



## Sponsorship of grassroots- and youth football teams

A qualitative study from the sponsors' perspective

David Arvidsson, Christoffer Rex Hansen Charles

Marketing, 15 credits

Halmstad 2016-06-10

## **Acknowledgements**

Writing this thesis has been a journey that has provided us a lot of new knowledge and experiences for the future. However, it would not have been possible without all the people that have supported us during this process.

First and foremost we would like to thank our respondents; Rikard Hillarp from ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan, Ann-Sofie Peterson from Länsförsäkringar Halland, Lars Rydberg from Halmstad Energi och Miljö AB, Marcus Johansson from Bendt Bil and Lars Sandberg from KBMEDIA. The time and the help that they have given us has been invaluable.

We would also like to thank our supervisor Hèléne Laurell for her valuable comments and constructive criticism, which have helped us through the writing process.

Last but not least are we likewise grateful to the opponents in our seminar group and others who have taken the time to read and review our thesis. They have given us a lot of useful feedback.

Halmstad, May 2016

David Arvidsson

Christoffer Rex Hansen Charles

# Abstract

<b>Title:</b>	Sponsorship of grassroots- and youth football teams: A qualitative study from the sponsors' perspective.
<b>Authors:</b>	David Arvidsson and Christoffer Rex Hansen Charles.
<b>Supervisor:</b>	Hélène Laurell.
<b>Level:</b>	Bachelor thesis in marketing (15 Swedish credits), Spring 2016.
<b>Keywords:</b>	Sponsorship, Sport sponsorship, Local sponsorship, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Football, Grassroots, Effectiveness measurement.
<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams.
<b>Theoretical framework:</b>	The theoretical framework begins with theory regarding sponsorship. CSR and its importance are also discussed. A link between sponsorship and CSR is brought forward at the end of this chapter.
<b>Methodology:</b>	A deductive approach and a qualitative method have been used in order to get a more detailed, deeper and descriptive explanation of the chosen subject.
<b>Empirical framework:</b>	The empirical framework was collected through personal interviews with respondents from five different companies. The respondents were the ones responsible for the work with sponsorship at each respective company.
<b>Conclusion:</b>	Companies are involved in the sponsoring of grassroots- and youth football teams in order to be seen as good citizens. It is also seen as a brand building activity and a way to build relationships. A link between CSR and sponsorship can be done and sponsorship can be used as a tool to communicate companies' CSR-initiatives. Finally, are the effects from sponsorship not measured due to the difficulties in this process, however, methods for this purpose do exist, such as customer surveys.

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Background</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1.1 Sponsorship.....	1
1.1.2 Corporate social responsibility.....	2
<b>1.2 Problem Discussion</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1.3 Purpose</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.4 Research problem</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.5 Demarcations</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Theoretical framework</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1 Sponsorship</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1.1 Definitions of sponsorship.....	5
2.1.2 Motives for sponsorship.....	6
2.1.3 The ERK-model.....	7
2.1.4 Development and evaluation of sponsorship deals.....	8
<b>2.2 CSR</b> .....	<b>9</b>
2.2.1 The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility.....	11
<b>2.3 Link between sponsorship and CSR</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>3. Methodology</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>3.1 Research design</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>3.2 Research approach</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>3.3 Research method</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>3.4 Case study</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>3.5 Data collection</b> .....	<b>16</b>
3.5.1 Primary data.....	16
3.5.1.1 Interviews.....	17
3.5.1.2 Chosen respondents.....	17
3.5.2 Secondary data.....	18
<b>3.6 Data analysis</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>3.7 Validity and reliability</b> .....	<b>19</b>
3.7.1 Validity.....	19
3.7.2 Reliability.....	20
<b>4. Empirical framework</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>4.1. ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan</b> .....	<b>22</b>
4.1.1 Motives and counter performances.....	22
4.1.2 Choice of sponsorship object.....	23
4.1.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities.....	24
4.1.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR.....	24
<b>4.2 Bendt Bil AB</b> .....	<b>24</b>
4.2.1 Motives and counter performances.....	25
4.2.2 Choice of sponsorship object.....	25
4.2.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities.....	26
4.2.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR.....	26
<b>4.3 KBMEDIA</b> .....	<b>26</b>
4.3.1 Motives and counter performances.....	27

4.3.2 Choice of sponsorship object .....	27
4.3.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities .....	28
4.3.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR .....	28
<b>4.4 Halmstad Energi och Miljö AB.....</b>	<b>28</b>
4.4.1 Motives and counter performances .....	29
4.4.2 Choice of sponsorship object .....	30
4.4.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities .....	30
4.4.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR .....	30
<b>4.5 Länsförsäkringar Halland.....</b>	<b>31</b>
4.5.1 Motives and counter performances .....	31
4.5.2 Choice of sponsorship object .....	32
4.5.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities .....	32
4.5.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR .....	33
<b>5. Cross case analysis .....</b>	<b>34</b>
5.1 Motives and counter performances .....	34
5.2 Choice of sponsorship object.....	36
5.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities .....	37
5.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR.....	38
5.5 Summary of the cross case analysis.....	40
<b>6. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>41</b>
6.1 Theoretical implications .....	42
6.2 Managerial implications .....	42
6.3 Further research .....	43
<b>7. References .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>49</b>
Interview guide.....	49
Intervjuguide .....	50

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

### 1.1.1 Sponsorship

Businesses are nowadays experiencing an increasingly competitive environment with the media closely watching the movements made by the companies. The global market of today requires well-reasoned and efficient promotional tools, which should be carefully planned and implemented (Tsotsou, 2011). One of these promotional tools is sponsorship, which can be seen as a business agreement between two organizations, a sponsor and a sponsee, where both parties should mutually benefit from this agreement in order to satisfy their nonprofit and profit objectives (ibid.). The sponsees are described by Hagstedt (1987) as organizations and individuals whose primary purpose is not to generate profits through their activities. Examples of such organizations are within sport, culture, environment and education. The size of sponsorship is growing rapidly (Tsotsou, 2011) and numbers from the Sponsorship Report, made by International Events Group (2015) confirms this. The report shows that global corporate sponsorship expenditure reached a record level \$57,5 billion for the year of 2015, with a continuously annual growth rate in the last couple of years. The projected number for 2016 is sat at \$60,2 billion.

It is easy to mistake charity for sponsorship, and therefore believe that sponsorship has existed for several centuries. The difference between them is that there is a requirement of a counter performance in sponsorship, i.e. the sponsor should receive something in return. This requirement does not exist in charity. It is possible to observe charity from the Roman Empire, when a minister of the emperor Augustus donated a manor house to a poet (Grönkvist, 2000). It was not until the seventies that reasoning on counter performances arose in Sweden. Sponsorship was legitimized after an investigation from the Swedish Sports Confederation, which opened up the possibilities for sport sponsorship. Sport sponsorship was professionalized and has accelerated in Sweden since the eighties (Roos & Algotsson, 1996).

Sport sponsorship has been the main focus when talking about the different kinds of sponsorships ever since this became a concept. Reasons for this are that sport is the largest popular movement, with half of the population involved in sport and exercise. It is also well organized with people of long experience with businesses cooperation, indicating a high level of reliability. Besides from this, sport gets superior publicity (e.g. through television coverage) (Grönkvist, 2000). Sport sponsorship is the largest part of sponsorship in Sweden, with 72,8 % of all sponsorship cost (Minnhagen & Thor, 2014). It is considered to be a rapidly developing market (Meenaghan, 2013). Vallerand et al. (2008) and Unlucan (2015) describe football as the most followed team sports worldwide and Vallerand et al. (2008) also make the notion that the importance of this sport is higher in European countries compared to other places. Football clubs attract millions of supporters to the stadiums every year and receive even more viewers from television broadcasting. Sponsors and investors have been attracted thanks to this increased

popularity (Unluçan, 2015; Vallerand et al., 2008). The integration of new media (digital) technologies, the necessity for brands to locate effective and unique ways to communicate with new markets and the convergence of consumer needs worldwide are reasons for this rapidly development (Santomier, 2008).

It is very helpful to have a policy with guidelines when choosing an appropriate sponsorship object among the incoming request. The fit of a sponsorship should be based on the situation of each company. It is important for companies to collect information about those they wish to sponsor and to choose an association with a good reputation. Furthermore, to sponsor fewer projects is better compared to be involved in many projects. However, this can be difficult for companies, due to the existing pressure from associations (Grönkvist, 2000).

Historically, it has been difficult to measure the effects from sponsorship, according to Roos and Algotsson (1996). This corresponds to newer research, as both Zatepilina-Monacell (2015) and Meenaghan (2013) confirm this. Sponsorship is in the lack of credible, accessible and comprehensive evidence, which industry spokespersons can use confidently (Meenaghan, 2013). It is also stated in Grönkvist (1999), that most of the resources are put on the implementation of the sponsorship. After this, is it preferable to look forward for new projects, rather than to monitor and measure the effects from previous sponsorship activities.

### **1.1.2 Corporate social responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is another part within marketing which has become much more important. Van Marrewijk (2003, p.102) defines CSR as follows: “company activities – voluntary by definition – demonstrating the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in business operations and in interactions with stakeholders”. The globalization and international trade are factors that have led to the heightened interest in CSR lately. An increasing business complexity has evolved which now put higher demands on companies, such as corporate citizenship and enhanced transparency (Jamali & Mirshak, 2007). CSR initiatives have become a way to respond to this increased business complexity and make it possible for companies to do a positive contribution to the society or support their strategic objectives (Karmas & Leonidou, 2013). Luo and Bhattacharya (2006) describe increasing media coverage as another reason for why companies now engage more in CSR activities. This makes it more desirable for them to communicate these initiatives to stakeholders such as consumers.

## **1.2 Problem Discussion**

Grassroots teams are teams playing in the lower divisions, where the majority of the players are amateurs. We refer to youth teams when talking about teams that consist of players from the age of 16 years old and below. Many of these teams do often work with constrained budgets and do not receive the same kind of media coverage as the big teams, if any at all. Besides this, they have a limited amount of fans that follows their games. Consequently, it seems as the objectives of the sponsoring entity, such as awareness and

publicity are much more difficult to achieve when sponsoring these kind of teams. Therefore, Grönkvist (2000) mentions that it can hardly be justified from a profitability perspective.

Even though it is possible to find an extensive amount of literature and scientific articles regarding sponsorship and CSR separately, not much has succeeded in describing how sponsorship can be used for companies to communicate CSR. Plewa and Quester (2011) do also explain that this is an area in which there is still a lot left to be explored. Uhrich, Koenigstorfer and Groeppel-Klein (2014) agree with the reasoning that more research has to be done within this area. Farrelly and Quester (2005) do also call for further research on the potential of sponsorship, not only on CSR, but also in relation to issues such as internal marketing and staff morale.

To choose an association to sponsor is not without difficulties even though companies have many options. It should be desirable for sponsors to be associated with the sponsorship object. The object should also reach out to the sponsors target groups (Grönkvist, 2000). Another interesting point is that despite the economic importance of sponsorships, there is no complete model to assess their effectiveness. Consequently, detailed methods and metrics for sponsorship evaluation in the literature are rare (Thjømøe, Olson & Brønn, 2002).

Motivated by the discussion above, it implies, as there is a research gap within this field of study. This gap seems to be even larger when studying grassroots- and youth football teams, as the majority of the literature and scientific articles focus on big and well-known clubs from the best leagues. Therefore, we wanted to investigate this further in order to get a clearer understanding.

### **1.3 Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams.

### **1.4 Research problem**

Which are the motives and counter performances for companies when sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams?

Can sponsorship be used as a tool to communicate companies' CSR-initiatives?

How do companies choose sponsorship objects and measure the effects from the activities related to sponsorship?

## **1.5 Demarcations**

Several demarcations had to be done in this thesis. The fact that we chose to make this study from the perspective of the sponsoring entity and not the sponsee is one example. It is in our opinion that this is the best way to make a more thorough analysis, rather than if we tried to highlight several angles. We focus on the largest category within sponsorship, which is sport sponsorship, and on companies that sponsor local grassroots- and youth football teams. Demarcations have also been done within CSR. The environmental aspect has more or less been excluded, while the focus instead has been on the social and economic parts of this area.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Sponsorship

#### 2.1.1 Definitions of sponsorship

There are many different definitions of the term sponsorship, which give various explanations. The common keywords in the definitions are exchange, cooperation, commercial, counter performance and mutual beneficial. Below are a number of definitions from different authors and they differ depending on the author's views.

Grönkvist (2000) has used a definition from the Sponsorship Association. This is a broad and general definition and goes by the following:

*Sponsorship is association marketing; a commercial method of communication, marketing and sales. Sponsorship is based on a commercial agreement between (normally) two parties where a company pays for commercial rights to use an association (with e.g. an event, a person, organization, a project etc). (p.10).*

Hagstedt (1987) explains that it is difficult to define sponsorship without being so general that the definition also covers other than the intended concept. He uses the following definition, which points out that the purpose is to finance the sponsored organization, not to create a financial surplus.

*Sponsorship refers to companies (and other organizations, excluding state and municipal) voluntary exchanges and eventually cooperations with organizations and persons whose primary (or formal) purpose of the exchange is to finance certain activities rather than creating a financial surplus. The exchange is expected to be beneficial for both parties. Further, the exchanges are excluded that solely consist of a) the sponsored making regular purchases by the sponsor, b) the sponsor only buys a ticket to, or participation fee for, the activity arranged by the sponsee. (p.17)*

Clark (1995) has in his definition mentioned that the partners are equal and active. Here, the sponsee is named as the seller. He also says that goodwill is the compensation.

*Sponsorship is a commercial cooperation between equal and active partners who voluntarily choose each other. The seller (e.g. person, team, group, organization or event within sports, culture etc.) sets for compensation its goodwill at the buyer's disposal against compensation in order to - in contracted terms - be used in planned communication actions to reach certain advertising-, PR-, sales or information goals. (p.3)*

Roos and Algotsson (1996) say that the aim of sponsorship is to increase sales and that it should be possible to measure and compare the result of sponsorship with the objectives.

