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Job Descriptions: the Heart of Every HRM System

An effective way to compose and implement job descriptions
for Lidl Nederland GmbH

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A design-oriented research for Lidl Nederland GmbH

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Executive summary

The aim of this research is to provide Lidl Nederland GmbH (hereafter Lidl) with an advice about how to compose and implement job descriptions and the forthcoming HR practices / outcomes in a way that leads to desired employee attitudes, behaviour, and performance. The past fifteen years, Lidl has grown from zero to 360 stores in the Netherlands and hence, many new jobs arose. However, Lidl does not have job descriptions that describe what the content and responsibilities of jobs are. Hence, this study will focus on identifying the most effective way to compose and implement them in the organisation.

Since there are no job descriptions, Lidl faces some serious problems. There are ambiguities about the duties, tasks, and responsibilities employees have because they do not exactly know what to do. Besides, with a lack of job descriptions it is hard to create congruence between HR practices as recruitment and selection, reward systems, and performance appraisals. In order to develop congruence between other HR practices it is important that job descriptions will be composed and implemented. On these propositions, the following research question is developed; *"What is the most effective way to compose and apply job descriptions into the organisational design of Lidl?"*

A conceptual framework about job descriptions (task- and competency-based) is developed following the Harvard analytical framework. This framework showed that *situational factors* and *stakeholder interests* are requirements that influence the way in which job descriptions need to be composed and implemented, needed to be studied. In the retail industry, these aspects of situational factors and stakeholder interests are most influential on the process of composing job descriptions: *workforce characteristics, business strategy, management philosophy*, *management, employees, works council, and the union*. These aspects are operationalised to identify how job descriptions need to be composed and implemented, according to department heads, (senior) managers, employees, and members of the work council.

Results of the design oriented study show that CLA and non-CLA employees differ in their requirements. Many CLA employees do not have the willingness or capacities to have more responsibilities and autonomy in their jobs. Hence, they prefer requirements in their jobs as job security over autonomy and opportunities for develop. Many CLA employees have less skills and knowledge than non-CLA employees of Lidl do have. There is a big difference between the skills and capacities of these employee groups and hence too much freedom for the lower skilled employees can result in ineffective process outcomes, which contrasts with efficiency and control that directors of Lidl demand. These differences in requirements lead to a dual HRM system with job descriptions based on performance areas for CLA employees and job descriptions based on competences and performance areas for non-CLA employees. Performance areas are already identified for all jobs within Lidl during an internal job design project and job descriptions for all CLA jobs are already composed. A first step in the development of competences for all non-CLA employees is to cluster all jobs into six job families and, hereafter, a key group of stakeholders need to define five core competences as foundation for the descriptions, while considering the aspects: technology, human beings, organisation, and culture. In order to cover the content-specific part of non-CLA jobs, the developed performance areas help managers to assess and employees to develop department specific knowledge and capabilities. Hereafter, job descriptions can be composed and they need to be examined by working groups on their consistency before implementing them.

Preface

This master thesis was the final step before graduation of my study Master of Business Administration Service Management at the University of Twente. The research project is conducted for Lidl, which is situated in Huizen, the Netherlands in cooperation with the University of Twente. I identified the most effective way to compose and implement job descriptions for Lidl.

I started this research in March 2012 and completed it in January 2013. During this period, many people helped, were involved and interested in my research project. Hence, I would like to thank several people. First, I would like to thank Skanda Kock and Marit Heeres, my supervisors at Lidl, for the feedback and input I received during my research. Next, I want to thank the department heads and (senior) managers, which helped me to collect data and gather information about the organisation and its processes.
Second, I would like to thank my supervisors Jan Kees Looise and Jan de Leede of the University of Twente. I received much valuable feedback and guidance, which helped me to complete my master thesis.

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Jasper Hiddinga

Contents

1. Introduction

Nowadays, (retail) organisations are challenged with attracting, developing, and retaining skilled employees, wherein job analysis plays an important role (Gardner, Reithel, Foley, Cogliser, & Walumbwa, 2009). HRM departments have to focus on ensuring continuity and stability. Employee retention and development of quality, competences, and knowledge are key aspects to ensure continuity and stability (Verhulst, 2012). The nature of the retail industry is facing increased competition and workforce composition changes (Morgeson & Campion, 2003). Because of this shift in employees' work, job descriptions have to be adjusted to these changes. What job descriptions are and how this definition will be used in this study will be defined in a later stage. Before job descriptions can be composed, it is important to recognise the importance of them in organisations. Kavanagh & Thite, (2009) argue that job descriptions are of great importance because they define the working contract between the organisation and the employee and they create structure around the jobs. In addition, job descriptions are important because they can be considered as the "heart" of a HRM system of an organisation since they are also used for recruitment, selection, training, retention, performance appraisal, and reward systems (Singh, 2008; Kavanagh & Thite, 2009).

1.1 Problem background

This study will focus on the organisation of Lidl. Lidl is founded in the 1930s under the family names "Lidl und Schwarz Lebensmittel-Sortimentsgroβhandlung". The head office of Lidl is located in Neckarsulm, Germany. Lidl established itself by focusing on a discount strategy consistently (Andersen & Poulfelt, 2006). However, they started to upgrade their concept by adding more articles to their assortment. Today Lidl is located in 25 countries and has more than 8000 stores. Lidl is founded in 1995 in the Netherlands and their head office is located in Huizen, North-Holland. Lidl can be seen as a young and quick developing discount retail organisation.

Lidl opened their first store in the Netherlands on 23 October 1997 and within eight months; they were already able to open their eighth store. Currently, Lidl holds more than 350 stores in the Netherlands that are supplied by five distribution centres, which are located in Heerenveen, Zwaag, Etten-Leur, Tiel, and Weert. In September 2012, a new head office in Huizen is opened together with a new store that is equipped with the latest technologies in the retail industry concerning sustainability. The new head office facilitates the following departments: General Management, Sales, Finance, Purchase, and Central Services.

In the past decade, Lidl profiled itself from a discounter to a service supermarket specialised in fresh products like potatoes, vegetables, and fruit. Many discounters focus their assortment on frozen products because of the lower costs and the extensive logistical process (Holla, Koreman, & Beernink, 2009). Lidl distinguishes itself from the competition by focusing on their service-image specialised in fresh products. In 2007, 2010, 2011, and 2012 GFK Panel Services Benelux (GFK, 2012) awards Lidl as "the best supermarket" based on their potatoes,

vegetables, and fruit. Since the repositioning and restructuring, Lidl's customer base is growing intensively. Yearly 4.2 million households visit Lidl and this amount is growing daily (Holla, Koreman, & Beernink, 2009), whereas the customer base of Aldi, which is a competitor of Lidl, is quite stable for several years right now. In 2011, the market share of Lidl increased with 25% towards 6.7% compared to 5.3% 2010 (Distrifood, 2011). Simplicity and adding non-food products to their assortment, have led to a superior performance of €5.400 average sales per square meter in comparison to an average of €3.900 from other retail organisations (Hansen & Kliger, 2004).

All stores follow a well thought standardised strategy with the forthcoming benefit of economies of scale. Simplicity is one of the cornerstones of Lidl's success because of the uniform layout and interior in all stores and almost all products are displayed on pallets (Iyikoey & Csurgo, 2005). Hence, the speed at which articles can be delivered from stock to store can be increased (Andersen & Poulfelt, 2006). Displaying products in this way can encourage customers to purchase larger quantities of a product, which could explain the average sale per square meter. Lidl aims to offer products to their customers following the philosophy *"The Best Quality at the Lowest Prices"* (Iyikoey & Csurgo, 2005).

Lidl can be distinguished in three divisions and five central departments: stores, distribution centres, and head office. The departments are sales, purchase, finance, general management, and central services. The organisational design and business strategy will be elaborated in chapter 2 and 4. The organisational design consists of two dimensions: structural and contextual. Structural dimensions provide labels to describe the internal characteristics of an organisation, whereas contextual dimensions characterise the entire organisation, including its size, technology, environment, and goals (Daft, 2007). Lidl is still kept under a tight rein with tight management control and little information is published about them (Andersen & Poulfelt, 2006).

The past decade Lidl started to grow rapidly and therefore many new jobs arose, which resulted in many new job descriptions. However, some descriptions are obsolete and some new jobs are not defined in job descriptions. The organisation and jobs are changed, which causes descriptions that are not similar to the reality. Hence, there are ambiguities about the duties, tasks, and responsibilities of the employees. Not all jobs are defined or described adequately and hence, hard to assess or measure. It is challenging to provide employees with performance management and contractual terms and conditions like an official reward system. The current system offers too few possibilities for a consistent HRM system. Consequently, Lidl has the need to develop a clear connection between the job descriptions, performance interviews, and other HR practices. These unclear defined duties, tasks, and responsibilities are the result of a lack of clear job descriptions.

As mentioned before, unclear job descriptions can cause difficulties for appraisals and performance interviews, since measurement of performance is not clearly defined in the job descriptions (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2010). Hence, consequences of a performance appraisal such as wage increases cannot be measured clearly and objectively. Management of Lidl wants to improve their work system design to affect motivation and satisfaction,

retention, and commitment of employees to achieve, in the long-term, higher organisational performance/effectiveness. Therefore, it is important for Lidl that adequate and clear job descriptions will be composed since they can influence commitment, employee competence level, cost effectiveness, and the congruence between the goals of the employees and the organisation (Beer et al., 1984).

Several aspects are of great importance in the process of composing and applying job descriptions. These aspects will be identified and examined in this study to compose and apply job descriptions in the organisational design of Lidl.

1.2 Research objectives and problem statement

How job descriptions can be composed and applied that are in line with the organisational goals, strategy, and culture will be the focus of this study. Much research has been conducted towards job descriptions, though there still is no universal approach to compose job descriptions in a specific industry that fits a certain strategy. It is important that Lidl is able to compose job descriptions that fit the organisational strategy and culture in order to form a basis for other HR practices that leads to desired employee attitudes, behaviour, and performance (Kavanagh & Thite, 2009).

A job description can consist of two aspects: job oriented and worker oriented aspects (Morgeson et al., 2004). Job oriented information of a description consists of tasks, responsibilities, and work procedures, whereas worker oriented information consists of requirements of an employee such as knowledge, skills, abilities, and competences (Morgeson et al., 2004). Job descriptions as defined above can be considered as the definition for job descriptions in this study. The definition increases construct validity because the boundaries of job descriptions are adequately defined and it helps to cope with misunderstandings (Creswell, 2009). Forthcoming the problem statement, the following research objectives can be formulated.

- Use scientific literature to analyse the phenomenon job descriptions and apply it towards Lidl.
- Provide an extensive overview of the importance of job descriptions for Lidl and the association with other HR practices.
- Provide Lidl with a clear recommendation about an effective way to compose and apply job descriptions that fit the organisational design of Lidl.

This research will help future research within this topic and a qualitative research method can help Lidl to compose job descriptions in order to serve as a basis for recruitment, selection, development, and discharge. This can enhance several other HR practices as organisational attractiveness and an increase of satisfaction and motivation among employees.

1.3 Research question and sub questions

The problem statement explained why job descriptions are the main research topic of this study. This study will focus on the importance of job descriptions in comparison with the

strategy and culture of an organisation and it will examine several job analysis systems in order to compose job descriptions that are in line with the strategy and culture of Lidl. On these premises, a research question and forthcoming sub questions are developed.

What is the most effective way to compose and implement job descriptions into the organisational design of Lidl?

Sub questions

1. *What are job descriptions?*
2. *To what extent can job descriptions contribute to retail organisations in line with their strategy?*
3. *Which approach to compose job descriptions is most applicable for Lidl?*
4. *How can job descriptions be implemented and applied in line with the organisational design of Lidl?*

1.4 Research strategy

To answer the research and sub questions, first a conceptual framework is developed. The literature for this research is selected, using a literature search process in order to select relevant academic literature and scientific articles. A wide range of sources will be studied for literature about job descriptions (in the retail and supermarket industry). Search engines like Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar will be used. To retrieve relevant information in academic literature and scientific articles several keywords will be used in various combinations. The articles used are identified with backward referencing in other articles, read literature, and unstructured search using the keywords in Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar.

The nature of this research is design-oriented since the process and implementation of the job descriptions is described and explained with a conceptual framework. The techniques used to collect data are structured interviews, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. In chapter 3, the methodology behind the qualitative data collection will be elaborated and the threats on internal validity, external validity, and reliability will be discussed.

1.5 Relevance of this research

This research aims to provide scholars and retail organisations with insights of the importance of job descriptions as foundation in a HR work system. Furthermore, it aims to provide Lidl with a recommendation about the process of composing and applying job descriptions in the organisation. By explaining and examining the traditional job analysis and competency modelling methods, this research will provide an understanding in the process of composing job descriptions and other HR practices.

This research will provide practical insights for Lidl and the outcomes may be generalised towards the organisational design of Lidl International (e.g., standard job descriptions). Based

on the conceptual framework and the findings of the qualitative research method, recommendations were made and some points for future research are given. The results of this research are interesting for science as well as for practitioners who are involved with HRM policy choices and especially with composing, developing, or renewing job descriptions for (retail) organisations.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 Introducing job descriptions

When scientific management (Frederick Taylor) evolved in the early part of the twentieth century, a general expectation was that by simplifying jobs, jobs could be performed more effective; less-skilled employees would be required, which would result in tighter management control; which in the long term could increase profits (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). A few decades later, research showed that unchallenging and routinised jobs, led to dissatisfaction among employees, which resulted in high absenteeism and turnover rates. The expected enhancement in profitability could not be measured, since dissatisfaction caused human problems (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Research and practitioners started to conceptualise the restructuring of work systems and job design, to improve productivity and worker motivation. Some features that are conceptualised are job rotation, which means moving employees from job to job to give them a greater variety of tasks and job enrichment. Job enrichment can be defined as greater responsibility, recognition, and opportunities for growth and development (Daft, 2007). Many researchers and practitioners emphasise that attitudes and behaviour of employees are influenced by the amount of feedback, variety, task identity, task significance, or autonomy in a way, as employees perceive those features (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). However, too much variety in jobs can cause low job satisfaction because of a lack of skills, knowledge, and abilities. Situational factors, such as management philosophy or workforce characteristics, influence the approach in which a work system is developed (Beer et al., 1984).

Hence, it is important that jobs need to be defined in adequate, timely, and objective descriptions, in order to increase job satisfaction and performance, because they affect the perceptions and experiences of employees positively (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Therefore, job descriptions can be seen as the "heart" of a HRM system because they form a solid basis for recruitment, selection, education, retention, a career plan, and job appraisal programs (Kavanagh & Thite, 2009). The process of analysing jobs and composing job descriptions need to be transparent, in order to help employees and employers to understand and contribute to this process and that they are able to develop themselves (Clifford, 1994).

2.1.1 General contents of a job description and a definition

Every job description has a general content, which forms the foundation for the working contract between the employee and the employer. A general content can consist of the following aspects.

Table 1: General contents of a job description (Morgeson et al., 2004)

Job title	Work experience
Employment	Education level requirement
Department	Goals / objectives of the job
Job location	Tasks and responsibilities

As defined in the problem background, a job description consists of two distinctions: job oriented and worker oriented (Morgeson et al., 2004). Job-oriented information of a description consists of tasks, responsibilities, and work procedures. Worker oriented information consists of requirements of an employee's competences such as knowledge, skills, and abilities (Morgeson et al., 2004). These elements will be discussed in the following sections.

2.1.2 Task-based descriptions

Job-oriented information or work requirements are usually defined in terms of tasks, activities, responsibilities, and work procedures that an employee needs to accomplish (Cunningham, 1996). However, employees often think that they know what they have to do, but it is too abstract and complex to be defined adequately since jobs are dynamic and constantly changing (Clifford, 1994). Other practitioners and researchers have empirical evidence that employees recognise a job description as their job within six months after the job analysis, since employees are constantly adjusting their jobs to be more efficient and systematic.

Some decades ago, researchers emphasised that specific tasks, responsibilities, activities, and work procedures are fundamental for job descriptions (Lawler, 1993). Cunningham, (1996), enhances a nomothetic approach that emphasises the development of descriptions in terms of more general measurable constructs. This construct consists of generic activity statements and human attribute-requirement statements. Hence, most organisations begin their HRM system with composing job descriptions in such a way that they can form the basis for selection, training, career development, and pay determination. In addition, these descriptions can also be used for grouping individuals into organisational units, in order to rationalise the overall structure of an organisation.

The tasks of an employee can be defined as "the smallest part of a job having a meaningful unitary goal or purpose" (Altman & Gagne, 1966). The activities can be expressed in a well-defined set of activities that can be performed and measured over a given period of time (Lawler, 1993). Generalised work activities (GWAs), a combination of task and activities, have several advantages and limitations. GWAs can be useful to make general descriptions, comparison, and classification for jobs across a broad spectrum. A limitation is that job-based approach of developing job descriptions fits the (production) economy that dominated the world in the twentieth century.

2.1.3 Competency-based descriptions

Worker oriented information or worker characteristics are usually conceptualised as the knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA's), and competences that enable employees to carry out the aspects (Cunningham, 1996).

Clifford, (1994), defined KSA's in a hierarchical way. First, skills can be defined as being able to perform a job as well as having already performed certain work. Second, knowledge is having the knowledge to perform certain work but not having performed it yet. Finally, ability is having the physical, emotional, intellectual, and psychological ability to perform the work, but neither having done the work nor having been trained to perform the work. They are often

used to compare jobs with each other. A job with more KSA's often is higher in the organisational hierarchy than jobs with less KSA's. Cunningham, (1996), defines KSA's in slightly different way. He divides knowledge and skills (KSs) as a generalisable content for (defined) occupational groups, which include basic education, communication, social, letter and report writing, and problem solving. These characteristics of an employee enable him to carry out activities. Examples of these aspects are planning, organising, problem analysis, and coping with conflicts. Abilities can be divided into two categories, which are physical and mental abilities. Physical abilities can be distinguished as sensory capacities, whereas basic mental abilities can be defined as established cognitive factors such as inductive reasoning and perceptual speed (Cunningham, 1996). Large organisations can develop personnel capability inventories based on the various jobs that require specific KSA's in order to develop adequate and equal descriptions.

