performance, it is in the interest of a team to work cooperatively together to obtain higher bonuses and rewards. This view is largely supported by the findings of this synthesis. According to Eriksson (2010), team bonus opportunities are considered more influential with regard to affecting attitudes and behaviour if bonuses are relatively large. The

quantitative literature and this synthesis are thus in agreement when it comes to the size of a team reward.

DeMatteo et al. (1998) also elaborated on the frequency of payout of rewards. According to them, the stronger and more consistent the link between pay and performance, the more motivational power rewards have. Moreover, they recommended that rewards should be provided to team members frequently enough that desired behaviours are reinforced. This synthesis is consistent with the literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) when it comes to the link between performance and pay. In this synthesis, it became clear that it is an important but sometimes difficult challenge to establish a clear link between performance and rewards, and that a clear performance–rewards link is likely to provide team members with a greater sense of control over potential rewards. A greater sense of control over rewards, in turn, is likely to have a positive influence on the motivational power of rewards. In this way, the sense of control over potential rewards forms a possible missing link in the relationship between the performance–rewards link and the motivational power of rewards. This synthesis also agrees with the recommendation of DeMatteo et al. (1998) that rewards should be provided to team members frequently enough that desired behaviours are reinforced. In this synthesis, it became clear that rare and infrequent bonus payouts may lead to very negative perceptions of a team incentive system, and that the responses to these negative perceptions can be of an extreme and prolonged nature. Emphasis should be placed on the phrase 'frequently enough'. Too many bonus payouts are also not desirable, as was made clear by the unintended signals that were given by the frequency of payout. In several studies from this synthesis, a lack of bonus payouts signalled that team incentives might be eliminated, whereas too many payouts led to concerns about team incentives coming to be viewed as automatic by team members. Therefore, both this synthesis and DeMatteo et al. (1998) recommend that the right balance be sought in the frequency of payout of rewards. A strong performance–rewards link and the right balance in the frequency of payout of rewards are so important because they are essential elements in making visible the relationship between the *incentive* to perform and the actual *reward*. If this relationship is not clearly visible and team members are unable to observe this relationship because there is too much time between the incentive and actual reward or between different bonus payouts, then team members are likely to become frustrated.

Until now, only a comparison has been made between this synthesis and previous, quantitative research on the basis of reward characteristics (i.e., distribution, size, and frequency of payout of rewards). It may also be worthwhile to look at what both can mean and contribute to each other in terms of team characteristics. Team size will be discussed first. In a smaller team, individual effort is easier to identify and motivation losses are therefore less likely (Garbers & Konradt, 2014). As the size of the team in question increases, individual performance is further removed from the amount of the reward, which in turn reduces the 'line of sight' between pay and performance (DeMatteo et al., 1998). Hence, attaching team incentives to the performance of smaller teams may increase an individual team member's *sense of control over performance and consequently rewards* (DeMatteo et al., 1998). The latter resembles this synthesis' promising emergent concept of the sense of power and control. In this way, the reasoning that smaller teams may ultimately result in a greater sense of control over performance and rewards can be a valuable addition to this synthesis' concept of the sense of power and control. Another team characteristic to consider is team type. DeMatteo et al. (1998) provide a valuable and particularly relevant statement about this team characteristic. They

stated that team incentive systems may be difficult to manage effectively in teams with frequent exogenous staff turnover. In the studies from this synthesis, considerable levels of staff turnover were generally noticed. Such a high degree of staff turnover can thus form a barrier to managing and fully implementing a team incentive system, which may ultimately harm the success of the system. In order to effectively manage and implement a team incentive system, it is therefore important to minimize unnecessary and undesired staff turnover. The finding that a team incentive system can ultimately lead to significant levels of staff turnover is a valuable new insight of this synthesis. It constitutes an addition and enrichment to the intellectual work of DeMatteo et al. (1998). DeMatteo et al. (1998) stated that a team incentive system may be difficult to manage effectively in teams with frequent exogenous staff turnover, whereas this synthesis demonstrated and confirmed that frequent staff turnover is likely to occur in such a system. That team incentives are likely to lead to staff turnover is something to take into consideration when designing, implementing, and managing a team incentive system.

As previously indicated in the theoretical framework, Garbers and Konradt (2014) their results showed a stronger effect for qualitative (behaviour-based) performance measures than for the less subjective quantitative (results-based) performance measures. This result is inconsistent with the findings that were identified in this synthesis. In the study by Ezzamel and Willmott (1998), the financial performance indicators of the team incentive system constituted a numerical view of reality for the employees that motivated them to enhance their efficiency and align their efforts with corporate objectives. Such events are more likely to lead to higher team performance and productivity than lower team performance and productivity. However, it should be noted that the concept of numerical view of reality arose from the methodological weaker study by Ezzamel and Willmott (1998). DeMatteo et al. (1998) also discussed performance measurement. They argued that the use of objective, quantifiable measures of team performance/productivity is particularly important in team incentive systems in which the boundary between individual and team performance is frequently ambiguous and must be managed carefully to prevent feelings of injustice (e.g., due to free riding of low-performing peers). In addition to the motivational numerical view of reality, this relative objectivity in cases of ambiguous boundaries is another argument in favour of the use of quantitative performance measures.

Furthermore, it is worthwhile to draw a comparison in terms of the individual characteristic of individual ability. According to DeMatteo et al. (1998), the highest-ability members or top performers in a team will react negatively to team incentive systems. Such high-ability team members may feel they are carrying the weight of less able team members while receiving equivalent financial rewards. DeMatteo et al. (1998) argued that high-performing individuals are therefore more likely to leave an organization when team incentive systems are in place. This piece of previous research is very similar to some of the findings identified in this synthesis and is particularly applicable to the group of primary care providers and clinicians from the studies by Greene et al. (2014) and most recently by Greene, Kurtzman, Hibbard, and Overton (2015).

Moreover, the literature review of DeMatteo et al. (1998) and this qualitative research synthesis are also in agreement when it comes to the degree of collectivism in an organization. According to DeMatteo et al. (1998), in an organizational culture that is highly individualistic, the introduction of teams and team-based compensation is likely to face considerable resistance, whereas team

compensation is more likely to be embraced in a collectivistic organizational culture. The former situation occurred in the setting organization from the study by Länsisalmi, Peiró, and Kivimäki (2000). A specific work unit of this organization was characterized by a highly individualistic culture in which help was only provided when requested. After introducing a group bonus system in this work unit, there was greater overall tension, conflicts arose, and the workers became suspicious of each other's intentions and actions. In short, the implementation of a team incentive system in a highly individualistic subculture led to considerable resistance and tension.

Finally, a comparison will be drawn between previous research and this synthesis on the basis of the size of an organization. DeMatteo et al. (1998) argued that as an organization becomes larger, it has to deal with increasingly complicated structures, an increasing need for coordination mechanisms, and a greater call for specialization. Moreover, these features of larger firms may also give rise to increasing complexity in the process of designing and implementing management systems and thus also team incentive systems. This reasoning was particularly reflected in the setting organization from the studies by Greene et al. (2014, 2015), namely Fairview Health Services. Fairview Health Services is a very large non-profit healthcare delivery system in Minnesota with 44 primary care clinics, 7 hospitals, and a wide range of specialty services. In this particularly large organization, a team-based, quality-focused compensation model for primary care providers was implemented. However, probably in order to incentivize a wide range of outcomes, the organization included a very large number of different compensation components in the model. This subsequently led to primary care providers being frustrated by the model's complexity and changing nature, and primary care providers not being able to calculate their own income. In short, this qualitative research synthesis confirmed the suggestion of previous, quantitative research that certain features of larger firms give rise to increasing complexity in the process of designing and implementing a team incentive system.

Overall, the findings of this qualitative research synthesis are quite consistent with the results of previous, quantitative research. This synthesis and previous research are consistent in that team bonus opportunities are considered more influential with regard to affecting motivation, attitudes, and behaviour if bonuses are relatively large, and in the sense that the right balance should be sought in the frequency of payout of rewards in order to make visible the relationship between the incentive to perform and the actual reward. In some cases, the findings of this synthesis were more than just *consistent* with the quantitative results and provided potential *explanations* for these results. Fewer instances of free riding of low-performing peers, less resentment over peers' performance, and fewer feelings of unfairness in the case of equitable reward distribution explain to some extent the greater effect for equitably distributed rewards, whereas the sense of control over potential rewards is a possible explanation for the relationship between the performance–rewards link and the motivational power of rewards. In addition, this synthesis and previous research *complement* and *add* something to each other. The reasoning of previous research that smaller teams may ultimately result in a greater sense of control over performance and rewards can be a valuable addition to this synthesis' concept of the sense of power and control. Conversely, the finding of this synthesis that a team incentive system is likely to lead to significant levels of staff turnover complements the suggestion of previous research that a team incentive system may be difficult to manage effectively in teams with frequent exogenous staff turnover. Furthermore, this qualitative research synthesis *confirmed* various suggestions of previous, quantitative research. The suggestion that high-ability team members may feel they are carrying the weight of less able team

members and are therefore more likely to leave their organization when a team incentive system is in place was confirmed by the group of primary care providers and clinicians from this synthesis. In turn, the suggestion that the introduction of teams and team-based compensation is likely to face considerable resistance was confirmed by the events of tension and conflict that occurred in the study by Länsisalmi et al. (2000). Finally, the fact that the setting organization from the studies by Greene et al. (2014, 2015) included a very large number of different compensation components in the incentive model and that this subsequently led to primary care providers being frustrated by the model's complexity and changing nature confirmed the suggestion of previous research that certain features of larger firms give rise to complexity in the process of designing and implementing a team incentive system. This synthesis was actually only *inconsistent* with previous research when it comes to performance measurement. The weaker effect for quantitative performance measures demonstrated by Garbers and Konradt (2014) was inconsistent with the benefits of quantitative performance measures identified in this synthesis, namely the motivational numerical view of reality and the relative objectivity in cases of ambiguous boundaries.

