Global politics and Sport: Positioning of the football club as a global actor inspired by global agendas of sustainable development; Case study of Malmö FF

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Abstract:

In recent years, under the influence of the institutional movement of Sport for development and peace, the United Nations recognizes sport as an important tool of sustainable development and, in the context of global politics, encourages different sport actors to participate in sustainable development. The UN Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals bring new important implications for sport as an important enabler of sustainable development. This thesis adds knowledge to the field of sport and sustainable development through a single case study on Swedish football club Malmö FF by examining the club's engagement and contribution to sustainable development driven and inspired by Agenda 2030. The research lays on the theory of globalization drawing on Gulianotti-Robertson's concept of glocalization in football, the concept of policy coherence regarding sport and implementation of the SDGs, and the concept of corporate social responsibility in football clubs. Results suggest that the football club CSR activities can be a useful tool for the implementation of the SDGs and that those kinds of club's policy, in combination with the partnership, under the processes of globalization, can be an argument for establishing a football club as a global actor.

Keywords: Agenda 2030, corporate social responsibility (CSR), football, globalization, Malmö FF (MFF), sport, sustainable development

Table of content

1. Introduction 1

1.1 Sport and global politics in the context of sustainable development agendas 1

1.2 Field of research interest, general puzzle and research question of the thesis 3

1.3 Background; description of the MFF organization 4

1.4 Disposition 5

2. Theory/Literature review 6

2.1 Theory of globalization 6

2.1.1 Gulianotti – Robertson theory of globalization; concept of glocalization in football 6

2.1.2 Non-state actors in the process of globalization; Football clubs as a transnational corporation 7

2.2 Sport and sustainable development; UN Agenda 2030 11

2.2.1 Previous research on Agenda 2030 in the context of sport and development 11

2.2.2 Achieving the UN's goals of sustainable development through sport: Agenda 2030 12

2.2.3 Sustainable development goals; implementation 12

2.2.4 SDGs and concept of policy coherence 14

2.3 Corporate social responsibility (CSR) 14

2.3.1 Theoretical concepts of CSR in general and in the sports context 14

2.3.2 Motivations, drivers and resources of CSR in the football clubs 16

2.4 Theoretical synthesis 18

3. Methodology 18

3.1 Research approach 18

3.2 Research method; Qualitative research method 19

3.3 Research design; Single study case 20

3.4 Data; collection and analyses 22

3.5 Reliability and validity 25

4. Analysis 26

4.1 MFF's corporate social responsibility engagement 26

4.1.1 MFF's CSR; motives, drivers, approach, and dimensions 26

4.1.2 CSR department "MFF in the community" and its programs 28

4.2 MFF in the context of UN's Agenda 2030 and its SDGs 32

4.2.1 MFF's idea of contribution in Agenda 2030 and its SDGs 32

4.2.2 MFF meets the SDGs; preliminary and implementation phase 33

4.3 MFF as a global actor 39

4.3.1. MFF as a global actor in processes of football globalization 39

4.3.2 MFF as a global actor; the importance of the partnerships, projects and networking 42

5. Conclusion 46

6. Bibliography 50

Appendices

1. Introduction

1.1 Sport and global politics in the context of sustainable development agendas

The importance and connection between politics and sport have been recognized long ago (Taylor, 1988). A good example of the connection between sport and politics, primarily international and global politics, is presented by Rensmann (2015), who points out that research has developed and explored a wide range of topics and intersections of sports and politics, such as soft power politics and the political impact of sports mega-events (Grix and Lee 2013; Lenskyi 2002; 2008), international sports policy and governance (Palmer 2013), sports, political culture and globalization (Allison 2005; Giulianotti and Robertson 2004; 2007; 2009; Markovits and Rensmann 2010), women's rights, sports culture and women's fandom (Markovits and Albertson 2012), global sports migration (Bale and Maguire 1994; Maguire and Falcos 2010), or the interaction of football and transnational public spheres (King 2003).

In recent years, policymakers have seen sport as an increasingly useful tool for advancing a wide range of social welfare and development policies, as a vehicle for integration, social cohesion and broader sustainable social development at local, regional, national and international levels (Gulianotti 2011, Kidd 2008). For decades, because of its nature and its perceived positive impact on individuals and society, different kinds of stakeholders, organizations and movements from local to international level, governmental, intergovernmental (such as United Nations), non-governmental (national and international sports federations, sports councils, clubs and leagues, civil society organizations, development agencies, and business and corporate entities) have been using sports as a tool for sustainable development, promotion of the human rights and peace, health, and well-being (Masdeu G.Y. et al, 2019; Gulianotti et al, 2018; Gulianotti et al, 2019; Gulianotti 2011; Darnell, 2010). New and innovative thinking comprises sport as an integral part of a holistic approach to development and peace and, as such, is increasingly gaining importance on local, national and international agendas (Beutler, 2008).

An important contribution to sustainable development is given by the "Sport for Development and Peace" (SDP) movement - initially emerged around the turn of the century (Kidd 2008). SDP is a global field of activity that uses sport and physical activities as tools or areas of social intervention, primarily with young people, to promote nonsporting social goals, such as gender empowerment, peace-building, health education, employment skills, and the social inclusion of

marginalized communities international development for advancing a wide range of policies on social welfare and development (Gulianotti et al, 2019, Darnell 2010). The concept of SDP became a global platform and initial engine of sustainable development used by the international community to encourage stakeholders to participate in sustainable development. Since the early 2000s, the SDP has become a recognizable and strongly institutionalized field, increasingly linked to international relations, politics and the global development sector aided in various spheres (Gulianotti et al, 2019). This link is visible by leading international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), by stating the role of sport in promoting development within the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Gulianotti et al., 2019; UNGA, 2015). The UN has been a highly influential force within the SDP, acting as its most prominent political advocate since at least the early 2000s. For example, the UN established the UN Office of Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) in 2001 and named 2005 as its International Year of Sport and Physical Education (Gulianotti et al, 2018). According to that, a large volume of SDP activity has been dedicated to pursuing the UN's development agendas, primarily framed by the Millennium Development Goals, which ran in the period 2000 - 2015 and Agenda 2030. However, the 2030 Agenda transformed the global policy context for sport and development when it replaced the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a broader set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals of United Nations Agenda 2030 for sustainable development (Lindsey et al., 2020: 129).

The United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) adoption of Resolution 70/1 '*Transforming Our World*: the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*' in November 2015 represented a significant milestone for sport. The resolution set out a new framework for global development efforts, replacing the expired Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Gulianotti et al 2018: 3). While the sport was not directly included under any of those SDGs (Lindsey et al., 2020), the UN's SDGs feature a powerful endorsement of sport' sport's role in promoting global development (Gulianotti et al., 2018; Gulianotti 2019). Article 37 of Transforming our world says:

"Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives" (UNGA, 2015: 10).

According to Lindsey and Darby (2019), this was the first time that any comprehensive global development policy has included such a broad statement on sport and, as such, constituted recognition of significant expansion in activities and advocacy related to 'Sport for Development and Peace' (SDP) since the turn of the millennium.

1.2 Field of research interest, general puzzle and research question of the thesis

This thesis seeks to advance the still emerging and interesting field of research on sport and global politics. Starting with the global recognition of sport as an important enabler to the sustainable development, this thesis is going to examine by which policies and methods, inspired by global politics and agendas, sport organization can contribute to sustainable development and, consequently, if this kind of organization's policies can position an organization such as a football club as a global actor. Sport, and especially football, constitutes one of the most dynamic domains of globalization. In social-political science, sport organizations and football clubs are seen as non-state actors. I am going to develop an argument referring to the theory of globalization, most particularly, the globalization of football with particular reference to Robertson's theorizations of global processes and glocalization of football. As a consequence of the globalization processes, the theory sees football clubs as non-state actors, more closely; transnational corporations which are the most dynamic agents in the modern globalization of football. Further on, I will examine the club's corporate social activities (CSR), inspired by the global agendas and global field of Sport for development and peace (SDP), which outcomes contribute to sustainable development.

Narrower, the purpose of this thesis is to examine by which policies and methods, inspired and congruent by global concepts and agendas, football club can contribute to sustainable development and, consequently, how this kind of organization's policies can position a football club as a global actor with the possible impact to the other football clubs and organizations on a global level.

The case study of my investigation will be the Swedish professional football club Malmö FF. To answer the research question, I am going to examine MFF's possible participation and implementation of UN Agenda's SDGs to see how a local football club can be a tool of implementation of the global agenda of sustainable development, and if this kind of club's policy, based on CSR activities, can be an argument in establishing football club as a global actor. In part regarding the implementation of SDGs, I will draw on the existing concept of "policy coherence" as a valuable lens to identify and consider factors that may enable and

constrain various potential contributions of sport to a range of Sustainable Development Goals and its potential implementation (Lindsey and Darby, 2019).

While is obvious that big sports organizations such are International Olympic Committee and FIFA have a significant political role and can be seen as a global actors in sense of decision making and policy transfer, I want to examine if club CSR's activities which are, in one part, driven and inspired by global agendas, can have a global impact.

It is interesting, but in the same time, relevant to the field of global politics, to examine on which way sport and sport organizations can contribute to the society and sustainable development inspired and driven by the concepts and agendas of global politics and, on the other side, to examine how global politics impact sport and sport organizations and their contribution to the society and sustainable development.

Although sport offers a new and unique tool that successfully aligns with the development mandate, the logic of sport is also compatible with the hegemony of neoliberal development philosophy (Darnell, 2012).

Research question: Where football club acts beyond being just a football club by engaging in forms of global governance, how can and should it be conceptualized as a 'global actor'?

1.3 Background; description of the MFF organization

Malmö FF was founded in 1910 and is one of the oldest Swedish football clubs. The club has won the highest football Swedish division (Allsvenskan) of 20 times, which makes Malmö FF the most successful Swedish team (MFF year annual book, 2019). Also, MFF is the only football club from Nordic countries to have reached the final of the European Cup, the predecessor of the UEFA Champions League. Whilst having won great sporting achievements at the national and international levels, MFF is much more than a football club. As an organization and institution with the huge impact on society and as a role model, MFF recognizes its leadership and social role and adopt it as one of its most important purposes, examines how well they are meeting that aim, and strives continually to improve relationships with supporters, local authorities, residents, youngsters and all other structures and subjects of social life. The club is seen as an enabler of sustainable development for the local community; it is situated in a big city, receives a lot of media exposure, and has a notably strong and proud supporter culture surrounding it.

According to the MFF year annual book (2019), MFF is a membership-based association and not a limited company, a non-profit association, which is 100 percent owned by its members. MFF approximately counts around 7 000 members, 2000 official supporters, 70 employees, 800 youth players in training and 400 corporate partners.

From another perspective, MFF is an integral part of the Nordic world, Swedish society and the Swedish sports movement which shares the values that underpin sports in Sweden and society at large. MFF's code of conduct and organization's statues show a big commitment to society, human rights and the environment. Using the positive values of sports, MFF works to provide young people with knowledge, integrate them to do community by sharing the respect for everyone of equal value trying to establishing itself as a local, national and global international actor.

1.4 Disposition

The introduction section introduces a background of the field of global political agendas and sustainable development in the context of sport to provide a better understanding of the context of global politics and sport-related to the research field and general puzzle. It further, it includes a discussion of the brief description of the thesis's research field, connection and its relevance to the field of global politics, purpose and research questions. The chapter ends with a background and description of the football club MFF as a chosen subject of a case study and the disposition of the thesis.

The theory section includes a literature review of the previous research related to the general puzzle of the thesis. Theories and concepts relevant to the study are presented, followed by a theoretical synthesis explaining why and how the concepts and theories in the previous research are interconnected and why and how this theoretical framework helps to develop and justify my methodological choice, why suitable for this research.

The methodology section presents a methodology of the research providing an understanding of how the research is practically conducted. It presents a qualitative research method and research approach, followed by a data collection and data analysis. In the end, reliability and validity are questioned.

The analysis section aims to dissect the empirical findings and put them concerning the theoretical framework. The empirical data gathered through interviews and documentary

studies will be presented and empirical findings will be analyzed with the help of a theoretical framework.

The conclusion is the last section which presents the conclusions of the research by answering the research question. The chapter ends with a discussion of the contribution to the research field and suggestions for further studies.

At the end of the thesis are the lists of bibliography and appendix.

2. Theory/Literature review

2.1. Theory of globalization

2.1.1 Gulianotti – Robertson theory of globalization; concept of glocalization in football

Sport, in particular football, given the global status, constitutes one of the most dynamic domains and catalyst of globalization (Gulianotti and Robertson 2004, 2006, 2007a). In this part of the literature review, I present the globalization of football with particular reference to Robertson's theorizations of global processes.

