CSR and CSV: The Managerial Interpretation of a Blurry Line

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ABSTRACT

From the moment the concept of Creating Shared Value (CSV) was introduced in 2011, it was by some considered to be an evolutionary way of contributing to society whereas for others it initiated an ongoing critical debate. This debate that is taking place on the academic scene has, among other things, focused on defining what CSV really is and differentiating it from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This is mainly because the critical side believes that CSV is unoriginal and strikingly similar to CSR. Interestingly, in practice companies are implementing CSV in many different ways and some are adding it to their CSR strategy. The fact that these two concepts are closely related has led to a blurry line, which in return has caused disagreements in the mentioned debate. Given the above, we aim at understanding how managers interpret and implement CSV in comparison to CSR and what the differences between these two concepts are in practice. Data was collected by employing case studies which entailed semi-structured interviews with company informants. The findings indicated that managers interpret CSV as a way of contributing to society as well as the firm’s business simultaneously, and thus the implementation of the concept is highly industry-specific. CSR on the other hand, was mostly interpreted as a way of conforming to external pressures and is therefore implemented in relatively similar ways across the companies interviewed. In contrast to academia, it was indicated that managers are more interested in infusing the above two concepts than separating and differentiating them.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Creating Shared Value (CSV), Strategy, Interpretation, Implementation
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Today, businesses are not only expected to address economic but also social as well as environmental concerns. This implies that organizations are expected to organize their business activities in a manner that does not only contribute to the organization but also to the society in which they operate (Elkington, 1998). Consequently, a significant amount of organizations have put business responsibility and sustainability on their agenda and started attending to matters regarding business ethics, society and the environment. This has been done by employing a concept known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of a way of responding to the above issues. Previous research has advocated for the concept of CSR and, like already mentioned, it has been implemented and used as a company strategy to enable firms to contribute to society, improving relationships with different stakeholders as well as brand legitimacy.

Nevertheless, most CSR practices have been argued to be isolated from the core of the business and mostly used as a way of dealing with stakeholder pressure. Therefore, these practices could be seen as failing to identify crucial societal issues where businesses could make real impact (Porter & Kramer, 2006). One example that could be given is the “Amazon Smile Program” which is a CSR program that enables Amazon to donate approximately five percent of individuals’ purchases to a charity of the firm’s choosing (Amazon, 2018). It is clear that this program is not connected to Amazon’s business and it does not really make any real impact since the firm does not solve a given societal need or issue. Similar initiatives with no link to the firm’s business have also been seen in other companies and it is arguable that these initiatives seem to deviate from the core of the company’s business. Given this, the applicability of CSR has been questioned and considered to be a flawed strategy (Wojcik, 2016).

As a way of supposedly dealing with this flaw, the concept of Creating Shared Value (CSV) was introduced (Porter & Kramer, 2011). It is considered to be an evolution of CSR in the way that it focuses not only on sustainability but also on enhancing both economic and social conditions in a given community (Porter & Kramer, 2011). As affirmed, CSV as a concept is
briefly about reconnecting business to society by contributing to both business and societal goals simultaneously. It is also argued to be a strategic shift from sole sustainability to an increased focus on shareholders’ needs and creating a better society (Corazza, Scagnelli & Mio, 2017). Over the past years, the concept of CSV has gotten an increased amount of attention and several companies have incorporated it into their business operations. Furthermore, CSV has been proclaimed to supersede CSR programs which are considered to mostly focus on reputation and have inadequate and limited connection to the business (Porter and Kramer, 2011). Moreover, business practitioners have encouraged managers to incorporate CSV into the company’s sustainability activities and scholars such as Wojcik (2016) have gone as far as proposing that CSV can be viewed as a concept that responds to the deficiencies of CSR.

Although CSV has been embraced with enthusiasm by many scholars and organizations, it has also faced a number of controversies and criticism from various sources such as academic researchers (Corazza, Scagnelli & Mio, 2017). From a critical point of view, it is suggested that CSV is unoriginal as a concept and full of naive and wishful thinking, which may not be applicable in the real business world (Crane, Palazzo, Spence & Matten, 2014). This is partially because CSV is said to ignore the conflict between social and economic goals that may occur when these goals are not aligned for all the involved stakeholders. Furthermore, the concept of CSV has been criticized for being naive towards business compliance and being based on a shallow and inadequate understanding of a firm’s role in society (Crane et al., 2014). Moreover, Crane et al. (2014) suggested that CVS is misleading and worthless to serious managers seeking realistic solutions to social problems faced by their businesses. In accordance to the above, it has also been suggested that CSV is not broad enough to fully achieve the important work of reconnecting business with society (Beschorner, 2013).

In addition to this, seeing as CSV is a fairly new concept there has not been much research done in this area. A result is that there is no clear definition of what CSV actually is in the real world (Wójcik, 2016). As of right now one could argue that it is a fuzzy concept which is up to every manager’s interpretation. According to a quantitative study by Corazza et al. (2017), organizations seem to be interpreting CSV in a number of ways, which involve other sustainability approaches and adding it to their CSR strategies. Given this, we argue that the claimed line between CSV and CSR is blurry despite the academic researchers’ effort to
clarify it. Consequently, there is a need for further research on how this blurry line between the two concepts is interpreted and implemented in practice.

In conjunction to the above debate, we argue that the mixed scholarly reactions and managerial interpretation of CSV are due to the fact that there has not been enough research done in this area. This is in line with Corazza et al. (2017) who strongly suggest that there is still not sufficient knowledge and academic research about how organizations are interpreting and implementing CSV within their processes and the effects of doing so. Moreover, according to the findings of previous studies, the concept of CSV is still at a nascent phase and more research is needed to understand the area of connecting business to society (Dembek & Singh, 2016). Given this fact, Wojcik (2016) also suggested that qualitative research is needed to extend previous studies’ findings concerning shared value creation and its interpretation. Lapina, Borkus and Starineca (2012) also urged for a real life application of both CSR and CSV involving a managerial perspective and the key differentiating aspects between the two concepts.

1.2 Purpose & Research Question

Taking the above into consideration, the purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of CSV as a concept from a managerial perspective and simultaneously exploring the practical differences between CSV and CSR. By conducting a study like this we hope to show the motivations behind both CSV and CSR, as well as what companies gain from these activities. Based on our understanding, our thesis has two sub-purposes which go hand in hand with the main purpose. Through achieving our main purpose, we will also contribute to the understanding of the blurry line between CSV and CSR in practice as well as contributing to the ongoing debate about CSV from a managerial point of view. This will be achieved by developing a theoretical framework which will be used to analyze the qualitative empirical data which will be collected. As a result, the research question will be as follows:

- How do managers interpret and thus implement CSV in comparison to CSR and what are the practical differences between the two concepts?
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this section we will go through the concepts of CSR and CSV one at a time. First we will give a short background to CSR, how the concept has evolved over time and how it looks like today. After that we will move forward to CSV and explain the concept more in detail based on available literature covering the area. We will also go through debates regarding both CSR and CSV as we believe that the outcomes, such as the pros and cons, can help us clarify the blurry line between the two concepts.

2.1 Defining CSR

CSR has been a hot topic for a long period of time. The more modern way of looking at the concept started already in the 1950’s when Howard R. Bowen published his book called Social Responsibilities of the Businessman in 1953. Bowen claimed that the largest businesses, by the mere power of their actions and decisions, could affect the lives of the society around them. He defined social responsibility as follows: “It refers to 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” (Carroll, 1999:270). Since the 1950’s, there has been an ongoing discussion about the notion of CSR and over the years it has lead to a multitude of different definitions and views regarding this concept. As a result, the concept of CSR is extremely broad with no clear boundaries or definitions. Today, the vocabulary surrounding CSR has come to encompass an array of different concepts, such as sustainability, accountability, corporate citizenship, just to name a few (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016). So the notion of CSR has become more of an umbrella-term that highlights the responsible actions done by corporations (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016).

As cited in Marrewijk (2003:96), social responsibility ”means something, but not the same, to everybody”. Governments, non-governmental organizations, corporations all have biased views towards CSR, looking at how the concept aligns with their specific interests (Marrewijk, 2003). The same issue is also apparent in the academic world, where the view on CSR differs greatly depending on which discipline that is analyzing it. Each of them has their own bias, method and normative agenda guiding them in their understanding of the concept (Sheehy, 2015). For instance, if looking into the business community, one of the more traditional and long-standing views on CSR comes from a study done by Carroll (1999),
which describes CSR in relation to the following four responsibilities: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. The description can be seen as a pyramid where the economic component is at the bottom followed by the legal, ethical and philanthropic component. According to Carroll (1999), "The CSR firm should strive to make a profit, obey the law, be ethical and be a good corporate citizen". The common view of CSR is understood as giving back to society and taking responsibility (Wojcik, 2016).

2.2 How to be corporately responsible

Like mentioned above, CSR is a multifaceted concept where companies and organizations can shape their activities in an abundance of ways. It is also something widespread, as almost every modern organization engages in some form of CSR (Jong & Meer, 2017). As a result, the activities and policies that companies and organizations engage in can take many shapes and forms. However, Jong & Meer (2017) mention three forms of CSR that are viewed and researched as separate entities. These are cause-related marketing, sponsorship and corporate philanthropy. Cause-related marketing is where companies try to combine sales with a social cause, sponsorship is when companies connect their brand to a certain event or cause, and corporate philanthropy can in simplicity be explained as charity given by companies and organizations (Jong & Meer, 2017).

