BLURRING REALITIES BETWEEN NPOs & RETAILERS

A qualitative study of what enables NPOs and retailers to sustain inter-organisational collaborations in strategic CSR-projects, despite conflicting institutional logics

Antonia Linnarsson & Lina Wingren

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Forum är en intresseorganisation för den idéburna organiseringen och samlar civilsamhällets organisationer med social inriktning.

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ABSTRACT

Inter-organisational collaborations between non-profit organisations (NPOs) and retailers have become increasingly popular in Sweden. However, only a few studies have sought to explain how inter-organisational relationships between NPOs and retailers can be sustained over time, given the often fundamentally different institutional logics upon which these two organisational types are based. Therefore, there is a need for more research to shed light on how practitioners work with inter-organisational collaborations and how such strategic collaborations can be more efficiently and effectively sustained.

The purpose of this study is to address the identified research gaps in two theoretical areas: institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations. We aim to do this by investigating what it is that enables NPOs and retailers to sustain their inter-organisational collaboration in strategic CSR projects, despite conflicting institutional logics.

We conducted a multiple-case study involving 10 NPOs and 10 retailers. This thesis also comprises two industry mappings of the NPO and retail industries to broaden the knowledge about existing collaborations in the Swedish market.

The main conclusion from this study is that the creation of an institutional space enables inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers to be sustained, despite the existence of different institutional logics. Seven factors are suggested to facilitate the creation of an institutional space in inter-organisational collaborations. These factors and the related insights they provide can be of immense value to practitioners. More specifically, this study contributes significant insights on how inter-organisational relationships can be sustained and provides theoretical insights into the areas of institutional logics and inter-organisational collaboration.

KEYWORDS: Institutional Theory, Institutional Logics, Inter-Organisational Collaboration, Corporate Social Responsibility

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

GLOSSARY

A **company** is any association active in a commercial business environment that has profit-driven goals (Business Dictionary, Britannica Academic 2017, de Lange et al. 2016). In this thesis, retailers are defined as companies.

A **non-profit organisation (NPO)** is any voluntary or non-profit organisation that contributes to social and humanitarian projects (Business Dictionary, 2017). An NPO primarily focus on societal and humanitarian goals in favour of commercial ones (de Lange et al, 2016; Werker & Ahmed 2007).

Institutional field is defined as organisations that share common resources, suppliers, customers, rules and products, which are part of a mutually recognised area (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Institutional logic is "*…taken-for-granted social prescriptions that represent shared understandings of what constitutes legitimate goals and how they may be pursued"* (Scott 1994). In the present thesis, this entails that retailers have a commercial logic as their core logic, whereas NPOs have social-welfare logic as their core logic, in line with Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016).

Hybridisation of logics at a field level is defined as *"…rules of action, interaction, and interpretation that integrate the goals of previously incompatible logics"* (York, Hargrave & Pacheco, 2016).

Inter-organisational collaborations are defined as having three fundamental aspects:
(1) they take place between organisations; (2) the relationship is purely collaborative, hence not competitive; and (3) negotiation is crucial since there are no predefined roles, hence potential conflicts can occur (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is *"…situations when companies go the extra mile beyond what is expected and instead engage in activities that generate more social benefit and exceed the interest of the company and what's required by law"* (McWilliams, 2001). In the present thesis, CSR is defined as social responsibility and does not entail environmental aspects.

Strategic CSR-projects refers to strategic collaborations between NPOs and retailers to address social issues. A strategic partnership goes beyond simple transactions of monetary resources and brand usage to also involve components such as exchange of knowledge, time and human capabilities.

Chapter 1

This first chapter presents the research area this thesis intends to cover, the research gap we will address, the purpose, and the research question we intend to answer. We also present the outline of the thesis.

Blurring Realities Between the Profit and Non-profit Worlds

7-Eleven sells cinnamon buns in collaboration with Friends; SJ employees perform voluntary work for My Special Day; Stockholms Stadsmission and Axfood has created a social supermarket to fight food waste and offer affordable products to people with low income.

In Sweden, inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers have become increasingly popular; in Sweden alone, 75 per cent of the 40 largest [1] retailers state on their websites that they are collaborating with NPOs (see Appendix 1). At the same time, the NPOs that receive the highest donations from companies and organisations in Sweden have developed explicit offers to attract companies to engage in long-term relationships, reaching beyond a single transaction (see Appendix 2). The financial investments involved in these transactions are substantial; during 2015 alone, companies in Sweden donated 3.34 billion SEK to NPOs (Svensk Insamlingskontroll, 2016). Even though an NPO and a retailer derive from fundamentally different institutional logics, which implies clear differences in goals, organisational forms and professional legitimacy (Pache & Santos, 2013b), both seem to have valid reasons for engaging in these collaborations. From an NPO's perspective, the ultimate goal is to address social issues; however, they require financial resources in order to fulfil this mission. Recently, several NPOs have started to recognise the financial benefits of engaging in inter-organisational collaborations, as a report from PWC indicates that NPOs in Sweden increased their income from companies by 25 per cent between 2012 and 2014 (PwC, 2016). Retailers, on the other hand, experience tremendous pressure from stakeholders such as governments, customers and employees to address a growing number of complex social issues (Lærke Hojgaard Christiansen & Kroezen, 2016; Rondinellii & Berry, 1997). The media is quick to report on retail failures regarding their efforts within sustainability. For example, both H&M and Nike were subject to intense media scrutiny when they were accused of having poor labour conditions in their overseas factories (Day, 2001; Catomeri, 2008). Thus, many retailers in the Swedish market have started to reach out to NPOs to engage in strategic CSR projects with the purpose of gaining knowledge and legitimacy in these matters (Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009).

Despite the benefits of collaborating, managing these inter-organisational collaborations entails great challenges as the two organisations draw upon conflicting institutional logics and demands (Pache & Santos, 2013b). Retailers focus on commercial aspects, whereas the NPO focuses on social welfare aspects; this can create tensions and conflicts between them in the collaboration (Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009; Gray, 1989; Rondinelli, 2003). More specifically, the partners might need to compromise their own goals in favour of the collaborating partner's goals and motivations (Gray, 2000). Previous research has even suggested that organisations that stem from the social welfare logic are threatened to collaborate with companies, as it may conflict with their core goals and organisational integrity. Hence, in times when goals are compromised, collaborations have not been able to persist over time (Fridell, Hudson & Hudson, 2008; Reed, 2009). In recent years, however, contradictory research has emerged providing evidence of long-term relationships being formed between organisations from private and public sectors and civil society, each of which are anchored in different logics (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Huybrechts & Nicholls, 2012; Defourny & Nyssens, 2006). Those studies provide evidence that inter-organisational collaborations can persist over time. However, the persistence of these inter-organisational relationships has not gained enough attention in literature (de Lange et al., 2016; Shier & Handy, 2016).

There is currently a lack of studies explaining how inter-organisational relationships between NPOs and retailers can be sustained over time, despite potentially conflicting logics (de Lange et al., 2016; Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Shier & Handy, 2016). While previous literature has mainly focused on conflicting logics within a single organisation, a few studies have been directed towards institutional logics within collaborations (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000; Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009). Additionally, in the present study we have observed that inter-organisational collaborations, as a widespread phenomenon on the Swedish market, require further exploration. Research is required to shed light on practitioners and on how their strategic collaborations can be more efficiently sustained. Given the popularity of collaborations between NPOs and retailers in the Swedish market, it is crucial to investigate what enables these collaborations to persist in the light of their differences.

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[1] Referring to turnover.

Purpose, Research Question and Expected Research Contribution

The purpose of this thesis is to address the identified research gaps in and between the two theoretical areas: institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations. More specifically, the research gaps this thesis intends to fill are described below.

Firstly, within institutional theory, much of the research regarding conflicting logics has been conducted at a field-level (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Lawrence, Cynthia & Nelson, 2002; Greenwood et al., 2011). Previous research has focused mainly on conflicting logics within a single organisation or institutional field, rather than conflicting logics between organisations from different fields (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Furnari, 2016). To address this research gap, the present thesis will investigate conflicting logics between two organisations from different fields; namely, NPOs and retailers.

Secondly, within inter-organisational collaborations theory, few studies have investigated how inter-organisational collaboration between organisations from different institutional fields can be sustained (de Lange et al., 2016; Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Shier & Handy, 2016). We will also address this gap.

Thirdly, there is a lack of theory explaining the persistence of these collaborations in the light of conflicting logics (Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009), which implies that institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations have not been connected frequently (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000). We will address this research gap by investigating inter-organisational collaborations between two organisations anchored in conflicting institutional logics; namely, NPOs and retailers.

In order to address the identified research gaps, we will examine the following research question:

What enables NPOs and retailers to sustain inter-organisational collaborations in strategic CSR projects, despite conflicting institutional logics?

Thesis Outline

This thesis is divided into seven parts, which are presented in Figure 1 below.

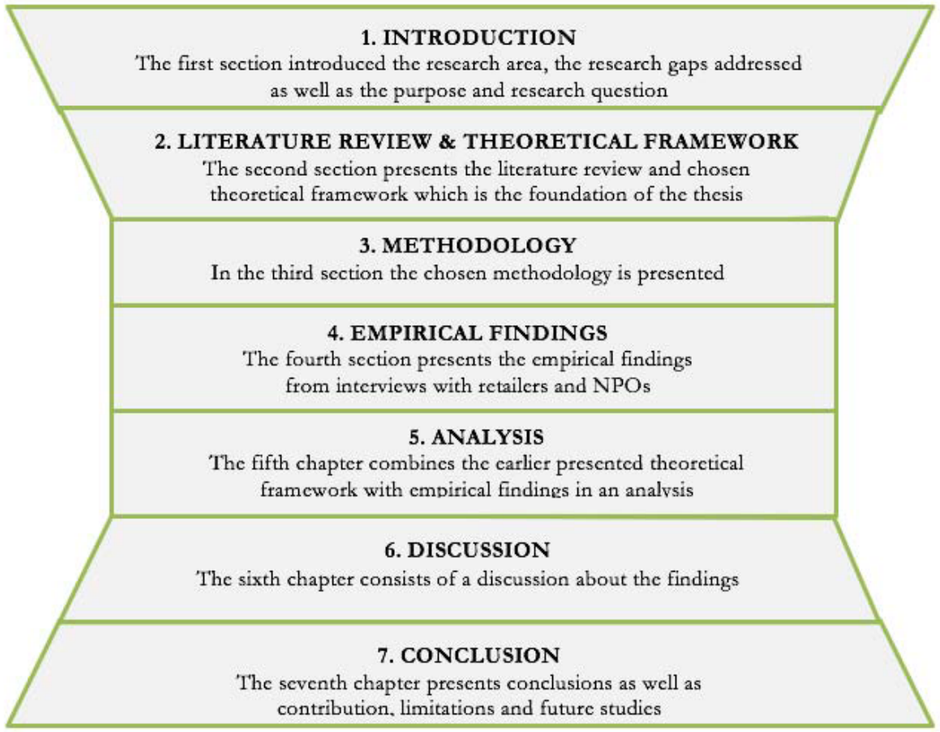

Figure 1: Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2

This chapter presents a literature review that provides a background of institutional theory and logics, conflicting logics and inter-organisational collaborations relevant to the research question. We then present our selected theoretical framework, which derives from the two theoretical areas: institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations.

Literature Review

The literature is divided into three parts. Firstly, literature on institutional logics is presented, followed by literature on inter-organisational collaborations and finally a summary of the literature review.

Institutional theory and institutional logics

This section starts by examining the background and definitions of institutional theory and logics, followed by the theory of conflicting logics and, finally, an explanation of the connection to the first research gap.

Background and Definitions

Since the mid-1970s and early 1980s, institutional theory has been of great interest to organisational researchers and is currently one of the most significant fields within organisational research (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1994; Scott, 2014). Institutional logics originate from a new institutional theory, which was first explored by Friedland and Alford (1991). Their ideas are still being applied in current research to understand such phenomena as the relationships between institutions, organisations and individuals. Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury (2012); Scott (2014) described institutional logics as an important part of shaping organisational fields, because logics act as belief systems and guide associated rules in the particular field. Friedland and Alford (1991) explained institutional logics as "…the organising principles that furnish guidelines to field participants as to how they are to carry out their work". They also argued that institutional orders have a core ideal type of logic – state, market, democracy, family or religion – which sets the organising principles, motives and identity for individuals and organisations.

