Gender Equality, Better Practiced as Workforce Diversity

- An explorative study on how CSR focusing on gender equality policies is practiced

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Abstract

This study explores how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. It was found that many organizations incorporate workforce diversity into their gender equality policies; therefore workforce diversity was also of great importance in this study. The foundation is interviews of managers within the service and manufacturing industries and viewing of documents.

CSR is a commonly used concept referring to environmental, economical and social responsibilities. One aspect of CSR is gender equality, which often is closely related to the economic and social responsibilities. Gender is defined as socially constructed and hence it can vary between different societies. However, in this study gender is considered as male and female.

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies, it was divided into three sub-purposes to further cover the design of policies, how they are communicated and what challenges organizations face when practicing them. The objective was not to generalize the findings. To meet the purpose, six interviews were conducted where the participants shared their reflections and thoughts; this was complemented by relevant documents. The research questions we seek to answer are: How do organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies? And, What challenges do organizations face when practicing CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies?

It was found that the service industry practice CSR focusing on gender equality well on a managerial level. However, it was clear that the plan and policies were not strategically communicated to the employees. Moreover, the employee surveys did not capture gender equality or workforce diversity. The findings of the manufacturing industry showed that they have several routines and strategies for how they should communicate and practice CSR focusing on workforce diversity. They have yearly employee surveys within the subject as well as a booklet of organizational values, which is given out to all new employees. Several challenges were discovered and brought up by the interviewees. One of them being preconceptions of the industry. It was clear that both the service and the manufacturing industry suffered from this as people tend to have preconceptions of the service industry being simple and the manufacturing being tough and dirty. Future researchers are suggested to study workforce diversity separately, looking at the different aspects to enable a more thorough understanding.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Gender Equality, Workforce Diversity, Manufacturing Industry, Service Industry, Managers
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Abbreviations
CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility
HR = Human Resources
1. Introduction

*In this chapter we will start by elaborating on why we found this topic interesting. Furthermore, we will present the background where we will describe the main concepts and clarify why this should be studied. This will be followed by the thesis research question, purpose and objectives. Finally, we provide the reader with a chapter guide for the following chapters.*

1.1 Why is this topic interesting?

We have a general interest in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), mainly the idea that organizations voluntarily take their own initiatives and responsibility for the world we live in and their potential effects on it. We were interested in analyzing how CSR is actually practiced within organizations; therefore it was natural for us to incorporate CSR into our thesis. Several of our university level courses have brought up aspects regarding CSR, however the courses we have taken lacked the connection between CSR and gender equality. We think that if people and organizations consider gender equality as a part of CSR it will create a wider understanding, hence greater investment within the field. We want to extend our knowledge about this subject, as we believe it is important to emphasize that gender equality is a big part of CSR.

Today, gender equality is a highly discussed subject, especially in Sweden. Sweden is one of the most developed countries within this area, hence one of the most gender equal societies in the world (Lincoln, 2011). Research shows that the distinction between what has been regarded as a male profession and a female profession has started to diminish. For instance, there is an increasing number of females in managerial positions and an increasing number of male workers within the health care sector (Abrahamsson, 2014, p. 112). These are examples of areas where Sweden is heading towards a more gender equal work force. However, studies indicate that Sweden still has a gender segregated labor market (Kjellsson et al., 2014, pp. 152-154).

Both of us have worked within the service industry and the manufacturing industry, both large-, medium, and small sized enterprises, and hence have personal experiences of the difference in gender equality. Our overall assessment is that organizations rarely have clear gender equality guidelines that are communicated to the workers. This can be stated as neither of us can remember being informed about gender equality policies or plans.

Being Swedish women, we have grown up in a society where gender equality is constantly discussed. We believe that is the foundation to our genuine interest in the topic and our ambition to have a gender equal society. Our career ambitions are high and therefore it is even more important for us to raise the discussion about gender equality. However, we are humble to the fact that not all Swedish women feel for this question the way we do. The interest has successfully grown during our working life since we have noticed a lack of gender equality issues being communicated throughout organizations. Consequently, we are highly interested in researching how the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies are practiced, as well as the challenges organizations might face when practicing these policies.
As a first approach, since we are both students in Umeå, we visited Umeå municipality's homepage (www.umea.se) to look for information regarding gender equality within organizations. We found that the distribution of gender between different industries varied greatly. Hence, we chose to study the service industry and the manufacturing industry, as we wanted to explore and understand the underlying factors behind this inequality.

We believe that this research will be valuable for organizations and researchers as CSR and gender equality is a highly discussed subject and hence it is of great importance to consider CSR and gender equality within today’s society. If successfully practicing CSR and gender equality organizations can gain competitive advantages and therefore it is likely to be in their interest to find out more in the subject. In the following sections we will be discussing the general background of CSR, gender equality, workforce diversity and briefly describe their connection.

1.2 Background

Corporate Social Responsibility

Emmott & Worman (2008, p. 28) states that the concept of CSR has grown in importance and they believe it will become a greater part in organizations in the future. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) had an original focus on corporate philanthropy, which mainly refers to donations within charity (Grosser, 2009, p. 292). The concept has now stretched to include several aspects of the marketplace, primarily a responsibility towards stakeholders: investors, consumers, suppliers and people directly employed or within the supply chain (Grosser, 2009, p. 292). Moreover, CSR goes beyond the traditional internal and external stakeholders and has moved to also include the local community and global responsibilities (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28).

There are many different definitions of CSR and therefore unclear in both the corporate and the academic world how CSR should be defined. CSR definitions generally consist of five dimensions: environmental, social, economic, stakeholder and voluntariness (Dahlsrud, 2008, p. 4). These dimensions are argued to be necessary to understand the definitions of CSR. For business it is further stated that the social, environmental and economic dimensions are of greatest importance (Dahlsrud, 2008, p. 4). The responsibility and liability to a variety of different stakeholders is recognized in many definitions of CSR (Grosser, 2009, p. 292). The general vision is a sustainable society where organizations take their responsibility within CSR, this is especially important for private businesses providing public services (European Commission, 2011, pp. 3-6).

The drivers behind the increased awareness around CSR have been created by a higher demand from consumers, employees and regulatory authorities for organizations impact on the society (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28). If CSR is used in a proactive way it can lead to a better company reputation, increased credibility and trust in the brand, higher employee engagement and also attract more talents to the organization (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28). This was further showed by Saeidi et al., (2015, p. 348), as they found a positive relationship between organizational performance and CSR saying that engagement in CSR affects customer satisfaction, which gives a sustainable competitive advantage, as it has a positive impact on organizations’ performance.
In a study conducted by Grosser (2009), she argued that organizations have a greater role in societal governance and that CSR enables them to work with the environmental and social impact of their business. The inclusion of gender equality within the field of CSR has shown to be important for the topic since highlighting gender equality as a part of CSR gives the possibility to promote it in relation to corporate impacts in the marketplace and community, rather than strictly as a workplace issue (Grosser, 2009, pp. 302-303).

