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Why are managers curious about Corporate Social Responsibility? A case study at Gambro

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Abstract

Title: Why are managers curious about Corporate Social Responsibility? A case study at Gambro

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Five key words: Corporate Social Responsibility, curiosity, fashion, leadership, management

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to improve the understanding to why managers are curious about CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility.

Methodology: This study is based on a qualitative study with an abductive approach which was executed at Gambro Lundia AB, Lund. Semi-structured interviews, based on a theoretical framework, have been primary data for this study. Eleven managers were interviewed at approximately one hour each. Our results were then coupled and compared with our theoretical framework to depict similarities and differences between theory and empirics.

Theoretical perspectives: This thesis has the following theoretical perspectives in order to answer its purpose; To discuss the meaning of CSR and depict its confusions as an idea. To discuss what constitutes an institution and its power. To understand within the process of translation the properties of ideas, fashions, and the importance of actors. To discuss and depict the characteristics of being a manager

Empirical foundation: Our empirics are based on interviews made with eleven managers at Gambro, Lund. Each interview lasted for about one hour.

Conclusions: We have in our research found 17 different driving forces to why managers are curious about CSR. Within these there lies a paradox between ideas as institution and fashion. Amplifying that paradox there also lies managerial elements which make managers more prone to become more curious about CSR.

Preface

We want to thank everyone who has made it possible for us to accomplish this research. We especially want to thank Josefin Nilzén, our contact person at Gambro, for her great support and interest in making sure that we met as many managers as possible. We also want to thank all of the managers at Gambro who made time for our interviews and attended for our presentation at Gambro. Without their input this thesis would not have been possible. Finally, our supervisor Thomas Kalling has also been a major source of motivation. We thank him for all of his critique, recommendations, guidance and positive attitude.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Problem discussion and background

CSR, a growing concept

An organization's survival is not just about efficient coordination and control of its resources. It is also how the corporation can adapt to its surrounding world and the demands that follow in a society. Research show that it is at least important to be accepted as a legitimate actor in society as it is to have efficient and well-structured internal processes (Grafström, Göthburg & Windell, 2008).

A research made by USA Today (2008) showed that 83 % of the respondents would trust a corporation more if that corporation could show that it engages in social issues. The same research showed that there is a growing mindfulness among young future employees. No less than 50 % would turn away from an employer showing lack of CSR communication.

By operating CSR programs corporations can be continually sustainable when markets fail them. Many corporations observe each other to find new ways to lower costs and at the same time increase customer base and customer satisfaction. An example is banks and other financial institutes that provide electronic services instead of face-to-face interactions. By doing this the banks reduce their costs on employee salaries and the customers avoid instilling damage on the environment by transporting themselves from their homes to the bank (CSR i praktiken, 2008).

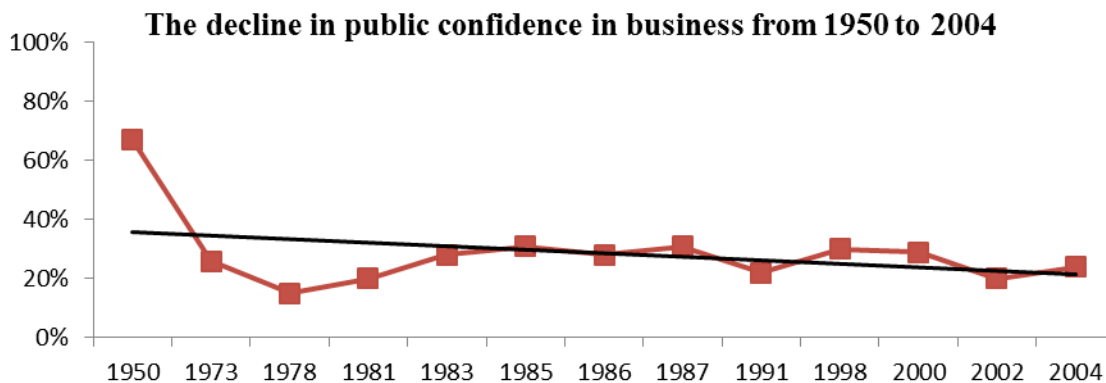
Vogel (2005) explained that all the major corporations that reside on the global market put in great efforts to paint themselves as a virtuous corporation. Since the early 1990s corporations such as McDonalds, Nike, Timberland, Starbucks, IKEA, BP, Shell, Citibank, PepsiCo, Chiquita etc., all have increased their efforts to build better societies, and thereby enhancing their legitimacy in the societies in which they operate. Regardless if these corporations perform these actions by their own free will or if the business climate demands of them to engage into social issues the impact of CSR is of undeniable importance. It can be seen as the monitoring of global corporations' activities are increasingly monitored under a microscope. Vogel emphasized that it is the close monitoring that persuades corporations to do good in society.

Statistics shown by Kotler & Lee (2004) is that charities from corporate America rose from \$9.6 billion to \$12.19 billion between years 1999 to 2002, and according to surveys these corporations

plan to increase their charity grant. The same survey explained how these corporations increased their CSR activities from 35 % to 45 % between years 1999 to 2002. Starbucks has been very eager to illustrate their CSR activities for the surrounding world as a way to “provide transparency on our business practices, measurements on our performance, and benchmarks for future reports”.

To this, there is also an increase in the belief that by working with CSR one gains a competitive edge. Corporations see CSR not only as a source of altruism but instead competitiveness and profit generation (Grafström et al., 2008). Such a view is also highlighted by the academia, for example where Porter & Kramer (2011) talked about *creating shared value*, or Prahalad (2010) where he explained the benefits of *BOP*-markets.

Frederick (2006) outlined how confidence in business gradually has declined during 54 years of observation. We have included a trend line displaying how consumers and stakeholders have added a negative view on business. It seems as if CSR could be a way for corporations’ to mitigate the frustration and anger from these.



Modified with a trend line from Frederick (2006) in Blowfield & Murray (2008) page 42

Implications with CSR

Ideas of what the responsibilities of a corporation are often born, passed away, and reborn again. These ideas influence our perceptions of what a corporation is and how it should be organized, made more effective and act in society. In other words there is no static image of what constitutes a corporation or what its responsibilities are (Grafström et al., 2008). This was highlighted by Votaw (1973) who stated “the term social responsibility is a brilliant one; it means something, but not always the same thing, to everybody.” To this even though there is no clear definition of what a corporation’s social responsibilities are the concept has had a strong dissemination and has become popular the last decade (Grafström et al., 2008; Grankvist, 2009). This situation has awoken our curiosity. When we compare the arguments for and against the concept of CSR, a clear decision whether to engage in it or not is not given, which adds to the overall confusions. At the same time,

authors like Dalton & Cosier (1982) clearly believed that the right corporate strategy is where legality meets responsibility. They were less concerned with why social responsibility is done than with the fact that it is done. To this, as mentioned above, there is also a profiled belief that corporations have much to win by working with CSR and thereby gain competitiveness (cf. Grafström et al., 2008; Grankvist, 2009; Porter & Kramer, 2011). Though, the implications of CSR such as confusion of the corporation's role in society, costs of involvement, lack of social skills, lack of accountability, difficulty in measurability and other reasons put us, we believe, in a situation where the arguments for and the arguments against CSR are mutually canceling (Davis 1973; Carroll, 1974). Though still, the interest for CSR has grown, as mentioned above.

Explanations for such popularity

The fact that the concept CSR has grown rapidly could be explained perhaps in different ways. One explanation could be given by new institutional theory where corporate legitimacy is a key for survival, that is when corporations act after what is perceived appropriate and expected action (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 2008). A preceding issue though is how social responsibility and institutional environmentalism even came to be under conditions where stability and not change is the norm. Hoffman (1999) for example talked about the disruptive events that have awoken the attention of constituents outside, in his case, the chemical industry in the U.S. There he gave a quite revolutionary picture of how institutional environmentalism around the chemical industry in the US has grown. Others would though question if institutional change really occurs that revolutionary and instead set forth change as an incremental process. Though nothing conclusive could really be said if institutional change really occur evolutionary either since the mechanisms and forces that contribute to change are hard to distinguish (Campbell, 2004; Scott, 2008). Though regardless of this, a new-institutionalistic view of CSR would today depict it as a "rule of the game" for legitimacy and survival. Much because of corporate irresponsibilities, its consequences, and its dissemination (Grafström et al., 2008; Hoffman, 1999; Windell, 2006). To this it is also interesting to understand how such legitimacy is perceived to be won, since that would depict "the rule". Further, the idea given by new-institutionalists that organizations act according to perceived appropriate behavior to increase their legitimacy which is necessary to survive, only really focuses on the process of rule development and fails to explain how change occurs (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Hoffman, 1999). Thus it is as if the field of new-institutionalism only has the characteristics of stability and incapability of change. This is where the concept of Translation instead works as a complementary thought because here emphasis is put on the importance of the actor himself, not only for change to occur but dissemination as well. The field

explains the actor having the ability to “think” contrary to an automatic process of adoption. That is an ability to make judgments and comparisons with what oneself is and what one’s surroundings are (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996; Sevón, 1996). In this sense, corporations are not necessarily forced to imitate or adapt to the newest trends, as depicted by new-institutionalism. Rather their adaptation and imitation come from the interest of corporations themselves (Sevón, 1996). Thereof, the actor within the process of ideas traveling and the energy needed for this to happen becomes important.

A main element within the concept of translation is what constitutes an idea that makes them popular. Røvik (2002) meant that ideas that become successful and widespread are a result of the ideas being a consequence of processes of social construction. This makes them universally applicable and they are therefore made up of some degree of ambiguity. It is this ambiguity that makes them fit different settings and contexts (Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002). At the same time ideas that promise some enhanced organizational outcomes are the ones that are more likely to become widespread (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Abrahamson, 1996). To this, there is of course the distinction of those ideas being usual and expected contrary to what is representing modernity, excitement, and uniqueness (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996). In this respect, a common word for ideas promising such excitement and uniqueness is of course *fashion*, and as already mentioned what is expected can be described as *institution*. Though perhaps such a contrast is not as clear-cut as one might think. To make our point clear it is beneficial to remind our readers two things. The first one is the purpose of this thesis, “why managers are curious about CSR?”. The second is our point that CSR is both expected of corporations to work with as it is depicted as promising of differentiation. Initially, apart from the managerial elements, we could answer our purpose in two ways, either because the idea CSR is expected of corporations, or because corporations try to find ways, ideas, to become more different, i.e. competitive. Though an interesting dilemma is of course when the idea that is expected, the institution, at the same time is the idea that promises excitement and uniqueness, the fashion. For example as we have mentioned above, CSR. That is, it becomes paradoxical how one becomes different by doing what is expected. Here it is important to add that we do not put any negative or positive weight in the meaning of fashion. Since for some fashion is regarded as transient, unimportant, and somewhat delusionary and for others by being institutional fringe it has potential to become the next institution (Abrahamson, 1996; Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996, 2005). Though both such views we believe lack from the fact that they can only be depicted in retrospect, they do not give explanation to our research question at the present.

To this, an important part then in the process of translation is the actor himself, since it is the actor or people that bring energy for ideas to move (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996). Actors that have often been emphasized in this process are consultants, mass-media, and academic institutions (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002; Windell, 2006). Practitioners,

such as managers, are not totally left out from prior explanations though the picture given that managers are gullible and “hooked on” whatever idea that is given to them without questioning seems like a dramatized picture of reality (Abrahamson, 1996; Worren, 1996; Newell, Robertson, & Swan, 2001; Ernst & Kieser, 2002).

We though believe that there are more proper reasons than being “gullible” and “hooked” explaining why managers follow contemporary popular ideas, or fashions. Which makes it interesting to better understand what it means to be a manager and what properties in managers that lead to their curiosity.

As such some of the reasons we look for is that research (Arvonen, 1989; Blomquist & Röding 2010) have shown that the importance for informal leaders have increased over time as business landscape have changed. Managers with the ability to adapt are crucial for any organization. Adapt, here meaning implementing new fashions and business practices. Blomquist & Röding (2010) discuss managers as “saviors” that is, in good times they are praised, and in bad times they are “scapegoats”. No matter the outcome, these managers are always in the spotlight. This stress on managers ends up with the same managers putting enormous demands on themselves (Blomquist & Röding 2010). Mintzberg (1975) has made an excellent contribution to management research by stating that managers too often make unconsidered decisions because of their hectic work situation and Huczynski (1996) claimed that the reason why managers adopt management fashions is because of pressure to perform from different stakeholders. Huczynski’s study also showed that managers felt legitimized as managers when implementing new fashions.

Chosen theoretical perspectives

Concluding then, this thesis has the following theoretical perspectives in order to answer its purpose.

- To discuss the meaning of CSR and depict its confusions as an idea
- To discuss what constitutes an institution and its power
- To understand within the process of translation the properties of ideas, fashions, and the importance of actors
- To discuss and depict the characteristics of being a manager

The reason to why we have chosen these above four areas to work with is elementary. As described before, CSR has many meanings. We need to start off by explaining to both ourselves and the reader how such a diffuse concept have been able to reach out to different managerial cultures if we want to answer our research question. We believe that CSR has grown fast and has made a strong

impact on different societal stakeholders. To us, perhaps CSR is growing to become a long lived institution. To learn more about this potential future end we need to discuss institutions and how these influence organizations and society. We do not believe that CSR has cropped up on its own without something or someones giving it “wind in the sails”. Therefore, it is of necessity to explain what feeds managers with its contents. Lastly, loads of managerial writings have been published on how managers regard their surroundings. In this thesis we need to explain the different demands on managers if we want to learn how they reason and view CSR.

1.2 Problem formulation

As depicted above, CSR has come to be a very popular and modern concept for corporations, for various reasons. We though believe that with the lack of a clear definition, and arguments just as strong for and against engaging in CSR put businesses under conditions of uncertainty.

We do not intend to dwell deep into conclusive answers regarding the benefits and drawbacks of CSR nor into questions about if corporations have a larger responsibility than an economic one. As already stated, we do not find any satisfaction from those discussions to why CSR is popular. Neither do we think that managers can be depicted through terms such as being gullible or incapable of judgment and comparison. Therefore we are interested in why managers, in our case study, have developed a demand, i.e. have become interested/curious or perhaps even anxious about engaging in CSR. We believe that this is a question of what makes a corporation prone to have a social responsibility? Or more precisely what makes managers prone? These questions can be interpreted into one overarching research question, which is;

- *Why are managers curious about CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility?*

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to improve the understanding to why managers are curious about CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility. To this we are also interested in widening our research findings to a broader applicability to why managers are curious about fashions in general.

1.4 Limitations

This study is limited to only focus on one case study, which is Gambro Lundia AB, hereafter referred to only as Gambro. This makes the study limited in its scope since it only considers the purpose of this study in a specific context and social environment. We believe though that the depth of our analysis is rich enough to be transmittable to other societal contexts. Further the study focuses on managers and does not include perceptions and reasons of other employees or stakeholders. Thereof, we can go into depth of the managerial role and how it opens up to become interested in concepts such as CSR. This limits the research since there perhaps are other forces and constituents creating demand for managerial fashions. The purpose of the research is neither to present a conclusive definition of what CSR is. The focus will further be on the facility in Lund.

1.5 Disposition

Continuing in the next chapter, Theory, outlines the theoretical framework and points out the overarching elements we expect to find. In chapter 3, Method, we describe our research design and the decisions that were made to build the thesis and the gathering of empirics. Thereafter, in chapter 4, we provide our empirics. After our presentation of the empirics an analysis will be provided, in chapter 5, where we put the empirics in relation to our theory. Our intention here is to expand the theoretical framework based on what we gather from the case study. In the last chapter, Conclusions, we answer our overarching research question and purpose of this thesis.

2. Theory

Comment: *The theoretical chapter begins with our general investigation of what CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility, means. Our conclusion is that one cannot simply talk about one conclusive definition of what CSR means, since there are too many areas of confusions. Because of these confusions we instead believe then it is more satisfying to understand why CSR is interesting for corporations. To do this, we began by understanding what institutions are, because they tell us and corporations “the rules of the game”. Though not satisfied with the explanations of how change and adaptation occurs given by new-institutionalists we followed the work of Scandinavian researchers within the field of translation. Here soon enough we realized that much emphasis was given towards how ideas are supplied and who the suppliers are. There was less said about why those that demand ideas and especially fashionable ideas do so. Even though there perhaps are more actors than managers demanding fashionable ideas our focus have solely been on managers. This is especially because managers demanding fashionable ideas are poorly depicted. This then lead us to better understand what it means to be a manager and how that then results in a demand for CSR.*

2.1 An analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility

History, definition and reasons

Let us start by dissecting the term Corporate Social Responsibility lexically. In an Oxford Advanced dictionary we find that the word corporate, connected to corporation means in its first explanation - a large business corporation; multinational corporations. The word social is explained as - connected with society and the way it is organized. Society, is defined as - people in general living together in communities who share the same customs, laws, etc. Finally the word, responsibility is explained as - a duty to deal with or take care of somebody/something so that you may be blamed if something goes wrong. In a lexical meaning Corporate Social Responsibility therefore means that a large business corporation has a duty to deal with or take care of people/something in general living together in communities who share the same customs, laws, etc. so that it (the corporation) may be blamed if something goes wrong. As much as this definition may be sufficient at first glance, it does not answer to what degree a corporation has

responsibilities, if a corporation should attempt to minimize its negative impacts on society or engage in for society beneficial activities. Neither does it explain a corporation's role compared to a government's role, or if its duty should exceed its financial and economic interests. These are just a few unanswered questions, thus clearly a lexical definition is not enough.

Historically the discussion of CSR has long roots dating back to the 1940s. Though, the modern era of CSR, then referred to as only "social responsibility of businessmen", dates approximately back to the 1950s. Bowen (1953) already then set forth a definition of social responsibility as being "...the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society". The following decades would continue to further explore the definition of CSR through contributions such as those by Davis, Walton, and Manne. The importance of the social responsibilities of businessmen being equal to their business power, and that a degree of voluntarism is required for business to engage in social responsibilities was then set forth (Davis, 1960; Walton, 1967; Manne & Wallich, 1972).

In 1974, Carroll made a contribution to the area by his weighing of arguments for and against the concept of CSR. Even though Carroll approached the matter of corporate social responsibility with some positivity he still mentioned the paradox of businessmen being considered both villains and saviors. In the 1970s, Carroll already then pointed out the difficulties with measuring CSR. On the matter of weighing arguments Davis (1973) provided a guiding discussion. Just as much CSR is depicted as having long-run self-interests, arguments against it are just as strong and even contradictory, such as the duty of profit maximization and the incurred costs of social involvement. Other mutually canceling arguments are the effects of public image and contradictory a lack of broad support and accountability. Lastly exemplified here is the argument for that business has the resources and contradictory that business lacks the social skills to engage in social responsibilities. Thus, as stated earlier, a weighing of arguments does not give a definitive answer whether or not to engage in CSR.

A popular, probably the most popular concept within CSR, is given by Carroll (1979) in his three-dimensional conceptual model of corporate performance. There he offered the definition that social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations society has of organizations at a given point in time. One should note that his model depicts all of its levels as responsibilities, thus one could say that an economic and a legal responsibility is enough for a corporation to be responsible even though this is not the message the model is meant to give in our understanding. Also, Carroll mentioned that a given business action may involve several of these kinds of responsibilities simultaneously. Again, even though it is not meant to be interpreted this way according to us, the possibility for an action to involve several of the

responsibilities makes room for several combinations of socially responsible activities, and thus not necessarily really providing with a definition, other than having a summarizing function of the literature concerning CSR.

Contrary to this “positive” approach is put forth in the discussion of CSR mainly by the words of Milton Friedman where he, in his book *Capital and Freedom*, wrote that the only one social responsibility of business is to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game. Behind this view are many who see the term CSR as an oxymoron, taking additional societal responsibilities conflicts with the role and purpose of a business (Grafström et al., 2008). To summarize, through history the polarization of different perceptions of CSR has continued and thereby has not really contributed with a clear definition. Though at the same time, the interest for social responsibility has risen considerably the last decade. From more investments in SRI portfolios to the majority of Fortune 500 corporations communicating that they are engaging in social responsibilities and the increase of academic articles since the beginning of the 21st century is noteworthy (Vogel, 2005; Grafström et al., 2008). The situation is confusing and makes one wonder why corporations are so interested in CSR when the term clearly suffers from being diffuse.

Corporate Social Responsibility, a concept for whom?

To this polarization we believe Dalton & Cosier (1982) has made an excellent contribution. Here the authors made a distinction between corporations with both legally accepted businesses that are separated by the morality and ethic on which their businesses are constructed upon. They categorized the two as Irresponsible/Legal corporations and Responsible/Legal corporations. The authors had no difficulty identifying what constitutes Irresponsible/Legal corporations, such as cigarette corporations, though they didn't exemplify any Responsible/Legal corporation, other than saying per definition what it should be and that this is a preferable strategy. Whatever their reasons were for not exemplifying, we find it interesting. We comment this line of thought by questioning whether or not businesses can so easily be categorized as being responsible or not. Even though products such as tobacco and alcohol do make severe damage to the body in large doses, one cannot say they are irresponsible for satisfying the customers' needs, such as to parade social status or ease our minds and everyday life stress. In this sense the societal context of what constitutes responsibility or not becomes very important (Grafström et al., 2008). An example of that would be the BP ads from the 1980s. Then their message was, “BP is successful, BP is British”. Today such a slogan would most likely not be successful considering BP's recent history (Lewis, 2003).