There is currently a growing body of research regarding institutional logics (Lounsbury & Boxenbaum, 2013), which has given rise to various definitions. Even though researchers are not in agreement regarding the definition of institutional logics, several researchers refer to institutional logic as deeply held underlying assumptions and rules of action that shape organisational behaviour, identity and legitimacy (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Thornton, 2004; Horn, 1983; Thornton, 1999). For our purposes, institutional logics is best understood in accordance with the definition provided by Scott (1994), which states that logics are usually explained as "…taken-for-granted social prescriptions that represent shared understandings of what constitutes legitimate goals and how they may be pursued". Consequently, institutional logics set the boundaries for what organisational behaviour is regarded as appropriate, how the organisational reality is perceived and how to be successful (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2004). Thus, institutional logics act as essential components because they explain the connections on how unity and a mutual purpose are created within an organisational field (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Scott et al. (2000) established institutional logics as a tool for investigating substance and meaning of institutions within sectors, markets or industries, to unfold how they can differ among both organisations and individuals. Other researchers, such as Pache and Santos (2013b), later used logics as an analytical tool. In a similar manner, this thesis will investigate the meaning of logics, both within and between NPOs and retailers. Institutional logics are significant, as members of a collaboration will draw upon the rules and practices connected to their organisational field (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000).

Conflicting logics

Institutional theorists state that organisational fields are structured on a core institutional logic, even though multiple institutional logics usually exist concurrently in a field (Scott, 1994; Reay & Hinings, 2009; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Greenwood et al., 2011). Previous studies have identified conflicting logics within a field such as within the healthcare field where the); business-like logic and medical professionalism logic was present (Reay & Hinings, 2009) and within the finance industry where the; market logic; and regulatory logic was identified (Lounsbury, 2002). Handling these different logics can create tensions and conflicts for the organisation that must deal with them (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Brunsson, 1994; Selznick, 1949; Battilana & Dorado, 2010).

The literature within institutional theory proposes two general scenarios in which logics can co-exist. The first is that conflicting logics cannot co-exist for a long period of time within an organisation (Reay & Hinings, 2009; Thornton, 2004). Those two studies show that the weaker logic eventually will be compromised by the stronger one (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Selznick, 1949; Hoffman, 1999) or, alternatively, that a hybrid version of the conflicting logics will be developed (Thornton, Jones & Kury, 2005; Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005). On the contrary, the second scenario is, as some studies claim, that conflicting logics can co-exist for a long period of time (Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007; Lounsbury, 2007; Reay & Hinings, 2005). Logics have been able to co-exist by being preserved by certain field members; through their specific profession (Reay & Hinings, 2009); or previous sectorial experience (Pache & Santos, 2013b). Logics can also co-exist in a hybrid organisational form as such an organisation is set to achieve dual goals anchored in conflicting logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010).

Connection to research gap 1

Previous studies have mainly focused on investigating conflicting logics within a single organisation or field, paying less attention to conflicting logics between organisations from different fields (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Furnari, 2016). Investigating conflicting logics between organisations from different fields will help us understand the differences between NPOs and retailers and, ultimately, why it should be difficult for these parties to collaborate, deriving from different fields. However, even though theory regarding institutional logics claims that it should be difficult for these organisations to collaborate, we have observed in this thesis that collaborations are evident between organisations from different fields. Hence, as we intend to understand what enables these collaborations to be sustained, we are required to turn to different literature, inter-organisational collaborations. Unlike theories regarding institutional logics, this literature does not have its starting point in field level structures; instead, it derives from studying the actual collaboration. Hence, in order to understand our research question, we need to apply theory from inter-organisational collaborations in order to understand how it can explain collaborations between different types of organisations. Therefore, theory of inter-organisational collaborations will be presented on next page.

This section starts by examining the background and definitions of inter-organisational collaboration theory, followed by a review of the literature on positive and negative outcomes of inter-organisational collaborations; finally, we present the connection to the second research gap.

Inter-organisational collaboration theory

This section starts by examining the background and definitions of inter-organisational collaboration theory, followed by a review of the literature on positive and negative outcomes of inter-organisational collaborations; finally, we present the connection to the second research gap.

Background and definitions

Inter-organisational collaboration is a prominent research area in management literature that has received much attention in recent years (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000; Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009; Gray, 1989; Gray, 2000; Lawrence, Cynthia & Nelson, 2002; Smith, Caroll & Ashford, 1995; To, 2016). This research area has its roots in organisational studies, social psychology and economic sociology (Pfeffer, & Salancik, 1978; Granovetter, 1985). Early research from the 1970s derived mainly from social psychology and emphasised external control and social relationships as the key to organisations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This early research also emphasised the dependency theory, explaining that organisations need external control and social relationships in order to obtain resources and information from their environment (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978); this can be obtained, for example, through collaboration. That research highlighted the importance of mutual goals and shared benefits in social relationships and this principle is currently the most settled one within the theory of inter-organisational collaboration (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Because several researchers have investigated this research area, there are many definitions of inter-organisational collaborations (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016, Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy 2000). Reay and Hinings (2009) defined it as "united labour, or co-operation", which takes place when actors engage in common issues, using shared resources such as knowledge, rules or structures. We have adopted the definition of Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2000), which emphasizes three fundamental aspects of a collaboration: (1) it takes place between organisations and is therefore inter-organisational; (2) the relationship is purely collaborative and not competitive; and (3) the parties need to negotiate in the collaboration since there are no predefined roles, meaning that conflicts can occur.

This research area has been examined from a range of perspectives (Rodríguez et al., 2007) and two prominent research streams have emerged (Gray, 2000). The first emphasises joint ventures among businesses, while the second focuses on alliances across sectors, particularly in sectors such as education, healthcare and social services (ibid). Another perspective investigates the differences between collaborations as they can vary when it comes to definitions, agendas, the amount of trust between the parties, intentions, learning approaches, methodologies, goals and outcomes (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000; Lawrence, Cynthia & Nelson, 2002; Beech & Huxham, 2003; Huxham & Hibbert, 2008).

Positive and negative outcomes of inter-organisational collaborations

Research has examined both the positive and negative aspects of collaborations and argued that inter-organisational collaborations can be extremely powerful but also cause more issues than they solve (Imperial, 2005). In essence, the line of research that is positive towards inter-organisational collaborations states that it enhances profitability, flexibility, efficiency, legitimacy, increases competitiveness, creates value and facilitates growth (Rondinelli & London, 2003; Krathu et al., 2015; Hamel, 1991: Grant, 1996; Trist, 1983; Kumar, 1998). Although collaborations can facilitate performance in many ways, there is evidence from research showing that inter-organisational collaborations can create tensions and conflicts. These tensions and conflicts might originate from distrust or the fact that the collaborative goals are not met (Rondinelli & London, 2003; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Westley & Vredenburg, 1991; Gray & Hay, 1986; Kogut, 1989; Franko, 1971; Beamish, 1985). To overcome these challenges, it is crucial for the collaborative actors to find ways to be aware of organisational differences in goals and outcomes (Rondinelli & London, 2003; Kumar, 1998; Cohen & Levinthal, 1990) as well as creating a sense of community and balance in order to sustain the relationship (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Hardy, Lawrence & Grant, 2005).

Connection to research gap 2

The literature on inter-organisational collaborations lacks studies that investigate how inter-organisational collaborations between organisations from different institutional fields can be sustained (de Lange et al., 2016; Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009; Shier & Handy, 2016). The few studies that have approached this topic have been conducted on organisations such as non-profit organisations and a mixture of organisations from different sectors (such as the private sector and local businesses) (Shier & Handy, 2016); multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations (de Lange et al., 2016); corporates and social enterprises (Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009); and corporations and fair trade organisations (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016). These studies are only partially helpful for the area of focus in the present thesis, as they were carried out in different contexts or with a different focus than ours. Hence, there is a clear lack of research into NPOs and retailers in particular, and what enables these parties to sustain their relations in inter-organisational collaborations. This makes our research necessary in order to gain further insights into this matter.

Summary

Inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers allow field boundaries and logics to cross. Consequently, by combining the two theoretical areas – institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations – we will be able to answer our research question. Additionally, there is a lack of theory explaining the persistence of these collaborations in the light of conflicting logics (Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh 2009).

To summarise, we have identified three research gaps in this thesis (see Figure 2).

• Firstly, previous studies have mainly been focusing on investigating conflicting logics within a single organisation or field, paying less attention to conflicting logics between organisations from different fields (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Furnari, 2016). This is illustrated as gap 1 in the figure below.

• Secondly, there is a lack of studies investigating how inter-organisational collaborations between organisations from different institutional fields can be sustained (de Lange et al., 2016; Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016; Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009; Shier & Handy, 2016). More specifically, there is a clear lack of research into this phenomenon between NPOs and retailers. This is illustrated as gap 2 in the figure below.

• Thirdly, there is a lack of theory explaining the persistence of these collaborations in the light of conflicting logics (Di Domenico, Tracey & Haugh, 2009), which implies that the two areas of research – institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations – have not been frequently connected (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000). This is illustrated as gap 3 in the figure below.

In conclusion, by combining these two fields of research, our three identified research gaps can be addressed, helping us to fulfil the purpose of this thesis and ultimately address our research question.

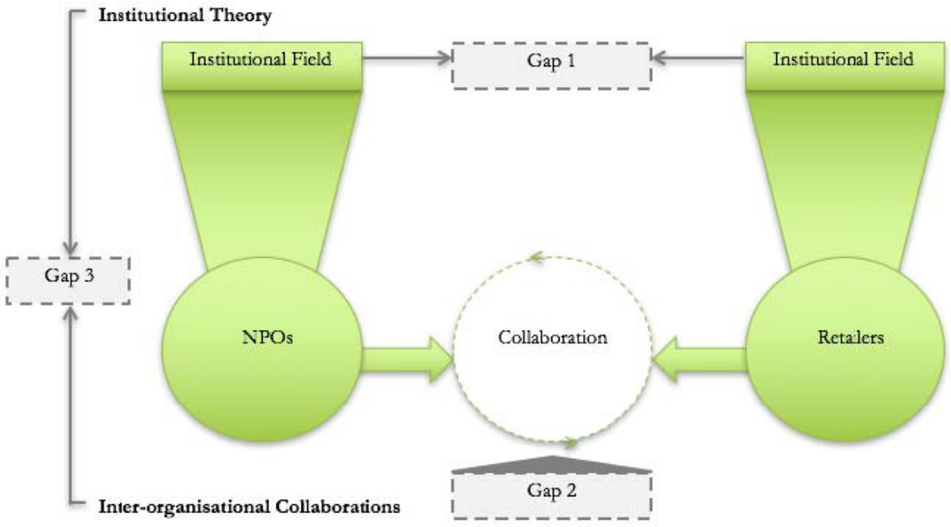

Figure 2: Research gaps this thesis intends to address

Theoretical Framework

Having reviewed the scientific research on institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations, we conclude this section by presenting the chosen theoretical framework. Firstly, we will present theory developed by Pache and Santos (2013b), which outlines the characteristics of the competing logics that are relevant to this thesis (the commercial logic and the social welfare logic). This is followed by the theory developed by Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016), outlining four conditions that are important to sustain inter-organisational relationships.

Outlining logics – Pache and Santos (2013)

The theory by Pache and Santos (2013b) is highly useful to our study because it provides a solid description of the logics of interest to our thesis; namely, the commercial logic and the social welfare logic. That study examines how organisations that combine competing institutional logics (also defined as hybrid organisations) handle these competing demands set by each logic. Their study is conducted on French work integration social enterprises, which are organisations that integrate both the social welfare logic and the commercial logic. As part of their study, Pache and Santos completed an analysis of field-level data consolidated into so-called *belief systems*. This analysis consists of aspects such as the goals, organisational form and professional legitimacy that characterised each logic (see Table 1). The belief system was later used to identify how these logics enforced pressures and demands at an organisational level. We will adapt a similar process to identify and outline the competing logics within the investigated organisations. This will be investigated through the lenses of the employees within NPO and retailer organisations.

Characteristics	Social Welfare Logic	Commercial Logic
Goal	To address social needs.	
Organisational Form	The non-profit form (association) is legitimate because of its ownership structure, which gives power to people who adhere to a social mission. The focus is on the social goal.	The profit form is legitimate because its ownership structure allows it to channel human resources and capital to areas of higher economic return.
Professional Legitimacy	Professional legitimacy is driven by contribution to the social mission.	Professional legitimacy is driven by managerial expertise.

Table 1: Summary of the commercial and the social welfare logic

Conditions to sustain inter-organisational collaborations – Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016)

Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016) presented four conditions that enable logics to align and to be sustained within inter-organisational relationships, despite power differences and the presence of distinct, potentially conflicting, institutional logics between the collaborative partners. Their study is relevant to this thesis because it took a qualitative approach, analysing the relationships between corporations (that sell, distribute or intermediate) and fair trade organisations (FTOs). Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016) studied six partnerships between corporations and FTOs, applying a case study methodology. Because the authors stated that their study is likely to be applicable to other cross-logic relationships, we will use their theory to investigate whether the same conditions are applicable to collaborations between NPOs and retailers. The four conditions to sustain collaborations (anchored in both institutional theory and inter-organisational theory) are presented in Table 2 below, as well as in text.