*Sponsorship is a business method for communication and marketing which in short and long term aims to increase sales for the sponsor. The sponsorship should benefit all parties involved and give a result which can be measured and compared to predetermined objectives” (p.20). Further: “Sponsorship involves buying an association or right to that which is being sponsored, which should add an extra dimension back to the company. It is this that makes sponsorship unique over other marketing tools. (p.20)*

Cornwell and Maignan (1998) mention that two activities are involved in sponsorship if this is to be a meaningful investment.

*Sponsorship involves two main activities: (1) an exchange between a sponsor and a sponsee whereby the latter receives a fee and the former obtains the right to associate itself with the activity sponsored and (2) the marketing of the association by the sponsor. (p.11)*

Throughout our study, we refer to the definition that Grönkvist (2000) used from the Sponsorship Association. It is both broad and easy to understand, which is rare when defining the concept of sponsorship.

### **2.1.2 Motives for sponsorship**

Grönkvist (2000) brings up the following motives to sponsor: Association and image transmission, good citizen, exposure, publicity, relations, industry exclusivity, social pressure, network, new markets, launches, sales, promotions, restrictions, staff motive and personal motives. A motive that will increase in importance is the good citizen-motive. Companies are citizens that want to be seen as good role models and respected for their care of the environment. Before a company can start with this type of sponsorship, an analysis is necessary. In this, they ask themselves how far the company has come with questions regarding the society and business ethics. After this is done, the company can choose which way they want to go (ibid.).

Clark (1995) explains that the motives to sponsor have changed. Formerly, it was a leading person in a company who had a relation to, for example, an association. Today, the sponsorship is implemented after a thoughtful analysis. The sponsor wishes to bring emotional dimensions to his or her company, product or campaign through the sponsorship. This is to get themes for advertising, public relations and support sales efforts or the internal marketing (ibid.). Sponsorship can be used to change people's attitudes towards a company, it creates so-called goodwill. Additionally, it can be used as a way for companies to enhance its brand image, which can be important since the image that the surrounding has of a company can differ from how the company wants to be perceived (Roos & Algotsson, 1996; Uhrich et al., 2014).

The motives for sponsoring grassroots- and youth teams are hardly justified from a financial point of view. Often, it is the players' parents' companies who are the sponsors. The company offers a sum of money and gets the company's name on the team kits in return. This means that the parents do not have to sell lottery ticket and similar

(Grönkvist, 2000). Grönkvist (2000) predicted that the interest in the local environment would increase among the sponsors in the beginning of the 20s. Even the biggest companies would realize how important child and youth activities are and therefore sponsor them. They are open for everyone and help to reduce the youth violence (ibid.).

Sponsorship has its origin in personal relationships, according to Cornwell and Maignan (1998). They argue that companies sponsor in order to create associations to them and develop relations to their customers and surroundings. Furthermore, the possibility for exposure in different contexts is another mentioned motive. The companies' surroundings and their respective budget are the factors that affect the ability to sponsor (ibid.).

Sponsorship is the most popular form of collaboration between small businesses and nonprofit organizations, according to Zatepilina-Monacell (2015). The study concluded that the nonprofit organization whose values correspond to those of the businesses and the ones that address the most urgent local needs from the community were most likely to receive support. Additionally, a personal relationship with nonprofit staff and board members was another motive that explains why businesses choose to support nonprofit companies in the local community (ibid.). The interest that stakeholders have in football is another explanation for why companies invest in football clubs, as a higher interest in this sport leads to an increased willingness to invest in football clubs. Companies that are owned by commercially oriented financial institutions are less willing to invest in football clubs. This differs from companies owned by individuals, which are more likely to become a sponsor (Naidenova, Parshakov & Chmykhov, 2016).

### 2.1.3 The ERK-model

The ERK-model was created 1991 by Sponsor Strategi (an association that has the intention to help Swedish companies with the use of sponsorship in marketing). Since then, it has been developed and been a valuable tool for structuring sponsorship work within the following areas (Roos & Algotsson, 1996):

- Definition of sponsorship.
- Sponsorship as a marketing alternative?
- Valuation of sponsorship objects.
- Agreements.
- Planning.
- Evaluation.

The model consists of three parts (exposure, relations & communication) that go into each other and is a simplification of what sponsorship can and should consist of. The goal is to consider the various elements and assess which balance that is most optimal between them. Using the model, a company can evaluate the sponsorship requests it has received.

**Exposure** - The sponsor is exposed through selected sponsorship method. The company shows off brand image, logo or product without a message. The main medias used is TV, newspapers and the place where the event takes place.

**Relations** - Sponsorship gives the opportunity to create important relationships. By inviting key audiences for various activities, the company can create these relationships. The target groups that are reached through sponsorship are customers, staff, decision makers, partners, other sponsors and opinion leaders (journalists and industry associations).

**Communication** - Sponsorship provides the opportunity to give something new to the sponsor. The sponsor wants to be associated with the sponsorship object, which can be done through advertising, promotion and marketing activities at place. At the last mentioned, the sponsor can meet consumers and communicate the product's advantages. Many forms of media can be used but the biggest are TV, radio printed media and the location.

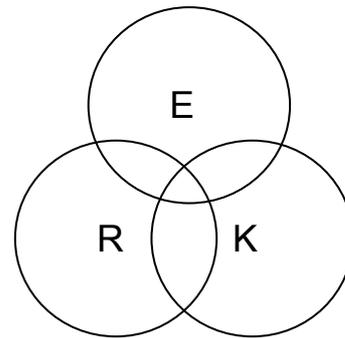


Figure 1: The ERK model  
Roos & Algotsson (1996, p 46)

### 2.1.4 Development and evaluation of sponsorship deals

Grönkvist (2000) describes planning, implementation and monitoring as the three stages in the sponsorship process. The target audience, goals, timetable and budget are determined at the planning stage. During the implementation it is important to be an active sponsor, as sponsorship requires a lot of work. The sponsor should make demands while being responsive at the same time. It is also of importance to integrate the work with sponsorship to the company's market communication, so it is linked to the rest of the marketing. Being creative as a sponsor makes it possible for them to get more publicity, as they would stand out more from the rest. Sponsors should try to get as much attention as possible through media, but magazines and annual reports can also be used for this purpose. Monitoring is performed in the last stage, but this is often not done if no measurable objects have been set up in the planning stage. The lack of money is another explanation for why no monitoring is done (ibid.).

The development process of a sponsorship deal is divided into three stages according to Athanasopoulou and Sarli (2015). The first relates to the generation of ideas and making sure of the fit between the sponsor's customers and the sponsee's fan base. The second stage focus on the preparation and presentation of the proposal, where the parties make the specifications about what should be exchanged and the time for this. According to Grönkvist (2000), is it most common to offer financial support in sponsorship, but goods and services are often offered as well by sponsors. Above all is local sponsorship characterized by this (ibid.). Athanasopoulou and Sarli (2015) point out that it is almost exclusively the sponsees that send proposals for a sponsorship agreement. However, is it often the sponsors that take the initial contact when it comes to more well-known and successful teams. The last stage involves negotiations of the proposal's contents (e.g. mutual agreements, the cost of sponsorship and methods to expose the sponsor), contract development and contract signing (ibid.).

The need to measure and monitor sponsorship arose in the breakpoint between the 80s and 90s, when the economic situation deteriorated. Those in charge needed to ensure that the investments would become profitable, as the case with the other communication tools (Roos & Algotsson, 1996). Despite this, Thjømøe et al. (2002) discovered from their study that some companies do not even measure the sponsorship effects due to costs involved in the process. Furthermore, many of the included companies did not have appropriate measures to even evaluate whether or not the sponsoring goals had been achieved. Grönkvist (1999) does also study the effectiveness of sponsorship and explains that evaluations have to be done in order to know if the sponsorship has been successful. These evaluations must be prepared already when the sponsor project is planned and are normally carried out by the sponsors through observational studies, e.g. interviews or surveys.

Besides from the difficulties that arise when measuring the sponsorship effects there is also, according to Zatepilina-Monacells (2015) study, a lack in the research that is made on the sponsee before a decision about sponsorship. The study showed that some of the surveyed companies did not do research on the nonprofit unless they enter into a long-term sponsorship or if the offerings are significant. Some companies did not know the budgets of the nonprofit organizations that they supported and all participants wished that they had done a more thoroughly research on their partners. The participants rely on the nonprofit affiliation with larger organizations or the reputation of the nonprofit in the community (ibid.).

The lack of a clear definition of sponsorship as a concept and its effectiveness shows that it is still in an early stage of development (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). Cornwell and Maignan (1998) conclude that sponsorship does not have the same ability to demonstrate its effectiveness compared to other promotional activities in reaching targeted audiences. At the same time, sponsorship will continue to play an important part in the future as a communication tool and promotional activity. Meenaghan (2013) agrees with this reasoning, and points out that the ability to measure its effectiveness must improve if it wants to keep up with advertising.

## **2.2 CSR**

Writing on social responsibility is mostly a product of the past 50 years (Carroll, 1999). The corporate scandals in the late 1990s and early 2000s are one reason for the increased attention for this subject (Grafström, Göthberg & Windell, 2015). Evidence of this increased attention can be seen by the fact that financial indices have been established for companies that are socially responsible and that the percentage of ethical funds has increased. Furthermore, standards and guidelines for the implementation and reporting of social responsibility has been designed and governmental organizations such as the UN and EU Commission have lifted CSR as an important point on the agenda. It also evident within the academic world, now with universities and colleges offering special courses focused on social responsibility (ibid.).

Luo and Bhattacharya (2006) were able to conclude that CSR has a positive impact on customer satisfaction, which leads to higher financial returns. This conforms to McWilliams and Siegel's (2001) study. It explains that those consumers who value CSR are prepared to pay a higher price for products with societal characteristics, e.g. ecological products. However, consumers must be aware of this CSR attribute, otherwise, consumers will buy the cheaper identical product without the characteristic. Besides from achieving a greater awareness, the companies' reputation improves when being socially responsible, resulting in an increase in sales (Zatepilina-Monacell, 2015). These attributes, which are linked to CSR, can be communicated through several channels (Flöter, Benkenstein & Uhrich, 2015). The channels can be controlled by third parties, such as media reports but also from channels controlled by the company and corporate advertisements. Du, Bhattacharya and Sen (2010) mention the possibility of being able to directly influence the content of communication as one great advantage of using channels controlled by the company. This is thanks to the fact that these channels are under the sponsors' control. Annual reports, corporate websites and newsletters are examples of this kind of channels. Magazines, TV commercials and billboard advertisements are also used (ibid.). Adams, Hill and Roberts (1998) do furthermore mention interim posts and press releases as medias available for companies to report their CSR activities. Manoli (2015) states however, that the annual report entails a limited success in reaching the press and general public. Du et al. (2010) argue that regardless of the channel, companies face a challenge when communicating CSR attributes, as they need to overcome stakeholder skepticism.

CSR investments can have positive or negative effects depending on how they are done, according to Dahlén and Lange (2009). Better results can be achieved if a company with a good reputation and capacity makes these investments. A higher product evaluation and an improved image can be the outcomes from the investments. However, the CSR investments can have a negative impact as well if they are made instead of investments that can increase the company's production. The investments can likewise have a negative outcome if they appear to be a recent addition due to the increased CSR focus in the community (ibid.). Additionally, do Dahlén and Lange (2009) state that CSR works best if there are strong links between the company and purpose, and if a nonprofit organization is the sender of the message. Furthermore, are the industry life cycle and the degree to which companies can differentiate their products factors that influence the level of CSR attributes. These attributes are more likely to be found in industries with highly differentiated products, such as financial services, food and automobiles. According to McWilliams and Siegel (2001) can the ideal level of CSR be determined by a cost-benefit analysis. This outcome will maximize profits while satisfying the demand for CSR from multiple stakeholders (ibid.). Luo and Bhattacharya (2006) were further able to conclude, as a result of growing commitment to sustainable and ethical business practices by consumers, that the concept of CSR can be identified as a potential form of competitive advantage.

Jutterström and Norberg (2011) mention two kinds of CSR for organizations, one that involves an adaption of the organizations' own production process and products (own performance management), and one that does not (general community support). This can be compared to what Dahlén and Lange (2009) say. According to them, there are two

perspectives to see CSR from: the normative perspective (desire to do good things) and the business perspective (self-interest). Examples of CSR activities that are performed by organizations are noted in McWilliams and Siegel (2001), who mention recycling, abating pollution, developing non-animal testing procedures as examples. Embodying products with social characteristics or attributes is another common CSR action, according to McWilliams and Siegel (2001).

### 2.2.1 The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility

The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility was created by Carroll (1991) in order to provide a better description of corporate social responsibility. The model consists of four forms of responsibilities that a company has and that should be adopted if CSR-efforts are to be accepted.

**Economic responsibilities:** The principal role of business organizations has historically been to produce goods and services to the community members and make an acceptable profit in the process. Later, an idea of maximizing the profit came up and this has been the case ever since then.

**Legal responsibilities:** Companies are expected to follow laws and regulations. They should also make sure that they provide services and goods that meet the minimal legal requirements.

**Ethical responsibilities:** These are things that are not “codified in law” and are about following standards, norms and expectations of society (i.e. to do what is right and fair, and also ensure that no harm is done to the stakeholders).

**Philanthropic responsibilities:** Companies want to be good corporate citizens and do therefore act in a way that meets the society’s expectations. This can be done e.g. by business contribution of financial resources or giving time to the community by having managers and employees participating in charitable activities. Even if this is voluntary, there are always societal expectations on the companies.