By definition, Gulianotti and Robertson (2004, 2006, 2007a, 2007b) understand that globalization refers to the increased types and levels of global connectivity, and the increasing social consciousness of the world as a unique place. Referring on Robertson 1992, 1995, 2003; Robertson and White 2003, 2004; Gulianotti and Robertson (2004) argue that globalization is marked by processes of 'glocalization', whereby local cultures adapt and redefine any global cultural product to suit their particular needs, beliefs, and customs. In social theory, glocalization was initially deployed and developed by Robertson (1992, 1995; Robertson and White, 2003, 2004, 2005); other theorists to elaborate the concept include Ritzer (2003, 2004), Roudometof (2005), and Tomlinson (1999).

Gulianotti and Robertson (2007a), argue that globalization is partly characterized by global thematization of locality and nationality, a global spread of differentiation on a local and national basis. Glocalization both highlights how local cultures may critically adapt or resist 'global' phenomena, and reveals how the very creation of localities is a standard component of globalization (Gulianotti and Robertson, 2004, 2007a).

Gulianotti and Roberton (2004: 546) examine the broad cultural, social, economic, and political questions concerning the globalization of football. First, in discussing the cultural elements of football's globalization, they focus on the interdependencies of the local/particular and the global/universal, and on how these are reflected in processes of glocalization. Second, they understand the world's leading football clubs as transnational corporations (TNCs) that serve to drive the football's contemporary globalization (Robertson 1992, 1995; cf. Sklair 2001) and they assess the political globalization of football regarding the possible enhancement of democracy within the football's international governance. Third, they consider issues of social exclusion regarding the globalization of football, and how these may be challenged through the democratic reform of the football's governance (ibid: 546.).

2.1.2 Non-state actors in the process of globalization; Football clubs as a transnational corporation

Ordinarily, five groups of NSAs are distinguished in the literature: Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Transnational Corporations (TNCs), epistemic communities, and a remaining general category (Arts B, 2003). The set of non-state actors associated with sport and development includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs), sporting federations and bodies, and private sector businesses (Lindsey et al. 2020).

As a consequence of globalization, Chatzigianni (2018) identified the importance of non-state actors in global politics and global governance. Regarding global governance, the UN Commission Report on Global Governance defines it as 'the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs' (ibid: 1457). One of the significant impacts of globalization is related to the emergence of other than nation-states global governing factors such as international organizations, and non-governmental actors including TNCs and global civil society.

According to (Gulianotti and Robertson, 2004), transnational corporations are the most dynamic agents in the modern globalization of football, which include large football clubs. Transnational corporations have been influential in sustainable development by instigating their own specific 'Corporate Social Responsibility' programs.

Further on, Gulianotti and Robertson (2004) addresses that a global realist understanding of the glocality of TNCs helps to explain the current state of the biggest football clubs. All clubs are

"ethnocentric" (Perlmutter), they retain key symbolic links to local (Smith, Wilkins), primarily through name, headquarters, home stadium, branding, strip colors and local support, but, for example, as clubs like Manchester United set up marketing outlets in Asia and North America, more "polycentric" marketing opportunities are emerging. Further on, in football's labor markets, TNC clubs still practice cultural 'glocalization.' Club accord status to symbolic local or national figures and recruits, for example, 'foreign' players from culturally similar nations while at the same time seeking to build global recognition, which is a significant feature of glocalization (ibid).

The model of the global football field which is presented significantly extends Robertson's original model of the 'global field' and has strong continuity with Robertson's theory of glocalization (Gulianotti and Robertson 2007a, 2012.). The model highlights the mutual interdependencies between local and global social forces. The global football field is constituted by the interrelations of the game's growing diversity of stakeholders such are official governing bodies, clubs, players, various sponsors, associated media, sports ministries, and formal fan associations, new inter-club alliances, supporter movements and subcultures, an international players' union (FIFPro) encompassing over 40 nations, and player agents and representatives. The model features four quadrants, each of which contains a dominant operating principle, an 'elemental reference point,' and an 'elemental theme.' The quadrants contain, first, neo-liberalism, associated with the individual and elite football clubs; second, neo-mercantilism, associated with nation-states and national football systems; third, international relations, associated with international governing bodies; and fourth, global civil society, associated with diverse institutions that pursue human development and/or social justice (Gulianotti and Robertson 2012).

In football, the most vital beneficiaries of neo-liberal policies include elite clubs (led by owners, shareholders and officials), top players and their agents, media corporations and corporate sponsors, and spectators who are advantageously positioned within global marketplaces. However, clubs like Manchester United, Arsenal, Liverpool, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Juventus, Milan and Bayern Munich are comparable to TNCs in their international labor pools, high wages, target markets, consumer development and corporate social responsibility activities (ibid).

Similarly, Chatarazzi (2018) contends that in the past few years, as a result of globalization and governance, some sport-related civil society associations and platforms have been created and

operate in the global sport environment. For example, the United Nation MDGs and SDGs have contributed to the establishment of civil society networking platforms aiming at the promotion of peace and development in the world.

According to Anheier et al. 2004; Baker and Chandler 2004; Giulianotti 2011; Kaldor 2003; Keane 2003; Kumar et al. 2009, global civil society is a contested arena wherein diverse institutions, movements and groups pursue social policies that are intended to promote international development, peace, and social justice (Gulianotti and Robertson, 2004). Conversely, according to The Economist (17 January 2008), neo-liberalists tend to advocate corporate social responsibility and other forms of philanthropic voluntarism, with the economic incentive that the self-regulation of industrial and social practices tends to be 'good for business'. In a football or broader sport context, global civil society is best understood concerning the growing' sport for development and peace' sector, in which diverse institutions (IGOs, NGOs, new social movements, TNCs and others) use sport as an interventionist tool to address issues regarding peace, development and social justice (Giulianotti 2012).

Through the processes of globalization in football, networking and partnership are playing a significant role on the global stage. Multi-sector partnerships between different actors and social partnerships are significant for the largest football clubs, but also their communities. Especially interesting, from the perspective of social responsibility, is tri-sector social partnerships between football clubs and its CSR foundation, or its CSR departments, between clubs and public institutions, and between clubs and international NGO's structures, such for example EFDN (Klischeievski and Simion, 2019). Within the professional football industry, social partnerships are an essential promoter of CSR, so CSR lays a strong foundation for social partnerships, which in turn provides a way to bridge between sharing and exploiting resources, as well as sharing the risks that arise (ibid.). Referring to Lin (2017), Klischeivski and Simion (2019) argue that social partnerships provide a purposeful framework for cooperation to benefit all parties, using the power of social collectivity and resource sharing to grow together and serve a broader common goal. The emergence and development of international networks, testify to the institutionalization associated with the causes of community action.

From the other perspective, from the approach for sport and development, a relationship between state and non-state actors is playing a significant role through their partnership (Lindsey et al., 2020).

When it is discussing football clubs from Sweden regarding the connection between civil society and sport the Nordic model will be of significant interest. The Nordic region – comprising the northern European states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – is widely regarded as having a particular model of social, political and economic relations, which is reflected in the particular interconnections of sport and civil society (Gulianotti et al., 2019b: 540). Alestalo, Hort, and Kuhnle (2009) note that the model is defined by statehood, especially by the high provisions of the welfare state; universalism, in social rights to welfare; and equality, such as the protection of the political, social and economic status of the working class, women, the disabled and the elderly (ibid.). The strong social qualities of the Nordic sporting model are revealed in several ways (Gulianotti et al., 2019b). First, some Nordic societies have enshrined sport as an essential social good to the extent that it is viewed as a human right. Second, Nordic societies have been at the global forefront of mass sport or sport for all movements. Third, women have long played significant roles in Nordic sport and civil societies. Fourth, the civil sphere has, at times, challenged the growing influence of commercial interests and neoliberal cultures within the Nordic sport.

The Nordic region is well equipped to transmit its policy models across the world as well as to receive neoliberalism and other policy models (cf. Alestalo, Hort, and Kuhnle 2009). The Nordic model has aspects that are extremely attractive to many other regions. The participatory model of Nordic sport – enshrined in the 'sport for all' ethos – is of real interest to both developed and developing nations that are seeking to tackle their long-term health 'crises' by making their sedentary citizens much more physically active (ibid.).

The Nordic region's tangible contribution to global development has three significant themes. First, the Nordic nations offer at least partial alternatives to neoliberal approaches, by acting as 'norm entrepreneurs' for the promotion of welfare society principles such as participatory democracy, political transparency, human rights, gender. Second, in broad terms, development and aid are ideal policy spaces for small, social-democratic nation-states to exercise influence internationally, and to showcase their 'soft power' capabilities through forms of humanitarian diplomacy (Tvedt 1998). In their research about the Nordic society model concerning sport, Gulianotti et al. (2019b: 550) conclude that sport and physical activity have been seen as essential factors in promoting equality across different genders, population groups, at local, regional, national and at the international level.

2.2 Sport and sustainable development; UN Agenda 2030

2.2.1 Previous research on Agenda 2030 in the context of sport and development

As I already mentioned in the introduction part of this thesis, for decades, because of its nature and its positive impact on individuals and society, different kinds of stakeholders, key institutions, organizations and movements from local to international level, governmental, intergovernmental (such as United Nations), non-governmental (national and international sports federations, sport councils, clubs and leagues, transnational corporations (especially through 'corporate social responsibility' programs), civil society organizations, development agencies, and business and corporate entities) have been using sports as a tool for sustainable development, promotion of the human rights and peace, health and well-being (Masdeu G.Y. et al, 2019; Gulianotti et al, 2018; Gulianotti et al, 2019a; Gulianotti 2011; Darnell, 2010).

The SDP sector reflects the historical interface of sport and global society, considering the SDP sector politically an increasingly important component of global civil society. Reflecting neoliberal and influences, Gulianotti (2011) argues that there is a side to the "corporate social responsibility" of the private sector, especially among transnational corporations, as illustrated by the SDP's work. In those categories, we can also find a lot of football clubs.

Gulianotti (2011) established four ideal-types within the SDP policy domain that tend to be associated with specific institutions. First, neo-liberal social policies, as embodied by private or commercial interests, such as transnational corporations and forms of 'corporate social responsibility'; second, 'developmental interventionist' policies associated with non-governmental and community-based organisations; third, 'strategic developmentalist' policies associated with national and international governmental organisations, and sport federations; and, fourth, social justice policies associated with new social movements and critical NGOs (Gulianotii 2011: 757). Gulianotti (2011) understands TNC and CSR programs as major institutional embodiments and beneficiaries of neoliberal politics. SDP is understood to be connected to the rise of the transnational civil society in which a variety of institutional and political forces, including NGOs, new social movements, and corporations, have increasingly taken an active role in the organization of global politics and, in the case of SDP, formulated sport-based responses to development inequalities (Gulianotti 2011; Darnell 2012).

2.2.2. Achieving the UN's goals of sustainable development through sport: Agenda 2030

The United Nations has promoted sport as a cost-effective means of accelerating the achievement of development goals and promoting peace (Beutler, 2008: 361). In the context of global politics, the UN plays a crucial role in any move towards an environmental turn within SDP, mainly through its Agenda 2030 SDGs.

According to Lindsey et al. (2020), the 'Sport for Development and Peace' (SDP) movement has continued to expand, engaging growing numbers and increasing diversity of organisations in different contexts across the world (Svensson and Woods 2017) and these developments undoubtedly contributed to the signed acknowledgment of the potential contribution of sport in the latest global development policy framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development represents a call to transformative action to individuals, organisations and governments in areas of critical importance for the sustainability of humanity and the planet (Masdeu et al., 2019: 316). According to Moallemi et al. (2019), the universal adoption of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a vital sign of global interest in integrating economic, social and environmental aspects into the development aspirations of UN member states.

Lindsey et al. (2020) argue that, the 2030 Agenda transformed the global policy context for sport and development when it replaced the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a broader set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda brings new implications for sport in that the broad range of its SDGs and associated SDGs is essential beyond the SDP movement, so it also implicates actors engaged in what could think of it as a 'mainstream' sport at different levels from the right to the elite and professional levels (ibid).

2.2.3. Sustainable development goals; implementation

The Agenda 2030 and SDGs set out a new framework for global development efforts, replacing the expired Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Lindsey et al. 2019). The SDGs are a set of 17 ambitious goals and 169 targets that aim to guide policy and investment development by 2030 to address some of the most pressing global issues such as stopping poverty (SDG 1), promoting health and well-being at all ages (SDG 3) and the provision of universal access to education (SDG 4) through partnership approaches (SDG 17) (Masdue et al., 2017). According

to Stafford-Smith et al., (2017), to achieve this set of goals and targets, a defined, interdependent, multidisciplinary approach is required (ibid.). Similarly to that, Biermann et al. (2017) coined the concept of "Governance through goals" to exemplify a new inclusive and interdependent goal-setting strategy that relies on partnerships and provides the freedom to all actors to take action within the SDG framework (ibid.).