Perspective: Conditions to sustain inter-organisational collaborations	**Condition**
Factors enabling logics to align cross inter-organisational relationships	Hybrid logics
	Boundary-spanning discourses
Factors giving support to sustain inter-organisational relationships	Co-created rules and practices
	Tolerance of dissonance

Table 2: Summary of the four conditions

Factors enabling logics to align across-organisational relationships

Hybrid logics: This aspect shows that an earlier 'hybridisation' of each part's logic is important for these inter-organisational relations to be maintained. Additionally, theory emphasises that the hybridisation of logics should be important to the specific partnership. If logics are hybrid, but at the same time clear and distinct on each side, it will be possible for them to align. For example, FTOs have developed a logic that blends their original social justice goals with traits from the market logic, such as emphasising growth. Hence, for a partnership to arise between organisations that adhere to different logics, an earlier 'hybridisation' of each part's logics is required.

Boundary spanning discourses: To ease the persistence of inter-organisational relationships, it is important to *"…develop common discourses that can span the boundaries between logics" (Nicholls & Huybrechts, 2016).* Both parties carefully use institutional material from the collaboration to develop multiple discourses and meanings, relevant to their core logic. For example, Nicholls and Huybrechts identified economic benefits as a boundary spanning discourse since it can be interpreted and recognised in accordance to each part's logic. More specifically, the company could increase sales and, at the same time, meet customer demands, whereas the FTO could increase sales and economic viability as well as highlight fair-trade matters in general.

Factors that support inter-organisational relationships to be sustained

Co-created rules and practices: This condition shows that if rules and practices were co-created at the mutual boundary of the relation, both parts are more willing to sustain the relation. This condition emphasises the importance of each part being involved in the process of co-creating meaning in the relation and also taking on a passive approach regarding potential dissonance. This process of co-creating rules and practices was identified to be played out in a *new institutional space*, which allowed for logics to be less defined. Within this institutional space, meanings could be decoupled from central narratives and re-interpreted into different symbolic and strategic ends. For example, companies could interpret stories from the FTO narratives in their marketing communication, adjusting them to their purposes and vice versa. Hence, if the collaboration is co-created, it increases both partners' willingness to engage in, and to sustain, the collaboration.

Tolerance of Dissonance: This condition refers to the acceptance of the other part's logic and dissonances when it comes to higher strategic goals. In order for inter-organisational relationships to be sustained, it is important that both organisations are tolerant towards each other's logic and accept that potential conflicts can arise regarding reaching key objectives that are not in accordance to their own logics. If the parties are not tolerant towards the dissonances that might occur, it can lead to dissatisfaction and conflicts.

Forming our theoretical framework

The use of this framework (see Figure 3 below) enables us to address the identified research gaps and our research question. The framework can be regarded as a two-part process.

• Part 1: Firstly, the theory of Pache and Santos (2013) will enable us to outline logics and to understand what goals, organisational form and professional identity members from each organisation will draw upon in the collaboration, mainly from their own core logic, but also investigate the presence of their counterpart's logic. Additionally, this framework will enable us to understand whether an earlier hybridisation of each part logic has occurred, which is a prerequisite in order to apply Nicholls and Huybrechts' (2016) theory. This analysis is illustrated in part 1 of Figure 3 below.

• Part 2: Secondly, by using Nicholls and Huybrechts' (2016) theory, we will be able to investigate the conditions that enable inter-organisational collaborations to be sustained, but in the context of NPOs and retailers. All taken together, we argue that in order to understand what enables these inter-organisational collaborations to be sustained, it is essential to investigate logics, acting as taken-for-granted social prescriptions that will guide the participants in the collaboration. Thus, by merging these two theories into our theoretical framework, our research question can be answered. This analysis is illustrated in part 2 of Figure 3.

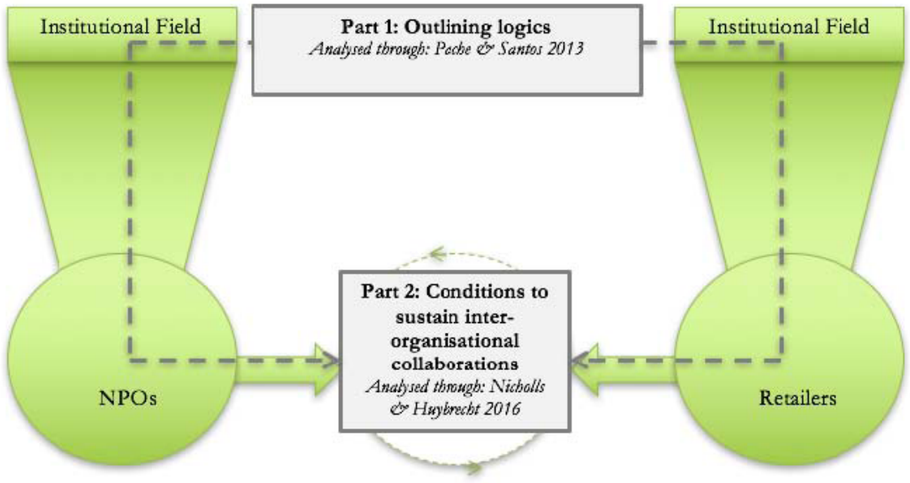

Figure 3: Theoretical framework

Chapter 3

The following section presents the methodological choices that we have made in this thesis to ensure the quality of the study. We will present the methodological fit, followed by the research design, the data collection, data analysis, and interpretation. Finally, the quality of the study will be evaluated.

Methodological Fit

To fulfil the purpose of this thesis and to answer the research question, we carefully considered some major methodological choices regarding ontological view, epistemological standpoint, research approach and research strategy. All of these methodological choices lay the foundation for the research strategy: a qualitative approach was deemed most suitable for this study. The methodological choices are explained below and then summarised in Table 3.

Ontological view

Ontology is divided into different philosophical ways of how social reality is perceived; namely, objectivism and constructivism (Gray, 2014; Bryman & Bell, 2011). Objectivism claims that the external reality can be viewed and perceived objectively (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007). On the contrary, constructivism believes that the human cognition creates reality, which means there is no single true objective reality (Mills & Birks, 2014). We have adopted constructionism as the ontological standpoint in the present thesis, as we perceive reality to be socially constructed rather than external and objective. This belief is based on the fact that we, as authors, were part of the research process, which inevitably means that subjective views and judgements were made. To answer our research question, we were obligated to subjectively judge the individual interpretations given by our interviewees. The views expressed by members within NPO and retail organisations regarding their adherence to different logics required use to make interpretations, which meant that a subjective approach was suitable for our thesis.

Epistemology standpoint

Epistemology is usually branched into positivism and interpretivism (Flick, 2009; Alvehus, 2014; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2007). Positivism assumes that reality is objective and external, whereas interpretivism perceives reality as subjective by its actors (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Alvehus, 2014). The epistemological standpoint in this thesis is primarily interpretivism, as we intend to explain individuals' interpretation of the social world; hence, we chose a subjective view over an objective one. This standpoint made it possible to understand a phenomenon through interpretation of the meaning people impose on it (Davidson & Patel, 1991). Connectedly, the goal of this study is not to reach one single and true reality, but rather to capture multiple realities – in one sense, subjective realities – perceived by the interviewed individuals from both NPOs and retailers regarding logics and collaborations. We argue that there is no single true reality in a collaboration, which means it is more interesting to interpret and contrast both sides of the realities as these are true to each individual.

Research approach

There are three different research approaches that can be applied: deductive, inductive or abductive (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Alvehus, 2014; Dubois & Gadde, 2002). In line with the above-mentioned approaches regarding constructionism and interpretivism, we deemed the abductive research approach as the most suitable in this thesis. Since we perceive the reality as socially constructed and we aim to explain individuals' interpretation of the social world, we were required to go back and forth between theory and empirical data in order to understand, interpret and develop it, in line with an abductive approach. Additionally, this approach was the best suited as we wished to explain a phenomenon in a certain context (Flick, 2009; Dubois & Gadde, 2002); namely, inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers, deriving from different institutional logics. We selected the abductive approach because it enabled us to investigate our research question in an explorative manner, within a currently under-researched area.

Research strategy

We selected a qualitative research strategy because it is in line with the methodological choices explained above (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In general, the present thesis focuses on subjective understanding and interpretation, rather than describing and explaining the area of research. Since the goal of the analysis was set to identify and discover patterns, rather than to test formal hypothesis, a qualitative approach was considered the most suitable in this thesis (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Edmondson & McManus, 2007). The fact that our area of research is under-explored means there is a need for a deeper understanding of what enables parties to sustain their relations, and this calls for a qualitative method (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Flick, 2009; Malhotra, 2013).

Overview of Methodology

The research methodology is summarised in Table 3 below.

Research Methodology	Application to this study
Ontological View	Constructionism
Epistemology Standpoint	Interpretivism
Research Approach	Abductive
Research Strategy	Qualitative

Table 3: Application of the research methodology

Research process

In an explorative manner, the starting point of this study was based on a phenomenon observed in reality, which was followed by theory-mapping relating to what was observed. Insights were found in theory regarding institutional theory, logics and inter-organisational collaborations. In order to gain additional insights of the observed phenomenon, we conducted two industry mappings and then conducted two pre-studies to explore the theories, from which we could further refine the theoretical framework. Later, the empirical data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with individuals working at NPOs and retailers, who were responsible for collaborations. In accordance with our abductive approach, insights from these interviews enabled refinement of the theoretical framework, which enabled us to choose a theoretical framework applicable to the research area. Overall, the research approach was not as structured as Figure 4 (below) indicates, as several of the steps occurred simultaneously. The gathered data was repeatedly interpreted and analysed, while new theories were added in accordance to the chosen research approach.

Figure 4: A simplified illustration of the research process

Research Design

Choice of multiple cases

One of the most frequently used approaches in qualitative research is that of case studies, which can either consist of single or multiple cases (Mills & Birks 2014; Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Yin, 2013). Because case studies are preferable when studying a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2013), this approach was appropriate in our context given that collaborations between NPOs and retailers have become more popular in Sweden during recent years. As these collaborations were observed to be widespread in Sweden, we found it suitable to investigate multiple cases in order to truly capture this phenomenon. A multiple-case study was also applicable in our thesis because we wished to contrast two different types of organisations (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Alvehus, 2014); that is, how interviewees from both NPOs and retailers interpret their different realities. Finally, as only a few people in each organisation are responsible for these relationships (in general only one to three persons), a multiple-case study was deemed the most suitable. A single-case study would not have allowed us to understand relationships, as only a limited number of employees are involved in these collaborations in each organisation. Instead, a multiple-case study enabled us to discover opinions, experiences and interpretations by as many individuals as possible working with these collaborations.

Preparatory work

We conducted two industry mappings in order to explore the current situation regarding collaborations between NPOs and retailers in the Swedish market. The first mapping focused on the Swedish Retailing industry, with the aim of investigating how prevalent these collaborations were in practice. The mapping was based on the latest issue of Vem är Vem i Detaljhandeln (2016), which lists the 40 largest retailers in Sweden according to turnover. The retail companies were investigated separately to identify whether they claimed (on their website) to work with any NPO. Seventy-five per cent of these companies did indeed claim to collaborate with NPOs, which shows that collaborations between NPOs and retailers are widespread in the Swedish retailing industry (see Appendix 1).

The second mapping focused on NPOs, with the aim of understanding whether they offered the possibility for retailers to engage in long-term relationships. This mapping was considered important to conduct because we wished to understand whether these collaborations (identified in the first mapping) went beyond single donations and could regarded as strategic collaborations. The mapping was based on the latest statistics regarding funds to NPOs, provided by Svensk Insamlingskontroll (2016), which shows the NPOs that received most donations from companies and foundations during 2015. After consulting Svensk Insamlingskontroll, we found that it was important to include donations from both companies and organisations, as some retailers donates money through their company, while others donate through a foundation. After this consultation, we ended up with a list of 14 NPOs, which were investigated separately to identify what types of collaborations they offer to retailers on their websites. This investigation showed that all the 14 NPOs have developed clear offers to attract companies to engage in long-term relations, reaching beyond a single donation (see Appendix 2).