6.3 Research limitations

First and foremost, the greatest limitation of the research is the overall balance in the process model and corresponding findings. The findings on the design process, the responses to a team incentive system, and the degree of success of such a system (to a lesser degree) were mainly derived from the study by Collins (1995). Given the sound methodological quality of the study by Collins (1995), this development did not necessarily make the research fundamentally flawed, but some components of the model may slightly resemble a one-of-a-kind account of a team incentive system implementation. Is it desirable and perhaps even necessary to further develop and reinforce the process model by means of additional process studies and corresponding findings. If additional studies make a meaningful contribution to the model, the components mentioned will be provided with a more nuanced and balanced character.

Moreover, there was also a lack of balance in the specific contribution of each study. The study by Collins (1995) provided by far the most findings and first-order codes, the studies by Edwards and Langley (2007), Ezzamel and Willmott (1998), and Greene et al. (2014, 2015) all made a solid contribution in terms of findings, and the contributions of the studies by Eriksson (2010), Länsisalmi et al. (2000), and Suchan and Hayzak (2001) were barely worth mentioning. This means that the study by Collins (1995) has a disproportionately large share in the process model and that the studies by Eriksson (2010), Länsisalmi et al. (2000), and Suchan and Hayzak (2001) have a disproportionately small share in the model. Although this observation may result in a somewhat less balanced picture of the overall implementation of a team incentive system, it does not necessarily have to be an unfavourable observation. The studies by Eriksson (2010), Länsisalmi et al. (2000), and Suchan and Hayzak (2001) showed a relatively low methodological quality and ended up with poor critical appraisal results for the criteria related to believability and adequate participant representation, investigator impact, and ethics. The study by Collins (1995), on the other hand, achieved practically the best overall appraisal results (only the study by Edwards and Langley (2007) was rated higher). It was not quite unfavourable that the methodological sound study by Collins (1995) managed to make a greater contribution to the process model and that the methodological weaker studies by Eriksson (2010), Länsisalmi et al. (2000), and Suchan and Hayzak (2001) ultimately made a significantly smaller contribution.

Finally, as regards the overall balance in the model, the setting organizations in which the team incentive-related events occurred were mainly active in sectors related to healthcare and (industrial) manufacturing. It was beneficial to the balance in the model that the healthcare organizations were quite different from the industrial and manufacturing companies, but it was a matter of concern that there were almost no findings and first-order codes from other settings. The study by Länsisalmi et al. (2000) was conducted in a different kind of setting organization, a high-technology Fortune 500 consulting firm, but with a total of two findings this study hardly succeeded in making a meaningful contribution. To conclude, the overall balance in the process model constituted a research limitation in that the study by Collins (1995) had a disproportionately large share in the model, some studies hardly made any contribution, and the studies were characterized by a monotonous dichotomy between healthcare settings and manufacturing-related settings.

Logically, there are also other research limitations to be discussed. A second important limitation of the research involves that this qualitative research synthesis did not manage to establish whether there were clear connections between *team dynamics* and *perceptions of a team incentive system*, and between *staff turnover* and the *degree of success of a team incentive system*. To begin with the latter, it may well be that staff turnover is actually an integral part of the degree of success of a team incentive system, but it may also well be that staff turnover triggers events that ultimately lead to a greater or lesser degree of success. To be precise, a situation may arise in which a high-performing team member and valued colleague voluntarily leaves his/her organization out of frustration over the team incentive system in place. It is entirely possible that the resignation of this team member causes damage to the team dynamics of collaboration and learning, and that this subsequently leads to a lesser degree of success of the team incentive system. In short, the question remains as to what the precise connection between these two components is. In addition, the only thing we know about the connection between team dynamics and perceptions of a team incentive system is that events from the former sometimes lead to the latter perceptions. To be precise, because of the negative *team dynamic* of free riding of low-performing peers, some team members *perceived* the heavy weighting of team performance in a team incentive system as unfair. However, given the findings that were at our disposal, we were unable to draw any further conclusions about the connection between these two components.

A third limitation of the research concerns that this qualitative research synthesis is not extensive or exhaustive. This is due to deliberate ignorance of the literature. Before proceeding, it should be noted that this research limitation has nothing to do with and is unrelated to the aforementioned extensiveness of the data structure. This synthesis pursued the methodology of Gioia et al. (2013) and therefore had the aim to develop a dynamic inductive model on team incentives. According to Gioia et al. (2013, p. 21), "upon consulting the literature, the research process might be viewed as transitioning from 'inductive' to a form of 'abductive' research, in that data and existing theory are now considered in tandem". This synthesis intended to remain as close as possible to the inductive slant and did so by the semi-ignorance of previous research. Obviously, previous research had to be examined to build the theoretical framework (therefore semi-ignorance), but it was attempted to develop the dynamic inductive model without being influenced by previous research. The fact that there was considerable time between constructing the theoretical framework and developing the inductive process model made it easier to hold on to this semi-ignorance. To come to the point, inductive research presumes a level of semi-ignorance and some suspension of belief in the

established wisdom of prior research and according to Gioia et al. (2013, p. 23), the literature reviews and syntheses that follow are therefore never extensive or exhaustive. The inductive approach pursued in this synthesis may not have resulted in an extensive or exhaustive process model, but at least the approach has led to some surprising and promising emergent concepts (e.g., the role of team manager as intermediary and the sense of power and control).

Fourthly, no peer examination was applied in this qualitative research synthesis. The technique of peer examination involves multiple authors each reviewing and coding articles, and makes use of multiple raters to establish inter-rater reliability (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). It is one of the most common techniques for establishing trustworthiness and validity in qualitative research. By not embracing this technique, the synthesis may have lost some of its trustworthiness or validity. However, to add some nuance, such techniques as peer examination and inter-rater reliability reflect a positivist perspective that may belie and threaten the interpretative nature that is necessary for synthesis (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). Gioia et al. (2013, p. 22) went even further by citing these techniques as "some sort of back-door positivism sneaking into an interpretive study". This synthesis concerns a master thesis that is generally not conducted by multiple reviewers, but in the case of a scientifically published synthesis a certain trade-off has to be made between embracing the interpretative nature of a synthesis and enhancing trustworthiness and validity through positivist techniques such as peer examination and inter-rater reliability. A final, closely related research limitation concerns that the findings and process model of this qualitative research synthesis have not been confirmed by a 'higher authority'. Such higher authorities may include influential researchers and specialists in the fields of remuneration, team incentive systems, and qualitative syntheses. Obviously, confirmation by a higher authority and constructive feedback/suggestions from such an authority could have led to a more accurate, balanced, and broad-based process model.

6.4 Suggestions for future research

In this final section of the discussion, suggestions and directions for future research will be provided. A first suggestion for future research relates to the measurable constructs mentioned in the previous section. Researchers may develop and convert the emergent concepts of this qualitative research synthesis into measurable constructs. According to Gioia et al. (2013, p. 27), a subtle but significant distinction between concepts and constructs can be drawn in the sense that concepts are broader, more tenuous notions that can later be more narrowly defined, operationalized, and measured. This direction for future research, however, is not the most obvious and important suggestion in view of this qualitative research synthesis.

Perhaps the most important suggestion for future research of this synthesis is to further reinforce the 'building blocks' and construction of the proposed process model. As should be known by now, some components of the model are rather thin in terms of findings and the number of studies that have made a meaningful contribution. The design process, the responses to a team incentive system, and the degree of success of a team incentive system are all components of the process model that would embrace additional contributions from new primary studies. A closely related suggestion for future research is to initiate and conduct process studies on team incentives in settings other than the settings from this synthesis. In this synthesis, the final set of included studies was characterized by a monotonous dichotomy between healthcare settings and manufacturing-related settings. There are many other conceivable settings in which team-based structures are likely to be prevalent and in

which it would be interesting to examine the implementation and progression of a team incentive system (e.g., high-technology consulting and software development firms). New process studies on team incentives may also examine who generally initiates and comes up with the idea of implementing a team incentive system. In this synthesis, it became clear which parties were involved in the stages of design, implementation, and post-implementation and which roles they played in these stages, but this synthesis could not reveal who generally initiated a team incentive system. Given the events in which owners heavily protected their own financial interests during the design stage, it would not be entirely logical for owners to come up with the idea of implementing a team incentive system. Typically, one would expect HR managers and company management/leadership to take the initiative to introduce a team-based structure and corresponding team incentive system. However, it is also quite conceivable that subordinate team members themselves come up with the idea of possibly introducing a team incentive system, at least if these team members are generally allowed to provide some input. In addition to the *party* that takes the first initiative towards a team incentive system, it would be interesting to examine which *events* occur between the first initiative and the final decision to actually design a team incentive system, and how much *time and effort* this transition/progression takes.

Another interesting, potentially valuable direction for future research would be to examine whether the events, processes, stages, and emergent concepts from this synthesis would arise and occur in other domains and interventions. This direction was also proposed by Gioia et al. (2013, p. 24) who argued that many processes and concepts are similar, even structurally equivalent, across domains. It would be interesting to see whether similar events, processes, and groups of employees would arise after the implementation of a *non-financial* team incentive system. Potential rewards in such a non-financial incentive system may include additional days off for each member of the team, an award presentation in front of other teams, a new office space or upgraded workspace for the team, et cetera. In that case, the question would be to what extent the incentives of these rewards would lead to the same perceptions, responses, team dynamics, and staff turnover-related events as in a *financial* team incentive system. It would also be interesting to examine a combination of financial and non-financial team incentives. For example, it may well be that an award presentation in front of other teams reinforces the events, perceptions, and responses that are set in motion by financial team incentives. At the level of individual team members, it may well be that informal leaders arise within a team and that their strong contribution to the team is recognized with an award presentation in front of their peers. If, in such a case, financial team incentives are added and the informal leaders and their team achieve the targets for actually receiving the monetary team rewards, the strong contribution of these informal leaders may be even further underlined and reaffirmed. In addition to examining a combination of financial and non-financial team incentives, researchers may examine whether promising concepts such as the role of team manager as intermediary and the sense of power and control also arise after the implementation of a different kind of intervention. Electronic health records (EHRs) could be such an intervention. Although perhaps widely researched, it is entirely possible that the implementation of electronic health records leads to concepts similar to the sense of power and control (e.g., a general practitioner's sense of control over his/her patients' progress) and perceptions similar to those of a complex and ever-changing system, to name a few examples.