Although Heads of State adopted the SDGs, the UN emphasized the need for united efforts by state and non-state actors at multiple levels of society - moving beyond bottom-up strategies and calling for action from new agents of change, including businesses, cities and local communities (Moallemi E. A. et al., 2019). The SDGs and their accompanying political declaration make it clear that countries are expected to make this national interpretation – setting their own goals, targets and priorities for implementing the SDGs, in response to national conditions and capabilities (Weitz et al., 2015). Bourn et al., (2017), point out that challenging poverty, environmental degradation and poor health, for example, must be at the forefront of these commitments and, if younger generations are to become responsible citizens, education has an important role to play (Amos and Levinson, 2019). The 17 overall goals of the SDGs cover a spectrum of development issues which are highly aspirational and broad in scope (e.g. "achieve gender equality," "ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns," "promote well-being for all at all ages" and "promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems") (Weitz et al., 2015). Under these goals, 169 goals have been allocated, which need to be more specific, direct immediate actions, and concrete measures to achieve the goals.

The inclusion of sport in the 2030 Agenda prompted the development of significant global and transnational policy documents for sport, which promoted alignment with particular SDGs and associated SDG Targets (Lindsey et al., 2020). Notable examples of such policy documents are the Kazan Action Plan (UNESCO 2017), and Commonwealth policy guidance on 'Enhancing the contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals.' Similarly, in one of the first scientifically published analyzes of sport and Agenda 2030, Lindsey and Darby (2019) suggested three widely differentiated ways in which sport can be related to specific development goals and associated goals. According to Lindsey and Darby (2019), first, existing aims and practices identifiable in the SDP sector continue to be well aligned with various SDGs and Targets. Second, according to Coalter (2010), within the broad scope of the SDGs, some specific SDG Targets have relevance to more conventional approaches to sports development that are centered on the provision of infrastructure and opportunities to participate and compete in a sport. Within the field of sports development, joint and long-standing efforts to address the

underrepresentation of groups in sport broadly links with the core 'pledge' in the 2030 Agenda that 'no one is left behind.' Third, a final set of SDGs and Targets brings into focus the need to reform those organizations and practices in sport, which are detrimental to development (Lindsey at el, 2020). Clustering SDGs and Targets in this way demonstrates that they can be relevant to organizations and institutions involved with sport in various ways.

2.2.4 SDGs and concept of policy coherence:

Lindsey and Darby (2019), in one of the first and crucial articles on sport and SDGs, claim that there is a need for expanded analysis of how the SDGs and associated Targets bring into focus the policies, practices, and impacts of a more comprehensive array of sporting bodies, organizations, and stakeholders to a far greater extent than has previously been considered. The authors draw on the "Concept of policy coherence". This concept has particular applicability as there is a repeatedly stated aspiration within the 2030 Agenda and a specific SDG Target (17.14) to 'enhance policy coherence for sustainable development' (UNGA, 2015) (ibid: 795.). This reflects the relevance of seeking coherence across multiple policies and domains given the conception of the SDGs as universal, integrated and indivisible. However, referring to Deacon (2016) authors claim that there is a little explicit elaboration in the 2030 Agenda as to what policy coherence may specifically entail or how it may be achieved. Policy coherence has also increasingly been portrayed as a multi-level concept, 'vertically' applicable across global, international, national and sub-national policies and across the full range of countries that may be involved with or affected by development agendas (Dubé et al., 2014; OECD). Consideration of the 'horizontal' coherence of policy implementation has expanded to encompass private and civil society organizations as well as institutions in the public sector (Janus et al., 2015; OECD, 2016). These expansions in the conception of policy coherence reflect increasingly 'globalized world in which the boundaries between different policy areas and levels have become blurred' (Verschaeve et al., 2016: 45).

2.3 Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

2.3.1 Theoretical concepts of CSR in general and in the sports context

Based on the analysis of 37 definitions, there is still no consensus regarding the definition of the term. However, The European Commission defines CSR broadly as "the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society" (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020: 62). On the other hand, Dahlsrud concludes that CSR can be characterized by five dimensions: the environmental

dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension, the stakeholder dimension and the voluntary dimension (ibid.). Similarly, Babiak and Wolfe (2009) point out that other CSR definitions address "societal relationships" (Wood, 1991, p. 693) and the "expectations that society has of organizations" (Carroll, 1979, p. 500). According to the work of the same authors (Babiak and Wolfe 2009), CSR "tends to focus on the effects of organizations on external constituencies (e.g., consumers, local communities, charitable organizations)" (Sethi & Steidlemeier, 1995, p. 20). Many different CSR concepts have emerged since Howard Bowen first emphasized corporate social responsibility, but Carrol's pyramid (1979, 1999) of social responsibility is a general approach in which he distinguishes between philanthropic/discretionary (activities that go beyond societal expectations), ethical (responsibility to act in a manner consistent with societal expectations), legal (the duty to obey the law), and economic (the fundamental responsibility to make a profit and, thus, be viable) responsibilities (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020; Babiak and Wolfe, 2009).

As reported by Fifka and Jaeger (2020), although CSR concept has been discussed in the business world for a long time, the concept has also recently received increasing attention in sports, and especially in professional European football. Conforming to many scholars, such are Irwin, Lachowetz, Cornwell, & Clark, 2003; Kern, 2000; Robinson, 2005, professional sports teams, especially football are increasingly, in last 15 years, engaging in socially responsible activities (Fifka and Jaeger 2020; Babiak and Wolfe 2009).

The concept of CSR is often related to the stakeholder theory, a theory of organizational management that addresses business ethics, morals and the consideration of interests and expectations of the various stakeholders of businesses (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020). Similarly, according to Smith and Westerbeek (2007), stakeholder theory suggests that corporate social responsibility (CSR) should require organizations to consider the interests of all stakeholders, including investors, suppliers, consumers, employees, the community and the environment in discharging their profit-directed activities.

The four dimensions of CSR are (Breithbarth and Harris, 2008; Breithbarth et al., 2011): The political approach focuses on the responsible use of business power in the political arena where the organization is seen as a citizen with a certain degree of involvement in the community (e.g., corporate citizenship, social contract theory). The instrumental approach focuses on achieving economic objectives through social activities (e.g., cause-related marketing, strategic investment in a competitive context). The integrative approach focuses on the integration of

social demands (e.g., stakeholder management, issues management). In the case of an integrative approach, the stakeholder theory is outlined as a balance of interests of different stakeholders of the organization. The ethical approach focuses on the right thing to do (e.g., the "common good," paternalistic-humanitarian ideals).

2.3.2 Motivations, drivers and resources of CSR in the football clubs

In the context of professional football, Breitbarth and Harris (2008) emphasize that managers need to be thoroughly evaluated and aware of developments in the wider socio-political-economic environment, just as corporate managers in other industries are increasingly monitoring and interacting with stakeholders and their growing range of interests (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020*)*. Therefore Breitbarth et al. (2008), differentiate between economic, political, integrative, ethical and emotional motives (ibid). Reiche also focuses on football clubs and concludes that there are societal drivers (strengthening regional identity and being a role model for society), economic drivers (customer retention and being interesting for sponsors) and political drivers (governmental pressures and governing associations) for integrating CSR (ibid). According to Hamil and Morrow, CSR is driven by (a) the normative expectations of executives or stakeholders, (b) the response to broader social programs, or (c) the potential economic benefit. Blumrodt et al. emphasize the vital role of history and tradition. It can also be considered a driver for CSR, as many clubs are traditionally highly embedded in their local communities.

Strategically, Anagnostopoulos and Shilbury have examined the role of managers when it comes to CSR-implementation in English football clubs and concludes that the decision-making process is depending on the personality of the managers and the organizational context in which they operate (ibid.). Further on, managers must evaluate on which strategic approach to focus on. Breitbarth and Harris differentiate between political, integrative, ethical and instrumental approaches to CSR in football (ibid.).

In line with Breitbarth et al. (2008), football clubs own a variety of resources that are of significant advantage when it comes to implementing CSR. They involve economic resources (such as the ability to reach public target groups, including diverse and isolated communities), political resources (such as the ability to build bridges or reach relevant decision-makers), integrative resources (such as the opportunity to provide an image transfer for corporate institutions or the ability to be a platform for social integration), ethical resources (such as the general positive attributes of sports or the ability to be a role model in terms of ethics and values)

and emotional and other resources (such as health issues or the general emotional attractiveness of the sport).

Breitbarth and Harris argue that professional football clubs, leagues and bodies can create a variety of values (humanitarian, financial, cultural and reassurance values) since they act in a complex set of stakeholders such as supranational institutions (e.g., United Nations, WTO, OECD, EU), commercial institutions (e.g., media, clothing industry, sponsors, shareholders, creditors), public/societal institutions (e.g., governments, NGOs) and local communities (e.g., supporter groups, grassroots football) (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020).

Anagnostopoulos and Shilbury assert that the implementation of CSR in English football clubs is influenced by a multilevel context, including at the institutional, organizational and individual levels. At the organizational level, the collaboration of clubs and their foundations/trusts is of great importance. Empirical findings in work of Kolyperas et al. (2016), a study on 66 football clubs in England and Scotland, to investigate how CSR is implemented in the clubs, shows that football clubs respond to various stakeholder pressures through numerous CSR programs that can broadly be categorized into four areas of social impact on CSR values: educational programs, sports/health programs, social/cultural inclusion programs and charitable programs.

Walters and Tacon discuss that only a small number of European clubs monitor and evaluate the impact of their CSR-related actions (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020). Breitbarth et al. recommend a CSR performance scorecard that covers the three-unit goals, indicators and ratings to measure CSR effectiveness. The results of different CSR-dimensions are summarized (e.g., economic index, ethical–emotional index) so that comparisons can be established over time. A method to measure the social impact of CSR is recommended by King, who suggests a Social Return on Investment (SROI) model to evaluate the impacts of sport, physical activity and recreation on health, social care, education, or youth crime reduction. Breith et al. (2011) point out that conceptual development and design of the CSR Performance Scorecard seeks to assist football clubs in building up a strategic approach to CSR, achieving their objectives, and controlling the impacts of their activities over time. Besides, as part of CSR's success, individual indicators are evaluated to allow clubs to compare themselves with other clubs and to compare their achievement with their own internal CSR goals (ibid.).

2.4 Theoretical synthesis

The theoretical framework of globalization, more particularly, the globalization of football with particular reference to Gulianotti - Robertson's theorizations of global processes and glocalization of football, has been used in this thesis since sport, and especially football, constitutes one of the most dynamic domains of globalization. Further on, as a consequence of the globalization processes, this theory sees football clubs as non-state actors, more closely, transnational corporations which are the most dynamic agents in the modern globalization of football. The intention is to draw on this theoretical framework to see if Malmo FF can be interpreted as a transnational actor.

As a second theoretical concept in this thesis, I draw on existing research on sport and development relationships in the context of the sustainable development agendas; Agenda 2030 and its SDGs in the context of sport. The concept of SDP became a global platform and initial engine of sustainable development used by the international community to encourage stakeholders to participate in sustainable development. Hence, a large volume of SDP activity has been dedicated to pursuing the UN's development agendas. I will rely on the research as mentioned earlier to examine the possible involvement of the MFF in the implementation of the UN AGENDA SDGs to see how a local football club can be a tool for implementing a global sustainable development agenda and if this type of club policy, based on CSR activities, can establish a football club as a global actor. In part concerning the implementation of sustainable development goals, I will refer to the existing concept of 'policy coherence'.

The third concept of the thesis's theoretical framework is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR theoretical concept is going to help me to examine if MFF's CSR programs and activities can be used as a tool of MFF's possible participation and implementation of UN AGENDA's SDGs. Consequently, the CSR concept used in case of MFF is going to show how a local football club can be a tool of implementation of the global agenda of sustainable development, and if this kind of club's policy, based on CSR activities, can establish football club as a global actor.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research approach

This research is using the deductive qualitative approach as a starting point of the methodological approach. The main idea for this research is to starts with a deductive approach,

from a particular theoretical framework that is later tested with empirical data where the aim is then to refine, extend, improve or test the theory.

The deductive approach represents the commonest view of the nature of the relationship between theory and social research, whereby the researcher draws on what is known about in particular domain and on relevant theoretical ideas in order to deduce a hypothesis that must then be subjected to empirical scrutiny (Bryman, 2016).

As I already mentioned in the theoretical synthesis, to be able to present a valid result of this thesis, to explain and contribute to an understanding of the contribution of the local organization, in this case, football club, in a global political agenda, how the local actor can be used as a tool of implementation of global policy, a case study including a qualitative analysis of textual data combined with semi-structured interviews have been considered to be the most appropriate methods to apply for this thesis.