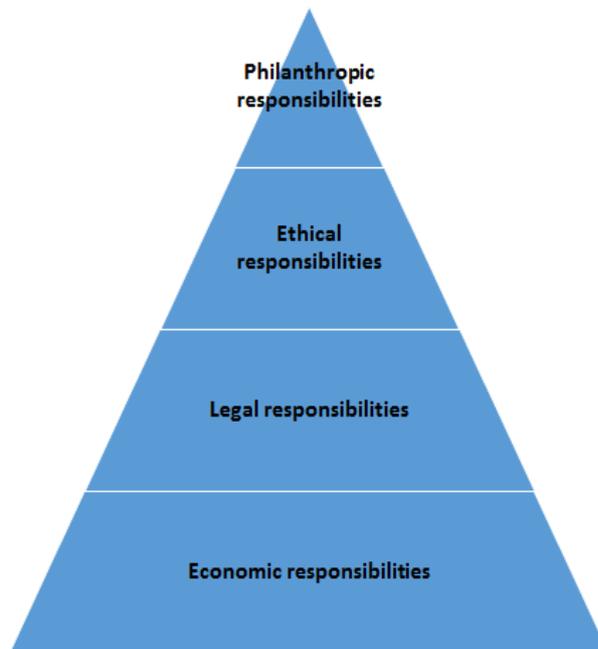


Figure 2: The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibilities (Carroll, 1991, p 42)

### 2.3 Link between sponsorship and CSR

By sponsoring a national or international sport organization, the sponsorship can reach a global audience. But its versatility also makes it suitable to use in a smaller scale. Engagements in local and regional sport is more likely to be perceived as CSR activities than e.g. sponsoring a major league football team (Plewa and Quester, 2011) and local sponsorship constitutes the largest part of a company's sponsorship operations (Grönkvist, 2000). These reasonings conform to McWilliams and Siegel (2001), who state that the supporting of a local business is an example of a CSR action. The importance of local sponsorship is studied in Plewa and Quester (2011). They argue that smaller sponsors wish to appear as socially responsible citizens, meanwhile as the local organizations' needs funding for their grassroots activities. The same findings are described in Zatepilina-Monacell (2015), as the study states that locally owned companies would like to be recognized as socially responsible through their commitment with the community and nonprofit partners, which in turn can generate more business. Russo and Tencati (2009) do likewise point out that small businesses need relations with the community to survive. Small businesses pursue CSR as they are expected to do so by the community. According to Grönkvist (2000) do many companies not sponsor because they wish to but the real reason is that they feel, as they do not have a choice due to the social pressure. Therefore, it is the risk for badwill that controls the local sponsorship, rather than the possibility to gain goodwill (ibid.).

Events, venues and activities have been recognized for their ability to target a particular demographic segment (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). However, linking sponsorship to a high-status event can lead to an insincere sponsorship. The sponsorship may in that case be seen as being commercially motivated instead of altruistic and therefore have no effect for the sponsor (Speed & Thompson, 2000). Plewa and Quester (2011) suggest instead that sponsors who want to work with CSR can choose to use an event that is of importance to the community. It can for example be by sponsoring an event for special sports. The choice of event may also include humanitarian or environmental issues. Some sponsors do also run sport programs in schools to encourage a healthy and active lifestyle, and thus show their concern and social responsibility (ibid.). Parris, Shapiro, Welty Peachey, Bowers and Bouchet (2015) studied the possibilities that a grassroots sporting event can have for sponsors. Their results are from a surf contest in Florida, where the majority of their participants were from the local area. The study shows that this kind of sporting event makes it possible for sponsors to build a stronger relationship to nonprofit organizations, and increase the association to their brand.

An advantage of grassroots sporting events can be explained from the large amount of repeat consumers from the local area, according to Speed and Thompson (2000). Furthermore, the opportunity to interact with multiple generations of consumers at the same time is also achieved from type of event. A sponsor can gain superior benefits from sponsorship if the audience perceives the sponsor to be sincere and well-liked. An interesting finding was that consumers do not perceive sponsorship to be another commercial activity, but are instead more sensitive to the humanitarian aspect that sponsorship can involve (ibid.). Furthermore, do Plewa and Quester (2011) argue that

community-minded sponsors can achieve a form of market advantage by demonstrating a connection to their consumer base by both local investments and proximity. This is in contrast to the previous study by Cornwell and Maignan (1998) who state that the philanthropic/community minded sponsorship was replaced by a market-driven type of sponsorship.

Sponsorship has become an alternative source of funding for community sport clubs (Misener & Doherty, 2014) and the existence of sponsored activities depend on corporate funding in some countries (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). The companies that sponsor football clubs come from a variety of industries such as airline, real estate, oil and gas, food and beverage (Unlucan, 2015). Misener and Doherty (2014) showed that trust was an important factor for a successful relationship. Trust and feelings of goodwill can arise by those managing the relationship, if a partner acts in a consistent way in their interactions and approach. Their findings do furthermore reveal that the presence of community sport organizations can be positively affected in the community through sponsorship relationships, if these are managed through organization, strong leadership and business acumen. Grönkvist (1999) mentions that sport organizations at local level often are contented with the sponsorship and use the same approach from season to season. It can be a sign on the sport ground, a place for the logo on the match kits, an ad in the match sheet and a donated ball from a sponsor. Biscaia, Correia, Ross and Rosados (2014) study shows that the sponsors that had their logo displayed on the match kits were those who were recalled the most. Furthermore, the sponsors can achieve high levels of recall by having naming rights in the stadium stand. Also, the sponsors that had long-term sponsorship agreements with the teams were the ones recalled more frequently.

Plewa and Quester (2011) state that sport sponsorship is a very efficient tool to communicate sponsors' CSR commitment to both consumers and employees. This will in turn enhance the internal effects, such as job satisfaction, higher levels of service quality and service staff motivation. Purchase intentions, retention and consumer attitudes are external effects that are enhanced as well. Flöter et al. (2015) did also study how sponsoring brands can use the medium of sport to engage in CSR. They argue that sponsors should seek to receive media coverage for sponsorship activities that are linked to CSR. Better effects can be achieved if these CSR activities are communicated to stakeholders with no clear connection to them. The ability to spread the information without appearing too biased is one great advantage with these stakeholders. The study does furthermore show the importance of choosing the right source of message. Reason for this, is that the attitudes that customers have towards the sponsor are affected via an indirect path (ibid.). Additionally, do Flöter et al. (2015) argue that sponsors should try minimizing the activation of consumers' persuasion knowledge when sponsorship is linked to CSR. Uhrich et al. (2014) found that companies can achieve a better credibility and attitudes, i.e. brand evaluation, when linking sponsorship to CSR in commercialized sports events. This combination adds a social meaning to the sponsorship and has better effects for the moderately low congruity brands to the sponsored event. These effects were not found for moderately high congruity brands, but the study highlights the fact that this link may complement the marketing communication portfolio of these brands, and therefore still be an attractive strategy.

Parris et al. (2015) state that traditional advertising are mainly an indirect communication tool, whereas a grassroots sporting event creates a direct interaction for consumers and producers. Cornwell (2008) argues that this direct interaction facilitates the goal of gaining the consumers' attention for marketers. Parris et al. (2015) mention further advantages with the close interaction involved in grassroots sporting events, such as it builds community support, creates brand awareness and allows the host organization to get involved in activities of its target consumers. Christensen (2006) concluded that the best way to obtain an increased awareness is achieved by sponsoring sport and cultural institutions. However, the sponsoring of charities gives a better effect on the consumers, with a higher degree of acceptance and preference indication, even though these institutions are more unknown than football teams and cultural institutions. The sponsoring of charities is a newer phenomenon and does not have the image of being commercialized. These characteristics are factors that can explain the higher level of preference and acceptance that these institutions have.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Research design**

Jacobsen (2002) mentions two different choices with the design of a study, namely intensive and extensive. The extensive approach is best suited for a quantitative study and being able to generalize is the advantage with this approach. However, superficial information that is too general is the results from this approach. The intensive entails that the researcher collects and studies deeper information, in which attention is paid to details. It can be used if one wants to understand or explain a particular situation or event (ibid.). Jacobsen (2002) argues that the problem with this design is that it is too specific and relates only to a particular context. Therefore, the results can be difficult to generalize to the entire population. The intensive approach is more suitable for a qualitative study and this is the approach that we have chosen. This approach made it possible for us to get as much details as possible and we saw it as a necessity to study deeper information in order to get a clearer understanding.

### **3.2 Research approach**

There are two main approaches that can be used for the collection of data, deduction and induction. The deductive approach creates its empirical data based on existing theories, from which research has been done in order to get a clearer picture of the problem area. Through this approach, one can see if the expectations conform to the reality (Jacobsen, 2002). Bryman (1997) mentions that the purpose with the deductive approach is to come up with specific proposals based on general descriptions. Jacobsen (2002) takes up the criticism that has been brought up with regard to this approach, describing that there is a risk that the researcher solely takes information that he or she thinks is relevant into consideration. Consequently, this might lead to an exclusion of important information, as the information will be collected based on how it supports the researcher's expectations.

The inductive approach is the opposite from deduction as it starts with the collection of empirical data, from which new conclusions and thus new theories are created. Relevant information without expectations is collected when using this strategy. The criticism of this approach say that it is naive to think that one can collect empirical data with a completely open mind. The researcher will, consciously or unconsciously, make a demarcation of the information (Jacobsen, 2002).

We are well aware of that the choice of approach may have had an impact on the collection of empirical data. However, we saw it as a necessity to be well-read within the subject in order to do an interview guide containing relevant questions and get a better understanding of the respondents' answers. Therefore, the deductive approach has been used for our thesis.

### **3.3 Research method**

Jacobsen (2002) mentions that there are two research methods, qualitative and quantitative. A qualitative method is suitable if a greater clarity wants to be created within an unknown subject, according to Jacobsen (2002). The method is advantageous in

a study where the purpose is to interpret, understand or investigate a concept for clarity. The researcher goes into depth and gets nuanced data. It concentrates on a few units and puts few restrictions on the answers that the respondents can give. This differs from the quantitative method where the questions are fixed while the answer options remain given, which does that relatively few nuances are examined but it extends over many units. Furthermore, the quantitative method is characterized by studying many units and goes wide instead (ibid.). Backman (2016) states that experiments, quasi experiments, test, surveys, questionnaires etc. are used to obtain empirical data in quantitative methods. This data is then, according to (Jacobsen, 2002) presented in numbers. Also in this aspect is there a difference, as Backman (2016) argues that the empirical data in a qualitative method is in form of verbal formulations, written or spoken. The most fundamental feature of the qualitative research is to see something with the studied object's eyes, according to Bryman (1997). Backman (2016) states that this method is not standardized as it contains a lot of flexibility and dynamism, which gives opportunities for variations.

The purpose with our study is, by interviewing five companies, to increase the understanding of sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams. This is a quite unexplored subject in which it was necessary to go into depth with, therefore making the qualitative method best suited for us. Furthermore, the amount of studied units makes it preferable to use a qualitative method. An effect of closeness to the respondents can occur in qualitative methods, according to Jacobsen (2002). Having a critical attitude to the studied subject during the entire study has reduced the occurrence of this effect. We are well aware of that the choice of the qualitative method, just as Jacobsen (2002) and Bryman and Bell (2013) state, causes difficulties when generalizing the results. However, we still find it necessary to use this method in order to get a more detailed understanding.

### **3.4 Case study**

A case study is a form of study where the researcher wants to get an understanding of the interaction between a phenomenon and a specific context, according to Jacobsen (2002). Ejvegård (2009) states that the purpose of case studies is to represent the reality from few cases. Furthermore, Jacobsen (2002) mentions case study as an appropriate method when the researcher wants to get a deeper understanding, since fewer companies are included. Jacobsen (2002) also argues that case studies are applicable for theory development. This study explores a phenomenon in depth and few companies are used. Additionally, we want to develop the lack of theory within this subject. Therefore, we believe that a case study suits our study well.

### **3.5 Data collection**

Jacobsen (2002) describes primary data and secondary data as the two types of data. The optimal way is to use a combination of these two, so that they can control and confirm each other. This increases the reliability according to Jacobsen (2002), and we have therefore chosen to use the both types of data in our study.

#### **3.5.1 Primary data**

Primary data is data that has been collected by the researcher for the first time with the intention of highlighting a specific problem. Interviews, observations and surveys are

methods for which this data can be collected (Jacobsen, 2002). The primary data in our study was obtained through individual interviews with the person responsible for sponsorship at the respective company. The questions for our interviews are found in the interview guide that we made. These are based upon the extensive amount of theories available from literature and scientific articles regarding sponsorship and CSR.

### **3.5.1.1 Interviews**

The researcher can hold three kinds of qualitative interviews which can be done either face-to-face, by telephone or with focus groups (Creswell, 2014). The most common qualitative interview is the individual open face-to-face, according to Jacobsen (2002). The interview can be more or less open, but is usually partially structured with e.g. points over subjects that should be addressed (*ibid.*). Deviations from the subject can be seen as a source of knowledge since it shows of something that the interviewee sees as important (Bryman, 1997). It is important to be careful when selecting the respondents for the interviews and prepare them sufficiently. By doing this one avoids going back to them, which would be time consuming. Furthermore, is it convenient to record the interview so one avoids taking notes during this, but can instead transcribe it and sort out what is of relevance afterwards (Ejvegård, 2009). Jacobsen (2002) agrees with these advantages and does also mentions that the conversation improves. Additionally, the interviewer is not the only one who has something to win (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The interview can be seen as a two-way process where the respondent can get something out of it as well, as the researchers' analysis of an interview can bring forward new ideas within the area (*ibid.*).

We wanted to get as much information as possible about the companies' work with sponsorship of grassroots- and youth football teams, which made the qualitative face-to-face interview an appropriate method. It is more personal and enables it to have a rewarding conversation. Additionally, this method makes it possible to observe the respondent's body language and facial expression, which can be of importance (Jacobsen, 2002). Our questions were made as open as possible and we do not have any fixed answer options. All interviews, except for one, were recorded. This was because of the fact that the respondent did not feel comfortable of being recorded. Since the majority of our interviews were recorded we mostly avoided taking notes, which led to better conversations with our respondents. Our study deals with a subject which the chosen companies are interested to talk about. A proof of this is the fact that it was easy to find companies that were willing to meet up for an interview. Companies are keen to talk about sponsorship and our study can be seen as a marketing possibility for them. We also believe that the companies, as Bryman and Bell (2013) state, will have benefits of our study and its findings. Therefore, all of the included companies in our study have been offered to receive our study.

### **3.5.1.2 Chosen respondents**

The choice of respondents in a qualitative research is necessarily not done as in a quantitative research, in which a random sampling or a selection of a large number of participants is done. The selected participants in a qualitative research should be the ones that can help the researcher the most to understand the problem. There is no specific answer to how many participants that should be included in the research, but it is characterized by a small number of participants (Creswell, 2014). This is also the case in

our study, as we included five companies. We realize that more companies could have been included, but it was in our opinion that we had gathered sufficient data in order to make a reliable and comparable study after our fifth interview. We chose the companies by studying the websites of the grassroots- and youth football teams in Halland, in order to see the sponsors of the teams. We selected companies from Halland, Sweden, that sponsored many of these teams. Their openness regarding sponsorship of grassroots- and youth football teams was an important criteria when choosing an appropriate respondent, as this would provide the necessary information for us to write our thesis. Furthermore, we preferred to have larger companies as our respondents since it is logical to assume that these work more intensively with sponsorship compared to smaller companies. The representative of the respective company was the person responsible for sponsorship.