Due to developments in (information) technology, and the shift to a global economy (Doyle, 1990), the type of work in Europe evolved to a more knowledge- and service-based work. One of the results of this shift is a change in performance demands, since the growing competition and the shift to a global economy. This forces organisations to be able to adapt new capabilities along with rapid changes. On individual level, the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the employees become critical for organisations' adaptability to learn and to compete with other organisations (Senge, 1990).

Competency-based job descriptions are an alternative and/or supplement for job-based descriptions, wherein the capabilities and the development of those capabilities of an employee are the primary focus of the organisation. Instead of the traditional job-based approach, organisations can develop indicators of the skills that individuals need to have to be effective in their jobs (Lawler, 1993). This approach works most effectively in situations where knowledge and service work is required (e.g., rapidly changing environments).

This approach will ask for a change in the organisational structure (e.g., work design, recruitment, selection, retention, and career development etc.). For example, tasks can be assigned to working teams instead of individuals. The working team can structure itself around a problem and needs to be given the freedom to take the responsibility for a certain area. In this team, every member can appropriate a task to develop its competences, skills, and capabilities towards an aspect of the problem. The challenge in such a process is to focus on what employees need to be able to do in order to make the work processes effective (Lawler, 1993; Sanchez & Levine, 2009).

To what extent a competency-based approach will change an organisational structure and if this approach fits the strategy and culture of an organisation are discussed in section 2.3.3. In essence, adequate descriptions of job-oriented information (e.g., competences) can provide frameworks for developing training modules, competency tests, and performance appraisal scales (Cunningham, 1996). Section 2.2 elaborates how job descriptions can be studied.

2.2 The Harvard analytical framework for HRM

Experience has shown that severe external pressures (such as increased competition, workforce changes, and rapid development) may be required for a firm to re-examine and change their HRM policies to affect organisational outcomes and certain long-term consequences (Beer et al., 1984). Work system redesign is of one those policies that is becoming increasingly important to improve the productivity and the quality of work experience of employees in an organisation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). If senior management of an organisation wants to determine what HRM policies and practices their organisation need to employ, they need a specific way to assess the appplicability and appropriateness of those policies (Beer et al., 1984).

The Harvard analytical framework for HRM (Beer et al., 1984) is a model, which suggests that an organisation has to concern itself with organisational effectiveness and the promotion of individual and societal well-being (Winstanley & Woodall, 2000). The HRM model of Beer et al., (1984) suggests that HRM is concerned with management of an organisation as a whole rather than solely emphasising personnel function and it can provide a useful basis for comparative analysis of HRM (Budhwar, 2008). Beer et al., (1984) emphasises that the model can be used for organisations that want to compare HRM policy alternatives, such as a work system with narrowly defined jobs versus an approach that focuses on competences and team responsibilities.

The Harvard model (figure 1) is conceived as an analytical framework, wherein HRM policy choices affect certain immediate outcomes and have certain long-term consequences. HRM policy choices influence and be influenced by stakeholder interests and situational factors. The model stresses on the human aspect of HR and is more concerned with employer-employee relationship (Singh, 2005).

Figure 1: The Harvard analytical framework for HRM (Beer et al., 1984).
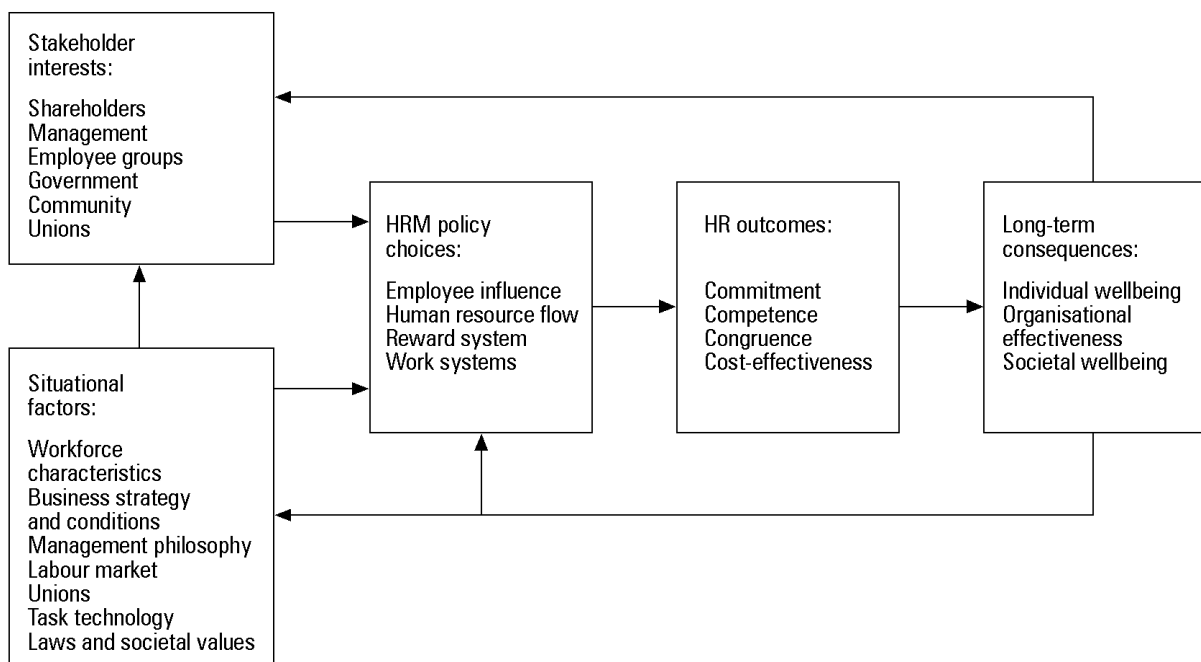
The model in figure 1 highlights the interests of different stakeholders in the organisation and how their interests are related to the objectives of management (Budhwar & Khatri, 2001). The aim of these outcomes is to develop and sustain mutual trust and improve individual and organisational performance, to achieve individual well-being, organisational effectiveness, and societal well-being.

Work systems can be considered as an important aspect of policy choices since it can stimulate, motivate, and satisfy employees to perform effectively on their jobs by the design of work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Their model consists of five core job dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, which influence personal and work outcomes positively. An effective work system defines how work actually is done, which responsibilities employees have, and how they involve each other in their work to meet the goals and objectives (Clancey, 1998). Job design, which is an essential part of a work system, includes the assignment of goals and tasks to be accomplished by employees (Daft, 2007). Either tools for modelling work systems produce detailed descriptions or broadly defined descriptions wherein work product flows between job functions are elaborated (Clancey, 1998).

As explained in the problem background, this research will focus on job descriptions since there is a need of composing and applying them. Job descriptions can be considered as a part of work systems (Beer et al., 1984). The term work system as it will be used in this study refers to aspects like job content, people, supervisor-management style, and management policies and practices and how they influence each other in the design of a system (figure 2). The core of a work system and this study is the design of the work itself, the tasks and requirements that jobs have to accomplish, the goals, and objectives of the organisation (Beer et al., 1984). Another aspect is the set of skills and attitudes that employees (people) have and those that are developed by work experience. The management style of supervisors can be explained as the amount of responsibilities employees get from their superiors. Management policies and practices include the amount of influence policies and practices have on the content of a job. Adequate and effective described jobs can positively affect management (basis for HRM system), employees (transparent and objective descriptions), and the works council (opportunity to influence the process of designing a work system) (HayGroup, 2011).

Figure 2: The aspects of a work system adapted from Beer et al., (1984).
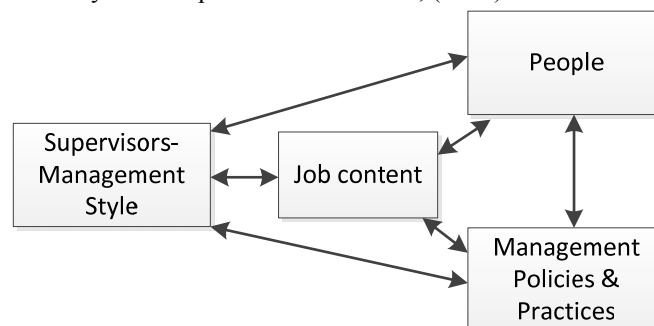
Following the theory of Hackman & Oldham, (1976), only employees who have the need for more responsibility, autonomy, and achievement will probably be affected by redesigning a work system. This raises the question what to do with employees that do not want to have more responsibilities. This question will be elaborated later in this study. Besides, it is of great importance that a work system is highly consistent with employee influence, human resource flow, and the reward system that will be applied. Beer et al., (1984) define two alternate types of work systems: traditional work system (e.g., narrowly defined jobs), which is focused on efficiency and control; and high-commitment work system (e.g., broadly defined jobs), which is focused on human commitment by integrating individual and organisational needs.

2.3 Types of job description systems

The next section will discuss ways in which job descriptions can be developed following the Harvard analytical framework for HRM.

2.3.1 Traditional job analysis systems

These two sections will give an overview of traditional job analysis systems, which can be considered as a part of a traditional task-based work system and competency modelling, an aspect of a high commitment competency-based work system. Hereafter, a comparison will be made to discover which model, or both, is most applicable to compose job descriptions in a specific organisation.

Job analysis can be seen as the centre of the human resource management activities, which are important for effective performance of organisations (Siddique, 2004). There is some evidence that effective job analysis can improve communication, accommodate change, contribute to improved HRM, and be cost effective (Clifford, 1994).

One of the main assumptions within traditional job analysis is that employees, jobs, and the match between them are constant over time (Singh, 2008). It refers to the tasks that an employee needs to perform, the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for job performance as it currently exists or has existed in the past. Jobs within traditional job analysis are considered stable over time and it is useful to analyse jobs that already exist. It is applicable since jobs can be analysed by observing tasks performed by incumbents or by interviewing incumbents (Singh, 2008). Job information can be acquired in two ways; First, by reading written information about the job (e.g., a job description), and second by actual contact with an incumbent of a job or by observing or interviewing an incumbent or manager (Voskuijl & van Sliedregt, 2002). Traditional job analysis is consistent with hierarchical and mechanistic organisations since they desire formally described work behaviours associated with current jobs (Stewart & Carson, 1997).

2.3.2 Competency modelling

A competency can be defined as a written description of measurable work behaviours, personal skills, areas of knowledge, and abilities used to complete current and future jobs, organisational goals, and objectives (Green, 1999; Schippmann, et al., 2000; Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006). In the 1950s, competency modelling is developed and it primarily focused on innate abilities that employees have to shape behaviour that lead to successful performance. In

fact, it was concerned with individual differences (KSAs) that distinguish organisations from their competitors (Schippmann, et al., 2000). Several decades later other researchers proposed a competency model, which is based on knowledge, skills, abilities, traits, or motives that are related to job or job performance (McClelland, 1973). The current approach to develop competency models involves core competences, which has been elaborated by Prahalad and Hamel, (1990). Core competences are based on organisational goals and strategy and do not involve individual-level attributes, which makes employees and an organisation able to react to changes or innovations in their environment (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006). As Lawler, (1993) mentions, "(…) human skills that embody core competences will have a positive influence on organisational analysis and effectiveness (…)". Techniques used for competency modelling are not radically different from traditional job analysis. There is evidence that a competency modelling approach is at its foundation also a job analysis process (Ruggeberg, 2007) that supplement each other (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Competency modelling can reduce a large number of descriptor statements (TJA) to a small number of job performance dimensions or competences focus on organisational goals and strategy (Schippmann, et al., 2000). Competences are important in several employee HR management applications (Beer et al., 1984; Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006):

- *Recruitment management*. Competences are useful in the process wherein capabilities of the potential employee are compared with the capabilities required. A possible gap between these two aspects can form the basis for development/ learning objectives.
- *Learning management*. A gap between the competences required and the competences that an employee has, can be linked to learning and performance objectives.
- *Performance management*. Employee performance can be evaluated in comparison with the requirements and the development/ learning objectives of the competences. Developed competences can result in higher employee satisfaction because employees experience responsibility for the outcomes of work. Besides satisfaction, can knowledge of the actual results of the work activities and fair treatment result in low absenteeism and turnover.
- *Career development*. Competences can also be used for career development. A comparison can be made through the required competences and potentials to develop competences. Development in competences can form the basis for career development and can lead to higher internal motivation since employees experience the meaningfulness of their job (career plan).

Competency development model
Competences can be considered as building blocks for competency models. Every competency in a model defines a specific part of the capabilities and behavioural indicators that an employee needs in a certain job (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006). A competency model is a set of core competences that present the core values of an organisation in current and future role (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006). Draganidis & Mentzas, (2006), describe the following steps in the development of a competency model.

The first step is the creation of a working team, which consists of human resource staff, top executives, and job incumbents. This team will be responsible for the development of competences and will oversee the competency model development process. A second step is the identification of a performance matrix in order to define performance for the jobs included in the model. Dreyfus & Dreyfus, (1986) developed a matrix and ranked performance on a scale from novice, advanced beginner, proficient, expert, and world class. Each measure correlates with a scale from 1 till 5 in order to measure improvements with each scale and to form an official reward system. The third step in the model of Draganidis & Mentzas, (2006) is the development of five core competences that can be applied for every job within the model. These core competences need to have a shared meaning in relation to organisational goals and culture. The creation of a list of competences can be succesful by reviewing other competency models developed by (retail) organisations since organisations that operate in the same industry, usually have some similarities in their work processes (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006). Another tool that can be used is identifying knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics needed for (all) jobs in the organisation (Marrelli, Tondora, & Hoge, 2005). This will help to working team to cluster similarities between jobs which helps to identify core competences.

Next, when five core competences are developed, interviews and focus groups with managers and employees of the specific departments need to be conducted in order to test and acquire information. Results of these meetings and interviews help the working team to perform an analysis of the competences discussed. Hereafter, the concept model of competences can be initiated and adjusted with the results of the interviews and focus groups. The working team can examine the acceptance and approval among the different stakeholders in the organisation before applying them. The application of a competency model is one of the most important steps in this process. In a fully-integrated, competency-based human resource system, the competences identified as required for effective performance are used to select, develop, manage, reward, and compensate employees of an organisation. Employees will know precisely what competences are required for success and how they will be evaluated (Marrelli et al., 2005).

Before the traditional task-based approach and the competency-based approach can be compared, the retail industry will be defined. Hereafter, requirements of the situational factors and the stakeholder interests will be elaborated. Paragraph 2.5 will compare the requirements with the task- and competency-based approach.

2.4. The retail industry and the situational and stakeholder requirements in job descriptions

2.4.1 The retail industry and its characteristics
The retail industry is very broad, not only supermarkets and a clothing store (physical goods) are elements of the retail industry; banks, insurance companies, and the housing industry (services) belong to it as well, nonetheless they have a different CLA (collective labour agreement) and work processes (Hindriks, 2007). Retailing can be defined as all activities of

organisations, which aim on direct sales of products and services to consumers when these products and services are paid from consumers' net income (van der Kind & Quix, 2008). Following the model of Beer et al., (1984), it is essential that organisations integrate a HRM policy that attracts and holds the right mix of employees that will complete mutual organisational goals and objectives, which simultaneously considers stakeholder interests and copes with the situational constraints (business strategy). Many supermarket retailers work with a CLA for their employees. However, they often make a distinction between employees working in stores, distribution centres and the head office. Often, employees working in stores and distribution centres are considered as CLA employees and employees working in the head office and managerial jobs in the distribution centres are considered as non-CLA employees (Hindriks, 2007). This distinction is based on the assumption that CLA employees are subordinate and responsive to traditional authority in order to cope with a gap between knowledge and skills, wherein achieving control and efficiency are the main strengths of this approach (Beer et al., 1984). This approach involves four policy areas: considering the human resource flow, a usual career track begins with lower-level positions that eventually can lead to promotion by job evaluation. Job evaluation in this approach is usually based on detailed job descriptions (reward system). In terms of work systems, retailers make jobs as simple and detailed described as possible at the bottom of their organisation with close supervision on performing these jobs. Employees can express their opinions towards their managers but do not have much influence on the work processes and the quality of work.

Since there are many different types of retail organisations, van der Kind, (2004) makes a classification between operational classification and shopping behaviour within retail organisations.

Operational classification

Retail organisations can be classified in three aspects: logistic, sales, and purchase oriented. Organisations have to pay attention to all of these aspects however; they often focus on one of these aspects. Logistic oriented organisations focus on the circulation speed of their products and services, wherein availability of them is of great importance. Besides the circulation speed products and services in these types of organisations, they are concerned with optimising external and internal logistics. Margins in logistic oriented organisations are small and consumers have to serve themselves. A typical example of such an organisation is a supermarket. Sales oriented organisations are concerned with the organisation itself and the maintaining the (return) frequency of their customers. Focus in sales oriented organisations lies on promotion of products and services (market-push) (Hindriks, 2007). However, these types of organisations are rare in the Netherlands, since many firms (e.g., factory outlet) failed to succeed this concept. Purchase oriented organisations are constantly renewing their assortment of products and services since most of these goods are time driven. Focus in purchase oriented organisations (e.g., fashion shops) lies on fashion trends and the developments of consumer behaviour.

Shopping behaviour classification

Besides operational classification, it is essential to classify retail organisations. Figure 3 distinguishes four types of goods, which retailers can sell: specialty goods, preference goods, shopping goods, and convenience goods. The vertical axis ranges from daily to non-daily shopping behaviour. The horizontal axis ranges from small to a big assortment:

- Specialty goods are sold in stores with a small assortment and have a not-daily purchasing frequency.
- Shopping goods are sold in stores with a big assortment and have a not-daily purchasing frequency.
- Preference goods are sold in stores with a small assortment and have a daily purchasing frequency.
- Convenience goods are sold in stores with a big assortment and have a daily purchasing frequency.