Based on these findings, we have chosen to further elaborate on gender and gender equality to create an understanding as to why it is important.

**Gender and Gender Equality**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2015), gender is one characteristic that divides people into two different groups, males and females. The Swedish Institute has added equality and states that gender equality is a concept that means that men and women should have the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all areas of life. Moreover, there should be an equal distribution of both genders in all aspects of society and every man and woman should have the right to balance work and family obligations. Gender equality is also about ensuring that both genders knowledge and experiences are used to create improvements in all aspects of life (Swedish Institute, 2013).

When reviewing work environment statistics, there is evidence of an uneven gender distribution among the 30 most common professions in Sweden (SCB, 2015). According to Eriksson-Zetterquist (2014, p. 105) organizations make greater investments into gender equality at their workplaces. The topic is often handled in a formal stage in the organizations. However, she further states that a need for continuous discussions and knowledge and a larger focus on practices to advance in this area.

Gender equality is not only a discussed and shared value in Sweden, it is also stated in the Swedish law as the equality plan is statutory. According to the Swedish Equality law 13 §, ch. 3 within the Swedish Discrimination act (Sw.: Diskrimineringslagen) (SFS 2008:567), employers with more than 25 employees should establish a plan for their future equality work concerning gender, ethnicity, religion and other beliefs every third year. However, in this study we will mainly focus on the gender aspect of the statutory equality plan. After completing the statutory equality plan it should be shared with the employees. Therefore, communication is highly important and needs to be functioning for the employees to engage in the plan and other gender equality policies (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 31–33; JämO, 2004, p. 7). This process will be described in more detail in the literature review.

CSR and gender equality is closely related to workforce diversity as mentioned in the above paragraph. Hence, we believe it is important to elaborate on workforce diversity.

**The importance of Workforce Diversity**

In many organizations, gender equality is a part of workforce diversity in the sense that workforce diversity has evolved from legislation concerning race, gender and age. This has further developed into a broader definition including human differences (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004, p. 410). As discussed by Jayne & Dipboye (2004, p. 410) "...diversity is a more palatable and "socially acceptable" way to address race and gender issues."
Workforce diversity does not only concern legislation and justice, but is also beneficial for companies. Various researchers have explored the business case of workforce diversity. For instance, it is stated by Herring (2009, p. 219) that according to the value-in-diversity perspective it is generally beneficial for businesses to have a diverse workforce, compared to a homogeneous one. Overall it produces better business results and is beneficial for earnings and corporate profits. It is discussed by other researchers that characteristics such as attitudes, cognitive functioning and beliefs normally differ, which can stimulate creativity and innovation (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 31; Robinson & Dechant, 1997, p. 27). Moreover, exploring these differences and value them can result in a productive environment. Workforce diversity can give a competitive advantage since it can contribute to new product development, new market opportunities and as a result broaden the customer base (Emmott & Worman 2008, pp. 30-31).

The importance of workforce diversity is also seen in today's media saying that "The more differences — between culture, race, and gender — within a team, the more perspectives and ideas that team will have when it comes to tackling a problem." (Elkins, 2015). Referring to this statement we have chosen to broaden the background and consider workforce diversity since gender equality is a part of the concept workforce diversity.

The connections between CSR, Gender Equality and Workforce Diversity

Above we have discussed CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity, in this section we want to provide an understanding for the connection between these topics.

According to the Council of Europe (2004, p. 9) the most important achievement in gender equality is to grow awareness of the need, as well as willingness to promote gender equality. Referring to Grosser (2009, p. 302) organizations has a larger role in the societal governance, which results in a growth of CSR and hence the inclusion of gender equality has become important. In research conducted by Emmott & Worman (2008, p. 30) they also emphasize the organizations role in the society and the importance of understanding societal aspects to successfully implement CSR. Further, they found that there is a need to respect workforce diversity and make use of it. Considering workforce diversity when creating CSR policies can better the organizations reputation among stakeholders (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 31). Below we will present some underlying factors as to why it is interesting to study CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity.

Why study CSR, Gender Equality and Workforce Diversity?

Sweden is often seen as one of the worlds most gender equal countries. In 2014 the Swedish parliament consisted of 44% women and the cabinet consisted of 54% women, which can be seen as rather equal. However, looking at the distribution of men and women within board of directors and management groups it is not as equal. Within listed companies in the private sector, 26% of the board members are women in 2014, this compared to 48% women the same year within the public sector (SCB, 2015). Alvesson & Billing (1997, p. 3-4) further elaborates on this matter “The case of Sweden is not that atypical: even though the country is often believed to have a high degree of gender equality, the overall picture is highly contradictory and in most respects not in harmony with the espoused general positive view on female political leaders and public sector top administrators.”. Hence, it is still of great interest to study gender equality within organizations in Sweden even though we are aware of the fact that it is tough and challenging to do a study of how organizations practice CSR aimed at gender equality, this
is also mentioned by Alvesson & Billing (1997, p. 2) saying that “Social reality is complex and contradictory.”

The complexity of gender and what is culturally seen as a female or male way of thinking, acting, feeling and valuing is analyzed to discover the meaning, importance and consequences of these gender perspectives. “A gender perspective also implies an analysis of the organizational practices that maintain the division of labour between the sexes.” (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 7). Referring to our research question we will be focusing on the latter part of what gender perspective implies, the organizational practices. Furthermore, “Rather than trying to find the average we believe that studying complexity and variation contingent upon different industries, labour markets, occupations and organizational cultures and even specific situations is worth pursuing.” (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 2-3). This supports our decision to interview managers having different positions within organizations. Furthermore, it also strengthens our choice to study two organizations, one from the service industry and one from the manufacturing industry.

We chose the service and manufacturing industry as we have personal experiences from working within them. Furthermore, as seen in Appendix 1, by looking at statistics we found that during April 2015, employed the service industry 45% females while the manufacturing industries employed around 16% according to SCB (2015). We therefore found it interesting to study how the policies differ between the two industries, as the service industry is rather gender equal, while the manufacturing industry is not. Characteristics of each one of the industries can be found in the empirical findings sections.

When choosing the focus of this study we based it on previous research by Lauring & Thomsen (2008, p. 35) where they suggested for further research to study how organizations actually practice CSR ideals. Additionally, we have personal experiences within this subject as mentioned in section 1.1 above. We assume that all organizations are facing some challenges when working with CSR focusing on gender equality, we therefore chose to include the aspect of challenges as it is of importance when evaluating the statutory equality plan and policies within gender equality (JämO, 2004, pp. 9-10).