*Table 1, Interview objects*

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Rikard Hillarp</b>	<b>Storekeeper/CEO</b>	<b>ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan</b>	<b>16-03-10</b>
<b>Ann-Sofie Peterson</b>	<b>Head of Communication</b>	<b>Länsförsäkringar Halland</b>	<b>16-03-11</b>
<b>Lars Rydberg</b>	<b>Communication Officer</b>	<b>Halmstad Energi och Miljö AB</b>	<b>16-03-14</b>
<b>Marcus Johansson</b>	<b>Head of Marketing</b>	<b>Bendt Bil</b>	<b>16-03-30</b>
<b>Lars Sandberg</b>	<b>CEO</b>	<b>KBMEDIA AB</b>	<b>16-03-31</b>

### **3.5.2 Secondary data**

Secondary data is data that has already been collected by others with different purposes in mind. This makes it of importance to be critical in the selection of this data (Jacobsen, 2002). Secondary data can be divided into qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data comes from existing stories and histories and quantitative data comes from existing statistics, accounts, annual reports and IPOs etc. (ibid.). Both qualitative and quantitative data have been used in our study. The majority of the secondary data are qualitative data and was obtained through scientific articles and books. All of the scientific articles have been collected by using the databases Web of Science and Scopus. These databases are commonly known to keep a high quality on its scientific material and the articles have been peer-reviewed by recognized experts in the area. The quantitative data are statistics from IEG and IRM (the institution for advertising and media statistics). We have tried to find as current sources as possible, however, a large number of older sources are included as well. We were unfortunately not able to find scientific articles that were written from a Swedish perspective. Instead, we chose to collect articles that covered other countries. It is in our opinion that this was the best way to attain a good theoretical overview of the research topic, which was our main objective when gathering secondary data. Also, the amount of information that can be found regarding grassroots- and youth football is limited. Consequently, some of the secondary data deals with other sports.

The following keywords were used in the libraries' catalogs and in the databases when searching for data: "Sponsorship", "Sport sponsorship", "Local sponsorship" "Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)", "Football", "Grassroots" and "Effectiveness measurement". Using these words helped us find the relevant data for our research. However, we soon realized that it was much easier to find articles covering sponsorship at elite football level compared to that of amateur level, which is the one that is relevant to us. The lists of references in the selected books and articles were controlled in order to make sure that the main source of information was found and therefore making sure that no misunderstanding would occur when interpreting. Another advantage by studying the references was that it helped us find other relevant sources.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

The analysis of qualitative data is divided into three phases, according to Jacobsen (2002). The purpose of the first phase is to get a detailed description of the data without influencing the information. Our recorded interviews were transcribed as carefully as possible and everything that was said in the interviews was written down without any own opinions.

The second phase is to systemize and categorize the data. This must be done in order to convey the collected data and to get a clear overview of this (Jacobsen, 2002). The non-relevant information in our data and the information that was repeated several times during the interviews have been excluded. After that, we categorized the content under the same headings used in our theoretical framework to get a clear overview of the collected data.

The last phase that Jacobsen (2002) describes is to combine and interpret the obtained data. In this phase we made a cross case analysis where the empirical framework from the companies was compared with each other, but also with the theoretical framework. Finally, a table was done in order to summarize our analysis. This table makes it easier to compare the companies with each other and it was likewise very useful for writing the conclusion.

### **3.7 Validity and reliability**

#### **3.7.1 Validity**

Validity entails that the research measure what it intends to and that this is relevant. Validity is in turn divided into internal and external validity. Internal validity is about whether or not the collected data and the drawn conclusions are correct (Jacobsen, 2002). To ensure this, a critical review of the references and the information from them has been made. The fact that some of our references are older may have had a negative impact upon the validity, since they might be seen as irrelevant. We do still believe that the included references are current and this is likewise confirmed by our empirical framework, as this mostly corresponds to our theoretical framework.

It is also important that the interviewed persons have knowledge about the subject at hand and at the same time has the desire to give accurate information (Jacobsen, 2002). The respondents included in our study are those who work with questions regarding our

subject at the respective companies. Our interview guide was sent out to the respondents before conducting each interview. This was in order for them to prepare themselves so that they could give us the best possible answers, which increases the internal validity. We are well aware of the fact that our respondents could prepare answers for the actual interviews by sending out the interview guide in advance. This entails a risk of receiving answers that just show the best side of our respondents. However, we believed the advantages with this approach outweigh this disadvantage.

The external validity addresses the issue of being able to generalize the obtained results. Jacobsen (2002) mentions that the sample size in a qualitative study is too small to be able to generalize to a greater population. Instead, it can be generalized to a theoretical level. According to Bryman and Bell (2013), is the choice of individuals and organizations that will participate in the study decisive for the external validity. We have chosen to interview companies within different industries in order to get a broader perspective on how these work with sponsoring of grassroots- and youth football teams. This is a factor that improves the external validity. The limited numbers of companies and the fact that they are all from Halland, Sweden, have a negative impact on the external validity, since the ability to generalize our findings is decreased.

### **3.7.2 Reliability**

Reliability means that the empirical result is reliable and credible (Jacobsen, 2002). This does in turn mean that we would get the same result if the same study was repeated and that the result is not affected by random or temporary conditions (Bryman & Bell, 2013). We have used theories from different sources that confirm each other to improve the reliability.

Both context effect and interview effect can occur in a qualitative study, which will affect the reliability of the result (Jacobsen, 2002). The interview effect occurs when the interviewer's presence creates special results. To ensure the reliability of the interviews so that the respondents understand the questions in the same way, Silverman (2001) suggests that the interviewers go through the interview guide before the actual interview. To not mislead the respondents and reduce the risk of misconception, we avoided leading questions and tried to hold the language in our interview guide as simple as possible. We have prepared ourselves thoroughly for the interviews by carefully studying the interview guide, which we sent out to our respondents in advance. This is done for the purpose of having a productive and relaxed interview without the appearance of an interview effect. The context effect means that special results are created due to the place of where the interview was held (Jacobsen, 2002). Our respondents have been interviewed at their respective place of work and therefore we do not believe that the context has influenced their answers.

The inability to write down the answers correctly during the interview is another threat to the reliability. This can be avoided by recording the interviews (Jacobsen, 2002), which conforms to Silverman (2001), who further points out that this is to avoid interference from the researches. We therefore wanted to record our interviews and we got approval to do this, except for with one of our respondents. According to Jacobsen (2002), there are also disadvantages of recording interviews. Some persons may for example react negatively on being recorded and then hold back on what they meant to say. Both the interviews and the interview guide were in Swedish, which entails a risk of

misinterpretation when translated. We were therefore keen to make sure that we made a correct translation to prevent this from affecting the reliability.

We have offered all our respondents the possibility to be anonymous. Instead, they all gave us approval to write both the name of themselves and the name of the company they represent. These have positive effects, as Jacobsen (2002) mentions that the reliability increases by not having anonymous respondents.

## 4. Empirical framework

### 4.1. ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan

ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan is a part of ICA AB, a Swedish retailing corporate group. The store is a hypermarket that offers a full range of groceries as well as fashions, entertainment, homewares and electrical. Rikard and Heléne Hillarp, who both work as storekeepers, run the company as a franchise. The store was built in 1989, has around 115 employees and a turnover of about 350 million SEK (ICA, n.d.).

We have interviewed Rikard Hillarp who works as a storekeeper at ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan. Rikard does not have any specific education within sponsorship. His experience with sponsorship is instead derived around his work as a storekeeper. He has been in the business for the majority of his working life. The work with sponsorship has always existed at ICA. It has taken different forms over the years and not been so distinct towards grassroots level as it is today. Previously it was more common that elite associations and individuals were among the target groups for the sponsorship. Today, the focus is instead on children, youths and disabled people. ICA Maxi Stormarknad Högskolan works under the sponsorship policy of ICA.

#### 4.1.1 Motives and counter performances

The personal connection and the contact network are important motives for why ICA Maxi sponsors grassroots- and youth teams. Rikard states that the chance to sponsor is greater if the company has a connection to the association. He believes that the company has a connection to almost every association around Halmstad, thanks to the company's many employees. The company sees it as a positive quality to have employees that are members of the sponsored associations, as this is a way to ensure that something is received in return. In that case there is a thread, according to Rikard, and the company knows that there is someone in the association that keep track of making sure that the criteria from ICA Maxi are met.

Rikard means that closeness to the company's customers is achieved through this kind of sponsorship, as the customers are involved in the associations. The sponsorship creates loyalty and emotions from both the side of the associations as well for ICA Maxi, but also from the customers that are members in the associations. To give back to the customers and support the community is the basis of their sponsorship. Additionally, the company wants to get an improved image of their brand, as a result of sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams.

Rikard does not see any disadvantages with the sponsoring of grassroots- and youth teams. However, he believes that it is important for the company to look after its interests, so that they can make sure that something is received in return. He states that it becomes a contribution instead, if the company does not receive anything. This is according to him, the difficulty when sponsoring teams at this level. Rikard does here mentions the importance of driving forces at the associations; *“They often have one or two driving forces and it happens easily that things and ongoing projects stop or are forgotten when they quit. We and the association are therefore very vulnerable in a relationship”*. Furthermore, he thinks that it will be more difficult for the associations to

find these driving forces in the future, which in turn will have a negative effect for sponsorship.

What ICA Maxi offers in their sponsorship has varied over time and is a matter of needs, desires and opportunities, but also a bit of luck. The company tries to find partnerships that they can get the maximum out of. Sometimes, the company does what feels good in the heart but this might not give so much in return. ICA Maxi offers a sponsorship that is purchased based for some of the associations. This means that the associations get a discount, which is based on the quantity that the members purchase at the store. In this way, it is the associations themselves that control how much they get, while ICA Maxi receive loyal customers in return by offering this. The company can also sponsor with its products, according to Rikard. Thus, they have different kinds of sponsorship, and not only financial contributions.

ICA Maxi does always has requirements on counter performances from those they sponsor. The counter performance is very controlled for some associations as the company gets signs and their logo on the match kits. Rikard says that it is only the ingenuity that set the limits for the counter performances. The company has, for example, had associations that have helped them to pack bags and with inventory. However, to only have a logo of their brand visible at a match program is nothing that ICA Maxi is interested in, as this does not give anything back, according to Rikard.

#### **4.1.2 Choice of sponsorship object**

It is the associations that make the initial contact to the company in 99 % of the cases, but there have been exceptions when the company instead has wished to have something from an association. The criteria that the company has for selecting an appropriate sponsor object are found in the sponsorship policy. Among other things, it says that the sponsorship should be done in collaboration with associations that help with youth activities. Furthermore, it should support local associations that are involved in grassroots sports. Rikard explains that the values of the associations should be consistent to those of the company's and that the association should be located geographically close to the company.

The company does not sponsor dangerous, environmentally destructive or violent sports. Therefore, there are some associations that they do not want to sponsor. Also, small associations that have too little of a width are not sponsored, as the company often lacks a connection to these. To find teams with a sufficient width at grassroots level is, according to Rikard, not a problem as there are many of them in the company's neighborhood. At the same time, Rikard says that if there is an association that the customers are passionate about, then it is there the company should try to give back.

The company receives many requests each year and it is the staff together with the management that decide who will be sponsored. Some of the associations have been sponsored previously, and in that case it is about how they have managed to live up to what was agreed upon earlier. Rikard says that the company has had to cancel a sponsorship agreement, as an association was not able to live up to the agreement. Once again, he comes into the importance of the driving forces. He believes that associations find it difficult to fulfill their part of the agreement, when the driving forces of the clubs quit.

### **4.1.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities**

Rikard believes that it is difficult to measure the effects from sponsorship, like it is with all different kinds of marketing. An effect that the company can observe, is that that they do not go back on the sponsorship that is purchased based, but at the same time it is difficult to say if they could have earned the money anyway. The company has had projects where members from the sponsored associations have helped with inventory and to pack bags. They can then compare this help to how much it would have cost if the service had been purchased instead.

The monitoring of their sponsorship projects is done continuously. Rikard believes that is it important to have a relation to the associations and to feel that there is an engagement from the associations' part as well. This is important since Rikard himself does not visit and check all of the associations. ICA Maxi does an evaluation on paper once a year before budget. First, the company looks at what should be distributed and then on how they should distribute it. Based on collected information from the past year, the company does an evaluation and assessment.

### **4.1.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR**

Rikard believes that the work with CSR is very important in order to nurture the company's brand. The work with CSR creates emotional bonds and feelings to the community. ICA Maxi works with this every day, whether it is with environment or sponsorship. The company is also aware of the increased focus on CSR and Rikard says that social media has contributed to this. Further, he says that the heightened hype around CSR has led to rapid shifts in the attitudes towards this, which often is angled incorrectly. Therefore, the company must be updated constantly about this and keep working on this matter.

Rikard believes that there is a link between sponsorship and CSR. It is because of this the company chooses clubs, organizations and teams that are geographically close to them. Also, the link is the reason for why they choose to sponsor according to what the customers and staff wish. The company takes responsibility for the community in this way.

## **4.2 Bendt Bil AB**

Bendt Bil is a family business founded in 1998 and located i Halmstad. The company is a full-service facility and reseller of SAAB, Opel, BMW, MINI, Hyundai, as well as Isuzu and Opel light trucks. The company has 74 employees, a turnover of about 480 million (SEK) and sells around 2500 cars a year. Bengt-Erik Johansson is together with his sons, Marcus Johansson and Viktor Johansson, the owners of the company (Bendt Bil, n.d.).

We have interviewed Marcus Johansson, the Head of Marketing at Bendt Bil. He has worked at the company for 12 years and he has had his current position for two years. Marcus has an education in marketing and leadership with focus on car dealership, which he studied in the United States. Bendt Bil is the sponsor of many grassroots- and youth football teams around Halmstad. It was Bengt-Erik who started the work with sponsoring these kinds of teams. This begun when the family took over the company, but Bendt Bil was engaged in sponsorship even before this happened.