Furthermore, when having decided to examine another phenomenon of interest or another domain, researchers may also decide to replicate the methodological combination that was applied in this study and see if it works for them. This methodological combination consists of conducting a qualitative research synthesis, applying the ENTREQ statement for the sake of transparency, and adopting a process theory perspective. This methodological combination is particularly suitable for uncovering promising concepts that are close to participants such as the role of team manager as intermediary and the sense of power and control. Qualitative synthesists and researchers pursuing the qualitative approach frequently seek to understand human behaviour and make use of thick description of the lived experience of study participants to provide true explanations. Process theory, in turn, is built in this synthesis through the use and structural analysis of narrative data. Participants not only make sense of their world in narrative terms, but they proactively plan and create narratives that are in accordance with their feelings, values, and expectations. Process explanations based on narrative data are therefore particularly close to the phenomena they claim to explain. In short, a qualitative research synthesis and process theory seek to understand human behaviour and are close to the feelings, values, and expectations of participants. These methods are therefore particularly suitable for uncovering concepts that are close to participants and normally seem to be somewhat elusive. The sense of power and control is an example of such an elusive emergent concept. The ENTREQ statement can subsequently complement the methodological combination to ensure and protect the necessary transparency and to make clear that things are not just made up. To conclude, the three aforementioned methods seem to form a proper and promising combination at first glance, but future replications should demonstrate whether this is truly the case.

Finally, speaking of methodology, relatively 'heavy' and rigorous methodological choices were made in this study. As with this study, future research endeavours could focus on conducting a qualitative research synthesis and following and documenting the precise steps of the ENTREQ statement. In that case, however, a valuable suggestion might consist of loosening the methodological choices and scope. First, qualitative synthesists may consider searching for and including grey literature. This study did not include grey literature in the actual synthesis and focused solely on peer-reviewed primary studies because at least some degree of confirmability and quality control was sought. However, assuming that grey literature meets a certain methodological standard, searching for grey literature may yield additional process studies on team incentives that could potentially enrich this synthesis' process model, especially the rather thin components of the design process, the responses to a team incentive system, and the degree of success of such a system. Grey literature may include research project papers, conference proceedings, dissertations, and master theses. While conference proceedings frequently have to comply with stated page limits, other grey literature such as research project papers and dissertations may not always have to deal with such limitations, may be of greater length, and are consequently more likely to contain valuable rich, thick descriptions. In addition to identifying additional process *studies*, researchers may also attempt to obtain additional process *data* by loosening the data extraction process. For example, researchers may consider examining and extracting data from appendices and from other primary study sections than the sections discussed in this synthesis. Finally, with process studies that examined both financial and non-financial team incentives, researchers may also consider extracting data related to events that are set in motion by / have to do with *non-financial* team incentives in order to achieve an even more complete picture of a team incentive system and the precise interaction and complementarity between financial and non-financial team incentives. To recapitulate, this section has proposed various directions for future

research that relate to team incentives and the methodological combination applied in this synthesis, as well as several other interesting directions.

6.5 Recommendations for policy and practice

Now we have provided researchers with the necessary suggestions for future research, the moment has arrived to provide various recommendations for policy and practice that may serve another main target group of this study, namely practitioners engaged in composing financial incentives. The latter main target group may include company policy makers, financial and HR-related professionals, and company management/leadership. This section provides various recommendations for policy and practice that practitioners may freely take into consideration when implementing or adjusting a team incentive system.

First, at the stage of designing a team incentive system, it is important to involve subordinate team members in the process or to have them participate in the design team, if there is one. In the case of a new team incentive system, potential changes in team members' compensation levels and way of working can be so significant that having team members participate in the design is likely crucial for their acceptance of the system. Practitioners may also consider providing opportunities for ongoing feedback, which likely further increases team members' acceptance of the new system (Greene et al., 2014). The statement that the participation of team members in the design of a team incentive system is likely crucial for their acceptance of such a system is supported by Groen, Wouters, and Wilderom (2012). Groen et al. (2012) examined the participation of maintenance technicians in the development of performance measures and noticed a positive change. According to them, the view of the maintenance technicians shifted significantly, from "this won't work in our situation" to "now we know what performance measures can do for us" (Groen et al., 2012, p. 138). This example shows that participation of subordinate employees in the design and development stage contributes to their awareness and acceptance of a management system. Moreover, Groen et al. (2012, p. 137) demonstrated that the participation of maintenance technicians in the development of performance measures had a positive effect on their attitude, social pressure, and capability to take initiative, and that this subsequently affected their behaviour regarding taking more initiatives for performance improvement. Participation of subordinate employees in the design process thus led indirectly to these employees *taking more initiatives to improve their performance*. This is a major argument in favour of early participation of subordinate team members. However, involving team members in the design process only makes sense if their contributions are taken seriously and if their interests are adequately represented, at least to a certain extent. In this endeavour, management could and perhaps should take a leading role by striking a balance between the interests of owners, shareholders and management itself, and the interests of subordinate team members.

Secondly, at the stage of actually implementing a team incentive system, practitioners may consider providing training, tools, and support to help team members prepare for the changes that lie ahead of them, and may also consider helping team members with the skills they will need to collaborate, interact, and communicate more effectively with their peers (Greene et al., 2014). This may not only reduce resistance to future changes and adjustments but may also boost the positive team dynamics that are likely to arise. In this matter, there is perhaps an important role to play for team managers, who are obviously in close proximity to the subordinate team members. In addition, team managers and abundant supervisors may play a role as facilitator or as an intermediary between management

and subordinate team members. Team managers can ensure that a team incentive system is well received by team members and can help them deal with the challenges and barriers that the system raises. Moreover, if the (quantitative) performance measures and financial indicators of the system allow it, team managers and supervisors may prove useful by exercising managerial discretion, which also paves the way for moral appeal to team managers if the situation really demands it.

As regards the specific characteristics of a team incentive system, it is important to minimize the complexity and changing nature of the system. However, complexity is sometimes necessary in order to incentivize a wide range of outcomes, and changes in the system are logically necessary to make adjustments and respond to unintended consequences (Greene et al., 2014). This trade-off between minimizing complexity and changes and making additions and adjustments to the team incentive system is likely to disappear over time because the system will eventually become more stable and team members will become more familiar with it (Greene et al., 2014). Minimizing the complexity and changing nature of the system is important because adjustments such as a less complex bonus calculation and fewer cost factors and ratios (that are beyond team members' control) are likely to provide team members with a greater sense of control over their own compensation. In addition to minimizing complexity and changes, practitioners should also attempt to strike the right balance in the frequency of payout of rewards. The frequency of payout may give unintended signals; a lack of reward payouts signals that a team incentive system may be eliminated, whereas too many payouts may lead to team incentives coming to be viewed as automatic by team members. A balanced and well-considered frequency of payout likely contributes to the continuity of the system. As far as signals are concerned, it is important for practitioners to identify negative signals and perceptions of a team incentive system as early as possible. If practitioners fail to detect these signals in time, the subsequent negative responses to the system can be of an extreme and prolonged nature. A final recommendation on reward characteristics is that potential rewards and bonuses do not always have to be of significant size and that a modest incentive frequently also 'does the job'. This is particularly the case for organizations that are active in sectors that are characterized by declining markets and a labour surplus. In such circumstances, the risk of unemployment would probably already be a considerable incentive for ordinary workers and team members.

Moreover, practitioners should make every possible effort to retain high-performing team members. Retaining these team members may boost the positive team dynamics since a team incentive system generally ensures that these team members actively reach out to low-performing peers to develop, train, coach, and assist them. In addition, high-performing team members may constitute valuable sources to gain knowledge from. One of the main reasons for such high performers to leave their organization is the occurrence of free riding of low-performing peers. This occurrence of free riding may be countered by introducing transparency in team members' performance. Combined with a team incentive system, this transparency may become a focal point of team members' attention and may spark them to improve their performance and reduce their free-riding behaviours (Greene et al., 2014).

Another potentially valuable recommendation for policy and practice involves that practitioners should increase team members' sense of control over personal compensation. A greater sense of control over personal compensation can be achieved in various ways. Practitioners may provide team members with the prerogative of participating in the design team for the team incentive system. In

this way, team members are able to exert influence on the system to which they will ultimately be subjected. Practitioners may also give team members the opportunity to provide input into the system after implementation has taken place, such as introducing a subsystem for ongoing feedback. Another way to increase team members' sense of control over personal compensation is to minimize the complexity and changing nature of a team incentive system. In a less complex and more stable system, it is likely less difficult for team members to calculate how much they have made/earned at the end of the day. In the case of a less complex system, one should not only think of a less complex bonus calculation and fewer cost factors and ratios but also of establishing a clear performance–rewards link. A clear link between performance and rewards is likely to provide team members with a greater sense of control over potential rewards and thus personal compensation.