Finally, we want to contribute to previous studies on how organizations practices CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies.

1.3 Research question
We seek to answer the following questions:
How do organizations practice CSR, focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies? What challenges do organizations face when practicing CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies?

1.4 Purpose and objective of the study
The primarily purpose of this study is to explore and understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies within the service industry and the manufacturing industry, to enable this we have divided the purpose into three sub-purposes. Firstly, we want to understand how the statutory equality
plan and gender equality policies are designed and communicated within the organizations. Secondly, we want to explore and understand how CSR aimed at gender equality is practiced within the organizations. Thirdly, we want to identify and understand the challenges that the two organizations within the service industry and the manufacturing industry may be facing when practicing CSR policies focusing on gender equality.

Through interviews and viewing of documents we aim at gaining access to the statutory equality plan, gender equality policies and personal viewpoints. Combining these interviews and documents we aim at providing a understanding for the service industry and the manufacturing industry to enable the organizations to further develop and be innovative to enhance gender equality.

In this study we focus on the service and manufacturing industries due to the relevance to our chosen topic and research question. For instance, we have chosen not to include the public sector, as we do not think it is of relevance to our purpose. As mentioned before, we limited our study to the two industries we found most interesting referring to gender inequalities and previous experiences. However, the objective of this study is not to generalize how CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies is designed, practiced or what challenges that organizations within the service industry and the manufacturing industry are facing. Rather, the objective is to gain an understanding of the two different cases that we have studied. The main focus of this study is our above stated sub-purposes and to answer our stated research questions. We do not want to deceive any reader of this study, therefore we will follow the purpose and objectives of this study as thorough as possible.

1.5 Chapter guide
Following this introduction we will present the theoretical framework related to our subject and purpose. It will include an overview of previous research within CSR, gender equality, workforce diversity, and some related to the industries studied. This is followed by previous research related to our three themes: Plan and policy, practice and challenges. We have chosen to have the theoretical framework before the methodology since we believe that it is more suitable to our study and to facilitate the reading. The theoretical framework will provide previous research that supports our chosen methodology. Furthermore, the methodological choices are closely related to our empirical findings and are therefore placed after the theoretical framework. Within the methodological choices we will state our chosen methodology for this study, both theoretical and practical as well as some fundamental assumptions. The methodological choices will lead to our empirical findings where we will present our results from the conducted interviews and documents. After the presentation of our results a discussion will take form. This will be followed by a conclusion where we seek to answer our stated research questions and meet our sub-purposes. We will provide recommendations and suggestions for future research and finally, provide an evaluation of our study using different truth criteria’s.
2. Theoretical framework

This chapter will give an overview of existing theories and findings from previous research that are relevant to the main purpose: to explore and understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. To critically review previous findings is essential for the purpose and research question, as the previous findings guides the direction and focus of this study. The theoretical framework is divided into subtitles and themes related to the purpose to facilitate the reading. We will start by presenting our choice of sources and a more general theoretical framework of CSR, gender equality, workforce diversity and organizations. This is followed by our three chosen themes: Plan and policy, practice and challenges. Finally, we will present our model of the framework and state the source criticism.

2.1 Choice of sources

In this study mainly peer reviewed academic journals were used, these are categorized as secondary literature sources together with research books, which was also used to a great extent. The course textbooks used are seen as primary sources together with reports, government publications and web sites, which can be a combination of primary and secondary literature sources. We used websites of different organizations practicing relevant subjects to gain accurate definitions and information. Websites in form of dictionaries can be considered tertiary literature sources (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 82-83).

Below figure illustrates the structure of the first part of the theoretical framework. First there will be a more thorough description of CSR, gender and gender equality and workforce diversity. This will be followed by the associated challenges.

![Figure 1. The structure of the first part of the theoretical framework.](image)

2.2 Corporate Social Responsibility

For businesses, CSR as a concept is nothing new. Organizations have always had an impact on social, environmental and economic dimensions, as well as been concerned with owners, stakeholders, customers, government and regulations. This has been managed over years but since globalization started to expand it puts pressure on the organizations. New legislations and stakeholders have new expectations on the businesses and demand an optimal balance between social, environmental and economic questions in decision making (Dahlsrud, 2008, p. 6).

There are various examples of researchers trying to establish a more thorough definition of CSR. One of the most commonly used literature reviews of CSR is derived from Carroll's (1999) where he guides the reader through definitions of CSR within academic literature from Bowen (1953) up to the 1990's (Dahlsrud, 2008, p. 2). There is no definition of CSR that is universally accepted, however that is not of great concern as the definitions of CSR are describing a phenomenon rather than presenting any guidance on how to manage the concept (Dahlsrud, 2008, p. 6).
We did not consider any of the academic definitions as we have chosen to focus on the European commission who actively works with CSR in today’s society. Due to their high impact and contribution to progress within the field of CSR, we have chosen to use their definition of CSR stated as:

“the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society”

(European Commission, 2011, p. 6). The concept is further explained that organizations should focus on integrating social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy to fully meet their corporate social responsibility (European Commission, 2011, pp. 6-7). The European Commission (2011, p. 3) states that "Through CSR, enterprises can significantly contribute to the European Union's treaty objectives of sustainable development and a highly competitive social market economy."

There are several enforces behind the increased attention of CSR, one being public awareness of scandals, for instance organizations purchasing supplies from organizations with inhumane labor policies. The employer is pressured by a demand from customers, employees, regulatory authority, campaigning organizations and the general public for more accountability for the organizations’ impact on society (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28). To be able to perform effective CSR there is a need to understand society and the role of each player including government, business, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and civil society. There is also a need to respect workforce diversity and adjust the approach depending on the situation (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28-29).

**Critics to CSR**

Friedman (1982) argued that the only responsibility of organizations is to generate profit and that manager’s only hold a responsibility towards its members. CSR has further been criticized by Hamann & Acutt (2003) who discuss organizations motives to engage in the topic. They bring up accommodation, which refers to organizations willingness to adapt to social interest and therefore must society stay critical regarding organizations real motives (Hamann & Acutt, 2003, p. 258). Their recommendation is for governments to be more involve in shaping CSR to ensure the initiatives of the organizations are a complement to already established regulated goals (Hamann & Acutt 2003, p. 267-268).

We want to develop the findings from above stated research in accordance to an organization called the Swedish Institute (2013) as they argue, "Gender equality is an important aspect of the way companies work with corporate responsibility."

**2.2.1 CSR and Gender Equality**

CSR enables organizations to work with environmental and social issues, which is important since they have an increasing role in societal governance (Grosser, 2009, pp. 302-303). Employees are major stakeholders within CSR and therefore initiatives and polices regarding people are essential for organizations when practicing CSR (Emmott & Worman 2008, p. 30).