In the study done by Jong & Meer (2017), they studied how organization’s CSR activities fit with the organization as a whole. After having studied 10 different annual and CSR reports, they identified 102 specific CSR activities. Overall, they narrowed it down to different areas in which organizations usually work with CSR:

- Products and services
- Production process
- Environmental impact
- Employees
- Suppliers
- Geographical area
First of all, companies usually involve their products or services in order to do good. An example Jong & Meer, (2017) uses is how a bank can create entrepreneurial opportunities for start-ups, or for people interested in starting their own business. The other area lies in the production process of the product or service. This area can include using eco-friendly materials, implementing sustainable energy sources and the likes. The third area identified is in regards to the organization’s environmental impact, where CSR activities could be linked to reducing this impact. This can in turn be done by for instance engaging in energy-saving, recycling and proper waste management. The fourth area is focused on employees, where companies and organizations can be corporately responsible by promoting equality and diversity within the organization and throughout their recruitment process. In this area the organization or company could also encourage employees to volunteer for charitable causes. The fifth area is suppliers, where companies can look beyond their own operations and urge their suppliers to act in a more responsible way. Jong & Meer (2017) mentions examples of where companies have certain requirements in regards to their suppliers, which the suppliers have to comply with. The last area surrounds the geographical area in which the company operates. Examples of CSR activities here could be anything from sponsoring local events to enhancing the overall quality of life in a certain region (Jong & Meer, 2017).

2.3 Debates regarding CSR

As mentioned above, CSR is a concept full of various definitions and scholars have not agreed on a universal way of defining the concept (Marrewijk, 2003). So it has faced both praise and critique. First of all, the concept has been utilized in so many settings and contexts that, as a result, some claim it has lost all meaning (Ahen & Zettinig, 2015). Seeing as CSR does not have to have a link to core corporate activities, some argue that CSR can be perceived as greenwashing, meaning a pure marketing stunt (Wojcik 2016). However, we argue that this does not necessarily have to be the case at all times. Some CSR activities could be linked to core corporate activities, depending on the company and the activities that they do. Others continue on by saying that traditional CSR is just a fancy word, that gives an unrealistic and cosmetic appearance of the company (Ahen & Zettinig, 2015). This can be especially apparent in situations where companies take credit for social and environmental contributions while at the same time still causing harm in one way or another (Sheehy, 2015).
Even though CSR has faced some critique over the years, we argue that it is still something so demanded in today’s society that companies cannot survive without it. The classical view on CSR and the effect it provides is that CSR entails short-term costs but long-term gains. It is argued that companies, through CSR, yield a greater social legitimacy while at the same time benefiting from less governmental control. There is also the notion that a better society in general would be positive for a company’s profitability in the long-run (Burke & Longsdon, 1996). Furthermore, Porter & Kramer (2006) are positive regarding CSR and claim that it is a source of innovation and opportunities.

In terms of stakeholders, studies have shown positive outcomes of CSR. Stakeholders are seen as individuals or groups that have or can claim rights or interests in a firm and its activities, such as employees and customers (Clarkson, 1995). When it comes to employees, CSR has been seen to positively impact both potential as well as current ones. Studies show that companies investing in CSR are more attractive to potential employees and that factors such as a firm’s values and ethics can significantly shape the perception of firm attractiveness (Brammer, Millington & Rayton, 2007). In addition, Brammer et al. (2007) claims that 58% of UK employees feel that their organization’s social and environmental responsibilities are of great importance. An effect of this is evident in the same study, where it shows that CSR is positively correlated with organizational commitment (Brammer et al., 2007). When it comes to customers on the other hand, CSR has been seen to enhance customer satisfaction, positively impact purchase intentions and make firms more attractive in the minds of customers (Abdulrazak & Amran, 2018). Also, Brammer et al. (2007) go on by claiming that CSR in the shape of involvement in social issues and philanthropy, can lead to enhanced firm reputation.

2.4 Defining CSV

In 2011, Porter and Kramer introduced the idea of CSV as a way of solving the supposedly narrow approach of value creation for the firm’s stakeholders. Based on previous research we define CSV as: practices or activities that enhance the firm’s economic value while simultaneously contributing to the society in which the firm operates (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Despite this, it is important to understand that this is a common definition from academic researchers who are pro CSV and believe that this is what companies need to
implement instead of CSR. On the contrary, researchers who are skeptical about CSV have claimed that the concept of CSV is just plain CSR and not as original as it has been made to seem (Crane et al., 2014). In defence, the pro side argued that unlike CSR, CSV focuses on finding and expanding the link between societal and economic progress. Furthermore, they argue that it is important for companies to align their interests with society’s, given the fact that their success are closely interrelated. All in all, CSV per definition is believed to not only improve existing societal issues but it also looks at how these specific issues can be turned into opportunities for the firm (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Considering this, Crane et al. (2014) emphasize how CSV might increase social work attention to companies but that as a concept it still has serious shortcomings that will prohibit any possibility for real change. Taking all the above into consideration, though our definition is inspired by the pro side of CSV, we are aware of and will also consider what is said to be the discrepancies of CSV throughout our thesis.

2.5 How to create shared value

CSV shifts business boundaries by understanding the importance of connecting company’s success with societal improvement. It opens up multiple ways of serving new needs, achieving efficiency, gaining differentiation and expanding markets (Porter & Kramer, 2011). There are three different ways organizations can create economic value by creating societal value:

*Reconceiving Products and Markets*

This refers to a number of unmet needs in the global economy which involves a touch of social needs. Companies have the opportunity to create unique value in this area by attending to social needs concerning healthcare, better housing, nutritional issues, the aging population, financial security as well as environmental issues. An example here can be given on companies in the food industry, which previously concentrated on taste and quantity to drive up general consumption but now have started to focus on the need for improved nutrition. Furthermore, in sectors such as the financial one, companies are developing products that for example help customers budget and manage credit in order to pay their debt. Through these ways of thinking companies open up new innovation ventures that create shared value by
providing healthier food options or by providing improved financial solutions (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

*Redefining Productivity in the Value Chain*

A company’s value chain is affected by a number of various societal issues, therefore opportunities for creating shared value can be a necessity in order to avoid economic costs in the value chain of the firm. These issues could for example be in regards to natural resources, water usage, health and safety, as well as working conditions. Companies are starting to understand that supporting suppliers benefits them since it improves supplier quality and productivity while ensuring access to needed volumes of raw material. Taking Nestlé as an example, the firm has invested in supporting its suppliers by giving them advice on farming practices, providing bank loans, helping them with securing plant stocks and pesticides. This has been done in an effort to improve low productivity, poor quality and farming practices that lead to limited production volumes. Through these initiatives, Nestlé achieved a reliable supply chain and shared value was created (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

*Enabling Local Cluster Development*

Companies do not succeed while operating in isolation, for that reason it can be argued that company success is highly related to other companies and the infrastructure around it. Clusters of related businesses, such as for instance IT in Silicon Valley, are one of the main driving forces of innovation and productivity. Moreover, clusters are of huge importance in the success and growth of regional economies and vital for competition, which drives innovation. Since deficiencies in conditions surrounding a given cluster can lead to multiple costs for a firm, it is essential to attend to these particular gaps to ensure the improvement of company productivity and through that shared value will be created. Looking at Nestlé once again, the firm has worked to build supplier clusters by employing initiatives such as helping regional farmers finance for a shared wet-milling facility and many more, which have rendered its procurement process more effective compared to before and at the same time created shared value (Porter & Kramer, 2011).
2.6 Debates regarding CSV

Though the concept of CSV has been adopted and implemented by multiple organizations, it has faced criticism from the business community and management scholars. Initially, the concept of CSV was critically evaluated by Crane et al. (2014) and since then there has been an ongoing debate about this concept within both academic and business practitioners. For the most part, CSV has been considered to have a number of serious shortcomings that need to be addressed accordingly (Crane et al., 2014). First of all, the authors suggested that even though CSV was introduced as a brand new concept it has striking similarities with existing concepts such as CSR and therefore it is simply unoriginal. Secondly, CSV does not consider the tension between social and economic goals, which can occur in a situation where social and economic benefits are not aligned for all stakeholders. There are a number of managerial decisions regarding social and environmental issues, that do not appear to be win-wins no matter how creative a manager is in the decision-making process. These issues can be viewed in a manner of constant struggle between organizations and their stakeholders due to limited resources. A practical example here is unresolved challenges of decent wages in different organizations which rarely result in win-win outcomes. Thirdly, CSV disregards the challenges of business compliance as it naturally presumes compliance from organizations rather than integrating it in the concept itself. This creates a gap since in certain industries, hard and soft law compliance is not apparent for some corporations. Last but not least, CSV is said to be based on a shallow conception of the firm’s role in society. This is because CSV’s aim is to transform business thinking, however it does not indicate any particular strategy models that need transforming other than mentioning that CSR and capitalism need fixing (Crane et al., 2014). Considering this discussion, it is unclear to what extent CSV as a concept can actually address the alleged deficiencies of CSR given that it also seems to have its own deficiencies.

2.7 Differentiating CSV from CSR

There still is a lot of confusion and ongoing debates about the differences between CSV and CSR despite multiple arguments made by many scholars and business practitioners. Based on a Michael Porter interview conducted in 2012, Moore (2014) proposed that CSR, “is
fundamentally about taking resources from the business, and investing those resources in being a good corporate citizen: recycling, giving money to social causes, reporting on social and environmental impacts, and engaging employees in community works”. On the contrary it was suggested that CSV “is aimed at changing how the core business operates - strategy, people, processes and rewards in order to deliver triple bottom line returns”. As indicated, the principal distinction lies in the fact that CSR activities are separate from the business whereas CSV integrates social and environmental issues into the business itself and therefore driving economic value (Moore, 2014).

According to multiple scholars some companies still view CSR activities as a reduction of profits on behalf of social and environmental issues (Bosch-Badia, Montllor-Serrats & Tarrazon, 2013). As argued, unlike CSR, CSV approaches a social issue in a manner that generates economic profits to the firm while also addressing the social issue in question (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Furthermore, it is has been claimed that CSV is not about doing good and not about charity like organizational CSR activities might be. In line with this, it can be argued that the fundamental and driving idea of CSV is that there are plenty of business opportunities which are embedded in meeting societal needs and as a final product value is created for both the firm and society (Moore, 2014). Moreover, CSR practices are largely driven by external pressures in the sense that if a given stakeholder group would, for example start lobbying for eradicating hunger-related issues in third-world countries, the firm would suddenly invest in programs that help eradicate hunger in order to increase its legitimacy. Considering all the above, we sum up that CSV is supposedly about expanding and sharing the created value between the firm and the involved society rather than just creating value for only society like CSR does. Despite this, it is important to be critical in the way we approach the differences between the two concepts. This is because it has been argued that CSR can also entail business cases and therefore it is not completely accurate to say that CSR only contributes to society (Abdulrazak & Amran, 2018).