Finally, it is recommended to increase team members' *overall* sense of power and control. A sense of lack of power and control may lead to significant levels of staff turnover, which in turn may partly offset the positive team dynamics that have been achieved and may result in a constantly changing status quo in teams. To be precise, if high-performing team members frequently leave their team and organization, the remaining team members must constantly search for new peers from whom they can learn and gain knowledge, and with whom they can collaborate, interact, and communicate. Moreover, with the resignation of high-performing team members, existing informal collaborative relationships and valuable pieces of the intra-organizational network are also lost. Team members having an enhanced sense of power and control should prevent all this. It should be noted, however, that a reduced sense of power and control does not always and necessarily have to lead to high-performing team members leaving their team and organization. The situation in the case of high-performing team members may be somewhat more complex. High-performing team members are more likely to appreciate challenges and are more likely to feel accountable and take responsibility for complex tasks. High performers may therefore actually like the challenge of dealing with a new team incentive system, despite a reduced sense of power and control. From the perspective of high-performing team members, the decision whether or not to leave their team and organization is likely to depend on more factors than just the overall sense of power and control.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Search terms and filters proposed by El Sherif et al. (2016)

The search terms and filters that served in this study as input for the additional database searches and that returned in the various additional search strings are highlighted in yellow.

Mixed methods filter for MEDLINE

1. Case Reports/ 2. Organizational Case Studies/ 3. Qualitative Research/ 4. qualitative research*.mp. 5. qualitative stud*.mp. 6. action research.mp. 7. Community-Based Participatory Research/ 8. participatory research.mp. 9. case stud*.mp. 10. ethno*.mp. 11. grounded theory.mp. 12. phenomeno*.mp. 13. Narration/ 14. narrative*.mp. 15. biograph*.mp. 16. Autobiography/ 17. Autobiograph*.mp. 18. documentar*.mp. 19. qualitative synthes*.mp. 20. active feedback.mp. 21. conversation*.mp. 22. discourse*.mp. 23. thematic.mp. 24. qualitative data.mp. 25. key informant*.mp. 26. Focus Groups/ 27. focus group*.mp. 28. case report*.mp. 29. Interview/ 30. interview*.mp. 31. Observation/ 32. observer*.mp. 33. visual data.mp. 34. (audio adj record*).mp. 35. Anthropology, Cultural/ 36. experience*.mp. 37. or/1-36 38. exp clinical trial/	39. exp Research Design/ 40. random allocation/ 41. double-blind method/ 42. Single-Blind Method/ 43. Placebos/ 44. Cross-Over Studies/ 45. or/38-44 46. (clinic* adj25 trial*).mp. 47. random*.mp. 48. control*.mp. 49. (latin adj square).mp. 50. placebo*.mp. 51. or/46-50 52. Comparative Study/ 53. comparative stud*.mp. 54. Validation Studies/ 55. validation stud*.mp. 56. evaluation studies/ 57. evaluation stud*.mp. 58. Follow-Up Studies/ 59. followup.mp. 60. follow-up.mp. 61. Prospective Studies/ 62. Cross-Over Studies/ 63. cross over.mp. 64. crossover.mp. 65. prospective*.mp. 66. volunteer*.mp. 67. or/52-66 68. singl*.mp. 69. doubl*.mp. 70. trebl*.mp. 71. tripl*.mp. 72. or/68-71 73. mask*.mp. 74. blind*.mp. 75. 73 or 74 76. 72 and 75	77. 45 or 51 or 67 or 76 78. Cohort Studies/ 79. Case-Control Studies/ 80. Cross-Sectional Studies/ 81. Health Surveys/ 82. Health Care Surveys/ 83. Risk/ 84. Incidence/ 85. Prevalence/ 86. Mortality/ 87. cohort*.mp. 88. case-control.mp. 89. cross sectional.mp. 90. (health* adj2 survey*).mp. 91. risk.mp. 92. incidence.mp. 93. prevalence.mp. 94. mortality.tw. 95. "case series".mp. 96. "time series".mp. 97. "before and after".mp. 98. prognos*.mp. 99. predict*.mp. 100. course*.mp. 101. or/78-100 102. (mixed adj5 method*).mp. 103. multimethod*.mp. 104. (multiple adj5 method*).mp. 105. or/102-104 106. qualitative.mp. 107. Qualitative Research/ 108. quantitative.mp. 109. 106 or 107 110. 108 and 109 111. 105 or 110 112. 37 or 77 or 101 or 111 113. 112 not (letter or comment or editorial or newspaper article).pt. 114. 113 not (exp animals/ not humans.sh.)

Appendix 2: Additions to inclusion and exclusion

The following eight exclusion reasons were used for excluding studies:

Exclusion reasons

1. Study does not focus on financial incentives or focuses on non-financial rather than financial incentives.

2. Study does not specifically examine financial incentives at team level.
3. Study focuses on developing and/or testing static relationships between independent and dependent variables.
4. Study does not contain its own qualitative empirical component.
5. Study uses children rather than adult populations and samples (18+ years or university students).
6. Study was published prior to January 1985 or after May 2017.
7. Study is not reported in English.
8. Full text is not available and accessible through access rights of University of Twente or is not available online at all.

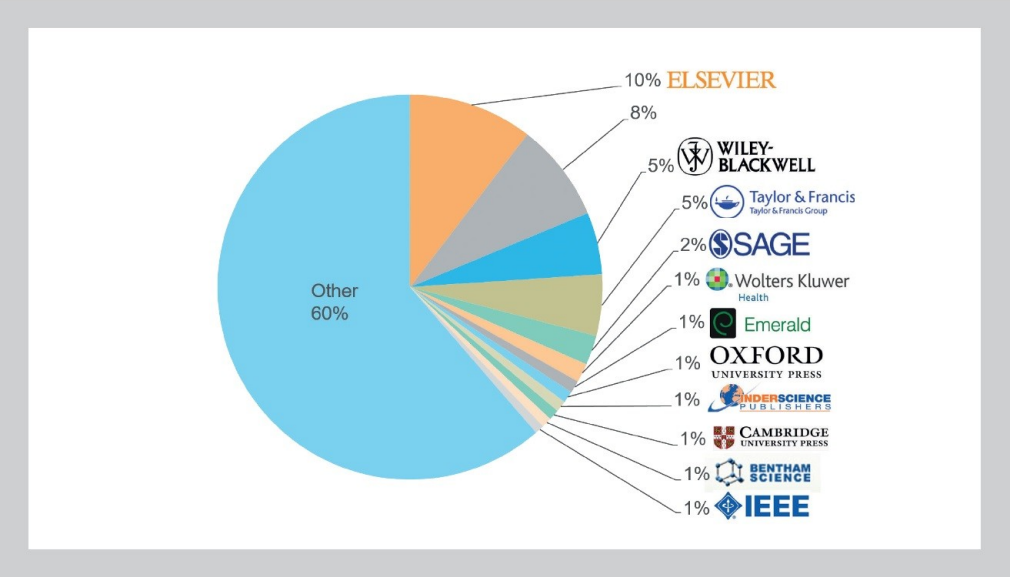
Additions to inclusion criteria 1 & 2

- Since the term compensation returns in numerous search strings, a primary study may not focus on financial compensation for damage, loss, injury, or distress.
- Study may not focus on financial incentives that are designed and intended to increase the participation in a research project/study or in (specific segments of) the labour market.
- Study may not focus on financial incentives that are designed and intended to increase the purchase and consumption of goods and services.
- Study must focus on a group of working individuals (employees, workers, or members) who together form a team or work group within a company. In line with the definition of Kozlowski and Bell (2003), work teams and groups are composed of two or more individuals who interact socially and interdependently on the same task with common goals. Adults or university students who together form a team with an experimental or similar setting, and who act as a real work team or group do also suffice.
- In a study, financial incentives must relate to the *team level within a company*. Studies that examine the incentivization of macro-level groups are therefore excluded from the synthesis.

Appendix 3: Electronic databases

The great advantage of Scopus is that it contains titles from all major and renowned publishers ("Scopus Content Coverage Guide", 2017, p. 3):

Publishers indexed in Scopus



The following table shows exactly which EBSCOhost databases were applied and which were not:

- **Table 10:** Overview of EBSCOhost databases

Databases applied:	Databases not applied:
• Business Source Elite • EconLit • PsycINFO	• Audiobook Collection (EBSCOhost) • eBook Collection (EBSCOhost) • ERIC (Education Resource Information Center) • European Views of the Americas: 1493 to 1750 • GreenFILE • Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA) • Philosopher's Index • PsycARTICLES • Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection • Regional Business News

Appendix 4: Detailed electronic search strategy

This appendix presents in detail the search terms and strings, the Boolean and proximity operators, and the search filters and limiters that were applied in the electronic databases Scopus, ScienceDirect, and EBSCOhost.