Pre-study

After conducting the two industry mappings, we investigated industry reports as secondary data to further explore the fields of interest. From the insights gained so far, we formulated a preliminary research question that was explored in a pre-study involving interviews with employees from both sides of the collaboration. This approach enabled us to obtained a nuanced view from both involved parties. The purpose of these interviews was to receive further ideas and insights and to pre-test interview questions (Malhotra, 2013). From these interviews, we received insights by asking questions that focused on why and how these collaborations occur. Additionally, the interviewees articulated that organisational differences between NPOs and retailers are evident in a collaboration, and sometimes conflicting. Both sides also expressed an interest in understanding these collaborations further; more specifically, what enables the creation of long-term strategic relations to sustain. These insights were highly relevant to our continuous process and helped us to understand what was relevant to investigate further.

[2] The report for 2016 is expected to be done in June 2017, so it could not be used in this thesis.

Choice of industries

In this multiple-case study, we chose to investigate NPOs and retailers. This choice derived from insights gained from the industry mapping, which showed clear evidence of collaborations between NPOs and retailers as a widespread phenomenon in Sweden (see industry mappings in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). The decision to focus on NPOs with a social mission also came from these mappings, as many retailers supported such NPOs. We also considered this focus interesting to our subject, as the differences between these parties was not always clear-cut. For example, we observed child cancer being connected to a fast fashion retailer, or sexually abused children being linked to a food retailer. Further, these collaborations were also found to be particularly interesting as these organisations originally had fundamentally different goals and organisational forms. Retailers aim to sell goods and/or services to generate economic surplus, whereas the NPOs aims to address social needs. Thus, understanding how these differences could be aligned in long-term collaborations was considered relevant, both from a theoretical point of view, as it was found to contribute to research (see identified gaps in Figure 2), but also from a practical point of view, as the subject would generate insights to practitioners on how these collaborations can be sustained. Additionally, we found retailers to be of particular interest because they face challenges communicating and motivating their CSR efforts, as it can appear paradoxical from a sustainability point of view to advocate for consumption at the same time as claiming to work with sustainability.

Data collection

Interview sample

In this thesis, we reached out to 45 organisations, which resulted in an interview sample of 25 interviews with 20 organisations (see Appendix 3). Most of the interviews were held face-to-face, except for seven that were held through telephone due to geographical distances. The interviews ranged in duration from 35 to 75 minutes. We aimed to conduct a heterogeneous interview sample in order to provide more extensive insights and a faceted view of collaborations. With this intention in mind, retailers from different industry niches were contacted through email and telephone. We reached out to 25 retailers from our industry mapping, ending up with nine retailers within niches such as food, consumer electronics, sports, outdoor equipment, home improvement, interior design and furnishing. The 10th retailer was not part of the list, as we received this contact through one of the NPOs.

With regard to NPOs, we contacted 20 organisations, 10 of which agreed to be part of our study. We contacted the 14 NPOs from our second industry mapping, as these were the organisations that received most money from companies, making them relevant to our subject. We ended up with six positive responses but, since we intended to interview 10 NPOs, we had to contact organisations outside the list. Thus, we turned to the first industry mapping and contacted NPOs that had been identified to collaborate with retailers. We also intended to interview NPOs with different focuses within social missions, and we ended up with organisations working with education, abuse of children, children's rights, sick children, human rights, refugees and medical support.

To summarise, the main strength of our interview sample is that it gives us the opportunity to convey contrasting views between NPOs and retailers. The reason for conducting two interviews in some organisations was to gain insights from different perspectives within an organisation. However, as only a few people are responsible for these collaborations within each organisation, we quickly realised that additional information did not contribute to new insights. Due to this realised saturation of information, we decided to conduct no more than one interview within the same organisation.

Interview design and documentation

The data gathered in the main study was obtained through in-depth interviews with semi-structured questions, which is one of the most common ways of collecting qualitative data (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Mills & Birks, 2014; Flick, 2009; Alvehus, 2014). This implies we had prepared questions that were used as guidance during the interview, rather than used as a strict manuscript (ibid). This meant that we could, to some extent, deviate from the prepared questions to ask follow-up questions and to pick up on answers from the interviewee. This suited our study well, since our area of research was under-explored and in line with our explorative approach we wanted the interviewees to talk openly and freely about collaborations between NPOs and retailers. To overcome the problem with probing, connected to a semi-structured approach (Malhotra, 2013), we asked open-ended questions such as 'how' and 'why'.

All of the interviews had the same structure, which started by introducing the authors and the study. Then the structure of the interview was laid out and the questions were divided into five areas: (1) initial questions about the interviewee and their organisation; (2) questions regarding collaborations with retailers/NPOs; (3) questions regarding close collaborations; (4) questions concerning close collaborations with one specific retailer/NPO; and (5) questions centred on the interviewee's specific work position. The interview questions were not sent out to the interviewees beforehand as we wanted them to answer spontaneously. The interview guide can be found in Appendix 4. All interviewees were informed that we were recording the interview, that the study was going to be published for the public, and that they as individuals were anonymous in the study. Furthermore, it was important to assure the interviewees that we did not have any hidden agenda and that we did not intend to point out weaknesses of any organisation or collaboration. All interviews were then concluded with an open question if the interviewee wanted to add something; this was done to capture as complete a picture as possible around the topic.

Before analysing the data, we chose to transcribe all interview data (Bryman & Bell, 2011) as it helped us in the analysis process. This enabled us to give our full attention to the interviewee during the interviewee and ask relevant follow-up questions. It was also beneficial to listen to the recorded interviews during the process of transcription as we could pick up on things we did not notice during the interview. Because this thesis has an abductive approach, we interpreted the data between the interviews. Therefore, the interview questions changed slightly throughout the process as some aspects reached maturity and some were emphasised more, because we were simultaneously outlining the theoretical framework.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The pattern matching method developed by Yin (2013) was considered fitting to this thesis because it enabled us to continuously compare and match the emergent themes from our empirical data with theoretical patterns. Our analysis consisted of the following steps, beginning with a categorisation of our data into the different groups: NPOs and retailers. This was followed by an analysis of each transcribed interview in order to identify categories connected to our research question; the identified categories were then compared within the two groups. Finally, we made a comparison between the two groups and to theory. Thus, we investigated empirical data with and without theoretical lenses, which enabled us to gain insights and, later, to reach conclusions from this process. Hence, we choose to adopt Yin's (2013) method to improve the overall quality of our process. In the data analysis, both authors also interpreted the data individually before consulting each other to compare our findings, in order to find differences and similarities (Alvehus, 2014). As both authors processed the data, we were able to discuss the findings and ensure that we did not miss out any view that was given by the interviewees. This increased the chances of capturing all the different realities expressed by the parties in the collaboration.

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Quality of the Study

The most prevalent way of assessing business research is through reliability, replication and validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Alvehus, 2014; Pratt, 2009; Tracy, 2010). However, there has also been discussion among researchers about how to assess qualitative research, as these criteria mainly fit quantitative research (Flick, 2009; Alvehus, 2014; Mason, 1996). Therefore, some researchers, particularly Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) have suggested using alternative criteria – namely, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability – to evaluate the trustworthiness of qualitative research. We have chosen to use these criteria in order to evaluate the quality of this thesis..

Credibility

Credibility refers to how believable the findings are (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In the present thesis, we explain as precisely as possible how we analysed our results to increase the credibility of the study. All interviews were recorded and transcribed to minimise misinterpretations. Moreover, we also ensured good practice and trust-building throughout the interview process (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Flick, 2009); we did this by ensuring the anonymity of the interviewees and assuring them we had no hidden agenda, hence intended to depict their interpretation of the social world rather than pointing to weaknesses in the focal organisation. We also acted professionally during all stages of contact with the interviewees – in emails and in interview situations – in order to be perceived as trustworthy and dedicated to our work. All these aspects increase the credibility of the study.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the applicability of the study to other contexts, which is limited in a qualitative study because it is conducted in a certain context during a specific time (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, in this thesis we discuss the transferability with caution. In our thesis, the interviewees in depth depict their social reality within their specific context, which can be viewed as limited. However, in comparison with a single case study, a multiple-case study implies that we are able to make additional interpretations of the depicted reality from the interviewees (Alvehus, 2014). This notwithstanding, with the chosen research approach in mind, sacrifices regarding the study's transferability were unavoidable.

Dependability

Dependability refers to whether findings can be replicated at other times (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To increase the dependability, we have outlined in as much detail as possible all stages of the research process in the methodology of the thesis, implying careful explanations of the industry mappings, pre-studies, the interview sample, interview design and documentation (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Flick, 2009). Much of the documentation is found in the appendices, such as the industry mappings, the interview guide and interview sample that further outlines the research process. We also intended to explain the theoretical framework, methodology and assumptions as clearly as possible to increase the dependability. However, the fact that the interviewees are anonymous in this thesis reduces the dependability. This was a conscious choice, as we wanted the interviewees to speak openly during the interviews and we feel that anonymity was necessary to build the trustworthiness that was required in order for them to open up and give honest and credible answers.

Confirmability

Confirmability concerns the researcher's objectivity (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Flick, 2009). As we have chosen interpretivism as a standpoint, we do not aim to convey an objective view of the interviewed individuals' interpretation of the social world. Our belief is that, in a collaboration, it is not a single reality that is true; instead, we aim to interpret and contrast realities from individuals involved in these collaborations. Furthermore, with the constructionist approach undertaken, reality is viewed as socially constructed and the point of the analysis is for us, as researchers, to subjectively judge the individual interpretations given by our interviewees. Hence, the intention of this thesis was not to increase confirmability and to be objective, because to answer our research question we needed to interpret our transcribed interviews..

Chapter 4

This part will present the empirical findings from this qualitative study. We start by providing a background of the organisational fields, and then present the identified themes from the interviews that connect to our research question on how to sustain inter-organisational collaborations, both from the NPOs' and the retailers' point of view. Throughout the text, the themes are explained briefly and mainly captured in quotes that were considered to capture the essence of the interviews..

Part 1: Background of the Organisational Fields

The background of the organisational fields is presented below, starting with the NPOs and then the retailers.

NPOs and their institutional field

This part presents what the interviewees from the NPOs expressed regarding the following topics: mission, identification among organisational members, competitive climate, commercial environment and focus on numbers. Their answers will describe how the interviewed members from NPOs experience their organisational field.

Mission

The interviewees described that the main mission of an NPO is socially or humanitarian-oriented. NPOs also emphasise that secondary goals are often focused around financial measurements.

NPO 11: "An NPO often has two goals. The ultimate goal is object-contingent but the goals are often formulated as financial goals on short-, medium and long-term levels. When working to save the world, this is what we want to achieve [pause]. The operation is often measured in both financial terms and in programme or object terms. So, there is a duality in a NPO."

Identification among organisational members

Regarding identification, some of the interviewees explained they do not exclusively identify themselves as an organisation working with charity and social good. They also underscore the importance of being recognised as professionals.

NPO 7: "We do not regard ourselves as a non-profit organisation per se; we are a large international humanitarian organisation. So, I believe that is it crucial to interact with the companies in a way that assures them that we too are a professional organisation and that we share a common language, even though we as an organisation focus on completely different issues."

A competitive climate

Sveral interviewees conveyed that more and more NPOs are working together with companies. This was also described as an important way to broaden sources of income, as the organisational environment has become more competitive, according to the interviewed NPOs. Even though the competitiveness in the field has increased, several interviewees stated there is still a sense of collaboration and helping each other within the field.

*NPO 9: "If one looks at the field in its entirety, there is of course internal competition similar to other fields. We are all competing for the same pot of money, even though we would prefer to increase that pot jointly rather than compete for the existing pot. One does not meet a company and say to them: 'So you are collaborating with [NPO X, Y, Z]? We want you to collaborate with us instead'. Organisations within our field do not behave that way. This is not like the business wo*rld."

Commercial environment

Acording to many of the interviewees numerous employees with previous experience from businesses have started working for NPOs. Consequently, the organisational environment is considered to being more focused around commercial aspects. Connectedly, several of the interviewees explained they were part of strengthening the commercial focus in their organisation, due to their previous background from businesses within commercial fields.

NPO 12: "The general opinion is that the field hires more professionals who have experience from other fields within marketing, sales or communication then before, whereas previous employees worked here because they wanted to be a part of this field."

Focus on numbers

Many NPO interviewees stated that they have a core mission, which is superior and will not be compromised. They also have clear targets, goals and measurements that have to be reached within their organisations. Several also emphasised the importance of increasing revenues.

NPO 4: "We have our goals that we must reach, as well as the income we must generate and the number of children we must reach. Because of this, we are also conscious and cost-conscious, maybe even more so than companies. Then of course, we must also always focus on what is best for the children."

Some interviewees also articulated this clear focus on revenues and costs, partly because of the strict rules regarding their obligation to report costs and revenues within the field. Thus, due to these rules, NPOs must strictly control and report their revenues and costs.