Figure 3: Classification of the Dutch retail sector adapted from van der Kind & Quix, (2008)
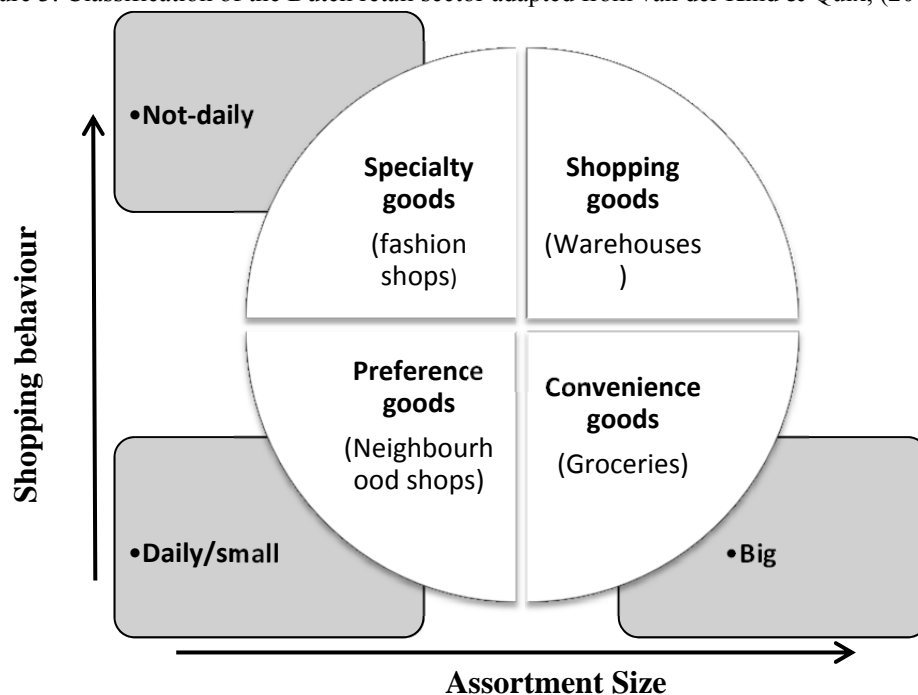
Nowadays, intense competition in retail markets force retailers to develop a strategy focused on retaining and attracting the right customers (e.g., being profitable or being loyal) (Sirohi, McLaughlin, & Wittink, 1998). With a certain business strategy (e.g., bureaucratic way), retailers try to enhance purchases made by customers, increase the return frequency, and let customers recommend the retail shop to others. An increasing return frequency can lead to more purchases because existing customers also tend to purchase more than new customers (Rose, 1990). Much research that has been conducted, acknowledges that small changes in customer loyalty can yield disproportionately large changes in profitability although not everyone agrees with this statement (Reichfeld, 1996). Hence, customer loyalty is one of the most important aspects in retail organisations like supermarkets, because loyalty was shown to generate increased profits through enhanced revenues and reduced costs to acquire

customers and serve customers familiar with firm's services as well (Hallowell, 1996). However, how customers precisely develop loyalty to a particular retail store, how that loyalty can be maintained, and even be expanded is still unanswered (Sirohi, et al., 1998; Lehew, Burgess, & Scarlett, 2002). Gaining and sustaining loyalty as a core goal, may even be more important than customer satisfaction since satisfaction is a forthcoming benefit of loyalty (Agustin & Singh, 2005). It is important that supermarkets are able to develop a strategy wherein customers are clustered in customer groups. As the founder of Wal-Mart, Sam Walton, mentioned "the secret of successful retailing is to give your customer what they want".

From a marketing point of view Zairi, (2000) once said, "customers are the purpose of what we do and rather than depending on us, we very much depend on them. The customer is not the source of a problem, we shouldn`t perhaps make a wish that customer 'should go away' because our future and our security will be put in jeopardy". This statement explains why modern organisations focus on loyalty and satisfaction.

Because of the heterogeneity of most markets, wherein customer demands and requirements are frequently changing, it is no longer effective for organisation to adopt a mass-marketing approach (Dibb, 1998). Hence, retail organisations must cluster their customer base into smaller homogenous groups based on similar characteristics and requirements. A study of Gevers et al., (2011) examined several studies and identified indicators of customer requirements in several customer groups. These indicators, which are displayed in table 2 can form a foundation for clustering the hetereogeneous market into homogenous groups.

Table 2: indicators of customer requirements per customer group adapted from Gevers et al., (2011)

General	55+	55-	Men	Women
Price (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)	**Good value for money** (George, 2005)	**Price** (George, 2005)	**Efficient operators (employees)** (George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)	**Price (low, consistent, competitive)** (George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)
Speed (checkout, uncluttered aisles) (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009)	**Short checkout Lines** (George, 2005)	**Speedy checkout** (George, 2005)	**Speed (no waiting, fast checkout/service)** George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011	**Weekly specials and regular discounts** (George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)
Assortment (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009)	**Convenient parking** (George, 2005)	**Accurate checkout** (George, 2005)		**Quality of (fresh) products** (Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)
Friendliness (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)	**Employee attitude (friendly and efficient)** (George, 2005)	**Customer service** (George, 2005)		**Friendliness** (George, 2005)
Cleanliness (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)	**Physical store environments** (basket, product location) (George, 2005)	**Layout of supermarket** (George, 2005)		**Hygienic processes** (George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)
Accurate checkout (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009)				
Stock (George, 2005, Parker et al., 2009, Nesset et al., 2011)	**Stock** (George, 2005)	**Stock** (George, 2005)	**Stock** (George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)	**Stock** (George, 2005, Mortimer & Clarke, 2011)

When a retail organisation identifies and clusters these groups, it is possible to offer the most promising opportunities to those segments, which in the long-term can be beneficial for organisational performance (Dibb, 1998). A retail organisation can segment its customer-base on variables like age and gender, which is discussed in table 3. Besides these variables, groups can also be identified as "young" or "families". As mentioned before, an organisation needs to determine the business strategy and objectives in their policy choices before they will cluster its customer-base.

2.4.2 Situational and stakeholder requirements within the retail industry
Several stakeholder interests and situational factors (requirements) are important to consider in the retail industry during the process of composing and implementing job descriptions. To understand and evaluate these constraints in the retail industry, the most important requirements are elaborated in the sections below.

Stakeholder interests

Companies can be seen as a mini-society made up of large numbers of constituencies, each claiming an important stake in the way the company is managed and its resources are employed (Beer et al., 1984). Managers developing HRM policies need to consider and comprehend the particular interest of each stakeholder to balance the multiple interests (e.g., employee groups, management, government, unions, and employees). Since the focus of this study is on human resources and composing job descriptions, the emphasis will lie on employee groups, management, employees, and unions. These stakeholders will surely differ in their interests or perceptions about conditions of work or job design (Beer et al., 1984). Recent research indicates that these stakeholders are the most important human resources in the retail industry when an organisation wants to compose and implement job descriptions (HayGroup, 2011).

Stakeholder requirements in the retail industry

Table 3 shows that the stakeholders 'customers or community' are not interested in the way jobs are done in supermarkets but only in the result of supermarkets. Hence, customers indicate "price", "stock", and "speedy checkout" as most important aspects during shopping. The HayGroup examined and defined important stakeholders in the retail industry and indicated that adequate and effective described jobs can positively affect management (basis for HRM system), employees (transparent and objective descriptions), and the works council (opportunity to influence the process of designing and implementing a work system). In essence, the success of a retailer depends on the retailer's stakeholder orientation and the balance between their interests (Girod, 2005).

Employees value several job characteristics in their jobs, such as autonomy, feedback, opportunities for development / promotion, and fair treatment that can influence their satisfaction and motivation positively (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Chapman et al., 2005; van der Sluis & van de Bunt-Kokhuis, 2009). Job descriptions can help to enhance these characteristics since job descriptions can depict what the level of responsibilities and goals of a job are (amount of autonomy). Besides, job descriptions can describe the opportunities for training, development, and promotion, which offer employees an objective measure to rely on (Lawler III & Ledford Jr., 1992). Employees in the retail sector also value fair treatment since they want to be treated equally and hence, job descriptions can provide an objective measure for feedback for managers and employees. Job descriptions are a way for fair treatment of employees in their performance appraisals since employees know what they have to do and managers have an objective measure to rely on in job appraisals (van der Sluis & van de Bunt-Kokhuis, 2009). Another stakeholder that needs to be considered in a work system design project is the union of the industry wherein an organisation is operating. Unions often are not involved in work design projects, which create ambiguities since unions do not understand the change in a project (Cobbaut, 2005). Unions, as representatives of the employees, would like to be involved from the start of a project in order to create a clear communication and understanding between consultants, employees, unions, and the board of directors. The main interest unions have in a work system project is that an organisation will focus on an

improvement of quality in order to increase performance (Cobbaut, 2005). Employees need to have opportunities for training and development; management can assess their employees using objective measures for feedback etc. Unions can perceive such a project as an opportunity to be more influential in organisations, which can increase the relationship between the organisation and union (Cobbaut, 2005).

Situational requirements

Situational factors influence and are influenced by HRM policies that have been developed. Most factors are external to the organisation since they are part of the environment (e.g., labour market, unions, laws, and societal values). Other factors like management philosophy, workforce characteristics, and business strategy and conditions appear to be subject to more managerial control. However, external factors and societal forces (Beer et al., 1984) also influence them. Situational factors that are most important for this study are discussed below.

Workforce characteristics

During the development of a work system, it is important that organisations reflect workforce characteristics. Workforce characteristics can be described as employee motivation, capacities, attitudes, potential, and desire for personal development (e.g., career plan, competence development) (Beer et al., 1984). These characteristics need to reflect and have to be consistent with the assumptions of management in order to utilise and develop employees effective. Gaps between assumptions and the workforce may result in conflicts between management and employees. Obviously, the workforce can be broken down into several employee groups (e.g., management). These differences need to be identified by valid assumptions about the differences in background, needs, expectations, and educational qualifications that employees bring to their jobs (Beer et al., 1984).

Business Strategy and conditions

A work system, which is part of a HRM policy, must fit with its competitive strategy and the environmental conditions. Since many retail organisations focus on quality as a key success factor, their HRM policy need to encourage employee involvement, concern, and employee development (Beer et al., 1984). A business strategy needs to be carefully analysed in order to identify the tasks that a strategy needs to present to the organisation, and the competences and involvement required from (potential) employees.

Management philosophy

A HRM policy is developed by the philosophy (implicit or explicit beliefs) of its key managers considering the nature of its business (Beer et al., 1984). In turn, the philosophy of managers is shaped by own values or assumptions about the role of business in society and the role of people in the business. Every company has unique values and its own philosophy in order to attract, retain, and involve their employees and to create a link between the HRM policy and their philosophy. Lacking a clear philosophy can create an inconsistent link, which can result in distrust of employees and it can undermine sustained implementation of a HRM

policy in the firm since trust is based on consistent treatment (Beer et al., 1984). Another way to emit a philosophy is by management style; the way managers behave, communicate, and interacts with employees.

Situational factors in the retail industry
Evidence exists that HRM strategies differ a lot across retail organisations (e.g., top-down or bottom-up) (Davis et al., 2005). The retail industry can be characterised by a high proportion of part-time youth employees (workforce) with irregular hours, pay for performance, upward mobility because of unionised stores, and low requirement of skills. However, few options for training and career development are offered in the retail sector (Hughes, 1999). Furthermore, turnover can be considered as high, which lowers the level of experience of the workforce (Moody, 1997). A result of high turnover is that new employees are less likely to view a retail job as a long-term career job (Hughes, 1999).

The past decades have changed job content in which workers become more autonomous and skilled (decentralisation). One of the key success factors of decentralisation is that (department) managers can operate more autonomously and are able to recruit en select their own employees (Hughes, 1999). This can enhance retention since departmental managers can train employees to be more knowledgeable and long-term. Management philosophy tries to bring employees and management together with common goals such as optimisation and efficiency (Tan, 2001).

2.5 Comparison task- and competency-based job descriptions

Paragraph 2.3 elaborated the traditional task-based approach and the competency-based approach to compose job descriptions. Afterwards, paragraph 2.4 discussed the retail industry and distinguished stakeholder and situational requirements that influence the process of composing job descriptions. After composing the conceptual framework, paragraph 2.5.1 compares the task- and competency-based approach based on the requirements elaborated in paragraph 2.4. The final section of this paragraph concludes this chapter and shows the conceptual model for the design-oriented research.

2.5.1 A comparison between traditional job analysis systems and competency modelling

In many organisations and industries, competency modelling has replaced the traditional job analysis approach (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Some researchers argue that competency modelling displace the job analysis approach or the other way around. Many experts think that job analysis is more task-focused and competency modelling is worker-focused (Schippmann, et al., 2000). Other managers acknowledge that competency modelling has the advantage of greater employee commitment to their jobs and improved performance (Beer et al., 1984). However, Sanchez & Levine, (2009) argue that the approaches supplement each other in the development of a HRM system. In addition, every competency-modelling project is established on the foundation of a job analysis method (Ruggeberg, 2007). Competency models have the advantage that they try to help employees to understand the norms, values, and goals of the organisation (common language), in order to influence employee behaviour towards a day-to-day strategic aligned behaviour (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Table 3 depicts a

comparison between the requirements in the retail industry and task- and competency-based job descriptions. The conceptual framework identified the characteristics of task- and competency-based approaches to compose job descriptions. Section 2.4.2 showed that four stakeholders are important in the retail industry: management, employees, works council, and the union. Retailers in the supermarket industry hire employees with diverse knowledge, skills, and ambition. There are employees working in stores, distribution centres, and at the head office of a supermarket chain with different CLA's and hence different requirements, interests, or perceptions about conditions of a task- and competency-based approach (Beer et al., 1984).

Task-based job descriptions are in line with an organisation with a tall hierarchy since decisions and the flow of information is usually top-down, wherein jobs remain stable over time (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Management of hierarchical organisations try to send a strong signal to those below them because they want to influence their behaviour in day-to-day behaviour activities in line with the strategy. Since retailers work with many different employees, their perceptions about for example, opportunities for development also can differ. CLA employees might prefer job security instead of opportunities for development (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004).

Another example, many retailers are decentralising their structure in order to be closer to their market (Hughes, 1999). By decentralising an organisation, which is in line with a competency-based approach to compose job descriptions, employees often are given more autonomy and responsibilities, however, not all employees have the need for more responsibilities. A final example, task-based descriptions concerned with KSA's, are often specified towards one job; hence, they fail to define key factors that should be able to adapt developments when change occurs in the job design (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). A small number of competences or performance areas that can cut across jobs and all layers of the organisation, creates a common language wherein employees can adapt more easily to developments and changes in the market. Competency-based should, in contrast to task-based, be able to adapt to developments in technology and the changing environment since they create an occupational common language that can easily be adjusted, by developing evolutionary and dynamic competences needed to perform a job (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). However, many CLA jobs within the retail industry are considered quite stable over time, regardless of some minor changes (Hindriks, 2007).

Hence, these and other characteristics have to be considered by managers that are concerned with a work system project. Besides, a job should be independent of those who perform it since employees have to be hired that are matching with the organisations' requirements and not the other way around (Dierdorff & Morgeson, 2007).

Table 3: Comparison of stakeholder and situational requirements vs. task- and competency-based job descriptions

Stakeholder Interests	Requirements	Task-based job descriptions	Competency-based job descriptions
Management	Effective instrument for other HR practices	Low relationship	High relationship
Employees	Feedback	Based on skills and capabilities	Based on competences
	Opportunities for development	Moderate	High
	Autonomy	Few responsibilities	Many responsibilities
	Fair treatment	Uneffective measure	Effective measure
Works council	Right of approval and supervision	Moderate	High
Union	Involvement	Moderate	High
Situational factors	**Requirements**		
Workforce Characteristics	Low requirements of skills	High relationship	Low relationship
	Job design	Stable over time	Flexible
Business Strategy	Decentralisation	Low relationship	High relationship
	Quality	Focus on performance	Focus on competence development
	Employee development	Low	High
Management Philosophy	Direct management style	High relationship	Low relationship
	Optimisation and efficiency	High relationship	Low relationship
	Top-down decisions	High relationship	Low relationship

Within task-based descriptions, KSA's can be seen as enablers to perform competences in an effective way (Hayton & Kelley, 2006). Knowledge, skills, and abilities can be a helpful supplement towards the behaviour that needs to be demonstrated in line with the strategy of an organisation since many competences have a complex nature (Hayton & Kelley, 2006). Competences try to help employees understand the norms, values, and goals of the organisation (common language), in order to influence employee behaviour towards a day-to-day strategic aligned behaviour (Sanchez & Levine, 2009).

Conclusion

The results of the conceptual framework lead to the conceptual model depicted in figure 4. This chapter elaborated job descriptions and the way in which they can be composed (task- or competency-based). Task-based is more work- and task focused and competency modelling is worker-focused. However, these approaches can supplement each other in the development of a HRM system. Organisations are concerned with attracting, developing, and retaining skilled and motivated employees, wherein job analysis and competency-based descriptions play an important role. Evidence exists that objective and unambiguous job descriptions, are an

important component to become attractive as an organisation. The descriptions can guide and stimulate (new) employees to develop collective skills, knowledge, competences, and behaviour that are instrumental for the strategy of an organisation. Stakeholder and situational requirements play an important role in the way descriptions are composed. Theory showed that adequate and effective described jobs in the retail industry could enhance several HR outcomes such as an increase of employee motivation and satisfaction, organisational attractiveness, commitment by integrating organisational an individual needs, and organisational effectiveness. It is assumed that job descriptions enhance HR practices when the stakeholder interests of management, employees, the works council, and the union will be considered. In addition, workforce characteristics, business strategy and conditions, and management philosophy can be considered as the most important situational factors that have to be taken into account in the retail industry when composing and implementing job descriptions (figure 4). This research will identify which approach, or a balance between the two approaches of composing job descriptions will be most effective for the organisation.