We believe that one has to remember that both the definitions of Bowen and Dalton & Cosier were written in a social context. Bowen mentioned social responsibility in a post-war setting, and Dalton & Cosier during times when the war on cigarette corporations was amplifying (Boston University Medical Center, History of Tobacco, 2012). To this, another interesting point that helps to define CSR is that corporations that have driven the evolution of corporate responsibility are mainly from the mining and oil industry that mostly have had environmental issues and committed crimes against human rights (Grafström et al., 2008). This brings forth the question, if seemingly corporations that from industries as the above are challenged in times of change because of their “irresponsibility”, then does this mean that CSR is only for morally and ethically wrong corporations such as cigarette corporations? Perhaps there is a truth in this. If we look at the business magazine Fortune’s list of socially responsible corporations we will find that many of the corporations listed are in industries such as oil, energy, and construction (Fortune Magazine, 2006-2011). In Sweden, corporations that have been active with CSR are from the textile, construction, and insurance industry (Grafström et al., 2008). Interestingly, according to Lewis (2003), people in Britain would generally, by 62 %, not trust business leaders. Right before journalists and politicians who would be the least trusted. The most trusted were doctors, by 91 %. At the same time a Harris Interactive Poll (2010) that surveyed adults in the United States showed that the oil and tobacco industries were trusted by the fewest people, while supermarkets and hospitals were the most trust worthy. Also, corporations that should be more regulated were in oil, pharmaceutical, health insurance, tobacco, and banking industry. If this is the case, that CSR is only for industries that lack trust and accountability. Then the heavy discourse that *businesses*, the plural implying any type of business, should do CSR gets confusing.

In other words, it is easy to depict the “misfits” in the time and society in which we live and thereby exemplify them as outcasts and wrongdoers. Though, to prove that CSR is for any type of corporation it would be interesting to know if one would demand a private hospital or even a corporation producing medical appliances to do CSR.

Corporate Social Responsibility as voluntary action

The European Commission (2001) described CSR as a term where corporations voluntarily integrate social and environmental concern into their business and relations to their stakeholders. Porter & Kramer (2011) similarly talked about creating “shared value” which they define as; “...policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a corporation while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates.” We believe even though they are similar, there is a significant difference. It is the term

“voluntarily” which we believe separate them. Walton (1967) emphasized that corporate social responsibility requires a degree of voluntarism and that there lies an acceptance that costs are involved which may not gauge any direct measurable economic returns. That is the free will guiding our choice of action, and with Walton’s description, without a measurable economic remuneration.

In the case of Porter & Kramer on the other hand, there is a bilateral trade between creating shared value and increasing competitiveness which in turn at the end of the day is meant to bring profit. The problem we have with the term voluntary could be explained lexically. The lexical definition of the word voluntary is explained as - done willingly, not because you are forced; done by people/organizations that choose to do it without being paid. Therefore one can lexically understand the definition of CSR, set forth by the European Commission, that CSR is done by people/organizations willingly and not because they are forced to and who choose to do it without being paid. There are two points here which draw attention, the first point is that it is done without being forced, and the second point that it is done without being paid. The first can be questioned through McGuire (1988) who explained that stakeholders have explicit and implicit claims. If a firm does not act in a manner that satisfies those implicit claims, parties to those implicit claims will then attempt to transform those implicit claims to explicit claims, which for the firm can be most costly. An example of this is the development of ISO standards.

An important aspect of constructing ISO-standards is for it to gain legitimacy, for the field in which it will operate. At the same time, it is meant to be used by many different types of organizations. Therefore, to both gain legitimacy and to satisfy the needs of many, industry experts are often called in. Interestingly though, idea generators are often not the end users of a standard due to practical difficulties such as initiating and participating in such a project. Instead industry experts that also function as consultants are the most active. Further, the standard texts are often abstract and hard to understand. This is criticized because end-users then often require help from experts in order to make sense of them. In other words, ISO standards are criticized for being constructed by consultants for end users, thus creating a situation where consultants are active in the construction of their own marketplace (Tamm-Hallström, 2004; Grafström et al., 2008).

By constructing legitimacy, a reason for many corporations to adapt to these standards, apart from their general guidance, is that they tend to set the norm for what corporations are expected to do. Corporations that do not comply then are subject to the risk of being perceived as less legitimate, or not at all. This takes us to the second point of the, the fact that it is done without being paid. A third lexical definition of the word payment is explained as - a reward or an act of thanks for something you have done. Thereof, a payment is not always necessarily in a monetary form. In this sense, legitimacy can be seen as a form of payment and therefore the concept of voluntarily engaging in

CSR can be questioned. Instead, it seems more likely norms of corporate behavior are what determine what is demanded by corporations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Abrahamson, 1996; Tamm-Hallström, 2004; Grafström et al., 2008).

The two ways of Corporate Social Responsibility

Today, there are two ways to work with CSR. One is to work through criticized decoupled activities such as charity and the other through the core competencies of the corporation (Grafström et al., 2008). Charity can be seen as one of the means of managing stakeholder interests (Borglund, 2009). The other way, working through the core competencies of a corporation is best explained by Porter & Kramer (2006, 2011). These authors much emphasized that prior schools of thought have been focusing on the tension between business and society rather than on their interdependence and only through creating “shared value“ can corporations gain back legitimacy, bring society and business back together and at the same time increase competitiveness.

The two methods are not mutually exclusive and corporations see CSR more and more as a source of gain rather than altruism and being socially responsible has less become an action for the sake of doing good, i.e. philanthropy, and more for the sake of doing both good and profitable business. Though that in itself is questioned since there is no conclusive research to whether or not CSR action actually leads to profitability (Grafström et al., 2008; Borglund, 2009). Though as a comment to this line of thought as depicted above, does not it imply that there is a latent evil in “regular” business and that we need concepts like CSR to put a leash on businesses and businesspeople in order to make them “good”? Perhaps there is a truth in this at least when we look at the percentage of adults in Britain agreeing on that the profits of large corporations help make things better for everyone who uses their products and services has fallen from an approximately 60 % in 1976 to 27 % in 2002 (Lewis, 2003).

On the other hand, if we see corporations as being regularly “good” and their imperfections that from time to time occur and create destabilizing evil. Which awakens societies perception of businesses and their requirements on businesses, which “good” businesses over time will respond to and correct, then why do we need a concept like CSR? In other words, are not practices like reducing emission, increasing employee happiness and efficiency, keep making products that are more innovative, less use of raw materials, reduce costs and prices, already known good managerial practices and do we really need to call them CSR? (The Economist, 2005; Reich & Vogel, 2008) To this, one can also question what was mentioned in the prior section about creating shared value and unique competitiveness in that how it separates from being product development. That is for example to produce goods with lower use of raw materials, cannot that be called product

development or R&D? Or something else we are already familiar with. Though, there seems to lie a belief that by working with concepts like CSR one also creates an own strategic hot spot, almost as if calling something product development is not enough. To this, according to Greenpeace, greenwashing is when corporations tout about their environmental programs while they at the same time use unsustainable practices and to brag about environmental achievements that are already required by law (stopgreenwash.org, 2012). According to Greenpeace, it is an act to distract the public in order to cover up corporate realities of environmental degradation (Greenpeace, 1992). For CSR not to be considered as buying an indulgence, charity or any other CSR activity should be clearly related to the core business (Grafström et al., 2008; Borglund, 2009). But then again the above mentioned dilemma occurs, how does that differ from regular strategy, product development, R&D, which is not assumed to reside any latent evil? Since surely it must have partly been in our trust to corporations that we have relied on to build civilized societies.

To this, Vogel (2005) made an interesting point where he meant it is pointless through statistical analysis to try to prove if CSR is profitable or not. He compared CSR activities with advertising and meant that there are even ambiguities to whether or not advertising is positively correlated with profitability. Though, in spite of this no one would question if there are any business reasons for them to occur. In this sense greenwashing, we believe, is nothing else than bad advertising. Thus, on one hand, one can question if pure strategic business motivations and opportunities should even be called CSR. On the other hand, it's confusing in how CSR really separates from being marketing.

Comment to CSR discussion

Above we have depicted different areas of CSR which we believe make up more of a definition to what it is and is not than those who have chosen to define it by appointing themselves to one side of the discussion. We have tried to show that the concept of CSR should not be taken for granted because of its present popularity since there are too many questions unanswered. Sure, more could be said and discussed. Perhaps there are more areas that constitute confusion around the term. Our purpose with the above has thus mainly been an attempt to deliver a discussion to point out the deficits of CSR in our own manner before judging it as confusing. Since it is this confusion that makes us wonder why managers are curious about CSR.

Initially CSR can here be seen as a very wide concept with an ambiguous meaning that constitutes as a model for corporations on how to act in present society which is somewhat forced upon them. Corporations upon this seek for a trade between such conformity and individual benefits, which perhaps in many cases is solely to keep a "membership" within a relevant industry. Though since

the degree of how such membership is sustained is not defined nor is a capable way of measuring it, the ways of how corporations behave to keep their membership are often diverse, thus amplifying the confused situation. Such situations are said to lead to a higher possibility for ideas to disseminate and corporations to conform to “the rules of the game” and imitate each other (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; North, 1990). Contrary to this though, at the same time there seems also to be an interest of being perceived as strategically unique. That is, not to do as everyone else. (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin-Andersson, 1996; Porter & Kramer, 2011). So not only does the concept in our belief suffer from definitional deficits but also from the paradox of that it is expected to be done and at the same striking a belief that the individual corporation will be different. Therefore to better understand why managers are curious about CSR we continue by understanding the concept of institutions because they depict the perceptions of what inappropriate and appropriate action is (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

2.2 Institutions

Comment: *An occurring theme in our discussion about CSR was whether we believe it is voluntary or not. There we questioned if there lies any voluntary action within CSR. Here we continue this claim by further understanding the function of guiding, legitimizing frame works, or models for how corporations should behave. That is institutions.*

New-institutional theory is the field where the survival of corporations or organizations is analyzed and explained as their drive to incorporate the practices and procedures institutionalized in society and act according to the perceived appropriate behavior. Those organizations that do so increase their legitimacy which is necessary in order to survive (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 2008). In this sense, institutions make up for what can be considered as appropriate as well as inappropriate behavior, or as North (1990) more elegantly put it, “institutions are the rules of the game in a society”. Scott (2008) explained that institutions have three aspects, or pillars. They are regulative, as guiding organizations through coercion or legal sanctions. Normative aspects are those that often take the shape and form of rules-of-thumb, standard procedures, which arise from social obligation. Lastly, cognitive aspects of institutions are those that are shaped by symbols, words, signs, and cultural rules. One follows these much without conscious thought. As so there are different interpretations of what institutions are. They have been depicted as international regimes of money and politics, non-smoking signs, or as the status of different professions, for example doctors (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Another view of institutions

given by North (1990) is that institutions include any form of constraint that human beings devise to shape human interaction. In this sense, they are a guide to human interaction that may differ from setting to setting. Through their reproductivity, controlled by socially constructed rewards and sanctions, we know or learn easily how to perform tasks (North, 1990; Jepperson, 1991). Regarding their social construction, others have put forth the cultural value in institutions as the means and desired outcomes, leading subjects to pursue an end (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991).

Institutions thus mediate and deliver the conditions and values under which some actions are prohibited and others are permitted. They take the shape of being formal as well as informal constraints, that is formal written as unwritten codes of conduct. By being what they are they reduce uncertainty to everyday life.

Institutions thus tell us two things. One is what permitted and prohibited action is under certain circumstances and values, and the other is what is to be perceived as a desirable action. By incorporating or changing, corporations legitimize themselves and thus strengthen their position of survival. Without such action, a bank for example, would find it harder to lend money to an illegitimate client (cf. Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Thus, just as North (1990) analogously depicts institutions with sports and “the game”, institutions are in motion, where actions form our perceptions and our perceptions form what is desired actions. Therefore what is taken for granted at a given point in time is actually a social construction that has taken time to become what it is. In this sense, institutions are not static, but dynamic.

As such, just as marriage, the motel, voting, the army, a handshake, attending college, wage labor and more can be referred to as organizations, cultural values, or a form of structure they can all be formed together under the term, institutions. Thereof, one can talk about corporations as institutions where the above depicted “rules of the game” make up for what is considered as permitted and prohibited actions as well as perceived desired actions by corporations (cf. Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Jepperson, 1991)

In this sense, the corporations resemble themselves by becoming models, or idols for each other and are similarly constructed during different times. Fligstein (1990) in his book, *The Transformation of Corporate Control*, showed how the different stages of how firms should operate have changed with time, from total control of manufacturing to emphasis and belief in marketing.

Just as much profit maximization has been much emphasized, today more and more corporations are incorporating environmental, safety, and responsibility programs as the issues regarding these areas for corporations arise (Grafström et al., 2008). In this sense, one can talk about that the means of getting to the main corporate objective changes over time. A good example would be to hold a shareholder conception of the firm in contrast to a stakeholder conception of the firm. As the concepts can be seen as contesting each other at times, they focus on the same objective, profits.

Neither are therefore an end in itself, instead both models depict how to make money (Windell, 2006).

To this, Windell (2006), offered an interesting view that one can talk about “one predominant” institutional model of the corporation which describe the corporation as being profit-oriented and motivated by its self-interest. Though this model is not a new concept entirely, remembering Adam Smith (1776/2003) who addressed that it is not from the well meaning of others that we expect our own ends but from their regard to their own interest. Instead, what is interesting in what Windell mentioned is that one can talk about a predominant model of what constitutes a corporation. Today, as discussed earlier, such a corporate model expects the individual corporation to work with CSR.

As we have depicted above, one can say that new-institutional theory is composed of the meaning of socially constructed norms, ideas, and taken for granted actions which guide and lead organizations into certain patterns, or usage of “building blocks”. That is, we interpret that with pressure rising on business, in such ways we spoke of in our introduction and early discussion, it becomes more of a must for corporations to work with CSR. Thereof, today as much as CSR is contemporary, its wide dissemination, i.e. reproductivity, also makes it expected to exist in corporations. Thereof, we believe CSR has become a must in the “game” of contemporary business. Though to this, less has here been said about how changes occur to what is considered as permitted and prohibited corporate action and behavior. This we believe is an important point since we put forth the idea that the term CSR is relatively contemporary, meaning at some point in time it either was not as contemporary or did not exist. In this regard, Hoffman (1999) depicted that change occurs and motivates through disruptive events and how such events can end what has become locked in by institutional inertia. Hoffman, focused on the institutional environmentalism around the chemistry industry and showed that as disruptive events occur, they awaken the interest of more stakeholders whom in turn put more pressure on what constitutes appropriate behavior for chemical corporations. As much as his arguments are clear one cannot say that change occurs as revolutionary as he depicts it. On the other hand, perhaps one cannot say that they are as evolutionary either (Scott, 2008). Instead, if one wants to understand how ideas are spread one cannot regard to organizations as passive entities that only react to all the latest trends in order to secure some kind of reward to their self-love. One has to see organizations as active actors in the process of dissemination of ideas and consider the properties of what an idea is (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin-Andersson, 1996).

2.3 Translation

Comment: *One of the confusions that we claimed that reside within CSR is its deficit of having a clear definition. We believe the term CSR is quite ambiguous. To this, we also meant that the fact that it is not given what kind of corporation that should engage in CSR further adds to this confusion. Though, perhaps it is such ambiguity that makes it possible to fill the term with many different understandings. To further investigate this we continue to understand the concept of translation.*

Organizations can be depicted as social constructions. Though, they can also and perhaps should be depicted as beings or actors capable of making comparisons, judgments, reason about causality, and act according to their desires (Sevón, 1996). This is somewhat contradictory to the above depicted picture which is one that shows corporations as passive actors that simply react and adapt to the latest trends (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996). In contrast to this then, since corporations can “think”, is that imitation or adaptation of the newest trends is not forced upon corporations, but instead to some degree come from the interest of corporations themselves (Sevón, 1996). Thereof, the concept of translation becomes relevant.

In short, translation can be described as the process of ideas traveling and the energy needed for this to happen and thus puts emphasis on the actors that supply this energy. The name of the concept, translation, in this meaning surpasses its linguistic interpretation and more appropriately could be defined as the displacement, drift, mediation, creation of a new link that did not exist before between at least two points and the modification of that idea. This process can be seen as continuous editing and reformulation of the idea for it to fit the present circumstances and local context. (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin-Andersson, 1996).

Though a main part of the concept of translation, and more interesting for us, is the definition of what constitutes an idea. An idea can be defined as images that become known in the form of pictures or sounds, where words can be either one of them. These ideas can be materialized, that is turned into objects or actions, such as paintings, recordings, reports, presentations and so forth.

In order for ideas to travel they have to be materialized, but before that happens an idea is objectified. What that means is that people, or for example managers first bring their attention towards a social product. This means that one cannot perceive something unless it somehow relates to what one already knows. Thus managers often do not look for what they do not know, or do not want to confirm but instead look for something that can function as a “guiding idea”. In this sense, managers of prosperous organizations look for excitement, managers in crisis for salvations and so

on. This is for example highlighted by the numerous imitation attempts of the successful science park Silicon Valley (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996).

Other properties as a part of ideas becoming objectified regard their social context, emphasis on taken for granted structures and the disruptions of them, importance of ideological control, and being brought under public attention and exciting to maintain public interest (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996). Also according to Røvik (2002), ideas that become successful are those that are universally applicable and presented in very simplified ways. A high tendency of ambiguity in ideas makes room for its dissemination. It is this ambiguity that makes ideas fit to different settings (Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002). To this, others meant that ideas that show or at least promise some enhanced organizational outcomes travel better than those that do not (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Abrahamson, 1996). Thus, one can say that an idea should not be too vague nor too specific. By going through this process of being objectified and turned into objects only then can ideas travel and as more people are persuaded to use the ideas for their own use, they can be materialized into collective action. (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996). Thereof, by remembering our prior discussion of the ambiguities that lie within CSR it seems not unfair to say that it as a term has been disseminated much because of such confusion. To this others have already depicted much of these properties in CSR as an idea (cf. Buhr & Grafström 2006; Windell, 2006; Grafström et al., 2008; Grankvist, 2009).

Novel and exciting ideas – Perceived competitive gain from CSR

Comment: *Just as much CSR is expected to be done by corporations as to follow some kind of rule like everyone else, it also we claimed is believed to inherent a degree of giving competitive edge. That is, how contradictory it may sound, by following the rule of the game one also tries to “rule the game”. Common sense would of course think of fashion as similar to this, especially within clothing and pop culture. Therefore to understand such dilemma within CSR we continue by discussing what fashion is.*

Often fashion is depicted as irrational behavior or deviation from what is rational managerial behavior. Finkelstein (1989) said that fashionability allows individuals who follow the imperatives of fashion to abandon the responsibility to make history and shape culture. Similarly Veblen (1899) thought fashion was a negative phenomenon leading people to conspicuous consumption. Others have portrayed fashions as transient and are aimed at figuring out for how long fashions “stick around” (Abrahamson, 1996; Spell, 1999). Such research claim the ability to divide fashion into stages makes it orderly and predictable. Though, it is hard to predict that a fashion will soon die

without it reaching its peak. Therefore, research portraying fashion related to some timeline can only function in retrospect (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005). Similar to Veblen, Bigg (1893) said that fashion serves no useful end. Instead fashion is merely a series of frequently recurring changes undetermined by utility. Bigg meant that this makes it clear of what make up for progress and what then constitute as fashion. Along with such thought, Abrahamson (1996) said that managerial fashions can be separated from aesthetic ones for two reasons. One reason is because aesthetic fashions need only to appear beautiful and modern, whereas managerial fashions must both be considered as rational means to an important end as well as progressive. The second reason is that aesthetic fashions are much more shaped by sociopsychological forces whereas managerial ones need to satisfy a managerial desire to close performance gaps. Accordingly, in this line of thought fashion seems to be made up of some degree of illusionary utility.

On the other hand there are other views of fashion. Tarde (1890) saw fashion as the pleasure of not doing the usual thing and to show to the public that one does not do the same thing as the rest of the world. Continuing in this line of thought Simmel (1904) meant that fashion is the imitation of a given example and satisfies the need for social adaption but also just as much the need of differentiation, and desire for change and contrast. That is, on one hand fashion as imitation can be explained as acting like someone else with a degree of conscious intent to achieve the same or almost the same results, consequences. Imitation in this way is to learn from others' experience and to save energy and resources from trial-and-error strategies. It is a judgment that whatever magic worked on others will work on oneself too. Though causal reasoning like that can just as much lead to pitfalls. Such judgment is based on the ability to make comparisons between one own's condition with others and to ask how it is possible to become more like someone else. It is often under uncertainty that such imitation occurs (Sevón. 1996).