Retailers and their institutional field

This part will present what the interviewees put across regarding following topics: mission, identification of organisation, external pressures of working with CSR, and benefits of working with strategic CSR projects. Their answers will describe how they experience their organisational field.

Mission

Most of the interviewees explained that generating profits and increase sales is their main aim.

R3: "We are quite honest about what we stand for. We make money and that is what all companies are supposed to do."

However, some of the interviewees do not recognise profit-generation as their only purpose. These interviewees painted a more complex picture, emphasising that retailer's purpose also involves public good and social welfare.

R2: "Obviously this is a cost. We do not earn any money by doing this [collaborations with NPOs]. We are doing this because we want to; it comes from our hearts."

Identification of organisation

In terms of how the organisations identify themselves, retailers expressed a desire to be recognised as a "good company" and not simply a profit-generating business. They also stated that they feel obliged to work with CSR matters in Sweden today

R2: "I think you have to work with sustainability issues in Sweden today to be able to survive in a good way. The big companies have got it in them. They want to work with it because they want to be a good company. You want to help together."

External pressures of working with CSR

As stated above, retailers consider working with CSR to be a necessity because of external pressures. Our interviewees identified several such external pressures, including laws, customers, employees and competitors.

R8: "We are a listed company, which means we are obliged to issue a quarterly report and annual report on how we are doing financially. Legislation obliges us to issue a sustainability report."

R9: "Eventually, there will be pressure coming from the outside, from the consumer. I do not know if companies are actually good or if they are doing what they have to in order to sell. I believe there is pressure coming from the consumer for companies to behave."

R10: "I think young students are starting to question their employers more and more, and not about what salary you have but rather about the purpose of the company. That is what makes one flourish and perform, and that is why people engage."

Benefits of working with strategic CSR-projects

Retailers are not only driven by external pressures, as many of the interviewees expressed. Instead, retailers have started to recognise the benefits of engaging in these collaborations and have therefore implemented these initiatives on a strategic level.

R10: "From being guided by the fact that a customer may make a claim, or that the law requires something, authorities making demands, to understanding that one has to work with social sustainability for the sake of profitability. This is a big change I am seeing; it is serious and it is real."

Many interviewees also described that retailers nowadays strive to engage in strategic collaborations, not simply in one-time transactions.

Part 2: How to Sustain Inter-Organisational Collaborations

This part will present identified themes on how inter-organisational collaborations can be sustained from both parties' points of view. Firstly, the NPOs will be presented, followed by the retailers.

Themes of NPOs	Themes of Retailers
Connection to core business	Connection to core business, part of a strategy
Organisational engagement	Organisational engagement
Mutual efforts in establishing collaboration practices	Mutual efforts to establish collaboration practices
Mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses	Mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses
Mutual gains of collaborating	Ambition to engage in a long-term collaboration
Ambition to engage in a long-term collaboration	Being transparent and having faith in the partner

Table 4: Summary of NPOs and retailers view on how to sustain inter-organisational collaborations

NPOs' views on how to sustain inter-organisational collaborations

From our interviews, we could identify common themes regarding NPO's view on our research question of how the inter-organisational relationship with retailers can be sustained on a relationship level. The identified themes are: connection to core business, organisational engagement, mutual efforts in setting collaboration practises, mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses, mutual gains of collaborating, and ambition to engage in a long-term collaboration.

Connection to core business

Many of the NPOs state they believe it is essential to connect the collaboration to the retailer's core business in order to sustain the relation. They expressed that it is very important for the activities in the collaboration to become a meaningful part of the retailer's business and for the whole retail organisation to be involved in the collaboration.

NPO 7: "There are many companies that also actively work that way to anchor it with their employees, to work from an employer branding perspective. You want employees to feel proud and to be part of the core values. It is important for us to anchor it in the organisation."

Some NPOs also mention the importance of shared values with the retailer in order for the collaboration to work; they regard it as a prerequisite to create sustainable strategic collaborations.

Organisational engagement

Furthermore, NPOs experience engagement from retailers as a vital factor in sustaining the relationship. The following quote captures the engagement that the NPOs experience in their long-term relationships with retailers.

NPO 2: "Then you notice the personal involvement in conversations with the individual or the manager. There is an increase in people who want to work voluntarily. Almost every company says: 'Our staff is so committed and how can they help?' That is when you notice that there really is genuine commitment, not just giving away a percentage of the revenue from the product or increasing sales; they are simply very interested in the issue."

Mutual efforts in setting collaboration practises

The majority of the interviewees conveyed that collaborations are better sustained if both parties take part in setting practices. They explained that it is largely about finding synergies between the organisations and setting common expectations. The initial phase involves finding these common grounds and that both could come up with ideas regarding practices.

NPO 14: "You sit down and discuss and then you work together based on common interests, core issues."

Even though NPOs express that many of the activities are set together with the retailer, they also emphasise that they often adjust to the retailers' demands to maintain the collaboration. Furthermore, NPOs state that they know better regarding practices concerning their core mission, such as what projects should be supported and what to focus on in the collaboration. Regarding these matters, the NPO usually controls the activity in detail and what actions to take.

Retailers sometimes request certain practises that NPOs have difficulty meeting. Examples include voluntary work and delivering back numbers and marketing material to the retailer.

NPO 3: "A challenge is that it is difficult to understand how different it may be in rural areas, such as Uganda. For example, the retailers might not get the promised images on time. Sometimes we do promise them something, such as a nice picture with a girl at a farm, but when you send them back the actual picture the girl might carry the goat in a wrong way. It can possibly happen. Then you need to explain it to them [the retailer]."

Mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses

NPOs also stress the importance of understanding and accepting each other's organisational limitations to sustain the relationship. It can be challenging to make the retailers understand the NPOs' limitations in terms of resources; however, in a long-term relationship they usually overcome this issue by having a deep understanding of one another. On the other hand, some NPOs expressed a contradictory view that this acceptance towards each other does not always exist.

NPO 3: "I often think that they have a lack of understanding and that they also are a bit naïve. When it comes to a small amount of money and they say that it should be used for school benches, a logo on the benches and also feedback, then we need to say: 'wait a minute', that will cost us more. Therefore, I sometimes feel that companies are a little bit naïve. It happens sometimes that we need to say no and we need to explain that we cannot do it because we cannot achieve it in a successful way."

Mutual gains of collaborating

NPOs experience that both parties gain by collaborating with each other, which they put across as important for sustaining the relationship. The mutual gains can be found on many different levels.

NPO 1: "There can be a lot of similarities in at least a few goals. The primary goal for a non-profit organisation can correspond with the secondary goal for a retailer. So, I definitely think that is possible to find similar goals."

More specifically, many NPOs state they gain economically by collaborating with retailers. They also described that collaboration with retailers enables them to reach out to a larger number of people than they could have accomplished by themselves. Furthermore, another gain of collaborating is the expertise that the NPO transfers to the retailer in certain areas.

Ambition to engage in a long-term collaboration

Finally, interviewees from NPOs feel that it is crucial for retailers to recognise the benefits of engaging in a long-term collaboration to sustain the relationship. For example, they expressed that it is costly to invest time and commitment to new partnerships and that establishing a close relationship takes a long time.

NPO 2: "If you want to work with large companies, customers need time to understand why companies are doing this and which matters are important. However, the employees must also perceive it as sustainable in the long run. We cannot support [NPO X] one day and the next day [NPO Y] and then [NPO Z].
Then, the employees wonder 'Why are you changing all the time?' It takes time for people to understand what the organisation actually does."

Retailers' view on how to sustain inter-organisational collaborations

We now present the common themes regarding retailers' views of our research question. These themes are: connection to core business, part of a strategy, organisational engagement, mutual efforts in setting collaboration practices, mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses, mutual gains of collaborating, and being transparent and having faith in the partner.

Connection to core business, part of a strategy

Firstly, the majority of the retailers stressed the importance of connecting the collaboration to their core business in order to sustain the relationship. They provided various examples of how these links can be achieved: through mutual values, target groups and country of production. The interviewed retailers feel that a relationship is easier to sustain if the collaboration is part of a core business and CSR-strategy. Some retailers convey the importance of making strategic choices regarding who to collaborate with and what projects to support, since they cannot support all social organisations.

R4: "Our philosophy is that you do not collaborate with many small projects, send some here and there. We view this as a part of the CSR work in the sense that we want to make it a real collaboration that will sustain in the long run."

Organisational engagement

The majority of the retailers mentioned organisational engagement as a motivating factor to sustain the relationship with NPOs. They said that it is important to collaborate with NPOs to satisfy employees and make them proud of their workplace, where social responsibility becomes an important part. Some also articulated that collaboration is an important part of attracting talent in their employer branding strategies.

R5: "We must create internal pride and activation in the projects. All our employees work half a day once a year in the activities of our NPO partner, which we think is amazing. The response is great: amazing employee surveys and employer's Net Promoter Score. So, internal pride is why we do this [collaborate deeply with NPOs]."

At a management and board level, engagement and support for these projects is essential in order to sustain the relationship. The importance of CSR initiatives was pointed out on this level; they must be motivated, primarily by numbers, to justify their existence. Additionally, some interviewees stated an even stronger view that emphasised the importance of return on investment in CSR initiatives.

Mutual efforts in setting collaboration practises

Retailers articulated that the collaborations involve a formal contract with certain requirements and rules that must be negotiated in the initial phase of the collaboration. They say that both parties will have demands and expectations that they are obligated to meet in order to create a close collaboration. Some retailers uttered the view that both are part of setting practices within the collaboration. This is an on-going discussion driven by both parts about which activities and practices to perform.

Some retailers articulated a partly conflicting view that activities related to the collaboration were not always driven by both parts due to the different areas of expertise and access to internal resources. The retailers expressed that they are responding to practices within their expertise, such as creating marketing campaigns, because they possess the internal resources and competences to execute it. Several retailers experienced that NPOs mainly pushed ideas, but that they as retailers often oversee the execution.

R7: "The [NPOs] may be good at coming up with ideas, but when it comes to execution, we do almost 90 per cent of the work in a project, such as the exposure, communication, etc. So, even though [our NPO partner] has a high service level and wants to help, we want them to carry out the work a bit more. But now we know from doing a couple of things that this is not how it will be. It has nothing to do with their attitude; they have goodwill, but they have no experience

Mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses

Retailers communicate understanding and acceptance of the NPO's business. Many of the interviewed retailers experience that there are differences between NPOs and retailers; for example, they claim that NPOs need more time to finish a particular task in comparison to the retailer. Even though many retailers accept the experienced differences between their organisations and NPOs, this does not apply to all the interviewed retailers:

R5: "And the greatest challenge is that I experience NPOs as very conservative. Innovation is not a term they work with. No NPO has made it 2.0 and we are not progressive together either. The question we get from NPOs is only: 'Can we get some money for this?' Not how to develop the collaboration, which is not sustainable in the long run."

Mutual gains of collaborating

The majority of the retailers stated that both parties gain mutual benefits from collaborating with one another, which they put across as an important part of sustaining the relationship. Some emphasise that mutual gains can be achieved through the synergies that can be reached by collaborating.

R3: "We understand each other more and more. An NPO can go out and ask for new money whenever they want. But a retailer cannot send an email and say, 'it was a bad week last week, could you give us some money?' Because nobody will give us money. There, however, one begins to understand that the symbiosis between the organisations and how to build on it in collaboration."

Many retailers mention aspects they gain from collaborating, such as monetary resources, recognition from customer and employees, knowledge, expertise, legitimacy and credibility. Even though some retailers said that they rather would spend money on their internal sustainability efforts than engaging in collaboration, retailers realise they need NPOs to build external trust in their sustainability work.

R6: "If you want to talk about something you have done well, then you cannot talk about the internal work you do. You have to talk about something external, and then it becomes this 'fluffy stuff' [collaborations]. If it was not expected by the customers, we would probably work more with sustainability internally."

Being transparent and having faith in the partner

Some retailers stated that, in order to create a long-term collaboration, it is crucial that NPOs are transparent in terms of showing how much of the donated money is dedicated to the social mission. Retailers also expressed the importance of measuring the outcomes of this collaboration for internal and external motivation.

R8: "It is important that both have expectations on each other and transparency of how they spend the money, what value it gains. What if it is discovered that the money ends up in the wrong pockets? That they do not end up where they should have? Internally, for us, it is important that we can measure what we gain from this. Have we contributed to the society with this work?"

Chapter 5

The analysis will compare our empirics with the chosen theoretical framework. The framework is divided into two parts. Firstly, the theory by Pache and Santos (2013) will be used to outline competing logics. Secondly, the theory by Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016) will be used to investigate the conditions that enable inter-organisational collaborations to be sustained. This analysis will contribute with an understanding of our research question: "What enables NPOs and retailers to sustain inter-organisational collaborations in strategic CSR-projects, despite conflicting institutional logics?"