![Figure 1: CSR vs CSV (Porter and Kramer, 2011)](image-url)
2.8 Managers as interpreting individuals

Seeing as there is an ambiguity regarding the concepts of CSV and CSR, we argue that the managerial interpretation is a big factor at play when implementing these two concepts. As affirmed by earlier research, the way in which managers interpret ambiguous strategic information is of huge importance as it eventually affects the organization's direction and actions (Daft & Weick, 1984). The concept of interpretation is the manner through which information is given meaning and actions are decided. In the interpretation process, managers initially consult their individual interpretation, which is influenced by prior knowledge and past experience. Thereafter, this individual interpretation is partially applied in order to develop an organizational interpretation where managers use organizational context frameworks to come up with a shared understanding (Thomas & McDaniel, 1990). An assumption here is that managers first interpret the concepts of CSV and CSR on an individual level, afterwards they apply the mentioned frameworks, and then the shared organizational interpretation becomes their interpretation. In alignment to this, managers make their interpretation based on the context of the organization, which is linked to how an organization perceives its environment (Nielsen, 2009).

2.9 The external environment

According to research done in the area of CSR, it is not only the individual manager that influences the implementation of CSR activities, but also the social context within which this manager and thus the organization is in (Athanasopoulou & Selsky, 2015). Adding on to this, we argue that this is the same regarding the implementation of CSV as there is a blurry line between the concepts (Corazza et al., 2017). As mentioned before, CSV has not been as researched as CSR, therefore there is limited research regarding the impact of the external environment when it comes to CSV. As a result, the following section will focus on CSR though we also believe that some parts, such as the external environment’s impact on the implementation of a concept, can be applicable to CSV as well.

As asserted by Athanasopoulou & Selsky (2015), CSR implementation is defined as a dynamic process that requires continuous interaction with the external environment. They continue on by saying that the social context in which organizations are in cannot be ignored, at least in CSR studies, since it is a factor influencing the organization and hence its
behaviour (Athanasopoulou & Selsky, 2015). For instance, research shows that there are discrepancies when it comes to CSR in Western countries compared to CSR in developing ones (Itotenaan, Samy & Bampton, 2014). Research has also shown that there can be similarities between different companies’ environmental strategies, in regards to the industry that they are in. Studies show that companies within the same or similar industry have a tendency to adopt the same kind of environmental strategies, influenced by the external pressures which emerge from the context they are in (Sharma, 2000).

According to Wojcik (2016), companies are mostly externally driven when it comes to the reasons behind their CSR initiatives. Thus we argue that the context and the external environment that a company is in is a contributing factor when it comes to overall CSR and CSV implementation. Companies’ enhanced attention to CSR is claimed only to be a reaction to public responses concerning societal issues and the public’s perception that corporations have a responsibility to do something about it (Porter & Kramer, 2006). CSR is then viewed as a way of gaining legitimacy or in other words gaining approval from society, which is of great importance for a firm’s survival (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016).

We argue that the quest for legitimacy can be done by conforming to external stakeholders, seeing as these are groups of people that can either enhance or cause damage to the firm, depending on corporate actions (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016). Some common stakeholders are as mentioned earlier, employees and customers but also governments and the company’s shareholders. Regarding governments, they are becoming more aware of corporate actions and are adept to hold companies accountable for them (Porter & Kramer, 2006). We argue that this can be specifically evident in Sweden, where this study was done, because it was one of the first countries in the world to push companies to engage in some form of environmentally and socially responsible behaviour (Itotenaan et al., 2014). On the other hand, the capability of governments to solve social issues has been questioned and in the majority of cases, society is now turning towards corporations and the business sector for help and assistance (Burke & Longsdon, 1996). Over the years, customers have also become more aware and interested in corporate activities, a lot of it due to public scandals involving companies being accused of for instance polluting the environment or for turning a blind eye toward poor labour conditions (Emmott & Worman, 2008). According to Brammer et al. (2007) this has made the public to start putting more attention and importance into a firm’s
values and their socially responsible behaviour, which are aspects that shape the way customers perceive the company.

2.10 Theoretical background summary

CSR can be seen as a multifaceted concept that has no clear boundaries or definitions, making it easily conceptualized and analyzed in different ways by different scholars (Sheehy, 2015). The concept has also made way for other concepts and terms, making CSR more like an umbrella-term covering areas such as for instance corporate citizenship and sustainability (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016). Still, the overall meaning of CSR is about giving back to society in different ways (Wojcik, 2016). The reasons for implementing CSR practices are shown to be mainly due to external factors, such as for instance meeting stakeholder expectations (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016). Some criticize CSR based on a lack of strategic focus, however it has also been praised for leading to innovation and enhanced company reputation, among other things.

The concept of CSV on the other hand, is supposed to be a new way of solving the limited approach of value creation for firm’s stakeholders and it is briefly concerned with practices or activities that enhance the firm’s economic value while simultaneously contributing to the society in which the firm operates (Porter & Kramer, 2011). As explained, corporations can create shared value by reconceiving products and markets though addressing social needs, redefining productivity in the value chain through attending societal issues affecting the value chain, and by enabling local cluster development in order to avoid operating in isolation (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Although CSV has been adopted by multiple corporations, it has faced criticism regarding the fact that it is unoriginal, naïve towards the tension between economic and social goals as well as compliance challenges (Crane et al., 2014).

This has led to a broad debate where, among other things, differentiating CSV from CSR has been a subject. Based on the pro side of the debate, it is suggested that the primary difference between the two concepts lies in the fact that CSR is more or less separated from the business whereas CSV is integrated into the business in order to drive economic value (Moore, 2014). The critics towards CSV argue that there is no clear difference given the fact that CSV is strikingly similar to CSR, which is why it has been considered to be unoriginal (Crane et al., 2014).
As explained above, it is also of high importance to consider the managerial interpretation process and external environmental while studying CSR and CSV, especially considering the ambiguity regarding these concepts. We argue that seeing as these concepts are hard to differentiate in theory, they might be even harder to differentiate in practice. In theory, scholars can use abstract meanings to clarify these concepts, whereas in practice CSV and CSR have to be interpreted and thus concretized by managers and the organizations that they are in. In this process, Athanasopoulou & Selsky (2015) argue that the external environment will also have an effect as the context in which organizations are in can shape the interpretation and implementation of CSR. We argue that this could potentially be the case with CSV as well, seeing as they are closely related concepts.
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research approach

When conducting research, the approach can be either qualitative or quantitative. A qualitative approach is based on interpreting words and subjective opinions, while a quantitative approach is more concerned with numerical interpretations (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). In this study, we chose a qualitative research approach since it was deemed the most suitable given the nature of our research question, which is about gaining new insight and knowledge about the interpretation and implementation of the concept of CSV in comparison to CSR. Given the confusion and blurriness regarding both CSV and CSR, we argue that our research area is complex and therefore we needed a research approach that allowed us to get a deeper understanding of our research topic. We believe that this could not have been done with a quantitative approach since this study does not focus on numerical analysis. Hence, we believe that a qualitative approach was essential to fully study the concepts of CSV and CSR, in regards to the purpose of this study. We also preferred a qualitative research approach since it recognizes social aspects such as the challenging relationship between society and organizations (Saunders et al., 2009). Moreover, a qualitative approach is said to be suitable when studying individuals and organizations as it allows the researcher to obtain a natural view of the phenomenon in a given setting (Straus & Corbin, 1990). Considering this, using a qualitative approach enables us to get a more natural interpretation of CSV and CSR from a managerial point of view.

3.2 Research design

Given the complexity of the concepts of CSV and CSR, we found it suitable not only to study them based entirely on previous frameworks or existing knowledge. Hence, we have adopted an inductive research design, which allows researchers to commence from the collected data before building a contextual framework (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Furthermore, an inductive design provides the researcher with the flexibility to make changes as the research advances and it is also concerned with capturing individual’s reasoning towards events in a given setting. Additionally, an inductive design was chosen since it enabled us the flexibility of considering new knowledge rather than just confirming the existing one.
(Saunders et al., 2012). Moreover, there is not sufficient knowledge about the concept of CSV and due to this issue, it would not have been suitable to only rely on a deductive path in order to contribute to this gap. This is because a deductive design initially formulates a framework from existing theoretical literature, which is later used to analyse the collected data (Saunders et al, 2012).

In addition to the above, a mixture of a descriptive and exploratory means are also applied in our thesis. Firstly, this is because applying a descriptive course enables us to gain an accurate and unmodified view of how managers from the chosen organizations interpreted both CSV and CSR (Saunders et al., 2009). Secondly, this study seeks to understand and determine what is happening in practical terms in regards to the above concepts as well as gaining new insights about the differences between CSV and CSR. Therefore we used an exploratory design in addition to the descriptive one, as an exploratory design focuses on finding out what is happening, gaining new insights and asking questions in order to clarify and assess the phenomenon being studied (Saunders et al., 2009). Due to these reasons, we argue that a mixed method of a descriptive and exploratory design was a necessity given that it matches the nature of our research topics.