On the other hand fashion is strategy, that is a choice with at least as much of a degree of conscious intent to achieve different and unique results, consequences. Since we can see it as strategy, it becomes a cause to find a unique selling point or argument that others are unlikely to imitate and copy (cf. Porter, 1996; Kim & Mauborgne, 2005). As such there is a simultaneous attempt for homogenization as heterogenization within fashion. In this sense, fashion stands both for difference but also with its repetitive, imitation like adaption, for tradition as well. Thus fashion is a highly paradoxical phenomenon and is both an expression of conformism as it is anti-conformism (Simmel, 1904; Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005). In this sense, and by remembering our earlier discussion about institutions, we believe CSR both satisfies the need for social adaption as much as it satisfies the need for differentiation. That is, it is both expected to do CSR as a "rule of the game" as it is a perceived factor for competitiveness or uniqueness, just like fashion. Also under uncertain conditions, fashion helps to better understand the present and at the same time makes room for

better predictability of the future (Blumer, 1969). By being a challenger to what exists, fashion is for some a phenomenon that opposes custom, and if successful, becomes custom itself, only to be opposed by the next fashion (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005). Though, we believe, just as some try to portray fashion as transient and unimportant in retrospect, portraying it as institutional seed can also only be done in retrospect. As such, regardless of whether or not fashion is seen as irrational behavior, transient or as institutional fringe and seed for new customs. A more neutral perspective of fashion, in this case the idea of CSR, instead notices that what constitutes fashion is an ability to compare and a wish to become like someone or something. Continuing, also a need or perception of it as strategy and conformity to the present, and a perception of uncertainty around it. As such, we believe CSR is just as much conformism as it is anti-conformism. Thus we believe that it is not retrospective measurable positive or negative results that constitute fashion. But instead it is what society and environmental contexts make of it and the importance that people give it or amplify it with.

The importance of actors

Comment: *Something that was mentioned though not extensively discussed under its own topic early on in this thesis is the power different actors have for disseminating ideas. We did mention for example how consultants create their own marketplace though here we will further understand the importance actors have to make ideas travel.*

In the process of translation there has to be an actor that brings the energy needed for an idea to travel. Books, movies, or pictures do not travel by themselves, rather it is people who energize an idea any time they translate it for their own use (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996).

Often, some forms of actors are seen as to be “idea-bearing” and are more concerned with the process of translation. This is the case regarding consultants. They are seen as actors with “whole equipments” needed to materialize ideas, where their interaction between each other and with managers very often puts them in a position as being regarded as creators or distributors of ideas (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002; Windell, 2006).

One aspect of the importance of consultants concerns the uncertainty, or ambiguity regarding ideas. Often such uncertainty leads to perceived lack of control. In such situations consultants provide the benefit of serving as facilitators of the re-stabilization of control. As a result, for example in their relation to managers, they strengthen or even restore managers’ confidence. Consultants and consulting firms have even been described as car tuning garages that do terrific tuning jobs, which lead to an addiction (Ernst & Kieser, 2002).

Consultants have also been depicted as actors in the process of translation through their acknowledgement of ideas. Windell (2006) showed that the growth of consultants working with CSR was understood by consultants themselves to be a consequence of corporate scandals, especially during the beginning of the 21st century. Also, the diversity of corporate issues that had been placed under the label, CSR, made the term being understood as vague and complicated. This situation was though beneficial for consultants since it allowed them to create their own unique points of view to sell to corporations and to engage in cooperative work with other consultants in order to successfully market CSR. As the term got more popular, some consultants even made clear that they considered themselves having ideological interests in the term, apart from strict economic ones.

Another actor in the process of translation is the media. Everything from books, business press, to CSR blogs have been a strong factor in the process of the dissemination of the concept (Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002; Windell, 2006). A Google search on “Corporate Social Responsibility” ends up with 21,000,000 results (Google search, February 2012). Buhr & Grafström (2006) have shown in their study how the business press contributes to the formation of meaning of management concepts. In their study of the Financial Times from 1988-2003 they show how the meaning and popularity of CSR changed over time from being a concept that had low reader familiarity to a well-known concept. CSR was associated with many different themes, from social and environmental concerns, to the transnational characteristics of corporations and stakeholder relations. With the increasing interest the term CSR was made into news and by giving much attention to unexpected events and deviating practices, stories got clear “heroes” and “villains”. As an actor in the process of translation and the traveling of ideas the business press has been a major contributor. One reason might be because of the very characteristics of a business magazine. Often, they avoid the full review of expert literature, rarely cite their references in a scholarly lengthy manner, and the discourse is often seen as very simplistic and sometimes even humoristic. Also popular business magazines manage to idealize business practices often to a broader public than that of managers. This is done by much emphasis being put on ideological statements, myth like narratives, and a focus on how large firms relate to these concepts (Mazza & Alvarez 2000; Van Rossem, 2006).

Academic journals have also had an effect on the establishment of the concept CSR and the number of articles dealing with CSR have grown quite significantly (Windell, 2006). Though for some, academic journals have not played the same extensive role as the business press. Mainly because managers generally do not read academic writings (Van Rossem, 2006).

Earlier we mentioned the work of Hoffman (1999) regarding the institutional evolution on environmentalism in the chemical industry. There Hoffman claimed that the concept of

organizational fields can be broadened around issues of importance with the energy of disruptive events. From only being an emerging issue, as more disruptive events occurred, the institutional history of the chemical industry changed and not only did industry corporations take part of its construction but NGOs, the US Government, and journals did so as well. All putting pressure on each other to conform to their own interests. As much as Hoffman sets forth the idea of issues fields, he also points to the fact of how ideas translate and travel and have constructed a model of some of the actors of idea setting. Similar models have been depicted by others as well (Armbrüster & Kipping, 2002; Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002).

In this regard, Abrahamson (1996) contributed with his general model of management fashion setting. Along with institutionalists Abrahamson suggested that there are norms for rationality and progress. That is the assumption that stakeholders to a corporation expect its managers to act rationally and the expectation of constant and never-ending improvement in an organization. These norms of rationality and progress create a market of management fashions. At the same time there are explanations for demand of such management fashion through socio-psychological needs and technical and economical environmental changes. Such needs and changes are depicted as a drive for individuality and novelty but at the same time also for conformity. Also, through for example economic fluctuations performance gaps are made visible that demand new managerial methods in order to close them. In this market, Abrahamson believes that there are different fashion setters, or actors that create new fashions for management. These suppliers of fashion are consulting firms, management gurus, business mass-media publications, and business schools. The actors that function as suppliers in this model create, process, select, and finally disseminate management fashion through their rhetorics of championing management. Though as much as the model¹ is explanatory of how and why management fashions are supplied, less is explained about how and why they are demanded. Even though Abrahamson mentioned that fashions are not forced upon managers, there is still an image of seeing managers as incapable of questioning, or handicapped to do so. Thereof managers become regarded as gullible. In this sense, Abrahamson developed the importance of noting the voices of a supply side of fashion, such as consultants and media, but forgot to give satisfying explanations to why managers demand such fashions (Worren, 1996; Newell, Robertson, & Swan, 2001). We believe that there are more explanations to why managers are curious about fashionable ideas such as CSR thus raising the importance of understanding of what management and leadership is.

¹ See appendix – 7.3 The management fashion setting process

2.4 Management and Leadership

Comment: *Above we have explained how CSR is expected corporate behavior, ambiguous as a term, and at the same time striking a belief of gaining a competitive edge or uniqueness. To this we also explained the importance of actors as a part of the dissemination of ideas. In this regard, much emphasis has been put on actors that are regarded as suppliers of ideas, or “idea-bearing”. The actor that we have focused on, business managers as an actor is especially important because these are the ones with true power. With power in this context we refer to decision making. Decision making from managers whether to implement a fashion or disregard it is the key to understand how CSR has become a transnational concept on international business landscape. This leads us to explain how the managerial role opens up for curiosity about CSR. In this theoretical section we present how leadership has evolved and the influence of society has on managers. Through progress in time our theoretical framework on leadership and managers suggests that managers have become more isolated and focused on from many stakeholders. We will provide theories regarding how this affects managers and how it affects decision making. We will present the role of a manager to better understand the manager’s work situation. In this section our aim is to increase the awareness of the everyday problems of being a manager via important organizational writers. As such, here we are more interested in internal elements that lead to a higher curiosity for CSR.*

What are management and leadership?

For reader’s utility during this section we start off by explaining the difference between management and leadership. Management is a formal title which exists to create structure, organization and predictability whilst leadership, an informal sociopsychological concept used to control the social environment around the leader, exists to create shifts and changes in processes. Consequently, management is about solutions and control in the everyday business routines, and leadership is about inspiration and securing commitment in times of change (Kotter, 1990; Rosell & Lundén 1998). Blomquist & Röding (2010) claimed that you need both management and leadership to reach success in an organization. If an organization has too much management they are not innovative and are not capable of dealing with changes. On the contrary, if an organization has too much leadership no one is in control resulting in deadlines failing, budget is not kept etc. True leadership handles ideas, what to do with them, and transforming them into visions and optimism that can be shared in an organization (Carter, 2009).

The origin of management and leadership

Historically, managers and leaders were a king, a pharaoh, a warrior etc. These gained followers by their formal title and not by the way they were able to convey their visions and goals (Arvonen, 1989; Blomquist & Rödning, 2010). Borgert (1977) wrote that when the industrial revolution began managers had to see to the humans who carried out the work. This forced managers to adopt a more social view on management practices. Arvonen (1989) wrote that when the industrial society started to grow it rationalized away important symbols as God, religion and the Pope since these were based on mysticism and not science. With this, society gained new leaders such as foundry proprietors and factory owners. They differ from the previous leaders of history in that sense that they exercised financial interest and was not focused on upholding an ideological society. Little demand was put on social leadership during this time since focus was on linear actions i.e. performing activities efficiently. Then, leadership was merely a controlling function.

History of management and leadership after World War II

In the 1960s managers were pressured in a larger extent to coordinate the contemporary modern system between machine and man; this meant that managers increasingly had to become more adaptive to new situations when facing new technological opportunities and problems (Blomquist & Rödning, 2010).

Inglehart's (1977) The Silent Revolution Model² explained the changes in American society in four respects after the end of World War II. (1) The material prosperity increased, (2) World War II became more distant from the contemporary modern time, (3) Education level increased, and (4) mass media has gradually become to play a more important role in society. These changes in society were called "The Silent Revolution" because it transformed human values and political activities mainly in the U.S. but also in other industrial countries. These changes resulted in society becoming more competent and aware of how societal institutions should behave. The future upcoming managers in the 1970s, called post-materialists, had other values than the older type of managers. Their values were mainly focused on creating a beautiful society, giving room for human ideas and thoughts, protecting freedom of speech and increase influence in social questions and employee democratic power. Whilst the older type of managers', who emerged after World War II, values were on fighting inflation, prioritize economic growth, protect law and order, fighting crime and having a strong military defense. From this, it can be said that "softer" values became more important over time after World War II.

² See appendix – 7.4 The Silent Revolution Model

In the 1970s and 1980s unions became larger and employee power was increasing which resulted in managers becoming more charismatic and dedicated into tasks to unify and motivate employees. During this time loads of autobiographies were released by industrial managers showing that interest in managers' personality and allure was gaining in importance (Blomquist & Rödning, 2010).

Leadership changes with development

Arvonen (1989) stated that the development in modern societies, referring to philosophic values, economy, technology, environment etc., has put new and higher demands on managers. Ansoff (1979) claimed that by the greater complexity in society the higher demands on leaders because the historical organization forms are insufficient for society and its consumers. Arvonen (1989) argued that the reason for these changes is because the "business compass" is moving towards a globalized world where the competitive landscape has no borders. As one example, the U.S. automobile manufacturers in the 1970s did not build smaller and more environmentally friendly cars as rest of the world's automobile manufacturers did. The American car manufacturers disregarded the increase of oil prices and continued to manufacture large and "petrol thirsty" cars. Consequently, the American car industry never really recovered after the oil crises due to that they did not adapt to the new global trend of understanding new needs. Modern leadership has become to adapt to global trends.

Connock & Johns (1997) wrote that ethics and moral have become "trendy" and "fashionable". Therefore, managers and leaders uncritically fall on their knees to obey any checklist on how an institution or organization *should* behave.

"Strategy and ethics go hand-in-hand. Strategy is just as much ethics as it is about goals and values"

Freeman & Gilbert (1988) in Connock & Johns (1997) page 9

There is a long tradition of correlated activities between business and society. Historically, business has been a regulated part of society. Governments have passed legislation for business to comply with, for example amount of working hours, maternity leave, minimum wage etc. As world markets arise the importance of business has arisen and society has had to make a trade-off in power in order to acquire other inputs beneficial for society. The two, business and society, are often depicted as having two separate interests. Business in creating wealth, and society in creating social cohesion and security. Many times the latter has had to intervene in the world of business through

regulation and redistribution. This is of course witnessed by different societies demanding new types of ethical leadership on corporations (Blowfield & Murray, 2008).

Demand for ethical leadership

Blowfield & Murray (2008) wrote about corporate responsibility. We accept their writings as similar to CSR and therefore we will transfer their thoughts on corporate responsibility to CSR as these are the same. They explained that in a recent poll that 81 % of the respondents, all of them managers, believed that CSR is essential to their business - even though they could not agree on what CSR is. Global corporations are becoming more anxious to externally report their social and environmental performance. Prosperity is built on economic growth, made possible through greater productivity and production. With almost all production being made in Third World countries low cost production has become important. For The Western World this has meant a new economy where ideas, creativity, and innovation brand the business landscape. With these two worlds merging has also meant that various places and communities on the planet have become suffering from the consumption and success of industrial countries. When these inequalities are highlighted by different stakeholders, the requirement for greater transparency and accountability are demanded. These inequalities can take many faces of, for example, child labor, corruption, environmental pollution, support for military regimes etc. Any unfavorable disclosure threatens shareholder confidence, brand reputation, production stability, employee trust, etc. So therefore, ethical leadership is needed to prevent these things from happening.

Blomquist & Röding (2010) defined good management as conducted ethically, morally and valuably. It is important for managers to act accordingly to these catchwords if society is to evolve for the better in all parts of society. Treviño et al (2003) established ethical leadership as a process where leading is performed in a manner which respects the rights and dignity of others. Managers must always have high integrity and trustworthiness to gain respect and social power over his or her employees. From these explanations, we interpret ethical leadership as a correlation between the values of the organization and the values of its customers or stakeholders.

There is an increasing interest for ethical leadership in organizations. One reason is that corporations are becoming more important for society; both locally and globally the corporations' power and influence becomes greater (Klein, 2002; Corvellec, 2006). For example, Wal-Mart was in 2010 the world's 13th largest economy. In this regard corporate ethics, moral and values affect us all in some way (Blomquist & Röding, 2010).

The manager and the organization

A manager's leadership style is defined by the ways that he or she tries to influence employees' behavior when performing business activities. This is an iterative process branded by several actors which can be resembled to how organizational culture arises. The final goal for the managers is to achieve efficiency in the whole organization (Borgert, 1977). Campbell et al (1970) claimed that leadership behavior in an organization is identified through several systems that depend on each other. The overall influence on managerial behavior is organizational culture, and the other impacts on managerial behavior are organizational results and individual characteristics.

Managers in general are very frustrated and abused by all of the different pressures from both external and internal stakeholders (Borgert, 1977; Albrecht, 1980; Watson, 1994). Many managers are burdened by everything that is expected of them. These managers feel that it is impossible to meet all stakeholders' demands, and these stakeholders all expect to see their needs being met. These contradictions usually make managers to incorporate basic management fashions created to fit the organization's need (Borgert, 1977; Briner et al, 1990).

The manager as savior

There is a romanticizing of leadership meaning that managers sometimes gain praise for an organizational advance which, in reality, is because of another organizational strength. This has resulted in many myths where managers emerge as "knights in shining armors" and rescues the whole organization. In opposite situations when organizations fail to deliver results "bad leadership" is often given as an explanation (Wallander, 1990; Blomquist & Rödning, 2010). DuBrin (2001) concurred that organizations with performance problems often replace a manager hoping that the new manager will reverse the problems. There are dangers with this culture of managers being heroes in the organization. Not only do others rely on the managers to shape successful strategies and big business executions, but the managers themselves may put tough, or even impossible, demands on themselves. This is not beneficial for anyone, neither managers nor the organization (Connock & Johns, 1997; Sveningsson, 2009).

Wallander (1990) argued that leaders, as individuals are important in organizations with high demands on them. In many cases, the prospects of a corporation can look very bad. The organization may have everything against them in terms of capability and commitment from employees. What they need is a leader with strong visions, a leader that solely can "sell sand in Sahara" and bring the organization back on its feet.

Arvonen (1989) claimed that the most important thing when it comes to leadership is to unite the organization with common visions and goals. This is a process which comprises the board, employees, unions etc. No matter how large disruptions may be the manager must make sure that these processes run smoothly. Therefore managers put much effort of trying to motivate their organization through common visions and goals.

Røvik (1998) argued that popular management fashions are simplified descriptions of larger fundamental problems. Models often have very relevant solutions to an organization's problem, therefore managers consider them to be clarifying and motivating to implement into the organization. These management models are also often explained as solvers of additional problems that the organization might have once they are implemented (Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002; Clark, 2004). According to Huczynski (1996) management fashions are adopted because they are manageable in a pressuring corporate world. Connock & Johns (1997) argued that organizations, at most times, do not implement CSR to solve a particular societal problem but an organizational one.

Pressure on managers

Albrecht (1980) described the 20th century as “the exponential century”. This period is not only marked by fantastic innovations created by mankind, but also increasing acceleration in the lives of mankind which has created a modern illness called “stress”.

*“A typical citizen in a large city gets out of bed at a fixed time every morning, sits in car traffic as he drives to work, goes into a swarming building, goes up to the office in a packed elevator, and works all day as a member of a social unit. Perhaps he eats lunch in a crowded restaurant and walks back to work on a busy street... Crime and violence are also things that the citizen often reflects upon.”, Albrecht, K. (1980). *Chefen och stressen*, page 15*

According to Albrecht (1980), managers sometimes adopt management fashions to numb their stress levels for a short period of time. Connock & Johns (1997) wrote that in organizations it is not always important for the stakeholders to know what the managers *actually* do. Instead, stakeholders seem to have a greater interest in what managers are *perceived* to do. Whether stakeholders are ignorant or lazy is irrelevant, but incredibly stakeholders do not care as long as it looks good from the outside. Strang & Meyer (1994) believed that managers adopt management fashions that are most likely reflecting the citizens' perception of what is believable, rational and modern. These popular management models gain further importance for managers through all of the channels and

sources which discuss them. The most important ones are business media, consultants and conference meetings (Rogberg 2006).

Sjöstrand, Sandberg & Tyrstrup (1999) agreed on that pressure on management is very hard since new and complex information arise constantly. Managers are being overwhelmed with information and cannot possibly be expected to let in all information making the managers stressed when having to choose between numerous activities.

Researches have shown that most managerial work is reactive and managerial decisions are based on gut feeling and intuition, not in a rational manner (Mintzberg, 1975; Stewart, 1979; Kotter, 1982; Grint, 1995). Wallander (1990) wrote about an expression originating from military command: “It is better to act than not acting at all”. This expression mean that managers are often very focused on their managing areas to that degree that they rather act out of fear of being replaced or out of experimenting to see if the act is successful.

Fluck (1999) discussed the relationship between managers and their owners, the shareholders. Fluck suggested that institutional investors put a lot of pressure on managers due to that their interests are strictly financial. They normally expect maximum value for their invested capital. Jensen (1993) agreed that large shareholders will keep close contact with the corporation to see where their invested equity goes. Having a strong owner examining what you are doing very closely will create a strong incentive for managers to work harder and try to find new solutions to be profitable.

Perceived utility of CSR

Comment: *Early in our thesis we pointed out that CSR both functions as a tool for legitimacy as it also works to increase competitiveness. Though we have not yet discussed how such a tool functions. That is we are also interested in how such legitimacy and at the same time competitiveness is perceived to be gained by managers. Following are some views of how CSR is supposed to function for managers. We believe this is important since it depicts how managers believe they should answer to institutional and market pressure.*

According to Blowfield & Murray (2008) many managers do not know what it is that CSR is supposed to do. Is it supposed to restore society’s faith in business corporations? Does it reduce poverty? End illegal corporate activities? Does it make the world more sustainable? Even though managers do not how to handle CSR still they are fast to embrace it. Any attempt to defy the concept of CSR is pointless for managers so instead they join their critics and point the blame on the next corporation in line. Any corporate action to increase economic development or improving

life quality for workers are merely actions initiated to conventional corporate growth and profitability.

Connock & Johns (1997) recommended that corporations follow ethical norms since a good reputation is more important than short-term sales. These ethical norms are used by different stakeholders to evaluate the corporate culture. Consumers are believed to choose between corporate culture rather than just best price. Therefore it is important for corporations to understand that they must conduct all of their business activities in an ethical way. On the other side, Nishikawa (1989) stated that “consumers are more honest when they spend their money rather than when they talk”. For example, 70 % of the U.K.’s population claimed that they are worried about the environment but only 11 % bought environmentally friendly products. By this, it appears that corporate strategic values can be affected by ethical values, but they are most likely to be affected by market interests. If this is true managers do not have to regard ethical standards in their organization. Clinard (1983) made a survey on managers regarding what kind of pressure these managers are exposed to. 21,7 % answered “Making profits, keeping costs under control”, 15,1 % answered “Time pressure”, 8,1 % answered “Building relations with employees” etc. No pressure was on managers to adopt ethical standards or ethical procedures so it can be assumed that managers are likely to disregard these ethical issues. This is verified as similar results were found in *Report on Business Ethics* (1996). However, other surveys based from customers’ perspective have shown the opposite, that managers should focus more on ethical leadership. Ferrell & Fraedrich (1994) wrote that 69 % of the respondents in a consumer survey would reject a corporation’s offer if they believed that the corporation’s managers act unethically. Connock & Johns (1997) argued that it is more beneficial for an organization in many areas to implement ethical standards, such as CSR, than not doing so. Smith (2008) wrote that CSR activities, such as Fair Trade labeling³, FSC⁴, Rugmark⁵ etc., have helped numerous of corporations to avoid boycott of their brands and have increased customer loyalty. Many times this is the kind of argument that put internal pressure on hesitating or hard-headed managers.