#### **4.2.1 Motives and counter performances**

The sponsorship of grassroots- and youth teams is basically a social responsibility for Bendt Bil. It is a way for them to take responsibility for the city. Marcus argues that if youths are involved in an association, then they have something good to do instead of, for example, hanging around in the streets in the evenings and on weekends. Therefore, Marcus believes that companies should sponsor in order to provide the necessary resources for the associations to e.g. pay coaches. Marcus mentions the personal interest for sport as another motive to sponsor sport associations. *“We are passionate about sport, all of us three owners are sportspeople and we therefore think that it is fun to sponsor sport”*. There are several other organizations and associations that could be sponsored if a company wishes to take a social responsibility, but one company can not be engaged everywhere and sports suits Bendt Bil well, according to Marcus.

Marcus believes that some marketing is involved in the sponsorship, since the company has its logo on the match kits, which people notice. The company’s niche is to always have their logo at the top of the back of the match kits. He says that it feels great for them to see their own logo on the kits. Furthermore, Marcus says that it may be subconsciously that people come to Bendt Bil to buy a car. These people might have seen the logo on a match kit, which makes Bendt Bil come up in their minds when they are to buy a car.

The main disadvantage with this kind of sponsorship is according to Marcus the difficulty of knowing what the company gets out of it, besides from the feeling of doing something good. He explains that it is also hard for them to know what the effects from sponsorship are, i.e. how much more they sell thanks to their involvement in sponsorship.

Bendt Bil does mainly offers financial resources in their sponsorship, but Marcus says that they can also provide better prices for their products to the members of the sponsored associations. The company has also lent out cars to some of the associations that they sponsor.

The company has no big demands on counter performances. They only require the teams to have the logo of Bendt bil on the match kits. Previously, the associations should have an event at Bendt Bil but this has declined in recent years. Marcus believes that it is usually easy to get help from the associations if the company holds an event, which is because the company should preferably receive something in return for the sponsorship.

#### **4.2.2 Choice of sponsorship object**

It is exclusively the associations that make the initial contact to Bendt Bil. The company does not have a written sponsorship policy. Furthermore, they have no clear criteria when it comes to sponsorship, except for the fact that the sponsored object should be a grassroots- and youth team and that the logo should be visible at the top of the back of the match kit. The company studies all the information they can get when selecting an association to sponsor. This can be information about what kind of association it is, how many members they have and so on. This is done in order to get a good picture of the association before entering into an agreement. The associations that Bendt Bil considers to be most of interest are the ones selected. Bendt Bil also receives requests from elite athletes, but the company says no to them, since they do not wish to engage in this form

of sponsorship. However, exceptions to this have been made on a few occasions when it has been a personal friend.

#### **4.2.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities**

Marcus believes that there are difficulties when measuring the effects of sponsorship. For Bendt Bil, it is difficult to know how many of their customers that come from the sponsored associations, but also how the visibility of the company's logo on the match kits have affected sales. The only way to get a picture of this is when the customers themselves tell that they have seen the logo, according to Marcus. The company is therefore in lack of a structured method to evaluate the effects. Marcus mentions that they do sometimes ask for a photo of the match kits when the company is in contact with the associations. This is something they have begun to do, and it is mostly done for their own marketing purposes.

The company is working with a project called Bendt Bil Pengen. The project means that Bendt Bil donates 1000 SEK for every time a member of a sponsored association buys a car from them. To take part of this, the associations must join the project, which is done in addition to the ordinary sponsorship. Marcus believes that not all members tell that they come from an association when they buy a car, which result in a loss of money for the association. The company does not inform the buyers about Bendt Bil Pengen. They do instead believe that it is the associations' responsibility to inform their members about it. The associations will market the brand of Bendt Bil to their members through this project and Marcus believes that this project provides them an opportunity to get a certain idea of the sponsorship effects.

#### **4.2.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR**

The link between sponsorship and CSR means, as stated above, that the company helps associations to keep staying in business and thus keep more youths away from the streets. The owner family knows how much sport means to young people and they do therefore see sponsorship as a way to help them and thereby give something back to the community.

### **4.3 KBMEDIA**

KBMEDIA is a family business founded in 1970 that currently has 13 employees. The company is a supplier of graphic communication, both in printed and digital media and does for instance produce signs, banners and decals in different materials and sizes (KBMEDIA, n.d.).

We have interviewed Lars Sandberg, the CEO and owner of KBMEDIA. He has worked in the industry for 35 years. Most of his education comes from different courses that he has taken subsequently, in e.g. marketing, leadership and sales. The company has been an active sponsor of grassroots- and youth teams for a long time.

### **4.3.1 Motives and counter performances**

The company sponsors grassroots- and youth teams as it wishes to be associated with them. Furthermore, they see this as a way for them to be seen with their brand. This is done by being able to see the company's logo on the teams match kits, but also on different signs around the stadiums. Lars also believes that the sponsorship cooperations enables it for the company to establish and take part of networking, which he thinks is of great importance.

The company is well aware of that this kind of sponsorship is good from a social perspective. Lars says that it helps to keep youths occupied with something good and useful, instead of hanging around the streets. The sponsorship is a possibility for KBMEDIA to do well in the society and they hope that the surroundings get a positive perception of their brand through this. Thus, it is also a brand building activity. The company does e.g. hope that the parents perceive them as a good and responsible company when they see that KBMEDIA sponsors their childrens' teams. Furthermore, Lars says that this kind of sponsorship is becoming increasingly important, which is linked to the increased focus on CSR.

Lars believes that the costs of this sponsorship are the main disadvantage and he thinks it is extra tough for KBMEDIA, as they find themselves in a harsh business. *"To measure the effects of the invested capital in form of time and money is another big disadvantage with this kind of sponsoring"*, according to Lars.

The company mostly offers financial support in their sponsorship. Products in form of e.g. billboards and flyers are offered as well. Lars says that the company has become stricter when it comes to giving money. This is due to the risk that the individual associations in turn will donate the money to other organizations that could be KBMEDIA's competitors. The company has no specific sponsorship policy. However, clear requirements on receiving counter performances do exist. Lars mentions that their brand must be visible and that it is important that the associations speak well about them. Being able to go to the teams' matches is another example of a counter performance.

### **4.3.2 Choice of sponsorship object**

It is the associations who make the initial contact. The process of choosing an appropriate sponsorship object begins with a presentation from the association to the company. A proposal is suggested after the presentation and then it is up for KBMEDIA to determine whether or not the clubs meet the company's criteria.

Lars points out that the company has several criteria that must be met when choosing a sponsorship object. First of all, only local clubs should be sponsored, since the company's market is based locally. Furthermore, Lars mentions that it has to be an association that does something good. The association should not be too small and KBMEDIA tries to avoid sponsoring individual persons. The sponsored sport should be public and family friendly, which is the reason for why violent sports are excluded. A contract is written if it feels good while the requirements are met.

### **4.3.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities**

The company does not evaluate the effects from sponsorship. Lars explains that it depends on the difficulty with this. To e.g. measure how much of the company's sponsorship that contributes to the reduction of broken windows in Halmstad is virtually impossible to measure, according to Lars. The company is more interested in feeling that they are contributing to benefit the society. Through this, KBMEDIA hopes that they are perceived as the good guys by the surroundings. To ensure that the clubs live up to the defined requirements in the agreements is nothing that is controlled specifically. KBMEDIA relies on the associations to handle this properly, which can be done thanks to the regular contact that the company has to them.

Lars mentions that it has become increasingly difficult to build relationships with the younger generations. This will in turn have negative impacts on sponsorship, since this is a business relationship. The markets were based on relationships in the past, according to Lars. He says that the Internet, globalization and competition have affected the younger generations in a completely different way from how it was before. He points out that this has made it harder to establish local networks. The loyalty is no longer the same and the consequences of this can, according to Lars, be seen by the many clubs that are struggling in financial terms. Despite this, he says that the ambition for the smaller associations has become bigger. Now they e.g. want cooler clothes but the money is not there in the same way as before.

### **4.3.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR**

Lars mentions that the company has always worked with CSR. To exclusively use environmentally approved paper, have environmentally friendly colors and to minimize the use of chemicals in their products are examples of how the company works with CSR (KBMEDIA, n.d.).

KBMEDIA believes that it is important to have a local involvement in order to support youths and voluntary work. This is the reason for why the company has entered into partnerships with different associations (KBMEDIA, n.d.). The sponsoring of grassroots- and youth teams is a part of their work with CSR. Lars says that this is not done as strategically as they had wished for, and they have therefore not really used it in their marketing. To ensure that the money is spent correctly, KBMEDIA is clear on pointing out for the clubs that the money should go to the grassroots -and youths activities. Typically, it is the big associations that need money. In those cases, the company sponsors the association and then it is up for them to distribute the money.

## **4.4 Halmstad Energi och Miljö AB**

Halmstad Energi och Miljö AB was founded in 2006 as a result of a merger between Renhållningsbolaget and Energiverken. The company consists of the parent company Halmstads Energi och Miljö AB (HEM) and the subsidiary Halmstads Energi och Miljö Nät AB (HEM Nät AB). The municipality of Halmstad owns HEM to 100 %. The two companies have approximately 240 employees that together offer various services in waste management and energy (electricity, district heating and total energy) to more than 45 000 customers in Halmstad (HEM, n.d.).

The interview was made with Lars Rydberg who works as Communication Officer at HEM. His work background comprises of work with market issues such as marketing communication, advertising, channel selection and optimization for target groups. He has no specific education within sponsorship and has not worked with this before his current position at HEM. The company sponsors a number of local grassroots- and youth football teams. The current sponsorship policy was made in 2013, but the company has worked with sponsorship even before that.

#### **4.4.1 Motives and counter performances**

The first motive that Lars mentions is about reaching their local customers; *“we act on a local market, we have customers locally. We therefore say that if we should sponsor an association and be visible with our logo, then it must be an local association”*. Lars says that if the company e.g. had had a logo on the match kit of an elite football team, then HEM would target Sweden as a forum instead of their customers, which are found locally. In that case, the company would get a tiny place for their logo among other companies, which would be negative for the visibility of their brand. Lars believes that more is received in return when sponsoring smaller associations and above all grassroots- and youth teams. Then, the company can be alone in having a logo on the match kits, which is targeted towards the parents, as they are the customers. The sponsorship strengthens the relation to their customers while it shows the parents that they do not have to invest money in the association, according to Lars. This is instead done by HEM, which in turn makes it possible for the kids to play football. It is also stated in HEMs owner directives that the company should actively support local associations in order to help build the local community. This is the reason for why the company does not go outside the municipal boundary with the sponsorship. HEM wants to increase the awareness of their brand by sponsoring locally and the company sponsors smaller associations in order to reflect the entire society.

The main disadvantage with this kind of sponsorship is, according to Lars, the difficulty of justifying who should get the money, i.e. where the company should take part and sponsor. Lars believes that the company is in lack of clear guidelines that can be used for decision-making. Therefore, it is ultimately a personal assessment that determines what is best. There is always a trade-off if the company sponsors for its own sake or in order to support the association. The allocation of money is today made by the size of the youth activities, which Lars believes is difficult to justify. Another disadvantage is that the company does not receive much in return, as a consequence of not being so involved in the sponsored associations. At the moment, it is mostly just a money transaction that takes place.

Counter performances should always be included in the sponsorship agreements. Some of the requirements on counter performance are stated in the company’s sponsorship policy. Examples of these are ads, banners, signs, delivery of direct commercial, assist in cleaning days and participation in fundraisers. Sometimes, the company receives tickets for the A-team matches as an exchange for sponsoring the youth teams of the larger associations. What each association has as a counter performance must be stated in the agreement, according to Lars.

#### **4.4.2 Choice of sponsorship object**

Lars says that it is only the associations that contact HEM about the possibilities for entering into a sponsorship agreement. He believes that there is a large demand by the associations. The choice of sponsorship object is made among the incoming requests. The company does not sponsor individual persons or associations that do not share the company's values. Nor are controversial or dangerous sports sponsored. Lars takes the decisions regarding sponsorship together with the Head of Communications and the Head of Marketing. The incoming requests are evaluated based on the company's values and the business aspect. If the associations live up to the sponsorship guidelines, then it is first come first served that counts. Therefore, the associations have to be out in good time. Lars is well aware of the fact that the smaller clubs send their requests later than the larger ones, which is the reason for why a part of the budget for sponsorship is left to them. This is mainly because the smaller associations do not have someone who is responsible for sponsorship in the same way as the larger associations. Lars would have preferred that the company takes the first contact and that they clearly decide which teams that should be sponsored each year. He would like to have finished sponsorship packages where the approaches for associations of different sizes are decided. At present, Lars must make an own assessment, which he would like to avoid.

#### **4.4.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities**

HEM does not measure the effects from the sponsorship activities. Lars sees this as a major flaw and something the company ought to improve. He believes that stricter requirements could be imposed on the associations so that they can become better at following up with information about how the company's brand is visible and in front of how many. This can be done through documentation and photography.

Lars believes that there are many difficulties when it comes to how the associations live up to the written agreements. The company does not check that the money or the material actually goes to the grassroots- and youth teams, as it is supposed to. It is entirely up to the associations themselves to make sure that this is handled properly.

#### **4.4.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR**

HEM follows the existing trends with CSR and does therefore work more and more with supporting or running CSR projects. The company should, according to the owner directives, influence and support CSR projects. For HEMs sake, it is primarily about sustainability, both from a social, environmental and economic aspect.

Lars believes that there may be a relation between sponsorship and CSR. The company must be involved and support the local community. Therefore, the sponsorship becomes a form of CSR, according to Lars. However, the sponsorship is not an explicit CSR project. It is not performed just so the company can sell more agreements, but also to support the local community.

Finally, Lars says that HEM does not receive much in return by just investing financial resources into a CSR project and then let someone else run it. He argues that there must be a commitment from both parties to actively work with the project.

## 4.5 Länsförsäkringar Halland

Länsförsäkringar Halland is a customer-owned insurance company. The company is one of 23 regional insurance companies that together with 16 local insurance companies own Länsförsäkringar AB. Länsförsäkringar Halland had 147 employees last year and the company's mission is to conduct joint banking and insurance operations (Länsförsäkringar Halland, n.d.).