Part 1: Outlining Logics

This analysis will identify and outline the competing logics within the investigated organisations, through the lenses of employees within NPO and retail organisations. The analysis conveys how members from the different organisations, NPOs and retailers experience the competing logics and demands within their organisations and fields.

NPOs

This part focuses on NPOs, aiming to analyse goals, organisational form, and professional legitimacy – aspects that are used to outline logics. We also present a short summary with concluding insights.

Goal

Theory explains that the social welfare logic has one clear goal, which is socially oriented. Our empirical findings clearly demonstrate that this social welfare goal is the ultimate within NPOs. At the same time, the findings also indicate an increased evidence of commercial goals within NPOs, such as market penetration, growth and attracting new businesses. Theory states that different logics have been able to exist in an organisation by being preserved by certain members through their previous sectorial experience. Thus, the findings support that members within NPOs with previous sectorial experience from commercial fields, are part of strengthening the market logic within their organisations. However, even though empirics show an increased emphasis on financial goals within NPOs, this change is driven by a desire to generate more money to their social missions. Finally, the findings indicate a more competitive climate and commercial environment within the sector, but still with a sense of group think connected to the core social welfare logic."

Organisational Form

Theory states that, for the non-profit organisational form, the economic surplus should be returned to the organisation in order to fulfil the social goal. In this aspect, our empirical findings showed that the interviewees clearly adhered to their core logic, following the obligations set by their organisational form. Relatedly, the findings indicate that it would not be perceived as legitimate for NPOs to use their economic surplus for something other than the social goal. Findings suggest that members within NPOs are extremely aware of costs and that donated money goes towards fulfilling the social mission. Further, empirics imply that some members within NPOs find it important that their organisations are regarded as professional and business-like and not only as charity organisations that just work towards social missions.

Professional Legitimacy

According to the social welfare logic, professional legitimacy is achieved in the progression and work towards the social goal. Our empirics indicate that NPOs are legitimate in matters connected to their social mission. However, findings are ambiguous if NPOs can be seen as legitimate in the commercial logic, as some NPOs recognised that retailers were more suited to perform a task within their area of expertise. Findings imply that NPOs recognise the importance of being perceived as professionals and experts within their areas. Moreover, the empirics show that there is a mutual understanding among NPOs about what matters they can gain their legitimacy from and not, without any indications of changing focus. In conclusion, NPOs both understand and build upon their legitimacy connected to their core social welfare logic.

To conclude, the empirical findings highlight that NPOs mainly draw upon their core social welfare logic, even if some evidence of the commercial logic was recognized in the above aspects. Further, the empirical findings show that NPOs are obligated to behave in accordance with their organisational form and that members recognize their professional legitimacy within social missions. In conclusion, this analysis indicates that NPOs mainly draw upon their core social welfare logic in a collaboration.

Retailers

This part focuses on retailers, with the aim of analysing the goals, organisational form, and professional legitimacy aspects used to outline logics.

Goal

Shifting to the retailers' perspective, theory proposes the commercial logic builds on a distinct goal, which is to *sell products and services on the market to produce an economic surplus that can ultimately be legitimately appropriated by owners*. Empirical findings clearly show that retailers are anchored in the goals of their core commercial logic. According to theory, the commercial logic also suggests that retailers address social needs, as these efforts are assumed to generate profit to grant goals. However, part of our empirics suggests that CSR projects are driven by heart, and not only by financial rewards. This indicates that the retailers have modified their market logic as they place less emphasis on profit-making goals. On the other hand, some findings suggest that retailers still emphasise return on investment from these projects, indicating that they have not truly modified their core market logic. Thus, one can question whether retailers have truly begun to draw upon the social welfare logic or if they are in line with theory. One could also question whether retailers have started to recognise benefits of engaging in social needs in line with their core market logic. However, the findings still highlight that retailers' ultimate goals are connected to the commercial logic and are superior to social welfare goals.

Organisational Form

Theory states that the for-profit organisational form gives shareholders control over operations and goals in order to allocate resources where they generate highest financial return. According to our empirics, the motivation to work with CSR projects derives from both internal and external pressures, through factors such as competition, employees and customers. Retailers listed on the stock market have an obligation to report their sustainability efforts, which forces them to work with CSR. Additionally, empirics shows that retailers believe that working with these matters can enhance business and profitability in indirect ways, such as by attracting top professionals. Hence, findings show that several retailers have incorporated CSR in their strategies without changing their organisational form. Consequently, while some retailers still regard themselves as for-profit organisations, they emphasise a desire to be recognised as a "good company".

Professional Legitimacy

According to theory, professional legitimacy is connected to technical and managerial expertise. Empirics show that retailers gain legitimacy in accordance with commercial logic but also partly through the social welfare logic. Retailers regard sustainability work as a hygiene factor to stay legitimate in today's society; thus, legitimacy for a retailer is partly driven by their contribution to social matters, which is in line with the social welfare logic. However, findings indicate that retailers do not truly have legitimacy working with these issues, which pushes them to partner with NPOs.

To conclude, the empirical findings highlight that retailers draw upon their core social welfare logic, as there are only few indications of adherence of the social welfare logic in above aspects. Further, the empirical findings shows that retailers are obliged to behave in accordance with their organisational form as the findings highlight the importance of generating return to shareholders. In conclusion, this analysis indicates that retailers will mainly draw upon their core commercial logic in a collaboratio

Part 2: Condition Framework

Having outlined the logics and reached an overall understanding regarding what logics each part will be guided by in the collaboration, we now move to the second part of the analysis. Here we will apply theory of Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016) to investigate the conditions that enable inter-organisational collaborations to be sustained. Their theory is used to compare and connect the empirical findings and all the themes identified in this study.

Factors enabling logics to align cross inter-organisational relationships

This part outlines the two factors that enable logics to align in a cross inter-organisational relationship: hybrid logics and boundary-spanning discourses.

Hybrid Logics

According to Nicholls and Huybrechts' (2016) theory, an earlier hybridisation of each part's logic is a prerequisite for a relationship to be sustained and for a dynamic relationship to emerge, as it will enable logics to align. The theory also emphasises that the hybridisation of logics should be of importance to the specific partnership. As elaborated in the first part of the analysis, both NPOs and retailers mainly draw upon their core logic, showing some recognition of the counterpart's logic. Therefore, the empirical findings are somewhat ambiguous regarding whether an earlier hybridisation of each parts logic has occurred. Analysing the NPOs, some findings indicate that hybridisation towards a commercial-driven social welfare logic has occurred as commercial objectives have become increasingly evident within NPOs. Specifically, this increased commercial thinking has been relevant in these relationships, as it has enabled NPOs to better understand and meet the retailer's needs. Findings show that some people were hired simply to contribute with the commercial perspective within their organisations in order to deliver value in these relations. However, findings also demonstrate somewhat contradictory results, which indicate that their core logic has not truly been hybridised. For example, the findings show that the underlying motivation to implement commercial goals is to ultimately gather more money to achieve the social mission. However, regardless of whether a hybridisation has occurred or not, the findings show that the increased adoption of commercial goals and practices has enabled NPOs to improve and maintain these collaborations.

Analysing retailers, the empirical findings are ambiguous and not completely in line with theory. The empirics from our study indicate that retailers draw upon their core social welfare logic, as there are only few indications of adherence of the social welfare logic, which makes it highly doubtful whether a retailer's core logic truly has been hybridised. To specify, findings are unclear whether retailers have begun to adhere to a different logic (the social welfare logic) or if they have begun to recognise benefits of engaging in these relations in line with their core market logic (such as expected long-term returns, pleasing customers, etc.). Regardless of whether a hybridisation of logics has occurred, some results indicate that this somewhat increased focus on social welfare goals has still has been relevant in these collaborations. For example, findings show that retailer's engagement in these collaborations has increased due to factors such as increased support from shareholders. Findings also show that these collaborations are part of a broader long-term CSR-strategy, out of which the retailers involved components of the welfare logic in their discourses. Additionally, the findings demonstrate that several retailers do want to engage in strategic long-term relationships and not simply donate money. All of these aspects have increased the engagement in these relations, and ultimately increased the likelihood of sustaining these relations.

To conclude, because findings are ambiguous regarding whether an earlier hybridisation has occurred in each part's logic (especially in the case of retailers), it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions about whether this is a requirement for sustaining relations between NPOs and retailers. Regardless, empirics show that factors such as increased engagement from retailers and an increased adoption of commercial goals and practices by NPOs have improved the chance of creating sustainable strategic collaborations.

Boundary Spanning Discourses

The second factor concerns boundary spanning discourses. According to Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016), a boundary spanning discourse is a mutual benefit that can be recognised from both parts logics. Our findings show that both partners gain from collaborating with each other. There are several mutual gains with these collaborations that are recognised by both parts, enabling boundaries to span between the logics in the collaboration. Firstly, addressing retailers, empirics shows that they gain trustworthiness in social matters, which strengthens their legitimacy towards customers. Additionally, by collaborating with NPOs, retailers can communicate and engage employees, which creates meaning for employees within their organisations. Findings also show that retailers recognise that they can gain knowledge about how to work with social responsibility and they learn from the NPO's expertise in this area. Secondly, analysing the NPOs, they recognise benefits such as increased revenues and economic viability. Lastly, the economic aspect is by far the most important benefit derived from collaborating with retailers in strategic CSR projects. By collecting additional money, the NPO can fulfil their socially oriented mission. Empirical findings also show that collaborations with retailers enable NPOs to reach out to a larger amount of people using the retailer's communication channels. This makes it easier for NPOs to spread their mission to potential customers.

Boundary-spanning discourses are widely recognised in these collaborations, as goals can be aligned in many aspects; retailers spend a great deal of money on these collaborations, which the NPOs can use in projects to fulfil their mission. By spending these sums of money, the retailer reaches out to customers and employees with their efforts regarding social responsibility and they gain legitimacy and trustworthiness from the NPO.

To conclude, collaborating creates a win-win situation for both parties, which can be recognized from both parts' logics, which ultimately spans the boundary between NPOs and retailers.

Factors giving support to sustain inter-organisational relationships

This part outlines the two factors that give support to sustain inter-organisational relationships between NPOs and retailers by presenting co-created rules and practices at their common boundary and tolerance of dissonance.

Co-created rules and practises at their common boundary

This condition shows that if rules and practices are co-created at the mutual boundary of the relation (explained above), both parties are more willing to sustain the relation. This emphasises the importance of both parties – the retailer and the NPO – being involved in the process of creating meaning in the relation, but also takes a passive approach in case of dissonance in the relation. According to Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016), this process of common setting of rules and practices played out in a new institutional space, which allowed for logics to be less determined and meanings to be decoupled from central narratives, re-interpreted into different symbolic and strategic ends.

The empirical findings show that the NPOs are generally part of creating meaning in the relation, partly by setting certain written rules in a contract, as a prerequisite for engaging in a relation. These rules act as insurance for the NPOs that the retailers will act ethically in accordance with the NPOs' social welfare logic. Thus, the NPOs decouple meaning from these contracts, ensuring both internally and externally that their social welfare logic will not compromised. The empirics also show that the NPOs engaged in relations and practices that truly resonated with their interests at the mutual boundaries of the relation, such as gaining revenues and spreading their brand. Thus, the collaboration enabled NPOs to act in a new institutional space, which allowed for logics to be less determined, as the collaboration allowed them to draw upon the market logics, but still motivate practices internally in line with their social welfare logic. For example, NPOs could, through the retailer in a collaboration, make marketing campaigns and advertise their mission. This is much harder for NPOs to do by themselves, as organisational form limits their ability to spend a lot of money on marketing, as revenues should go back to their social mission. Thus, these relations enabled NPOs to align their social welfare logic with central elements of the market logic.

Analysing the interviewed retailers, the empirics shows that different retailers decoupled narratives from NPOs and re-interpreted meaning to serve their strategic ends. For example, depending on what strategic goal the retailer had set for the collaboration, their organisation interpreted different meanings of the collaborations. The findings show that retailers wished to connect their practices to their core business, to attribute meaning and motivation behind the collaboration. Thus, the retailers engaged in what truly resonated with their interests regarding social responsibility practises, which is in line with theory. Likewise, retailers' reporting and communication of CSR goals enabled them to align their core logic with central elements of the social welfare logic. The empirics also show that retailers consciously used narrative material (which was approved by the NPOs) in their communication (internally and/or externally) to frame their market logic. Finally, the empirics demonstrated that symbolic meaning was extracted from the collaboration, as the collaboration acted as a symbol both internally and externally, of them being a "good company". Further, even if NPOs set rules and contracts for these collaborations, these rules were still flexible enough to be re-interpreted in the collaborations in accordance to each part's own hybrid logic. However, our empirics also indicate a more critical view as retailers expressed that they required certain demands, such as numbers and pictures, in order to be able to transfer meaning into their organisations. Thus, this aspect occasionally hinders retailers in their process of creating meaning in the relation.