“Good ethics is just like a good insurance – we may not utilize it but it could prevent massive losses”

John Collins (1990) in Connock & Johns (1997) page 9

³ **Fair Trade** is an international organization which creates opportunities for croppers and employees in developing countries to improve their life and social qualifications (<http://www.fairtrade.se/cldoc/627.htm>)

⁴ **FSC** (Forest Stewardship Council) is an International organization that works for global environment and social accountability when cutting down rain forests (<http://www.fsc-sweden.org/om-fsc>)

⁵ **Rugmark** is a network of non-profit organizations dedicated to ending illegal child labour in the rug making industry (<http://www.pbs.org/now/enterprisingideas/RugMarkUSA.html>)

Blowfield & Murray (2008) explained that when it comes to measuring CSR activities managers often show something small and irrelevant to the bigger societal problem in focus just so they have something to show for. There are hundreds of ways of measuring CSR-activities: FTSE4Good, the Ethibel Sustainability Index, the KLD Indexes, ARESE social ratings, Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes etc. This diffusion causes organizations to improve their ethical standards which initially seem like a positive aspect. However, the negative aspect is that organizations have to put resources into projects which few stakeholders really care about. These resources could have been put into some other project with greater benefit to the core production. Besides organizations there are also magazines, such as Business Ethics, Business Week, and Fortune etc., all of these also have their own interpretation of what CSR activities are supposed to be. Even though corporations are not included in the UN Human Rights treaty, or the Kyoto Protocol, as countries are, they are still tied to these norms. Managers disregard that they have no further formal or legal responsibility to contribute to society other than paying tax to gain legitimacy. They uphold their legitimacy as managers by showing external commitment.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Comment: *In this section we will summarize our theoretical framework and point out the overarching elements, which we mean make managers curious about CSR.*

- CSR, a diffuse idea

Earlier we depicted four areas of confusion concerning the term CSR. The first two areas concerned the fact that there is no clear definition of what CSR means nor is there an answer to what type of corporations that should engage in CSR. We believe this point is consistent with the theory of translation in that uncertain situations, and ambiguous ideas make room for the dissemination of ideas. That is, in line with the process of translation the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility is neither too vague nor too precise to be objectified, making the term suited to be picked up by managers. In other words, we expect managers to perceive CSR as ambiguous.

- Developing an idea of CSR through other actors

Further we have also mentioned the importance of actors, such as consultants, media, and other constituents such as governments. As such we believe managers have developed an understanding of what CSR is, and that it should be incorporated in the corporation through their contact with consultants, through media and business press, and through pressures from other constituents.

- Creating legitimacy for the corporation

Continuing, another area in our earlier discussion regarded whether or not CSR is voluntary or not. We believe our discussion there is consistent with our discussion about what institutions are and what “the rules of the game” means for corporations. That is, Corporate Social Responsibility in our understanding is today an institution, which corporations must follow in order to secure their own survival. Thus, we expect managers to perceive and believe that the importance of CSR is higher than their own free will, more or less a must for corporations. A part of this is also to try to understand how such legitimacy is perceived to be won, that is what is the perceived practical activity or perhaps activities that need to be done?

- CSR as a competitive factor

The last area of CSR which we discussed was whether or not CSR is seen as an ability to increase competitiveness. This point is consistent with our discussion regarding what constitute fashionable ideas. In this sense, we expect managers to show a belief that through CSR not only will they conform to society but also be able to be unique through it. However contradictory that may sound. Important elements of what constitutes fashion are thus an ability to compare and a wish to become like someone or something, a need or perception of it as strategy and conformity to the present, and a perception of uncertainty around it.

- Contemporary expectations on managers

Management and leadership are, through history, bound to a certain social role where they are expected to act according to what is expected of them in the contemporary time. As such we expect that the managers believe that CSR is a part of their managerial role today. Thereof, we ask the managers how they perceive their role as managers and if they believe that leadership has changed throughout their career.

- Organizational culture

Managers are shaped by the organizational culture, which has an overarching impact on managers' decisions making. At the same time managers want to gather their employees around common values to strengthen the organizational culture. Thus, organizational culture direct managers to the decisions that are best suited to unite the organization.

- Managers as saviors

Managers are seen as more than just humans working in an organization. From the very many and high expectations on managers they are seen as saviors or "knights in shining armors". Managers fight hard to uphold their status and the implementation of management fashions are a way of gaining control of their chaotic situation. To ease some of their hectic burden it was discussed whether the adoption of management fashions is a way for the manager to enhance his or her legitimacy as the visionary leader and to implement CSR or any other ethical standard as a way to solve an organizational problem.

- Lack of time and stress

Due to lack of time managers do not always have time to thoroughly examine arising management fashions. Often due to the many demands and work tasks that they have. Therefore the implementation of management fashions such as CSR works as a quick-fix to please the demanding stakeholders. Since the demands for CSR are many, managers often reason as "it is better to act than not acting at all".

- What is not included in our theoretical framework

We do not take a position where we think that our theoretical framework is complete to fully understand what factors contribute to managers to become curious about CSR. The eight elements depicted in 2.5 Theoretical Framework are merely areas that have caught our interest and what we believe are the most important elements to look at when trying to research why managers are curious about CSR. We for example have intentionally left out other important factors such as other stakeholders than managers. Examples of these are consultants, different shareholders, employees etc. Even though these are, more or less, mentioned in our theoretical framework, and surely have an impact to why managers are curious about CSR, we have deliberately chosen not to go in depth with these. If one wants to gain full understanding to why managers are curious about CSR all stakeholders must be researched, but we focus only on managers. Neither have we studied psychology theory about the individual characteristics of managers why managers are susceptible to management fashions, which is also an interesting perspective if one wants to learn why managers are curious about CSR. To this, we also could have depicted the term CSR as a product and not as an idea. Though we believe that because of the term being so diffuse already, such a categorization would be hard to do. Next, we want to explain how our research has been conducted in chapter 3, Method.

3. Method

Comment: *In this chapter the choice of study and course of actions are to be presented. For the empirical data we will give the reader the understanding of why and how the interviewees for our primary data, semi-structured interviews, were selected. A brief overview on the interviewees will also be provided in the appendix. As for the theoretical framework this will be presented in a section with critique of theoretical and empirical sources. The chapter will be concluded with a presentation of reliability, degree of generalization and methodical ethics.*

3.1 Methodical way of attacking the problem

The purpose of this thesis is to raise the understanding to why managers are curious about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). To find an empirical answer to our research quest we have chosen to do interviews with top managers of Gambro. The result of these interviews will be compared and analyzed in comparison with our theoretical framework.

The method of collecting data for this paper has been abductive which means both a deductive and inductive approach. Abductive approach means that we oscillate between theory and empirics to draw conclusions about why some managers are eager to adopt CSR activities. Inductive approach is based on facts that are drawn out from observations and empirical data. The problem with inductive approach is that it generalizes through several observations. Deductive approach is when conclusions are drawn out from previous written theories and from these a logical hypothesis can be drawn. You start from some general principles which are known to be true or assumed to be true and then apply these obvious principles to more specific cases.

You could also say that deductive approach is a study where the relation between theory and empirics is examined. The limitation of deductive approach is that we assume that the theoretical foundations are solid. To relate to our thesis we assume that the theories studied are correct. To build a solid theoretical framework though, we have made sure to read many types of different literature which bring forth many different theories in the basic areas of this thesis. According to Backman (2008) it is disputed whether a writer can be entirely objective after having read previous literature in the fields of research. To avoid being blinded of our studied theories we have made sure to let our interviewees follow their own paths in the interviews and focus on any other area of their own interest. A good deductive approach should be critical towards the decisions that a

corporation executes so determinism⁶ is avoided (Bryman & Bell, 2003). We have all along this thesis chosen to view Gambro from a critical point of view. Since Gambro is curious about CSR but does not have any high degree of knowledge in it we feel no anxiety about being submitted in this area.

We have deliberately chosen to study just one corporation. CSR is a widespread concept and we could probably study any corporation which is curious about CSR because it is widely adopted by many corporations. However, to go in depth and to learn empirically why CSR has awoken managerial curiosity we focus on just one corporation. Also, to limit our study to just one corporation enables us to be more flexible if new research findings are to arise. Other reasons to why we have just focused on one case study are that corporations are not always comparable and accessible when it comes to this intimate research. Corporations have different needs to exercise CSR though we believe, since we have not made any industry comparisons, the focus on one corporation will still bring a clear view on our problematization since we focus on managerial and societal traits.

3.2 A qualitative case study

To reach an answer for this thesis' purpose we have had to do a qualitative study, with eleven semi-structured interviews. This is because this study contains a high degree of complexity and it contains "soft" elements such as organizational culture and management fashions. These are hard to quantify and a case study on these areas are a good way of dealing with these problems. The conclusion cannot be reached with only a quantitative methodology but a case study will bring theory and empirics closer together (Jacobsen, 2002).

Qualitative interview methodology is when the interviewees get to put forth their image of reality with their own words (Backman, 2008). In this case how they perceive CSR, new management fashions, what leadership is and how leadership affects curiosity in CSR in an organization. We are interested in how the interviewees interpret, experience, and structure their surroundings in relation with their own experience. This will raise the relevance and quality of the interviews and make the analysis of the empirical study more useful (Jacobsen, 2007). Qualitative methodology aims to investigate processes more than one-dimensional measurable results (Backman, 2008).

The weaknesses with qualitative research are that it is very subjective and it does not capture "the full picture". Responses are not measured, neither are they statistically representative, so data is

⁶ Determinism = Philosophic outlook that says that everything is predetermined. Free will is an illusion. In modern philosophy determinism is regarded as several concurring facts becoming reality because everyone is inspired from the same facts (Prismas, 1993)

hard to generalize. When one cannot generalize data it is hard to compare cases, making correct analysis of reality and draw proper conclusions. Further, interviewees might not be totally honest knowing that what they say is on record, and therefore embellish reality. Qualitative research is dependent on interviewer skills, orientation and interpretation. Lastly, the result of a qualitative research is not easy to connect to other research areas (Kate Willis Research, 2012). What we have done to counteract these flaws is that we begin by acknowledging that our study is separate from others. We have no other identical research data to compare with to avoid bias. We are only interested in capturing the Gambro managers' view on reality. To deal with honesty in the interviews we asked critical questions which were hard to move away from, and made sure the interview stayed related to the subject. At the same time our questions were open for individual interpretation and the interviewee was as such given chance to go into depth in any particular situation within or related to our theoretical framework. More pitfalls of qualitative studies are researchers bias which can affect the analysis of the results (Colorado State University, 2012). We acknowledge that we are somewhat skeptical of the term CSR, but at the same time we consider this to be a strength and an increase to our motivation to investigate why managers adopt CSR. We do not believe that our analysis will be affected since the empirics will guide us towards the results. We cannot affect the empirics, we are merely observers. Another deficit with qualitative research is that the case study group may not be representative of the larger population (Colorado State University, 2012). It is true that our results to some degree may be industry related and as such harder to be incorporated in all business corporations. However, we think that there are many corporations in Gambro's situation in which our results would be beneficial for.

The strengths of qualitative studies are that they are "naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings" giving a strong handle on what reality looks like. The fact that this data is collected in close proximity to a specific situation, rather than e-mail or over the phone, reinforces the confidence between the reader and the writer (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Further advantages with using qualitative research are that it is open-ended, dynamic, and flexible. This enables the interviewer to access new areas of interest and possibly penetrate rationalized and superficial responses (Kate Willis Research, 2012)

Gambro

Gambro is a global medical technology corporation based in Lund. Gambro was founded in 1964 and has today 8 000 employees world-wide, production facilities in nine countries, and sales in more than 100 countries. Gambro claims to be world leader in developing, manufacturing and supplying products and therapies for kidney and liver problems (Gambro, 2012).

Why Gambro as case study

After a brief meeting both parties, the writers of this thesis and Gambro representatives, agreed to collaborate in the mutual interest area CSR. Our benefit from this was to gain access to Gambro's top management. We believe that if we can through interviewing the top managers of Gambro learn why managers are curious of CSR we can also learn why managers are curious of management fashions in a broader sense.

As discussed in the introduction CSR is a growing widened concept which nearly anybody can have an opinion about. Regardless of previous experience about CSR the topic is easy for the individual to discuss. With our collaboration with Gambro we were fortunate to gain access to many years of working experience of as managers. This combined leadership has most certainly faced a lot setbacks and success. Our benefit from this is that their combined experience from working as managers will enrich our empirics. Gaining access to Gambro managers gave us a broad empirical ground to analyze. All of the Gambro managers were willing to make room in their schedule for this research. We believe this show that CSR is a concept that more or less affects Gambro's business landscape. Also, we believe that Gambro as a corporation is quite representative of the general situation of a corporation which has no active CSR engagement. That is, it is a corporation which has recently become curious in working with the term CSR. Thus, Gambro in this respect is inexperienced just like many other corporations right now that are interested in CSR.

3.3 Methodical way of collecting data

Our gathered data have been both primary sources as secondary. Our primary data, the semi-structured interviews at Gambro, comes from managers with long managerial experience. We felt that it was important to do the interviews face-to-face to gain trust and to study the reactions of the Gambro managers so we could lead the interviews to potential new areas of interest. Our secondary data derives from Internet web pages, such as Gambro's homepage.

3.4 Semi-structured interview method

Our conductance of the qualitative interviews has been built up upon the recommendations of Bryman & Bell (2003). This means that the questions are less structured than what they would have been in a quantitative interview. Less structured questions mean that the interviewees have more

freedom to interpret their perception of reality and speak more freely. The expectation on a semi-structured interview is to receive rich and detailed answers. We aimed to capture the standpoints of the interviewees rather than capturing our own interests. We wanted to give the interviewee the freedom to access new places that extends our theoretical framework in order to open up for new empirical data to the paper. This means that the interviewer must dare to diverge from the questionnaire structure to access new empirical data. Semi-structured interviews should be flexible and accommodating, they should follow the interviewee's direction and the focus of the interview should be adapted to new arising questions that may arise.

In her interviews at McDonalds, Leidner (1993) left room for the interviewees to bring up any theme or topic as they were especially interested in order to discover any latent factor to why he or she acted in a certain situation. We did the same.

3.5 The interviews

All of the eleven interviews were held at Gambro's office in Lund during the spring of 2012. Present were, besides the authors to this thesis, and the interviewee, a dictaphone recording the whole interview. The interviews lasted for approximately one hour making our empirical research eleven hours long in total. The eleven managers who were interviewed all belong to the Gambro Lundia Management Group and they represent eleven different business departments. This will enable us to get a broad view on how different departments' managers view CSR. We have deliberately been focusing on managers and their individual view on their surrounding world. Hence employees and other stakeholders are naturally left out of this study. All of our interview questions that we prepared are attached in appendix.

3.6 Criticism of sources

Theory

First of all it can be mentioned that what we have constructed theoretically, we believe, is a set of different perspectives to better understand the reasons behind for why managers are curious about CSR. To this, much of the theory used is written by forefront authors within each field. Scott, Meyer and Rowan, are for example very known within the field of institutionalism and have strong contributions within the field. Regarding the field of translation authors like Czarniawska, Sevón,

and Sahlin-Andersson are also important authors. Often the different authors have referred to each other and used each other's work as their sources. Such a theoretical relationship may put the work locked-in a similar line of thought. On this point we have tried to outweigh different theories in order to avoid such lock-in. This can be noticed especially under what constitute fashion but also how adoption and dissemination of ideas occur.

We have under all theoretical perspectives tried to use the most well-known literature or work of what each field represents. To this, some perspectives and work are fairly new such as Hoffman and Windell. We do not think that their novelty means that they are less appreciated mainly because there is not much written within the field of management fashion and who the actors within the field of management fashion are and in what way they contribute to its dissemination and popularity.

During our investigation of what CSR means we have both used the most known arguments, literature and definitions of it as well as tried to implement our own way of dissecting the term lexically. We believe that perspective contributes to our intention to depict a general view of its definition and confusions. This is mainly because it is not the purpose of this thesis to give a conclusive definition of what CSR is.

In the area of management and leadership, theory was picked out that concerned anything of why and how corporations adopt new working processes and concepts. An important author like Henry Mintzberg will appear to clarify how organizational structures affect managers. Christine Blomquist and Pia Rödning have made excellent contributions to leadership theory by recent study in many different industries. Not only did we have to understand what drives these changes from a micro perspective, but we also included theory on how societies have changed affecting whole business markets. Further, our theoretical framework also looked at how managers react when under pressure. Due to the wide range of literature in this field we will present many different theories concerning pressure on managers.

Empirics

The empirics of this thesis are mainly gathered from the interviews we have had with the managers at Gambro Lundia AB, Lund, Sweden. Other information has been gathered from the web and corporation homepage and a few poll surveys done by statistics corporations. Some of the data collected here can be argued to be subjective, especially the interviews with the managers since they are more likely to speak highly of the corporation regarding sensitive areas such as taking a social responsibility. Such subjective perspectives cannot really be avoided though it has been our intention to disregard such connotations done during the interviews. Our interview questions have

also been related to our theoretical frame but at the same time the interviewees have been free to bring forth their own ideas and thoughts.

3.7 Presentation of empirics

The presentation of the empirics has been done by presenting the most apparent factors from our interviews. To this, the presentation of the empirics has thus been influenced by our theoretical framework in such a way it has driven the answers given by the interviewees into their appropriate categories. This method of presenting the empirics has made data regarding similar factors given from various interviewees more comprehensible. At the same time it has also been more efficient to deliver the different views and perceptions the interviewees had. We believe such a delivery of empirics is best suited to answer our purpose given the fact that we have worked with qualitative data.

Biases that can occur with such a method of delivery are that answers given can be interpreted and presented after what is a desired result rather than presenting the raw data. Another weakness with such a delivery is the fact that results have not been presented in their fullest length. That is, the most interesting and relevant data has been presented. If we were not to do this, then it would not have been possible to deliver both the similar and different views as comprehensible as we have. It would have been harder for the reader to follow the differing interviewee answers and as such much of the efficiency and dynamics would be lost, such as coupling interviewee answers that were linked to not necessarily the same question. We have though worked to minimize any subjectivity. Another form of presenting the data could have been by delivering the raw data interview by interview. Though the fact that we have had eleven interviews at approximately 1 hour each, such a presentation would most likely be utterly difficult to follow. Also, it has not been possible to make a presentation in the form of a comparison since there has not been any other corporation in our case study or prior experience within the corporation in question. Through our study we have tried to gather the managerial experience and the perceptions the managers had of CSR and since the case corporation is new to the term, managerial experiences connected to why managers are curious about CSR cannot be collected in retrospect, therefore no comparison can be made. The study has more been interested in managerial factors leading up to such a curiosity.

3.8 Analysis - and discussion method

The analysis has been made by a comparative analysis between our theoretical framework and the empirics. That is, our results have been applied to our theoretical framework which has opened up for a discussion to highlight the similarities and differences between the two. To this, elements that have been evident in the empirics, though not included in our theoretical framework have been added in a manner to widen the theoretical framework. The analysis ends with a summarizing discussion.

In the analysis our theoretical framework also influences the discussion, though is not divided specifically for each theoretical statement made which we have presented. Such a presentation of analysis would be too extensive to follow and from time to time very repetitive.

3.9 Reliability, degree of generalization, and method ethics

The internal reliability of this thesis has been captured through the work and research being done by two researchers. Since this thesis heavily relies on its qualitative interviews, all the interviews have been recorded and have been participated by both researchers. By recording the interviews we have also been able to go back and control the answers of the interviewees. Before any of the interviews were conducted we also sent out an information letter to all the managers explaining our purpose of the interviews. We have through this way worked to make sure that the relevant empirics are gathered.

In this case, the presence of a high degree of external reliability can be questioned. This is because the thesis is based on qualitative data and therefore it is hard to “freeze” the social context of space and time for others to do the exact same thing. Though similar contexts can be achieved since we have focused on the managerial position, experience, and knowledge regarding Corporate Social Responsibility. All of the interviewees have long managerial experience and thereby have good insights of what it means to be a manager. Also, the managers come from different managerial positions and departments.

The validity of this thesis have been captured mainly through a strong relationship and explanation of theory, our interview questions, interviewee answers, use of two observers, and observations of the corporation such as the corporation website. Further, this thesis is based on a case study, qualitative data, and a specific set of people with their personal views and interpretations of CSR it can be hard to gain a higher degree of generalization. Though we believe that our theoretical

framework is strong enough to make it possible to extend this thesis to other contexts and social environments.

Before each interview, the interviewee was asked if they were comfortable with the recording of the interview. None of the interviewees had any request not to be recorded. Our interview questions were also handed to our contact person at the corporation along at the start of the interview period for confirmation. The contact person, Josefin Nilzén, did not return with any wishes to change any of the interview questions. We have also signed a contract that is mainly meant to protect any disclosure of confidential data and information. Therefore this study has taken this into consideration wherever it has been relevant. This mainly means that our work has been delivered to our contact person at the corporation and the managers for their approval. All of the recordings have also been handed over to Gambro.