3.2. Research method; Qualitative research method

As Becker (1966) pointed out, while the overall goal of quantitative and qualitative research is the same - to understand the world better - their methodologies and focus differ in some respects (Aspers and Corte, 2019). A quantitative research method refers to that property of something that can be determined by measurement. On the other side, as quantitative research, qualitative research can be used to study a variety of issues. However, it tends to focus on the meanings and motivations underlying cultural symbols, personal experiences, phenomena, and a thorough understanding of processes in the social world (Aspers and Corte, 2019). Qualitative research uses a variety of multiple methods, such as intensive interviews, case studies, ethnography and participant observation, grounded theory, biographical and participative inquiries, in-depth analysis of historical materials (Strauss and Corbin 1994), and, according to King (1994), it is concerned with a comprehensive account of some event or unit (Sinkovics et al., 2008). Similarly, according to Meriam et al. (2005), observation, interviewing, and examination of artifacts (including documents) are the most common methods of qualitative research. Qualitative research methods are useful when researchers try to examine and gain an understanding of a particular situation, phenomena or social context, when they are studied in great detail and when a researcher wants to explore new areas (Aspers and Corte, 2019, Sinkovics et al. 2008).

Hence, this thesis aims to examine and advance the still-emerging field of research on sport and global politics. Narrower, the purpose of this thesis is to examine by which corporate social responsibility activities and other policies and methods, inspired and congruent by global political agendas, sport organization such as football club, can contribute to sustainable development and, consequently, how this kind of organization's policies can position a football club as a global actor. In order to reach an in-depth understanding of the phenomena that are being investigated, therefore I decided that qualitative methods for this thesis are more appropriate than quantitative since the aim is to make sense of a specific phenomenon rather than determining something with measurement. In order to examine the contribution of a sport organization in Agenda 2030, the methodological approach will consist of mixed qualitative data conducted in semi-structured interviews with relevant actors and textual analysis of the relevant documents.

3.3 Research design; Single study case

Case study research scientifically investigates into a real-life phenomenon in-depth and within its environmental context. Andersen and Kragh (2010), Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that case studies provide a better understanding of phenomena regarding concrete context-dependent knowledge (Ridder, 2017). According to Yin (2003), a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context (Baxter and Jack, 2010). Burawoy 2009; Stake 2005; Yin 2014 state that, such a case can be an individual, a group, an organization, an event, a problem, or an anomaly. The case is chosen, because the case is of interest (Stake 2005), or, as Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) argue, it is chosen for theoretical reasons (ibid.).

Referring on followed scholars, Ridder (2017) argues that for within-case and across-case analyses, the emphasis in data collection is on interviews, archives, and (participant) observation (Flick 2009: 257; Mason 2002: 84) where case study researchers usually triangulate data as part of their data collection strategy, resulting in a detailed case description (Burns 2000; Dooley 2002; Eisenhardt 1989; Ridder 2016; Stake 2005: 454).

The research design of my research is a simple case study of a football club MFF. As the focus of the thesis is on local adoption and implementation of global policies, the standard approach

of studying local and global interaction regarding adoption and implementation is the qualitative approach of a single case study that seems to be suitable. I am going to examine local football club engagement in global policies, how local actor adopts and implements global policies and if this kind of engagement can establish a football club as a global actor.

In this single case study, the research question will be identified and shaped using literature to narrow the interest in a specific topic (Ridder 2017), looking for key studies and identifying questions in these studies. Laying on Yin's design (2014), the existing theory will be the starting point of case study research. Existing theories of globalization in football, which see elite football clubs as transnational actors, concepts of sport and sustainable development in the context of global agendas and concepts of corporate social will be the starting point for the examination of football club's engagement in global policies. Ridder (2017) points out that a case study research design can also aim at specifying gaps or holes in existing theory with the ultimate aim of advancing theoretical explanations. In single case study research, there is an opportunity to open a subject by looking at deeper causes of the phenomenon (Fiss 2009). As reported by Gomm et al. (2000), the case data can lead to the identification of patterns and relationships, creating, extending, or testing a theory (ibid).

With this kind of approach and case study design, I am going to be able to specify gaps or holes in chosen existing theory to advance a theoretical framework. In this case study research design, existing tentative theory and the research strategy is theory-driven. With this kind of approach, a case study can outline the tentative theory; to demonstrate the lacks and gaps of the tentative theory; to specify how and why the tentative theory is aimed to be extended and/or modified; to develop theoretically-based propositions which guide the investigation; and to evaluate new elements, relationships, and mechanisms related to the previous theory (analytical generalization) (Ridder 2017).

After analyzing data in the chosen single case study, I am going to test the connection between concepts of the transnational corporation in globalization, corporate social responsibility concept and concept of sport as an enabler of sustainable development presented in the theoretical framework, to develop, extend or test if this connection in the theoretical framework is suitable after analyzing the data from the single study case. Referring to Ridder (2017), the aim with the case study, in my case single case study design, is to demonstrate and describe a new interesting phenomenon, develop new constructs and relationships, add constructs (variables), antecedents, outcomes, moderators, or mediators to a tentative theory.

3.4 Data; collection and analyses

Data collection;

Data for this thesis has been gathered from primary sources and secondary sources. Those primary sources are semi-structured interviews and internal MFF documents. Primary source documents such are MFF *Year annual report, MFF policy documents, statuses and code of conduct*, *Den Himmelsblå Vägen (MFF*) will be use and in-depth analyzed to validate and to examine activities and outcomes of the MFF CSR engagement with the purpose to find possible positive contribution on society and sustainable development and to find a connection with Agenda 2030. The important part will rely on the partnership between MFF and European Football for Development Network (EFDN).

Secondary data such are some external documents and articles will be used as well. This means that a triangulation of primary and secondary sources has been used. Data triangulation is designed to narrow problems of construct validity, as multiple sources of data provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon. Pattern-matching is a primary choice where the research strategy and the data have to be confronted by pattern-matching. According to Yin (2014:143), pattern-matching is a means to compare the theoretically based predictions with the data in the site. In analytical generalization, the theory is compared with the empirical results, leading to the modification or extension of the theory.

When it is about the data, purposeful sampling of qualitative data is the primary choice. In this case, purposeful sampling will be conducted since the unusual case is chosen and rarely observable phenomena will be investigated concerning non-well known matters and their relationships. Sampling is highly focused on the purpose of the case study, where a single case is chosen to investigate deeply into new phenomena (Ridder 2017). In my chosen case, I will examine if a football club can be involved in global political agenda through organizations' policies such as CSR activities and if those kinds of policies are positioning clubs as a global actor.

Semi-structured interviews as primary data;

Interviews are one of the most important and most used methods for collecting qualitative data used in case study research design. To fulfill the purpose of this thesis, I am going to use a semi-structured interview form.

According to Alvesson and Deetz (2000), semi-structured interviews are the most common of all qualitative research methods, but also, according to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), the most effective and convenient method of gathering information (Qu & Dumay 2011). In my case, the interviews are conducted to better understanding how decisions and policymakers in MFF see contribution and adoption of the global agenda of sustainable development and how that kind of engagement can position them as a global actor.

However, for this research, the design of the group of interviewees is divided into two parts. The first group of interviewees includes MFF's s decision and policymakers such are CEO, head officer of the CSR department, head officer of the global networking and project leader of MFF's participation in UN's Agenda 2030. The second category is an interview with the CEOs of the European Football Developing Network in which MFF participate as a member since December 2019. In the first case, I will get an insight into what MFF representatives think about themselves. In the other case, I will get an insight into those issues external factors and experts on the field of football networking regarding corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. This is extremely important because this is how we get a more comprehensive picture, and at the same time, we improve credibility and objectivity. Besides, this kind of design is contemplated to represent a wide-ranging set of viewing points and experiences, both internal and external respondents. Internal and external respondents were selected to obtain more general outcomes and a broad understanding of the research subject as well as to ensure the consistency of the empirical results.

Since the respondents had different positions, the questions and the guide were tailored to each interview. The major themes were still the same, but the questions were adapted to suit the respondent's positions. I followed the prepared guidelines and questions, and the conversation flowed in the desired direction. This kind of approach enables interviewees to provide responses in their terms and in the way that they think and use language (Qu & Dumay 2011). The interviews were more in the form of interpersonal conversations rather than the interrogation of the interviewees, both interviewees and the interviewee participating in the interview, generating questions and answers through the discourse of detailed interpersonal conversations. Interviews were conducted in the period between February and May 2020. However, as I am personally involved in MFF, and as I had an internship there, I had a few informal conversations with all four interviewed decision-makers in MFF. Four of the five interviews have been taken in English, and one interview has been taken in Swedish. Responders from MFF are Swedish, so I left the opportunity to each responder to express him or herself in the native language

(Swedish), as sometimes it is easier to express itself in the native language, so we do not lose the point of the answers. One of them used Swedish, and that interview was transcript and translated on English later during the process before analyzing data. Three of four responders of MFF are engaged in an international network where they use English as a first language, so they stated that interviews could be done in English. Although I speak Swedish, I am not a native speaker; during the translation of the interview conducted on Swedish, I had the help of a native Swedish speaker with fluent English and academic background. Responder from EFDN is Dutch, but from the same reason as three of four responders of MFF, he stated that the interview could be done in English. The interviews conducted lasted for approximately 45 and 60 minutes. Three of the five interviews were conducted face-to-face and two via Skype due to the Covid-19 pandemic in one case and due to the long distance between Sweden and Holland in other case. The interviews were all contacted in person or by email at first. Later on, we decided on a place and time of the interview. Before the interview, interviewees were informed of the purpose of the research, what kind of questions that I intended to ask, asking for permission for taping the interview, which they accepted. The list of interviewees is attached in the Appendix of the the thesis.

Secondary data;

The external documentation included academic articles connected with the research topic and essential documents about the European Football Developing Network provided by its official representative and, some of them, available at their webpage. Secondary sources as supplementary data were combined with primary data in order to provide better further understandings of the topic and to help us to get an answer to the research question.

Data analysis:

The importance of data analysis is needed to understand the meaning of the data collected and to interpret certain patterns that will later answer the research question. As I already mentioned, data triangulation is designed to narrow problems of construct validity, as multiple sources of data provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon. An essential feature of the case study is its focus on multiple sources of data collection to provide a better explanation of the phenomenon under study. As I already mentioned, the internal documentation includes internal sources, such as MFF's code of conduct, annual report, policy document, Den Himmelsblå Vägen documents provided by MFF. In this research in analyzing data, I used pattern-matching where the research strategy and the data have to be confronted by pattern-matching. According

to Yin (2014:143), pattern-matching is a means to compare the theoretically based predictions with the data in the site. In analytical generalization, the theory is compared with the empirical results, leading to the modification, extension, or testing of the theory. Accordingly, in my case, the analysis of the identified empirical patterns and the theoretical framework was made to get connections between identified phenomena and empirical data.

3.5 Reliability and validity

Theoretically, according to Carmines and Zeller (1979), reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides a stable and consistent result (Taherdoost, 2016). In quantitative research, reliability refers to the exact replicability of the processes and the results (Leung, 2015). Similarly, Bryman (2016) points out that the reliability of research means how reliable and consistent the results are or whether the result would be the same if repeated research. Reliability is very close to other criteria of research – replicability when the researcher chose to replicate the findings of others (ibid.). In this case, when conducting a case study, it must be established that another study conducted by another researcher of the same case by the same procedure would produce the same result. Another issue, as I mentioned earlier, I am personally involved in the MFF organization and that is why potential personal biases or prejudices could be an issue. The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study (Yin, 2009:45). However, my ethic and professionalism are something which guarantees the objectivity in this research.

In agreement with Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005), validity explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation (Taherdoost, 2016). Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from the piece of the research (Bryman, 2016: 41). According to Yin (2009: 41), there are three ways to increase the construct validity of the research. First, multiple sources should be used to enable data triangulation in the case study. As I already mentioned, in this thesis, I interviewed a wide range of MFF decision-makers on different positions to get a wider picture and to ensure accuracy. Second, the reader should be able to monitor how the results were obtained, from the research question to the conclusion, by establishing a chain of evidence. Third, key informants should review the study before it gets finalized in order to get their view and that the findings are in line with reality, which is something that I have done.

4. Analysis

4.1 MFF's corporate social responsibility engagement

4.1.1 MFF's CSR; motives, drivers, approach, and dimensions

Besides economic and sport objectives where the aim is to win and share joy, togetherness, and success with as many people as possible, MFF has a social aim as well. As it already mentioned before, the MFF organization recognizes its social role and adopts it as one of its most important purposes to develop the commitment to the society, human rights, and the environment (MFF policy document). The social aim defined in that way is very much in line with the theoretical definition of CSR. The European Commission defines CSR as "the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society" (Fifka and Jaeger, 2020: 62). On that track, Babiak and Wolfe (2009) point out that CSR definitions address "societal relationships" (Wood, 1991, p. 693) and the "expectations that society has of organizations" (Carroll, 1979, p. 500).