3.3 Research strategy

There are a number of research strategies that a researcher can use and these simply illustrate how data will be collected (Saunders et al., 2012). To conduct our research we employed case studies. This is because it is recommended to use a case study when the goal is to gain in-depth understanding of a phenomenon and its environment (Yin, 2003). This goes hand in hand with our research question, which is understanding the interpretation and implementation of CSV and CSR from a practical point of view. Furthermore, using case studies enabled us to investigate manager’s view on CSV and CSR as well as enabled us to ask questions such as “why” and “how” in order to gain new insights about the concepts (Yin, 2009). Additionally, case studies deal with empirical inquiries when there is need for a clear understanding of the phenomenon and its real life setting (Yin, 2003). This strategy also enabled us to study whether different contexts have significance towards how managers interpret and implement both CSV and CSR. This was achieved by specifically using industry based multi-case studies that involved conducting a similar study on all three chosen cases
Given the complexity of our area of interest we argue that it would not have been sufficient to support our claim by solely using a single manager’s interpretation. Therefore, a multi-case study involving two companies from similar industrial contexts (Volvo Group AB & Scania AB) and another company from a different context (Telia Company AB) were chosen. This was done in order to obtain a variation in the interpretation and implementation of CSV and CSR, and thereafter analyze if there are any patterns or differences between these companies.

3.3.1 Case and informant selection

We selected cases according to their theoretical relevance and not by a random sampling. During this process, it was important to continuously refer to our research question in order to ensure that the chosen cases were in congruence with our research purpose (Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, it was important to consider the selected amount of cases in order for the information not to be staggering and therefore affect the result of the study (Jacobsen, 2011). Considering the above, we started by making a list of companies that aligned with our research question and could help in achieving the research purpose. Given this, the criteria to make the list was mainly limited to a population of companies practicing both CSV and CSR related activities. Following the mentioned recommendation by Jacobsen (2011), the initially long list was eventually narrowed down to only three cases in order to limit the volume of information. This resulted in choosing Volvo Group AB, Scania AB and Telia Company AB as case companies. For this choice we argue that since both Volvo Group AB and Scania AB are both found in the same industry, this could help us establish similarities in their interpretation of CSV and CSR if there are any. Furthermore, Telia Company AB enabled us to get a perspective from another industry, to see if there are cross-industry similarities or differences regarding CSV and CSR.

Before choosing an informant, it is of great importance for researchers to ensure that the information obtained from a specific informant will be trustworthy and adequate to answer the research question (Jacobsen, 2011). In light of this, the ideal informants from different case companies were primarily determined based on their managerial responsibilities and whether their expertise and knowledge were in accordance with the concepts being studied. Therefore, all of the informants have senior positions within CSR and CSV related areas in their respective companies. Given that managers wished for their names not to be used, random names were assigned to all participating informants as seen below.
3.4 Data collection

There are two types of data that researchers can collect during a study and these are primary and secondary data (Myers, 2009). As presented below, both primary and secondary data were employed in this study.

3.4.1 Primary data

Primary data is the type of data that is gathered for particular purposes and it is collected straight from a given informant (Saunders et al., 2009). In our thesis, primary data was collected through interviews from the above mentioned informants with the aim of answering our research question and therefore contributing to the research gap mentioned earlier. There are three types of interviews that can be applied while collecting primary data; structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Saunders et al., 2009). All types of interviews were carefully considered but only semi-structured interviews were adopted. We believe this type of interview was suitable as it enabled us to use a flexible structure and ask additional follow-up questions in order to obtain profound interpretations from our informants (Yin, 2003). In addition, due to the vagueness of both the concepts CSV and CSR, it was important for us to naturally gain an in-depth view and therefore semi-structured interviews were used to encourage our informants to speak freely (Bryman & Bell, 2011). What we also realized during the course of our interviews was that this type of interview enabled informants to feel more relaxed and therefore they were more willing and open to speak about their view on CSV and CSR. Since semi-structured interviews carry a risk of being broad, going of topic and beyond the studied scope (Jacobsen, 2011), it was of great importance for us to steer the interview with follow-up questions such as “how and why is that related to CSV or CSR activities” in order to mitigate this risk.

3.4.2 Data quality

According to Saunders et al. (2012), there are three ways of avoiding data quality issues when conducting semi-structured interviews. The first one is the level of knowledge regarding the research topic, the interviewee and the organization/context that the interviewee
is in. Before conducting the interviews, thorough research was done when it came to both CSR and CSV as well as the companies which would be investigated. In this case, annual and sustainability reports were of great assistance. The second way of avoiding data quality issues is by handing out relevant information to the interviewees before the interview (Saunders et al., 2012). We did this by first of all, in our initial contact with the interviewees, present ourselves, the purpose of our study and why we thought they would be a good company to study. We also encouraged our informants to ask us about anything that seemed unclear. Before the interviews took place, we also sent out our interview questions where we also stated that follow-up questions could arise based on what their answers would be and what we thought would be interesting for our study. Lastly, the third way of avoiding data quality issues is by having an appropriate interview location (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016). According to Saunders et al. (2016) one should select a location that is convenient for the interviewee, that is comfortable for them and where the interview would most likely not be disturbed. We put great emphasis on this and chose to conduct the interviews on-site where the respective interviewee worked. Our opinion is that their office would be the most convenient and comfortable place for them. Saunders et al. (2016) also continues by claiming that interviewing managers in their offices has the added benefit of the managers being able to find documents and other resources that can support the claims they are making and possibly being able to give out these documents to the interviewer.

Data quality also addresses the issue of reliability and validity. Reliability refers to whether or not other researchers would get the same result if they conducted the same study (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words if the findings are reliable and consistent. When it comes to semi-structured interviews, seeing as they have a lack of standardization, it raises concerns regarding the generalizability of the findings. However, there is also an argument for this being the strength of semi-structured interviews, seeing as they capture the reality at the time when conducted. So the mere complex and dynamic circumstances under which data is collected during this type of interview makes generalizability impossible. Still, the lack of generalizability does slightly weaken the external validity of this study (Saunders et al., 2012). Nonetheless, we still believe that these interviews were appropriate given our research design.
3.4.3 Secondary data
Though we mainly focused on primary data, a limited amount of secondary data was used as complementary source of data. By definition, secondary data refers to the type of data that has been collected for other purposes, however it can still be utilized as a means of answering a given research question (Saunders et al., 2009). The used secondary data includes annual sustainability reports and website information from the all the case companies respectively. The reason why secondary data was narrowly used was because this type of data was not collected for our precise research question and due to that the quality aspects of this data might be poor (Saunders et al., 2009). Furthermore, given the ambiguity of CSV and CSR, it was of great importance to mainly collect primary data in regards to managerial interpretation and implementation of the two concepts.

3.5 Operationalization
Before the interviews were conducted, an interview guide was drafted through operationalizing both theoretical concepts of CSV and CSR into questions (Table 1). The questions were developed based on the ideas from previous theory and this was used as a background to understanding the managerial interpretation of CSV in comparison to CSR. Based on the views by Carroll (1999) a question regarding managerial CSR interpretation was formulated and as for CSV, Porter and Kramer (2011) was used. Considering, the criticism by Crane et al. (2014) it was important to formulate a question that clarifies why the firm has implemented CSV. This was done as a way of establishing if there was a correlation to the debate suggesting that CSV is being implemented to deal with the deficiencies presented by CSR (Wojcik, 2016). This also laid the foundation of questions regarding activities performed under CSV and their main objectives, which in return enabled us to analyze if practical CSV supports the claims made by Porter and Kramer (2011). Furthermore, CSR can be driven by different factors (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016). Due to this, a question addressing this issue was formulated in order to gain a better understanding of the managerial perspectives in regards to this. Additionally, the matter about organizations considering CSV as part of their main CSR strategy (Corazza et al., 2017) was also addressed since it is partially related to our main claim.
 Operationalizing the two theoretical concepts into questions was done given the fact that it helped us visualize the relation between theory and our main claim about the blurry line between CSV and CSR. Table 1 illustrates the main research features which were studied, the theoretical assumptions as well as the related questions which were asked to the informants. It is important to note that follow-up questions were not included in this table as they were asked depending on their necessity and how the informants replied to the main questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main research features</th>
<th>Theoretical assumptions</th>
<th>Conceptual operationalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial interpretation of CSR &amp; CSV</td>
<td>The notion of CSR has become more of an umbrella-term that highlights the responsible action done by corporations (Fryans &amp; Yamahaki, 2016). Furthermore, “A CSR firm should strive to make profit, obey the law, be ethical and be a good citizen.” (Carroll, 1999) CSV is practices or activities that enhance the firm’s economic value while simultaneously contributing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which the firm operates (Porter &amp; Kramer, 2011)</td>
<td>2. Briefly, how do you define the concept of CSR? &amp; Briefly, how do you define the concept of CSV? 14. According to you, how do you think an organization should work with CSR &amp; CSV in the best way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing CSV</td>
<td>CSR has failed to make significant societal impacts and does not sustain company long-term profitability (Porter &amp; Kramer, 2006). CSV can be viewed as a strategic move from solely sustainability to an increased focus on societal needs and it is a tool that responds to CSR deficiencies (Wojcik, 2016)</td>
<td>3. When did you start implementing CSV and what were the reasons behind this action? 13. In what ways does CSV create value for the company compared to CSR?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing CSR</td>
<td>CSR can be adopted from four different angles; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic (Carroll 1999). CSR initiatives are mostly externally driven in the sense that they conform to external expectations (Wojcik, 2016). Jong &amp; Meer (2017) mention three forms of CSR that are viewed and</td>
<td>3. When did you start implementing CSR and what were the reasons behind this action? 5. What type of activities do you practice within the field of CSR? 7. What are the objectives of practicing CSR?</td>
</tr>
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researched as separate entities. These are cause-related marketing, sponsorship and corporate philanthropy.