4. Empirics

Comment: *In this chapter we present our empirical findings from the interviews that were done with the managers at Gambro. It should also be mentioned that none of the managers are from the same department, see appendix.*

4.1 Perceived ambiguity and meaning of CSR by the managers

In the beginning of this thesis we concluded that CSR is a most confusing term and carries many different meanings. Here we will present the perceptions the managers had of what CSR means and whether they believe there lies any uncertainty of what CSR means.

When the managers were asked what they understand as the responsibilities of a corporation, many times their immediate reaction was to point out that the question was very wide, and thought the question was too large to be able to give a brief answer, following by asking if we meant the question in a CSR perspective. Also, some of the managers felt they had little background to be able to answer since the term CSR regularly is not something that concerns them (Interview C; Interview J). Note should be given to the fact that especially the managers from Sales and Environment & Facilities, were the most comfortable talking about CSR and to some degree the Site Manager and CFO as well.

Continuing, interestingly few managers had initially similar perceptions of what the responsibilities of a corporation are. By initially we mean the first thing that came to their minds. Three of them emphasized the regulatory responsibilities they have as primary. From here there was a variation between the managers. One of the managers specifically pointed out that the survival of the corporation and profit generation are the primary responsibilities by saying;

“The survival of the corporation is in a way the utter responsibility we have”

(Interview A, 2012)

Another manager, Interview B, pointed out that the term was more related to his department and its aspects. This manager along with the Sales Manager both themselves pointed out that they are the initiators for Gambro to work with CSR, something concurred by other managers as well. This manager’s view, Interview B, was very wide and pointed out that there was a CSR perspective by

asking whether it was in a CSR perspective we meant our question and then continuing to answer by emphasizing that his answer was in a CSR perspective. The manager continued by saying that these responsibilities include showing care for the environment, employees, customers, and societal responsibilities. Such an explanation was given by all of the managers as they continued though it was not a part of their initial answer. When the managers gave such answers we followed up and asked how that differs from regular management. The majority of the managers concurred that surely many aspects of the responsibilities of a corporation in a CSR perspective collide with what also can be called management, such as caring for the employees. To this, one manager compared CSR to branding. According to this manager CSR and branding are highly connected and meant that just as the results of branding often are not included in a balance sheet, so is the case for CSR as well (Interview K). Further the manager from interview B thought that the jurisdictions of law were not sufficient and that corporations should take their own initiatives to work with CSR. Other answers provided by the managers were more specific as for example, to give the little extra to those in need (Interview D), that the products do what they are supposed to do (Interview F), to take care of the patients (Interview H), and to think of the corporation's external environment (Interview I). One manager even directly criticized the term CSR when asked what the responsibilities of a corporation are by saying:

“I’m not even sure if we are supposed to do it (work with CSR). For me, CSR is a term which is modern right now in the management culture. From what I understand, some already think that it is outdated because it is so hard to define.” (Interview C, 2012)

It should be mentioned that this manager also initiated the interview by mentioning a perceived lack of knowledge regarding CSR to be able to answer our questions. Two other managers answered by pointing out similarities between CSR and the term “good citizenship” and “the stakeholder model”. The first manager emphasized the participation in the development of the society, by supporting universities, and the local cultural life (Interview E). The second manager, implying that only through a stakeholder analysis can one see whether one is responsible or not to insure that the users of the products do not get harmed (Interview G).

With a wide understanding of what CSR means according to these managers, all of them were later on during the interview asked whether they think that there lies any ambiguity within the meaning of CSR. All of the managers thought that the term is very ambiguous, some of them questioned it, thought of it as a management trend and fashion, and others didn't feel secure working with such a term. One manager pointed out that the term seems to become whatever corporations make of it (Interview F). Another emphasized the difficulty in predicting its future and what to do with it

(Interview A). A third pointed out this variety in the corporation by mentioning that there is no definition of CSR at Gambro (Interview D).

4.2 Understanding of what CSR is through other actors

Major suppliers of ideas which we have mentioned earlier are consultants, mass media, academia, and governments. Here we will present to what extent the managers have been in contact with such suppliers regarding the concept CSR and what their perceptions of them are.

First of all, very few managers had worked with consultants or been in contact with consultants regarding the term CSR or concepts closely connected to it. Reasons for this according to two managers were that they work with the core competencies within the corporation (Interview F; Interview I). According to them there is only up to a certain limit of input that a consultant can provide. One of the managers even pointed out that if one wants to create a facade, then you use consultants (Interview F). Another manager mentioned that there had been a lecture at the corporation regarding “EcoDesign” (Interview A). When asked of what impressions the consultant had left the manager with, especially regarding his rhetoric, the manager felt that the consultant had accomplished to make the manager wish they could do more around the subject. Thus a positive sense was spread from the rhetoric of the consultant. Another manager, interview B, had been in contact with a consultant that works full time with CSR. This manager said that the consultant have supplemented the manager’s image of what CSR is. Other than these two, there is not much evidence that the managers at Gambro have had contact with consultants regarding CSR.

The general perception of what CSR is for these managers have mainly been through mass media. Some of them have also read some books. Unfortunately, none of them could not remember the names of these books. Mass media, such as business press and television, have mostly worked as a messenger of major events which the managers have been alert to take notice of. Incidents such as those that have taken place in the textile industry are believed to have been a source of information. Further, the managers also mention that they have developed an impression of what CSR is through their scanning of competitors. A majority of the managers know or are familiar with that a major competitor, Baxter, is communicating CSR through their website. One manager, referring to CSR, said that their competitors are good at it (Interview H). Another manager, who also felt that the term is mostly associated with the aspects of his department, points out that other corporations such as IKEA and AstraZeneca put the bar for what CSR is. The same manager also pointed out that the already mentioned competitor, Baxter, have come a long way in their CSR work (Interview B). A similar point is made by Interviewee H who also added that the corporation in this respect is behind

when it comes to working with CSR compared with the same competitor, Baxter. Others have just simply used Google and the internet to update their knowledge (Interview C; Interview J).

A fourth, and seemingly very important provider of the term CSR and related concepts are the municipalities in the region. All of the managers emphasized that the requirements of what must be achieved and what should be achieved very much in their understanding already covers areas of what constitutes CSR. Two managers mentioned that there are heavy regulatory requirements for their products to pass in order to even be considered for procurement (Interview A; Interview H). These requirements they believe are a major source for what is expected by them and therefore also define what a term like CSR, or the responsibilities of a corporation are. The regulatory demands are depicted as making it quite obvious in the industry that one already works with CSR like activities and therefore function as a source of what CSR is. This is a point which is emphasized under other topics as well.

To this, some managers emphasized that apart from especially mass media and the requirements of the municipalities they have developed an understanding of what CSR is mainly through their work experience and the people that they work with. One manager mentioned that during 30 years of experience within the corporation has given her a perception of the term (Interview K). Another manager mentioned what she saw at prior employments as a source (Interview D), and a third manager said that the people around you influence you (Interview I).

Further, the academia is a relatively small source of information among these managers. One of them mentioned prior university education and another one what was thought during an executive MBA (Interview G; Interview I). All in all, none of the managers said that they have put any considerable effort to increase their knowledge regarding the term CSR.

4.3 Perception of CSR as a must to survive

In our theoretical framework we mentioned that we expect managers to perceive and believe that the importance of CSR is higher than their own free will and is more or less a must for corporations. That is, they believe that CSR today is “a rule of the game” for corporations to secure legitimization. Here we will present the findings from our interviews regarding this matter.

Two managers thought that CSR is today important for society and thus expectations rise for Gambro. They said that if the public knows and cares of what CSR is, then it becomes important for Gambro to pursue it as well. Though if no one cares and only relates it to an activity with a negative tone that is done by tobacco corporations then there is no point. Further they pointed out that to work with CSR is becoming a standard (Interview A, Interview B). Other managers pointed out that

CSR is a “trendy” word and the fact that you do not put a label on everything that you do does not mean that you are not working with CSR. This was a point made by a majority of the managers where some aspects of CSR are the same as day-to-day management and that the corporation has already a history of CSR-like activities though they are not communicated. To this, Interview K meant that “good management” is a fundamental to build up anything, including CSR. Along with the same manager two other meant that it is contemporary to work with CSR for many corporations (Interview G; Interview J).

Others pointed out that there are regulatory requirements that demand CSR-like activities, and that in the near future, municipalities will have more expectations on their suppliers to do CSR activities to even consider them for procurement (Interview H; Interview G). Since a majority of their customers are municipalities, one manager said that if they were not to work with CSR-like activities, they would not exist in the long run (Interview E).

Another manager said that they would lose all credibility if they gave life with one hand and took life with the other. He meant that Gambro cannot work beneficiary for some, the users of their products, whilst others are being hurt by their operations (Interview I). To this, all the managers believed that Gambro as a corporation had a good reputation in the local community. One manager even thought that Gambro was doing society a favor by producing medical devices (Interview A). A few managers also pointed out that they do not have a bad label to wash off. Another manager said that Gambro is not probably a corporation that you would expect to do CSR (Interview E).

Further, many of the managers clearly pointed out the *obligation* to work with CSR. Most emphasis was given towards an obligation to work with CSR in order for the employees not to feel disappointed (Interview D). One manager said that as an employee one makes active moral and ethical choices. The manager pointed this out by saying;

“Do I want to work at a tobacco corporation? No, I don’t. One makes a choice as an employee”
(Interview G, 2012)

Some managers thought that events that have occurred and been highlighted through media have had an impact on putting pressure on corporations. Such events made one manager question if they really knew everything about each component within their own value chain (Interview F). Another manager pointed out the danger of getting negative publicity if something were to arise from their suppliers (Interview A). To this, interviewee K, meant that as a corporation one has a “brand promise”, and the stronger and a more well-known brand you have the more transparent and in the spotlight will your corporation be. Therefore it becomes much more important that you have control over your CSR.

Two other factors that the managers pointed out were the importance of CSR as a selling device and the fact that Gambro's competitors do it. One manager said that one sees what other corporations are doing and therefore believe that one should do it as well. The manager further expressed this by saying:

"The others have it. We are lacking it." (Interview F, 2012)

Thus, since municipalities are requiring more and more CSR-like commitment from their suppliers the Sales manager pointed out that having a CSR plan, which is communicated, packaged and documented, will help to sell products better. The Environment & Facility manager also pointed out the benefits of having a CSR-package ready to communicate. The same manager also said that if the corporation would have been on the stock market, they would already have such a package.

4.4 CSR as competitiveness

We mentioned that a factor that is particular for management fashions is their ability to both provide a sense of conformism as they, at the same time, satisfy the need for anti-conformism. That is, we expected the managers both to believe that through CSR not only will they do what is expected by society, which was presented above, but also believe that they gain unique competitiveness through it. An element within this is also to have a wish to become like someone or something. Here we will present the perceptions for such competitiveness.

As mentioned earlier the majority of the managers are aware of what their competitors and other corporations are doing when it comes to CSR. These managers point out that a source of inspiration comes from benchmarking what the competitors are doing. As stated earlier, one manager thought that they lack it. Such thought of making comparisons is further strengthened by a manager saying that one source of inspiration comes from that the things are not as they should be (Interview A).

When asked what competitiveness is the managers gave answers as, giving best value for money, being able to recruit talents, to attract a customer more than any other competitor, to solve the problems that no one else has solved, and anything that helps one to sell a product. Upon this we asked if CSR was a tool to gain competitiveness. The managers meant that CSR is a tool to create competitiveness and that it helps to sell better. The Marketing manager and Sales manager especially pointed out the term's function as a communication device, both internally among the employees and externally to customers and other stakeholders. One manager pointed out that being

Svanen certified for example is very much appreciated in this market and that a CSR commitment can make it easier to win major procurement deals (Interview H).

To this, we then mentioned the fact that one of their major competitors have an active CSR program and is communicating it through their website. We asked whether the managers thought, since CSR increases competitiveness according to some of these, that their rivals are more competitive.

Most of the managers said that they did not have enough insight to whether CSR helps their competitors to sell more even though they believed that CSR would be beneficial for themselves in order to sell more. This was especially highlighted by one manager who believed that the specific competitor does not gain more competitiveness through their CSR but that Gambro could increase their own competitiveness with CSR (Interview F).

It should also be mentioned that the same manager felt that through CSR one can only increase competitiveness to a certain degree. The manager pointed out that in the medical device industry, it is not that a product contributes to the general good of society which is demanded but instead the fact that the product saves lives. So according to this manager, if the product would save lives at 100 % each time to a cost of using bad practices in production, the product would still be much appreciated (Interview F). Again, here it can be mentioned that other managers pointed out the usability of CSR as a selling device and communications tool. To this, Interview K, also pointed out that it is not strange if a manager close to production is not as interested in the term CSR as a Communications- or Marketing manager. There was only two managers who thought that since their competitors have more developed CSR work they gained some competitiveness over Gambro though that they still could catch up (Interview J; Interview K).

Further, regarding inspiration and benchmarking one manager said that because they are lagging behind their competitors regarding CSR there sure will be a copy effect of what the competitors are doing (Interview H). As earlier mentioned corporations like IKEA and AstraZeneca work as role models for some of the managers regarding CSR. Also, two managers commented Bill Gates as a role model for CSR activities. They thought that Bill Gates stood for a good cause today by picking an issue in society to solve. Though one of the managers thought that it was a shame that Bill Gates only after he made a fortune invested time and resources to do good (Interview H). To this, another manager meant that even though there lies a degree of imitation when benchmarking, it does not necessarily decide the innovation itself (Interview I). A third manager pointed out this as well and meant that inspiration and benchmarking only leads to that you create something your own (Interview J).

4.5 Leadership has changed: the ethical modern leader

In the theoretical section it was stated that management and leadership are bound to social norms where managers and leaders as individuals act in different roles where they are expected to act according to what is expected of them by different stakeholders. We asked the managers how they perceive their role as managers and if they believed that leadership had changed throughout their career.

Most of the managers emphasized the importance of respecting all stakeholders to Gambro as this is expected of them as managers, some of them explained that ethical leadership is about creating other values than just money (Interview B; Interview C; Interview E). All of the managers were in agreement that it is important to act ethically as a leader if you want to lead employees. One of the managers started off by saying that for the past 20 years an increase in demand of ethical leadership has been eminent because of the exposure of Asian sweatshops. The large multinational brands that have been associated with these sweatshops have faced a lot of criticism and no corporation wants anything to do with that. This manager continued by explaining that there is a “hidden expectation” to act ethical as a manager as no one would really look into any measurable ethical ratios on this manager’s ethical performance (Interview E). This is supported by another manager who explained that there is no formal duty to implement CSR or any other ethical procedures as none of this is stated in the written individual managerial demand profile (Interview H). Other managers also mentioned that they do not at the moment have any duty to implement CSR unless it is a decision taken by above authorities or direct requirements from municipalities. To this, it can be mentioned that most of the managers rely on their gut feeling when it comes to making a choice between some of the CSR-like activities, such as sponsoring. Every Gambro manager has a demand profile handed to them to know what is required of them in their individual positions as Gambro managers.

Two of the managers believed that it is Gambro’s and every manager’s own moral duty to work with CSR as a way to develop both themselves and society (Interview D, Interview K), another manager explained that all corporations are obligated to help their stakeholders in one way or another and this must start with ethical leadership (Interview G). One manager talked about ethical leadership with regard to CSR as:

“I think it is an obligation to work with CSR as a manager, not just towards Gambro’s own organization but also towards the rest of the world” (Interview H, 2012)

But on the other side this manager also stated that he is unsure whether Gambro in fact can do more than what they already do. He also explained that their competitor have *Svanen* certified their products which have been highly appreciated by different societal stakeholders (Interview H). One manager emphasized the importance of being ethical as a leader and pointed out that if he had been brought up somewhere else in the world, he would most likely have a different set of values (Interview F). Further, this manager thought that it is stimulating for the whole organization to work with ethical procedures. Preferably, this manager wanted to see that Gambro took a greater responsibility "from A to Z" by doing something more than just follow laws and regulations. This manager wanted Gambro to specialize themselves by aiming their CSR activities narrowly (Interview F), whilst another manager wanted Gambro to aim their CSR focus widely by addressing all of their concerned stakeholders (Interview I). Coincidentally, almost all of the managers talked about Gambro's rooting in Lund and working at Gambro is an important driver for wanting to engage into social problems. This was most emphasized by Interviewee E who said that as a part of corporate leadership Gambro has always worked close to the Lund community as a way of ethical practices and the fact that they produce reliable products. Another manager referred to CSR when talking about ethical leadership. For this manager talking about EcoDesign, laws and regulations are not enough to ensure grey zone areas in which EcoDesign inhabit. Therefore it is up to corporations to try to do good for societies and markets (Interview B). Most managers, as Interview H, stressed the importance of acting ethical as a leader, but some of them did not agree that they as managers could expand their accountability as they believed that the corporation and its employees already do so much for society. One manager thought that Gambro could not do more than working after the requirements of auditing government state agencies (Interview A), one manager believed that laws and regulations controlled the ethical standards as a manager in this manager's work area (Interview C), and another manager experienced that by guidance from the Gambro Code of Conduct managers are always guided with ethical leadership (Interview G). This manager continued by stating that ethical leadership is important but mentioned that ethical practices is not just about taking, for example, an environmental responsibility. It is also about saving money for the firm. Being considerate to the environment is a way to avoid unnecessary costs, or any other unwanted friction for the organization. He exemplified this by saying that most organizations shut off all lamps before departure at the end of the day. This is a way to save money and avoid wasting electricity (Interview G). Talking about generating financial results vs. solving social problems, as mentioned earlier, most managers explained that making money was their primary responsibility. These managers also explained that they think it is important to be humble when you are a big player in society and that you take equally big responsibility. However, some managers expressed a

desire to do more for society if they knew how their profits could be efficiently allocated (Interview C, Interview D).

One manager, emphasizing changes in ethical leadership over time, did not feel as this had changed very much during this manager's career. Swedish managers from this manager's perspective have always behaved in an ethical manner. Though, this manager mentioned differences between Swedish ethical leadership and ethical leadership in south of Europe. In Sweden ethical leadership is either black or white whilst in south of Europe ethics is a cloudy area open for interpretations (Interview H). This is supported by one manager who also did not feel, emphasizing Gambro, as ethical leadership had changed. This manager continued by stating that Gambro, unfortunately, have forgotten its social responsibility over the last few years but this is changing (Interview K). Another manager on the contrary, felt that the demands on the managers' role have changed dramatically. The demands referred to are (1) that managers are expected to be accessible and available at all times because of the advancements of digital communication, and (2) that managers in a higher degree are supposed to be sources of inspiration keeping them on their heels at all times. This manager did admit though that he enjoys working under these conditions (Interview I). One manager felt as the managerial role has become more coaching over time (Interview J). Lastly, one manager explained that society have failed to solve certain social problems. In his opinion, ethical leadership have increased as corporations extend their responsibilities to try and solve these social problems.

4.6 The importance of organizational culture

From the theoretical section we argued that organizational culture has a major importance on managerial decisions. To start with managers want to gather their employees around common values to strengthen the organizational culture. Secondly, managerial decisions are taken by individuals, individuals who are vulnerable to social impacts such as organizational culture. Thereof organizational culture direct managers to the decisions that are best suited to unite the organization. Lastly, we explained that managers are bothered by the many different requirements coming both from inside the own organization but also coming into the organization externally.

All of the managers at Gambro were very open to talk about their culture. All of the managers thought that their corporate culture is an important driver to work with CSR. Most managers believed that by uniting employees around common visions and ethical values would strengthen corporate culture. One manager continued this reasoning by stating that these common visions and ethical values eases decision making and is therefore desirable for this manager (Interview K). All

of the managers stated that Gambro's ethical work procedures guide them in their managerial role as their employees and organizational culture would not allow otherwise.

As mentioned earlier, one manager deemed that the employees would be very disappointed if Gambro would not actively engage into CSR. Therefore, this manager thought that Gambro must become better to market their activities as these would strengthen the organizational culture. This manager thinks that Gambro's employees would become more motivated if they knew the value of their work effort (Interview D), and this was also stated by a majority of the managers. One manager felt a lack of communication skills and reinforcement of the corporate image when it comes to market their CSR activities internally to Gambro's own organization (Interview C).

“I am originally from ABB, a corporation that has a very strong culture, you felt as an ‘ABB:er’, you felt proud of it, you had an identity in it, but I have never experienced that at Gambro. I think the people that have worked here ever since Gambro was founded, they feel this identity somehow, but for me I do not know when it ended... and I think that all about this working with CSR is about building an identity in a corporation to get the co-workers feel proud and know what we stand for”
(Interview C, 2012)

Besides pointing out that Gambro's organizational culture is a driver for CSR the managers all concurred that society has a positive view on Gambro as being a well-meaning medical corporation with their roots in Lund where competence and capability is found. One manager explained that Gambro and its corporate culture is very closely linked with Lund as Gambro has been beneficial to Lund with their success, products and local anchoring (Interview E).