We have interviewed Ann-Sofie Peterson who works as the Head of Communications. She is responsible for the sponsorship in Halland and has worked at this position for half a year. She has worked with marketing for 25 years, partly as a copywriter, project manager and brand strategist at advertising agencies. Johanna Stakeberg has answered some of the questions, mostly those within CSR. She works as sustainability manager and was unable to attend the interview. The company has sponsored grassroots- and youth teams for a long period, but more structured with a policy the last 10 years.

### 4.5.1 Motives and counter performances

The sponsorship of grassroots- and youth teams is according to Ann-Sofie a way for Länsförsäkringar to be seen with the company's brand. The sponsorship of football at grassroots level is a way for Länsförsäkringar to show that they take responsible for the society and therefore contributes to their vision of "a safe Halland to live in". This is of great importance, as the company wishes to build the brand around being a good partner to the community.

Ann-Sofie believes that sponsorship is a business relationship that constitutes a win/win situation for the company. Furthermore, she says that this sponsorship provides an opportunity for networking. The business networks are mostly created through the larger elite clubs, as these have a larger number of contacts, but it is likewise done at the smaller clubs. The company meets a lot of its customers at grassroots level and the fact that Länsförsäkringar is customer-owned is reflected in the entire company's way of being and thinking, according to Ann-Sofie.

Ann-Sofie mentions some of the benefits of sponsoring football associations, as she says "*football is a very big sport that attracts many youths, but also at the side of the pitch, such as parents, spectators and supporters*". The company is pleased of the fact that their contribution to the associations helps youths to have a meaningful leisure. To have youths involved in associations generates better health and nutrition, while it at the time keep them away from drugs. Ann-Sofie mentions this as the most meaningful benefit with this sponsorship.

As a counter performance in the sponsorship agreement, the company wants to be seen with their brand at as many places as possible. In football, they prefer to be seen on the match kits. Arena signs, match program and on websites are other used channels for this purpose. Ann-Sofie says that the company connects their work with CSR to the counter performances. If the sponsorship is of a larger size, then Länsförsäkringar wants the associations to help on some of the community activities that are arranged each year, for example night walks. Ann-Sofie believes that very good effects are obtained when combining CSR to sponsorship. Furthermore, she also believes that it is an opportunity for the associations to demonstrate commitment to the society. Länsförsäkringar mostly

offers financial support in their sponsorship, but likewise prizes in form of products for different tournaments.

#### **4.5.2 Choice of sponsorship object**

It is only the associations that take the initial contact with regard to sponsorship. Ann-Sofie mentions that the company has a sponsorship policy that must be followed when selecting an object to sponsor. First and foremost, the policy states that the object must be an association from Halland that shares the same values as Länsförsäkringar. Another criterion is, according to Ann-Sofie, that the counterpart must be serious in their business, e.g. by having many members while working in a good way. Furthermore, it is also important for Länsförsäkringar that the sponsored object strengthens the company's brand and core values, which is why it is important that it is a serious association. Ann-Sofie believes that there must be counter performances in order to achieve a win/win situation, and this is another criterion in order to go into a sponsorship deal.

The company can not sponsor all teams as a result of having a constrained budget for sponsorship. Instead, they try to find a balance, partly between girls'– and boys' teams, female- and male teams, but also between different sports in the different cities in Halland. Länsförsäkringar tries not to write contracts for longer than 3 years, as they wish to give more teams the chance of being sponsored.

#### **4.5.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities**

The company does not have a structured approach for measuring the effects from their sponsorship activities. Instead, they check that their brand can be seen as according to what has been agreed on and that the associations participate on the social commitments that the company organizes. Ann-Sofie mentions that the social activities itself are more important than the potential of gaining profit from the sponsorship activities. She believes that the company has a good and regular contact with the associations, which they meet each year.

The difficulty with measuring the sponsorship effects is the reason for why the company does not do it. According to Ann-Sofie, this is the case no matter what kind of event it is. She states that the effects can be seen when the company participates in the networking events that the associations arrange. In that case, it is possible to see if the sellers have received any commercial agreements. However, to measure if the sponsorship has led to an increase in sales, of for example insurances, is not something the company does.

The company checks that they appear on the associations' websites and makes sure that the sponsored objects live up to the requirements by visiting them. These controls are done continuously and especially with the new associations. Ann-Sofie mentions that the associations bring photos and match programs with them when they meet, and they can in that way ensure that the brand is visible. She highlights that this is important, since it is difficult to control the grassroots- and youth teams, due to the lack of media coverage. To have good relationships with the associations is also very important, according to Ann-Sofie. This makes it easy for the associations to contact the company if something has broken, e.g. a sign with their logo. This is important for Länsförsäkringar, since the company always wants to be visible, but as well for the associations, as these do not want to have anything broken at them.

#### **4.5.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR**

CSR means for the company that they should actively and concretely contribute to a better and safer society. It must be done through their core business, but also through involvement in the community and environmental projects. Their work with CSR is targeted to all the people in Halland, both non-customers and customers. The primary intention is to do well, not to generate business. According to Johanna, has the work with CSR proven to save many millions to the community, Länsförsäkringar as a company and their customers.

The company's vision is the base for everything they do. Ann-Sofie says that Länsförsäkringar works together with other public institutions such as the municipalities, police, region, country government, voluntary organizations and the church. Night walks, the handing out of reflexes, the lending of lifejackets and give out extinguishing grenades to the fire department are examples of some of the company's CSR-activities. The goal of the activities is to make sure that the people in Halland will run a reduced risk of being hit by crimes, injuries and accidents. Thus, the company wishes to promote health and the environment, according to Ann-Sofie. Johanna states that the work with CSR makes the employees proud of working for Länsförsäkringar, but likewise do the customers become proud of the company.

The company does not see the sponsoring of grassroots- and youth teams as a part of their work with CSR. Länsförsäkringar is clear on the fact that they differ between these two concepts. According to Ann-Sofie, is sponsorship a business relation that builds on a win/win situation. This differs from CSR, which is not based on win/win. CSR is a financial contribution, nor is it deductible as sponsorship is, says Johanna. Johanna describes that the company could link the concepts together more than what is done at the moment, since it is a social commitment to sponsor local sport as it helps the youths to have meaningful leisure. Often is the sponsorship about contribution to elite sport and then it becomes something else, according to Johanna.

## 5. Cross case analysis

### 5.1 Motives and counter performances

All of the companies in the study sponsor grassroots- and youth football teams in order to show that they are good citizens that take responsible for the society, which is a motive mentioned in Grönkvist (2000). Grönkvist (1999) argues that this type of sponsorship is open to everyone and contributes to reduce the youth violence. This can be related to Länsförsäkringar, KBMEDIA and Bendt Bil, as they stated that the sponsorship helps to keep the youths busy with something positive, instead of hanging around on the streets. Ann-Sofie at Länsförsäkringar mentions this as the most meaningful motive. The sponsorship is a way for our respondents to show that they are socially responsible and they wish to get an improved perception of their brand from the surroundings through this. Thus, all of our respondents see the sponsoring of grassroots- and youth teams as a brand building activity. This conforms to Roos and Algotsson (1996) and Uhrich et al. (2014). Uhrich et.al. (2014) argue that it can help to change people's attitude towards a company, so they can be perceived as they wish. Lars from KBMEDIA confirms this, as he says that the sponsorship can help the company to be seen as the good guys.

All of our respondents work for companies that compete in different industries and this corresponds to Unlucan (2015), as the study shows that the sponsors of football clubs come from different industries. A reason for why companies sponsor football clubs is according to Naidenova et al. (2016), because of the fact that the owners have an interest in the sport. Marcus at Bendt Bil confirms this, as he says that all of the owners are interested in sports and that is partly a reason for why they sponsor football teams. Ann-Sofie from Länsförsäkringar brings up another advantage with the sponsoring of football teams, namely that football engage many people, both on and off the pitch. Unlucan (2015) and Vallerand et al. (2008) do also state that the popularity of football attracts many sponsors.

HEM, ICA Maxi and Länsförsäkringar see the sponsoring of local teams as most advantageous, since their customers are based locally and involved in the associations. Local sponsorship is also the largest or the only part of the companies' sponsorship, which corresponds to Grönkvist (2000), as he states that local sponsorship constitutes the largest part of a company's sponsorship operations. ICA Maxi has increased their sponsoring directed to local associations, children and youths in recent years. This statement is also in accordance to Grönkvist (1999), as he believes that the sponsors' interest in the local environment will increase in the 20s.

Cornwell and Maignan (1998) argue that sponsorship has its origin in personal relationships. The study by Zatepilina-Monacell (2015) describes personal relationship with nonprofit staff and board members as another motive for sponsorship, which conforms to the case of ICA Maxi. Rikard says that this brings a sense of security. Länsförsäkringar sees sponsorship as a business relationship and HEM argues that the relation to its customers is improved through this sponsorship, just as stated in the ERK-model (Roos & Algotsson, 1996) and Grönkvist (2000). A sponsor wishes to create emotions to his or her company through sponsorship, according to Clark (1995). This is consistent to what Rikard says. He believes that sponsorship creates loyalty, closeness and feelings between the company and its customers. Misener and Doherty's (2014)

study showed that trust was an important factor for a successful relationship and the importance of this is also noted at KBMEDIA. Being able to trust the associations is the reason for why the company does not control that the clubs live up to the requirements.

Grönkvist (2000) states the ability for networking as another motive to sponsor. This was also brought up among some of our respondents. Lars from KBMEDIA says that it is of great importance for the company to establish and take part of networking. Länsförsäkringar has similar reasoning. They create most of their business networks through the elite clubs, since these have a larger number of contacts. Furthermore, Ann-Sofie says that the company also meets many of their customers at grassroots level, which corresponds to Speed and Thompson (2000). Parris et al. (2015) confirm this, by stating that grassroots sporting events makes it possible for sponsors to get involved in activities of its target consumers.

Grönkvist (2000) differs between charity and sponsorship, by arguing that there is a requirement of a counter performance in sponsorship. The importance of a counter performance is evident at our respondents. For example, Ann-Sofie describes that there must be counter performances if Länsförsäkringar is to enter a sponsorship deal. The lack of counter performances means that it becomes a contribution instead, according to Rikard. HEM, ICA Maxi and Länsförsäkringar have their requirements on counter performances stated in a sponsorship policy. Furthermore, even though KBMEDIA does not have any policy, they still have clear requirements on this aspect. Bendt Bil, which neither has a sponsorship policy, mentions that they do not have big demands on receiving counter performances.

To have the company logo on the match kits in order to be visible with their brand and gain awareness was mentioned as a counter performance by all of our respondents. Christensen (2006) does likewise conclude sponsoring of sport institutions as one of the best ways to obtain an increased awareness. Länsförsäkringar prefers to be visible at the match kits. Marcus at Bendt Bil mentions it as a criterion to have their logo at the top of these kits. These reasonings seem logic after having read Biscaia et al. (2014), as the study states that the best way to be recalled is by having the logo on the match kits.

Besides from being visible, HEM wishes that the associations speak well of them in order to receive positive promotion. HEM argues that both sponsors and sponsees should mutually benefit from an agreement, which also Tsiotsou (2011) and Grönkvist (2000) describe. Receiving tickets to the matches is a counter performance that both KBMEDIA and HEM receive. Furthermore, HEM appears with their brand in ads, banners and signs. The delivery of direct commercial, assist at some of their cleaning days and participation by the clubs at the company's fundraisers are other counter performances that they receive. The clubs can show their commitment to the society and therefore work with CSR by helping HEM with the above mentioned tasks, as noted in Karmas and Leonidou (2013). Ann-Sofie agrees with this, as she states that it is an opportunity for the clubs to demonstrate commitment to the society. This can be a way for the clubs to gain a competitive advantage, according to Luo and Bhattacharya (2006), or support their strategic objectives (Karmas & Leonidou, 2013). Länsförsäkringar connects their work with CSR to the counter performances. If the sponsorship is of a larger size, then the company wants the associations to help them on some of the community activities that they arrange each year, for example night walks. Marcus also explains that they wish to receive help from the sponsored associations for the events that the company arranges.

Rikard believes that it is only the ingenuity that set the limits to what the counter performances can be. Du et al. (2010) mention the club's match program, arena signs and websites as channels that can be used to be visible with the brand. However, to be seen with the company logo in a match program is nothing that ICA Maxi is interested in, since Rikard says that this does not give that much in return. This differs from Länsförsäkringar, as Ann-Sofie has a more positive view on this.

In order to receive the above mentioned counter performances is it most common for sponsors to offer financial support when sponsoring, according to Grönkvist (2000). This is also the case in our study, as this constitutes the major part of what our respondents offer. Even though all our respondents offer financial support, they do however differ on some aspects of this area. Grönkvist (2000) argues that local sponsorship is primarily characterized by offering products as well. This conforms to ICA Maxi, Länsförsäkringar and KBMEDIA, who all offer products. Länsförsäkringar offers the products as prizes for tournaments, whereas KBMEDIA offers them in form of e.g. billboards and flyers for the clubs to use. Bendt Bil provides better prices for their products to the sponsored associations. Additionally, they also offer to lend their cars for the larger associations. Lars from HEM says that it is the size of the youth activities that determines the amount of financial support. The desires, opportunities, needs and luck are factors that have impact on what ICA Maxi offers. ICA Maxi and Bendt Bil do also offer purchased based sponsorships. Even though financial support also is what KBMEDIA offers mostly, they have become more careful when it comes to this.

## **5.2 Choice of sponsorship object**

The first stage in the process of developing a sponsorship deal focus on the importance of the fit between the sponsor's customers and the sponsee's fan base (Athanasopoulou & Sarli, 2015). The companies in this study have their customers located locally, which also means that they are involved in many of the local associations. This is the reason for why the companies only sponsor local teams. This leads to a fit between the sponsor's customers and the sponsee's fan base. Ann-Sofie, Lars at HEM and Rikard do also point out that the sponsored associations should share the same values as the company. ICA Maxi, HEM and Länsförsäkringar do all have sponsorship policies with guidelines that they follow in the selection of sponsorship objects. Bendt Bil and KBMEDIA have no written guidelines, but there are still criteria that must be fulfilled. Furthermore, is Bendt Bil the only company that only sponsors youth teams, while ICA Maxi and HEM have them as main target. Neither KBMEDIA nor Länsförsäkringar sponsor small associations with few members. Athanasopoulou and Sarli (2015) argue that the second stage in the process includes the preparation and presentation of the proposal. The sponsor and sponsee then agrees on what will be given and received, and the time for when this should happen. Our respondents emphasize that there must be a counter performance in sponsorship, while both ICA Maxi and Länsförsäkringar mention that it becomes a contribution if this is not the case. What the companies require as counter performance differs and is discussed above.