In the beginning, it is essential to mention that all responders during the interviews mention a long history of corporate social responsibility in the MFF organization. Even 75 years ago, social engagement was part of the organization's daily operations. During the interviews, two high position persons in MFF pointed out the role of probably most important chairman in the history of the MFF, Eric Persson. During World War II and after it, the community engagement of the MFF was already visible. At that time, football was an amateur sport, and players were not professionals. However, each of them, players, and management, in that time, were intensely engaged in community issues. Both Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 stated that they are proud of the MFFs history and social engagement heritage.

"*Starting with our honorable chairman Eric Persson who was committed to the society, people, and human rights, MFF's sense for social issues was always part of the organization's DNA. For example, Eric Persson was engaged in saving Jews transporting them from Denmark to Sweden during World War II.*" Interviewee 1

"We all in MFF have the mission to show social responsibility like our honorable chairman Eric Persson. He was engaged in social issues from the early beginning, and we have to keep the same path. He was the first president who organized long trips in Brazil to show to people

in Sweden how people from other parts of the world live. Also, we in MFF are all proud of his contribution during World War II. He got a medal from Danish king in that time for saving the Jews by secretly transports from Denmark to Sweden." Interviewee 3

As Fifka and Jeager (2020) point out, the critical role of history and tradition emphasized by Blumrodt et al., can also be considered as a driver for CSR as many clubs are traditionally highly embedded in their local communities. This can be an argument in the case of MFF, where MFF history is one of the motives for its CSR engagement.

By analyzing the documentations and during the interviews, it was clear that multiple dimensions of activity characterize MFF's CSR. This is in line with Dahlsrud's conclusion, presented in the work of Fifka and Jeager (2020). He argues that different dimensions can characterize CSR, such as the environmental dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension, the stakeholder dimension, and the voluntary dimension.

Interviewee 2 points out that MFF's CSR activities are related to the environment and community concerning economic aspects and stakeholders' interests. Also, much of MFF's CSR activities are voluntary. For instance, even MFF CEO was voluntarily helping to share the food for those in need during the Covid-19 crisis. All of those multiple dimensions of activity are visible through MFF CSR programs operated by the CSR department "Malmo FF in community," which can be presented and analyzed in the next section.

MFF's social engagement is very much in line with the concepts where policymakers have use sport, sport values and sport influence as an increasingly useful tool for advancing a wide range of social welfare and development policies. Sport has seen as a vehicle for integration, social cohesion and broader sustainable social development at local, regional, national and international levels (Gulianotti 2011, Kidd 2008). Under the influence of neo-liberal social policies, many football clubs incorporate in their organization a corporate social responsibility program inspired by the SDP's work. Interviewee 1 aimed that sport and especially football as the most popular sport is a global tool for sustainable development.

Besides, MFF's CSR policy can be described through an integrative and ethical approach. The theoretical concept used in work of Breithbarth and Harris, (2008), Breithbarth et al., (2011) points out that the integrative approach focuses on the integration of social demands and ethical approach focuses on the right thing to do with either a philosophical, paternalistic humanitarian or sustainability background, or following human rights and other international

conventions (e.g., UN Global Compact). In the case of MFF, empirical findings prove that integrative and ethical approaches are much more seen as a motive than a political approach or instrumental approach which focuses on achieving economic objectives through social activities. All people from MFF who were interviewed named out that CSR activities and programs are not motivated with the economic benefits, but rather with the fact that this is right to do.

"We are aware of the fact that our society is struggling with the issues and we, as a role model, and organization with the big influence, want to do our best to a positive contribution to our society. Society is giving to as an organization, and we want to give back to society as well. Our main motives are not political or economic. However, we need to be aware of the interest of our stakeholders". (Interviewee 1)

Breitbarth and Harris (2008) emphasize that managers need to be fully evaluated and aware of developments in the wider socio-political-economic environment. We can see that this kind of statement is very much in line with the MFF CSR policies. As Interviewee 1 pointed out, the role of stakeholders, stakeholder expectations and the exposed role of clubs force them to be transparent in business, to consider stakeholder interests and to integrate CSR to benefit society which Fifka and Jeager, (2020) emphasize.

4.1.2 CSR department "MFF in the community" and its programs

MFF's positive contribution to society and sustainable development is achieved and recognized through the several different programs of the department "MFF in the community". The aim of the department, which is dealing with particular programs and concepts, is to spread positive values - in line with MFF's sports philosophy – and to contribute to society. The purpose is to counteract violence and racism, increase integration between different groups, to participate in sustainable development, protect the minors, promote the health and educate youngsters and adults (MFF Annual Yearbook, 2019).

Social engagement is the keyword for the extensive activities MFF conducts with all those programs. Social engagement describes the program "MFF in the community" in general, and it is part of all other programs under the umbrella of "MFF in the community" (MFF Annual Yearbook, 2018). A large part of activities MFF is cooperating with the city of Malmo, the business community and other stakeholders. The dynamics of such cooperation create new

opportunities to give people in society the confidence of the future and the existence of a better sustainable society.

As the previous research in the theoretical framework suggests, in the context of professional football, specific CSR-goals, as well as their corresponding key performance indicators, need to be defined. These can be based on the CSR-related issues (communities, human capital, fans and members, the commercial environment, compliance and the ecological environment). Empirical findings show that MFF detected communities and environmental issues and established CSR programs to help solve those issues through CSR engagement.

Most important programs within the entire department named "MFF in the community" are: *Football Academy*, *Career Academy, School football against racism and MFF helps.*

MFF's Football academies concept has been an integrated part of MFF CSR programs since 2005. The concept combines football training with academic education where MFF's academies not only produce good footballers but generate academic results that rank those schools among the very top schools in Malmö (Den Himmelsblå Vägen, 2012). By integrating sport and school, young people have the opportunity to invest entirely in both. Students receive specialized football training daily as part of the school. At the same time, football is used as an educational aid in teaching. The academy has only one goal: all students must pass admission to the national high school's program.

In this unique holistic approach to school and football, the most talented 13-year-olds in Malmö and the surrounding area are selected and offered a place in the Football Academy, a school profile program that Malmö FF conducts in collaboration with the City of Malmö (ibid.). In collaboration with Malmö City the program has been expanded to include sports other than football *(Den Himmelsblå Vägen, 2012).*

MFF Youth and MFF Football Academies have a task to develop good people on and off football peach. MFF policy is in line with scientific researches. As a sports organization, they have a responsibility to "design programs that develop better people rather than simply skilled individuals" (J.L. Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005:32). Also, MFF as a policy-makers assures the accessibility of sport and organization programs to all, regardless of socio-economic status, race, culture, ethnicity, or gender.

Also, for those students who are playing in MFF on an elite youth football level, MFF intends to give those youth players an honest chance for a high-quality elite football venture without

having to give up school work. There will come a time after the career or when the career has not progressed as intended and then a full high school and upper secondary education is an essential foundation to stand on (Den Himmelsblue Vägen, 2012).

"15 years ago we started with one school in Malmo, and today we are proud that we count 17 academies, 14 in Skåne region and three outside of Skåne. Expansion of the academies is a significant result of our work, and we are very proud of where we are standing today. Besides, school results show that students having football training during school hours are motivated to achieve better school results. Statistic confirms that". Interviewee 4

The Career Academy is Malmö FF's initiative to help reduce youth unemployment in Malmö (MFF Annual Yearbook, 2018*)*. The concept consists of two parts. The first part is a matching activity where MFF works with matching unemployed young people under 30 to jobs in the club's partner companies. The second part is "Career Day with Football" where MFF mixes job seekers and employers during a day, where they get the opportunity to meet both on and next to the football pitch" (ibid). MFF ambition and motivation, with its partners, is to create a new arena where young people from all over Malmö can meet working life in a new way and get information about different job choices. The Career Academy's ambition is to be a unifying force that effectively uses the resources already available and adds to MFF's skills and its large network of potential employers under the strong Malmö FF brand *(*MFF KarrierAcademi doc, 2019*)*. Today it looks like MFF is a natural and obvious partner to the Municipality/City of Malmo. MFF has assumed that collaboration is defined as a partnership between different actors who jointly drive sustainable development.

MFF gladly shares ideas and concepts of Career Academy. Although it was MFF who came up with a concept and idea, what is crucial is that MFF is generous and willing to shares with others, something that can benefit many people. This is an idea and model which spreads around Sweden. The reason why SEF (Swedish Elite Football Association) is interested in national initiatives comes from the fact that club managers have previously expressed that they would like to see concrete and measurable concepts that more people can be involved in. Progress is seen by the fact that the aim for 2018 was that five clubs within SEF have an agreement with their local employment agency (MFF Annual Yearbook, 2018).

"Yes, we gladly share our CSR ideas, especially the idea of "Career Academy", our cooperation with Swedish Employment to reduce unemployment in the local community. Our methodology, our contacts and experience was something which attracted other clubs to do the

same. We are proud that we could be an example. 2017 SEF signed a contract with Swedish Employment Service based on our (MFF) methodology that every club in SEF can adjust to local needs. I became a national coordinator of the project and this is probably the sigh that we are doing an excellent job in MFF and that could be used in other clubs and their communities as well. I am sure those kinds of programs can be established on the international level as well, cause, during the meeting at the international conference with other European colleagues, they were very interested in our work." (Interviewee 1)

MFF is the initiator of the project "*Football against racism - for everyone's safety and equal value"*, which combats racism and discrimination in football and society in general and is, in many segments, based on *the Convention on the Rights of the Child (*Annual Yearbook, 2018). MFF's idea with the whole project is to increase public awareness to combat racism. An inclusive, equal and integrated society is based on the principle of everyone's equal rights, regardless of, for example, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability and descent is something which MFF works with partners (MFF policy document, 2018). In 2010, starting with the U-17 match between MFF and Barcelona, MFF gathered representatives from 26 Skåne associations at stadion and worked one day together to produce a manifesto for how to work against racism and discrimination and how it should work practice (Den Himmelsblavagen, 2012).

Malmö FF wants to help increase knowledge and understanding of autism with the program *"MFF helps"* in cooperation and partnership with the "LifeWatch" organization. This program runs the last few years and MFF player Behran Safari is the ambassador (MFF Annual Yearbook, 2018).

The theoretical framework of CSR in football helps to explain MFF's CSR work. In the work of Fifka and Jeager (2020), Breitbarth et al. point out that football clubs own a variety of resources that are of significant advantage when it comes to implementing CSR. They involve economic resources (such as the ability to reach public target groups, including diverse and isolated communities), political resources (such as the ability to build bridges or reach relevant decision-makers), integrative resources (such as the opportunity to provide an image transfer for corporate institutions or the ability to be a platform for social integration), ethical resources (such as the general positive attributes of sports or the ability to be a role model in terms of ethics and values) and emotional and other resources (such as health issues or the general emotional attractiveness of the sport). As we have seen in empirical data, in the case of

MFF Football Academy and Career Academy programs are examples where organizations involve its economic resources to reach the target group of unemployment or, in case of Football Academy, to reach the youth to help them solving school issues through the football. Results show that MFF is using its political resources in cooperation with the municipality of Malmo to combat school issues. At the same time, they are working on their image as a platform for social integration by using values and positive attributes of the sport. A good example is program Football against racism.

4.2 MFF in the context of UN's Agenda 2030 and its SDGs

4.2.1 MFF's idea of contribution in Agenda 2030 and its SDGs

The idea of MFF's participation in global political agendas is the extension of the MFF's CSR engagement from the early beginning. During the analysis of the MFF internal documents with the confirmation in the interviews, it was clear that, as an example and the role model for the population on local, regional, national level, MFF feels even as a duty to take an active role in global agendas. This kind of engagement is a chance for contribution to sustainable development, which will, for sure, create new opportunities and the existence of a better society for all (MFF Anual Yearbook, 2019).

In the interview part regarding MFF's participation and contribution in Agenda 2030, Interviewee 1 pointed out the importance of the Agenda 2030 for MFF as an organization.

"It is important to realize what Agenda 2030 is and why it is important in general. What that means that for us in MFF and how we can contribute to the SDGs. For us, this is not a commercial project. Engaging in Agenda 2030, we want to take one level up in achieving sustainable development. However, first, we have to detect the space for improvement and connect our previous and present work with the possible implementation of the SDGs". Interviewee 1

Thus, the first phase of implementation of SDGs was to find a link between the previous and present work and the SDGs. As a consequence, with this kind of approach, the contribution to sustainable development can be put on a higher level.

However, problems were detected early in the beginning. As a theoretical framework suggests, SDGs are considered as 'integrated and indivisible' (Lindsey and Darby, 2019). This means that the implementation of each goal should be in relation and possible implementation with all

other goals. To identify and examine the relevance of multiple intersections across sport and different SDGs and targets, Lindsey and Darby(2019) draw on the "Policy Coherence Concept" *as a valuable lens for identifying and considering factors that can enable and limit different potential contributions to sport in various sustainable development goals* (Lindsey and Darby, 2019: 795). This concept can be used to help to explain participation, contribution and possible implementation of the SDGs from a sports organization perspective. As Lindsey and Darby (2019) concluded, this concept has a particular application because there is a repeatedly expressed aspiration within the 2030 Agenda and certain goals of the SDG (17.14) to "enhance the coherence of policies for sustainable development" (UNGA, 2015). This, in turn, reflects the relevance of seeking compliance across multiple policies and domains are given the concept of SDGs as universal, integrated and indivisible.