“There is nothing in our corporate culture which says that we should not exert CSR. There is a ‘hidden expectation’ that we should work with CSR” (Interview E, 2012)

Some of the managers strongly believed that Gambro's corporate culture is naturally linked to CSR activities. When asked what organizations they associated Gambro with most of the managers thought of health care institutions, while a few managers could not relate Gambro to any other organization. One manager emphasized that Gambro's Code of Conduct is a way to strengthen and uphold the corporate culture. That manager stated that Gambro, via its corporate culture, has worked with CSR ever since this manager started at the corporation (Interview G). Another manager explained that the corporate culture is in a way self-governing and that CSR therefore is a natural extension of their everyday work (Interview A).

“Since we are a medical corporation we are already working in a manner that is responsible. Regarding CSR, the employees would probably wonder ‘Oh, but isn’t that something that we are already doing today?’” (Interview A, 2012)

4.7 Managers as saviors

In the theoretical section it was described that managers are always in the spotlight. Managers are often pointed out as the difference between success and failure even though they are just individuals. This leads to managers putting a lot of weight on themselves. Therefore managers understand the importance of uniting the organization with common visions and goals. To ease some of this burden it was discussed whether the adoption of management fashions was a way for the manager to enhance his or her legitimacy as the visionary leader. In the theoretical section it was also explained that managers want to implement CSR or any other ethical standard as a way to solve an organizational problem rather than a societal one.

On always being in the spotlight all managers accepted this role. No one wanted to paint themselves as a savior but emphasized their responsibilities as managers. One manager explained that a management position is a conscious decision and thereby this manager accepted the role and should be able to deal with all demands (Interview K). None of the other managers felt differently.

When it comes to finding new managerial fashions one manager acknowledged that it is a duty to look for new trends that is applicable on the organization. If management fashions are helpful in management decisions and for this manager’s unit then this manager would certainly adopt them to unite the team of employees (Interview I).

Two of the managers believed to win legitimacy among employees if they were to tell them that they are to work with CSR, because CSR is now a widespread respected concept (Interview H; Interview K). Some of the managers found this question utterly hypothetical as they did not know what kind of CSR activities that were involved (Interview D; Interview J), whilst some believed that the implementation of CSR would not have any effect on how managers are perceived by their employees (Interview C; Interview I). An aspect here is that the managers pointed out that the purpose to why they tell their employees that they are to work with CSR is important. This purpose of engaging in CSR has to be clearly stated and if it is only meant to be because other corporations are doing it then most of the managers would not be interested. Some of the managers believed that they would not win legitimacy since they and their employees already presume that they are working with CSR (Interview E; Interview G).

Before we present our empirical data on what the managers hope to achieve by implementing a formal CSR program we want to remind the reader that CSR is a diffuse concept and Gambro does not have an official CSR program at the time of these interviews. Therefore, the question of what type of result every manager wants to see from their potential CSR activities is a hypothetical question.

Some of the managers emphasized that they hope that a CSR program can weld the Gambro organization together and reinforce their corporate culture. Interviewee E explained that CSR is a way for the organization to mediate their values and messages, particularly internal communication. The Quality manager expressed a wish to strengthen the Gambro brand (Interview J). The Sales manager gave a unique response by saying that a potential CSR program would aim to create collaboration between business and health care again (Interview H). Gambro's history started with collaboration between a businessman and a researcher. In this regard, the manager hoped to use CSR as a mean to create new values for the future. A couple of managers understand CSR as a way to build a solid corporate culture (Interview C; Interview H; Interview I). The need to do this is emphasized by another manager saying that the surrounding world has a more positive view on Gambro than the Gambro employees themselves (Interview H). In addition than to just strengthen the corporate culture, most of the managers also stressed that they hope to increase their attractive force as a potential employer for new arising talent wanting to work at Gambro. Some of the managers mentioned that they hoped to solve uncertainties with their suppliers via CSR activities. One manager hoped that by working with CSR ethical operations will travel back in the supply chain creating harmonized ethical work procedures (Interview A). These managers acknowledged that they have little information about the work standards of their suppliers.

“I don't know how... I really don't know what it looks like in the factories from where we buy our components from” (Interview B, 2012)

The same manager explained that by working with CSR, Gambro would hopefully get a better overview on their suppliers because with the way things are today, Gambro does not have the resources enough to examine their suppliers thoroughly (Interview B). This was verified by another manager who expressed that the emergence of social media could potentially expose bad working conditions at a supplier's factory (Interview I).

Some of the managers also emphasized the element to competitiveness. One manager talked about modern social media and the importance of staying away from scandals or any other disruptions that may aggravate society's view on Gambro. This manager thought that society has a good view on Gambro though (Interview A). Some managers talked about how CSR may improve Gambro's

position in procurements. This was stressed by one manager when talking about a contemporary procurement situation with Region Skåne, a major client.

“We need CSR to be able to win these kinds of big procurements” (Interview H, 2012)

One manager explained that it is desirable for Gambro to work with CSR to improve the organization’s competitiveness in many areas such as recruitment, gaining partners, gaining support from society etc (Interview G). One manager explained that since Gambro does not have an official CSR program it was hard to talk about speculative CSR results. Though this manager concluded by saying that hopefully Gambro’s CSR activities can provide a better life for another person (Interview D).

4.8 Lack of time, stressed managers

The theoretical section explained that managers have lack of time due to the many demands and work tasks that they have. Therefore the implementation of management fashions such as CSR works as a quick-fix to please the demanding stakeholders. Shareholders are often depicted as wanting to maximize their invested capital. Active shareholders tend to put a lot of pressure on managers.

The Gambro managers gave different answers to how they cope with stress and the different demands of CSR. Almost all of the managers thought that they have little time at hand to critically examine management fashions such as CSR. One manager said that the time is not optimal for close examination of management fashions (Interview A), one manager stated that there is not a lot of time at hand because this manager held two managerial positions at the time of the interview (Interview B), one manager thought that the managerial duties as a Gambro manager required so much time that the whole organization have forgotten about their external social responsibility (Interview K), one manager refereed to restructuring of the organization as a reason to why there is little time to look into management fashions (Interview I).

“Time is always a short supply” (Interview G, 2012)

Some of the managers stated that it is a matter of prioritizing. If it is meaningful for them they will take the time to examine the management fashion (Interview C; Interview D; Interview F; Interview

J). The managers pointed out that if higher authorities put pressure on the managers of new management fashions, then, they will find time to prioritize it.

When it comes to the work climate on Gambro the managers gave different responses. One manager explained that the work climate is good. This manager has a lot of responsibilities, is very satisfied with this but could not relate to this as pressuring or hectic (Interview F). On the contrary, another manager describes the work situation as constant stress. This is because Gambro deals with large contracts and a lost contract means a big defeat for the whole organization (Interview H).

A lost contract is a tough blow for Gambro, something that most managers agreed on. One manager admitted that there had been “quite a few” conflicts between the Gambro managers and their owners which are institutional investors demanding high profitability (Interview F). One manager explained a situation of how the owners’ demands may look like.

”The kind of stress that we have been exposed to for the last couple of years from the owners is that we have received top-down budgets for the coming year, and we have felt already in January that these financial demands are unattainable for us.” (Interview H, 2012)

One manager said that the owners have high expectations since Gambro have not reached its goals even though the organization is successful in comparison to their competitors (Interview A), Another manager stated that Gambro’s curiosity in CSR is derived from both their corporate culture and demands for profitability from owners but where profitability somehow is the most important to secure future operations (Interview I). Even though all managers agree on that the owners have high financial expectations on them, some managers rejected the idea that them being curious about CSR is a result of financial demands. These managers believed that Gambro was in it to contribute to society even more than what they are already doing (Interview C; Interview E; Interview K).

5. Analysis

Comment: *Here we have used a comparative analysis between our theoretical framework and the empirics. Thus we applied our results to our theoretical framework, which opened up for a discussion concerning the similarities and differences between the two. Further, what has been evident in the empirics but less evident in the theory have been added to widen our theoretical framework. Our analysis ends with a summary.*

5.1 Perceived ambiguity and meaning of CSR by the managers

In our theoretical framework Czarniawska & Joerges (1996), and Røvik (2002) for example presented that ideas that carry a level of ambiguity and are objectified are most likely to disseminate. We can also conclude that for these managers CSR is a highly ambiguous term. Not only did they state it themselves but they also depicted it as a very wide concept. To start off with, when they were asked of what the responsibilities of a corporation are, for them it did not seem to occur that there is not much of a difference between Corporate Social Responsibility and the responsibilities of a corporation, lexically. That is, also admitting, that by tossing around with the words in CSR we unintentionally created an understanding among the managers that we seemed to mean something different from whatever CSR means for them. This is because the managers pointed out that their answers had a CSR perspective. As such there seems to lie a lexical connection between the term CSR and its contents. When understood this way, we believe this can mean that some things are CSR while others are not. We can remember that a similar thought was provided by, Interview I, where CSR is to care for one's external environment.

Though at the same time along with remembering our early discussion of the confusions of CSR, where we questioned the existence of the term, the managers' responses to what the responsibilities of a corporation are in a CSR perspective can often be understood as regular "management". As such our presented critique towards CSR in our theoretical framework perhaps is not unfair (The Economist, 2005; Reich & Vogel, 2008). That is, the confusion of which we spoke of early on also resides among the managers as well. Thus underscoring the ambiguity perceived among the managers. Meaning that within the responsibilities of a corporation there lies a CSR commitment which thus makes it unclear for managers to when to call something CSR and when not to. Thus it is not strange that CSR is a diffuse term which carries many different aspects for managers.

Further, the managers emphasized different points of what they believe CSR is. Here we believe that to think that products should do what they are supposed to do, clearly points out the confusion and thereof ambiguity of what CSR means as depicted above. That is, one wonders that if they would work without CSR would their products not do what they are supposed to? Then of course the following question becomes obvious, what have you been doing all these years? Though to say that their products have not done what they are supposed to is of course ridiculous and not a part of this thesis, but it emphasizes ambiguity. Other statements are right up contradictory. One statement emphasized regulatory responsibilities that come from above as primary and the other emphasized the lack of such regulations to deal with areas as CSR. Here not only does it become evident that some managers see CSR as to follow or exceed law and regulation but it also points out big differences of what CSR expects of a corporation among these managers, and thus creates more universality within the term. Such universality, as mentioned in our theory, is a reason for CSR's dissemination. Here it can also be reminded that we earlier criticized Carroll's model for corporate responsibility for such vagueness.

Such differences from manager to manager have also been evident through the fact that the sales manager and the Environment & Property manager both claimed themselves to be the initiators of awakening a CSR commitment. Sevón (1996) pointed out that interest for ideas come from the corporations themselves. The fact that one of the initiators found the concept more related to his department also underscores that a curiosity of the term CSR seems to come from the interest of some of the managers themselves. As can be seen through appendix, the managers who emphasize the fact that one already works much with CSR like activities in order to even exist both work close to production, R&D and Liquid Research. On the contrary, the Sales manager and Marketing manager both pointed out that having a CSR commitment will help to sell better and to communicate the brand value, as if they were lacking it. As such there is evidently not only a wide variety of CSR understandings among the managers but more interestingly this variety is somehow related to the managerial position.

To conclude then, we expected that CSR was to be ambiguous by the managers since such an ambiguity leads to a better dissemination of an idea. Within this discussion though we also found that the managerial position seems to guide the interest and perception the manager has towards CSR. This will be discussed below.

Expansion of theory

As an expansion to our theoretical framework, where the concept of Translation put much emphasis on the ambiguity within ideas, there also seems to be a fragmentation of what the term means

depending on the managerial position. That is, those managers who work especially closer to production already thought that in their industry one cannot exist without already being highly responsible. It is a part of their work. Though, we do not think that the Sales nor Marketing manager are not aware of the necessities to exist in the market, rather it is what they see in CSR, as a device to sell and market their products, that is interesting since such a thought can clearly be related to their managerial work. Though note should be given to the fact that if one already works with CSR like activities, it is not hard to understand that one would find the term CSR less interesting, such as those managers who work close to production.

Further, not only is it interesting that there is a fragmentation among the managers of what CSR means but it is also interesting to question if it is the already residing contents within the term CSR that makes managers believe that the term is more linked to their position and managerial work or if it is the managers who fill the concept with its content? Perhaps this goes both ways. That is, the more a certain type of manager gets interested in CSR the more he or she unintentionally also fills the content of the term. In this section though we have delivered an extension to our theoretical framework where we believe that the managerial position relates to the perception a manager has towards CSR. A further thought of such fragmentation of understandings is that it perhaps opens up doors for integration costs, especially among departments. As such, it is not unfair to believe that such fragmentation within corporations creates job opportunities for external consultants.

5.2 Understanding of what CSR is through other actors

In our theoretical framework we said that consultants are idea-bearing suppliers of ideas and terms like CSR (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002; Windell, 2006). Though, in general these managers have not used or been in contact with consultants concerning terms like CSR or other subjects close to the term. The fact that especially the R&D manager emphasized that consultants only can provide with input up until a certain limit and that through them one only can create a facade, we believe points out that towards such managerial positions consultants only have had low or no influence as an idea bearer. On the contrary, it seems the opposite can be said especially about Interviewee B. Here Ernst & Kieser portrayed consultants as re-stabilizers of control and created addiction. We believe this manager having contact with a consultant regarding specifically CSR can explain this. Since this consultant was said to have supplemented this manager's image of what CSR is. At the same time it should be reminded that this manager finds the term CSR linked to his department. We interpret these factors as this manager having a much higher interest in the term and also that he has been much more influenced

by the consultant to why CSR is important, again much due to the fact of his managerial position. A similar point can be made by remembering our earlier discussion about consultants creating their own marketplace through such uncertainties and by their strong rhetorics (Abrahamson, 1996; Tamm-Hallström, 2004). Here even though there were not many who had been in contact with consultants, they still managed through strong rhetorics make an effective impression that one should work more with CSR-like activities.

To this, as also depicted in our empirics the general perception of what CSR means come from mass media such as the business press. In our theory we also presented the work by Buhr & Grafström who showed how the business press has through time changed the meaning of CSR by creating “villains” and “heroes”. Our managers much the same pointed out that through certain disruptive events CSR has come to be about being aware of your suppliers, otherwise there lies a risk of getting negative publicity. Thus coupled with how the business press idealizes, simplifies reality and rarely states its sources, this can be a reason for why the term is ambiguous and seemingly related to a will to be more aware of their suppliers. That is by the business press portraying of what is accepted corporate behavior and what is not, which in itself is constructed to a certain degree of corporate behavior which account for as disruptive events, clearly for these managers having a hick-up within the own supply chain seems to have unraveled a level of anxiousness, or worry that there might be a flaw.

Further, the fact that academic journals do not have a significant influence seems to be the case here as well. A few managers have read books of which they cannot remember their names and only two mentioned that during their education subjects such as CSR were brought up. Though these seem not to have been major influences, at least when compared with the business press. Thus, not much can really be said here apart from what the theory already has.

Further, major suppliers for what CSR means for these managers are the municipalities. In Hoffman (1999) government agencies had a very strong presence in the development of the institutional environmentalism for the chemical industry in the US. Here it is evident that in this industry there are heavy regulatory requirements for what is to be considered acceptable. This is not hard to understand since municipalities have to think of their own citizens primarily. That means, for managers in this industry, above all else whatever the municipalities require of them must be in place. Thus if with time such requirements are to include more and more CSR-like commitments, and packages to communicate, then how is that separated from such “green washing” trademarks set forth by Greenpeace that we introduced early on in our theoretical framework. That is, if laws, rules, or requirements are so demanding for a corporation like Gambro just to even exist, then how does a corporation exceed a mandatory legal responsibility in order not to be profiled as committing green washing? This dilemma seems to be occurring among the managers as well, since they point

out that to even exist in this industry one already has to take responsibility. Thus, it seems as more rules, regulations, and requirements are demanded by municipalities, the less managers can perceive their business having a wider responsibility, since regulation already seems to cover such areas. This also opens up the question of the industry itself, and how different industries thus expectedly should make managers more or less prone to be interested in CSR. In our case, taking into consideration the fact that they perceive themselves as behind, and that they have difficulties seeing how they would exceed regulations, this industry seems to have put these managers less prone to get involved in at least openly communicating CSR.

Finally, an element that we did not expect through our theoretical framework was that these managers put forth that their own work experience has been a major source of what CSR means. To some degree, scanning of other competitors can also be understood as work experience though what was especially mentioned here was that they saw things that other employees did around them without being aware of those activities being CSR-like. Thus, perhaps one can say that managers that are within the same industry for a longer time develop a proportionately large ethical ground compared to managers in other industries. Obviously this thesis has not done such a comparison. Though, the financial crisis that the world still struggles with and all the top executives involved there surely makes a contrast.

Expansion of theory

Interesting is how the industry relates to the perceived understanding of what CSR means. Here it is clear that municipalities very much effect perceptions, and to somewhat degree perhaps narrow their view of what CSR means. Also, by being and working within such an industry for quite some time these managers could be said to have developed a proportionately larger ethical ground. Something we believe thus can work as a factor to prove specifically a point that it is not correct to talk about that any type of business is equally expected to work with CSR. Though since this was not expected this thesis has not taken this into account and thus nothing conclusive can really be said since we believe such a statement must be put in relation to another industry.

5.3 Perception of CSR as a must to survive

In our theoretical framework we explained through contributions by Meyer & Rowan, Scott, North and others that CSR is an institution and today a rule of the game. Therefore, we expected managers to also perceive CSR as such. The fact that some managers pointed out that CSR is important for society and thus raise the expectations for the corporation and that CSR is becoming more and more a standard clearly points out a pressure from society. Here it was important whether or not the public knows what CSR is, otherwise there is no point in doing it. Especially if it only is connected to what tobacco corporations are doing. As such some managers put emphasis on that there is a societal expectation and perceived importance for corporations to do CSR. To this, the managers pointed out that CSR is today a trendy and a contemporary word for corporations to work with. Though, that just because you are not labeling activities that you are doing as CSR does not mean you are not doing CSR like activities. That is, as mentioned before, the fact that day-to-day management is already being understood to some degree as CSR and that there is a belief that one would not exist in the long run and thus lose all credibility puts forth the question if for these managers there is a perceived must to do CSR at all, or a perceived must to communicate what is already done? We believe this is an important question since it depicts how CSR is a must to legitimize the corporation, which is also something that we discussed in the theoretical framework. An answer to this can be given through the fact that most of the managers believe that the corporation has a good reputation, no label to “wash off”, is not a corporation you would expect to do CSR, and that there is a belief that the corporation is doing society a favor by just existing and producing their products. Thereof, it seems more as if there is a perceived must towards communicating what one already is doing. That is, as these managers see what competitors are doing, and especially as municipalities put further and further requirements as time goes by it becomes more and more urgent for there to be a CSR-package to communicate. Though, at the same time the marketing manager talked about keeping a brand promise, and that it thus becomes more urgent to have control over one’s CSR. Meaning the more you communicate, the more you actually must be able to prove, for example that you do not have irresponsible suppliers. Such a thought can be related to what was mentioned above, in that especially the business press, has awoken anxiousness among these managers. As such the question of how CSR is perceived as a must to survive for the majority of these managers is not about in fact doing CSR. It is about communication. That perhaps also explains why some managers are more interested in CSR than others. Also, whether or not their activities actually can be accounted as CSR is not relevant, for that in part would mean to try to answer what CSR is.

Thus, seemingly there are three powers that drag these managers into perceiving CSR being a must in order to legitimize the corporation. The first one was mentioned earlier where especially the mass media has created an anxiousness over the possible risk of irresponsible suppliers and an ambiguity around the term. Secondly, the fact that more and more municipalities are requiring it, and third that an important competitor is communicating such CSR-commitment. The third point works as creating a perception of being behind and lacking something in order to sell better. To this there are pressures of taking employees into account. Such pressure we interpret as meaning to become a more attractive employer and to keep up employee morale and pride. Thus there is from the managers a perceived expectation about current employees and future employees having a higher awareness of what the employer represents and anticipating that CSR is communicated.

To conclude then, in this part the main analysis has not been to depict whether or not there is a perception of CSR as a must, but instead how CSR is a must. Thus, what we present is that the majority of the managers perceive it important to communicate CSR-like activities in order to legitimize the corporation.

5.4 CSR as perceived competitive gain

In our theoretical framework we explained that just as corporations are expected to do CSR they also themselves put a belief that through CSR there can be a competitive gain (cf. Simmel, 1904; Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005; Kim & Mauborgne, 2005; Porter & Kramer, 2011). An important part for this to happen is to be able to compare, especially one's own situation with others (Sevón, 1996). The fact that these managers benchmark both their competitors as other corporations creates an image of a role model of what CSR could be for them as well. This proves we believe the point made in our theoretical framework that one cannot expect that managers are not capable of comparing their own situation with others'. That is, ideas do not automatically contaminate among these managers. Though, this "scanning" of other corporations or the market in general needs to be further discussed.

The fact that they benchmark and put up role models, we interpret, as there is a question formulation as "how can we become like them? Or do like that?". An underlying element to this we have already mentioned is the will to legitimize the corporation because that is what is required by society today. On the other hand, especially because their competitors are already responding to these requirements, these managers seem to have developed a sense of being behind or lacking something, in this case communicating CSR-like activities. Here it can also be added that the same way the managers meant that communicating a CSR-package will become more and more a

requirement in this industry it also is a way to compete better. Especially for the Sales and Marketing manager. That is elements that we expected of the paradoxical properties within fashions are also here evident. As such we believe that we can say that the same way these managers perceive that they legitimize their corporation is also the same way they perceive the corporation will gain a competitive edge. Though, it is worth pointing out that the same fragmentation of which we have spoken of earlier also resides in this aspect. Therefore, also here, managerial positions that can be thought of as more related to the meaning of what CSR means among these managers, are also related to their perceived belief that CSR creates competitive gain.