Grosser (2009) conducted a study to increase the understanding of how CSR can be used as a policy instrument to improve gender equality. It was found that including gender equality within the field of CSR is important for the gender equality issue. The research
demonstrated a lack of systematic approach to gender equality within CSR. Gender equality needs to be more systematically considered within organizations and therefore, it is essential that organizations incorporate the topic into their CSR policies. A more gender aware approach in CSR creates possibilities to promote gender equality not exclusively as a workplace issue, but also in association to corporate impacts in the marketplace and the community (Grosser, 2009, pp. 302-303). Due to the relationship between CSR and gender equality we will provide a more thorough theoretical background to gender and gender equality below.

2.3 Gender and Gender Equality
The purpose is to explore and understand how organizations practice gender equality and therefore it is important to give insights to the different parts of the concept, as well as its importance in organizations and society.

2.3.1 Gender or Sex?
Sex is referred to a person’s biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women, while gender is referred to as the:

“socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women”

(WHO, 2015). How people perceive the differences between sexes will not differ extensively between different societies, on the contrary the perceptions of gender can vary greatly (WHO, 2015). The development and recreation of gender takes place at the individual, cultural and societal level. They are all equally important as people shape these gender roles and norms through activities and reproduce them by adjusting to the expectations of the gender we belong to (Council of Europe, 2004, p.8; Genus, 2012). We have chosen to use the term gender instead of sex, as our purpose is not to study the biological characteristics, also we agree that gender is a socially defined concept.

The phenomenon gender is historical, as it has been known for many centuries. Gender is not only interpreted differently within different cultures and time, it also continues to develop and is in a constant change. Social science is a part of culture, thus influences how gender will be practiced and understood in the future. The ratio of men respectively women working as managers, nurses, housekeepers and engineers is affected by social practices and cultural ideas rather than genes. Social science is combined with cultural ideas and therefore the development of cultural ideas is influenced by social science (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 10).

In the pre-industrial era men and women had specific work and there were even some work that only one gender was allowed to do. For instance women were the only ones allowed to milk cows in Sweden until this century. Men did not want to do women's work as they would loose status and prestige, something that women could rarely get as it was only related to men's jobs. Segregation between genders is no longer as common but it exists in some industries where there are still ideas about what is regarded as women's work and men's work (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, pp. 54-56). As mentioned by Alvesson & Billing (1997, p. 2) “…the career-oriented person, giving priority to work over family matters, may be preferable in the business world, as a strong commitment to equality would often
mean a re-balancing or downplaying of corporate matters in relation to family obligations and values.”

2.3.2 Gender equality
The council of Europe is Europe's leading organization within human rights where Sweden has been a member since the start in 1949. Gender equality is one of the values within human rights and has by the council of Europe been defined as:

“Gender equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life.”

(Council of Europe, 2014, p. 5) The concept has previously been described as a means of equally accepting and valuing the differences between the two genders and the diverse roles they have in society. Accomplishing gender equality is an essential factor in the protection of human rights (Council of Europe, 2004, pp. 8-9). Human rights refer to every person having the right to be independent, not discriminated and have the equal rights and obligations (UN, 2015). Both men and women need to acknowledge the need to remove the unbalances that exists in society, they also share the responsibility to take action (Council of Europe, 2014, pp. 8-9).

Gender Equality within organizations
Frink et al. (2003, pp. 144-145) found that a gender equal workforce was beneficial for organizations. Their hypothesis that organizations with a gender equal workforce, meaning 50/50, are performing better in terms of profitability compared to an organization with an uneven distribution of the genders, was supported. Campbell & Minguez-Vera (2008, p. 447) further found that gender diversity among board members has a positive impact on an organizations' firm value. It is highlighted that there is a need to establish a more equal distribution between men and women. This phenomenon have been further confirmed by Kakabadse et al. (2015. p. 277) who found that gender diverse boards have several nonfinancial benefits, for example higher corporate reputation, improved decision making and better use of talents.

2.3.3 Critics – Gender and Gender Equality
In reference to using the distinction between genders, Kakabadse et al. (2015) was researching the perceptions amongst female directors regarding the use of female quotas when selecting board members. Their result showed that it was important to employ more women on the boards, but quotas were not the appropriate way to accomplish it. The general idea amongst the female directors was that they perceived themselves as individuals and wanted to be chosen based on their knowledge and experiences, not because of their gender (Kakabadse et al., 2015, p. 276).

Another criticism to gender and the practice of it, is that the discussions and statements are based on personal values and never politically neutral (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 10). Not to consider gender is a political action, likewise it is if you choose to study gender or to use a clear distinction between men and women. There might be different distinctions for different people, for instance, sexual orientation, ethnicity and age can be as important to some people as male and female is for others. Some might not want to separate men and women arguing that humans are universal rather than two sexes (Alvesson & Billing, 1997,
p. 10). As mentioned before, we have however chosen to use the concept of gender as socially constructed attributes of male and female.

When looking at the people in our society they do not only differ in gender. People have other demographic variables such as age, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic background (George & Jones, 2012, pp. 43-44). All of these different demographic variables can contribute to a variety of different viewpoints that can be an advantage for organizations (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 28-30). To meet the purpose, hence to more thoroughly understand gender equality and the usage of it, we will elaborate further on the attributes of workforce diversity below, as gender equality is a part of that.

2.4 Workforce Diversity
In the search for literature regarding gender equality we found that there was also an emphasis on workforce diversity. Referring to the purpose we want to understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. Hence, since gender is a part of workforce diversity, it would be unwise not to consider workforce diversity. The concept of workforce diversity have been defined as:

“a mixed workforce that provides a wide range of abilities, experience, knowledge, and strengths due to its heterogeneity in age, background, ethnicity, physical abilities, political and religious beliefs, sex, and other attributes”

(Business Dictionary, 2015). This reflects that sex, which we refer to as gender, is only one part of the concept. Workforce diversity is the reality for organizations, their employees and managers as all people are different (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998, pp. 120-121). How organizations and their employees respond to workforce diversity is determined by both individual as well as organizational values. Therefore, workforce diversity must be investigated from an organizational culture perspective (Guillaume et al., 2013, pp. 795-796).

The business perspective of workforce diversity is been shown in a research conducted by Homan et al., (2007, pp. 1195-1197) where workforce diversity does certainly promote social interaction, work group performance and innovation when group members themselves believe in the value of workforce diversity. To benefit from the positive sides of workforce diversity it is therefore of great importance to make the employees value the workforce diversity that exists within a group. They emphasize that these values start with the management beliefs and need to be communicated throughout the organization (Homan et al., 2007, pp. 1195-1197).