Just as an example, which can make things more understandable, and which can help in this analysis, analyses were undertaken concerning health and the SDGs used in Lindsey and Darby (2019) research, illustrate the complexity of policy coherence and the numerous interconnections across the Agenda 2030 and its SDGs. They refer to Nunes et al. (2016), who recognize both the importance of various SDGs in contributing to the health-specific SDG 3 and the varied contributions that improving health can make to other SDGs. In the case of MFF and its contribution and implementation of SGDs show that contribution to the SDG nr 3 (health) can be in connection to the few other SDGs. We are going to see those cases in analyses a bit later.

However, before that, it is essential to mention that Agenda 2030 is a relatively young project that started in 2015. Also, MFF started to work on Agenda 2030 and possible implementation in August 2019, and it can be a limiting factor due to the short period on Agenda 2030 (MFF Annual Yearbook 2019).

4.2.2 MFF meets the SDGs; preliminary and implementation phase

So, in the preliminary phase, MFF tried to link running CSR programs and each SDG goal. The purpose was to see what MFF had already done and what MFF is still doing in the field of sustainable development. The aim is to find possible connections between CSR work and each of the 17 SDGs.

In the interview with Interviewee 1, the interviewee pointed out that the connection between MFF work on sustainable development and SDGs is more than evident. The link, contribution

and concrete results could be measured mostly through the concept and work of the Football Academy activities and Career Academy activities on several different SDGs.

Empirical results show concrete results of the CSR programs which can be in connection to SDGs and which contribute to SDGs. Connection and contribution are visible in SDG nr 3 (ensuring healthy lives), SDG nr 4 (promoting the well-being of youngsters ensuring equitable access to quality education), SDG nr 5 (gender equality), SDG nr 8 (promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work), SDG nr 10 (reducing inequality), SDG nr 16 (promotion justice and combating the discrimination). In further analysis, the connection will be explained more in detail.

More concrete, as we have seen in empirical data, the MFF Football Academy concept by its definition contributes to achieving SDG nr 4 (*"ensuring equitable access to quality education, UNCA, 2015*) and, as such, can be a ground for implementation. Just as an example, with the concept of Football Academies, MFF meets goal nr 4 and target 4.1 *("By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes, UNCA, 2015)* since MFF Football academies are open for both girls and boys and are free of charge.

"The participation of the boys and girls in academies programs, although programs are open for both, 80% of students are boys" (Interviewee 4).

As previous research suggests, this is an example where activities regarded SDG nr 4 are in direct relation with SDG nr 5 (gender equity). Besides, According to MFF's policy document (2019), gender equality is a natural and integral part of the MFF organization. This is much in line with previous research from the theoretical framework between the sport and SDGs, where we have seen that operating on one particular SDG has an impact on the possible few other SDGs. Rossi and Jeanes (2016: 493) recognize that 'educational elements are central to the movement's ability to contribute to sustainable development' and in Agenda 2030 and its SDGs (Lindsey and Darby 2019).

Besides, Lindsey and Darby (2019) argue that the broader orientation of SDG Target 4.1 towards 'relevant and effective learning outcomes' from primary and secondary education enables a recognition of further potential synergies between sport-related activities and the 2030 Agenda. Goal 4.7 of the SDG has relevance beyond formal education in promoting the broader concept of "education for sustainable development" that includes elements such as sustainable

lifestyles, citizenship, gender, peace and human rights (UNGA, 2015: 17) different cases and contexts, were among the 'life skills' that SDP projects sought to develop.

Interviewee 1 aimed the potential of a broad concept of the SDGs where, for them in MFF, it is vital to work on those broad "life skills".

Employers and training providers in other industries could help to enhance pathways that support young people into employment and thus address a limitation of some current SDP projects (Lindsey et al., 2019). According to that, we can see many elements of Career Academy's work are in the partnership (SDG nr. 17) with the municipality of Malmo.

For example, in SDG goal number 4, the UN (UNCA, 2015) proposes to *"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."* This seems innocuous for many, yet it is the goal that is most entwined with not only SDG 1 (poverty reduction) and SDG 8 (decent work), but also with SDG 5 (gender equality) to render possible such goals as good health and well-being (SDG 3) (English, L. M. and Mayo, P., 2019.).

Further on, providing young people with quality education for more comprehensive content is the best and most effective way of reducing and eradicating poverty (SDG nr 1). Although the national definition of poverty in Sweden does not exist, Interviewee 1 points out that statistic shows that 4 500 people in Malmo live below the poverty line. By providing them quality education in combination with the sport through football and partly through Career Academy, it is theoretically possible to reduce poverty.

From the perspective of SDG nr 3 ("*Ensure healthy lives and promote the well-being of every one of all ages, UNCA 2015*), one of the main aims of the sport and football is to promote physical, mental health, and well-being. MFF, as a sports organization and football club, contributes to goal nr 3 through many activities and programs on a daily base.

As already mentioned, a significant contribution is visible in SDG nr 8 through the concept and activities of Career Academy.

Further on, regarding SDG nr 10, an inclusive, equal and integrated society is based on the principle of everyone's equal rights, regardless of, for example, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability and descent is a part of MFF values incorporated in each aspect of the organization (MFF policy document, 2019). Through the program "Football school mot racism", MFF is doing an arduous work to reduce inequality.

SDG nr 16 is strongly linked to all the other goals, because peace, justice, inclusion and accountability, fit-for-purpose institutions, strongly influence everything else and are in turn influenced by everything else, and because governance is the process meant to steer the entire collection of goals toward effective outcomes. The goal is especially strongly linked to SDG 1 (poverty reduction), SDG 4 (equitable education), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 9 (resilient infrastructure), and SDG 17 (means of implementation). Due to that, we can see that MFF has already contributed to this goal through the mentioned programs and activities connected with several goals. MFF aims to improve "*School Football against racism"* through an increased focus on children's rights based on *the Convention on the rights of the children.* This kind of activity promotes good vehicles to train many essential social and life skills and to address significant risk factors for crime and violence, racism, especially amongst youngsters.

In this preliminary phase, the lack of concrete measures and commitments are detected in SDG goals 13, 14, 15, which are related to measures responding to the challenges of climate change and environmental protection.

After the preliminary phase, after connecting the existed work with SDGs, in the second phase of the involvement in SDGs, the MFF focus will be on SDG nr 17 *(partnership)* and target 17.7. *(Encourage and promote effective public and public-private partnerships and civil society partnerships based on the experience of other partnerships and their funding strategies, (UNCA, 2015)).*

"All of our commitment to those SDGs is in cooperation with our partners. So, our focus in the second phase will be on partnership. Through the partnership, we can do much more and contribution can be realized on a higher level." Interviewee 1

Interviewee continues that MFF asked for expert opinion where is the most potential to meet the SDGs. The experts have suggested focusing on SDG target 17.7 to be able to strengthen implementation resources and revitalize the global sustainable development partnership. Through its activities on and off the playing field, MFF will contribute to the city, business, associations and organizations acting together to create an inclusive, safe and sustainable society for all children and young people.

The suggestion is that MFF should encourage a sustainable lifestyle where resources are used and consumed as efficiently as possible to use the potential of stadium and stadium sustainability programs. More closely, by engaging in target 12.3 ("*By 2030, halve per capita*

global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses", UNCA, 2015), the suggestion is that MFF shall, through preventive measures and information, encourage reduced food waste within its operations. With the target 12.5 (*By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse, UNCA: 2015),* the suggestion is that MFF should reduce the amount of waste and waste of resources through preventative measures and initiatives that will encourage reuse and recycling.

Besides goal nr 12 as a new SDG where MFF sees space for contribution, MFF will improve contribution in goal nr 4 and some of its targets.

The additional space is detected in goal 4, Target 4.7 *("By 2030, ensure that all students have the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promoting a culture of peace, non-violence and global citizenship, and valuing cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development. (UNCA, 2015)".*

Based on the descriptions available about MFF's initiative *"Primary school football against racism"*, proposes are directed to target 4.7 by the fact that the target 4.7, in its original description, links to several areas that can be more clearly attributed to countering racism than many other goals, such as diversity, human rights, gender equality and cultural understanding. Besides, there is a direct link to education.

By allowing children and young people to combine sports with developing relevant skills and knowledge for the future working life, MFF is going to contribute in target 4.4 *("By 2030, the number of young people and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and professional skills, will increase substantially for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship"*). The base for this kind of contribution is the actual work of MFF Football Academies.

When we are talking about work of MFF Football Academies, the space for contribution is detected even in target nr 4.a which says: "Build and improve educational environments that are adapted for children and people with disabilities, and take into account gender equality aspects and thus offer a safe, peaceful, inclusive and appropriate learning environment for everyone", UNCA, 2015. The suggestion is that MFF will contribute to this target by allowing children and young people to combine sports with the development of relevant skills and

knowledge for the future working life. MFF shall contribute to creating safe and inclusive learning environments where people are allowed to develop based on their conditions. MFF strives to create safe environments where people are given equal opportunities to develop for life both on and off the playing field.

In SDG nr 8, Career Academy by its nature and current work is a base to contribute to this goal by MFF using its broad network to reduce unemployment and exclusion in society, which contributes to both people's well-being, business development and sustainable development in general. In this phase, MFF, through the activities of Career Academy, will focus on target 8.3. ("*Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services", UNCA 2015).* So, the suggestion is that MFF continues to support the development of the local business community through networks and inspiration and contribute to increased employment in society. Close with that is target 8.6. ("*By 2020, significantly reduce the proportion of young people who are neither working nor studying", UNCA 2015),* where MFF aims to help individuals, especially young people, acquire relevant skills and knowledge to get closer to the labor market.

As Interviewee 3 pointed out, MFF wants to lead with example by engaging in global processes and agendas. However, the interviewee is aware that MFF cannot implement all 17 SDGs, but MFF would like to engage in those goals where the space for implementation is possible due to the MFF'S resources.

In the Year Annual book (2019), MFF concluded that in 2020 the aim is, with the support of the "Tillväxtverket", to lead a national initiative to broaden the market for social entrepreneurship from a sports perspective, raise awareness of Agenda 2030 and the global goals and how sports clubs can be better at measuring the effects of their community engagement.

If we take a look on previous research how sport can contribute to SDGs, Lindsey and Darby (2019) argue that issues such as education, health and gender empowerment, that have occupied a prominent position within policies, practices and research associated with SDP, remain strongly represented in the 2030 Agenda and are the focus of specific but broadly conceived SDGs. On the other hand, other SDGs and Targets associated with discrimination against women (SDG 5.1), abuse and violence against children (SDG 16.2) and corruption and bribery

(SDG 16.5), for example, are amongst those that draw existing problems within sport firmly into the realm of the global development policy framework. The agendas now encompassed by these universal SDGs, therefore, have significant implications not just within SDP but for and across sport more broadly. Empirical findings show lots of MFF contribution on those issues.

4.3 MFF as a global actor

4.3.1. MFF as a global actor in processes of football globalization

As a theoretical framework suggests, the importance of the football clubs, politically define as non-state actors in global political agendas, has become relevant to the development of globalization and global governance (Chatzigianni, 2018). Gulianotti and Robertson (2004, 2007, 2011) see football, as the world's most popular sport which constitutes one of the most dynamic domains of globalization. They explain football's globalization through the concept of 'glocalization' in which local subjects may adapt or resist 'global' phenomena.

In analyzing data, it is evident that MFF is very aware of the fact that globalization processes in football are something that shapes today's football global world.

"I think everything today is globally connected. We, as a club, are doing things on a local level, which are directly visible and measurable on a global level. This is possible by connecting local activities with the global processes, but also the opposite. This is the result of globalization". Interviewee 2

This kind of thinking is based on awareness of the global connection and interdependencies. This is very much in line with Gulianotti and Robertson (2004) concept that points out that the fulcrum of football's dimensions is the relationship of the universal and the particular, 'the elemental form of global life' *per se* (Robertson 1992: 103; 1995) and while universalism and particularism may appear as categorical antinomies, they are interdependent, fused in a globe-wide nexus.