<table>
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<th>Creating shared value</th>
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<tr>
<td>As affirmed, there are three different ways an organization can create shared value; reconceiving products and markets, redefining productivity in the value chain as well as enabling local clusters development (Porter &amp; Kramer, 2011). CSV is said to be based on a shallow conception of the firm’s role in society. This is because CSV’s aim is transforming business thinking thus it does not indicate any particular strategy models that need transforming other than mentioning that CSR and capitalism need fixing (Crane et al., 2014).</td>
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<th>CSV &amp; CSR differences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Furthermore, CSV is absolutely not about doing good and certainly not about charity like organizational CSR activities might do. (Porter &amp; Kramer, 2011). As indicated, CSR is mostly driven by external drivers such as different stakeholder groups putting pressure on the organizations as well as internal drivers such as firm resources (Frynas &amp; Yamahaki, 2016) The main distinction lies in the fact that CSR activities are separate from the business whereas CSV integrates social and environmental issues into the business itself and therefore driving economic value (Moore, 2014). CSV was introduced as a brand new concept though it has striking similarities with existing concepts such as CSR and stakeholder management and therefore it is simply unoriginal (Crane et al., 2014).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 13. In what ways does CSR create value for the company compared to CSV? |
| 6. What activities do you practice within the field of CSV? |
| 8. What are the objectives of practicing CSV? |
| 3. Are your CSV activities a part of your larger CSR strategy or are they separate? |
| 9. What do you consider to be the biggest differences between CSR and CSV? |
| 10. Are all activities under CSR & CSV equally important or do you focus more on some? |
| 11. What factors are involved in how you determine which CSR and CSV activities to implement? |
| 12. What outcomes does the company obtain from CSV activities in comparison to CSR? And vice versa? |

Table 1: Operationalization
3.6 Data analysis

To analyze the collected primary and secondary data, two main categories were established. These categories were embedded in our interview questions and they were based on the aim of this study as well as the theoretical background of our thesis. This meant that once we started analyzing the collected data, we could clearly see what data belonged to CSV and CSR respectively. For the CSV category; CSV implementation and CSV uniqueness were chosen as sub-categories and the same was done for CSR. This is because we found these categories and subcategories to be highly relevant to our research question as they would help us to establish possible differences between the two concepts. This process was also done in order to condense and structure the collected data which in return enabled us to have an overview of the data (Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, this technique was used because it enabled us to clearly study if there were any connections between the collected data and the used theoretical background (Yin, 2009). For example, all the managerial interpretation of CSV and CSR were initially arranged under their respective categories. Thereafter, we compared each managerial interpretation to theory and from this process an informed conclusion was made.

Though the above manual analysis technique proved to be effective during our study, it also carried some downsides. As asserted, the nature of the above process puts researchers in a situation where they have to ignore pieces of information which they deem irrelevant to the studied area (Jacobsen 2011). This might have severe consequences to the overall outcome of the study if those pieces of information deemed to be irrelevant would in fact be relevant. In light of this issue, it was of high importance for us to be thorough and systematic when determining the relevance of all the collected data. Therefore, we decided to present how the companies work with CSR and CSV, as explained by our informants. We believe that this presents the data in an objective way where it is not tampered by our own biases and interpretations. How we interpreted and analyzed the data will instead be presented and discussed in the analysis section of this thesis.
3.7 Research ethics

Conducting our study in an ethical way was a priority for us and something we considered throughout our research process. First of all, when informing and contacting informants about a given research area, ethical guidelines state that honesty and transparency are two main components (Saunders et al., 2012). Like mentioned above, when initially contacting the informants, they were given a thorough presentation of us, the purpose of our study and other relevant information. They were also encouraged to ask questions if something seemed unclear, so that the they knew that we would be honest and transparent with them. Furthermore, seeing as the interviews were recorded, we started each interview by asking the informants if they were comfortable with the recording and made sure they knew that they had the option of staying anonymous. This was done in order to ensure that the informants were at ease during the interview (Saunders et al., 2012). It was also made clear that the purpose of the recording was strictly for facilitating the data collection process and it would solely be used in regards to our thesis and later deleted. As another step of ensuring that the informants were comfortable with the recording, and the interview in general, we assured that they would be given a chance to review and approve the interview transcript before we started using the material in our thesis. This was done to further encourage the informants to be more open and willing to elaborate on their answers.

3.8 Limitations

The limitations of this study are first of all the small sample of companies that have been interviewed and that they are all Swedish companies. This, in accordance of using semi-structured interviews results in the findings not being able to be generalized, for instance on a global level (Saunders et al., 2009). Like mentioned above, this impacts the reliability and validity of the study. We also argue that there might be a cultural implication, seeing as all three companies were Swedish and that this could impact how they interpret and differ between CSV and CSR. However, we still believe that this study could raise some general awareness and shed light on the differences between CSR and CSV, from a managerial point of view.
4. EMPIRICAL DATA

In this section the empirical findings collected from Scania AB, Volvo Group AB and Telia Company AB will be presented. A short company presentation will be given on the respective case companies and thereafter all significant findings in regards to our area of interest will also be provided.

4.1 Scania AB

Scania AB is one of the leading Swedish global automotive industry manufacturer formed in 1991 through a merger of companies known as Vabis and Maskinfabriksaktiebolaget Scania (Scania AB, 2018). The company employs 49 300 people in about 100 countries and its headquarters is located in Södertälje, Sweden. Scania is one of the world leading providers of transport solutions such as buses and trucks for heavy transport applications. The firm also provides industrial and marine engines as well as financing, insurance and rental services. The firm’s core value “Customer First” is their guiding point and their success is built upon the ability to provide profitable and sustainable transport solutions. Scania’s business model is aligned with the company’s goal of driving the transition towards sustainable transport systems, creating a mobility world which is better for the business, community and the environment. This is being done through focusing on company wide sustainability and achieving better economic value creation with positive impact on society and therefore creating shared value (Scania AB, 2018).

4.1.1 Sustainability at Scania

During the interview with Ms. Eriksson, when asked about how Scania looks at CSR, she answered by saying: “First of all, we do not talk about CSR, we talk about sustainability. This could be more or less the same, depending on how you look at it” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). This is also affirmed by Mr. Svensson who explained that sustainability is the term used at the firm and this is because sustainability is a broad term which covers a lot of areas. It was further explained that CSR might be perceived to be narrower than sustainability and it was used more a couple of years ago but nowadays several companies talk more about sustainability.
Ms. Eriksson explained how Scania works with sustainability, based on the model found below (Scania AB, 2018). Scania’s sustainability approach is divided into two parts - Sustainable Transport and Responsible Business. She also added that “We also talk about value creation in different ways, which is often included in this model (the model below)” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). This approach to sustainability was developed about 1.5-2 years ago, although Ms. Eriksson mentioned that the mindset has been there for longer. When asked what sparked this change in their sustainability work, she mentioned the higher demands put on companies by society and refers to initiatives such as the Paris-agreement and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s), just to name a few.

Figure 2: Sustainability at Scania

**Sustainable Transport - Doing the right things**

Within this area Scania has found 3 focus areas to work with, namely energy efficiency, alternative fuels and electrification, as well as smart and safe transport. This area is basically about the products, the vehicles, that Scania produces and how they can be improved in the three areas mentioned. However, Ms. Eriksson also mentioned that within sustainable transport, Scania also looks at the infrastructure in given locations. She added on by saying that every vehicle from Scania is connected online, which allows them to gather a lot of data and provide a multitude of different services. She concluded by saying; “That is kind of how we create value with sustainable transport” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018).
When explaining the model on how Scania works with responsible business, Ms. Eriksson said, “We have to walk the talk, or however we say, we have to take responsibility to even be trustworthy in this above part, when it comes to sustainable transport” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). So in this area, Scania has identified 6 areas that they work with: Resource and energy efficient operations, diversity and inclusion, health and safety, human and labour rights, anti-corruption, and community impact. This is something internal, but external as well as Ms. Eriksson mentioned, “When looking at our supply chain for instance, we demand the same from our suppliers, or at least encourage and push them to be better in all of these areas…” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). Furthermore, she indicated this is a way in which they believe Scania creates value, by also encouraging their tier 1 suppliers to demand the same requirements from their suppliers, throughout the supply chain. In addition, Mr Svensson suggested that that if they would develop and sell a sustainable product without considering for example how its parts were produced in regards to for instance poor working conditions and negative environmental impact, then they would not really be sustainable as a firm.

In order to ensure a sustainable supply chain, the Mr. Svensson clarified that Scania uses a classical approach, where there are requirements and standards which suppliers have to meet in different areas. Moreover, Mr. Svensson affirmed that it is important to follow-up on these requirements since you want them to be embedded down the whole value chain to a significant extent. This is done to ensure decreased supply chain risk such as financial risk, security risk and other risks which can cause the supplier not to deliver accordingly. Additionally, Mr. Svensson explained that reputational risk is another serious risk considered, because if something shameful happens somewhere in the supply chain, it is going to find its way up to Scania and suddenly the firm may be in the newspapers. In accordance to this, it was explained that, “We must do the work I described above for our credibility and overall ambition, we must do it to minimize risks,…there are also increased business opportunities and in some way you can create shared value where there is mutual benefit (win-win)” (Mr. Svensson, 2018).

Within Responsible Business, the area of community engagement is something that Ms. Eriksson viewed as closest to traditional CSR. She says: “It’s important that we leave a positive impression in the communities that we are in and we also try to make sure to contribute positively in those communities or areas, based on the local conditions” (Ms.
Eriksson, 2018). She continued by first giving an example of their presence in Södertälje, where they have their main office but also on how Scania has helped with various HIV/AIDS projects in Africa, as well as how they have arranged local driving competitions in different parts of the world.

**Partnership driven leadership**

When explaining the above model, Ms. Eriksson said, “This should be a partnership, in all of these pieces” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). Scania says that they want to work together with other actors, to not just be giving donations. Instead they think there needs to be a two-way cooperation where you can unite and work together. Within Sustainable Transport for instance, Ms. Eriksson said that Scania wants to drive the change towards a sustainable transport system. In order to succeed at this, Scania cannot work independently but first of all need to consider the importance of a sustainable supply chain and how product parts are produced down the chain (Mr. Svensson, 2018), as well as working with for instance infrastructure, city development, fuel suppliers etc (Ms. Eriksson, 2018).