Figure 4: Conceptual model of composing job descriptions (Based on Beer et al., 1984)
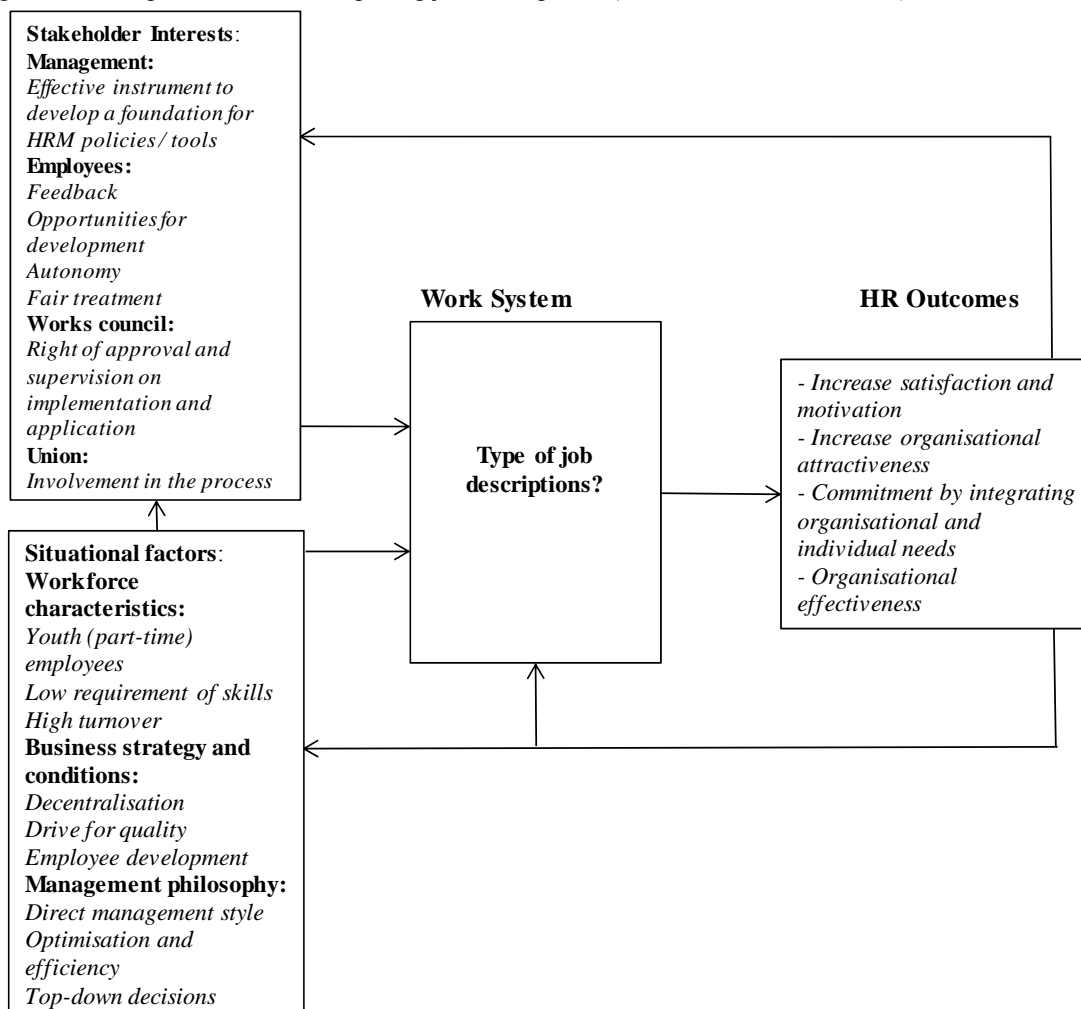
3. Methodology

This chapter will discuss the research methodology that is used to answer the sub- and research questions. The question whether interviews or a questionnaire should be administered belongs to the centre of a research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Other authors note that both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The main objective of this research is to understand, explain, and describe the process of composing job descriptions, and to implement these in line with the strategy and culture of Lidl. Qualitative data suites this type of research since this study required in-depth information about the organisation, its situational factors, and stakeholder interests. Hence, this study can be seen as descripto-explanatory (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This research started with building a conceptual framework based on existing literature, since there is a wealth of literature (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The framework identified what job descriptions are, several processes of composing job descriptions, the contribution for retail organisations, and situational and stakeholder requirements that influence the process of composing job descriptions, which in their turn influence HR practices.

3.1 Design-oriented research

The objective of this study was to identify which process of composing job descriptions fits the strategy and culture, and how these descriptions can be implemented in the organisation of Lidl. Currently, jobs are not defined or described adequately and hence, hard to assess or measure. It is challenging to provide employees with performance management and contractual terms and conditions like an official reward system. The current system offers too few possibilities for a consistent HRM system. Hence, Lidl required a work system that facilitates job descriptions for all jobs within the organisation that can be matched with other HR practices. On forehand, the problem that Lidl faced and the solution required were clear. Hence, this study can be considered as a design-oriented research (Verschuren & Hartog, 2005). Examples of design-oriented research are the design of a competence management system or the redesign of an organisation. A conceptual framework is developed and used for the identification of situational and contextual constraints that influence the process of composing job descriptions and forthcoming HR practices. An important step in design-oriented research is the specification of the requirements a study has (Verschuren & Hartog, 2005). Four types of requirements can be distinguished:

Functional requirements
Functional requirements indicate what job descriptions need to fulfil when they are composed and implemented in the organisational design of Lidl. Job descriptions need to be clear and unambiguous in order to create a formal structure around all jobs. Job descriptions can help employees and management to understand the essence and responsibilities of their jobs. Employees know how jobs have to be performed and managers can provide employees with clear feedback about their development and performance. Besides, a formal structure around

all jobs can help Lidl to match the descriptions to order HR practices as recruitment, training, development, assessment, and a formal reward system.

Contextual requirements

Contextual requirements are constraints formed by the social environment, believes, culture, and strategy of the organisation of Lidl, which need to be considered during the process of composing and implementing job descriptions. The design of the descriptions needs to cope with workforce characteristics in the retail industry and the demands from management philosophy and business strategy of Lidl, since the conceptual framework defined these constraints as most important in this study. For example, which business strategy and culture fits which approach to compose and implement job descriptions. A centralised structure is often more familiar with a task-based approach (Schippmann, et al., 2000), whereas a decentralised structure with a focus on employee development is often familiar with a competency-based approach (Sanchez & Levine, 2009).

User requirements

User requirements can be defined as the requirements of the future users. In this study, future users can be seen as the stakeholders concerned with job descriptions. The conceptual framework identified management, employees, works council, and the union as the most important stakeholders for the process of composing and implementing job descriptions. Besides the different interests of each stakeholder in the retail industry, are important to consider since they all have their own interests in job descriptions. For example, management requires an effective instrument to develop a foundation for other HR practices and the union of the retail industry requires involvement in the process of composing job descriptions to create understanding.

Structural requirements

Many authors ignored the importance of structural requirements in their paper, but Drejer, (2000) was one of the first authors that identified and elaborated structural requirements. These requirements can be defined as the elements of a competence and its relation with each other. During the development of a competence model, it is important to consider technology, human beings, organisation, culture, and their relation to each other. These four elements combined, will help Lidl to develop flexible and dynamic competences that can be used organisation wide. Structural requirements can be seen as an extension of the other three requirements since it covers with human beings (user), organisation, and culture (contextual and functional). Technology can be seen as a part of functional requirements, because it describes how technology helps human beings to fulfil activities (and effects) that are related to a competence.

These four types of requirements are theoretically elaborated in chapter two and will be practically discussed in chapter 4 and 5 in order to make a proper design for job descriptions.

3.2 Data collection methods

This study will use multiple methods to collect data: document analysis, structured interviews, and semi-structured interviews. The use of two or more independent sources of data or data collection methods helped to find patterns between research findings and literature within this study. This phenomenon is called triangulation and is often used in studies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Use of triangulation helped to cope with the researchers' bias since multiple sources of evidence are used (e.g., structured interviews, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews).

Document analysis

Document analysis is used in order to gain a rich understanding about the organisation and culture of Lidl. Document analysis can be source of support in a design research for findings of the (structured) interviews. Documents are obtained by asking (senior) managers for relevant documents such as organisation charts and information about the organisation and its characteristics. Organisation charts were available and helped to identify the structure of Lidl per department and as a whole.

However, documents that define a clear business strategy and its core mission and values are not available. Two aspects can explain a lack of these documents. First, data protection within the organisation of Lidl can be considered as extremely high, hence, many documents are highly confidential and these documents may not be consulted for this research. Second, the organisation developed from zero to almost 360 stores in the Netherlands within 15 years. The organisation around the stores is still developing and professionalising and the board of directors still did not define a clear business strategy.

Since a design-oriented research requires much in-depth information about the requirements to compose job descriptions, the influence of situational factors and stakeholder interests on composing job descriptions and the forthcoming HR practices, information needed to be acquired in other ways. The researcher was involved in an internal job design project next to this research in the organisation during the graduation project. During this internal project, the researcher held approximately 50 individual meetings with department heads and (senior) managers of Lidl. In these meetings, information is acquired about the business strategy and core values, the characteristics and responsibilities of the specific departments and its employees, ways in which job descriptions can be composed, and what the HR effects of these descriptions are. Unfortunately, these meetings are not recorded and hence, no transcripts are developed. However, these meetings helped the researcher to gain a rich understanding about the organisation and its situational and stakeholder characteristics, which is of great importance since multiple sources of evidence are used to identify patterns between the results and the conceptual framework.

Structured interviews

Since the business strategy with the forthcoming mission, vision, and shared values of Lidl are not officially defined and documented, structured interviews are conducted to identify

important aspects / characteristics of the strategy. The structured interviews are conducted in an early stage of the research and in advance of the semi-structured interviews because the business strategy and the forthcoming mission, vision, and shared values first needed to be determined. The aim and role of these structured interviews is to acquire an insight about the strategy on forehand of the semi-structured interviews. Next, the results are compared with the results of the semi-structured interviews to explore patterns between them, which are important to meet the requirements of the design. In essence, it helped determining which type of job descriptions fit the organisation of Lidl (e.g., task- or competency-based descriptions) in line with the business strategy.

The respondents are selected on basis of their knowledge, experience, and department of Lidl. The structured interviews are conducted among 15 managers of five departments of the head office of Lidl, which is situated in Huizen (table 4). The five different departments display a sample of every department within the organisation. Hence, five different perspectives of the business strategy are gathered.

Table 4: Respondents of the structured interviews

Department	Number
Sales	3
Central Services	3
Finance	3
Purchasing	3
General	3

Semi-structured interviews
Next to document analysis, primary data is used to study practical information about job descriptions and methods to implement them into the organisational design of Lidl. Semi-structured interviews formed the foundation to gather data for the design of job descriptions in this study. The aim of the semi-structured interviews was to acquire information about situational factors, stakeholder interests (requirements) that influence the process of composing and implementing job descriptions into the organisational design of Lidl. Besides, interviews helped to understand feelings, attitudes, and opinions about the tasks, activities, and duties of employees within the organisation. The interviewees are selected on basis of their knowledge about the organisation and years of experience. After having selected interviewees, individual meetings were scheduled between the researcher and eight employees of Lidl in order to reduce the probability of low response rates because of uncertainties or reluctance among respondents.

To ensure that respondents would speak openly; confidentially and data protection for all respondents was guaranteed and no names are used. The eight interviewees can be divided in three employee groups: CLA employees (n = 2), work council (n = 3), and senior managers (n

= 3)[1]. These employee groups are interviewed since the conceptual framework identified them to be most important and influential in this process (HayGroup, 2011). By interviewing these employees groups, data is gathered from three different perspectives within the organisational structure.

The semi-structured interviews are conducted in a one-on-one and face-to-face basis. To guide the interviews, a set of topics/themes (interview protocol) that reflect the variables in this study and forthcoming questions are developed (Appendix A). Interviewees received a set of definitions in advance of the interview in order to rule out ambiguities about specific definitions. This should promote validity and reliability by enabling the interviewee to consider the information in the drafts and allowing them the opportunity to gather supporting organisational documentation (triangulation) from their files (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

3.3 Reliability, internal, and external validity

Qualitative as well as quantitative data collection methods and analysis procedures each have their own strengths and weaknesses (Smith, 1981). This section will cover threats to validity and reliability within this design-oriented research in order to increase research quality.

Internal validity

Internal validity can be defined as to the extent to which findings can be attributed to interventions rather than any flaws in your research design (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). In other words, measuring what you intend to measure (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). A threat to internal validity is that this study will measure incorrect constructs, which can lead to misinterpretation, false conclusions, and recommendations for Lidl. To cope with this threat triangulation is used since this increases internal validity by combining research methods (Patton, 2001). This research used three types of independent data collection: semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and structured interviews, which helped to identify patterns between the conceptual framework and the results. Another threat to internal validity is the language wherein the interviews are conducted. The interviews are conducted in Dutch and the results need to be translated in English. As mentioned before, the discussions with department head and (senior) managers are not recorded. However, all semi-structured interviews are recorded to ensure that all arguments can be translated correctly. Directors of Lidl expect a practical advice about the process of composing and applying job descriptions in their organisational design, therefore internal validity will be the main concern in this design-oriented research.

External validity

External validity can be defined as the extent to which the results from a study are generalisable to all relevant contexts (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). They mention that a threat to this study is that the findings are difficult to generalise to other research settings. Although this research generates much information about job descriptions and the way in

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[1] This research may not appoint any job titles due to confidentiality

which they can be composed, it usually is not generalisable towards other organisations. However, this study does not intend to generalise this outcomes since this is a specific research for Lidl.

Reliability

Reliability can be defined as the extent to which data collection techniques will yield consistent findings, similar observations would be made or conclusions reached by other researchers, or if there is transparency in how sense was made from the raw data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The goal of this test is to validate that the activities of a research can be repeated with the same results, to minimise errors and bias (Yin, 2003). Yin, (2003) asserts several threats to validity such as subject or participant error, and observer bias.

To cope with participant error, individual meetings were scheduled between the researcher and the eight employees of Lidl in order to reduce the probability of low response rates because of uncertainties or reluctance among respondents. In what way data will be interpreted can be seen as observer bias. Hence, recording, transcribing, and clustering of the data is important to consider. A way to cope with observer bias was to cluster the answers / quotes mentioned on basis of the constructs developed in the conceptual framework (Yin, 2003). Clustering helped to find patterns in this design-oriented research between the data collected of requirements and the conceptual framework.

Reliability will be higher when a predefined list of themes / topics (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009) will be developed for the interviews, however as this design-oriented research preferred a higher internal validity, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data about requirements (Vennix, 2007). Besides, findings of non-standardised research methods are not necessarily intended to be repeatable since they reflect reality at the time this research for Lidl is conducted and because of the unique and complex nature (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

4. Lidl's situational and contextual requirements

This chapter analysed the results of the data collected among the workforce of Lidl and used the results of the structured interviews and documents analysis to identify which type of composing job descriptions fit the organisation of Lidl and to find patterns with the conceptual framework. Consistent with the conceptual model, the requirements identified are used to describe and analyse the results.

4.1 Analysis of the results per cluster

This section describes and analyses the findings of the study based on the dimensions that are identified and operationalised in chapter 2 (stakeholder interests, situational factors, HRM policies, and HR practices). Key aspects are identified in the transcripts and clustered into several tables. This process helped the researcher to find patterns between the transcripts of the semi-structured interviews, structured interviews, and document analysis in order to examine the conceptual model, which is developed in the conceptual framework, and it helps to answer the research question. The interviewees in the semi-structured interviews stakeholder groups are: 'management' (n=3),'work council' (n=3), and 'CLA employees' (n=2). The structured interviews are conducted among 15 (senior) managers of the head office of Lidl and an overview of these results can be found in appendix B. The tables depicted in chapter 4, are based on answers mentioned four times or more by respondents. Besides, other opinions and quotes (n ≤ 4) that are important to this research are also discussed.

4.1.1 Situational requirements

Situational factors influence stakeholder interests and HR policy choices and they are affected by HR practices. The literature background defined several aspects to be important in this study and forthcoming measurable variables.

Workforce characteristics

Literature defined three aspects that describe the workforce characteristics of the retail / supermarket industry in general. These are youth (part-time) employees, low requirement of skills, and high turnover.

The workforce of Lidl (over 9000 employees) is working in the head office, stores, and distribution centres and they are distinguished in CLA and non-CLA employees. CLA employees are all employees that are working in stores and all non-managerial jobs of distribution centres. All managerial jobs of distribution centres and the jobs on the head office can be considered as non-CLA employees. The average age within the organisation can be considered young, which is in line with the conceptual framework concerning the retail industry[2]. In the stores, there is an overhand of young part-time employees over mature full-time employees. Based on the answers given by the respondents, it can be assumed that most of these young employees are students of secondary or higher professional schools.

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[2] This research may not appoint any numbers about the average age of employees

Another question in the interview was if interviewees could describe the (ideal) Lidl employee considering personal behaviour, attitude, and characteristics. Several aspects were mentioned, which can be found in table 5. One respondent mentioned: *"Lidl employees can be described as enthusiast, multifunctional, and customer focused"*. Most interviewees answered with "Always want to be the best" since they consider this as the most important characteristic of an (ideal) Lidl employee. Besides these aspects, the respondents mention four other aspects four times or more. Two aspects, "customer focused" and "perseverance" where mentioned both five times. One of the respondents argued: *"every employee within the supermarket industry needs to be customer-focused since the customer pays our wage and he needs to have perseverance because efficiency is one of the most important aspects in our industry. I think that the majority of our employees have these characteristics"*. It sounds reasonable that every employee within the organisation of Lidl need to have these aspects.

Table 5: Behaviours, attitude, and characteristics of employees of Lidl

Workforce characteristics concerning behaviour, attitude, and characteristics	Frequency
Always want to be the best	7
Customer focused	5
Perseverance	5
Entrepreneurial	4
Be benevolent	4

Note: N = 8

The level of skills required for CLA jobs in the stores and distribution centres is considered low by the interviewees. One of the respondents mentioned: *"Requirement of skills of CLA-employees is not high. However, they do not need many skills to fulfil tasks and responsibilities in stores and distribution centres"*.

A final question about the workforce characteristics was to identify high turnover rates in the supermarket industry and the turnover rated within the organisation of Lidl. Several interviewees mentioned that this rate is high since many young part-time students leave the organisation when they finished their education. However, absolute values of turnover in the organisation are below market average[3]. As can be seen, there are some patterns between the answers of the employees of Lidl and the conceptual framework (e.g., the amount of young (part-time) employees in the organisation). Another respondent mentioned argued: *"The knowhow of employees in the distribution centres is not sufficient"*. The interviewee refers to the knowledge and skills that employees currently have. The requirements to be hired for a job in the distribution centres are low and hence results are affected by low skills and a lack of knowledge. For example, it often happens that pallets are stacked incorrect, which lead to a higher loss of products since products often fall.

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[3] This research may not appoint any numbers about turnover or absenteeism within Lidl

Comparing these results with the outcomes of the meetings held with (senior) managers and department heads during the internal project, some patterns could be identified. Although no transcripts are made of these meetings, outcomes helped to gain a rich understanding for this research. During meetings for the job design project of Lidl, participants were asked about job requirements for jobs in their departments. Managers of distribution centres explained that CLA-jobs in a distribution centre do not require much skills and that turnover is quite high. They consider job variety quite low, which can be a cause for the level of turnover. Managers of the head office argued that the skills needed for a job in of their departments (non-CLA) are much higher since there is a need for much skills and specific capacities. Besides, employees are often recruited when they just finished their education (young employees), which in turn helps managers to train new employees effectively towards 'Lidl expected behaviour' since they do have much experience in other organisations.