Further on, in Gulianoti-Robertson's concept of globalization of football, in the second point of their interpretation, they interpret the world's leading football clubs as transnational corporations (TNCs) that serve to drive the football's contemporary globalization. As already mentioned in the theoretical framework, a global realist understanding of the glocality of TNCs helps to explain the current condition of football's largest clubs. All clubs are 'ethnocentric', which means that they retain key symbolic ties to locality mostly through name, headquarters,

home stadium, branding, strip color, and local support. Empirical findings show that we can put MFF in this category as well since MFF is a symbol of the local community, they have built a strong local brand, they own the stadium, and they have local support. However, clubs like Manchester United establish marketing outlets in Asia and North America, more 'polycentric' marketing possibilities arise (Gulianotti and Robertson, 2004). This is the point where MFF is much more behind the largest football clubs. Transnational clubs like Manchester United, Juventus and Bayern Munich have global communities of supporters and merchandise consumers that are similar in size, if not patterns of identification, with the citizenry of nations (ibid.).

In the case of MFF, empirical findings show that MFF cannot compare with those clubs due to the limited economic and human resources without global communities of supporters and consumers. Also, from the perspective of Dolles and Söderman (2011), football clubs can construct their global brands and produce their ways of an international operation, including international franchises and strategic alliances, such as the one between Manchester United Football Club and the New York Yankees (Chatarazzi, 2018). Empirical findings show that MFF is not on that kind of level at this moment.

However, in interviews with the policy and decision-makers in MFF, they pointed out that the aim is, by improving sport, economic and social goals, to be a club well known outside of the national boundaries.

Further on, as the theoretical framework suggests, the model of the global football field has strong continuity with Robertson's theory of glocalization and highlights the mutual interdependencies between local and global social forces. In the global football field, football clubs can be associated with neoliberalism. Neoliberal policies see clubs like Manchester United, Arsenal, Liverpool, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Juventus, Milan and Bayern Munich, comparable to TNCs (Giulianotti and Robertson 2004, 2009). Those benefits are much bigger for the largest teams. MFF, as an elite football club from the global football field, as a result of globalization processes, belongs in this category and have benefits of those kinds of politics. However, the position of MFF as a 68 the most successful team in Europe in 2020 *(MFF Annual Yearbook, 2019)* does not put MFF in a good position from that perspective.

On the other side, neo-liberalist tend to advocate corporate social responsibility and other forms of philanthropic voluntarism, with the economic incentive that the self-regulation of industrial and social practices tends to be 'good for business' (Gulianotti and Robertson, 2012 referencing

The Economist, 17 January 2008). MFF can be seen as a part of the global civil society. As Gulianotti and Robertson (2012) suggest, in a football, global civil society is best understood regarding the growing' sport for development and peace' sector, in which diverse institutions (IGOs, NGOs, new social movements, TNCs and others) use sport as an interventionist tool to address issues regarding peace, development and social justice.). In this context, MFF can establish itself as a club with a high level of corporate social responsibility programs, which can give him a better global position in a global football field as a subject of global civil society. As all interviewees in MFF pointed out, social components can establish MFF on the global football field with a significant impact on other football clubs.

What can be seen in favor of MFF positioning on the global level is the fact that MFF is a part of Nordic civil society. As we have seen in the theoretical framework of literature review, this model has specific social characteristics focused on a strong welfare state, many civil society organizations and close and effective partnerships between the state, civil society and the market. In sport, this model is linked to significant government investment, a "sport for all" policy and the advancement of national networks of sports clubs and associations (Gulianotti et al., 2019b). The nordic model prioritizes social democracy and inclusion, where Nordic societies evidence higher levels of social equality than many other regions. This can be an extra argument in the case of MFF. One crucial way in which the Nordic region may seek to develop and to export its models of civil society is by operating within the realm of 'global civil society'. Global civil society refers mainly to the social dimensions of globalization, particularly the forms of social development (Gulianotti et al., 2019b).

During the interviews, Interviewee 2 said that MFF football rivals from other region and European countries were interested in MFF social policies and sustainable development programs. Being a part of this model of society can affect a positive global civil society. As we are going to see in the last part of this analysis, MFF established itself as a global actor through the importance of networking, where MFF partners were interested in this kind of policy, which describes MFF engagement and which can be under the impact of the Nordic model of society.

Under the influence of neoliberalism, many football clubs in Sweden became private ownership. There has been notable growth in the number of clubs that have moved towards commercial ownership models where the business component is priority number one. However, MFF, as a club from elite-level have long been subject to the rule promoting social inclusion

and democracy that requires their 51% ownership by a non-profit club rather than by private companies or entrepreneurs.

Besides, the Nordic nations offer at least partial alternatives to neoliberal approaches, by acting as 'norm entrepreneurs' for the promotion of welfare society principles such as participatory democracy, political transparency, human rights, gender and other social equality, and social justice (Gulianotti et al., 2019b). The influence of Nordic society can be argued while MFF as a football club is engaged to contribute to society.

Due to that, The Nordic region's actual contribution to global development and, in recent times, much of this activity has been directed towards achieving the United Nations' development goals, most recently the Sustainable Development Goals (Gulianotti et al. 2019b). This can also be an argument for MFF engagement in Agenda 2030 and development goals.

On the other side, the theoretical framework of globalization, from the perspective of global sustainable development agendas, help to explain that football club participation in global political agendas is a consequence of the globalization. Sports organizations are now interested in development issues, and in contributing to meeting development goals (Darnell, 2012). Empirical findings show that MMF can be a role model on a local, regional and national level by taking an active role in Agenda 2030. Besides, as we have seen above, the aim is, as a consequence of the globalization process and neoliberal politics, to establish itself as a global actor.

In the case of MFF participation in Agenda 2030, Interviewee 3 said that it is vital to understand the importance of global agendas. Interviewee 3 pointed out that everything is interconnected and that local engagement in global agendas is going to have an impact on a global level. Some other football clubs or organizations could be inspired by the MFF example and can be led by the same or similar engagement.

4.3.2 MFF as a global actor; the importance of the partnerships, projects and networking

In interviews with all participants from MFF, they mentioned the importance of networking, projects and partnership with different actors.

As we have seen in a theoretical framework, partnership on social issues is one of the most important promotors of CSR. That kind of cooperation helps to show MFF CSR engagement regarding sustainable development. Also, this is one way how MFF can make it self-visible on

the global scene. The first cooperation is between the club's foundations and football clubs. However, some clubs have only a CSR department which is integrated into the club as a department. Empirical findings show that MFF has a CSR department integrated into the club's structure.

The partnership between the club and the public institutions is mainly based on generating social value for and within the (local) community (Klischievski and Simion, 2019). In the case of MFF, empirical findings show that partnership between MFF and public institutions is achieved by the cooperation with the municipality of Malmo through Football Academy and Career Academy concepts. Local engagement and collaboration on the local level is the ground for all other broader club's CSR activities.

In their study, Klischievski and Simion (2019) present that the complementary direction of this partnership is identifying and reaching international partners by accessing the network of public institutions. This is very much in line with MFF's partnership with the public employment service. This kind of partnership and memorable results on a local level enable MFF to be involved in a global network of public employment, where MFF can achieve its global influence.

Interviewee 1 stated that establishing MFF as a leader in Sweden will help to position MFF at the European level as well. As empirical results show, MFF is with no doubt, one of the most influenced clubs and leaders among elite football clubs in Sweden. MFF was measured by professional statistics as the best football academy and one of four most influenced clubs from the field of CSR in Sweden. As we have seen previously in this analysis, the MFF program and concept of Career Academy has been accepted by many other Swedish clubs in SEF (MFF Annual Yearbook, 2019). Also, as Interviewee 1 announced in the interview, through the partnership with SEF, MFF educates other clubs about the importance of Agenda 2030. MFF shares its experience on how to approach the SDGs and how to contribute to some of them.

Interviewee 1 remarks that CSR works in MFF, and mostly works on sustainable development, which is something that can have a global impact.

"Still, we are aware that we need more financial resources to do more reports on English via Global Reporting Standards on sustainable work. Our CSR quality was recognized because we were invited to cooperate and participate in European projects. For example, in 2015, we were invited to become a member of the World International Network of Public Employment, a global

network of public employment where we present our work of Career Academy. This is the way how we are becoming globally visible and recognized. We as an organization have to invest more in our CSR programs, and we have to use all those kind of global possibilities to establish our self on a global international scene. I repeat, this mantra "think global, do local" suits well in this situation. Maybe we don't have resources such big clubs have, but our engagement, knowledge and results are very respectful in the global scene. Being part of those kinds of programs and networking helps us to achieve that, help us being global." Interviewee 1

As the theory suggests, the third course of the social partnership concept, that clubs could benefit from, is the international networks. The successful example is network and partnership the *European Football for Development Network (EFDN),* which aim is to promote the power of football as a tool for social development and support the efforts of the network members in their initiatives to use football to reach sustainable development (EFDN, 2019). Klischievski and Simion (2019), point out that EFDN acts as a powerful entity and institutional partner, gaining easier access to European funds and opportunities. On the other hand, EFDN provides a different and more potent blend of promotional channels from which clubs could benefit, increasing their reach and visibility. The network promotes knowledge, experience, and best practice sharing on a European level to enhance the quality and efficiency of community and social responsibility programs in football (EFDN, 2019). Moreover, it gives them access to external resources coming from the more expansive network football clubs, leagues and football associations from European countries, which can benefit from official strategic partnerships. The network currently consists of 96 clubs, leagues and FA's from 29 European countries, which benefit from EFDN's official strategic partnerships with the Fare network, Centre for Access in Football Europe (CAFE), the Social Football Club Alliance, European Healthy Stadia Network, European Club Association and UEFA Foundation for Children (EFDN, 2019).

"...Our aim is that every one of our members, on the territory of UEFA, becomes community-engaged and socially responsible...being more than just a football club..." Interviewee 5

MFF is a member of this European organization since 2019, but as Interviewee 1 aimed, a collaboration between EFDN and MFF has been established several years ago. Interviewee 1 tends out that MFF has the benefits of being a member of the organization. Through the EFDN platform, MFF can present its CSR work, which is important in the sense of establishing CSR programs on a global European scene. Through the platform, MFF can inspire other football

clubs as well. MMF got a chance to attend the conference where they are building its network with other clubs, particularly regarding CSR activities through the football.

"We can learn from them, but they can learn from us. I have to say that those conferences have good meaning for us. Conferences help us improve our CSR, but also help us to make our CSR programs visible on the international scene." Interviewee 1

Similarly, regarding the benefits for football club being a member of the EFDN, Interviewee 5 points out:

"…EFDN offers to MFF projects which can disseminate both on a Swedish and international level. I think this is one of the values that we can provide to our members…"

Klischievski and Simion (2019) argue that, in addition to all the benefits that an EFDN member brings, there are also events and projects that the organization has developed, serving both knowledge sharing and business networking. Further on, besides conferences, EFDN is organizing a week *More than football*, which should contribute to the visibility and recognition of the work of foundations. These events are as exposed as legitimacy important reputational milestones. Also, these events come with essential media reporting capabilities to improve visibility and the grace of prestige.

More concrete, through the EFDN organization, MFF applied for two projects. "Sustainable stadiums" is a project of sustainable football stadiums where MFF has the most considerable potential. MFF owns the stadium, which is unique for Sweden. MFF sustainable activities regarding the stadium are plentiful, and MFF wants to use that potential, to share it with others and to be the inspiration for others. MFF's recycling food waste program, using 100 percent of wind energy in some stadium domains.

"Sustainable stadiums" is a three-year project in cooperation and with some founds of European commission and benefits for this kind of project are huge for MFF. Another project is the "Staff exchange program in football". Through the program, football clubs exchange staff for some period. Also, participants in this program are allowed to organize the conference and present their sustainable development work. This is the way how, through the networking regarding sustainable development activities, MFF can establish itself as a global actor influencing other football clubs.

In the study of Klischievski and Simion (2019), they argue that clubs need the support from various other clubs to showcase a social project on a European scale commonly and to receive the funding from the European Commission. Consequently, a supranational project needs to be delivered with the same methodology and in the same way, having this type of international structure to mediate the collaboration and provide the working framework.

"I have been discussing with the largest European football clubs who are impressed with MFF sustainable development works with our limited resources and funding. Many clubs see MFF as an example and role model. Despite differences in financial resources between MFF and larger football clubs, we share the same problems." Interviewee 1

5. Conclusion

Conclusion comments regarding MFF as a global actor;

The argument in favor of MFF as a global actor, regarding the partnership, is given in the conclusion of Klischievski and Simion (2019) where authors argue that the public institutions bring in the local community support and opportunities for international partners while the EFDN brings in international exposure and recognition, along with a collaborative knowledge-sharing framework.