### 4.1.2 Value creation at Scania

Ms. Eriksson mentioned that Scania has a focus on and are working actively with value-creating activities. However, when asked directly what kind of activities that would be considered as CSV, she says: “That depends on what you mean by CSV…” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). Mr. Svensson continues by saying: “We do not really use the term shared value per say. I know that shared value in theory is about trying to find opportunities with other actors in the sustainability area by doing something together, which in some way, will serve both parties” (Mr. Svensson, 2018). In conjunction to this, he also emphasized that if the firm decided to work with shared value and use it as a heading, it would be possible to find such activities but “we have not looked for activities and labelled them as shared value, not in that sense” (Mr. Svensson, 2018). Furthermore, it was mentioned that by setting requirements and standards to suppliers, Scania ensures continued profitability and survival, at the same time as the firm contributes to the suppliers’ future relevance, which could be seen as a possible shared value example.

When asked about value creating activities, what one would call CSV, Ms. Eriksson also mentioned how Scania is working with sustainable cities, namely on a project called the ABC-city, which is a project about sustainable cities in the future. In this project Scania is
working together with other actors, looking into how sustainable cities can be developed. She also mentioned cooperations with schools and universities, one for instance being with the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, that has been about future technologies within sustainable transport. In this partnership, she said that Scania can help students with their thesis’s while at the same time being able to influence universities to teach students about areas that Scania thinks will be important in the future. Mr. Svensson mentioned that as a part of the firm’s community engagement, Scania has its own upper secondary school in Södertälje, which enables the firm’s own supply of educated workforce and also contributes to society in a shared value manner.

4.1.3 Scania’s take on the differences between CSR and CSV

According to Mr. Svensson, it is hard to distinguish the two concepts on the content level, “For example, risk minimization is somehow the number one heading, and then you can, as I said earlier, try to work further and find shared value elements in what we do”. Furthermore, he suggested that one simply needs to have both approaches in order to fully work with all areas accordingly as one cannot work with some issues and ignore others. He concluded by saying, “I think this heated talk about shared value, is perhaps more in the academic world because I myself have not experienced that everyone at other companies is walking around and talking about shared value as a big and recent buzzword” (Mr. Svensson, 2018). Ms. Eriksson argued that the difference between the two concepts lies in the fact that, “…CSV feels more like a holistic and broad way to look at it than to just talk about CSR that is just about corporate responsibility, which can be seen as rather small” (Ms. Eriksson, 2018). She also mentions that the whole partnership part becomes more evident when talking about CSV and that CSV is something that Scania is looking more into, compared to what one would call traditional CSR, at least according to her perspective.

4.2 Volvo Group AB

Volvo Group is one of the leading Swedish multinational manufacturing companies, which was founded in 1927 by Assar Gabrielsson and Gustav Larsson in Gothenburg, Sweden. The firm employs approximately 100 000 people, has production facilities in 18 countries and its products are sold in more than 190 countries. Volvo Group provides solutions such as buses, trucks, construction equipment, marine and industrial engines as well as complete financial services. In the firm’s values there is a company culture which guides how the organization
interacts with customers and society as whole in order to achieve business related goals. This is used to ensure long-term success of the company and it is the foundation on which everything is built upon. Volvo Group believes that in order to create value for the firm, stakeholders and society at large, it is important to drive prosperity through transport solutions. This is partially being done by using Volvo Group’s approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability (Volvo Group AB, 2018).

4.2.1 Driving Prosperity at Volvo Group

Volvo Group’s approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability are of huge importance in regards to their success. The firm is a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact, partner in the WWF Climate Savers Program and supports the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Elements such as global trends and challenges, norms of responsible business behaviour as well as stakeholder expectations are highly considered when the firm developed its CSR and sustainability work. The Group’s CSR and sustainability approach is divided into three main parts:

1. Value chain activities
2. Sustainable transport solutions
3. Role in society

By attending to the above parts accordingly, Volvo Group is able to establish resilience and reduce risk by incorporating CSR and sustainability into daily work (Volvo Group Annual & Sustainability Report, 2017).

Value chain activities

The firm is fully committed to developing, producing and delivering products and services in a responsible and sustainable manner. This is done by considering the environmental care through mitigating environmental impact from products and services, minimizing the operational footprint and continuously improving their environmental impact. Furthermore, it is important for the firm to approach its value chain activities from a customer-based perspective since it is considered of high value in order to strategically succeed (Volvo Group Annual & Sustainability Report, 2017). In alignment to this, Mr. Andersson explained that it is imperative for the company to consider stakeholders, “…we continuously worked with our investors and stakeholders and listened to what they considered to be important for the firm
to do within CSR. So in short, it is important that we take in all input from our stakeholders and we of course do it” (Mr. Andersson, 2018). Furthermore, Volvo Group requires all employees to work according to their code of conduct, which dictates that company-wide business is expected to be conducted ethically and in compliance with the law. According to the firm, this is done as it helps to build trust with the customers and society, minimizes risks and protects their reputation (Volvo Group, 2018).

*Sustainable transport solutions*

Volvo Group believes in focusing on future transport solutions such as automation, connectivity, electro-mobility and alternative fuels as these will be the key to changing today’s transport industry. In regards to this, the firm has collaborated with a number of private sector stakeholders and global organizations to drive themselves as a firm, their sector as well as society in a more sustainable course. Through working with local, regional and cross-governmental actors, the firm has also been able to assess the viability of sustainable business solutions to ensure that the infrastructure supports their innovative solutions (Volvo Group, 2018).

*Volvo Group’s role in society*

It is important for Volvo Group to influence growth towards a sustainable society and therefore the firm has been actively engaged in the communities where they operate. The firm believes that their contribution to prosperity means to contribute to societal development, which also is in line with their mission “Driving prosperity through transport solutions”. According to the company, their societal engagement activities are driven by the idea of creating shared value (Volvo Group Annual & Sustainability Report, 2017).

**4.2.2 Creating shared value at Volvo Group**

Creating shared value at Volvo Group is, “when we create any kind of activity within the framework of CSR that has an impact on society, it can be big or small but it must have an impact on society and at the same time have a positive effect for our business. Meaning our company and how we operate our business. So briefly, it is some kind of double value creation” (Mr. Andersson, Volvo Group, 2018). Furthermore, he explained that one of the reasons they started practicing CSV is that the firm wanted to drive less towards philanthropy. It was further explained that CSR should not be some kind of philanthropy or sponsorship department where money is just donated as it has traditionally been done,
without knowing if the firm will get anything back. In line with the recently mentioned, Mr. Andersson provided an example stating, “If you donate 100,000 SEK to a hospital somewhere, it does not have a direct effect on our business, it is of course not wrong, donating money to a hospital is a great gesture and it does some good but it does not help us to sell more trucks”. Last but not least, he explained that at the end of the day, they are a business and their mission is to make money for their shareholders. Therefore, all their activities must be aimed at achieving that, even when they are working with CSR.

The company leverages CSV through the approach of linking Volvo Group’s mission, business and expert capabilities where the highest potential is where the business interacts with society to create mutual benefits. This has been done through focusing on areas such as education, skills development, traffic and worksite safety as well as environmental sustainability (Volvo Group Annual & Sustainability Report, 2017). In alignment with the focus areas, Mr. Andersson indicated the importance of the mechanic schools which the firm has opened in countries such as Ethiopia and Morocco - “It is very clear; you are doing something for society as a whole because you train local workforce who can then do local jobs. This helps our business grow in that country and our dealers can hire skilled mechanics” It was further indicated that the firm is actively involved in skills development activities where they train experienced drivers in defensive driving, eco-driving and cargo handling. This was considered as a typical shared value activity, given the fact that this would hopefully reduce accidents in society and give added value to their customers. Last but not least, the firm is also doing human rights activities in regards to how mineral raw materials are obtained within their supply chain. In regards to this activity, Mr. Andersson stated, “It is harder to see the direct link here in comparison to a mechanics’ school in Africa but the element of shared value exists in both activities. I would like to say that all of our activities do absolutely have an element of shared value and that is what we strive for” (Mr. Andersson, 2018).
4.2.3 Volvo Group’s take on the differences between CSR and CSV

According to Mr. Andersson, it is hard to know what the traditional CSR work is and if there really is a difference between CSV and CSR. He further suggested, “I do not think there should be any difference between CSR and shared value, but I understand what you mean… If I had to answer I would say that on one side you have philanthropy and on the other hand you have shared value” (Mr. Andersson, 2018). In addition, it was indicated that making a distinction of what CSV is or contributes to the firm in comparison to CSR, is impossible to make, “Based on how we work today, I do not see any differences. We want shared value to pervade in all our CSR activities, so we do not make any distinction in that sense” (Mr. Andersson, 2018). While considering differences between the above two concepts it is also important to consider their outcomes. As mentioned earlier, Volvo Group’s CSR is used as a way of building trust with customers and society, decrease risks and protect the firm’s reputation (Volvo Group, 2018). On the contrary, Mr. Andersson stated that CSV activities such as opening mechanic schools in different parts of the world is doing something good for society as whole and it also contributes to the firm’s business as dealers can hire qualified local workforce.

4.3 Telia Company AB

Telia Company is one of Sweden’s biggest telecommunication companies which was established back in 1853. The firm has around 20 000 employees and currently they are operating throughout Scandinavia, except Iceland, as well as the Baltic countries, Moldova, Turkey, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The firm provides products and solutions within mobile voice and data, fixed voice and data, IP capacity as well as TV and media. Telia Company believes that the digital society is a global movement and they are determined to connect and integrate everything from tablets, cars to business processes. Therefore, the company states to be on a mission to become the next generation telecommunications company. Their purpose is to bring the world closer and they plan to do that through innovation, simplifying their operations and solutions, and by caring for customers and the world as a whole. However, Telia Company is aware of the negative impacts of digitalization and hence sustainability is considered a core function (Telia Company, 2018).
4.3.1 Digital Impact at Telia Company

The model below presents Telia Company’s approach to sustainability, called Digital Impact. At the top are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) made by the United Nations (UN) that serve as a guideline for the company, followed by board and management commitment. After that comes the two big blocks of Shared Value Creation and Responsible Business, each having their own focus areas. This is then followed by Employee Engagement and Governance, Risk and Ethics at the base of Telia Company’s sustainability movement (Telia Company, 2018).