On the other hand though it is still noted that there becomes a copy-like behavior by Gambro since by communicating CSR activities as the competitors, a level of imitation is created. Though, a few other managers mean that benchmarking and imitation do not in fact control the outcome of an innovation. This can perhaps be fair to say in such a high technological industry when one works near production. Though, if the competitive edge is perceived to be gained from communicating CSR-like activities that are already done then we could say that it is not the sole communication that actually creates the competitive edge but rather the fact that those activities are different and better than others', especially the competitors'. Thereof, one falls back again on the subject of how such activities that one wants to communicate are different from general management, but foremost how it becomes possible to perceive that by communicating CSR one actually does something unique? The answer to this most likely we believe resides in the fact that competitors are already communicating it which in turn creates a feeling of being behind and that one needs to at least "catch up".

As such, we believe we can say that among these managers there is a perception, maybe latent, that by following a fashion one confirms both one's legitimacy in the present as one at the same time perceives oneself to satisfy an urge or will to become more unique, i.e. competitive.

5.5 Contemporary expectations on managers

Inglehart (1977) argued that after World War II societies who either participated or were closely linked to the war adopted softer values with time. Even though we can spot modern ethical practices such as CSR, ISO-standards, fair trade etc., we acknowledge that our research showed that these managers diverge in their beliefs in whether societies have become to focus more on these softer and broader values than just making money. This is because the Gambro managers are in disagreement whether Gambro can do more than just their day-to-day business. However, all managers emphasized the importance of acting responsibly aiming at a wide range of stakeholders.

We believe that the Gambro managers are mindful to their stakeholders, but if this is because of that those managers are compassionate characters or mindful to business kind of characters is hard to tell. Though to this, one could also understand such divergence as ethical leadership has grown to be a supplement to leadership with a financial focus. In accordance with Blowfield & Murray's (2008) thoughts on respecting all stakeholders to a firm this was supported by most managers minding all people are affected by Gambro's operations. We understand that it is important to show both internal and external commitment to ethical practices as this was depicted especially by two managers. These informed us that it is their duty to work with CSR and other ethical practices as managers (Interview D, Interview H). From this, we understand how some managers have become curious about CSR. If managers feel a sense of responsibility to act ethically towards a broad spectrum of stakeholders then CSR, according to us, is just another concept that can be used to show how responsible Gambro is. With this, we mean that CSR is a tool to show external commitment to ethical practices, just like Fair Trade, the ISO standards, FSC, Svanen etc. One of the managers expressed that being Svanen certified is highly appreciated by different societal stakeholders. With this, we understand that having ethical standards puts pressure on competitors. This pressure for ethical standards has led to that managers are curious about another ethical standard, CSR that is.

Connock & Johns (1997) wrote about how ethics and moral have become "trendy" and "fashionable", therefore desirable for managers to pursue ethical leadership. When discussing ethical leadership all managers agreed that it is important to act ethically when leading other people, the employees. When discussing the fragmentation between investing in ethical practices and retaining profits most managers were willing to admit that their primary responsibility is to earn money for Gambro and its major shareholder, an institutional investment corporation. From this we understand that there is a managerial conflict between wanting to make money and wanting to do good for society. Though all of these managers emphasized that with excellent financial result comes equal responsibility. It is our understanding that with Gambro's development these managers feel a sense of accountability to give back to society. One of the managers clearly stated that Gambro in its recent history have forgotten about the social responsibility and that is unfortunate. From this, we can see that it has become more important to respect and show society the organization's commitment to social needs and that a manager is curious about CSR to see if the organization can extend its social responsibility.

One of the managers mentioned something that drew our attention to another unexplored area of interest. This manager said that some societies have failed to solve their social problems, or that they do not have the resources enough. Therefore it is up to corporations to solve these problems (Interview B). From our theoretical framework Blowfield & Murray (2008) suggested that markets

had failed society, not the other way around. By this input we have learned that it is important to look at the political and social structure in a certain society before making rush conclusions about which organization that is supposed to govern that particular society. Our initial thoughts go to societies which have high corruption rates needing ethical leadership and help to solve social problems. Given that this manager is right, that societies have failed to solve certain societal problems, Gambro managers as explained in the last paragraph are curious about CSR because they want to know how they can do more for society in which they conduct their business in. Many of the Gambro managers talked about the historical bonds that the corporation has with the Lund community. None of this was found in our theoretical framework which we believe is important to mention that every corporation has its own identity in society. During our empirical research most of the Gambro managers talked about the strong ties with the Lund society. It is our understanding that these managers want to build a positive image around Gambro by displaying their ethical work procedures. Since we have not found out via our empirical research specifically what type of social problems Gambro want to address we cannot determine if there in fact has been a breach of social trust between the Lund society and its citizens. We can only state that it is a driver for at least one of the Gambro managers to want to engage into CSR.

Expansion of theory

In our empirical research we have focused on looking at the driving forces that attract managers' attention to CSR. Thereby we intentionally refrained from looking at individual characteristics of the managers. This is the traits of character that the Gambro managers possess which shape them as individuals. From our empirical research we identified two of these many individual traits that brand a person. One manager talked about his upbringing and how this has affected him in his ethical leadership, and the other manager mentioned that the Swedish view on ethical leadership is different from the ones in southern Europe. We acknowledge these as two valuable inputs as to how managers are curious about CSR. Managers are affected by values that are given to them just by living in a certain society. That is, geographic differences may have an impact on managerial ethical behavior. To portray a contrast, one might guess that Chinese people do not have the same view on ethical leadership as managers in Sweden due to differences in social security, cultural values, traditions and norms etc. Though such a contrast cannot be concluded in this thesis since there has not been any cross analysis between the two countries. We argue that managers are branded by certain type of values, which more or less direct them to be curious about CSR.

5.6 Organizational culture

Most managers believed that society has a positive attitude towards Gambro meaning that they are a well-meaning medical corporation with their local rooting. We acknowledge that most corporations work hard to build a strong positive culture in their organization. Campbell et al (1970) claimed that leadership behavior in an organization is identified through several systems that depend on each other. The overall influence on managerial behavior is the organizational culture. Since almost all of the Gambro managers spoke about how the corporate culture has a great impact on managerial behavior we interpret this as the Gambro corporate culture is stronger than the individuals in charge. With this, we support Campbell et al's (1970) theory on that corporate culture has an important role in decision making. However, the IP manager resisted the power of organizational culture by stating that Gambro's corporate culture lack identity. We think this is because this manager's department is not directly linked to the core operations of Gambro. Our understanding is that there are several departments in any corporation that are not directly linked to production. Examples, we think, would be for example HR, Customer Relations, Legal services etc. As already mentioned, we believe that there is a difference between different departments in their curiosity of wanting to explore CSR. In Gambro's case, the IP manager that expressed that the organization has a lack of identity is managing an area, which is not normally associated with CSR activities.

Some of the managers mentioned the Gambro's Code of Conduct as a framework to uphold the corporate culture. By having a Code of Conduct we believe that top management want to secure reliable and ethical practices to avoid just the types of negative events mentioned earlier by some of the managers. To us, having a Code of Conduct is meant to promote a certain type of behavior most fit for the individual organization within the specific industry. In our empirics managers said that common visions and goals make it easier to relate to where Gambro is going. It is our understanding that the Gambro managers want to unite all employees around common ethical values and thereby increase the power of corporate culture. A strong corporate culture, we believe, lead to motivated staff and efficiently streamlined performances. Therefore it is important to strengthen their Code of Conduct and implement ethical standards such as CSR. That is, such documents meant to establish fundamentals of how one should behave we believe may also be reasons for these managers becoming interested in CSR given the fact of how they perceive their industry.

5.7 Managers as saviors

Some authors in our theoretical framework stated the importance of uniting all employees around common goals and visions (Borgert 1977; Arvonen, 1989; Blomquist & Röding, 2010). We believe that this is partly true as most of the managers have talked about securing the employees' commitment by their potential CSR activities. Also some of them talked about how their resources are too short to make possible a common vision for the organization. Unfortunately, it was not fully explained what these resources comprised – money, knowledge, time etc. Our best guess would be time due to that most of the managers talked about time as a lack in their everyday operations. All of these managers also pointed at meaningfulness and motivation if they would take time to engage into it.

Our theoretical framework suggested that managers are always in the spotlight regardless of the success or failure of the organization (Wallander, 1990; Blomquist & Röding, 2010). In addition, managers are supposed to put tough, or even impossible, demands on themselves (Connock & Johns, 1997; Sveningsson, 2009). Most of the managers accepted their role of being the point of attention in their managerial role. No one of the managers were willing to say that he or she put tough, or even impossible, demands on him- or herself. By our theories on managers putting tough demands on themselves we wanted to investigate if implementing CSR could be seen as a desperate managerial action to ease some of the pressure that managers are under. In this case, the Sales manager directly expressed that Gambro needs CSR to win major procurements. We believe that this is a sign of a manager putting great reliance to CSR, and thereby great pressure on oneself. This manager emphasized the importance of Gambro winning big procurements because these may secure their survival for years to come as long as the contract with the customer is running. If the Gambro organization is dependent on these big procurements, and CSR is the tip on the scale according to this manager, then no wonder that this manager is curious about CSR. We believe that this manager is under great pressure if he relies so much into a concept that is diffuse even to this manager.

Wallander (1990) argued that visionary leaders that can engage the whole organization are important in organizations with high demands on them. When talking about themselves as visionary leaders our impression was that the Gambro managers responded in a modest way. All of the managers did not want to see themselves as a savior but emphasized teamwork. Some of the managers acknowledged themselves as visionary leaders who gain legitimacy by creating shared visions with their employees even though most of them did not think CSR would increase their legitimacy as managers. Some of the managers said that there is a value as a manager to pursue and

introduce concepts as CSR to their employees, which means that it gives pride to managers to pursue these ethical standards required by societies. When we set out to do the interviews we did not believe that the managers would easily expose themselves because of we believe, the sensitivity of these questions. Therefore on the question if managers are curious about CSR as a way to legitimize themselves in their managerial roles, or saviors if one will, we assume that many of the managers took a modest stance. As stated above, some of the managers admitted that they would strengthen their legitimacy showing that this is a reason for managers to be curious about CSR.

Some authors presented in our theoretical framework argued that management fashions such as CSR are implemented to solve another organizational problem rather than the direct purpose of that management fashion (Røvik, 1998; Huczynski, 1996; Connock & Johns, 1997; Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002). It is to be mentioned once again that since Gambro does not have an official CSR program the question on what issues they want to address is hypothetical. Most of the managers mentioned various desirable personal and organizational ends that they would like to see. Examples of these are “a stronger organizational culture”, “better control of suppliers”, “increased competitiveness”, “better communication both internally and externally about Gambro’s values and ethic” etc. With this we believe in the provided theory that managers in most cases have a hidden agenda when implementing CSR activities. This, we believe, confirms the above authors’ theory that managers have other intentions rather than primarily solving a societal problem. All of the managers when talking about CSR initially referred to bad things going on in the world today or the past caused by transnational corporations. Our overall impression on this matter, regardless what these managers said they wanted with their CSR activities, is that they somehow wanted a security for not getting involved into any negative exposure. Negative exposure in any industry is bad for business but even more in a medical industry as this has a relatively good reputation according to us. To this an element mentioned earlier in our analysis, though appropriate to discuss here as well, is the point of managers getting anxious about their situation and thus wanting to work with CSR. That is, since for these managers business press seems clearly to have portrayed that it is important to have insight in what one’s suppliers are doing. The fact that the managers are not aware of their suppliers’ situation, thus, we interpret lead to anxiousness and thereof raising an interest in CSR to calm such anxiousness. However, in our empirics one manager hoped to see that Gambro’s CSR activities benefit people unknown to Gambro. With this, we have spotted a deviation. To us though, it still seems as managers in most cases do have other intents than solving societal problems displaying that they are curious about CSR to solve any other organizational problem

Expansion of theory

As mentioned above most of these managers expressed their desirable ends in CSR to be solutions for an organizational problem. One of them was to gain better control over suppliers. Earlier in our analysis we mentioned that these managers understanding of what CSR means have through especially business press and the risk of getting negative publicity been about just that, being aware of one's suppliers. To this, these managers expressed that they are not aware of how conditions are at their suppliers. As such, an expansion to our theoretical framework is that we believe that a reason for why these managers are curious about CSR is because it is profiled for corporations to deal with such issues. If not, negative publicity punishes your corporation. As such, not knowing the situation of your suppliers creates anxiousness that surely needs to be calmed.

5.8 Lack of time and stress

From management theory we have studied Albrecht (1980) who wrote about stress and how this affects managers. From this, other authors have stated that stress affects managerial work negatively (Mintzberg, 1975; Stewart, 1979; Kotter, 1982; Grint, 1995).

From our empirical research we understand that managers in general felt that they have lack of time in their hands. One of the managers expressed that Gambro managers' tasks require so much of them that they might have forgotten about their external social responsibility. To us, we acknowledge this as a reason to why this manager is curious about CSR. Since very few of the managers said that they have time to critically examine new management fashions such as CSR we believe that most managers are very vulnerable to rhetorics of consultants or any other force that impose that they know better than managers. The problem with this, according to us, is that managers and their organization get even less time now as they have more procedures to think about and following up on after an implementation. We do acknowledge that there are cases of successfully implemented management fashions beneficial for organizations in respects to revenue, time savings, value creation etc. If not then global corporate landscape would probably never have developed into what it is today. Though, looking at new management fashions just because managers lack time to create an official opinion on this matter, to be able to criticize it, creates in our opinion excess demand. To implement any trial-and-error factor demand resources which could have been focused somewhere else. It is our understanding, since most of the Gambro managers simply want to communicate their values and ethics both externally and internally, that they want to adopt a "copy-paste" behavior where two needs are satisfied. The first comes from the various

pressures for Gambro to adopt CSR, and the second is the time aspect where managers do not have the time to establish a position on CSR. Therefore we claim that lack of time is a driver to why managers are curious about CSR.

When it comes to shareholder pressure discussed by Fluck (1999) and Jensen (1993), they claimed that institutional owners primarily have a financial interest in their involvement with a corporation. In Gambro's case, dealing with their institutional owners, it was obvious to us that their owners kept a close eye on Gambro's financial progress. The Gambro managers could not even talk about their owners in any way. To this, most of the managers agreed that their owner has high financial expectations on them. These financial demands that active shareholders have on corporations, or Gambro in this case, creates an incentive to be curious about CSR to see if this concept is by any chance profitable. Most of the managers stated that their curiosity about CSR comes from their corporate culture by as stated before we believe that the Gambro managers might have had taken a precautionary modest approach to our questions.

Managers that are more susceptible to pressure incorporate basic management fashions created to fit the organization's need (Borgert, 1977; Briner et al, 1990). When it comes to find new managerial fashions one manager acknowledged that it is a duty to look for new trends that is applicable on the organization. The other managers did not express management fashions as a duty to look into but more as interesting to look into if it "landed on their desk". We believe this is the case because the majority of the managers said that they lack time, therefore making it convenient for others to guide and influence them.

5.9 Summary of the above

We want to simplify for the reader to know what research findings we have made in our quest to learn why managers are curious about CSR. To do this we have made bullet points below, each one tells a driver to why managers are curious about CSR. The headers reveal the origin of every finding.

Theory confirmed by the empirical research

- The diffusion of the concept CSR has lead to the dissemination of CSR among managers more efficiently.
- Different idea-bearing suppliers influence managers what CSR means and increases their interest. The mass media works as a strong supplier, consultants to a lower degree, books and academia even lower.
- Corporations feel a need to legitimize themselves in society as they have increasing expectations to work ethically. Managers are expected to work ethically and mind all stakeholders in society.
- Managers compare themselves with other organizations via benchmarking and having ethical role models.
- Just as much CSR legitimizes it also is perceived to increase competitiveness. As such managers seek a competitive edge in comparison to their rivals.
- An ethical corporate culture drives managers to investigate new ethical standards to legitimize them as managers.
- By unifying the organization around common visions and ethical norms the corporate culture and the brand is strengthened.
- Managers win legitimacy among their employees by implementing CSR.
- Managers often have a hidden agenda with their implementation of CSR, i.e. they want to solve an organizational problem rather than a societal one.
- Pressure from major shareholders creates an incentive for managers to try new ways to be profitable, hence the curiosity for CSR.
- Managers implement CSR to numb their stress level.

Expansion of theory from empirical research

- The perception of CSR differs between managerial positions showing that some managers have certain reasons to be curious about CSR. Reasons closely linked to the purpose of their managerial role.
- Industry elements wield influence over managers via, in our case, regulatory requirements on ethical standards.
- Managers have, through their work experience, stumbled over the CSR concept and over time ethics and what is important have shaped them in their managerial positions.
- Geographic and cultural differences shape how much or how little managers are curious about CSR.
- For managers not knowing what your situation looks like create a level of anxiousness needed to be calmed.
- To a lesser degree, managers feel a local anchoring in their local region and therefore they want to contribute to the society in which they live and conduct their business in. Managers want to take social responsibility in the same extent as they are large because they think that society have failed to solve societal problems opening up for corporations to solve these instead.

6. Conclusion

Comment: *In this chapter our results are to be presented and whether these answer the purpose of this thesis. Thereafter, the knowledge contributions are discussed, limitations and applicability of the findings. Finally, suggestions for further research are offered.*

6.1 Reaching our conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate why managers are curious about Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR. To begin with we established a theoretical framework. In this, we presented various authors giving their definition on CSR. Further we continued by presenting different theoretical perspectives to better understand why managers would be curious about such a confusing term.

We set out to study managers for two reasons. (1) Not much had been said about these in relation to CSR and neither did we think that previous explanations were realistic. (2) Managers are the ones with actual decision-making power that can allow a concept like CSR to further grow. In our method we have stated that we have taken an abductive reasoning through this thesis meaning that theory and observations are gathered to understand why managers have become curious about it. Based on theories from our theoretical framework we had semi-structured interviews with 11 Gambro managers. The results have been presented in the empirics section. Using the mentioned abductive reasoning we, before coming to this point, made an analysis where both theory and discovered empirics were presented, and how these relate to our research question.

6.2 Why are managers curious about Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR?

Perceived ambiguity and meaning of CSR by the managers

Since CSR is a diffuse concept it has gained universality and thereof including all sorts of actors and organizations, even those who already are regarded to take their social responsibility in an earlier state. Therefore we believe that managers working in uncontroversial industries, such as the medical device industry, have also been exposed to CSR. Also, our research showed that the meaning of CSR differs between managerial positions. For example managers who work close to

production in their work tasks think they are already doing CSR by their everyday business routines, while sales and marketing managers see communicational functions that can be better used with the term.

Understanding what CSR is through other actors

We believe that from our interviews primarily mass media, by bringing publicity to disruptive events, has been a source of what CSR means. Managers want to avoid negative publicity set by business media. To this, if the manager lacks knowledge of the corporation's situation regarding such issues highlighted by mass media. A level of anxiousness emerges that leads to higher interest in a publically approved solution, in this case CSR. Also to a lower extent, managers read books about CSR to gain more knowledge about what it means. Work experience is also a source for understanding of what CSR means.

Consultants to some degree have influential power over managers in our case. Though much research has already been made concerning this. The managerial position also here seems to be an element to which manager is more exposed than others. Another driving source are municipalities, whom are also customers in this case, which wield influence over managers via their regulatory requirements on ethical standards. Here though there might be differences in industries regarding to what degree municipalities vs. customers set forth requirements. Since they are the same in our case, it is hard to separate them. Though in this case, the more rules, regulations, and requirements are demanded by municipalities, the less managers can perceive their business having a wider responsibility, since regulation already seems to cover such areas.

Perception of CSR as a must to survive

Managers perceive that there is a societal expectation on them to work with CSR, and this expectation have also increased with time. As such managers feel a must to legitimize the organization in society. This legitimization in society is perceived to be achieved by communicating both internally and externally to send out the good values that they believe their organization generate. Though this we believe needs further investigation since differences may reside from industry to industry.

CSR as perceived competitive gain

Managers compare themselves with other organizations via benchmarking and having role models. To this, by these competitors answering to societal expectations faster than the focal corporation managers also believe that there is a competitive gain to achieve through CSR. As such, in our case, communicating CSR is perceived to both legitimize the corporation as giving it further competitiveness.

Contemporary expectations on managers

Our research showed that managers feel that they are expected to work ethically and mind all stakeholders in society. We understand that there is a sense of wanting to take social responsibility in the same extent as the size of the organization. To this we encountered geographic and cultural differences that help to shape how much or how little managers are curious about CSR. Though we do not believe we can conclusively say that this is so since this requires cross analysis between different geographical, socio-economic and cultural areas.

Organizational culture

An ethical corporate culture drives managers to investigate new ethical ways. To this, different departments may regard CSR differently much due to the fragmentation of which we mentioned earlier. All in all, managers think by unifying the organization around common visions and ethical norms the corporate culture and the brand is strengthened. These factors are incentives for managers to be curious about CSR.