Besides job requirements, managers were asked to describe characteristics required for a job. They often mentioned that employees within the organisation and the retail industry need to be persistent and customer-focused. Although this can be measured on different levels, they agree that a retail employee needs to have these characteristics.

Business strategy

Before the semi-structured interviews were conducted, structured interviews were held to identify important aspects of the business strategy and the management philosophy, since directors of Lidl did not define a business strategy yet. During semi-structured interviews with the employees of Lidl, they were asked to describe the business strategy of the organisation. The conceptual framework developed several indicators to measure important aspects of a business strategy of a retail organisation. Results of both types of interviews and the documents analysis are described and compared in this section and in the section "management philosophy".

Table 6 indicates four aspects of the business strategy that are mentioned most often in the semi-structured interviews. Employees indicate that "best quality at lowest prices" describes the business strategy of Lidl most adequate. When comparing this argument with the conceptual framework it can be assumed that quality is an aspect, which is very important in this industry. As one interviewee mentioned: *Value for money always has been a central theme within Lidl*. Since Lidl aims to offer products at lowest prices as possible, it sounds reasonable that this aspect describes the business strategy most adequate. Respondents mentioned that "always want to be the best" is the most important characteristic of the workforce of Lidl. It is remarkably that they consider this also as one of the most important aspects of the business strategy. These results show a pattern between the situational factors since the workforce characteristics are influenced by the business strategy. Hence, it is reasonable to think that employees of Lidl need the same characteristics as the aspects of business strategy in order to meet the organisational goals. However, most of the respondents of the structured interviews argued that these goals are not clear defined since the strategy also is not defined.

Another aspect, which respondents of the semi-structured interviews argued to be important, is that there are many opportunities to develop by learning on the job within Lidl. This is partly a result of the decentralisation. After the decentralisation, employees in the five regions (distribution centres) are given more responsibilities in order to be closer to the market as organisation. For example, since the decentralisation, potential employees can be recruited and selected by managers in the regions. Besides, more responsibilities and autonomy stimulates employees to develop themselves since they have more responsibilities.

One interviewee mentioned: *"Young potentials can develop quickly when they have the right ambition and perseverance by learning on the job"*. For example, many management trainees promoted to management positions within two or three years after employment. The respondents mentioned that most employees within Lidl have ambition to develop.

Table 6: Aspects of the business strategy of Lidl

Aspects of the business strategy	Frequency
Best quality at lowest prices	6
Always want to be the best	5
Many opportunities for development by learning on the job	4
Strategy not officially defined	4

Note: N = 8

A last remarkable argument that respondents mentioned is that the strategy still is not officially defined. It is of great importance that the strategy will be defined in order to create a foundation for other HR practices. Unclear defined goals or strategy can cause problems in the level of organisation performance, which is the basis for assessments of performance (Porter, 1996). One of the respondents mentioned: *"We all know what we want and who we are. However, we have to define our culture and core values into a business strategy. It is impossible to develop a policy when the business strategy is not defined"*. A possible explanation for this argument is the fast growth of Lidl in the Netherlands. Since the opening of the first store in 1997, currently almost 360 stores are opened in the Netherlands. The young organisation around the stores is still developing and professionalising. Composing uniform job descriptions is one of these developments. Most criteria are parallel with the conceptual framework since the interviewees mentioned them. However, you should suspect that an organisation of this size has a clear business strategy.

Management philosophy
The last aspect of the situational requirements in job descriptions that will be elaborated is management philosophy. The conceptual framework defined three aspects in the retail industry that can describe a management philosophy: direct management style, optimisation and efficiency, and top-down decisions. Respondents were asked to describe the organisational culture. They mentioned that Lidl is an organisation with clear hierarchical direct lines. Lidl is an organisation that is closely related to Lidl Germany and hence, this

direct management style is recognisable in Lidl. Most of the respondents of the structured interviews, agree that Lidl has a direct hierarchical culture with clear norms and values.

Decisions are closer to the market after the decentralisation. However, the policy is still defined central to maintain uniformity across the organisation. This is in line with the conceptual framework since policies usually are implemented top-down in retail organisations. Direct management style can help these employees by performing their tasks and responsibilities effective. One respondent argued: *"The management style of store managers can be intimidating for (young and) new employees since they are not familiar with this management style"*. New or young employees that are not familiar with a direct management style can consider this management style as intimidating. Employees immediately receive feedback when their performance is below average and they do not receive many compliments.

Another requirement of the management philosophy elaborated in the interviews is optimisation and efficiency. Respondents mentioned that Lidl operates in a process-oriented culture with detailed manuals that describe every process in stores and the distribution centres. Manuals keep senior management in control of organisation and the forthcoming processes, since these manuals can help employees to fill the gap between knowledge and skills they need to perform a job.

One interviewee mentioned that the management philosophy could be best described as *"Maintain and increase market share by offering the best quality at lowest prices considering all aspects of corporate social responsibility"*. Another interviewee argued: *"Sustain and increase our leading position in corporate social responsibility"*. Based on their opinions, it can be assumed that Lidl is an organisation that, of course, wants to increase their market share and, while doing this, considering all aspects of CSR.

A final aspect that was asked is the way in which the management style of Lidl influences the way in which job descriptions will be composed (e.g., task- or competency-based). Most interviewees agreed that a direct management style influences job descriptions in such a way that they will be composed task-oriented.

Of course, the direct management style applied, formed the foundation for the success of Lidl in the Netherlands. However, senior management of Lidl would like to move from a directive towards a more situational management style for their non-CLA employees since this can stimulate employee development more effective as they argue.

Comparing results of the structured and semi-structured interviews with the outcomes of the meetings from the job design project some similarities can be identified. During these meetings, questions were asked about the organisational culture, management style, and the way in which that influences the approach of a job design. Participants mentioned that Lidl is an organisation that is focused on optimisation of processes in order to be efficient. A way to optimise processes, which is also mentioned by respondents of the semi-structured interviews, is to describe all processes of stores and distribution centres in manuals. Participants of the meetings told that directors want to maintain control over all processes since this can cope with the gap between knowledge and skills of their CLA-employees.

On the other hand, non-CLA employees are given more freedom and responsibility since the decentralisation towards the regions. This enhances the need for looser management control and the need for competency-based descriptions. A small number of competences or performance areas can cut across jobs and all layers of the organisation, and it creates a common language wherein employees can adapt more easily to developments and changes in the market (Kavanagh & Thite, 2009). Besides, competency-based descriptions stimulate employees to develop themselves since they have more freedom to accomplish organisational goals. More freedom to fulfil responsibilities offers employees the opportunity to adapt new skills and capacities, which helps them to develop themselves. Participants of the meetings mentioned that employee development is one of the key aspects that Lidl values. Employee development integrates individual and organisational needs, since many individuals would like to develop themselves in order to create promotion opportunities and this in turn, integrates organisational needs because employee development can stimulate retention of employees. The way in which job descriptions need to be composed and which practices can be linked towards descriptions will be elaborated in section 4.1.3.

4.1.2 Stakeholder requirements

Stakeholder interests influence HRM policy choices, which are affected by HR policies and practices. Interviews are conducted among three different stakeholder groups of Lidl, since they are considered most influential and important in this design-oriented research for Lidl.

Employees

In the interviews with the different stakeholders within the organisation, several aspects are measured about the interests of an employee for a job description. The conceptual framework defined that employees value feedback, opportunities for development, autonomy, and fair treatment as important characteristics in their jobs. Table 7 describes the interests that employees value as most important of job descriptions. The interviewees mention that job descriptions will give clarity for employees, like one respondent mentioned: *"Every employee has the right to know the exact content of their jobs. Job descriptions help us to know what we have to do"*. Currently, there are no job descriptions composed for the jobs within Lidl. When all employees in the organisation have a job description, it is transparent what the exact content of a job is. It is an objective way for employees to know what they have to do, know what is expected from them, were they can go to if they face problems concerning their tasks and responsibilities, and what they can expect from Lidl as organisation.

Table 7: Employee interests of job descriptions for Lidl

Employee interests of job descriptions	Frequency
It gives clarity, we know what we have to do	7
Know what to expect from Lidl as organisation	5
Objective measures for feedback and job appraisal	5
Opportunity to set goals and targets for self-development	4

Note: N = 8

Besides the aspect of transparency and in line with the conceptual framework, employees value opportunities for development. The interviewees mentioned that this need to be described in a job description in such a way that an employee knows what the opportunities are, which competences or behaviour is expected from them to develop. When these features are described effectively it gives an objective measure in their feedback and job appraisal, which also is valued as important by the interviewee. Employees know what is expected from them, hence they know on which performance areas or competences they will be evaluated. However, there are many opportunities for development in the organisation, but they are not adequately defined. As one interviewee argued: *"An employee has the right to know the content of his job, which needs to be the basis for other HR tools"*.

During meetings of the internal project for Lidl, managers argued that many employees do not know what the goals of their jobs are. Unclear defined goals can cause problems for organisational performance, which is the basis for assessments of performance. Besides, a lack of or unclear and ambiguous job descriptions can cause problems in performance of employees because they do not know what their goals and the organisational goals are. Another consequence of unclear goals can in the long-term result in undesired behaviour since employees of Lidl do not exactly know what is expected from them. Lidl does have a strong organisational culture that defines certain behaviour that is expected from their employees. Expected behaviour can help to define goals of a job for job descriptions. One interviewee argued: *"Lidl has a strong organisational culture, but we would like to receive more compliments from our managers when we perform our jobs adequately"*. When managers give more compliments (effectively timed), this can enhance self-confidence of employees, which can increase their performance.

Clear described goals in a job description, are a foundation for the performance areas and competences required for a job. Competency-based descriptions form the basis for objective feedback and treatment from managers and it is a measure that can help employees to develop their skills and capacities since they know what is expected from them.

Management
The conceptual framework defined manager interests in job descriptions as an effective instrument to develop a foundation for HRM policies / tools. Interviewees were asked to define the interests of a manager of Lidl in a job description. Table 8 shows the most important aspects respondents mentioned. Answers varied since members of the works council and CLA-employees answered this question too. However, they agreed that job descriptions create clarity for the organisation of Lidl, since they create uniformity and structure for all employees. As mentioned before, job descriptions form the foundation for the HRM aspects of the organisation. From this point forward, HRM structure can be developed around the jobs of employees. Three other interests that respondents argued are closely related towards the first interest described and towards the literature on HRM. First, respondents mentioned that when performance areas and competences are adequately described in a job description, it forms a basis to coach, train, and develop employees. Second, when managers

are able to develop competences of employees, they have an objective measure to rely on in job evaluation / appraisal. Third and final, as one interviewee mentioned: *"With job descriptions you form a foundation, which can be used for effective recruitment and selection since we know what we expect from an employee considering competences, behaviour, and attitude etc. In other words, we can effectively recruit the right person for the right job"*.

Table 8: Managers interests of job descriptions for Lidl

Manager interests of job descriptions	Frequency
Creates clarity for Lidl since descriptions create uniformity and structure for all employees	7
Rely on tasks and responsibilities of a description in evaluation / appraisal	5
Forms a basis to coach, train, and develop competences of employees	5
Recruit and select the right people by clear descriptions	4

Note: N = 8

Two other interviewees mentioned: *"It is of great importance that support is created among the employees and works council for the implementation of the descriptions"*. Employees within the organisation of Lidl are not familiar with job descriptions, hence support need to be created among them to understand the importance. The works council as well as the union play an important role in the implementation. Hence, this will be elaborated in the next section.

Next to the outcomes of the interviews and the conceptual framework, the outcomes of the meetings with department heads and (senior) managers gave an insight in the interests managers have in competency-based job descriptions.

In March 2012, Lidl implemented performance appraisals into their organisation. However, these appraisals cannot be based on tasks and responsibilities employees have since there are no job descriptions defined. When the first appraisals were conducted, managers received much negative feedback because employees considered their performance appraisals as subjective. Hence, outcomes of these meetings showed that the need for clear and objective job descriptions is high because it will form an objective measure for feedback and appraisal.

Department heads and (senior) managers argued that they would like to distinguish the way in which job descriptions will be composed between CLA and non-CLA employees since there is a difference in their requirements. In general, they argue that job descriptions are an effective instrument for other HR practices as recruitment, education, wage structure, promotion opportunities, discharge etc. One manager argued: *"There always will be a residual category of tasks and responsibilities that employees have. This category cannot be objectively managed by us"*. Competences in contrast to task-based descriptions can stimulate expected behaviour in the current and future role of an employee and it can cope more effective on residual tasks, since it focuses on organisation wide competences instead of tasks (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). This in turn, stimulates development of employees since employees can be effectively coached and trained.

Works council & Union

The conceptual framework presented that the main interests of the works council, a representation of employee and directors requirements and needs, can be defined as the right of approval, supervision, and implementation / application of job descriptions. Like the works council, also the union has a great interest of being involved in the process of composing and implementing job descriptions in the organisation of Lidl. Interviews identified the amount of influence on the process and implementation they would like to have. Respondents were asked to explain the interest of the works council in job descriptions. In total Lidl has a works council of 15 members, whereof four in the daily board. The most important interests are described in table 9 (three interviewees of the semi-structured interviews are a member of the works council of Lidl).

However, every interviewee was asked to develop an opinion about the interests the works council and union have. Respondents agreed that the implementation is the most important interest for the works council since support among the employees needs to be created. One interviewee mentioned that: *"Every new employee need to receive a job description by employment. Besides, all other employees need to receive a description during the next job appraisal meetings. All managers can inform, explain, and motivate employees about job descriptions face to face and most important; agreements can be composed about tasks, responsibilities, and competences"*.

This is a rational argument since it seems to be a good starting point to implement them because descriptions are objective to rely on for training and development and for evaluation.

Another interest that seems to be important for the works council is that employees know their rights and duties. Respondents argued that it is easy to forget that besides rights employees also have duties. A pitfall of job descriptions is that employees are able to hide behind it concerning their tasks and responsibilities.

Table 9: Works council interest of job descriptions of Lidl

Works council interest of job descriptions	Frequency
Implementation needs to be conducted during next job appraisals since employees are not familiar with job descriptions	6
Compose job descriptions on basis of performance areas and competences	6
Important that employees know their rights and their duties they have	4

Note: N = 8

As one interviewee mentioned: *"I think that management functions will face less difficulties to understand and see the importance than non-management functions in the stores and distribution centres"*. Hence, CLA-employees, working in stores and distribution centres as interviewees mention, need to be motivated about the importance and the opportunities of a job description. A final interest that interviewees consider as important for the works council (and managers and employees) is that descriptions are composed on basis of performance

areas and competences. This is in line with literature since other HR practices (e.g., education and wage structure) can be linked effectively towards competency-based job descriptions.

During the internal job design project for Lidl no members of the works council are met. However, on basis of the meetings and discussions with department heads and (senior) managers, some assumptions are developed about the interests of the works council and the union on job descriptions. One of the most important aspects discussed is the way in which support will be created among the employees during the implementation of job descriptions. A pitfall is that during the implementation no support is created, which can result in misuse or unexpected behaviour of employees since they do not understand or see the importance and opportunities of a job description.

Assumptions can be made that the works council, the union, the directors, and employees of Lidl, value integrating organisational and individual needs into a job description. As discussed in the sections before, employees and managers think that descriptions based on performance areas and competences are most applicable for Lidl. Since the works council represents these employee groups, it can be assumed that they also agree with these type descriptions. Organisational and individual needs can be integrated by making a job relevant. Besides employee development, the goal of a job can also integrate both needs. When the goal of a job is clear defined in a description, employees can consider their jobs as relevant to accomplish organisational goals. To come back to the creation of support among employees for job descriptions, integrating organisational and individual needs will enhance the probability that employees see the importance and opportunities of descriptions based on performance areas and competences.

4.1.3 Combining situational and stakeholder requirements of Lidl

Section 4.1.3 elaborates the results of the way in which job descriptions have to be composed and which other HR practices can be matched with them. Stakeholder and situational requirements that influence this process are elaborated in the previous sections. Interviewees were asked in which way job descriptions need to be composed and which aspects are important to consider during this process. The conceptual framework defined that a balance between some specific performance areas and competences is probably most effective since performance areas / core tasks form the foundation for a job description in current and future role and for other HR practices (Ruggeberg, 2007).

4.1.3.1 Work systems: job descriptions based on performance areas and/or competences?

Interviewees were asked which type of job descriptions (part of a work system) they consider as most effective and applicable for Lidl. Respondents agree that Lidl needs to compose and implement job descriptions that are based on several performance areas (tasks) and competences for non-CLA employees. Besides, they agree that descriptions based on performance areas need to be composed for CLA employees, which leads to a dual HRM system. Respondents argue that performance areas need to be the basis for every description since this specifies department specific responsibilities and because the foundation of Lidl's success is based on specific described tasks and responsibilities.

When Lidl opened their first store in the Netherlands, which was in 1997, the German work culture and processes, (tight management control) formed the basis for the work culture and processes in the Netherlands. For example, offering the highest quality of products against the lowest prices. Hence, respondents argue that job descriptions need to have several department specific performance areas. One respondent argued: *"When descriptions are composed too generally (e.g., only competency-based), the probability increases that CLA employees of the stores and distribution centres will have too much freedom in their jobs. This can result in ineffective process outcomes"*. Not all CLA employees want to have more responsibility or autonomy in their jobs because too much freedom can result in ineffective process outcomes since there can be a gap between the competences and the knowledge and skills of CLA employees. On the other hand, as respondents agreed that job descriptions for non-CLA employees also need to have competences because this forms the foundation for several HR practices and outcomes since competences describe the core values and strategy of Lidl as organisation. Both arguments have some patterns with the conceptual framework because employees that do not have the skills and capacities to have too much freedom in their jobs, process outcomes can be ineffective since they do not know what they exactly have to do (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Like one interviewee argued: *"Since Lidl works with many young and unskilled employees in the stores and distribution centres, detailed task-based descriptions need to be composed for them to maintain management control"*. Hence, task-based descriptions can keep senior management more in control (Hackman & Lawler, 1971).