To conclude, rules and practices are largely co-created between NPOs and retailers and, in accordance with theory, the findings demonstrate that these collaborations enable the creation of new institutional space in which logics are more fluent and where the parties can draw upon each other's logics.

Tolerance of Dissonance

Nicholls and Huybrechts' (2016) theory states that, in order for inter-organisational relationships to be sustained, both organisations in a collaboration must be tolerant towards disagreements and disputes concerning strategic goals connected to their specific logic. The findings in this study show that because NPOs have employed people with backgrounds from the corporate world, these employees were tolerant towards retailers, as they understood their demands and businesses. Therefore, in this sense, the tolerance of dissonance can be considered high from NPOs as they understand the counterpart well. Furthermore, empirical findings demonstrate that many NPOs even strive for and are willing to meet the retailer's demands in many concerns.

Our findings show that retailers are somewhat accepting of NPOs because they know and accept what to expect from their counterpart in a collaboration. For example, they understand and accept NPOs' limitations in terms of how much work they can carry out. However, some findings contradict this view, as not all retailers found NPOs to be progressive enough in the collaboration because they could not always meet their demands. The empirical findings show that the NPOs recognised this frustration, stating that retailers did not have a deep understanding and acceptance of their organisational form and their limitations. Thus, the findings from NPOs emphasised the need to explain and educate retailers about the NPOs' organisations and social missions. However, this was more common in the beginning of a collaboration.

To conclude, even if findings show that there are times of dissonance that derive from each part's different logics, findings from both NPOs and retailers show that tolerance increases as relationships evolve. Hence, the findings show that, over time, a greater understanding and tolerance towards each other is developed, enabling NPOs and retailers to sustain their collaborations.

These four aspects – hybrid logics, boundary spanning discourses, co-created rules and practices, and tolerance of dissonance – will be elaborated on further in the next chapter

Chapter 6

In this part, we discuss our findings and present our conclusion.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis shows that both NPOs and retailers are strongly anchored in their core logic and organisational form and would not sacrifice their own ultimate goal in favour of the counterpart's in a collaboration. Insights from part 1 of the analysis show that NPOs will never adhere completely to, or change to the commercial logic, and that the retailer will never adhere completely to the social welfare logic. For example, NPOs will not start selling goods or services in the same way as for-profit organisations. Similarly, retailers will not begin to address social needs as their primary goal. However, part 2 of the analysis shows that, by collaborating, NPOs and retailers can keep their core logic but at the same draw upon the counterparts' logic, enabling them to handle the increased demands derived from their institutional fields.

Further, by looking beneath the surface of these traditional logics and organisational forms, we argue that synergies between the organisations and their different logics can be found when realities begin to blur. Specifically, the NPO's primary goal can correspond to the retailer's secondary goal, and vice versa. If the collaborative partners can find these common goals, in line with both core logics, it enables the collaboration to be sustained. Finding these synergies in a collaboration enables both organisations to draw upon the counterpart's logic and engage in practices that they could not have proceeded with on their own. For example, a NPO can, through collaboration, pursue aggressive marketing activities through the retailer's channels. These marketing activities cannot be pursued by the NPO alone, since their core logic prevents them from spending such sums of money on marketing as it is not perceived as legitimate; the environment expects that the money should be dedicated to their social mission. For retailers, on the other hand, the collaboration enables them to ask for money to pursue social projects through the NPO. It would not be possible for either side to perform these activities without the other, due to their limitations of their core logic and organisational form. Hence, retailers and NPOs have created an institutional space, a space where logics are able to co-exist fluently and where both parts can benefit and draw upon each other's differences, enabling collaborations to be sustained.

Conclusion

The creation of an *institutional space* enables inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers to be sustained, despite different institutional logics.

There are some factors that could facilitate the creation of this institutional space; these are identified in the empirics we presented in chapter 4. While not all of these factors are required to create this space, they were recognised as important to facilitate the emergence of it. The conclusion and these factors are also summarised in Figure 5 below. Hence, the persistence of these collaborations and the creation of an institutional space will be eased by the following seven factors:

1. Connection to core business: By connecting the CSR project to the retailer's core business – for example, by making it a part of the CSR strategy – it will become a meaningful part of the retailer's business.

2. Organisational engagement: Engagement from both parties, notably from the retailer as it has the financial resources.

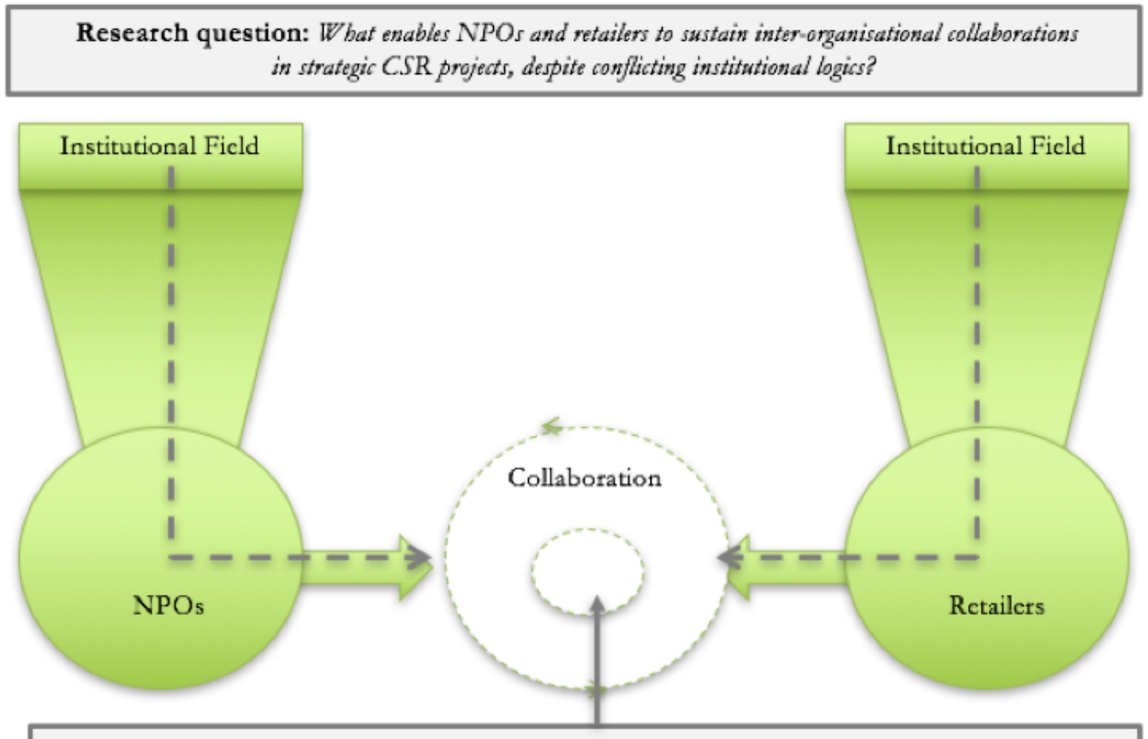
3. Mutual efforts in setting collaboration strategies: Both partners should take part in setting the collaboration practices, goals and meaning.

4. Mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's businesses: It is important that both partners understand and accept each other's differences and limitations.

5. Mutual gains of collaborating: Creating win-win situations is important for these collaborations.

6. Ambition to engage in a long-term collaboration: It is important that retailers are motivated to engage in a long-term relationship as they are required to contribute many of the resources in these collaborations (such as money, human resources).

7. Being transparent and having faith in each other: It is crucial that NPOs are transparent by showing how much of the donated money is dedicated to the social mission, in order to build trust in these relations and enable retailers to decouple meaning.



Chapter 7

This part will address the research question and present the theoretical and practical contribution of our study, followed by limitations and future studies.

Addressing the Research Question

The purpose of this thesis was to address the identified research gaps in two theoretical areas: institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations. To address this purpose, the following research question was developed:

What enables NPOs and retailers to sustain inter-organisational collaborations in strategic CSR projects, despite conflicting institutional logics

The theoretical and empirical findings and analysis lay the foundation for answering the research question. The main conclusion is that the creation of an institutional space enables inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers to be sustained, despite different institutional logics.

Theoretical Contribution

This thesis has addressed three theoretical research gaps; hence, this thesis has three main theoretical contributions.

Firstly, in institutional logics, less attention has been devoted to conflicting logics between organisations from different fields. We address this gap by shedding light on conflicting logics between two organisations from different fields: NPOs and retailers.

Secondly, in the topic of inter-organisational collaborations, there is a lack of studies investigating how collaborations between organisations from different institutional fields can be sustained, especially between NPOs and retailers. We address this gap by suggesting seven factors that facilitates inter-organisational collaborations to be sustained between two organisations from different fields; namely, NPOs and retailers.

Thirdly, there is a lack of theory explaining the persistence of these collaborations in the light of conflicting logics. We address this gap by connecting the two theoretical areas: institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations.

Practical Contribution

This thesis makes two main practical contributions.

Firstly, the conducted industry mappings contribute to practitioners by showing that collaborations between retailers and NPOs are a widespread phenomenon in the Swedish market. Additionally, the mappings illustrate that NPOs have developed clear offers to attract companies to engage in long-term relations, reaching beyond a single donation.

Secondly, our findings are highly relevant to managers engaged in collaborations between retailers and NPOs since we recommend the creation of an institutional space that enables the inter-organisational relationship to be sustained despite differences in institutional logics. We suggest seven factors that ease the creation of this institutional space and, hence, how NPOs and retailers can create strategic collaborations that persist over time. This is relevant to practitioners as the interviewees in our pre-study expressed an interest in and need to understand what enables the creation of long-term strategic collaborations. Long-term relationships are also valuable economically, which benefits both parties. Lastly, these relationships between NPOs and retailers are particularly important with regard to social responsibility, which makes the practical contribution from this study even more important.

Limitations

This study has certain limitations. The study is not mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, which means that there are additional factors that could sustain relationships between NPOs and retailers. The results depict individuals' experiences of the context they are in, which means they are not representable of all NPOs and retailers collaborating in CSR projects. Since the study is exploratory in nature, the findings may not be applicable in other industries than retailers and NPOs. Additionally, the study was conducted in Sweden and the results may not be applicable to collaborations between NPOs and retailers outside of Sweden. It is important to note that the findings do not describe collaborations overall, but collaborations in strategic CSR projects between retailers and NPOs.

Future Research

There are several avenues for future studies in this research area. To start with, a similar study could be conducted in other geographical areas, since collaborations between retailers and NPOs are not limited to the Swedish context. It would also be interesting to broaden the knowledge for collaborations in strategic CSR projects by studying additional fields and organisations. Another interesting perspective that future studies could develop is to investigate logics beyond the commercial and social welfare logic in collaborations between two organisations.

Chapter 8

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Chapter 9

Appendix 1: Industry Mapping 1
Collaborations between Swedish NPOs and retailers

This table illustrates that 30 (75 per cent) of the 40 largest retailers in Sweden (in terms of turnover) are collaborating with NPOs in CSR projects.