Some of these elements have been in place before in the company, however this new take on Digital Impact started in 2015 when the company wanted a fresh start after a bribery scandal in relation to their operations in Eurasia back in 2012/2013 (Ms. Karlsson, 2018). Ms. Karlsson said that there was much negativity written in media about Telia and that they were eager to show a new side to the company, show how they can create value. Since media was focused on said scandal they found it hard to show a new side to their business. However in 2015, they decided to turn things around and look into how Telia is and can create value. They started by employing a sustainability consultant with expertise within CSV and together they created a new CSV strategy. Around the same time that this work was being finished, the UN released their SDG’s. Telia tested their strategy against these goals and found that they matched very well, that digitalization can have a positive impact on these SDG’s. In this
way, Ms. Karlsson at Telia claimed that they have tried to incorporate both CSV and what could be called general CSR into one approach. Therefore, at Telia these two concepts are aligned in their Digital Impact approach and do not act as separate strategies.

**Responsible Business at Telia**

The area of Responsible Business is something that Telia has worked with for a longer time, at least compared to the area of Shared Value Creation. This is where Telia takes into account the negative impacts that their business, as well as digitalization in general, has and how they can make a positive impact instead. Inside this box are 7 focus areas that Telia works with. Ms. Karlsson said that there is more to responsible business that they work with than just these 7 areas, but that these areas are prioritized.

Ms. Karlsson has specifically been working closely with Children’s Rights within Telia. She said that the well-being of children has been important to Telia for a very long time. For one they are actively working with the children’s rights principles developed by Unicef, Rädda Barnen and the UN Global Compact. Telia is also a founding partner of the foundation called Childhood, that works against sexual abuse of children, as well as a sponsor for Friends that work against bullying among children. Unfortunately both sexual abuse of children and bullying are apparent online which is why Telia are actively working together with these organizations against it. Their focus on children is also apparent under Responsible Sourcing, which is a focus area regarding Telia’s supply chain, where Telia requires their suppliers to have a certain ethical standard.

**Shared Value Creation at Telia**

The area of Shared Value Creation was something that Telia started to get involved in during 2015 when they wanted to show a new side of their business. Ms. Karlsson said that they all studied up on the subject and transferred this knowledge to the board of directors. Since then it has, according to her, been a natural part of their strategy. So now it is all about getting this thoroughly implementing and working throughout the whole organization. At the moment, Telia has found 3 areas in which they have identified that they can make a difference. For instance, Telia believes that digitalization is an important factor for economic growth and puts great emphasis on innovation in that field. So within Innovation and Growth, Telia is working in Scandinavia and the Baltic countries with start-ups within tech/digitalization. What they do is helping them out, sometimes financially, but also with competence and other kinds of support. With this initiative Telia is looking for start-ups with ideas that can be
beneficial for them and that potentially, could be bought by the company. With the focus on Quality of Life, Telia is for instance, together with other companies, looking into the concept of smart cities and how they can contribute there (Ms. Karlsson, 2018).

4.3.2 Telia Company’s take on the differences between CSR and CSV

Ms. Karlsson said that they believe that not just as individuals but also as a company, they should contribute where they have a possibility to make a difference. To not just give money for a good cause, which is usually considered as traditional CSR, but also contributing to society with their competence and abilities. As an example of this she mentions how they helped in Nepal after the earthquake in 2015. Since they had an office there, they were quick to look after their employees and rebuilding their phone lines, but they also started looking into the surrounding society to figure out how they could help. As a result, Telia built community centers in certain parts of the country where people could connect online, charge their phones and get access to a digital library, among other things. They also worked together with scientists on how their phone lines could be used to predict weather changes, which would be beneficial for the agricultural workers in the area (Ms. Karlsson, 2018). Ms. Karlsson (2018) mentions that the initial thought was to donate money but at the same time they wanted to build something based on their own competence to create value for both the local society as well as their own business.

On a more general level, she also said that she believes that CSV in contrast to CSR creates a greater value for the world and mentions how the UN claimed that the SDG’s cannot be reached without the competence and power of companies. She also believed that the difference between CSR and CSV is that CSV is based on coming up with new ideas based on a company’s core competence, that can also lead to societal benefits. So she believed that CSV can generate new ways of working in a way that traditional CSR cannot (Ms. Karlsson, 2018). She also mentioned that with CSR it is more a question about image, or some form of inner satisfaction about having helped with something. Moreover she said that it is something a company might do to feel and show that they are responsible. That if you can communicate this in an effective way you can be perceived as a good company, a company customers can believe in. Additionally, she explained that with CSV, you can get a business aspect to all of this. However, she claims that the challenge is to show customers that this is also a way to be a responsible company. That the whole image-effect is a bit lost when it comes to CSV compared to traditional CSR (Ms. Karlsson, 2018).
5. ANALYSIS

5.1 Interpreting and implementing CSR and CSV

5.1.1 Interpreting and implementing CSR

When it comes to the interpretation and thus implementation of both concepts, we see that the three companies have both differences and similarities in their approaches. First of all, it is apparent how CSR is just an umbrella-term for a multitude of other concepts and wordings that can be used within this field (Frynas & Yamahaki, 2016). CSR is not really something that the companies talk about in that sense, instead they use similar concepts such as sustainability when they talk about what they do in this field. It is arguable that the concept of CSR itself has become old and maybe even associated with terms such as green-washing, which has made companies, not just the three interviewed in this study, use different wordings to some extent. Ms. Eriksson at Scania also mentions that she thinks CSR is an aged concept that they do not work with anymore. Thereby, we see that Scania labels their CSR-work as Sustainability for Scania, Telia calls it Digital Impact, while Volvo Group calls it Driving Prosperity. Still, no matter how they label their CSR-work, there are similarities across the three companies interviewed. Elements of being a responsible company are evident across all three cases, where for instance both Scania and Telia work with areas they call “Responsible Business”. Volvo Group on the other hand has not labeled it as such but say “We are a company that does good” (Mr. Andersson, 2018).

Comparing the findings of this study with the one made by Jong & Meer (2017), it is evident that all 6 CSR areas, which were mentioned in the theory section, are apparent in all three companies. The majority of the focus areas are also fairly similar and as a result we see that CSR has been implemented in relatively similar ways within all the three companies. For instance, they all have a focus on creating a good workplace for their employees, being environmentally friendly and trying to take this focus further down to their suppliers, just to name a few. Even though some of these CSR areas are not a legal requirement for companies to work with, it is still something that can be considered essential to the firm’s survival. This is because these are areas that stakeholders such as customers, employees, the government and other governmental bodies demand these companies to work with. Moreover, it is something that has become somewhat like a standard when doing business today and
something expected from Swedish companies. In line with this, Ms. Eriksson, refers to their work within Responsible Business as some kind of standard routines, that they would not survive as a company without them. Therefore, we see that the implementation of CSR can mostly be viewed as a way of conforming to pressures from various stakeholders and these activities can be viewed more as requirements that need to be complied with. Therefore, we argue that the similarities of how these companies work with CSR outnumbers the smaller differences.

5.1.2 Interpreting and implementing CSV

According to Porter & Kramer (2011), the definition of CSV is a company’s activities that create a solution that benefits both the company and society. This definition is something that is also shared among the managers that were interviewed. All three companies define CSV in the same way – that it is about creating value for both the company as well as society as a whole. However, we find that the differences mostly lie in the way that the concept has been interpreted within the companies. According to Daft & Weick (1984), the individual manager plays a role in how a concept is translated into practice. This is observable within Scania, considering the fact that they do not use CSV as a label on what they do. Therefore, we see that within Scania the individual interpretation of CSV becomes more apparent and as a result, it is up to every manager to interpret the concept and what they think it means. This can for instance be seen when Ms. Eriksson and Mr. Svensson talked about Scania’s community engagement. Ms. Eriksson’s point of view was that Scania’s community engagement as more of traditional CSR, while Ms. Svensson mentioned the upper secondary school in Södertälje, which is a part of their community engagement, as an example of CSV. Telia and Volvo on the other hand, have both clearly stated that they actively work with CSV as a concept. CSV is mentioned in their sustainability reports and there seems to be an organizational consensus on what the concept is and how they are working with it in their respective companies.

On a more general level, the way that CSV has been implemented stems from the company’s own competences, the core of their business and how their business can be improved as well as contribute to society. We see this as being much in line with how the concept is defined in academia (Moore, 2014). Volvo Group and Scania’s take on this is by focusing on for instance education and sustainable transport. Within education, both Scania and Volvo Group are engaged in providing skilled workforce that benefits them and society. Within sustainable
transport, both companies provide truck-drivers with training on how to drive more eco-friendly. Telia is instead engaged in other types of CSV activities more suited to digitalization, which is at the core of their business. In the theory section, it was mentioned that the industry in which a company is in can affect the company’s CSR strategy (Sharma, 2000). Now, we see this as being apparent with CSV as well. We argue that there is an industry factor in regards to how CSV is implemented, especially considering that CSV is about aligning business with society. As of this, Scania and Volvo share similarities in their CSV work seeing as they are in the same industry, whereas Telia engages in other kinds of CSV activities.