Based on the results of the structured interviews, respondents think that the organisational goals are not clear defined. A lack of these goals can cause problems in performance, behaviour, and performance measurement. Goals can help to develop competences and competences in turn, try to help employees to understand the norms, values, and goals of the organisation (common language), in order to influence employee behaviour towards a day-to-day strategic aligned behaviour (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Besides, competency descriptions have the advantage of enhancing high commitment of employees since the right employees can be attracted and be trained to develop themselves etc. (Beer et al., 1984; HayGroup, 2011).

Other aspects respondents mentioned to be important, parallel to the conceptual framework, is that task-based descriptions can lead to conflicts or ambiguities between employees and managers since tasks and responsibilities of non-CLA jobs frequently change within Lidl. They mention that the essence of a job will be disregarded since descriptions constantly have to be changed. Singh, (2008) argues that job descriptions composed using the traditional job analysis approach (task-oriented), need to be stable over time in order to be effective. Hence, respondents mentioned that constant change of task-oriented job descriptions would result in a loss of the essence of a job. One respondent argued: *"Keeping a description too detailed, will result in constant change of a description because they do not match with reality anymore. In my opinion, this will enhance unnecessary creation of work and, descriptions will lose the essence of a job and the link towards organisational strategy"*. Hence, patterns can be

discovered that identify the need for composing and applying descriptions based on performance areas and competences in the organisation of Lidl. On the other hand, jobs in the stores and distribution centres will not change radically over time. For example, cash-register procedures will change frequently, but the essence of cash register transactions will remain stable over time. The procedures of an order picker in a distribution centre will change over time, but these will only by minor changes and the essence of the job will remain stable. Hence, job descriptions for CLA-jobs can be composed by performance areas since jobs are quite stable. This counter argument strengthens the need to distinguish that way in which job descriptions need to be composed for CLA and non-CLA employees.

Based on the results of the meetings conducted with department heads and (senior) mangers of Lidl (internal project), some important aspects can be identified in line with the results of the interviews and the conceptual framework. They also identified the need to distinguish that way in which job descriptions need to be composed for CLA and non-CLA employees since, in their opinion, requirements, knowledge, and skills differ between these employees. Descriptions based on performance areas can close the gap between the lower level of knowledge and skills CLA employees have. Most non-CLA jobs within Lidl are constantly changing to adapt trends and developments in the retail industry. Too detailed descriptions cause many problems to reflect reality, whereas the essence of a job can be described in 5 till 8 performance areas and / or competences. It is essential that jobs reflect reality in order to contribute towards the strategy and achieving the goals.

Currently, HRM managers and other (senior) managers of the organisation have meetings with the directors of Lidl to define the core values of the organisation, what do we expect from our employees and ourselves concerning behaviour, attitudes, and responsibilities? One aspect that came forward is employee development and how this can be enhanced. Since other HR practices are also associated with employee development, Lidl directors started with the project: *"on the road to good employment"*, wherein employee development is the key value. These meetings resulted in the decentralisation of several decisions, which gave employees more freedom and autonomy in their jobs.
Freedom and autonomy enhances the shift from a directive to a more situational management style. In the contrary, task-based descriptions are in line with an organisation with a tall hierarchy where all decisions are made by the board of directors (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Hence, directors of Lidl officially requested to deviate from the international structure from Lidl Germany, to compose job descriptions based on performance areas and competences. When permission is honoured, coaching and training employees based on competences can stimulate employee development. As mentioned before, competences help employees to understand norms, values, and goals of the organisation in order to develop themselves and the organisation (Sanchez & Levine, 2009).

4.1.3.2 HR practices

The next question interviewees were asked is which other HR practices can be linked towards these types of job descriptions. Although respondents came with varying answers, some patterns could be discovered hence, table 10 summarises answers that could be clustered towards several aspect. An aspect that respondents value is that competency and/or performance area based descriptions, can help to define what type of behaviour and attitude is expected from an (new) employee. As one respondent mentioned: *"First, new employees can be recruited and selected on basis of several performance areas and/or competences with a certain type of expected behaviour and attitudes. This increases the probability that the right people are attracted. Second, employees can be coached and trained to develop themselves when they have competency based job descriptions"*. A dual HRM system with clear and unambiguous descriptions based on competences and performance areas for CLA employees and performance areas and competences for non-CLA employees can help Lidl managers to select the right people. This because these descriptions describe which behaviour, attitude, and character a specific job requires (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). For example, a combination of performance areas and core competences defines an objective and clear image of the type of non-CLA employee that is required for a job, which enhances recruiting and selecting the right people.

Table 10: Forthcoming HR practices of job descriptions

Results of	Frequency
Rely on performance areas and/or competences in job appraisals	6
Competency based descriptions define what type of behaviour and attitude is expected from an (new) employee	5
Competences form a foundation for effective employee development	5
Descriptions help to develop a wage structure around the jobs	5
Makes a job relevant towards the organisational goals	4

Note: N = 8

The results of the interviews show that respondents argue that descriptions form a foundation for effective employee development since they think every employee needs feedback and education in order to develop him or herself. Education can be linked to the competences and/or performance areas a job requires, which stimulates employee development. In line with the conceptual framework, opportunities for development and career development are two of the key aspects that employees value in their jobs (Chapman et al., 2005; Walsh & Taylor, 2007). As one of the respondents mentioned: *"Wage is an important factor for employees, however clear career paths and opportunities for development and promotion is an aspect, which they consider to be more important"*.

Once the right people are recruited and selected, they can be trained and coached on the performance areas and/or competences described in their job descriptions. An aspect that respondents consider important is that the job descriptions are a foundation for performance / job appraisals. Managers have an objective measure on which they can train, coach, and in the

end, evaluate their employees on. Besides, employees have an objective measure since they know what (level of) competences and/or performance areas are expected for a certain job and on which level they are currently. On basis of these results, a development / career plan can be developed in collaboration with their managers, which also is an objective and transparent measure for performance appraisals.

Another aspect that respondents consider important is that formal descriptions can form an official reward system for Lidl. Performance areas as well as competences describe the knowledge, capacities, and behaviour a job needs, which problems a job (CLA or non-CLA) need to solve, and which level of freedom / autonomy a specific job has (HayGroup, 2011). A reward system based on competences is an objective benchmark for comparing and evaluating jobs on their weight. As one respondent mentioned: *"Currently, we have no official reward system and hence, jobs are evaluated and rewarded on basis of thin air"*. Besides the need for clarity for all employees of Lidl (CLA and non-CLA), it enhances the need for an official and objective system since it can reduce the amount of jobs that is evaluated too high, which in the end can reduce wages. Finally, it can reduce the amount of different jobs within Lidl since there are currently 170 different jobs in the organisation. 170 different jobs are hard to compare and evaluate on weight because many jobs have different requirements. Hence, employees argue that descriptions based on performance areas and/or competences can reduce this amount of jobs into job families and help to form an official reward system.

Based on the results of the interviews, 'relevance' of a job description is another important HR practice. As mentioned in the sections above, clear descriptions can be matched with effective education and development of non-CLA employees, which integrates organisational and individual needs. Besides, clear descriptions might help CLA employees to increase job security since clear and relevant descriptions, exactly clarify what employees have to do, which can enhance effectiveness. Next to the result of the semi-structured interviews, the outcomes of the meeting with department heads and (senior) managers during the internal job design project pointed out that Lidl is concerned with attracting and retaining the right mix of employees. The organisation can coach and train their employees on basis of the job description, which will lead to effective performance of employees. On the other hand, there is evidence that most employees value development, opportunities, or job security for promotion above rewards (Walsh & Taylor, 2007). Job descriptions based on performance areas and/or competences stimulate management of Lidl to describe opportunities for employee development and clear career paths in relation towards the organisational goals and it offers CLA employees more job security since they can be more effective.

Outcomes of the meetings from the internal project, identified that organisational goals need to be matched towards the specific jobs within Lidl. The competences in a job description need to be defined in such a way that it contributes directly towards organisational goals. This in turn, can enhance the commitment of employees to their job since they consider their jobs as influential in relation towards the organisational goals (employee influence). In line with the conceptual framework, employee influence is an important aspect of a HRM policy that

needs to be considered in the development of a work system; in this study: job descriptions (Beer et al., 1984).

As the requirements of CLA and non-CLA employees differ, a dual HRM system with performance area based descriptions for CLA employees and competency and performance areas based descriptions for non-CLA employees seems most effective for Lidl. These two approaches lead to one general conceptual model, wherein general stakeholder requirements and characteristics of a work system are defined. Figure 5 depicts the conceptual model of chapter 2 after combining situational and stakeholder requirements of non-CLA and CLA employees of Lidl in job descriptions. The model will serve as foundation for the two approaches and will be supplemented with several characteristics in the design of the job descriptions (chapter 5).

Figure 5: Conceptual model after combining stakeholder and situational requirements of Lidl

Stakeholder Interests:
Management:
Effective instrument to develop a foundation for HRM policies/tools
Employees:
Feedback
Fair treatment
Works council:
Right of approval and supervision on implementation and application
Union:
Involvement in the process

Situational factors:
Workforce characteristics:
Youth (part-time) employees
Low requirement of skills
High turnover
Business strategy and conditions:
Decentralisation
Drive for quality
Employee development
Management philosophy:
Direct management style
Optimisation and efficiency
Top-down decisions

Work System

Performance area based job descriptions:
- Effective recruitment and selection
- Link towards education and training
- Foundation for performance appraisals
- Pay structure

HR Outcomes

- Increase satisfaction and motivation
- Increase organisational attractiveness
- Commitment by integrating organisational and individual needs
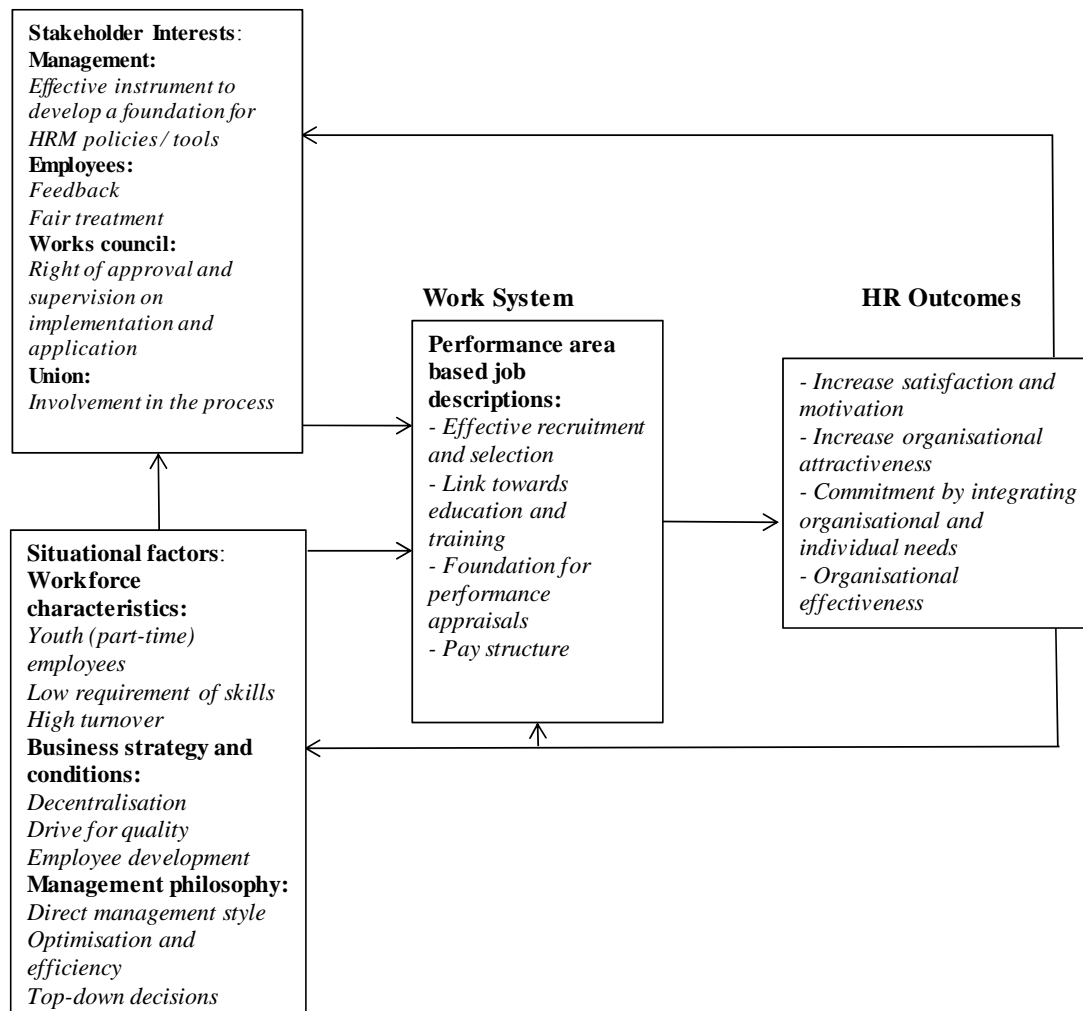*- Organisational effectiveness*

Table 11 summarises the differences in requirements between CLA and non-CLA employees of Lidl. Many CLA employees do not have the willingness or capacities to have more responsibilities and autonomy in their jobs. Hence, they prefer requirements in their jobs as job security over autonomy and opportunities for develop. There are many employees working in stores and distribution centres (CLA) that have less skills and knowledge than management jobs (distribution centres) and employees working at the head office of Lidl. There is a big difference between the skills and capacities of these employee groups and hence too much freedom for the lower skilled employees can result in ineffective process outcomes, which contrasts with efficiency and control that directors of Lidl demand.

Table 11: Differences in requirements between CLA and non-CLA employees

Differences in Requirements	
CLA employees	**Non-CLA employees**
High value to job security	Little value to job security
Little value to opportunities for development	High value to opportunities for development
Little value to autonomy	High value to autonomy
Low capacities and skills to have freedom and responsibility	High capacities and skills to have freedom and responsibility

However, there are CLA employees that do have the willingness to have more freedom and responsibilities since they would like to have opportunities for development. For example, there are young store employees that would like to have opportunities to promote assistant store manager or store manager. In essence, it is impossible to conclude that all CLA employees prefer job security in relation to opportunities for development and autonomy. Nevertheless, in general it can be assumed that when an equal HRM system will be developed and implemented, conflicts will arise since CLA and non-CLA employees operate at different levels of knowledge, skills, and capacities.

5 Design of job descriptions for Lidl

This chapter elaborates the approach of composing job descriptions, which is used during the internal job design project. Hereafter, based on the conceptual background and all the situational and stakeholder requirements, a desired approach of composing job descriptions is discussed together with a visualisation of a job description.

5.1 Current approach of composing job descriptions

During the internal job design project (March – October 2012), job descriptions are composed for 170 different jobs within Lidl. Approximately 50 individual meetings with department heads and (senior) managers of Lidl were conducted. In these meetings, information is acquired about all tasks and responsibilities within the specific departments. At the start of this project, directors of Lidl required an approach that is quite similar to the task-based approach (TJA) as a first step in the development of a HRM system. However, task-based job descriptions are only applicable on jobs that remain stable over time and directors wanted to make a shift from a directive towards a more situational management style. Besides as individuals continue to learn, develop, and progress in his performance, there need to be some ways to facilitate this. Most task-based systems are not facilitating this (Lawler, 1993) and hence it was decided to translate the tasks, activities, and responsibilities off all jobs into sustainable performance areas.

As mentioned before, most jobs (CLA) within Lidl are stable over time (e.g., store employee or order picker), individuals can be selected and trained to do jobs for a number of years, and too much freedom in jobs can result in lower performance of employees because of a gap between skills and knowledge. Most managerial jobs and jobs at the head office (non-CLA) are changing constantly; hence, it is decided to compose job descriptions based on performance areas since these can be used for jobs wherein loose and tight control is required.

Because there were no descriptions available in the organisation, in advance of all meetings the different jobs within the organisation were identified. Besides, all department heads and (senior) managers were asked to distinguish all responsibilities and tasks in their departments (together with their employees) before the meeting started. During the meetings, these characteristics were discussed in order to rule out ambiguities about the jobs. Together with the managers, tasks and responsibilities were translated into performance areas. Hereafter, all descriptions are composed based on these performance areas and provided with feedback by managers. Employees of Lidl are not familiar with job descriptions and hence an adequate approach to implement the descriptions needed to be developed. In consultation with the financial director and the HRM manager, it is decided to start implementing the descriptions in March 2013. Employees will be informed and motivated in advance of the start in order to create support among the different stakeholders and to cope with misperceptions and misunderstandings. Hence, all employees will exactly know what they have to do, how they are performing now, and what is desired. As one respondent mentioned during the interviews: *"When employees know what they have to do, what is expected from them, and most*

important, which opportunities to develop and promotion they have, they probably will be motivated to accomplish their tasks and responsibilities and they will be satisfied about Lidl as employer".

Half a year later, the descriptions can be evaluated among and together with employees. From this point forward, managers can provide their employees with objective feedback every half year in order to make, for example, development or career plans.

5.2 Desired approach of composing job descriptions

Lidl made a great step in the development of a HRM system with composing job descriptions based on performance areas. However, as the requirements in chapter 4 showed, Lidl is an organisation that *"always wants to be the best"* by focusing on the best quality at lowest prices, customers, and employee development. Many practitioners agree that competency-based descriptions can help organisations to become even more customer-focused (Peters, 1992). Job descriptions based on competences create clarity by creating structure and transparency for all employees since they know what they have to do, what is expected from them, and which opportunities for development and promotion they have etc. Besides, stakeholder and situational requirements of Lidl show that job descriptions need to form the basis for other HR practices as recruitment, development, reward systems, and performance appraisals. Based on the conceptual framework (chapter 2) and the situational and stakeholder requirements of Lidl (chapter 4), it seems appropriate to develop a dual HRM system in order to distinguish CLA and non-CLA employees from each other in the design of job descriptions.