Athanasopoulou and Sarli (2015) state that it is almost exclusively the teams that send proposals, which is confirmed by the companies in our study. They receive a lot of proposals every year. ICA Maxi says, however, that there have been a few exceptions when the company instead has wanted something from an association. The difficulties when choosing a sponsorship object were mainly experienced by Lars from HEM who

would have preferred that it was the opposite, i.e. that the company takes the first contact. The companies could use the ERK-model (Roos & Algotsson, 1996) when selecting a sponsorship object. Using that, a company can evaluate the received sponsorship requests. The goal is to find the most optimal balance between the three parts: exposure, relations and communication, with regard to the company's purpose with the sponsorship.

Cornwell and Maignan (1998) mention that companies' ability to sponsor is affected by their respective budget. The companies in the study have limited budgets for sponsorship, which mean that they can not sponsor all of the associations that do send proposals. Ann-Sofie explains that Länsförsäkringar, due to its limited sponsorship budget, tries to find a good mix between potential sponsees.

### **5.3 Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities**

Thjømmøe et al. (2002) study showed that some companies do not measure the sponsorship effects due to the costs involved in this process. The measuring of the effects was also very limited among our respondents, but it was rather due to the difficulties with this. Roos and Algotsson (1996), Zatepilina-Monacell (2015) and Meenaghan (2013) do all conform to this. Sponsorship is an efficient promotional tool, according to Tsiotsou (2011). Despite this, do none of our respondents have structured methods to measure the effects. Not measuring the effects is a major deficiency, according to Lars from HEM. Rikard at ICA Maxi highlights the fact that sponsorship is not the only promotional tool that is difficult to measure. This corresponds to Meenaghan (2013) who also explains that sponsorship is a promotional tool that must improve, with regard to effectiveness measuring. The example by Lars from KBMEDIA, about how their sponsorship benefit the society by contributing to the reduction in broken windows, makes it easy to understand why companies find it difficult to measure the effects. Marcus at Bendt Bil agrees with the difficulties involved and mentions a similar example to that of KBMEDIA. Ann-Sofie argues that the only way for Länsförsäkringar to get an insight of the effects is through the events arranged by the sponsored associations. At those, they can see if the company's sellers have managed to get new agreements. Therefore, to measure whether or not the sponsorship has lead to an increase in sales is not done by our respondents, as it should be in the last stage, according to Grönkvist (1999).

Bendt Bil and ICA Maxi are two respondents that partially manage to measure the effects of sponsorship. The offering of purchased based sponsorship by ICA Maxi and the concept of Bendt Bil Pengen are alternative methods that makes it possible for the companies to see if a customer comes from an sponsored association, but also the amount they buy for. Furthermore, ICA Maxi compares how much they save by receiving help for some services from the sponsored associations, instead of buying the services. Länsförsäkringar, KBMEDIA and HEM do not offer these in their sponsorship and do therefore not have the same ability on this aspect. Speed and Thompson (2000) argue that the customers are more sensitive to the humanitarian aspect that sponsorship can involve. This can explain why KBMEDIA focus more on the well-being of the society, rather than on the income from the activities related to sponsorship. Länsförsäkringar shares the same opinion, as Ann-Sofie says that the social activities from sponsorship are more important than gaining profit. Likewise does HEM points out that this is also done in order to support the local community.

Monitoring has to be done in order to know if the sponsorship has been successful and making controls is a part of this, according to Grönkvist (1999). Neither Bendt Bil, KBMEDIA nor HEM conduct structured controls to see if the sponsorship agreements have been followed correctly. Lars at KBMEDIA and Lars at HEM argue that they rely on the associations to follow the agreements and they believe that this can be done thanks to a good contact with the associations. Additionally, do ICA Maxi and Länsförsäkringar point out that it is important to have a continuous contact. Lars at HEM believes that the company could impose stricter requirements on the associations to present information about how their brand have been seen and in front of how many. Länsförsäkringar is the company that does the most comprehensive controls. During the sponsorship time, they visit the sponsored associations and get pictures on the signs and match kits etc.

#### **5.4 Link between sponsorship and CSR**

Sponsorship is a way to reach a global audience, but it can also be suitable to use in a smaller scale, according to Plewa and Quester (2011). However, Lars from HEM says that it is not profitable for them to sponsor national with a global audience, since their customers only are located locally. This was also the case for the rest of our respondents as they mainly have local customers. Engagements in local and regional sport are, according to Plewa and Quester (2011), perceived as CSR activities. McWilliams and Siegel (2001) do also describe it as a CSR action to support a local organization. All of the respondents agree with this, as they believe that there is a link between sponsorship and CSR. This link is the reason for why the respondents choose to sponsor associations that are located geographically close to them. Länsförsäkringar divides the work with CSR and sponsorship, as they believe that sponsorship should be a win/win situation, which is in contrast to CSR. Despite this, Johanna thinks this kind of sponsorship is a form of community involvement, and she therefore believes that the company should be able to link these two concepts together more than they at the moment.

Companies want to be good corporate citizens and do therefore act in a way that meet the society's expectations, according to the philanthropic responsibilities which is seen at the top of Carroll's pyramid (Carroll, 1991). All of the companies in this study mention that their sponsorship is a part of being good corporate citizens. Parris et al. (2015) study does also state that the sponsoring at grassroots level builds community support. Marcus at Bendt Bil says that companies must take part and sponsor so that the associations can afford to take in youths. This corresponds to the fact that sponsorship has become an important source of funding for many clubs, according to Misener and Doherty (2014). According to Carroll (1991) and Russo and Tencati (2009) are there, even if it is voluntary, always societal expectations on the companies to pursue CSR. Our respondents did not mention that they feel any expectations from the society, but they do all see the work with CSR as very important. Rikard mentions that the work with CSR is a way for them to nurture their brand.

Luo and Bhattacharya (2006) concluded that CSR activities have a positive impact on customer satisfaction, but like Dahlén and Lange (2009) state it can also have negative consequences. It can e.g. be if the activities appear to be a recent addition due to the increased CSR focus in the community. This was something raised by Rikard and Lars at KBMEDIA. Rikard describes social media as a reason for the increased focus around CSR.

Plewa and Quester (2011) suggest that sponsors who want to work with CSR should engage in events that are of importance to the community. The choice of event may include humanitarian or environmental issues. Both Länsförsäkringar and HEM are engaged in such activities. Just like Parris et al. (2015) state can grassroots events, like those Länsförsäkringar and HEM arrange, create a direct contact between the companies and current and potential customers. This interaction makes it easier for companies to gain the consumers' attention (Cornwell, 2008).

According to Plewa and Quester (2011) is sport sponsorship a very efficient tool to communicate sponsors' CSR commitment to both consumers and employees. This will in turn enhance the satisfaction and motivation among the employees, but also improve the consumers' attitudes. This is confirmed by Johanna from Länsförsäkringar who believes that the company's work with CSR makes the employees proud of the company, which in turn makes them motivated and satisfied. She also believes that the customers are proud over the company's work with CSR.

## 5.5 Summary of the cross case analysis

Table 2 summarizes the results from our cross case analysis and contains the most relevant parts from this analysis. The table makes it easier to see the similarities and differences among our respondents. It shows, as described above, that good citizen and brand building are motives among all of our respondents. Furthermore, is brand visibility the most common counter performance and all respondents offer financial support. None of the companies in this study measure the effects from sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams. Finally, do all of our respondents believe that there is a link between sponsorship and CSR.

*Table 2, Cross Case Analysis*

<b>Company</b>	<b>ICA Maxi</b>	<b>Bendt Bil</b>	<b>KBMEDIA</b>	<b>HEM</b>	<b>Länsförsäkringar</b>
<b>Motive</b>					
Good citizen	X	X	X	X	X
Brand building	X	X	X	X	X
Networking			X		X
Build relationships	X		X	X	X
Personal interest		X			
Local customers	X			X	X
<b>Counter performance</b>					
Brand visibility	X	X	X	X	X
Receive tickets			X	X	
Help at events		X		X	X
<b>Offerings</b>					
Financial support	X	X	X	X	X
Products	X		X		X
Purchased based sponsorship	X	X			
<b>Sponsorship deals</b>					
Sponsorship policy	X			X	X
Measure effects					
Make controls	X				X
<b>Criteria</b>					
Shared values	X			X	X
Geographically close	X		X	X	X
Large associations			X		X
<b>Sponsorship link to CSR</b>	X	X	X	X	X

## 6. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams. The answers to our research problems are presented below and contain conclusions that we have been drawn from the analysis.

### *Which are the motives and counter performances for companies when sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams?*

There are many motives with this kind of sponsorship. We can conclude that the primary motive is to take responsibility for the society by providing youths with a meaningful leisure, which is the good citizen motive. The sponsoring of grassroots- and youth football teams is also seen as a brand building activity. The personal relationship is another common motive among sponsors. Having a good relationship to the sponsees entails a possibility for sponsors to attract customers from them. If sponsors have their customers based locally, then it is more advantageous from a marketing perspective to be engaged in the sponsoring of grassroots- and youth football teams in order to reach these customers. Sponsoring teams at elite level focus on a global audience instead of the local customers.

Furthermore, we can conclude that sponsors do not have high requirements on counter performances when sponsoring these kinds of teams, but they must be included. Being visible with the company's logo at the match kits, in match programs and on signs were the most common counter performances in this study. Receiving help by the sponsored associations at community projects and events was another counter performance.

### *Can sponsorship be used as a tool to communicate companies' CSR-initiatives?*

The sponsors believe that there is a link between sponsorship and CSR. This link explains why companies choose to sponsor grassroots- and youth football teams. Our findings show that sponsors are engaged in this kind of sponsorship as they wish to be involved and support the local community. Therefore, the sponsorship becomes a form of CSR. Thus, we can conclude that sponsorship is an excellent way for companies to communicate their CSR-initiatives. It is the feeling of doing something good for the society, rather than the potential of maximizing profits, that describes why companies sponsor these kinds of teams.

The increased importance of CSR is also highlighted in this study. Social media and a more competitive business environment were mentioned as contributing factors to this development. CSR is a contribution, while sponsorship is a business relation that has requirements on receiving counter performances. Additionally, to have the sponsees help the sponsors at events and CSR projects is seen as a requirement on counter performance.

### *How do companies choose sponsorship objects and measure the effects from the activities related to sponsorship?*

We can conclude that the choice of sponsorship object is made exclusively among the incoming requests. There is a big demand among grassroots- and youth teams that wish to be sponsored and these are the ones that make the initial contact. Those companies that have a sponsorship policy base their choice of sponsorship object on this. To have

sponsees that share the same values as the sponsors was an important criterion when choosing an appropriate sponsorship object. Furthermore, should the sponsees be located geographically close to the sponsors and preferably have a large number of members.

The major disadvantage with this kind of sponsorship is the difficulty of measuring the effects. This difficulty is the main reason for why companies do not measure the effects from sponsorship. Instead, some companies rank the positive impact on the society as more important than gaining profit. Furthermore, we can draw the conclusion that sponsors' controls of whether or not the sponsees follow the agreements are insufficient. Instead of controlling this themselves, sponsors mostly rely on the sponsees to take care of this.

## **6.1 Theoretical implications**

This study complements, but above all, expands the inadequate research that has been done on the sponsorship of grassroots- and youth teams. Our study has focused on sponsorship within football, which only few studies have done previously. It contributes to the companies' views on this kind of sponsorship and its relation to CSR. Furthermore, have ideas with regard to counter performances, measurement and communication of sponsorship been brought up.

Conclusions have been drawn from existing theories and the collected empirical framework. Even though most of our findings correspond to existing theory, we do however see some differences. This study found that it is not most important to be able to measure the effects from sponsorship. The feeling of supporting the society is more important compared to the benefit in financial terms. The study also shows that it is more advantageous from both a CSR- and profitability perspective to sponsor local teams compared to elite teams, if the companies have their customers locally.

Our study provides a new basis for future research in the area of sponsorship at grassroots- and youth level. This can in turn be used for both sponsors and sponsees in order to get new ideas.

## **6.2 Managerial implications**

Even though the sponsoring of grassroots- and youth teams within football involves much fewer resources compared to sponsorship at higher levels, it is still a promotional tool that must be taken seriously in order to be successful. We believe that companies should try to get more media attention for their work with sponsorship and CSR activities. Obviously, this is difficult when sponsoring these teams, but we believe that high rewards would be obtained if done. Besides from this, we suggest companies to communicate more of the CSR activities related to sponsorship by using the company's' own channels, such as annual reports, social media and magazines.

Companies must become better at developing a strategy for the activities related to sponsorship. The strategy should be included in a company's overall marketing strategy plan and contain clear guidelines for how sponsorship objects should be chosen and evaluated, as we realized this to be a great lack. However, before entering into a sponsorship agreement, companies must have clearly defined motives and counter

performances. This is another area that can be improved, as it is in our opinion that the counter performances lack of creativity. This is also the case for the offerings in sponsorship. We argue that companies should offer more alternative means than just financial support. Having the employees help the sponsored associations is one solution to this problem. This would provide sponsors an opportunity for brand- and relationship building, while it at the same would make them stand out among others. Clearly defined motives and counter performances, together with more creative offerings, would facilitate the selection process of an appropriate sponsorship object, which in turn may form a base for the evaluation of the effectiveness. To have these stated in a sponsorship policy is a step in the right way and we recommend all companies that are in lack of this to get one.