2.4.1 Critics to Workforce Diversity
There are some critique and challenges highlighted by previous research in relation to workforce diversity. Herring (2009, p. 219) states the diversity-as-process-loss perspective of working with workforce diversity within businesses. This is a critical view of workforce diversity arguing that workforce diversity can be counterproductive by interfering in the group functioning, hence introduces conflicts and other problems. Furthermore the perspective argues that workforce diversity will have negative effects on business performance and as a result lower the organizations profitability and efficiency. However,
Herring found in his research that the relationship between business functioning and the establishment of gender and race diversity was positive. He argues that even though people working together have different backgrounds, which might lead to communication barriers and conflicts, the positive effects of workforce diversity are likely to lead to a competitive advantage. Workforce diversity increases creativity and the opportunity for the group to develop a higher quality product, his findings are consistent with previous research and arguments’ saying that workforce diversity enables business success (Herring, 2009, p. 220).

Williams & O’Reilly (1998, pp. 115-117) discussed that workforce diversity is a mixed blessing. Diverse groups tend to have less integration, less communication and more conflict. It can also be related to a higher level of stereotyping that will have a negative effect on the group functioning. Williams & O’Reilly's (1998, pp. 120-121) conclusion is that more workforce diversity does not guarantee that the group will make better decisions or function more effectively. It needs careful and continuous attention for to have a positive effect on group performance. Unless steps are taken to actively prevent the negative effects, it has been showed that workforce diversity by itself is likely to have more negative than positive effects on group performance. The challenge with workforce diversity is to accommodate these tendencies so that organizations can benefit from the positive sides of workforce diversity.

2.5 The connection between CSR, Gender Equality and Workforce Diversity
As the purpose is to understand and explore we find it relevant to present the connection between the three main concepts used: CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity. The social, environmental and economic parts of CSR are the areas mainly affecting businesses and they are highly related to gender equality (Dahlsrud, 2008, p. 4). Furthermore, as mentioned above gender equality is a part of workforce diversity and hence we have chosen to include workforce diversity as a concept and aspect since we believe that the practice of gender equality can not be fully distinguished from the practice of workforce diversity and it is therefore important to know their connection.

CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity all have separate business cases as explored under the headings of each concept. In summary, the business case of CSR is for organizations to care about the society they act in and for them to gain profitability as well as a competitive advantage. Gender equality is referred to ethical and moral aspects of the business case. Viewing the business case of workforce diversity we can see that workforce diversity enables creativity and innovation as several opinions and backgrounds are mixed, hence this creates efficiency (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 31; Robinson & Dechant, 1997, p. 27) Combining them, we can present below figure stating the business case of incorporating CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity in to the organization.

![Figure 2. The business case of CSR, Gender Equality and Workforce Diversity.](image)
Why should organizations engage in these questions?
Organizations are common in people’s everyday life through activities, work or relating to them as customers, they fill up around one third of people’s life in total. Organizations produce goods and services, consequently they are central economic institutions that control and care of the citizens. Due to the fact that organizations are workplaces they pay our wages, hence are decisive for our well-being and it is therefore of great importance to study how they function (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 5).

Some previous research within the industries of this study will be presented below. However, a more thorough description of the two industries and their main characteristics can be found in the empirical findings section.

2.5.1 Service industry and Manufacturing industry
Ali et al. (2011) tested the relationship between gender diversity and performance in the service and manufacturing industry. Their findings showed a greater positive relationship between performance and gender diversity within the service industry compared to the manufacturing industry. In the manufacturing industry had the gender distribution little impact on the performance, as the results of productivity were almost the same no matter if the organization had a homogenous group of 100 % males or 50 % of each gender. The positive relationship for the service industry supported their arguments that a work group that have mix of genders can give important insights regarding the two different genders and also communicate efficiently with male and female customers (Ali et al., 2011, pp. 1480-1481). A similar result was found by Frink et al. (2003, pp. 143-145) were they initially tested how the distribution of genders affected the organizations' performance. A stronger relationship between equal gender distribution and performance was found in the service and retail industry, compared to the manufacturing industry. The service industry may therefore be in the best position to exploit the benefits of gender diversity because of the greater value of market insights compared to the manufacturing industry (Ali et al., 2011. pp. 1480-1481; Frink et al., 2003, pp. 143-145).

The first part of the theoretical framework provided a more thorough description of CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity as well as their connections. Referring to the purpose we want to explore how organizations design and communicate, practice and what challenges they face, when practicing CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. Therefore, the second part of the theoretical framework will be focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies as well as how to practice them and challenges organizations face when practicing them.

![Figure 3. The structure of the second part of the theoretical framework.](Image)

2.6 Plan and Policy
2.6.1 The Swedish Equality Plan
A statutory equality plan is established by the organization and states how they will work with equality at their workplace. This plan must according to the Swedish law, 13 §, ch. 3
in the discrimination act (Sw.: Diskrimineringslagen) (SFS 2008:567) be created by all organizations with more than 25 employees every third year. The plan must involve the following seven areas: workplace conditions, recruitment, comparison of salaries between men and women, distribution of gender, the possibility to combine work and parenthood, men and women’s ability to apply for positions and development and existence of sexual harassment or harassment in terms of a persons gender (SFS 2008:567). The Swedish equality plan involves gender, ethnicity, religion or other belief system. However, in this study we will mainly focus on the gender aspect of the statutory equality plan as mentioned previously.

The equality plan is a part of the Swedish law and those organizations that do not fulfill the requirements when being inspected by the Equality ombudsman will receive a fine (JämO, 2007, p. 16). In 2009 the equality ombudsman was put together with other departments relating to discrimination and today, they are called discrimination ombudsman. The equality ombudsman was working to prevent discrimination in terms of gender, which today have been replaced by the discrimination ombudsman, who works to cover all areas of discrimination in Sweden. The equality ombudsman as well as discrimination ombudsman was and are both public authorities (DO, 2012).

In theory an employer can create a statutory equality plan without overlooking the current situation and without having the intention of it being executed. In short-term, the plan can therefore fulfill the law’s minimum requirements. However, this can be viewed as a way of wasting time and resources to create a document that does not fulfill the law’s intentions (JämO 2004, p. 9). Furthermore, the statutory equality plan is not only important from a legal point of view, it has also been showed that a workplace where everyone’s experiences and knowledge is valued leads to an effective organization (JämO, 2004, p. 4).

2.6.2 How to create an Equality Plan
In the creation of a statutory equality plan there are according to JämO (2004, p. 3) four key steps: mapping and analysis, concrete actions, measurable goal setting and evaluation.

Mapping and Analysis
Step number one is to collect information about the current situation in terms of equality at the workplace. This will be the foundation to the next statutory equality plan. The mapping should include gender statistics to enable evaluation of actions performed (JämO, 2004, p. 6). Furthermore it is recommended to distribute questionnaires to enable employees to express their needs and desires regarding equality (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 31-33). Through questionnaires employees can highlight faults within equality that statistics cannot see (JämO, 2004, p. 6). After the collection there is a need to analyze the material to be able to draw conclusions from the result (JämO, 2004, p. 7).