RETAIL COMPANY sorted by size		Examples of COLLABORATION PARTNERS
1.	ICA Sweden	Röda Korset, Cancerfonden, Childhood, Frälsningsarmén
2.	Coop	VI-Skogen, We Effect, Bistånd på Köpet, Matmissionen
3.	Axfood (Willys, Hemköp, Tempo, Handlarn)	Rädda Barnen, CSR Sweden, Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen, WWF
4.	Systembolaget	Systembolagets Alkoholforskningsråd, Centralförbundet för alkohol- och narkotikaupplysning, Fair Trade, Fair for Social Life
5.	IKEA Sweden	WWF, FSC, Better Cotton Initiative, Rädda Barnen, UNICEF
6.	Bergendahls (City Gross, MAT, Matrebellerna, Granit, Glitter)	Initiativ för Etisk Handel, Fairtrade
7.	Apoteket Hjärtat	Rosa Bandet, Gundua Foundation, Childhood
8.	Apoteket	Rädda Barnen
9.	Elgiganten	Friends, RagnSells, Revac
10.	Axstores (Åhléns, Kicks, Lagerhaus)	Myrorna, Stadsmissionen, Fur Free Alliance
11.	Dustin	WWF
12.	Lidl Sweden	Barncancerfonden, Stadsmissionen, UNHCR
13.	H&M Sweden (H&M, Monki, Weekday, Cos &Other Stories)	Better Cotton, WWF, Wateraid, Better Cotton Initiative
14.	Byggtrygg (XL-BYGG, Bygghemma.se, Chilli, Trademax)	
15.	Kronans Apotek	Riksförbundet HjärtLung, Farmaceuter utan gränser, Farmaceutkompis
16.	Woody Bygghandel	EURO-MAT
17.	Jula	Hungerprojektet
18.	Beijer	
19.	Qliro Group (Cdon, Nelly, NLYman, Members, Gymgrossisten, Bodystore, Milebreaker, Tretti.com, Qliro)	Reach for Change
20.	Media-Saturn Nordic (Media Markt)	
21.	Netto	Barncancerfonden
22.	Bolist	
23.	ÖoB	
24.	OKQ8	UN Global Impact, UNHCR, VI-Skogen
25.	Stadium	SOS Barnbyar, Sweden Textile Water Initiative, Human Bridge, Accord
26.	Biltema	Scandinavian Children's Mission, SafePoint
27.	Gekås Ullared	SOS Barnbyar, Hand in Hand, Human Bridge
28.	Bauhaus	Barncancerfonden
29.	Netonnet	
30.	Rusta	Läkare Utan Gränser
31.	Apoteksgruppen	Flicka, Prostatacancerförbundet, Bröstcancerfonden, Farmaceuter utan gränster
32.	Intersport (Intersport, Löplabbet)	Sweden Textile Water Initiative
33.	Lindex	Min Stora Dag, Her Project, WaterAid
34.	Clas Ohlsson	Rädda Barnen
35.	Mio	
36.	Byggmax	ActionAid
37.	Elon (Elon, Elkedjan)	
38.	Reitan Convenience (Pressbyrån, 7-Eleven)	Friends
39.	Optimera	
40.	Colorama	

Appendix 2: Industry Mapping 2
Collaboration forms between NPOs and retailers in the Swedish market
This table illustrates the different collaboration forms that NPOs offer to companies. All of the 14 NPOs that receive the most donations from companies and organisations in Sweden have developed clear offers to encourage companies to engage in long-term relations, reaching beyond a single donation.

Revenues from companies during 2015

1. UNHCR (371 million SEK)	2. UNICEF (221 million SEK9	3. Rädda Barnen (205 million SEK)	4. WWF (143 million SEK)	5. Barncancer-fonden (135 million SEK)
Company Gift One-time transaction (choose the amount) **Support Company (from 10k SEK)** Receive a banner, web logo, email signature, newsletter and social media kit **Friend Company (from 100k SEK)** Receive a banner, web logo, email signature, newsletter, social media kit and tailor-made gratitude movie **Collaborative Partner (from 1 million SEK)** Receive a banner, web logo, email signature, newsletter, social media kit, tailor-made gratitude movie, communication package, logotype on landing page, reports, lecture, field trip, use of logotype, global report, press release	**Company Gift** One-time transaction (choose the amount) **Collaborative Partner**	**Company Gift** One-time transaction (minimum 500 SEK) **Friend Company (from 5k SEK)** Receive a diploma, banner, email-signature, company name on website and digital newsletter **Catastrophe Partner** Tailor-made partnership	**Friend Company (from 100k SEK)** Company Gift One-time transaction. Donate 2500 SEK and receive a certificate, company name on website, web logo **Friend Company** (from 10k SEK) Receive the WWF magazine, newsletter, web logo, diploma **Friend Company** (from 25k SEK) Receive the WWF magazine, newsletter, web logo, diploma, banner, Panda Book **Friend Company** (from 100k SEK) Receive the WWF magazine, newsletter, web logo, diploma, banner, Panda Book, email signature, company name with logo, text and picture	**Children Supporter** **Main Partner**

6. Röda Korset (112 million SEK)	7. Cancerfonden (111 million SEK)	8. SOS Children's Village Sweden (102 million SEK)	9. Läkare Utan Gränser (87 million SEK))	11. Sveriges Olympiska kommitté (83 million SEK)
Supporting Company (from 5k SEK) Receive banners and newsletter, company name on website **Supporting Company (from 15k SEK)** Receive banners and newsletter, company name on website and diploma **Collaborative Partner** Tailormade partnership, active collaboration	**Friend Company (from 5–50k SEK each year)** Receive a diploma, exposure, banners, save life, newsletter If you donate 50k SEK you will also receive moving graphics, ads and exposure of logotype **Main Partner** Different levels; Pink Company, Pink Partner and Pink Main Partner	**Friend Company (from 100k SEK each year)** Receive regularly information on how your money is being used, digital diploma, banner, mail footer **Godparent Company (from 250k SEK each year)** Your money is devoted to a specific project, logotype on website, information on how your money is used, usage of logotype, digital diploma, banner, mail footer **Partner Company (from 500k SEK each year)** Receive a field trip visiting your specific project, lectures, visibility on website with logotype, information on how your money is used, usage of logotype, digital diploma, banner, mail footer **Main Partner (from 1 million SEK each year)** Receive a field trip visiting your specific project, your own page on our website about your specific project, lectures, mingle with other main partners, visibility on website with logotype, information on how your money is used, usage of logotype, digital diploma, banner, mail footer, ads	**Company Gift** One-time transaction (choose the amount) **Friend Company (from 10k SEK each year)** Receive a logo, diploma, email footer, newsletter **Field Partner (from 100k SEK each year**) Receive a logo, diploma, email footer, newsletter, regular information during catastrophes, presentation **Partner Company (from 1 million SEK each year)** Tailormade partnership	**Official Supplier** **Team partner** **Partner Company**

Appendix 2: Industry Mapping 2
Collaboration forms between NPOs and retailers in the Swedish market
This table illustrates the different collaboration forms that NPOs offer to companies. All of the 14 NPOs that receive the most donations from companies and organisations in Sweden have developed clear offers to encourage companies to engage in long-term relations, reaching beyond a single donation.

Revenues from companies during 2015

12. Frälsningssarmen (68 million SEK)	**13.Erikshjälpen (60 million SEK)**	**14. Fryshuset (50 million SEK)**
Company Gift (from 1k SEK) Receive a digital diploma **Company Gift** (from 5k SEK) Receive a digital diploma, banner **Company Gift** (from 10k SEK) Receive a digital diploma, banner, pictures for Facebook	**Friend Company (from 10–50k SEK each year)** Receive information about our work in our magazine, digital newsletter, diploma, logo, exposure website, label, sticker, moving graphics, lectures about CSR **Support Company** Support with products and/or services **Partner Company (from 100k SEK each year)** Receive information in a magazine, digital newsletter, diploma, logo, exposure website, label, sticker, moving graphics, lectures about CSR, ad in magazine, logo in newsletter, thank you note with logo in annual report, logo at website	**Company Gift** One-time transaction (choose the amount) **Collaborative Partner**

Appendix: 3: Conducted Interviews

Conducted Interviews NPOs

Ten organisations, 14 interviews

Organisation	Type of interview	Role	Type of interview	Date of interview	Interview length
Help to Help	Pre-Study	Founder	Face to Face	7/2	54:00
Childhood	Main Study	Secretary-general	Face to Face	21/2	35:00
	Main Study	Responsible for corporate relations		23/3	71:00
Barnfonden	Main Study	Responsible for corporate relations	Telephone	21/2	52:00
	Main Study	Donations manager and deputy secretary-general	Telephone	21/3	35:00
Min Stora Dag	Main Study	Head of marketing, communication & fundraising	Face to Face	24/2	65:00
	Main Study	Responsible for corporate relations	Face to Face	14/3	35:00
UNICEF	Main Study	Responsible for corporate relations, senior corporate officer	Face to Face	27/2 1	51:00
	Main Study	Responsible for corporate relations, senior corporate officer	Telephone	6/3	40:00
Läkare Utan Gränser	Main Study	Corporate relations	Face to Face	15/3	42:00
SOS-Barnbyar	Main Study	Corporate and major donor relations	Face to Face	15/3	38:00
UNHCR	Main Study	Manager, strategic partnerships	Face to Face	16/3	41:00
Barncancerfonden	Main Study	Manager, corporate donations	Face to Face	17/3	52:00
Friends	Main Study	Coordinator, donations	Telephone	20/3	39:00

Appendix 3: Conducted Interviews

Conducted Interviews Retailers

Ten organisations, 11 interviews

Organisation	Type of interview	Role	Type of interview	Date of interview	Interview length
Reitangruppen (7-Eleven)	Pre-Study	Responsible external communication	Email	20/2	-
Axfood	Main Study	Project manager at Axfood Sverige	Face to Face	13/3	55:00
Gekås Ullared	Main Study	CSR/environmental manager	Telephone	20/3	42:00
Naturkompaniet	Main Study	Head of marketing Project leader	Face to Face Face to Face	20/3 20/3	35:00 34:00
Stadium	Main Study	General manager	Face to Face	22/3	46:00
Granit (Bergendahls Group)	Main Study	Sustainability and quality manager	Face to Face	22/3	60:00
Elgiganten	Main Study	Human resource specialist	Face to Face	24/3	47:00
Dustin	Main Study	Head of corporate responsibility	Face to Face	28/3	54:00
Bygghemmagroup (Byggtrygg)	Main Study	CEO	Telephone	28/3	35:00
MIO	Main Study	Sustainability manager	Telephone	31/3	39:00

Appendix 4: Interview Guide

Retailers

Overall question areas:

1. Company background and sustainability work
2. Overall questions about collaborations with NPOs
3. Questions about long-term/strategic collaborations
4. Questions regarding specific strategic collaboration partners
5. Questions about the interviewee and his/her working position

Question area 1: Company background and its CSR/sustainability work

- Name?
- Position and time of employment?
- How long have you been working for [Company X]?
- What is your professional background?
- Organisational mission, goals, measurements?
- How does your organisation gain legitimacy?
- How does your organisation work with CSR?
- Is the CSR work spread within the organisation or isolated to specific departments/persons?
- Is there any support from the management for these questions? If so, what form does it take?

Question area 2: Overall questions about collaborations with NPOs

- Tell us briefly about your collaborations with retailers.
  How many are working with company collaborations?
- How have these collaborations developed over time?
- Why are you collaborating with NPOs?
- What is the desired outcome of these collaborations? Do NPOs meet these needs?
- Do you adapt to the NPOs way of working? Does the NPO adapt to your way of working?
- What similarities and differences are there between a retailer and an NPO?

Question area 3: Questions about long-term/strategic collaborations

- In general, what factors enables long-term/strategic collaborations with NPOs from retailers' point of view?
- Have you experienced any obstacles in these long-term/strategic partnerships?

Question area 4: Questions regarding a specific strategic collaboration partnership

- Why and how are you collaborating with [name of the NPO]?
- Who initiated the contact?
- What did the process look like when you started to collaborate with [name of the NPO]?
  Who was nvolved in the decision?
- Do both parties have common goals with the collaboration?
- Are compromises made in the relationship? How? When?
- Who is pushing the collaboration/partnership forward?
- What is your role in the collaboration?
- Have you reached your desired goals with the collaboration?
- What does the process look like when making important decisions that concern both parties?

Question area 5: Questions about the interviewee and their working position

- How do you handle the trade-off that is evident to all retailers: on the one hand, selling as much roducts/services as possible and, on the other hand, working with social responsibility?

Would you like add anything?
Is there anything you want us to ask NPOs about?

Inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers have become increasingly popular in Sweden. Yet, there is currently only a few studies that seek to explain how inter-organisational relationships between NPOs and retailers can be sustained over time, given the often fundamentally different institutional logics on which these two organisational types are based. Hence, more research is needed to shed light on how practitioners work with inter-organisational collaborations and how such strategic collaborations can be more efficiently and effectively sustained.

The purpose of this study is to address the identified research gaps in two theoretical areas: institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations. To address the identified research gaps, we aim to investigate what enables NPOs and retailers to sustain their inter-organisational collaboration in strategic CSR projects, despite conflicting institutional logics.

A multiple case study involving ten NPOs and ten retailers was conducted. In addition, this thesis comprises two industry mappings of the NPO and retail industries to broaden the knowledge about existing collaborations in the Swedish market.

The main conclusion from this study is that the creation of an institutional space enables inter-organisational collaborations between NPOs and retailers to be sustained, despite the existence of different institutional logics. Seven factors are suggested to facilitate the creation of an institutional space in inter-organisational collaborations. These factors and the related insights they provide, can be of immense value to practitioners. More specifically, the study contributes significant insights on how inter-organisational relationships can be sustained. In addition, the study provides theoretical insights to the areas institutional logics and inter-organisational collaborations.

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