We further recommend companies to put down more effort and become more thoroughly when measuring the effects from the activities related to sponsorship. Our findings show that this was hardly done, which can be seen as surprisingly when thinking of the costs involved in sponsorship and the importance of this promotional tool. Also, the fact that companies today are strictly controlled and followed up by stakeholders would make it sensible to believe that the measuring of the effects would be handled properly by the companies. The difficulties involved in this process were the main argument for why this was not done among our respondents. We acknowledge that it is difficult to measure the effects, especially with these teams that are playing in the lower divisions. However, we do not believe that it is impossible. Conducting surveys among its customers is one opportunity for companies to measure the effects. Through them, they would be able to get a clearer picture of how many customers that have seen their brand through sponsorship and made a purchase as a result of this. We advise companies to have similar offerings to that of purchased based sponsorship and other alternative methods, since these enable it for companies to measure the effects in some aspects.

Additionally, we believe that the evaluation process would be facilitated if sponsors impose stricter requirements and controls on the sponsees. The sponsees have a big responsibility as representatives for the sponsors' brands and we believe that they should report more information to the sponsors, such e.g the visibility of the brand.

### **6.3 Further research**

The research on sponsorship has been neglected, although many companies work with it. We have throughout our work with this thesis figured out a number of other problem areas than those we have researched. First and foremost it would have been interesting to conduct the same study but using a quantitative method. This would make it possible to do statistical analyzes and look for relationships between several factors, such as sponsorship activity and company's result. Being able to draw conclusions that can be applied to a larger population would be obtained by doing this.

The problems involved when measuring the effects from sponsorship have been mentioned in this thesis. It is in our opinion that it is more difficult to measure the effects from sponsoring grassroots- and youth football teams due to, for instance, the lesser media attention that these teams receive. Therefore, future studies should try to research this problem even further in order to develop a method for measurement.

A study that compares how the sponsorship of grassroots- and youth teams looks at various places in the country is another suggestion for further research. Then it would, for

example, be possible to study whether there exist a stronger “sponsorship culture” in some places and if there is more pressure from the society in other places.

This study has focused on the sponsorship of football from the perspective of the sponsor. Future research might be to investigate the sponsees between different sports and get their viewpoints on the link between CSR and sponsorship.

## 7. References

Adams, C. A., Hill, W. Y., & Roberts, C. B. (1998). Corporate social reporting practices in western europe: Legitimizing corporate behaviour? *British Accounting Review*, 30(1), 1-21.

Alla bolag. (2016). Kopieringsbolaget Göran Sandberg Aktiebolag. Retrieved March 30, 2016 from:  
[http://www.allabolag.se/5561344044/Kopieringsbolaget\\_Goran\\_Sandberg\\_AB](http://www.allabolag.se/5561344044/Kopieringsbolaget_Goran_Sandberg_AB)

Athanasopoulou, P., & Sarli, E. (2015). The development of new sponsorship deals as new business-to-business services. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 30(5), 552-561.

Backman, J. (2016). *Rapporter och uppsatser*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Bendt Bil. (n.d.). Om Bendt Bil. Retrieved March 31, 2016 from:  
<http://www.bendtbil.se/sv/om-bendt-bil>

Biscaia, R., Correia, A., Ross, S., & Rosado, A. (2014). Sponsorship effectiveness in professional sport: an examination of recall and recognition among football fans. *International Journal Of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, 16(1), 7-23.

Bryman, A. (1997). *Kvantitet och kvalitet i samhällsvetenskaplig forskning*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2013). *Företagsekonomiska forskningsmetoder*. Stockholm: Liber AB.

Carroll, A.B. (1999). Corporate social responsibility: Evolution of a definitional construct. *Business and Society*, 38(3), 268-295.

Carroll, A.B. (1991). The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: Toward the moral management of organizational stakeholders. *Business Horizons*, 34(4), 39-48.

Christensen, S.R. (2006). Measuring consumer reactions to sponsoring partnerships based upon emotional and attitudinal responses. *International Journal of Market Research*, 48(1), 61-80.

Clark, J. (1995). *Sponsring i mästarklass*. Bjästa: CEWE-förlaget AB.

Cornwell, T.B., & Maignan, I. (1998). An International Review of Sponsorship Research. *Journal of Advertising*, 27(1), 1-21.

Cornwell, T.B. (2008). State of the art and science in sponsorship-linked marketing. *Journal of Advertising*, 37(3), 41-55.

Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

- Dahlén, M., & Lange, F. (2009). *Optimal marknadskommunikation*. Malmö: Liber AB.
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C.B., & Sen, S. (2010). Maximizing business returns to corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of CSR communication. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 8-19.
- Ejvegård, R. (2009). *Vetenskaplig metod*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Farrelly, F., & Quester, P. (2005). Investigating large-scale sponsorship relationships as co-marketing alliances. *Business Horizons*, 48(1), 55-62.
- Flöter, T., Benkenstein, M., & Urich, S. (2015). Communicating CSR-linked sponsorship: Examining the influence of three different types of message sources. *Sport Management Review*.
- Grafström, M., Göthberg, P., & Windell, K. (2015). *CSR: Företagsansvar i förändring*. Malmö: Liber.
- Grönkvist, U. (1999). *Framgångsrik sponsring*. Farsta: SISU Idrottsböcker.
- Grönkvist, U. (2000). *Sponsring & event marketing*. Uddevalla: Björn Lundén Information AB.
- Hagstedt, P. (1987). *Sponsring mer än marknadsföring*. Stockholm: Ekonomiska forskningsinstitutet, Handelshögskolan i Stockholm.
- Halmstad Energi och Miljö AB. (2014). HEM:s historia. Retrieved March 30, 2016 from: <http://www.hem.se/om-hem/om-hem>
- ICA MAXI. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2016 from: <http://www.ica.se/butiker/maxi/halmstad/maxi-ica-stormarknad-hogskolan-2308/butiken/#>
- IEG. IEG Press releases: IEG Projects Global Sponsorship Spending To Increase 4.7 Percent In 2016. (2016). Retrieved February 9, 2016, from: <http://www.sponsorship.com/About-IEG/Press-Room/IEG-Projects-Global-Sponsorship-Spending-To-Increa.aspx>
- IRM Institutet för Reklam- och Mediestatistik. Minnhagen & Thor. (2014). Sponsring 2013. Retrieved February 12, 2016, from: [http://www.ypanel.se/inside/uploaded/sa/sponsringsmarknaden\\_2013.pdf](http://www.ypanel.se/inside/uploaded/sa/sponsringsmarknaden_2013.pdf)
- Jacobsen, D.I. (2002). *Vad, hur och varför? Om metodval i företagsekonomi och andra samhällsvetenskapliga ämnen*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Jamali, D., & Mirshak, R. (2007). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Theory and practice in a developing country context. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 72(3), 243-262.
- Jutterström, M., & Norberg, P. (2011). *Företagsansvar- CSR som mangementidé*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Karmeas, D., & Leonidou, C.N. (2013). When consumers doubt, Watch out! The role of CSR skepticism. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(10), 1831-1838.

KBMEDIA AB. (n.d.). Företagsfakta. Retrieved March 30, 2016 from: <http://www.kbmedia.se/om-oss/f%C3%B6retagsfakta-22922223>

Luo, X., & Bhattacharya, C.B. (2006). Corporate social responsibility, customer Satisfaction, and market value. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4), 1-18.

Länsförsäkringar AB. (2016). Årsredovisning Länsförsäkringar Halland. Retrieved march 31, 2016 from: [http://www.lansforsakringar.se/globalassets/halland/dokument/om-oss/arsredovisning\\_2015.pdf](http://www.lansforsakringar.se/globalassets/halland/dokument/om-oss/arsredovisning_2015.pdf)

Länsförsäkringar AB. (n.d.). Om Länsförsäkringar AB. Retrieved march 31, 2016 from: <http://www.lansforsakringar.se/halland/om-oss/om-lansforsakringsgruppen/lansforsakringar-ab/>

Manoli, A. E. (2015). Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility in the Football Industry. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 21(3), 335-350.

McWilliams, A., & Siegel, D. (2001). Corporate social responsibility: A theory of the firm perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), 117-127.

Meenaghan, T. (2013). Measuring Sponsorship Performance: Challenge and Direction. *Psychology and Marketing*, 30(5), 385-393.

Misener, K., & Doherty, A. (2014). In support of sport: Examining the relationship between community sport organizations and sponsors. *Sport Management Review*, 17(4), 493-506.

Naidenova, I., Parshakov, P., & Chmykhov, A. (2016). Does football sponsorship improve company performance? *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 16(2), 129-147.

Parris, D.L., Shapiro, S.L., Welty Peachey, J., Bowers, J., & Bouchet, A. (2015). More than competition: exploring stakeholder identities at a grassroots cause-related sporting event. *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing*, 12(2), 115-140.

Plewa, C., & Quester, P.G. (2011). Sponsorship and CSR: Is there a link? A conceptual framework. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 12(4), 301-317.

Roos, M., & Algotsson, U. (1996). *Sponsring- Ett sätt att sälja*. Stockholm: Sellin & Partner Bok och Idé AB.

Russo, A., & Tencati, A. (2009). Formal vs. informal CSR strategies: Evidence from italian micro, small, medium-sized, and large firms. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 85(2), 339-353.

Santomier, J. (2008). New media, branding and global sports sponsorship. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 10(1), 15-28

Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Speed, R., & Thompson, P. (2000). Determinants of sports sponsorship response. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(2), 226-238.

Thjømmøe, H.M., Olson, E.L., & Brønn, P.S. (2002). Decision-making processes surrounding sponsorship activities. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42(6), 6-15.

Tsiotsou, R. (2011). A stakeholder approach to international and national sport sponsorship. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 26(8), 557-565.

Uhrich, S., Koenigstorfer, J., & Groeppel-Klein, A. (2014). Leveraging sponsorship with corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(9), 2023-2029.

Unlucan, D. (2015). Jersey sponsors in football/soccer: the industry classification of main jersey sponsors of 1147 football/soccer clubs in top leagues of 79 countries. *Soccer and Society*, 16(1), 42-62.

Vallerand, R.J., Ntoumanis, N., Philippe, F.L., Lavigne, G.L., Carbonneau, N., Bonneville, A., Lagacé-Labonté, C., & Maliha, G. (2008). On passion and sports fans: A look at football. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 26(12), 1279-1293.

Van Marrewijk, M. (2003). Concepts and Definitions of CSR and Corporate Sustainability: Between Agency and Communion. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 44(2-3), 95-105.

Zatepilina-Monacell, O. (2015). Small Business–Nonprofit Collaboration: Locally Owned Businesses Want to Take Their Relationships With Community-Based NPOs to the Next Level. *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing*, 27(2), 216-237.

# Appendix

## Interview guide

Our thesis is about sponsorship and what the motives are for sponsoring youth- and grassroots football teams. By grassroots teams, we refer to teams playing in the lower divisions where the majority of the players are amateurs. We examine the relationship between sponsorship and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is the idea of how businesses in an economically, socially and environmentally way should take responsible for their impact on the society.

Company name:

Name and position of the respondent:

Employment background and education of the respondent:

### General Information

- Which youth - and grassroots teams does the company currently sponsor in football?
- For how long has the company worked with sponsorship of youth - and grassroots teams?
- Which advantages and disadvantages do you think there is with this kind of sponsorship?
- Which are the most meaningful benefits?
- Does the company have any sponsorship policy?

### CSR

- What does corporate social responsibility mean for the company?
- How does the company see the relationship between sponsorship and CSR and what does it mean in practice?
- Is the sponsoring of youth- and grassroots teams a part of the company's work with CSR?

### Why does the company sponsor youth- and grassroots teams?

- What motives does the company have with this type of sponsorship?
- What does the company offers in its sponsorship?
- Which requirement of counter performance does the company put on the sponsored objects?

### Choice of sponsorship object

- How does the initial contact take place? Is it the company that looks up the clubs to sponsor or is the choice made among the received request?
- Are there any criteria when selecting a sponsorship object?
- How does the company approach the process of selecting a sponsorship object?

### Measuring the effects of sponsorship activities

- Does the company measure the effects of the sponsorship? If that is the case, how does the company proceed with that?
- If no, what is the reason for not doing that?
- When are the effects from sponsorship measured? Before, during or after the project?
- Is there anything further you wish to add?

## Intervjuguide

Vår uppsats handlar om sponsring och vad det finns för motiv till sponsring av ungdomslag och gräsrotslag inom fotboll. Med gräsrotslag menar vi lag i lägre divisioner där spelarna är amatörer. Vi undersöker sambandet mellan sponsring och Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR är idén om hur företag på ett ekonomiskt, socialt och miljömässigt sätt ska ta ansvar för hur de påverkar samhället.

Företagets namn:

Respondentens namn och befattning:

Respondentens arbetsbakgrund och utbildning:

### Allmänt

- Vilka ungdoms- och gräsrotslag sponsrar företaget för närvarande i fotbollssammanhang?
- Hur länge har företaget arbetat med sponsring av ungdoms- och gräsrotslag?
- Vilka fördelar respektive nackdelar anser Ni att det finns med denna form av sponsring?
- Vilka är de mest betydelsefulla fördelarna?
- Har företaget någon sponsringpolicy?

### CSR

- Vad innebär corporate social responsibility för företaget?
- Hur ser företaget på sambandet mellan sponsring och CSR och vad innebär det i praktiken?
- Är sponsringen av ungdoms- och gräsrotslag en del av företagets CSR-arbete?

### Varför sponsrar företaget ungdoms- och gräsrotslag?

- Vilka motiv har företaget med denna sponsring?
- Vad erbjuder företaget i sin sponsring?
- Vilka krav på motprestation ställer företaget på de sponsrade objekten?

### Val av sponsringsobjekt

- Hur sker första kontakten? Är det företaget som söker upp klubbar att sponsra eller görs valet bland förfrågningar som företaget får till sig?
- Finns det några kriterier vid valet av sponsringsobjekt?
- Hur går företaget tillväga vid valet av sponsringsobjekt?

### Mäta effekterna av sponsringsverksamheten

- Utvärderar företaget effekterna av sponsringen? Och hur går de i sådana fall tillväga?
- Om nej, vad är anledningen till att de inte gör det?
- När utvärderas effekterna av sponsringsverksamheten? Före, under eller efter projektet?

- Är det något ytterligare Ni önskar tillägga?

Christoffer Rex Hansen Charles

David Arvidsson



PO Box 823, SE-301 18 Halmstad  
Phone: +35 46 16 71 00  
E-mail: [registrator@hh.se](mailto:registrator@hh.se)  
[www.hh.se](http://www.hh.se)