- **Table 11:** Overview of search filters and limiters applied in Scopus

Document types applied:	Document types not applied:
• Article • Review	• Article in Press • Book or Book Chapter • Business Article or Press • Conference Paper • Conference Review • Editorial • Erratum • Letter • Note • Short Survey

- **Table 12:** Overview of search filters and limiters applied in ScienceDirect

Content types applied:	Content types not applied:
• Journals	• Books • Reference Works • Images
Document types applied:	**Document types not applied:**
• Article • Review Article	• Articles in Press • Book Review • Correspondence, Letter • Discussion • Editorial

	• Erratum • Product Review • Publisher's Note • Short Communication • Short Survey

- **Table 13:** Overview of search filters and limiters applied in EBSCOhost

Business Source Elite publication types applied:	
• All	
Business Source Elite document types applied:	**Business Source Elite document types not applied:**
• Abstract • Article	• Bibliography • Book Review • Case Study • Correction Notice • Directory • Editorial • Entertainment Review • Film Review • Interview • Letter • Music Review • Obituary • Poem • Poetry Review • Proceeding • Product Review • Recipe • Short Story • Speech • Television Review
EconLit publication types applied:	**EconLit publication types not applied:**
• Journal Article	• Book • Book Review • Collective Volume Article • Dissertation • Working Paper
PsycINFO publication types applied:	**PsycINFO publication types not applied:**
• All Journals	• All Books • Authored Book • Dissertation Abstract • Edited Book • Electronic Collection • Encyclopedia • Peer Reviewed Journal • Peer-Reviewed Status-Unknown

PsycINFO document types applied:	PsycINFO document types not applied:
• Abstract Collection • Journal Article	• Bibliography • Chapter • Clarification • Column/Opinion • Comment/Reply • Dissertation • Editorial • Encyclopedia Entry • Erratum/Correction • Interview • Letter • Obituary • Poetry • Publication Information • Reprint • Retraction • Review-Any • Review-Book • Review-Media • Review-Software & Other
PsycINFO methodologies applied:	**PsycINFO methodologies not applied:**
• FIELD STUDY • INTERVIEW • -Focus Group • LITERATURE REVIEW • NONCLINICAL CASE STUDY • QUALITATIVE STUDY	• BRAIN IMAGING • CLINICAL CASE STUDY • CLINICAL TRIAL • EMPIRICAL STUDY • -Experimental Replication • -Followup Study • -Longitudinal Study • ---Prospective Study • ---Retrospective Study • -Systematic Review (LITERATURE REVIEW) • MATHEMATICAL MODEL • META ANALYSIS • METASYNTHESIS • QUANTITATIVE STUDY • SCIENTIFIC SIMULATION • TREATMENT OUTCOME • TWIN STUDY
PsycINFO special limiters applied:	
• English • Exclude Dissertations	
Source types applied (after conducting search):	
• Academic Journals • Journals	

- **Table 14:** Complete overview of searches and results in Scopus

1ST SEARCH STRINGS →	WHICH FIELDS?	AND, OR, AND NOT	2ND SEARCH STRINGS →	WHICH FIELDS?	# RESULTS
(implement*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				28
(implement*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				14
(implement*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				0
(implement*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing"))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				17
(implement*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay"))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				6
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	process PRE/1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	4
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	process PRE/1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	4
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	process PRE/1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	process PRE/1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	process PRE/1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				70
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				19
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				1
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing"))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				120
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) W/5 ((team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay"))	Article title, Abstract, Keywords				16
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	References	35
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	References	5
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	References	1
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	References	0

(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	References	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	qualitative* W/3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	43
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	qualitative* W/3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	3
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	qualitative* W/3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	qualitative* W/3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	qualitative* W/3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	case PRE/1 (stud* OR report*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	95
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	case PRE/1 (stud* OR report*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	87
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	case PRE/1 (stud* OR report*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	4
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	case PRE/1 (stud* OR report*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	3
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	case PRE/1 (stud* OR report*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	214
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	101
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	8
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	1
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	1
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	24
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	4
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract,	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Article title, Abstract,	0

	Keywords			Keywords	
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	6
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	2
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	1
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	9
(team* OR group*) W/3 (compensat*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	8
(team* OR group*) W/3 (bonus*)	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0
(team* OR group*) W/3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	1
(team* OR group*) W/3 ("merit pay")	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Article title, Abstract, Keywords	0

- **Table 15:** Complete overview of searches and results in ScienceDirect

1ST SEARCH STRINGS	→ **WHICH FIELDS?**	**AND, OR, AND NOT**	**2ND SEARCH STRINGS**	→ **WHICH FIELDS?**	**# RESULTS**
implement* W/5 team* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				1
implement* W/5 group* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				1
implement* W/5 team* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 group* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 team* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 group* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 team* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 group* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0

implement* W/5 team* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 group* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 team* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 group* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 team* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
implement* W/5 group* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(process PRE/1 theory) OR (process PRE/1 research) OR (process PRE/1 model) OR (process PRE/1 study)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	2
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(process PRE/1 theory) OR (process PRE/1 research) OR (process PRE/1 model) OR (process PRE/1 study)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	2
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(process PRE/1 theory) OR (process PRE/1 research) OR (process PRE/1 model) OR (process PRE/1 study)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(process PRE/1 theory) OR (process PRE/1 research) OR (process PRE/1 model) OR (process PRE/1 study)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
event* W/5 team* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 group* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 team* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 group* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				1
event* W/5 team* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 group* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				2
event* W/5 team* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 group* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 team* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
event* W/5 group* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract,				0

	Title, Keywords			
event* W/5 team* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
event* W/5 group* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
event* W/5 team* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
event* W/5 group* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 team* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			1
activit* W/5 group* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			1
activit* W/5 team* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 group* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			5
activit* W/5 team* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 group* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			3
activit* W/5 team* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 group* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 team* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 group* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 team* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 group* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 team* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
activit* W/5 group* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 team* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0

sequence* W/5 team* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			3
sequence* W/5 team* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 team* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 team* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 team* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 team* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
sequence* W/5 group* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 incentiv*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			3
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 reward*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 compensat*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 bonus*	Abstract, Title, Keywords			0
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title,			0

	Keywords				
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 gainsharing	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 "profit sharing"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
barrier* W/5 team* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
barrier* W/5 group* W/5 "merit pay"	Abstract, Title, Keywords				0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley" OR "Van de Ven" OR "Poole" OR "Pentland"	References	6
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley" OR "Van de Ven" OR "Poole" OR "Pentland"	References	10
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley" OR "Van de Ven" OR "Poole" OR "Pentland"	References	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	"Langley" OR "Van de Ven" OR "Poole" OR "Pentland"	References	0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(qualitative* W/3 research*) OR (qualitative* W/3 stud*) OR (qualitative* W/3 data)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	3
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(qualitative* W/3 research*) OR (qualitative* W/3 stud*) OR (qualitative* W/3 data)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(qualitative* W/3 research*) OR (qualitative* W/3 stud*) OR (qualitative* W/3 data)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(qualitative* W/3 research*) OR (qualitative* W/3 stud*) OR (qualitative* W/3 data)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(case PRE/1 stud*) OR (case PRE/1 report*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	6
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(case PRE/1 stud*) OR (case PRE/1 report*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	8
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(case PRE/1 stud*) OR (case PRE/1 report*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(case PRE/1 stud*) OR (case PRE/1 report*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Abstract, Title, Keywords	32
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Abstract, Title, Keywords	23
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3	Abstract,	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR	Abstract,	0

"merit pay")	Title, Keywords		observation*	Title, Keywords	
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Abstract, Title, Keywords	2
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	action research OR "participatory research"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	12
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	action research OR "participatory research"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	3
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	action research OR "participatory research"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	action research OR "participatory research"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 incentiv*) OR (group* W/3 incentiv*) OR (team* W/3 reward*) OR (group* W/3 reward*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	1
(team* W/3 compensat*) OR (group* W/3 compensat*) OR (team* W/3 bonus*) OR (group* W/3 bonus*)	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	4
(team* W/3 gainsharing) OR (group* W/3 gainsharing) OR (team* W/3 "profit sharing") OR (group* W/3 "profit sharing")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0
(team* W/3 "merit pay") OR (group* W/3 "merit pay")	Abstract, Title, Keywords	**AND**	(mixed W/3 method*) OR (multiple W/3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	Abstract, Title, Keywords	0

- **Table 16:** Complete overview of searches and results in EBSCOhost

1ST SEARCH STRINGS →	**WHICH FIELDS?**	**AND, OR, NOT**	**2ND SEARCH STRINGS** →	**WHICH FIELDS?**	**# RESULTS**
(implement*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*))	AB Abstract				18
(implement*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*))	AB Abstract				4
(implement*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*))	AB Abstract				0
(implement*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing"))	AB Abstract				0
(implement*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay"))	AB Abstract				0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	process W1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	AB Abstract	4
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB	**AND**	process W1 (theory OR research	AB	0

	Abstract		OR model OR study)	Abstract	
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	process W1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	process W1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	process W1 (theory OR research OR model OR study)	AB Abstract	0
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*))	AB Abstract				9
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*))	AB Abstract				3
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*))	AB Abstract				0
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing"))	AB Abstract				1
(event* OR activit* OR sequence* OR barrier*) N5 ((team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay"))	AB Abstract				0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	TX All Text	6
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	TX All Text	1
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	TX All Text	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	TX All Text	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	"Langley, A." OR "Van de Ven, A. H." OR "Poole, M. S." OR "Pentland, B. T."	TX All Text	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	qualitative* N3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	AB Abstract	11
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	qualitative* N3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	AB Abstract	2
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	qualitative* N3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	qualitative* N3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	qualitative* N3 (research* OR stud* OR data)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	case W1 (stud* OR report*)	AB Abstract	25
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	case W1 (stud* OR report*)	AB Abstract	7
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	case W1 (stud* OR report*)	AB Abstract	1
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	case W1 (stud* OR report*)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	case W1 (stud* OR report*)	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	AB Abstract	68
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	AB Abstract	9

(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	AB Abstract	4
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	AB Abstract	1
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	interview* OR "focus group*" OR observation*	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	AB Abstract	10
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	AB Abstract	2
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	narrative* OR narration OR "grounded theory" OR thematic	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	AB Abstract	2
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	"action research" OR "participatory research"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (incentiv* OR reward*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	(mixed N3 method*) OR (multiple N3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	AB Abstract	2
(team* OR group*) N3 (compensat*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	(mixed N3 method*) OR (multiple N3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (bonus*)	AB Abstract	**AND**	(mixed N3 method*) OR (multiple N3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 (gainsharing OR "profit sharing")	AB Abstract	**AND**	(mixed N3 method*) OR (multiple N3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	AB Abstract	0
(team* OR group*) N3 ("merit pay")	AB Abstract	**AND**	(mixed N3 method*) OR (multiple N3 method*) OR multimethod* OR "multi method*"	AB Abstract	0