Managers as saviors

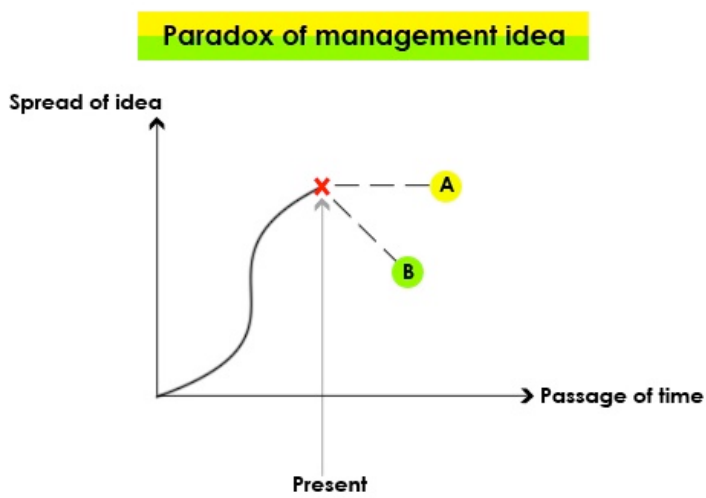
To some degree managers believe they win legitimacy by implementing CSR. Though because the sensitivity of such a perspective we think this needs further research. In addition to this, the managers put a lot of trust into CSR as they hope that it can help them resolve issues regarding an agenda of organizational problems. Also, the state of not knowing what your situation looks like creates a level of anxiousness needed to be calmed.

Lack of time and stress

In our research we have shown that managers are curious about CSR because of their stress level along with a level of anxiousness and must to respond to societal expectations. Also, to some degree it seems as if pressure from major shareholders creates an incentive for managers to try new ways to be profitable, hence the curiosity for CSR.

6.3 Final Discussion

What we propose in this thesis is that it is not always simple to draw the line for when something is sustainable contrary to transient, serious contrary to unimportant or even what is old contrary to what is new. Such a situation creates ambiguity and is quite paradoxical. We want to explain this with the following illustration. Here we see a line explaining the spread of a hypothetical management idea. X represents the present. This point can be explained in two ways. Either



through A , which means that the idea will have at least a steady course and prove to become what we can later call, an institution. Or, it can be explained by B and become what some choose to call fashion. The problem is that neither explains X at the present. Thereof, the point could be interpreted as inheriting both explanations. As such, what would you call such a point? Semi-institution?

Semi-fashion? Probably, that is not so important. Instead what is important is to understand that such a point is immensely risky. Much like a stock, there is no meaning to tout about its increase in value if that increase does not bring any personal gain. Just the same, there is no shame if that same stock would choose to fall, as long as one has not invested any money in it. That is, ideas that reach paradoxical status opens up doors for strategic implications and costs. An example of this could of course be integration and education costs, especially regarding IT. Other costs could be production costs, or costs due to changes in one's supply chain management. The point is also amplified because of other elements. In our case, for example managerial lack of time to investigate what it is that one wants to spend a fortune on, or the allure of increasing one's own existence and calm anxiousness.

To explain what has been written above in another term one can think of the contemporary modern toy called iPhone. Nowadays, many people have an iPhone to fulfill certain needs or to be regarded as modern and up-to-date by others. This is, when any person buys an iPhone this person believes to be unique and different from other cell phone users. Soon though, this person realizes that he or she is just like everybody else since there is an oppressive majority using iPhones today. We believe that corporations are just like iPhone users – they do not know when fashions die or if they will continue in the shape of an institution. Regardless if management fashions are important or

nonsense corporations do make an effort in trying to look good and being up-to-date for certain stakeholders like an iPhone user. We do not intend to engage into a discussion of what cell phone is the better, but we would like to name that there are satisfactory complements to iPhone. Even though these complements possess similar attributes people still seem to prefer the iPhone. We want to call to that there are hundreds of other ethical concepts to exert for corporations but at the moment CSR seem to be the hottest.

6.4 Knowledge contributions, limitations of study, and applicability of findings

This study was focused on understanding why managers working at Gambro in Lund were curious about CSR. This research has contributed to widening the complex situation of managerial work today. Even though we understand that we only have one case study, the depth of this enables a generalization in most areas. As mentioned earlier, prior researches focus on managers as decision makers to why they are curious about managerial fashions we believe have been insufficient. This study provides a higher generalization to the understanding of why managers are curious about management fashions. The results depict a more realistic view through that we do not put any negative or positive worth in what a fashion is. Neither do we portray managers as incapable of judgment or addicted to such suppliers of fashion such as consultants and mass media. Instead we have tried to explain more neutrally to why CSR, as a managerial fashion, receives curiosity by managers.

Limitations of our study have mainly been the specific industry which Gambro exists in. We have encountered areas where we believe that the industry has had impacts over some of the elements to why managers are curious about CSR. Further we also encountered the possibility of there being geographical differences to why managers are curious about CSR, something this study has not taken into major account. Also, it should be mentioned that CSR inherits a level of moral and ethical value, which may lead to sensitive areas for managers to answer.

Even so there are many overall aspects in our study that can be further used to understand why managers are curious about management fashions, and CSR. This is because many of them are not traits to specific industries, but they are traits of what the managerial role implies and how society functions.

6.5 Suggestions for further research

In this thesis we have chosen to focus on managers. For future research we recommend four areas of interest which we discovered during our empirical research. The first area of interest is that we believe there is a difference between industries when it comes to managerial curiosity. For reasons explained in our method section, we have focused on one sole organization. We acknowledge that a cross-study of organizations working in different industries would expand the knowledge of why managers are curious about CSR. The other area of interest is researching the differences of CSR curiosity between geographic areas and cultural values. We limited our research to only Gambro in Lund but as CSR has become a world-wide concept the interest of managerial curiosity about CSR should be discussed and researched globally. Also fragmentation of understandings is another field, which is interesting, and what kind of costs and organizational implications that leads to. Further interest should also be given to the development of anxiousness around management fashions as well. This is because CSR as we mentioned earlier inherit moral and ethical values, which can be reasons for such anxiousness to increase faster than other more technical fashions.

7. Appendix

7.1 Interview questions (in Swedish)

Vad innebär det att ett företag är ansvarstagande för dig?

Var får ni inspiration till nya arbetsprocesser ifrån på din avdelning?

Har Gambro arbetat med ansvarstagande tidigare? I så fall vad?

Varifrån får du dina källor, information om vad CSR är för något? Vilka böcker, tidningar, skrifter har du läst?

Vilka organisationer står Gambro närmast?

Har det någon betydelse för de om ni engagerar er i CSR? Förväntar de sig det?

Finns det något yttre tryck till att Gambro bör hålla på med CSR?

Vad skulle hända om Gambro skulle välja att inte hålla på med CSR?

Tycker du att det finns en struktur som avgör hur du agerar som chef?

Anser du införandet av nya koncept som CSR är en del av denna struktur?

Upplever Du att kraven och synen på chefer har förändrats under Din tid som chef?

Känner Du att det har blivit svårt att hänga med i den snabbt växande omvärlden?

Hur påverkar detta Dig som chef?

Känner Du att det är viktigt att anpassa sig till den rådande omvärlden och nya affärstrender?

Hur hade du upplevt dig själv som chef om du hade pådrivit CSR på din avdelning?

Tycker Du att pressen utifrån gör så att Gambro känner sig tvungna att införliva CSR?

Känner du dig stressad över externa krav på att Gambro skall vara ett socialt ansvarstagande företag?

Vilka problem hoppas Du att era CSR aktiviteter skall lösa?

Anser du att det finns en stor otydlighet kring vad som förväntas av företags ansvarstagande och vad CSR betyder?

Upplever du att du vet hur du praktiskt ska arbeta med CSR?

Har ni varit i kontakt med konsulter angående CSR?

Hur upplever ni dessa konsulttjänster?

Vad är konkurrenskraft?

Kan man skapa konkurrenskraft genom CSR?

Håller era konkurrenter på med CSR?

Har era konkurrenter ett försprång ifall de håller på med CSR?

Har ni förebilder av ledare eller företag inom CSR?

Hur tror du synen på Gambro utifrån samhällets perspektiv ser ut?

Varför bör Gambro arbeta med CSR om det bara är något för bolag med negativ stämpel?

Är du rädd för att Gambro skulle bli ansedda som desperata ur samhällets synvinkel om ni sysslar med CSR?

Kommer er nyfikenhet på CSR från er företagskultur eller krav på lönsamhet?

Vad hoppas du att Gambro skall kunna uppnå genom att ta ett socialt ansvarstagande?

7.2 Interviewees

Interviewee A. Director of Purchasing

49 years old, is responsible for all purchases from long-term commodities to disposable products at Gambro. Controlling different projects, supplier evaluations, and keeping track on costs are his main work tasks. Before starting at Gambro he worked as Director of Purchasing at Ericsson. He has also merits from working as Director of Operations at Axis, Director of Quality at SonyEricsson. Has 17 years of management experience.

Interviewee B. Environment & Property manager

55 years old, responsible for environment and facilities at Gambro. Prior experience as chemist and hygienic and quality manager at Trelleborg AB and former environment manager at AstraZeneca.

Interviewee C. Site Managing Patent Counsel

46 years old, is responsible for making sure that Gambro protects the results of investments in R&D, and monitors others intellectual property rights. Before joining Gambro she worked with similar tasks at ABB. Has 10 years of management experience.

Interviewee D. Manager Nordic IT

37 years old, is responsible for following up and coordinating IT related needs at the Nordic sites within Gambro. Work tasks consist mainly of being the point of contact within IT and being a spokesperson for this area. Before joining Gambro, she worked at Tetra Pak's IT department where SAP implementation later lead her to Gambro. Has only management experience from Gambro since 2007.

Interviewee E. VP Development & Manufacturing

52 years old, is responsible for developing and producing monitors for dialysis treatment. Before joining Gambro, has management experience from Ericsson, Quality & IT manager and Factory manager. Further management experience is Production manager at Cardo Door. Has 25 years of management experience.

Interviewee F. Research manager

57 years old, is responsible for Research and Development. Main objectives are to lead and prioritize research activities within the corporation. Prior experience as a university researcher and lecturer. Has 10 years of management experience

Interviewee G. Chief Financial Officer

41 years old, is responsible of financial analysis, recommendation, coordination, forecasting, reporting, and accounting. Prior experience in a trading corporation, chemical corporation, and venture capital. Has 10 years of management experience

Interviewee H. Director Nordics and Baltics sales

54 years old, is responsible for sales, marketing activities and technical service in the Nordic and the Baltic countries. Has spent his whole career at Gambro. He has been in a management position for 22 years.

Interviewee I. Director of Liquid Research

Is responsible for the research of liquid components in Gambro's dialysis machines. Has been working as manager in different constellations at Gambro since year 2000. Has 15 years of experience of management.

Interviewee J. Quality manager

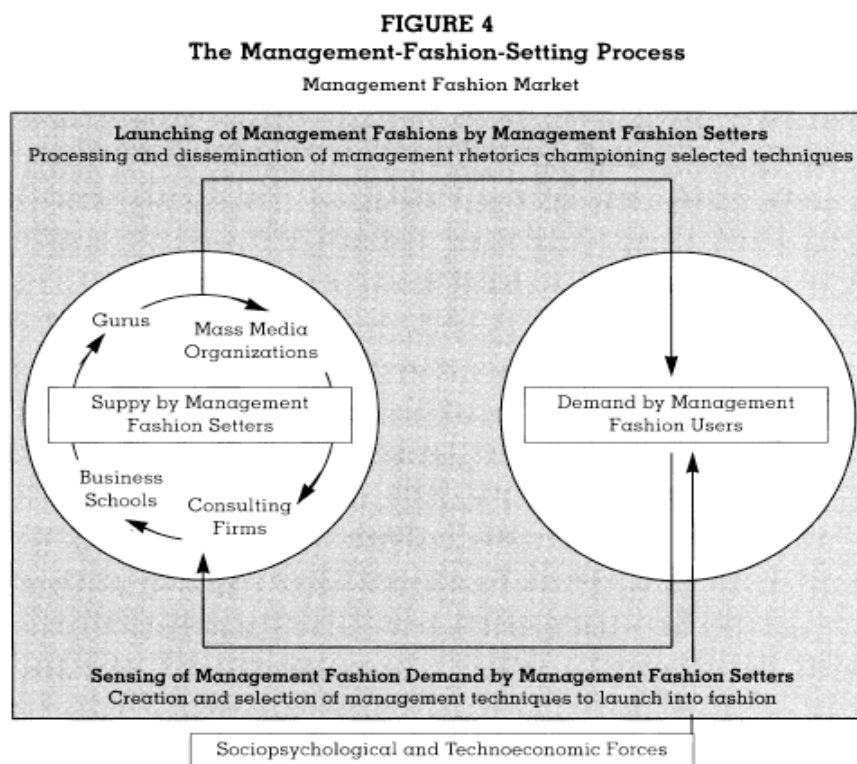
45 years old. Responsible of QARA Chronic. Is leading the quality assurance department consisting of four teams; quality deviation team, assurance of law and requirements team, complaint and vigilance team, and quality system team. Prior experience as service technician at Lund University Hospital and different managerial experience at Sony Ericsson. Has 18 years of management experience.

Interviewee K. Branding & Market Communication manager

Has a global responsibility. She is responsible for branding. She works at communicating Gambro's values and marketing world-wide. Has worked at Gambro for 30 years.

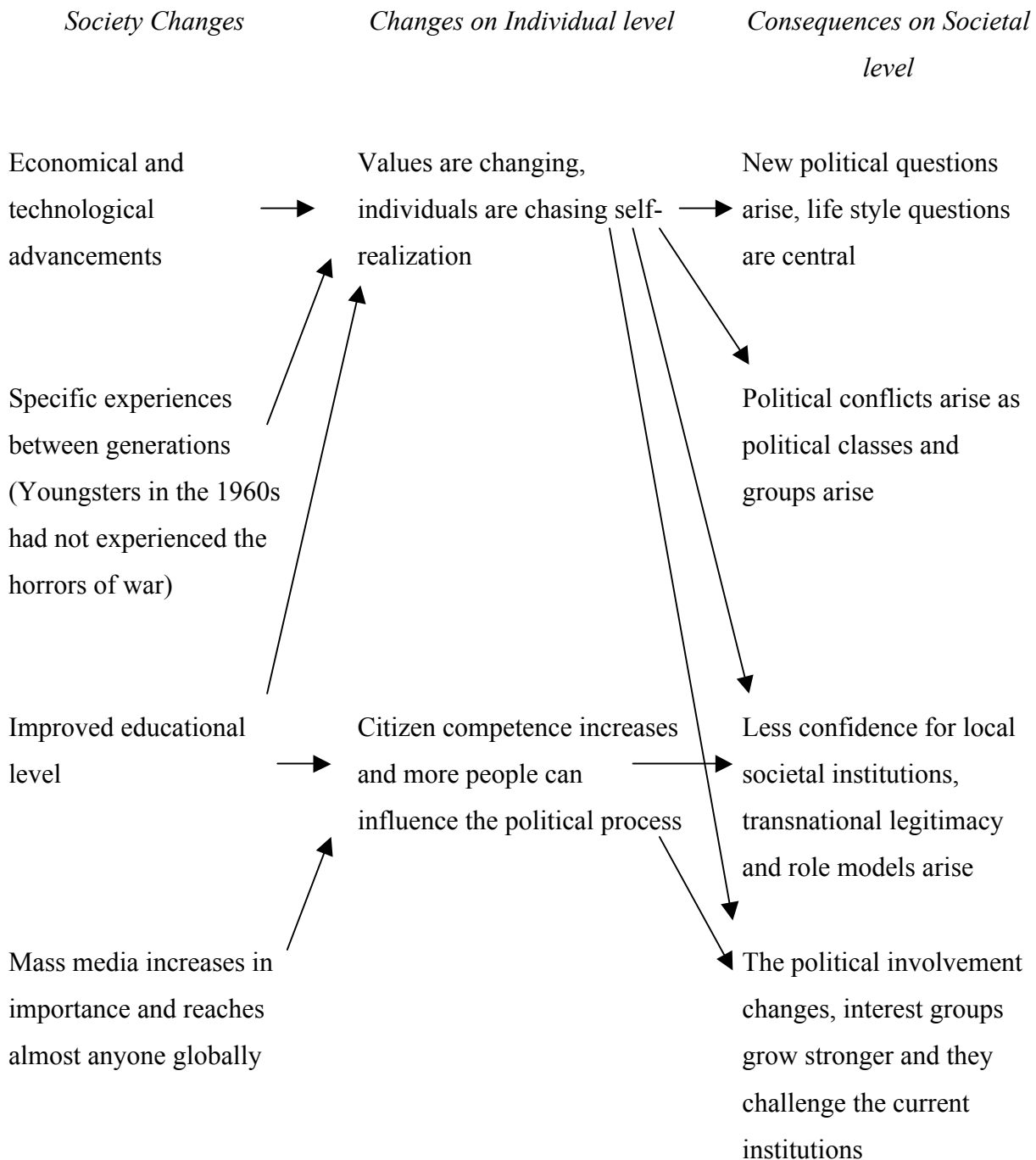
7.3 The Management-Fashion-Setting-Process model

The Management-Fashion-Setting-Process by Abrahamson (1996). The Academy of Management Review, 21(1), 254-285.



7.4 The Silent Revolution model

The Silent Revolution model created by Inglehart (1977 in Sveiby 1990)



Artikel

Tidning: CSR i praktiken (ägs av Veckans Affärer) eller DI.

”Varför är chefer nyfikna på CSR?”

Många anser att företag bör utvidga sitt sociala ansvar genom att anamma värdeladdade begrepp som t.ex. CSR. Andra tycker de varor som företag producerar är socialt ansvarstagande nog. Hur kommer det sig att företagsledare i större utsträckning är nyfikna på CSR?

I en nyutgiven studie gjord av studenter på Lunds Universitet så undersöktes olika anledningar till hur affärstrender uppstår, s.k. management fashions. I denna studie användes CSR för att undersöka hur konceptet uppstått till dess att företagsledare blir nyfikna på dess verkningar. Studien gjordes i samarbete med Lundaföretaget Gambro. Genom att intervjua elva chefer som innehar olika arbetsuppgifter så kunde studenterna utvidga forskningsrönen kring managementteori. Studien tog sin utgångspunkt i institutioner och hur dessa färdas ned mot företagsledare.

”Ökade krav på CSR”

För att nya management fashions ska kunna sprida sig så visade studien på att dessa måste vara diffusa. Anledningen är att chefer upptas av andra uppgifter vilket gör att de inte har tid att kritiskt granska nya management fashions som sprider sig inom företagssfären. Genom att begreppet är diffust och att chefer inte har tid att granska nya koncept så innebär detta att språkrör för nya management fashions lättare kan sprida konceptet.

I Gambros fall så visade det sig dock att de varit i kontakt med förbluffande få konsulter givet förutsättningarna för CSR. Istället så var det myndighetskrav, tillika Gambros kunder som framförde krav på etiska förhållningssätt. Flera av Gambros chefer hävdade att klimatet i branschen lett fram till att det är viktigt att kommunicera goda värden och etiska arbetsprocesser efter myndigheter tittar efter sådana faktorer innan de skriver kontrakt med företag. På ett djupare plan så visade studien att organisationer genom olika påtryckningar känner behov av att legitimera sig som ansvarsfulla och goda samhällsmedborgare.

”CSR som konkurrensverktyg”

I studien visade det sig att chefer tror mycket på CSR som ett konkurrensverktyg trots att forskning visar att alltför organisationer anammar CSR-strategier och att den nytänkta studien visade att chefer har ett imitativt beteende där de genom benchmarking kopierar varandra ute på marknaden. Gambros chefer menade på att CSR är precis som vilket konkurrensverktyg som helst, även om det mest påminner om marknadsföring. Detta kan jämföras med att köpa en iPhone.

- ”Du köper en iPhone för att känna dig unik men snart så upptäcker du att du är precis som alla andra”, säger Kubilay Orman som är en av författarna till studien.

Intressant nog så visade det sig att chefer ofta har en baktanke med att marknadsföra etiska begrepp. I diskussioner vad Gambro hoppades att få ut av sina CSR-aktiviteter så nämndes lösning av sociala problem väldigt sällan. Istället så hoppades Gambros chefer på att "stärka organisationskulturen", "få bättre kontroll på leverantörerna", "stärka varumärket" o.s.v.

"Resultatet av studien"

- "Studien är viktig eftersom den belyser nutida chefers komplexa och pressade arbetssituation", säger Philip Hedestad, en av medförfattarna till studien. "Det är ändå dessa som avgör i slutändan genom sina beslut om resten av världen har rätt att ställa krav på organisationers ansvarstagande"

Studien syftade till att öka förståelsen till hur nya management fashions uppkommer och varför organisationer tar emot dessa. Författarna till studien menar att många av drivkrafter till CSR hos Gambro går att applicera på vilka management fashions som helst. Dessa är sammanfattade i de "fem drivkrafterna till management fashions".

Fem drivkrafter till Management Fashions

1. Ju diffusare management fashion är, desto större chans att väcka intresset för dessa
2. Konsulter och kunder push:ar företagsledare att använda management fashions
3. Företagsledare vill legitimera organisationen genom att använda etiska förhållningssätt
4. Företagsledare tror att de kan stärka sin konkurrenskraft genom att implementera management fashions
5. Chefer hoppas att management fashions ska lösa ett annat organisationsproblem

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