5.2.1 Design job descriptions for CLA employees

There are many employees working in stores and distribution centres (CLA) that have less skills and knowledge than management jobs (distribution centres) and employees working at the head office of Lidl. There is a big difference between the skills and capacities of these employee groups and hence too much freedom for the lower skilled employees can result in ineffective process outcomes, which contrasts with efficiency and control that directors of Lidl demand. As one interviewee mentioned: *"Many employees that are working in distribution centres such as order pickers, do not want to have more responsibility or autonomy in their jobs. They prefer job security over development and autonomy".* In line with the theory of Hackman & Oldham, (1976), only employees who have the need for more responsibility, autonomy, and achievement will probably be positively affected by redesigning a work system. As mentioned in paragraph 5.1, jobs as order picker and store employees (CLA employees) are considered stable over time, because there only are some minor changes in processes over time. All employees working in the stores and the non-managerial jobs at the distribution centres can be considered as CLA jobs. The performance area-based approach, as elaborated in section 5.1, which will be implemented in the organisational design of Lidl, will give CLA employees clarity and support when performing their jobs. On the other hand, it keeps (senior) management in control to maintain efficiency and control in the operating processes in the stores and distribution centres.

5.2.2 Design job descriptions for non-CLA employees

Non-CLA employees (head office and managerial jobs at the distribution centres), prefer job descriptions based on performance areas and competences since this enhances several HR practices and outcomes. Outcomes of the meetings with department heads and (senior) management (internal project) showed that one of the cornerstones of the project *"on the road to good employment"* (internal project of Lidl), is employee development. As mentioned before, competences can enhance employee development, which can result in more motivated and satisfied employees since they have clarity around their jobs. Besides, increased employee satisfaction might result in employees who will be positive and enthusiastic about Lidl as employer to their friends, family and other people outside the organisation.

Respondents of the semi-structured interviews agree that HR practices stimulate the project *"on the road to good employment"*. Clear performance areas and competences can be linked towards effective education to stimulate employee development, wherein employees can develop their competences. Within the context of *"on the road to good employment"*, individual and organisational needs will be integrated. Hence, this stimulates employee satisfaction since employees perceive that they are being taken seriously. Besides, it can enhance effective recruitment and selection (organisational attractiveness) when descriptions are clear and transparent. For potential employees it is important that they have a fit with Lidl employees.

Another HR outcome that respondents value, is that effective recruitment, effective education, objective performance appraisals, career development, and an official reward system will create more effective work processes, which can enhance commitment of employees towards the organisational goals. In line with the conceptual framework, Beer at al., (1984) acknowledges that broadly defined jobs (e.g., competency-based) focuses on human commitment by integrating individual and organisational needs. Based on the discussions in the meetings with the department heads and (senior) managers during the internal job design project, they consider that the forthcoming HR practices of job descriptions will create higher congruence between these HR practices because they all are closely associated with each other. Clear job descriptions, will help recruiters to effectively recruit and select employees, it gives managers objective measures to train, coach, and evaluate employees, and they are a basis to form an official reward system around the jobs within Lidl. Besides, job descriptions based on performance areas and competences, guide employees to develop themselves and it offers clarity about promotion opportunities and career paths. Employees have an objective measure for their job appraisals and it enhances the likelihood that employees perceive their jobs as important since employee development integrates organisational and individual needs of Lidl.

Effective job descriptions and the discussed HR practices lead to increased adaptability, which is essential for survival of the business strategy of Lidl (Beer et al., 1984). Adaptability can increase organisational effectiveness since that they are able to be flexible and responsive to the retail market and social environment.

The development of the competences and job descriptions can be developed in a reasonable period of three months, since competency requirements can be arrived by analysing the performance areas and tasks of the jobs. In line with the conceptual framework of chapter 2, the first step in the design of job descriptions based on competences and performance areas is the creation of a working team (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006). A working team of directors, (senior) managers, employees, and the works council (stakeholders), which represent all departments and layers in the organisation need to define five or six core competences for a broad range of jobs within Lidl (all non-CLA employees). Core competences can be defined as Lidl specific skills and cognitive traits that give a shared organisational meaning and goal to all jobs within Lidl (Bogner & Howard, 1994). Hereafter, they can be identified and this meeting have to result in five or six core competences that have a shared organisational meaning and goal in relation to the strategy and culture of Lidl, which can be used in the development of job descriptions for non-CLA employees. When developing these competences, four elements are important: technology, human beings, organisation, and culture to consider (Drejer, 2000). Technology can be seen as the tool that employees use to do activities that are related to competence. Human beings, the most important part of a competence, are the focal point in the development of competences and without them, nothing will happen. Organisation refers to the management style of Lidl under which the employees function. Hence, this is an important aspect since it influences the way in which employees operate. Finally, the corporate culture of Lidl influences employees via shared values and norms. When these competences are developed, the working team needs to determine a performance matrix in order to define performance for the non-CLA jobs using the model of Dreyfus & Dreyfus, (1986). The model of Dreyfus & Dreyfus, (1986) is a matrix that ranked performance on a scale from novice, advanced beginner, proficient, expert, till world class. Each measure correlates with a scale from 1 till 5 in order to measure improvements with each scale and to form an official reward system (table 12).

Currently, there are 170 different jobs within Lidl and hence, this amount has to be reduced by clustering jobs into job families. For example, it is impossible to compose and compare 170 different jobs in a job evaluation. It is recommended that Lidl will use their organisation charts for clustering jobs into job families. These charts are designed on a basis of six scales (MA, GrL, Al, Bl, GF, GL), from employee (MA) until director (GL). These scales can reduce 170 jobs into six job families.

After defining core competences and clustering jobs into job families, working groups of multiple stakeholders per department have to be appointed in order to compose job descriptions for the jobs in their department. The foundation of these descriptions will be based on the core competences. Next to these competences, five performance areas need to be defined per department, in order to cover the content-specific part of a job since these performance areas can help managers to assess and employees to develop department specific knowledge and capabilities. However, during the internal job design project, performance areas for all jobs, including non-CLA jobs, are already identified. Hence, these working groups can use these performance areas together with the core competences to compose the

descriptions. Hereafter, the job descriptions need to be exchanged with other working groups in order to compare them and to examine the internal consistency of all descriptions. Are the descriptions consistent with each other, strategy, and goals? Outcomes of these assessments of the descriptions need to be adjusted. Besides, job descriptions have to be evaluated in terms of their weight, such as knowledge and skills a job requires, or how much autonomy a job has. Hence, jobs need to be evaluated to each other in order to develop a formal reward system. For example, the competences and performance areas can be assessed using the well-known levels of competence development, which is elaborated by Dreyfus & Dreyfus, (1986) (table 12). This gives managers and employees an effective measure for performance, development, and eventually a reward system. Employees will grow in wage when they reach a certain amount of points (level of competence). Finally, when employees perform expert or world class in specific areas, it provides managers an objective measure for promotion opportunities.

Table 12: Assessment and levels of competence development and performance areas, adapted from Dreyfus & Dreyfus, (1986)

Novice	Advanced Beginner	Proficient	Expert	World Class
1 till 1,5	>1,5 till 2,5	>2,5 till 3,5	>3,5 till 4,3	>4,3 till 5
Increase of wage within a scale				
-	0,5 p	1 p	1,5 p	2p

A last step in the process of composing job descriptions and the development of a reward system is that a working group of several stakeholders, such as the works council, employees, union, and (senior) managers need to be appointed, to examine the acceptance and approval among the employees within the organisation of Lidl. First, a mailing needs to be developed for all non-CLA employees (approximately 600) to inform them about the change in their job descriptions and to invite them for a presentation about the goal and importance of performance area- and competency-based job descriptions. Since it is hard to organise a meeting for all 600 non-CLA employees together, these meetings will be divided in six presentations. During this presentation, the importance of the shift to a more competency-based approach will be elaborated. Besides, the goals and the forthcoming benefits of the five or six core competences will be discussed. Since job descriptions that are based on performance are already implemented, there will be no need to discuss this during the presentation. After considering objections, feedback and differences in perception of these meetings, the job descriptions can be implemented. Appendix C presents a visualisation of a job descriptions based on performance areas and competences.

This competency and performance area spectrum helps Lidl to combine employees, jobs, rewards, and structure perfectly with each other.

Finally, when job descriptions are implemented in the organisation of Lidl, it is of great importance that, in line with the results of this study, other HR practices will be matched to job descriptions. They form the foundation for effective recruitment and selection in order to select the right employees. Job descriptions can help to provide potential applicants with the right information and requirements of a job they want to apply to, in order to reduce

recruitment costs since the probability that unqualified employees will apply decreases, because only people will apply that have a fit with a description (Uggerslev, Fassina, & Kraichy, 2012). Job evaluation ranked jobs in terms of their weight and hence, Lidl needs to create an objective measure to develop career paths and opportunities for development. As mentioned before, this in turn provides managers and employees a measure for assessment since they know what is expected from them.

5.3 Implications of competency- and performance area-based job descriptions

Any HRM system should be integrated so as to attract and hold the right mix of employees and to establish the type of working relationship between these people that will carry out the organisation's strategic plan, once that plan has taken into account any relevant human resource constraints and opportunities (Beer et al., 1984). However, there are many practical implications, which managers need to consider such as, subjectivity, employee perception, and willingness of employees. The challenge is to develop competences that can be implemented organisation wide.

When job descriptions are composed based on competences and performance areas A, B, and C, it is of great importance that descriptions have a residual category of tasks and responsibilities since there always will be additional tasks that employees perform. Nevertheless, this always will be a subjective measure in performance appraisals. Job descriptions based on competences and performance areas generally describe the goals of a job. When descriptions are too detailed composed, this will hinder freedom and autonomy of non-CLA employees, which are important measures for employee development. When job descriptions are implemented for Lidl this will provide managers and employees a more objective measure for performance appraisal. In essence, Lidl needs to consider the subjective measures that managers will have on employee performance. This implies that Lidl needs to develop a HRM policy on job appraisals, which eliminates subjective measures as much as possible, which can enhance coaching and training by managers to stimulate employee development.

A second important implication that Lidl needs to consider, are the needs and perceptions of their employees (Non-CLA and CLA) since these can deviate from organisational needs. The aim of this research is to provide Lidl with an advice about the design and implementation of job descriptions and the forthcoming HR practices / outcomes in a way that leads to desired employee attitudes, behaviour, and performance. The implication is that it is not just the HR practices themselves, but rather also manager and employee perceptions of those HR practices that are important for achieving desired organisational outcomes. It is important that Lidl will assess these HR practices and outcomes to identify valuable information about the accomplishment of organisational goals. One way to identify this information is to focus on managerial and employee assessments of HR practices and their fit with the organisational goals. This enhances the probability that these employee groups will identify misfits between job descriptions and other HR practices and / or organisational goals.

Since perceptions of employees can deviate from each other, it is of great importance that the implementation of job descriptions will be conducted effectively in order to create mutual understanding among employees. Open communication in an unambiguous manner will help Lidl to implement the descriptions in the organisational design. Open communication between directors, managers, the works council, and employees will help to create mutual understanding. Managers need to inform, motivate, and stimulate their employees about the importance and meaning of a job description. Another benefit is that this dialogue between managers and employees will help to cope with misperceptions or misunderstandings since these two aspects can reduce employee satisfaction and motivation (Martinko & Gardner, 1987). The implementation is also a starting point for other HR practices as recruitment and selection, employee development, reward system etc. The design and implementation of descriptions based on competences and performance areas is elaborated in section 5.2.2.

A final implication is the willingness of employees to develop. The conceptual framework already identified that not all employees (CLA and non-CLA) have the willingness to develop within an organisation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Some employees do not want to have more responsibility and autonomy in their jobs because of a lack of ambition, skills and capacities, or age in order to develop themselves. This study identified that one of the cornerstones of Lidl's goals is employee development, wherein ambitious employees have many opportunities to develop and promote within the organisation of Lidl. However, most development policies of organisations are aimed at young potentials, since these policies focus on learning, rewards, and promotion (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Older employees or employees that lack ambition, skills, or capacities might value job security as more important. It is important that Lidl will consider these needs when implementing job descriptions and in the development of other HR practices.

6. Conclusion

The last section of this design-oriented research for Lidl includes the conclusion, limitations, and future research. The aim of this research is to provide insights into the most effective way to compose and apply job descriptions for Lidl. Hence, this chapter will provide an answer to the research question and sub questions formulated: *What is the most effective way to compose and implement job descriptions into the organisational design of Lidl?*

6.1 Conclusion

This section will give an answer to sub questions and finally to the research question. This study started with identifying what job descriptions are. Job descriptions can be defined as the working contract between the employee and the employer that is a part of a HRM system and they can consist of several different aspects: task-based and competency-based. Task-based descriptions are usually based on tasks, activities, responsibilities, and work procedures that employees have to accomplish, which can be considered as a part of a traditional work system. Competency descriptions are usually based on knowledge, skills, abilities, and competences, which can be considered as a part of a high-commitment work system. Competency-based job descriptions are conceived as an alternative and / or supplement of task-based descriptions. Capabilities and the development of those capabilities is usually the primary focus of organisations that compose competency-based job descriptions.

The Harvard analytical framework for HRM has proved to be an effective framework to identify in which way a job description needs to be composed. The stakeholder interests and situational factors (requirements) of Lidl influence the content of a description (work system), whereas job descriptions influence several other HR practices and outcomes. Before comparing both approaches in order to find out which approach fits, which type of organisation, the requirements of situational factors and stakeholder interests in a retail organisation are elaborated.

Since (retail) organisations are concerned with attracting, developing, and retaining skilled employees, job descriptions can play an important role in this process. A consequence of a lack of or unclear job descriptions can be that (new) employees do not know what is expected from them. This can result in undesired attitudes or behaviour, which can lead to organisational ineffectiveness and turnover. Unambiguous and objective job descriptions can enhance effective recruitment and selection, which can reduce costs since recruitment and selection processes still are concerned as one of the main costs for (retail) organisations. Job descriptions can form the foundation for other HR practices as recruitment and selection.

Situational factors in the retail industry that are most influential in the process of composing and implementing job descriptions are workforce characteristics, business strategy, and management philosophy. Most influential stakeholders in this process are employees, management, work council, and the union.

The comparison between the requirements of stakeholders and situational factors and the task- and competency-based approach identified that competency modelling should, in contrast to traditional job analysis, be able to adapt to developments and the changing environment since

they create an occupational common language that can easily be adjusted, by developing evolutionary and dynamic competences needed to perform a job. However, for jobs which are stable over time, task- or sustainable performance areas-based descriptions can also be composed.

Structured interviews and semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to examine situational and stakeholder requirements, forthcoming HR practices, and outcomes that influence the way in which job descriptions have to be composed and implemented in the organisation of Lidl. Results showed that there is a difference in requirements between CLA and non-CLA employees.

As the requirements of CLA and non-CLA employees differ, a dual HRM system with performance area based descriptions for CLA employees and competency and performance areas based descriptions for non-CLA employees seems most effective for Lidl.

Non-CLA employees have the need for descriptions based on performance areas and competences since too detailed descriptions do not reflect reality anymore. Most jobs within Lidl are constantly changing to adapt trends and developments in the retail industry. Too detailed descriptions cause many problems to reflect reality, whereas the essence of a job can be described in 5 till 8 performance areas / competences. It is essential that jobs reflect reality in order to contribute towards the strategy and achieving the goals. On the other hand, some jobs within Lidl are stable over time (e.g., store employee or order picker, which can be considered as CLA-employees), individuals can be selected and trained to do jobs for a number of years, and too much freedom in jobs can result in lower performance of employees because of a gap between skills and knowledge. Since most managerial jobs and jobs at the head office (non-CLA employees) are changing constantly; hence, it is recommended to compose job descriptions based on performance areas for CLA-employees and competence- and performance area-based descriptions for non-CLA employees. In essence, Lidl directors identified employee development as one of the most important aspects of their strategy, which also enhances the need for competency and performance area based descriptions for non-CLA employees.

Many CLA employees do not have the willingness or capacities to have more responsibilities and autonomy in their jobs. Hence, they prefer requirements in their jobs as job security over autonomy and opportunities for develop. There are many employees working in stores and distribution centres (CLA) that have less skills and knowledge than management jobs (distribution centres) and employees working at the head office of Lidl. There is a big difference between the skills and capacities of these employee groups and hence too much freedom for the lower skilled employees can result in ineffective process outcomes, which contrasts with efficiency and control that directors of Lidl demand.

However, there are CLA employees that do have the willingness to have more freedom and responsibilities since they would like to have opportunities for development. For example, there are young store employees that would like to have opportunities to promote assistant store manager or store manager. In essence, it is impossible to conclude that all CLA employees prefer job security in relation to opportunities for development and autonomy.

Nevertheless, in general it can be assumed that when an equal HRM system will be developed and implemented, conflicts will arise since CLA and non-CLA employees operate at different levels of knowledge, skills, and capacities.

Results showed that job descriptions could form the foundation for other HR practices as recruitment and selection, employee development, reward system, and performance appraisals. Besides, since Lidl is concerned with these HR practices, attracting and retaining the right mix of employees by employee development is a core value, which can increase several HR outcomes as satisfaction and motivation, organisational attractiveness, commitment, and organisational effectiveness.

A working group of several stakeholders need to develop core competences for Lidl, while considering technology, human beings, organisation, and culture. After defining core competences, all 170 jobs within the organisation can be clustered into six job families (MA, GrL, Al, Bl, GF, GL). Hereafter, working groups of multiple stakeholders per department have to be appointed in order to compose job descriptions for the jobs in their department. The foundation of these descriptions will be based on the core competences. Next to these competences, five performance areas need to be defined per department, in order to cover the content-specific part of a job since these performance areas can help managers to assess and employees to develop department specific knowledge and capabilities. The working groups need to assess and adjust all descriptions on consistency (e.g., strategy, goals, weight in relation to each other etc.). Before implementing, all non-CLA employees will be informed and motivated via a mailing and presentation. After considering objections, feedback and differences in perception of these meetings, the job descriptions can be implemented.

The most effective way of composing and implementing job descriptions is different in every organisation, since every organisation has its own unique values and strategy. There is no best way of composing and implementing job descriptions that can cope with all organisational constraints. One of the problems in the process of composing job descriptions is that individuals need to be hired when they fit a job description and not the other way around. The last section of this study will provide Lidl with some recommendations and future research.

6.2 Limitations

As with any research, the results of this research must be viewed in the context of its limitations. While designing and conducting this study, several decisions had to be made, that created some limitations.

First, the number of respondents creates a limitation towards the reliability of this design-oriented research. This study interviewed eight employees of Lidl for primary data collection (semi-structured interviews). These respondents were (senior) managers (3), employees (2), and members of the work council (3). Eight respondents of over 9000 employees within the organisation of Lidl is a low sample. Hence, it is difficult to draw reasonable assumptions on basis of the results.