Appendix 5: JBI-QARI critical appraisal tool

The original form that was used during the critical appraisal stage ("Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research", 2017, p. 3):

JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research

Reviewer_____Date_____

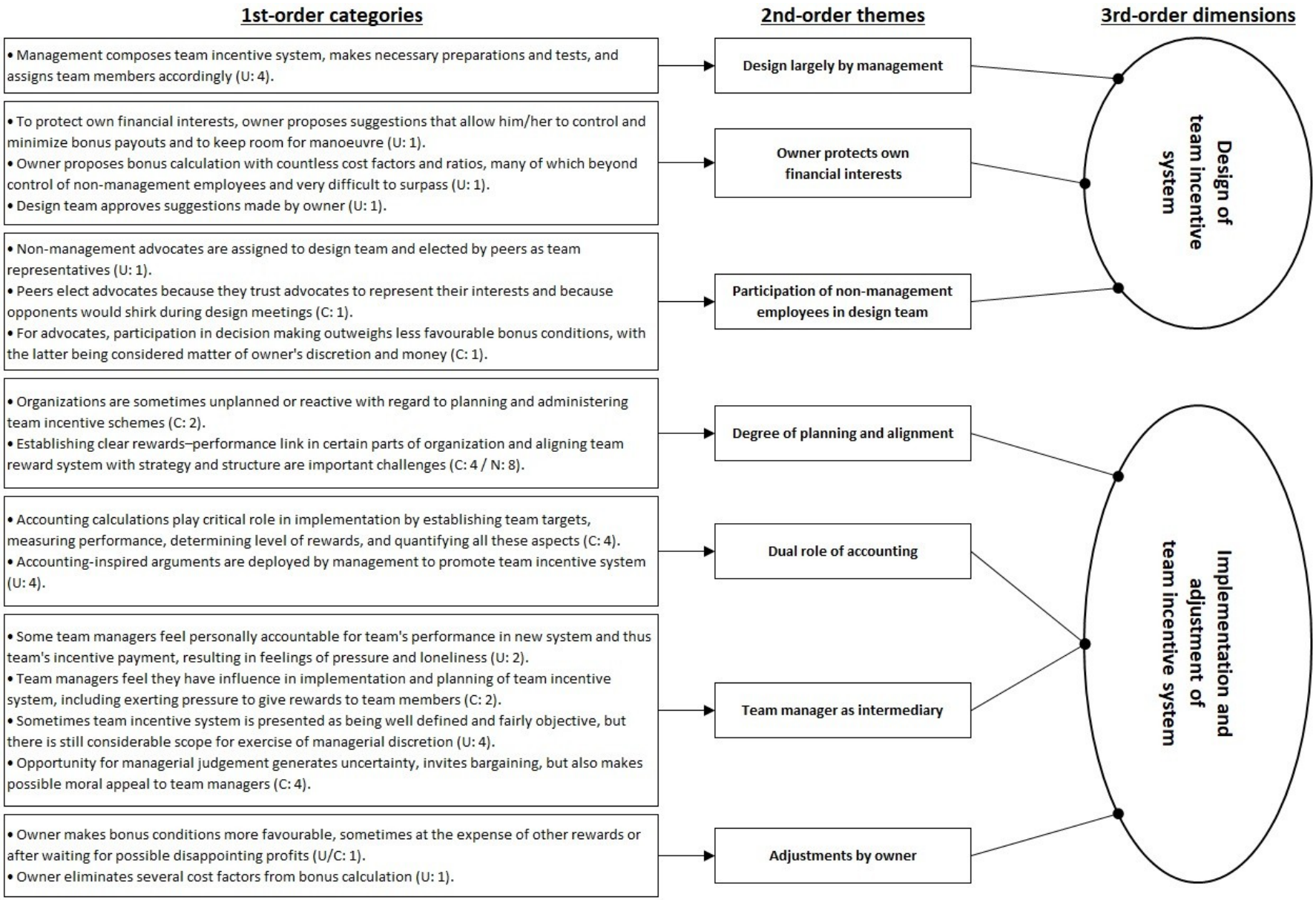
Author _____Year_____Record Number_____.

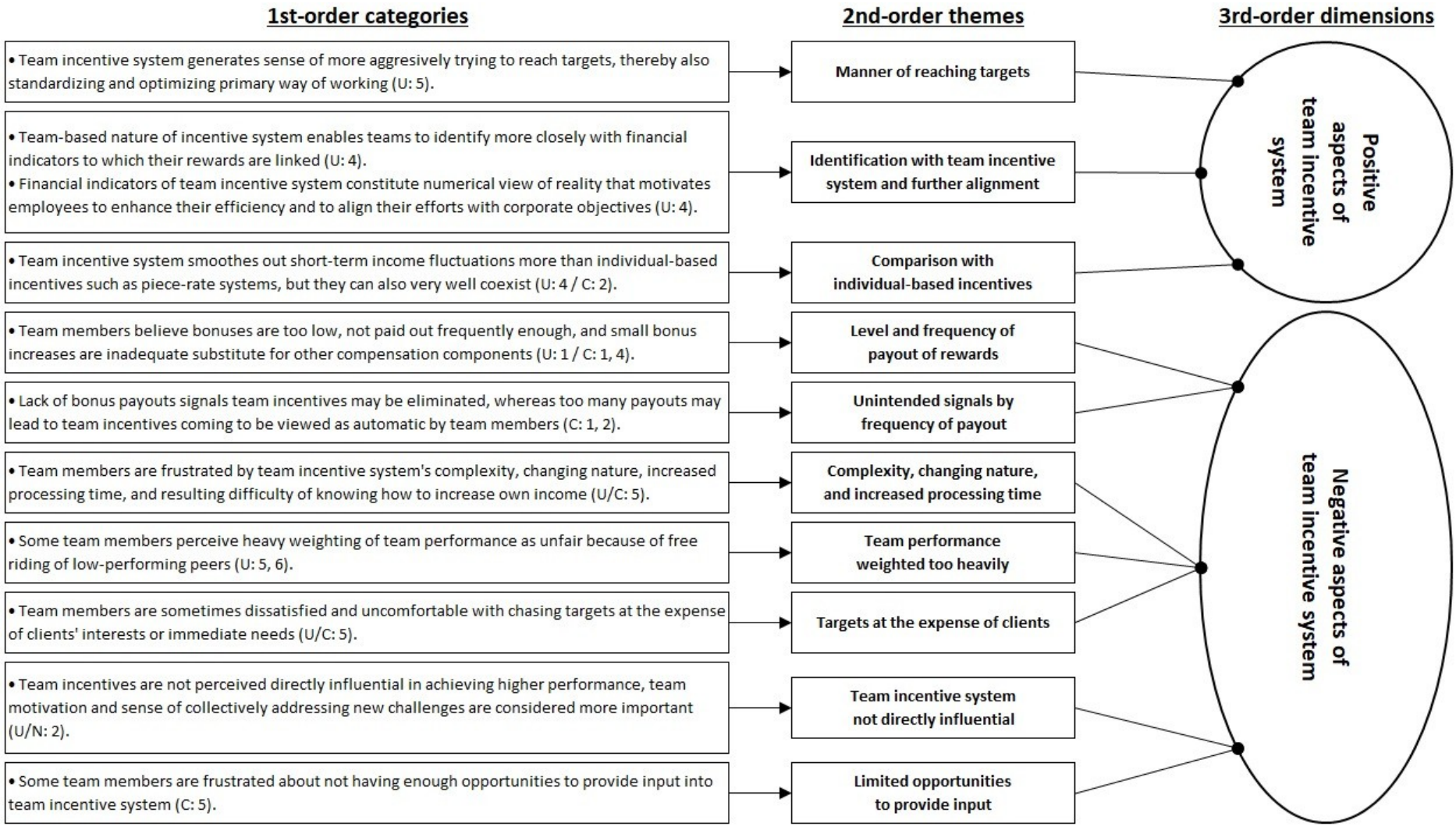
		Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1.	Is there congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Is there congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Is there congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Is there congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Is there congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Is there a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Is the influence of the researcher on the research, and vice- versa, addressed?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Are participants, and their voices, adequately represented?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Is the research ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies, and is there evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body?	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	Do the conclusions drawn in the research report flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data?	☐	☐	☐	☐