5.1.3 Factors affecting the implementation of CSR and CSV

The external environment is an important factor to consider when researching CSR and similar concepts (Athanasopoulou & Selsky, 2015). In this case it is evident that it is indeed an influencing factor. Both a quest for legitimacy and managing stakeholders are factors apparent within all three companies in regards to their overall CSR/CSV work. In this case, conforming to stakeholders’ expectations seems to be the way to legitimacy for the all the three companies. First of all, on a more macro-level, all of the companies mentioned the UN’s SDGs as influencing factors and some have even incorporated them, more or less, in their overall CSR strategy. Ms. Eriksson at Scania also said that they need to be doing the things they are doing within CSR/sustainability in order to survive as a company and that it is something their stakeholders require. Volvo Group also mentioned that stakeholder management is an integral part of their business and something they are working actively with. Additionally, we argue that since these companies are based in Sweden, and are originally Swedish companies, that it can too have an effect on how they interpret and implement both CSR and CSV. It was one of the first countries in the world to put pressure on corporations to act in a more responsible way (Itotenaan et al., 2014). Given this, it is arguable that Swedish stakeholders might have stricter requirements in comparison to stakeholders in other countries, which is something that companies need to consider.

As mentioned earlier, the industry in which the companies are in also influences how CSR is implemented (Sharma, 2000). We believe that this is because companies in the same type of industry, first of all, tend to have similar pressures and regulations. For instance in regards to CSR, seeing as companies in the transportation industry have a negative effect on the environment as a result of their products, we argue that they automatically have more
pressure to be environmentally responsible in comparison to other industries. Therefore, the activities that they need to be doing become quite standardized, such as creating more sustainable transport solutions, which we saw both at Scania and Volvo Group. Though we see that the implementation of CSR is affected by the industry in which the companies are, we still regard traditional CSR as something that can be more generalizable to all industries compared to CSV. We argue that this can be evident especially when it comes to activities such as promoting equality and diversity, trying to conduct business in a more sustainable way and so forth. On the other hand, seeing as CSV is all about aligning business with society, the industry factor becomes much more apparent in comparison to CSR. Therefore, the argument made by Sharma (2000) can be applicable to CSV as well. Hence, we argue that the implementation of CSR can be more general in nature, whereas the implementation of CSV can be perceived as more specific in regards to industries and specific companies.

5.2 Differences between CSR and CSV

According to figure 1, the differences between CSV and CSR lies in the fact that CSV is concerned with the firm’s economic and societal value creation whereas CSR is concerned with organizational citizenship and philanthropy. This argument is also in accordance with Mr. Andersson’s who further explained that if he had to answer he would say that on one side there is philanthropy and on the other, there is shared value. Based on on this example, we argue that managers perceive the act of donating money as a traditional and philanthropic CSR gesture which only creates value for society but has no effect on the firm’s core business (Moore, 2014). In accordance with the above, we further argue that it is clear that CSV is not just about charity (Figure 1). As explained by Mr. Andersson, Volvo Group is a business and all work they do, has to be connected to their business with no exception and therefore the firm tries to infuse CSV in all their sustainability activities. All the managers interviewed mentioned that they want to stem away from charity and focus on activities that can simultaneously benefit their business as well as society. In other words, they want something that brings a direct effect to their companies. We believe this is why CSV has been positively embraced by the all these companies, as it is a concept that allows them to do just that. We also believe that from the perspective of the companies, CSV might be easier to validate to shareholder’s as it is something they can argue will benefit them as well.
In practical terms, we see that CSR activities are typically more used as way of responding to external pressures whereas CSV is used as a way for the company and the community to create joint value (Porter & Kramer, 2011). We argue that there is a difference between the two concepts here, specifically that CSR is mostly externally driven while CSV is more a mix of both external and internal drivers. CSR is seen as what companies need to be doing in order to meet expectations from stakeholders whereas CSV is more seen as a new way of working and is viewed upon as a business opportunity. In line with this, Ms. Karlsson and Ms. Eriksson emphasized the importance of partnerships achieved through CSV and how this can lead to new ways of working in ways that traditional CSR cannot. This could be seen as a new dimension of CSV, that we have not seen mentioned in literature, namely that companies can potentially create value for each other by working together and at the same time contribute to society. In addition to this, one manager claimed that CSV feels more like a holistic and broad way to approach societal issues whereas CSR is simply about responsibility, which can be perceived as a narrower approach. Ms. Karlsson also indicated how through CSV in contrast to CSR, companies can use their competence and abilities to truly contribute to the UN:s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ms. Karlsson continues by saying that CSR focuses on organizational image and that it can be considered as an effective strategy organizations use in order to feel good and be perceived as responsible. Unlike maintaining the firm’s external image, CSV is rather about using the firm’s competence in order to respond to business opportunities which are embedded in meeting societal needs (Moore, 2014). In conjunction to this, Ms. Karlsson also indicated that unlike CSR, CSV creates greater value for both the firm and society as it takes into account several business aspects. This is for instance where companies’ unique competences are applied to create new business opportunities. Considering this, Ms. Karlsson pointed out that Telia acted quickly after an earthquake hit Nepal in 2015, where they built community centers in certain parts of the country where people could connect online, charge their phones and get access to a digital library. It is clear that this is something that benefited the society, but Telia also gained value in the form of their products and services being used and potentially gaining new customers. As a result of this, we see that CSV could in some ways be a more active approach to societal contribution in certain cases. Instead of taking a passive role through donations for instance, a company could instead utilize their core competence in order to reach a mutual benefit between what is good for society and what is good for the company.
5.3 CSR and CSV in practice compared to academia

As mentioned earlier, there is a heated debate about the two concepts within academia. CSV has been said to be an evolutionary concept connected directly to the business (Porter & Kramer, 2011) and on the contrary it has also been said that CSV is a shallow concept, which should not be considered by serious managers (Crane et al., 2014). With regards to this discussion, we argue that managers do not seem to care about the above ongoing academic debate nor differentiating these two concepts at all. Some even wonder if there is a real difference between the two concepts at all; “I do not think there should be any difference between CSR and shared value… Based on how we work today, I do not see any differences” (Mr. Andersson, 2018). It is observable that academic researchers are focused on differentiating CSV from CSR/sustainability (Porter & Kramer, 2011). On the contrary, managers are more interested in finding a way to blend these two concepts and make them work together in practice. This can be indicated by the fact that in all three companies, CSV or at least some form of CSV activity, and overall CSR/sustainability is incorporated into one strategy. Given this, we further argue that all the three companies have not interpreted CSV as something entirely separate from CSR. They have rather approached CSV as an evolution of CSR and as something of a business opportunity that can be combined with their traditional way of contributing to society.

However, this only means that the blurry line between CSV and CSR becomes even blurrier when trying to differentiate the concepts in practice. Although we could argue about slight differences between the concepts in this study, we do not think that they should be put against one another as opposites, seeing as they can share similarities. Therefore, instead of seeing the differences between the concepts as a barrier, they should be considered as a way of learning how these concepts can be integrated in order to strategically contribute to society in a way that can potentially make the most positive impact on both sides. In that way, CSV can serve as a guideline on how companies can gain from contributing to society. Therefore, we believe that the ongoing academic debate surrounding the differentiation about the concepts might be misguided in practical terms. Instead, we believe that it would be better to focus on seeing elements of CSV as an addition to CSR, as one concept does not exclude the other. What one interprets as CSV could also be interpreted as CSR so therefore the concepts become what you make them to be. The traditional model on CSR made by Carroll (1999)
views the concept as a pyramid made up of 4 responsibilities; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Based on the managers’ perspective, we argue that this traditional view on CSR has evolved, or is evolving, to incorporate elements of CSV instead of the philanthropic element as all the managers mention that they do not want to engage in plain charity. As managers are infusing and aligning CSR and CSV, we argue that this may be an ongoing evolution of how companies will be working to contribute to society in the future.
6. CONCLUSION

For both CSR and CSV we see that the external environment is an important factor when interpreting and thus implementing the two concepts. First of all, we see that the implementation of CSV is more industry-specific in comparison to CSR, mostly because the concept is more about aligning societal and business opportunities. Also, CSV activities implemented by companies in one industry may possibly not be relevant in another. We do not see this issue with some of the more traditional CSR activities, such as for instance promoting equality and diversity in the workplace, donations and so forth. When it comes to traditional CSR, we see it as revolving much more around external pressures from various stakeholders and how the companies are conforming to them. Therefore, we see that companies in different industries can still have similar CSR activities.

The differences between the two concepts lies in the fact that CSR is interpreted as something more traditional whereas CSV is seen more as something new, as a business opportunity. CSR is seen more as a standard of what companies need to be doing to comply with external pressures from various stakeholders, as a way of showing off a certain image externally. CSV on the other hand is interpreted as a new way of working to contribute to society, for instance through cross-industry collaborations, which is something several managers mention as a CSV activity that they do. However, some managers claim that the “image-effect” is not as apparent with CSV compared to CSR, which could therefore be a negative side-effect of it.

Compared to academia, the concept of CSV is viewed upon more positively among managers and we have not seen focus being put on the differences or pros and cons between CSR and CSV. Instead the two concepts are aligned, and therefore implemented as one within the companies interviewed, up to the point where some claim that there is no difference between the two.

All in all, there is still a blurry line between the two concepts, which makes them hard to differentiate as they are closely intertwined and one does not exclude the other. An activity labeled as CSR could be perceived as CSV, depending on how someone interprets it. Therefore, we argue that the concepts become what you make them to be and that it is up to every company to interpret and implement the concepts in regards to their business and what they wish to gain from them. Therefore, we argue that the ongoing debate regarding CSR and
CSV might be misguided in practical terms. Instead of focusing on the differences between the concepts, researchers should try to focus on aligning them, like they have been in practice. Therefore, in the future, we believe that there could be a possibility that CSV might just become another concept underneath the umbrella-term of CSR. This entails that overall CSR work will become more and more connected to aligning the core business with society and that the blurriness between the two concepts might increase even further.

6.1 Further research
For further research we suggest that the concept of CSV should be examined even more in order to contribute to present research. Another area which should also be taken into consideration is extending our findings by involving more companies, preferably from other industries and countries. Moreover, we also urge future research to further examine how CSV and CSR can be aligned and how companies can gain from this. We also think it would be interesting to investigate how companies can engage in cross-industry collaborations as a part of their CSR/CSV work and what kind of shared value that could be created from it.
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