It is recommended to consult different people within the organization to explore areas where the equality needs improvements (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 31-33; JämO, 2004, p. 6). Iseskog (2005, p. 33) further states a need for involvement in the creation of the statutory equality plan by all employees in leading position as they need a clear overview of how the working conditions function in relation to equality.
Concrete Actions
After the mapping process, the second step is to state concrete actions. The plan needs to be concrete and measurable to enable follow-ups of the actions taken (JämO, 2004, pp. 5-7). Furthermore, it is important to be familiar with the different paragraphs of the Swedish Discrimination act, to make sure the statutory equality plan covers all required areas (JämO, 2004, p. 6).

In large organizations it is recommended to have one overall plan for the whole organization and smaller plans for the different departments, this enables the organizations to easier find what concrete actions that needs to be performed within the different departments (JämO, 2004, p. 5).

Measureable goal setting
The third step is to state goals to enable improvements of the found weaknesses during the mapping process. It is desirable to have quantified goals as they are easier to measure, but they should at least be realistic and measurable in some way. The stated goals should be for a long and short-term perspective (JämO, 2004, p. 7).

There is an uneven distribution of the genders if the distribution is less than 40/60, meaning for instance that less than 40% men compared to women, would be considered an uneven distribution. This measurement is not only used to look at the organization as a whole, but also within different parts of the organization, for instance within a specific professional group or category (Iseskog, 2005, p. 43: JämO, 2004, p. 28). However, according to JämO (2004, p. 28) the long-term goal is recommended to be 50/50.

Evaluation
The fourth and last step is for the statutory equality plan to be evaluated at the end of its active period. This is done to see if the goals have been met or not. Moreover, an analysis of the goals that were not met should be performed to enable better accomplishment of those goals in the upcoming plan (JämO, 2004, p. 8).

Emmott & Worman (2008, p. 31-33) recommend employee surveys to evaluate how everyone involved perceives actions taken towards equality. This can be used as a foundation for areas of improvement in the new statutory equality plan. They further discuss the importance to regularly review, evaluate and keep data of the progress to enable a presentation of the business benefits of workforce diversity.

2.6.3 Critics to the Swedish Equality Plan
In an article published by SCB (Bernhardtz, 2013, 2013:87) they discuss the fact that there is an almost equal amount of men and women within the workforce in Sweden. However, there are a higher number of women working part time and their employments are often less secure then men’s. The goal is for men and women to have equal opportunities to become self-sufficient, as it is of great importance for the Swedish equality policy.

2.6.4 Policies for CSR aimed at Gender Equality
To be able to understand CSR and to successfully implement it into an organization, there is a need to understand the society and each role of the players within it. In CSR there is a great emphasis on how organizations treat their employees, produce goods and services and use advertisement etc. CSR does therefore not concern what organizations do with
their profit, but instead of how they make that profit (Vilke et al., 2014, p. 201). It has further been stated by Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 30-31) that there is a need to utilize workforce and face it with respect within CSR. If corporations take workforce diversity into account in the creation of their CSR policies, it can enhance their reputation among stakeholders.

Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 30-31) states the key principles of how to create CSR policies. The first important step that they mention is to define the organization’s core values and principles. It is also essential to clarify the key internal and external stakeholders within the organization, furthermore the CSR policy needs to be connected with the HR practices and strategies. There is also great importance to have the top managements support to be able to communicate the benefits of CSR to the whole organization.

2.7 Practice of CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies

2.7.1 Why practice CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies?

Theories within CSR focus on four main aspects to why organizations practice CSR: meeting objectives that create long-term profits, the use of business power in a responsible manner, incorporate social demands and by acting in an ethical manner contribute to a good society. Long-term profits are normally identified as the main goal and to maximize profit it is essential for CSR to be integrated into the organization (Garriga & Mele, 2004, p. 65).

If CSR is used in a proactive way it can lead to a better company reputation, increased credibility and trust in the brand, higher employee engagement and also attract more talents to the organization. All of these factors can contribute to a competitive advantage for the organization (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28). Saeidi's (2015, p. 348) research strengthens these findings, that CSR are positively related to organizational performance. It was found that an engagement in CSR affects customer satisfaction, reputation and gives a sustainable competitive advantage, which all have a positive impact on an organizations’ performance.

As mentioned before, gender and gender equality is seen as a part of CSR. Looking at a management perspective gender is important to consider as “Counteracting sex discrimination and conservative gender patterns would make possible a more rational way of recruiting, keeping, placing, training and promoting labour.” (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 1). Furthermore, Alvesson & Billing (1997, pp. 1-2) states that employing both men and women might facilitate organizational creativity and learning if they are made visible and given the opportunity to share their viewpoints and experiences. Having a flexible workforce without conservative ideas concerning what is most appropriate for women or men to do is possibly more effective. It would be a great example of irrationality not to consider the qualifications and talents of almost half of the labor force. Injustice and profitable management are two strong reasons for organizations to work with questions regarding gender.

Research has shown that CSR can create change regarding an organization’s behaviors, attitudes and performances and HR can take a strategic part to change an organization’s
culture so that behaviors and actions reflect the CSR focus (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 28-29). It is important to know why organizations practice CSR, however, it is of even greater interest referring to our study purpose to know how organizations should practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. The following section will provide some aspects as to how organizations should practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies.

2.7.2 How to practice CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies

We believe that how organizations practice CSR varies depending on industries and the organizations values. However, from previous research that will be presented below, we have found some areas of concern that can be related to all organizations practicing CSR, independently of their industry.

Communication

When the statutory equality plan is completed the next step is to share it with all of the employees and run through the essential parts during meetings. This should include the goals, actions that will take place and the reason behind it (JämO, 2004, p. 7). It is important to clarify that all employees carry a personal responsibility to follow the policies and plan. The organization should establish good communication channels and an open culture so that the ideas can be better shared and discussed. Newsletters, in-house magazines and notice boards are examples of methods to keep people informed about workforce diversity policies and practices (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 31-33).

Training

Workforce diversity training can ease the management of a diverse workforce (George & Jones, 2012, p. 143). The concept and its practices should therefore be included in management training and in other possible employer training programs. This should be done to increase the awareness of the importance of managing different views, perceptions and ideas and to break down stereotypes. The workforce diversity concept should moreover be included into introduction programs for new employees, to make them aware and learn about the organization’s policies and practices. In addition to this it is essential to give sufficient workforce diversity training to line managers to help them accomplish the organizations polices and practices within workforce diversity (Emmott & Worman 2008, pp. 31-33). Training within CSR is needed to ensure that the employees are engaged in the subject, if not, it will not have an impact (Emmott & Worman, 2008, p. 28).