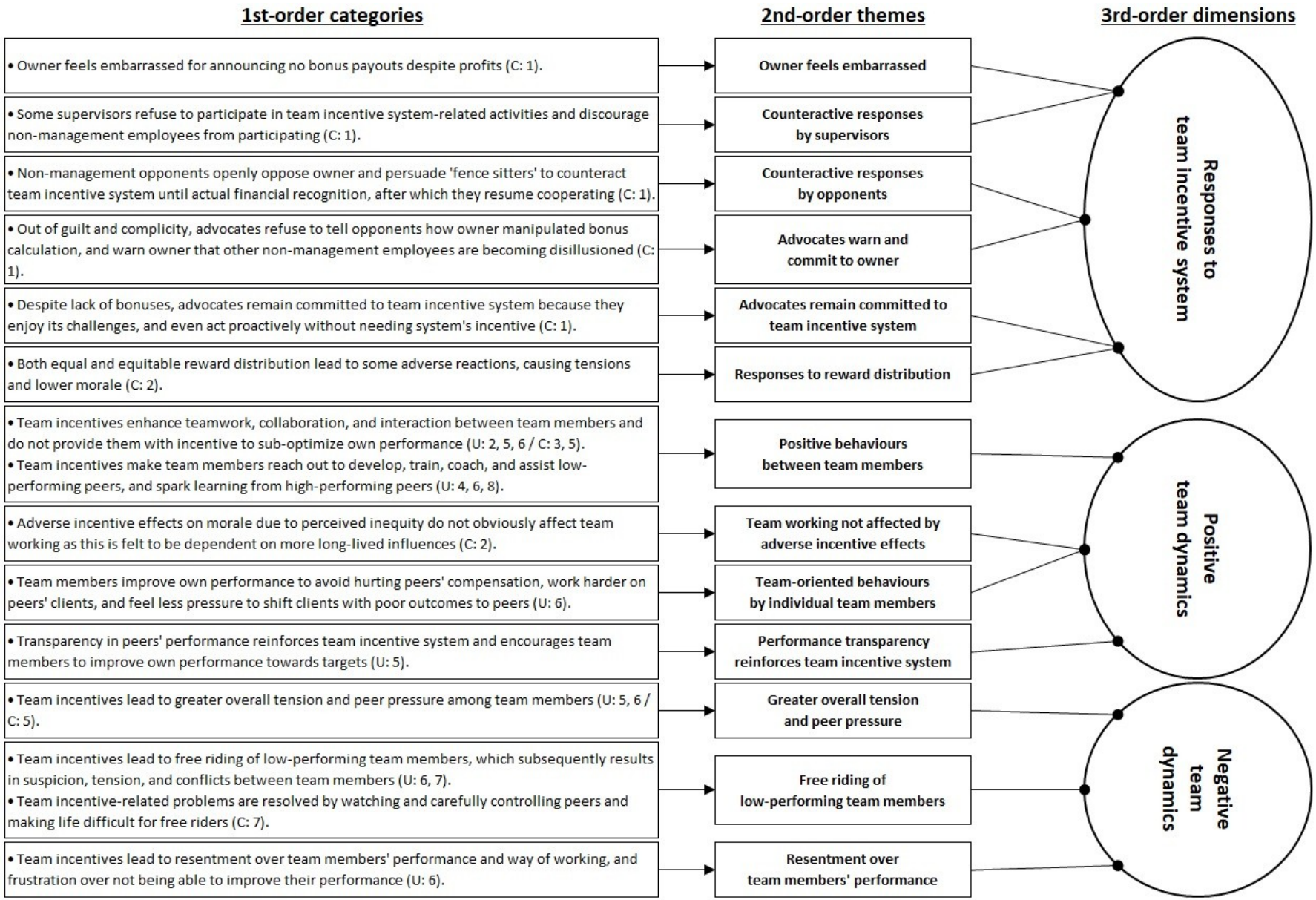
Overall appraisal: Include ☐ Exclude ☐ Seek further info ☐

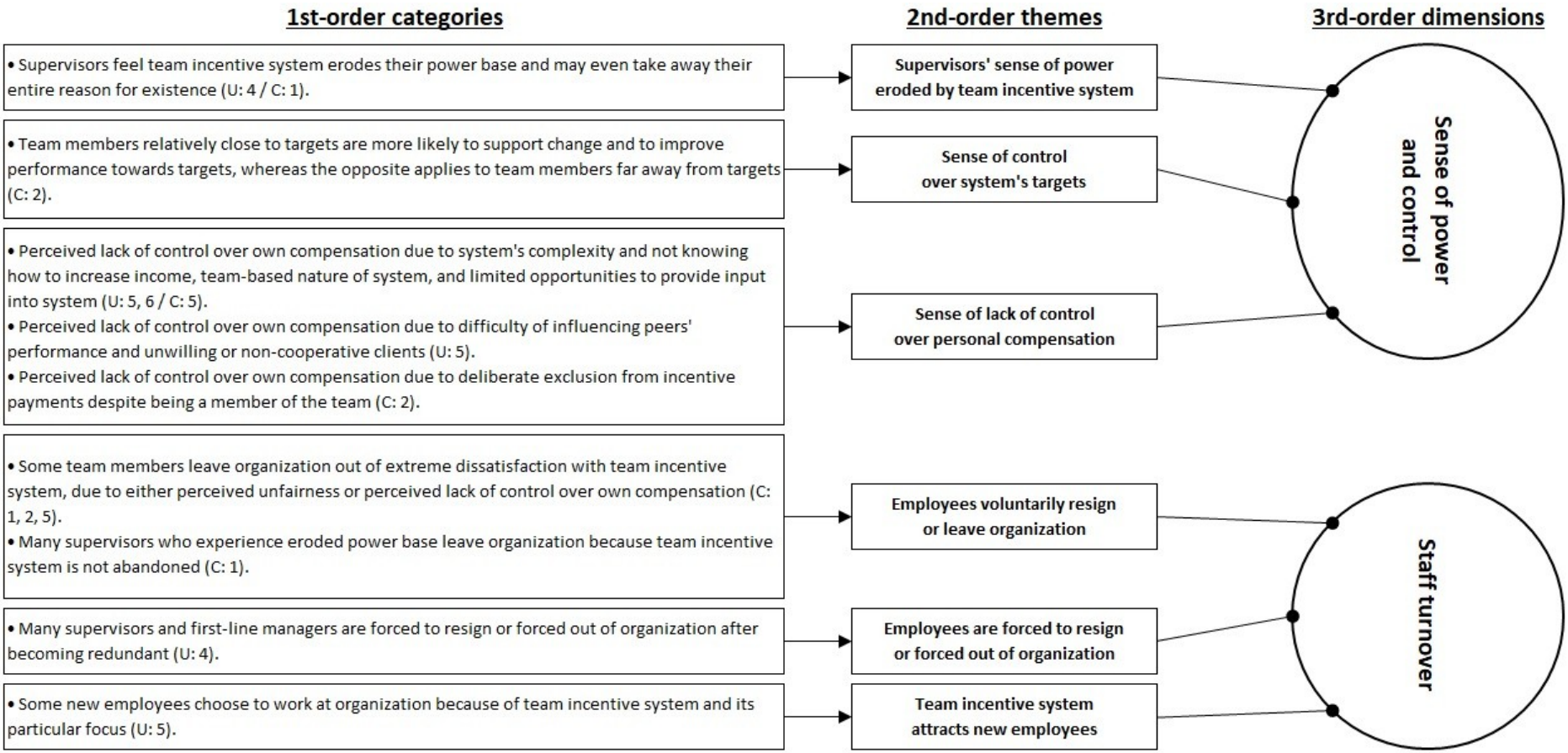
Appendix 6: Data structure figures

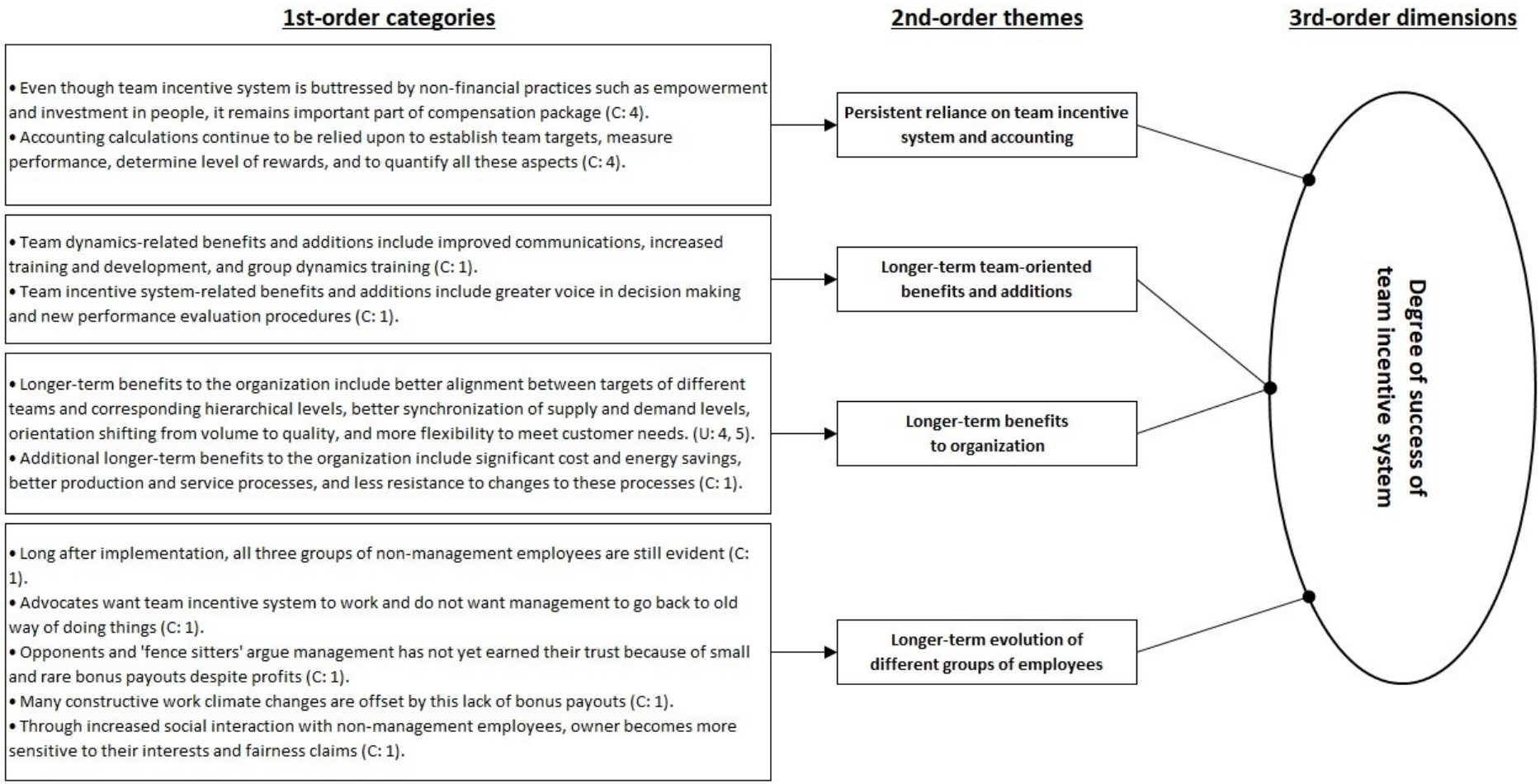
The data structure figures can be found on the following pages.