Nevertheless, to increase the reliability for Lidl of the research, several steps are taken. First, the respondents are carefully selected on basis of their knowledge and experience about Lidl and about their knowledge on job design projects. Only the employees are chosen on behalf of a recommendation of another respondent and thus only this respondent may be in question. Second, to increase the reliability structured interviews are conducted among (senior) managers of the head office to identify key aspects of the business strategy. Finally, the researcher was involved in an internal job design project for Lidl. During this project, the researcher spoke with 50 (senior) manager and department heads, in order to discuss about the culture, responsibilities, and tasks of a specific department and the organisation as a whole. These meetings generated a detailed insight of the organisation and the specific departments, which helped to compose job descriptions based on performance areas (internal project). Besides, these meetings helped to answer the research question an increase the internal validity (triangulation).

Second, due to time constraints questions regarding employee attitudes and behaviour in relation to HR practices that arise with job descriptions could not be answered. For example, it was not possible to identify if employee behaviour and attitudes might influence HR practices or outcomes. Hence, it could be that dissatisfied employees or employees that do not want to develop themselves, make negative attributions about Lidl's HR practices or outcomes. As discussed in the practical implications, employee perception surely will differ among the 9000 employees within Lidl. Hence, their perception about the meaning and importance of competency and performance area based job descriptions with forthcoming practices and outcomes can conflict with each other. Although some ideas to identify and cope with these conflicts are elaborated in the section above, future research that incorporates these elements is necessary to identify and cope with these constraints.

Third, the scope of this study was quite narrow since this study focused on one part of work systems; job descriptions, which are a part of a work system. Hence, a small range of stakeholder interests and situational factors are taken into account in this research. Asking other stakeholders such as government, communities, or unions, and identifying more situational factors as labour market, task technology, or laws and societal values could have generated a broader insight. Each stakeholder group has their own interests about job descriptions and the forthcoming HR practices and outcomes, which could influence the process of composing job descriptions for Lidl. Just like situational factors as 'labour market' could have created another view on the way in which job descriptions need to be composed and implemented for Lidl. For example, it is likely that an effective job description measured from different perspectives might produce different results. On the other hand, it is questionable if stakeholder interests as government or community are valuable, since the government do not have a direct influence on this process. The community also does not directly influence this process since they for example, are not interested in the way jobs are done in supermarkets, but only in the result of supermarkets. Hence, customers indicate

"price", "stock", and "speedy checkout" as most important aspects during shopping (Gevers et al., 2011).

6.3 Recommendations

Some practical recommendations are the result of the outcomes of this design-oriented research. Since this study had a quite practical nature, practical recommendations will be presented in this section.

First, Lidl has to develop their business strategy, in order to develop other policies, such as a work system. Although (senior) managers and employees of the organisation know what they have to do and what they want, it is never officially defined in terms of a strategy. Directors of Lidl have to start with identifying the core values, mission, and official goals of the organisation. It is important that the directors involve a wider group of stakeholders since involvement of many stakeholders will create a holistic and flexible strategy for current and future role. The retail industry faces many changes and hence, when the market demands lower costs, product innovation, or improved service, management of a firm must sense the need for change and be able to create mutual understanding to support and adapt a change. An effective approach could be the Miles and Snow's strategy to develop the business strategy of Lidl. This approach helps directors and (senior) managers to formulate strategies that are congruent with the external environment and with the internal characteristics (Miles & Snow, 1978).

Second, after the job descriptions are composed and implemented, it is important to evaluate both the descriptions and the process of composing them and HR outcomes like effectiveness, satisfaction, motivation etc. The evaluation need to examine how the competency-modelling process could be improved, as well as the effectiveness of the model that is developed. Standard program evaluation techniques can be applied in this process (Marrelli et al., 2005).

Competency modelling is a continuous process. To be effective, the list of defined core competences and performance areas must be examined and adjusted on organisational strategies, environmental conditions, job design, stakeholder interests, situational factors or other key aspects in relation to the jobs. When the core competences and performance areas seem to be effective and suitable, these descriptions might be adapted for all jobs (CLA and non-CLA) within Lidl in the future.

Future Research

Outcomes of the design-oriented research and the limitations, created the need for future research for Lidl. First, this study focused solely on one part of a work system; job descriptions. When the descriptions are implemented, research is necessary to identify the way in which other HR practices can be effectively linked to job descriptions. Second, this study identified that job descriptions based on competences and performance areas can stimulate effective recruitment and selection. Since Lidl is concerned with attracting and retaining the right mix of employees, research is needed in order to study turnover rates in the organisation. Does Lidl pay enough attention to recruitment and selection, or development

and training? Consequently, Lidl can identify in which stage turnover rates are high and develop policies in order to reduce turnover rates.

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Appendix A Interview protocol

Interview protocol (Dutch)

Naam:	
Functie/afdeling:	
Datum/tijd:	
Plaats:	

Introductie

Voor het afronden van mijn opleiding ben ik onderzoek aan het doen over functieprofielen en het functiegebouw binnen Lidl. Het doel van mijn onderzoek is om de meest effectieve manier te vinden om functieprofielen op te stellen en te implementeren op een manier, welke aansluit bij de organisatiestructuur van Lidl. Graag wil ik dit met u bespreken. Het interview zal ongeveer 1 uur duren.

Het interview bestaat uit een aantal onderwerpen met een aantal vragen om het interview te sturen. Graag wil ik het interview ook opnemen in verband met het opstellen van transcripten. De opnames zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld en alleen worden gebruikt voor de verwerking van de resultaten. Heeft u verder nog vragen vooraf?

Algemeen

1. Wat is uw rol en wat zijn uw verantwoordelijkheden binnen de organisatie?
   a. In hoeverre is de kennis over de regels, methoden en technieken die noodzakelijk zijn om uw effectief werk uit te voeren toereikend?
2. Waarom denkt u dat het project functieprofielen in leven is geroepen?

Situationele factoren

3. Hoe ziet de (potentiële) Lidl medewerker er volgens u uit voor filiaal en hoofdkantoor en komt dit overeen met de huidige medewerkers?
   a. Filiaal
   b. Hoofdkantoor
4. Elke organisatie heeft een unieke bedrijfsstrategie, Hoe omschrijft u de bedrijfsstrategie van Lidl?
   a. Waar richt de strategie zich op? En kunt u zich hierin vinden?
5. De bedrijfsstrategie vloeit voort uit de filosofie van het management, Wat zijn hiervan de kenmerken en zijn deze parallel met die van de medewerkers?
6. In hoeverre sluiten de kwaliteiten en competenties van medewerkers aan bij de strategie "*altijd de beste willen zijn*"?
7. In hoeverre richt de strategie van Lidl zich op ontwikkeling van de medewerker? Welke gevolgen heeft dit?
8. Kunt u de organisatiecultuur omschrijven?
9. Hoe hoog is het niveau dat aan vaardigheden en competenties wordt gevraagd van medewerkers (hoofdkantoor/regio)? Is dit te hoog of te laag naar uw mening?

10. Wat zijn in uw optiek mogelijke oorzaken voor het hoge verloopcijfer in de supermarkt branche? En zijn dit volgens u ook redenen voor het huidige verzuimpercentage van bijna 3%?
11. Welke soort beslissingen mogen er sinds de decentralisering op de afdelingen / regio's zelf worden genomen?
12. Hoe omschrijft u de management stijl welke Lidl hanteert? Kijkend naar uw eigen functie (OR, medewerker of management), vindt u dat de juiste manier van leidinggeven?
13. Wat is de invloed van de management stijl op de manier waarop functieprofielen worden samengesteld (denk aan taak of competentie gerelateerd)?

Stakeholder belangen

14. Wat voor impact heeft de feedback die u krijgt (en uw medewerkers krijgen) op het gedrag en de houding ten opzichte van de doelstellingen?
15. In welke mate heeft u behoefte aan feedback van uw leidinggevende om uzelf verder te ontwikkelen?
16. In hoeverre biedt het aantal verantwoordelijkheden wat u hebt, de mogelijkheid om uzelf verder te ontwikkelen? Welke gevolgen heeft dit voor uw motivatie?
17. Vindt u dat uw taken en verantwoordelijkheden een grote bijdrage leveren aan de organisatie als geheel? En waarom?
18. In welke mate sluiten uw kennis en vaardigheden aan bij de verantwoordelijkheden die u hebt?
19. Welke stakeholders zijn belangrijk en van invloed tijdens het opstellen van functieprofielen?
    a. Wat zijn de belangen van deze stakeholders?
    b. Wat is de invloed van de stakeholders (per categorie en deze wijze waarop het profiel wordt samengesteld)?
    c. Welke wrijvingen kunnen zich voordoen tussen deze groepen stakeholders mbt. het opstellen van functieprofielen?
20. Op welke manier moeten de opgestelde profielen uiteindelijk worden geïmplementeerd?

HRM beleidskeuzes

21. Op welke manier kan volgens u een functieprofiel het beste worden opgesteld? Op basis van taken (specifiek/ detaillistisch) of op basis van competenties (algemeen/ resultaatgebieden)? En waarom?
22. Wat is het verschil (qua gevolgen voor de organisatie) tussen het opstellen van een functieprofiel op een taakgerichte en een competentiegerichte manier?
23. Wat zijn belangrijke factoren tijdens het opstellen van een functieprofiel (waar dient rekening mee worden gehouden)?

Hoe kan bij het opstellen van een functieprofiel rekening gehouden worden met de volgende aspecten:
24. Welke mogelijkheden zijn er om op het gebied van trainingen en bijscholingen om de verantwoordelijkheden te realiseren? Welke moeten dat zijn volgens u?
25. Zijn de doelstellingen en competenties die u nodig hebt voor uw werk zodanig geformuleerd, dat u het belang inziet van het behalen van de individuele en organisatie doelstellingen? Zoniet, hoe kan een functieprofiel eraan bijdragen om dit te realiseren?
26. Hoe kan een functieprofiel bijdragen bij het creëren van individuele en organisatie behoeften? Hoe dienen ze geïntegreerd te worden?

27. In hoeverre bent u zelf bereid om te blijven leren en om meer verantwoordelijkheden te krijgen? Hoe kan een profiel hieraan bijdragen?

Gevolgen van het opstellen van een functieprofiel voor P&O beleid

28. Hoe kan medewerker tevredenheid en motivatie worden verhoogd door middel van functieprofielen?
29. Hoe kan de aantrekkelijkheid van de organisatie worden verhoogd door middel van functieprofielen?
30. Hoe kan een effectief functieprofiel bijdragen aan de ontwikkeling van een carrière van een medewerker?
31. Welke aspecten van een functieprofiel maken het aantrekkelijk voor een medewerker om bij Lidl te gaan en blijven werken; wat moet erin staan?
32. Hoe beïnvloeden HR gevolgen de situationele factoren en de belangen van stakeholders?

Overig

33. Is er nog iets wat we niet hebben behandeld maar wat wel van belang kan zijn voor dit onderzoek?
34. Heeft u nog eventuele opmerkingen of advies voor het project?

Hartelijk dank voor de tijd die u in dit interview heeft gestoken!

Appendix B Results of the structured interviews

The results of the structured interviews are clustered in table 14.

Table 14: Results of the structured interviews

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Formalisation	Many written rules		6,25%	37,50%	37,50%	12,50%		6,25%				Few rules
Specialisation	Seperate tasks and roles			37,50%	37,50%		18,75%		6,25%			Overlapping tasks
Hierarchy	Tall hierarchy of authority	18,75%	37,50%	31,25%	6,25%				6,25%			Flat hierarchy of authority
Technology	Product			37,50%		6,25%	31,25%	25,00%				Service
Enivironment	Stable		25,00%	31,25%	6,25%	12,50%	18,75%		6,25%			Unstable
Culture	Clear norms and values		6,25%	37,50%	37,50%	12,50%			6,25%			Ambiguous norms and values
Professionalism	High professional training			12,50%	18,75%	12,50%		31,25%	18,75%	6,25%		Low professional training
Goals	Well-defined goals			6,25%		18,75%	31,25%	37,50%	6,25%			Goals are not defined
Size	Small			6,25%		12,50%	31,25%	25,00%	12,50%	12,50%		Large

Appendix C Visualisation of a job description based on performance areas and competences

Functieprofiel Manager Personeelsadvies (m/v)*

Organisatie-onderdeel / afdeling

Hoofdkantoor, afdeling Personeel & Organisatie (P&O).

Ondergeschiktheid

De Manager Personeelsadvies valt disciplinair onder de Financieel Directeur.
De Manager Personeelsadvies valt hiërarchisch onder het Hoofd P&O.

Ondergeschikten

De Manager Personeelsadvies is vakinhoudelijk verantwoordelijk voor de (regionale) Personeelsadviseurs en de leidinggevende van de Landelijk Vertrouwenspersoon en de Medewerkers Personeelsadvies.

Plaatsvervanging

Bij afwezigheid wordt de Manager Personeelsadvies vervangen door het Hoofd P&O.
Bij langdurige afwezigheid besluit het Hoofd P&O over de vervanging.

Functie-eisen

Afgeronde P&O opleiding op minimaal HBO niveau.
Ervaring met leidinggeven, het begeleiden van medewerkers en ervaring met personeelsbeleid en verzuimmanagement zijn een vereiste.

Doel van de functie

Zorg dragen voor een optimaal lopend proces met betrekking tot instroom-, doorstroom- en uitstroom alsmede verantwoordelijk voor de ontwikkeling, controle en realisering van personeelsbinding- en motivatie-instrumenten om de medewerkerstevredenheid te verhogen.

Resultaatgebieden

De Manager Personeelsadvies is verantwoordelijk voor de volgende resultaatgebieden en competenties:

Resultaatgebieden

Leidinggeven (hiërarchisch)
Aansturen, coachen, beoordelen en ontwikkelen van de medewerkers van de eigen afdeling gebruikmakend van de instrumenten, diensten en procedures van de P&O afdeling zodat met een efficiënte inrichting van de afdeling en een motiverend werkklimaat de doelstellingen van de afdeling worden behaald.

Functieprofiel Manager Personeelsadvies (m/v)*

Projectmanagement
Zorgdragen voor de coördinatie en uitvoering van projecten op het gebied van binding & motivatie van medewerkers (medewerkerstevredenheid, exitgesprekken, ontwikkelen feedbackcultuur) binnen het vastgestelde projectplan, zodanig dat de projectdoelstellingen worden behaald.

HR Advies
Ondersteunen, adviseren en vakinhoudelijk begeleiden van de Personeelsadviseurs en de Landelijk Vertrouwenspersoon; tevens fungeren als Personeelsadviseur voor medewerkers en leidinggevenden op het hoofdkantoor.

Bewaking kwaliteit personeelsmanagement lijn
Bewaakt de uitvoering en juiste toepassing van regelingen en richtlijnen op het gebied van P&O beleid, CAO en wetgeving en zorgt ervoor dat de kwaliteit van de lijn continue aandacht heeft, initieert in geval van afwijkingen tijdig actie i.o.m. Manager P&O, zodat het personeelsmanagement binnen de gestelde kaders plaatsvind en de kwaliteit continue gewaarborgd blijft.

Managementinformatie
Opstellen anonieme maandelijkse rapportages over de werkzaamheden van de Landelijk Vertrouwenspersoon en de Personeelsfunctionarissen aan de directie en kwartaalrapportages aan de internationale P&O afdeling op het gebied van binding en motivatie van medewerkers.

Sociaal beleid
Opstellen van beleid aangaande gezondheid, vitaliteit, en welzijn, i.o.m. Manager P&O, vertaalslag maken naar een plan van aanpak, coördineren en organiseren van de operationele uitvoering, teneinde mede invulling te geven aan een duurzaam personeelsbeleid en te verhoging van de medewerkers tevredenheid (Op weg naar morgen).

Verzuimmanagement
Ondersteunt en adviseert bedrijfsonderdelen t.a.v. de uitvoering van het verzuimbeleid en de begeleiding van de arbeidsongeschikte medewerker, stelt richtlijnen en procedures op en draagt zorg voor een correcte naleving van de wet en regelgeving hieromtrent, maakt samenwerkingsafspraken met externe partijen, teneinde optimale ondersteuning en begeleiding van de arbeidsongeschikte medewerker en lijnmanagement te waarborgen.

Vakontwikkeling / vernieuwing
Verantwoordelijk voor bijhouden van vakkennis, door middel van vakliteratuur, ontwikkelingen op het gebied van personeelsbeleid, bijwonen van beurzen en relevante opleidingsbijeenkomsten, vertalen hiervan naar verbeteringen en vernieuwing binnen de toegewezen verantwoordelijkheidsgebieden.

Beleidsbijdrage
Leveren van een belangrijke bijdrage aan de ontwikkeling en implementatie van het P&O beleid wat een directe relatie heeft met Personeelsadvies, teneinde adequaat in te spelen op de ontwikkelingen op het werkterrein.

Kerncompetenties

Initiatief
Kansen zoeken er daarop actie nemen. Initieert acties die gericht zijn op lange termijnveranderingen en die op de korte termijn misschien geen succes oogsten.

Integriteit
Handhaven van sociale en ethische normen in het werk en vertrouwen wekken in eigen professionaliteit en integriteit.

Kwaliteitsgerichtheid
Hoge eisen stellen aan de kwaliteit van eigen en andermans werk; voortdurend verbeteringen nastreven. Signaleert de noodzaak tot kwaliteitsverbeteringen in de organisatie en neemt passende actie.

Klantgerichtheid
Onderzoeken van de wensen en behoeften van de klant en laten zien vanuit dat perspectief te denken en handelen. Kent de markt van de klantorganisatie en de specifieke problemen die dat voor de klant oplevert.

Flexibiliteit
Wanneer zich uitdagingen of kansen voordoen zonnodig de eigen gedragsstijl veranderen om een gesteld doel te bereiken.

Overig

Naast het uitvoeren van de hierboven genoemde taken is de Manager Personeelsadvies verplicht om op aanwijzing van de leidinggevende(n) bijzondere taken en opdrachten uit te voeren die operationeel noodzakelijk zijn.

Bijzondere bevoegdheden

De Manager Personeelsadvies heeft financiële tekenbevoegdheid voor een bedrag tot € 5.000,=.