Leadership

Previous studies have pointed out the importance of the workforce diversity principles to be driven from the top management down through the organization (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 31-33; Guillaume et al., 2014, pp. 793-794). Guillaume et al., (2014, pp. 793-794) found that the impact of organizational workforce diversity management policies and procedures will be a reflection of top management diversity beliefs. Therefore it was identified that top management support was the main source to which workforce diversity initiatives were implemented and if they were successful. It has also been found that within organizations with more female employees on corporate boards, in top- and middle management and as heads of the CSR department has a positive impact on the gender equality practices in the organizations (Larrieta-Rubín de Celis et al., 2015, p. 100).
The role of Management
Strategic management within CSR is needed to obtain the benefits of practicing CSR. It is essential for it to be supported by the top management and implemented throughout the whole organization. It should be a reflection of everything the top management, the organization and its employees do. It is necessary to ensure that the organization’s CSR strategy holds for inspection because a loss in its credibility is difficult to recover. Different stakeholders are interested in the delivery of the policies rather than the formulation of text within a document. Therefore it is important to ensure that CSR is more than a step towards positive publicity (Emmott & Worman 2008, pp. 28-29). By incorporating CSR into systems and processes, such as employer brand, recruitment, appraisal, retention, motivation, reward, internal communication, workforce diversity, coaching and training, the organization can effectively incorporating their values within CSR into the organization (Emmott & Worman 2008, p. 29).

Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 28-29) conclusion is that the Human Resource department (HR) is in a great position to implement workforce diversity values into the organization. They also carry the responsibility to create, implement and monitor of the CSR policies. The policies that are linked to the HR department can be internal communication, workforce diversity, training and recruitment, they all need to be reviewed to support the CSR policies and strategies.

Working with CSR focusing on gender equality as a part of workforce diversity is however related to some challenges. Higher turnover rate and the probability of individuals being absent are generally higher in a more diverse group referring to age, race and gender (Milliken & Martins, 1996, p. 408). Other main challenges organizations are facing will be elaborated on in the following section.

2.8 Challenges when practicing CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies
The increased diversity within today’s workforce is a challenging task for organizations and their managers (George & Jones, 2012, p. 43). Our sub-purpose within this study is to identify challenges that organizations face when practicing CSR focusing on statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. Below follows a description of some of challenges found in previous research.

Communication
In a research conducted by Lauring & Thomsen (2008, p. 32) it became clear that the policies where not communicated to the employees within the organization. Policies regarding equal opportunities was unknown by the employees and some employees regarded the policies as “just policies”. Therefore, there was a lack of trust in the policies and their execution.

Resources
Many companies recognize the importance of making workforce diversity a business consideration, however it is not often a business priority. Other business initiatives that present more actual and precise evidence of payback on investment are often preferred over workforce diversity initiatives. To integrate workforce diversity into the organization is a long-term commitment and the outcome is not as tangible or predictable as for
example an investment on new technology (Robinson & Dechant, 1997, p. 21). Robinson & Dechant (1997, p. 30) made the conclusion that the organizations need to treat workforce diversity initiatives like any other business investment, as it in the long run will lead to competitive advantages.

**Fairness and Justice**

To be employed and being promoted is a competitive process and managers are challenged to give employments, promotions and rewards in a fair and ethical manner. Traditionally have organizations selected white males to higher positions, but with an increasing diverse workforce there is a greater pressure on managers to promote fairness. Today managers need to judge everyone in their diverse workforce in the same ethical and unbiased way to avoid lawsuits. If employees are not treated in a fair manner it can have a negative effect on their well being, which in turn will have a negative effect on the organizational performance (George & Jones, 2012, pp. 43-44).

**Risks with CSR policies**

If the effects of CSR are not measured the organization will not know the result of the time, effort and resources invested in the project (Emmtot & Worman, 2008, pp. 28-29).

One critique and risk mentioned by Alvesson & Billing (1997, p. 3) is that “Although equal opportunities are increasingly espoused by more and more companies, this may often be more a matter of lip service for legitimacy reasons than serious business intended to permeate corporate practices.”, not all companies are working with gender equality for the same reasons.

In the following section we will summarize our theoretical framework by providing a model describing the connections and our chosen structure.

**2.9 Our Model**

To facilitate the reading and understanding of this study we have chosen to present a model summarizing the structure we have chosen for our study. This will also be the framework for our interview guide, empirical findings and the discussion.

As CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity are interrelated and in close connection to each other we will consider them as the foundation to our study. We have further divided them into three main themes: the statutorily equality plan and gender equality policies, practice and challenges. These are derived from the foundation and in relation to our three sub-purposes. The first theme refers to the design and communication of the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. The second theme concerns practice of CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. Finally, the third theme refers to the challenges that organizations face when practicing CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. The foundation and the three themes are all included in the model to show the complete relation between the concepts and themes.
2.10 Source Criticism
We strive for credibility and therefore consider it highly important to be critical to the literature sources we have used. Primary, secondary and tertiary sources will be critically examined as well as their contributions to our study, however, these categories are flexible and hence often overlap each other (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 82).

Primary sources
Our primary sources provide valuable firsthand information to our study; these are mainly found in the empirical findings section. The interviewees are managers functioning as key figures within different departments of the organizations; hence we assume that they are credible. They are likely to be biased to some extent but since the purpose is to explore and understand we believe that their own perceptions of practice and challenges are of great value.

Reports from European commission were used as other primary sources. These are available via Internet, published by an established organization and match our topic, which is why we believe they are of high quality. Other sources found via Internet are websites used, for instance the Statistics Sweden and the World Health Organization. These are used and included with caution, as we are aware of the risks of these sources being biased by the organizations or the authors. We chose well-established organizations to ensure that the sources are as accurate and reliable as possible. Much of the information found online is a combination of primary and secondary sources providing good up-to-date information for our study. The course textbooks used for methodology are also considered primary sources as well as secondary sources. They have been approved and developed by many researchers, which is why we argue that they are reliable and trustworthy. More than one book is used to gain different viewpoints and enable us to create the most suitable methodology for our study.

Secondary sources
The academic journals used are mainly peer reviewed, which indicates that they are written by experts and reviewed by other researchers and experts, hence we consider them credible within this field of study. They provide good academic insight and theoretical background, since many of the previous researchers have done qualitative studies it also guided and strengthened us in our choice of methodology. Emmott & Worman (2008) are employee
relations and workforce diversity advisors within CIPD, an organization for HR and people development. Both are advisors within our research field and we believe they can provide good insights to our study, which is why we used their peer-reviewed article to an extensive amount.