1st-order categories
2nd-order themes
3rd-order dimensions
• Management composes team incentive system, makes necessary preparations and tests, and assigns team members accordingly (U: 4).
Design largely by management
• To protect own financial interests, owner proposes suggestions that allow him/her to control and minimize bonus payouts and to keep room for manoeuvre (U: 1).
• Owner proposes bonus calculation with countless cost factors and ratios, many of which beyond control of non-management employees and very difficult to surpass (U: 1).
• Design team approves suggestions made by owner (U: 1).
Owner protects own financial interests
• Non-management advocates are assigned to design team and elected by peers as team representatives (U: 1).
• Peers elect advocates because they trust advocates to represent their interests and because opponents would shirk during design meetings (C: 1).
• For advocates, participation in decision making outweighs less favourable bonus conditions, with the latter being considered matter of owner's discretion and money (C: 1).
Participation of non-management employees in design team
Design of team incentive system
• Organizations are sometimes unplanned or reactive with regard to planning and administering team incentive schemes (C: 2).
• Establishing clear rewards–performance link in certain parts of organization and aligning team reward system with strategy and structure are important challenges (C: 4 / N: 8).
Degree of planning and alignment
• Accounting calculations play critical role in implementation by establishing team targets, measuring performance, determining level of rewards, and quantifying all these aspects (C: 4).
• Accounting-inspired arguments are deployed by management to promote team incentive system (U: 4).
Dual role of accounting
• Some team managers feel personally accountable for team's performance in new system and thus team's incentive payment, resulting in feelings of pressure and loneliness (U: 2).
• Team managers feel they have influence in implementation and planning of team incentive system, including exerting pressure to give rewards to team members (C: 2).
• Sometimes team incentive system is presented as being well defined and fairly objective, but there is still considerable scope for exercise of managerial discretion (U: 4).
• Opportunity for managerial judgement generates uncertainty, invites bargaining, but also makes possible moral appeal to team managers (C: 4).
Team manager as intermediary
• Owner makes bonus conditions more favourable, sometimes at the expense of other rewards or after waiting for possible disappointing profits (U/C: 1).
• Owner eliminates several cost factors from bonus calculation (U: 1).
Adjustments by owner
Implementation and adjustment of team incentive system


1st-order categories
2nd-order themes
3rd-order dimensions
• Team incentive system generates sense of more aggresively trying to reach targets, thereby also standardizing and optimizing primary way of working (U: 5).
Manner of reaching targets
• Team-based nature of incentive system enables teams to identify more closely with financial indicators to which their rewards are linked (U: 4).
• Financial indicators of team incentive system constitute numerical view of reality that motivates employees to enhance their efficiency and to align their efforts with corporate objectives (U: 4).
Identification with team incentive system and further alignment
• Team incentive system smoothes out short-term income fluctuations more than individual-based incentives such as piece-rate systems, but they can also very well coexist (U: 4 / C: 2).
Comparison with individual-based incentives
Positive aspects of team incentive system
• Team members believe bonuses are too low, not paid out frequently enough, and small bonus increases are inadequate substitute for other compensation components (U: 1 / C: 1, 4).
Level and frequency of payout of rewards
• Lack of bonus payouts signals team incentives may be eliminated, whereas too many payouts may lead to team incentives coming to be viewed as automatic by team members (C: 1, 2).
Unintended signals by frequency of payout
• Team members are frustrated by team incentive system's complexity, changing nature, increased processing time, and resulting difficulty of knowing how to increase own income (U/C: 5).
Complexity, changing nature, and increased processing time
• Some team members perceive heavy weighting of team performance as unfair because of free riding of low-performing peers (U: 5, 6).
Team performance weighted too heavily
• Team members are sometimes dissatisfied and uncomfortable with chasing targets at the expense of clients' interests or immediate needs (U/C: 5).
Targets at the expense of clients
• Team incentives are not perceived directly influential in achieving higher performance, team motivation and sense of collectively addressing new challenges are considered more important (U/N: 2).
Team incentive system not directly influential
• Some team members are frustrated about not having enough opportunities to provide input into team incentive system (C: 5).
Limited opportunities to provide input
Negative aspects of team incentive system


1st-order categories
2nd-order themes
3rd-order dimensions
• Owner feels embarrassed for announcing no bonus payouts despite profits (C: 1).
• Some supervisors refuse to participate in team incentive system-related activities and discourage non-management employees from participating (C: 1).
• Non-management opponents openly oppose owner and persuade 'fence sitters' to counteract team incentive system until actual financial recognition, after which they resume cooperating (C: 1).
• Out of guilt and complicity, advocates refuse to tell opponents how owner manipulated bonus calculation, and warn owner that other non-management employees are becoming disillusioned (C: 1).
• Despite lack of bonuses, advocates remain committed to team incentive system because they enjoy its challenges, and even act proactively without needing system's incentive (C: 1).
• Both equal and equitable reward distribution lead to some adverse reactions, causing tensions and lower morale (C: 2).
• Team incentives enhance teamwork, collaboration, and interaction between team members and do not provide them with incentive to sub-optimize own performance (U: 2, 5, 6 / C: 3, 5).
• Team incentives make team members reach out to develop, train, coach, and assist low-performing peers, and spark learning from high-performing peers (U: 4, 6, 8).
• Adverse incentive effects on morale due to perceived inequity do not obviously affect team working as this is felt to be dependent on more long-lived influences (C: 2).
• Team members improve own performance to avoid hurting peers' compensation, work harder on peers' clients, and feel less pressure to shift clients with poor outcomes to peers (U: 6).
• Transparency in peers' performance reinforces team incentive system and encourages team members to improve own performance towards targets (U: 5).
• Team incentives lead to greater overall tension and peer pressure among team members (U: 5, 6 / C: 5).
• Team incentives lead to free riding of low-performing team members, which subsequently results in suspicion, tension, and conflicts between team members (U: 6, 7).
• Team incentive-related problems are resolved by watching and carefully controlling peers and making life difficult for free riders (C: 7).
• Team incentives lead to resentment over team members' performance and way of working, and frustration over not being able to improve their performance (U: 6).
Owner feels embarrassed
Counteractive responses by supervisors
Counteractive responses by opponents
Advocates warn and commit to owner
Advocates remain committed to team incentive system
Responses to reward distribution
Positive behaviours between team members
Team working not affected by adverse incentive effects
Team-oriented behaviours by individual team members
Performance transparency reinforces team incentive system
Greater overall tension and peer pressure
Free riding of low-performing team members
Resentment over team members' performance
Responses to team incentive system
Positive team dynamics
Negative team dynamics


1st-order categories
2nd-order themes
3rd-order dimensions
• Supervisors feel team incentive system erodes their power base and may even take away their entire reason for existence (U: 4 / C: 1).
• Team members relatively close to targets are more likely to support change and to improve performance towards targets, whereas the opposite applies to team members far away from targets (C: 2).
• Perceived lack of control over own compensation due to system's complexity and not knowing how to increase income, team-based nature of system, and limited opportunities to provide input into system (U: 5, 6 / C: 5).
• Perceived lack of control over own compensation due to difficulty of influencing peers' performance and unwilling or non-cooperative clients (U: 5).
• Perceived lack of control over own compensation due to deliberate exclusion from incentive payments despite being a member of the team (C: 2).
• Some team members leave organization out of extreme dissatisfaction with team incentive system, due to either perceived unfairness or perceived lack of control over own compensation (C: 1, 2, 5).
• Many supervisors who experience eroded power base leave organization because team incentive system is not abandoned (C: 1).
• Many supervisors and first-line managers are forced to resign or forced out of organization after becoming redundant (U: 4).
• Some new employees choose to work at organization because of team incentive system and its particular focus (U: 5).
Supervisors' sense of power eroded by team incentive system
Sense of control over system's targets
Sense of lack of control over personal compensation
Employees voluntarily resign or leave organization
Employees are forced to resign or forced out of organization
Team incentive system attracts new employees
Sense of power and control
Staff turnover


1st-order categories
2nd-order themes
3rd-order dimensions
• Even though team incentive system is buttressed by non-financial practices such as empowerment and investment in people, it remains important part of compensation package (C: 4).
• Accounting calculations continue to be relied upon to establish team targets, measure performance, determine level of rewards, and to quantify all these aspects (C: 4).
Persistent reliance on team incentive system and accounting
• Team dynamics-related benefits and additions include improved communications, increased training and development, and group dynamics training (C: 1).
• Team incentive system-related benefits and additions include greater voice in decision making and new performance evaluation procedures (C: 1).
Longer-term team-oriented benefits and additions
• Longer-term benefits to the organization include better alignment between targets of different teams and corresponding hierarchical levels, better synchronization of supply and demand levels, orientation shifting from volume to quality, and more flexibility to meet customer needs. (U: 4, 5).
• Additional longer-term benefits to the organization include significant cost and energy savings, better production and service processes, and less resistance to changes to these processes (C: 1).
Longer-term benefits to organization
• Long after implementation, all three groups of non-management employees are still evident (C: 1).
• Advocates want team incentive system to work and do not want management to go back to old way of doing things (C: 1).
• Opponents and 'fence sitters' argue management has not yet earned their trust because of small and rare bonus payouts despite profits (C: 1).
• Many constructive work climate changes are offset by this lack of bonus payouts (C: 1).
• Through increased social interaction with non-management employees, owner becomes more sensitive to their interests and fairness claims (C: 1).
Longer-term evolution of different groups of employees
Degree of success of team incentive system