"*Our job in MFF is to create the environment and conditions to be the best in Sweden, leading in the Nordic countries and established our self in Europe. Our task is to have a strong club and brand reputation on the football field and far outside the football field. But not less important, we always want to be a positive force in society that gives people and society the opportunity to grow".* Interviewee 2

"When MFF played Champions league 2014, 2015 against all biggest European clubs such as Real Madrid, Juventus and Atletico Madrid, our CSR got a chance to meet CSR experts from those biggest clubs. I can tell that work we do better in comparison to other clubs was the contribution to society and sustainable development. They could learn from us and I think that was the only thing we were at the forefront in comparison with those clubs." Interviewee 2

"*If we can show our contribution to sustainable development on a local level to those actors on a global level, it would give us a global position with the influence on other actors. On the other side, that would be a contribution to society and sustainable development on a worldwide level. This is all possible because of today's globalization processes where everything is connected*." Interviewee 2

For the conclusion of MFF as a global factor, Interviewee 2 stated that for MFF is essential to follow international trends, but it must be via local engagement. So through the activities which improve sustainable development on a local level, which are inspired by global programs, MFF could be a role model for other clubs. For now, this is just beginning, but MFF's ambitions are to achieve that in the future.

"For now we have ambition so show our sustainable development engagement in a global football field. In recent times we have started with networking, which can help us in our task to be an international actor. We have the highest incomes of all Swedish clubs and great sponsors. We have to use this advantage to show our notable work on sustainable development on the international scene. Agenda 2030 is something we do for the community on a local, regional, national and international level. Still, also it is an excellent opportunity to show to the football world our engagement, and if only one club can be led by our example, we would be delighted." Interviewee 3

About sharing club's CSR programs via EFDN platform, which can help the club to establish itself on a global scene:

"…We welcome clubs to send us information about their CSR programs. We have many active clubs who are promoting their programs via EFDN, which also helps them (clubs) to communicate back to their sponsors, especially if they have sponsors on a European or global level. Then by disseminating club's CSR programs on an international level, it helps us to inspire other clubs to follow good examples. On the other side, clubs get additional exposure where local work is recognized on a global level…" Interviewee 5

The broader purpose and motivation for this thesis was the desire to advance the still new and exciting field of research in sport and global politics. Starting with the global recognition of the sport as an important enabler to sustainable development, in this thesis has been examined by which policies and methods policymakers have been using sport as a tool for sustainable

development. The inspiration and initial engine of sustainable development is Sport for development and peace platforms, which have been used by the international community to encourage different actors from the world of sport to participate in sustainable development. As we have seen in this thesis, leading global organization - the United Nations, stated the role of sport in promoting sustainable development within the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (Gulianotti et al., 2019). As a consequence, different sports organizations such are professional sports clubs and leagues, transnational corporations from the sports sector, international sports organizations, became interested in development issues, and in contributing to meeting development goals (Darnell, 2012).

Accordingly, in this thesis, I examined by which policies and methods, inspired and aligned with global UN Agenda 2030, a football club can contribute to sustainable development and, consequently, if such policies can position a football club as a global actor. The case study of my investigation was the Swedish professional football club Malmö FF. To answer the research question "*Where football club acts beyond being just a football club by engaging in forms of global governance, how can and should it be conceptualized as a 'global actor'*", an in-depth analysis of the Malmö FF was performed by studying primary and secondary textual data sources in combination with conducting semi-structured interviews.

Results of the analysis show that processes of globalization, more closely, the process of glocalization of merging the local and the global, enable the processes where the local football club is a part of global governance where, on the other side, in the same processes, local engagement of the football club has a global impact. In the case of MFF, we have seen how football club adapts and redefines global agenda to suit its own particular needs, in this case, to contribute to sustainable development inspired by Agenda 2030. The results show that MFF's policymakers are aware of football as an essential tool for sustainable development. MFF's corporate social responsibility engagement on sustainable development has been used as a starting point in contribution to Agenda 2030 and the implementation of its Sustainable Development Goals. Further on, results made it visible that limited resources unable MFF to contribute and implement all 17 sustainable development goals. Although the idea of SDGs as universal, integrated, and indivisible is challenging to achieve from the perspective of a sports organization, as previous research and results of this study confirm, this reflects the relevance of seeking coherence across multiple policies such are partnerships between local, regional, national, and international bodies.

The answer to the research question regarding the part "*Where football club acts beyond being just a football club by engaging in forms of global governance...",* is visible in results from the analysis where MFF CSR programs are used as a vital contribution tool in Agenda 2030. Similarly, those programs are the foundation for further engagement and implementation of particular SDGs. As results show in the case of football club MFF, this has been achieving through the different kinds of partnerships with different actors.

Consequently, results show that MFF's CSR engagement in the global agenda is an argument that helps to establish MFF as a global actor and answers the second part of the research question. As we have seen in interviews, 3 of 4 decision-makers in MFF pointed out that being an example, role model, and contributor on sustainable development driven by Agenda 2030 makes MFF visible and important on the global scene. Besides, the importance of networking and participation in the projects, such as the project of "Stadium sustainability" under the guidance of European Football Developing Network driven by a desire to contribution to SDG number 12, are extra arguments in favor of MFF as a global actor.

As we have seen in this thesis, football clubs can be seen as transnational corporations in the process of football globalization, which can be interpreted as those clubs are global actors.

The largest football clubs in the world, such are Real Madrid, PSG, Manchester United, characterized by global impact through global supporter's network, substantial economic resources, and effective CSR programs supported by neoliberal policies. MFF is not in the category of the largest football clubs regarding global supporter's network and economic resources. However, results in this thesis show that MFF's corporate responsibility programs are well respected and influential on the global scene. As we have seen, MFF has a space for its transnationality via CSR engagement, and it can be seen as a global actor.

As we have seen in this thesis, another argument in favor of MFF as a global actor is a positive impact and attractive position of MFF as a part of Nordic society.

However, in the end, there are some limitations to this research. This research conducted a single case study, and recommendations for future research would be to research multiple case studies of football clubs to get a broader picture in the sense of generalization. Also, this research would get an extra dimension if we could include other clubs' perspectives and opinions about MFF as a global actor.

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NOTE! This thesis contains 21 490 words excluding *Appendicies*

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Interview guide with Interviewee 1: Karin Heri (Head of MFF's CSR department)

For introduction: how long have you been in MFF, your position and projects?

1. Besides sport and economic aims, objectives MFF established its social objective as well, which is, which is with any doubt, visible on a daily base through the social engagement driven by department "MFF in the community".

a) What means social aim for MFF and how important is that aim for MFF as an organization?

b) Please, tell me something about MFF corporate social responsibility. More specifically, "MFF in the community". Tell me something about the Swedish Elite Football and the concept, "MFF gladly share an idea."

c) Not so long time ago, MFF became a member in European Football for Developing Network who "aims to promote the power of football as a tool for social development and support the efforts of the network members in their initiatives to use football to reach sustainable development". What means that membership for MFF, what kind of benefits MFF conducts from organization and opposite, what this membership means for the EFDN?

2. There is global recognition of the sport as an important enabler to the sustainable development. Besides everything we talked about before about MFF social engagement, MFF

would like to contribute to the sustainable development inspired and driven by global political agendas, particularly, in AGENDA 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.

a) I am interested is the idea still alive, what are the concrete measures, how far MFF went in implementation? Is this only a utopian idea for football clubs with limited resources to contribute to SDGs and implementation of the SDGs?

b) Sustainable Development Goals are integrated and indivisible, global and universally applicable. Key for implementation is partnership. What do you think, in which goals MFF contribute the most? What could be done from the MFF side even more concerning Agenda 2030?

c) Back to SEF and EFDN. Both organizations are committed to Agenda 2030 and SDGs. Do you see space for cooperation on SDGs?

3) Without a doubt, MFF wants to establish itself as a real European club. First of all, this would be through excellent sport achievements and results. On the other side, do you believe, and how it is possible if you believe, that MFF can establish itself as an important global player through the other activities, beyond sport, such are corporate social responsibilities. We know that now so many football clubs contribute to global agendas. Could that be a way of establishing a global international player?

Appendix 2: Interview guide with Interviewee 2: Niclas Carlnen (MFF's CEO)

For introduction: how long have you been in MFF, your position and projects?

1. Besides sport and economic aims, objectives MFF established its social objective as well, which is, which is with any doubt, visible on a daily base through the social engagement driven by department "MFF in the community".

a) What means social aim for MFF and how important is that aim for MFF as an organization?

b) Please, tell me something about MFF corporate social responsibility. More specifically, "MFF in the community". Tell me something about the Swedish Elite Football and the concept, "MFF gladly share an idea."

2. There is global recognition of the sport as an important enabler to the sustainable development. Besides everything we talked about before about MFF social engagement, MFF would like to contribute to the sustainable development inspired and driven by global political agendas, particularly, in AGENDA 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.

a) I am interested is the idea still alive, what are the concrete measures, how far MFF went in implementation?

3) Without a doubt, MFF wants to establish itself as a real European club. First of all, this would be through excellent sport achievements and results. On the other side, do you believe, and how it is possible if you believe, that MFF can establish itself as an important global player through the other activities, beyond sport, such are corporate social responsibilities. We know that now so many football clubs contribute to global agendas. Could that be a way of establishing a global international player?

Appendix 3: Interview guide with Interviewee 3: Per Ågren (head of MFF Youth and person involved in Agenda 2030 and MFF Football Academy)

For introduction: how long have you been in MFF, your position and projects?

1. Besides sport and economic aims, objectives MFF established its social objective as well, which is, which is with any doubt, visible on a daily base through the social engagement driven by department "MFF in the community".

a) What means social aim for MFF and how important is that aim for MFF as an organization?

b) Please, tell me something about MFF corporate social responsibility. More specifically, "MFF in the community".

2. There is global recognition of the sport as an important enabler to the sustainable development. Besides everything we talked about before about MFF social engagement, MFF would like to contribute to the sustainable development inspired and driven by global political agendas, particularly, in AGENDA 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.

a) I am interested is the idea still alive, what are the concrete measures, how far MFF went in implementation? Is this only a utopian idea for football clubs with limited resources to contribute to SDGs and implementation of the SDGs?

b) Sustainable Development Goals are integrated and indivisible, global and universally applicable. Key for implementation is partnership. What do you think, in which goals MFF contribute the most? What could be done from the MFF side even more concerning Agenda 2030?

3) After a long time, MFF established a football girl section. What does it mean for MFF from the perspective of the head officer of MFF Youth and responsible person in MFF Football Academy?

4) Without a doubt, MFF wants to establish itself as a real European club. First of all, this would be through excellent sport achievements and results. On the other side, do you believe, and how it is possible if you believe, that MFF can establish itself as an important global player through the other activities, beyond sport, such are corporate social responsibilities. We know that now so many football clubs contribute to global agendas. Could that be a way of establishing a global international player?

Appendix 4: Interview guide with Interviewee 4: Jan-Olov Kindvall (Head of MFF Football Academy)

For introduction: how long have you been in MFF, your position and projects?

1. Besides sport and economic aims, objectives MFF established its social objective as well, which is, which is with any doubt, visible on a daily base through the social engagement driven by department "MFF in the community".

a) What means social aim for MFF and how important is that aim for MFF as an organization?

b) Please, tell me something about MFF corporate social responsibility. More specifically, "MFF in the community".

3) In your opinion, do you think "MFF Football Academy" can have a global impact as an excellent example of a CSR program so that other global actors can do similar work?

4) Without a doubt, MFF wants to establish itself as a real European club. First of all, this would be through excellent sport achievements and results. On the other side, do you believe, and how it is possible if you believe, that MFF can establish itself as an important global player through the other activities, beyond sport, such are corporate social responsibilities. We know that now

so many football clubs contribute to global agendas. Could that be a way of establishing a global international player?

Appendix 5: Interview guide with Interviewee 5: Hubert Rovers (CEO of EFDN)

For introduction, can you tell me something about your position in EFDN

1.) Can you tell me something about EFDN?

2.) The sustainable development is important for football clubs. Why so?

3.) EFDN The European Football for Development Network (EFDN) consists of professional football clubs, leagues and FAs who are committed to their communities and social responsibilities and have the passion for cooperating and engaging on a European level. The network aims to promote the power of football as a tool for social development and support the efforts of the network members in their initiatives to use football to reach out to various target groups in their communities.

Can you tell me, more concretely, how EFDN supports members in their initiatives to use football as a social tool of development?

4.) EFDN has recognized the universal call for action and engaged itself in Agenda 2030 and its SDGs. Can you tell me something more about it from the EFDN perspective? How you encourage clubs to participate in SDGs and possible implementation of SDGs. Can you give me some concrete examples, maybe some clubs engagement in the SDGs?

5.) Not so long ago, MFF has become a member of EFDN. Can you tell me what this membership means from EFDN and what it means for MFF? Are the benefits concrete and can you tell me what kind of benefits are for MFF as a membership?

6.) With no doubt, MFF wants to establish it self as a real European club. First of all, this would be through excellent sport achivments and results. On the other side, do you u belive, and how its possible if u belive, that malmo can establish it self as an important global player through the other actities, beyond sport, such are corporate social responsibilities. We know that now so many football clubs contribute to global agendas.

7.) Could membership in EFDN be a way of establishing MFF as a global international player? Could it be attractive for other clubs on the European scene the fact that MFF is coming from the Nordic part of the world?