We have mainly used the research book written by Alvesson & Billing (1997) as we found it relevant to use the perspective of a Swedish author and the relation between gender, workforce diversity and organizations. This literature source and for instance the article by Robinson & Dechant are both published in 1997, which is not as recent as the other sources we have used. However, we chose to include them as they provide further and relevant perspectives to our theoretical framework.

Carroll's (1999) literature review of definitions of CSR is well cited and has been used by different researchers, we therefore found it important to mention it in reference to the article written by Dahlsrud (2008, p. 2). However, as the definitions are widely used and in a constant change we chose to use a more popular definition instead, referring to the European commission (2011). There is a risk of us interpreting the sources differently and since other researchers have other objectives with their studies the information gathered can be taken out of context. To limit the risk of these sources being misunderstood we have tried to be consistent with their original context.

**Tertiary sources**

Tertiary sources used are websites in form of dictionaries and databases provided by Umeå University, for instance Business Source Complete (EBSCO) and Google Scholar that we have also used to be able to find some previously cited articles. These are all online resources mainly used to find secondary sources.

The literature sources we have used have given us a good foundation to our study and relevant input hence, we are generally satisfied with the sources we acquired. To gain a more thorough understanding for our research approach and review of the literature, see the following chapter presenting our methodology.

3. Methodological choices

The methodology chapter will provide the reader with our pre-understanding, the research approaches and design, as well as the underlying assumptions to our study. The chosen approaches and strategies are the foundation to our way of answering our research questions. Moreover, this chapter will state the practical- and theoretical methodology used.

3.1 Pre-understanding

3.1.1 Pre-understanding of Sofia Flykt

I have always been interested in CSR with a greater focus on the environment. During my high school I studied a special designed program focusing on environmental aspects and the nature. I believe that it is important for us to take responsibility for the environment and the world we live in, both small- and large scale. I have worked within different organizations where CSR questions have been discussed and I have personal experiences from workplaces where they prioritize CSR and try to be as environmentally friendly as
possible. However, I do not have any first-hand pre-understanding from working actively with gender equality policies within an organization and hence no clear pre-understanding of how organizations practice CSR focusing on gender equality.

The workplaces I have worked at have all had different distributions of gender, more and less balanced. I value the benefits of having a diverse and gender equal workforce as I have experienced the great effects it has on the daily work. Referring to our research question, I believe that the connection between CSR and gender equality is highly relevant and interesting. I had never before thought of gender equality as a part of CSR, I only knew that organizations in Sweden were obligated to have a gender equality plan. Due to my previous knowledge within CSR and my experiences from gender equality I am likely to have large influence of the topic of this study.

3.1.2 Pre-understanding of Josefin Holmberg
My interest in environmental questions in relation to organizations started to grow during my first trips abroad. The first time I came in contact with the concept of CSR was during my first few months at university. The introduction to this topic made me realize the great effect that organizations have on our society and environment and it became my standpoint that all organizations should take this into consideration. At first I saw the concept of CSR mainly as a way for organizations to take responsibility for their environmental effect. The first time I came across the association between CSR and organizations responsibility regarding gender equality was through the beginning of this study.

During the start of an employment I was the only female worker at the department. I was later informed that there was a desire to hire more women but there was a lack of female applicants. During previous employments I have had limited or no insight in how the organization work with their CSR policy, and even less regarding their efforts towards gender equality. Therefore is my previous knowledge and experiences within this topic limited.

3.1.3 The authors combined pre-understanding
Considering our individual pre-understandings it is clear that both of us have a genuine interest in CSR questions and find gender equality as positive. Referring to personal work experience Sofia has some experience from working within organizations that put great focus on CSR while Josefin lacks that experience. Sofia has experienced the benefits of gender equality and workforce diversity but not in relation to CSR while Josefin has experienced the possible reasons to why some workplaces are not gender equal. Mutual is that we have no experience from working directly with gender equality within an organization and therefore we lack theoretical- and practical experience from gender equality policies. Our combined pre-understanding is a good foundation to the study as it enables us to study the research question and purpose with similar but slightly different viewpoints. The different viewpoints contribute to broader perspectives and that we will capture more aspects, hence an enriched study.
3.2 Research Philosophies

The term paradigm is frequently used and there are many different definitions and meanings of the term within social science (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 140). Hence, we have chosen to include two different definitions.

A paradigm within research is defined by Saunders et al., (2012, p. 677) as a mode used to examine social phenomena, where you can find explanations and gain a deeper understanding for the specific phenomena. Another, more thorough, definition can be found in Denzin & Lincoln (2000, p. 157) they state that a paradigm comprehends four concepts: ethics (axiology), epistemology, ontology and methodology. “Ethics asks, How will I be as a moral person in the world? Epistemology asks, How do I know the world? What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?”, further they state “Ontology raises basic questions about the nature of reality and the nature of the human being in the world. Methodology focuses on the best means for gaining knowledge about the world.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 157). Axiology includes different philosophies that describe judgments referring to value; here we are concerned with the researchers personal values and the role they play throughout the whole research process. It is important for us to ensure that our research process is credible and therefore we will clearly define our personal thoughts throughout the research process (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 137-139).

The most appropriate philosophical approach to reflect our values within this research process is interpretivism. This philosophy implies a subjective research where we as researchers are a part of what is being researched; we cannot be separated from the interviews that will be held. Another distinction is the small, in-depth research mainly done in qualitative studies, which parallels the purpose to explore and understand (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 140). Below, we will further elaborate on our ontological and epistemological standpoints.

3.2.1 Ontological assumptions

Ontology refers to the nature of reality and the two main aspects discussed by Saunders et al., (2012, p. 131) is objectivism and subjectivism. Objectivism refers to the view of social entities existing independent of and external to social actors. An example given by Saunders et al., (2012, p. 131) is how management is assumed to be similar within different organizations, focusing on the structural aspects. However, this does not apply to our research, as we believe that each organization works differently and that they are dependent of social actors.

We have found the ontological standpoint subjectivism as the most suitable for our research and philosophical approach. Subjectivism claim that what creates social phenomena, are the actions of social actors resulting from their perceptions. The interaction between different actors, in our case employees, is an on going process that is in a constant change. To understand what is really happening, it is therefore important to study the details, which is often related to social constructionism where reality is viewed as constructed by the social actors (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 130-132).

The purpose is to explore and understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies and what challenges they face when practicing them. This will be enabled through the interviewee’s interpretation of the nature
of reality, in this case referring to their workplace and their daily work with gender equality.

3.2.2 Epistemological assumptions
In a specific research field, epistemology refers to what is considered as acceptable knowledge. Saunders et al., (2012) are discussing three different philosophies; positivism, realism and interpretivism. “The ‘resources’ researcher is embracing what is called the positivist philosophy to the development of knowledge whereas the ‘feelings’ researcher is adopting the interpretivist philosophy.” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 134). Researchers reflecting positivism will aim at providing law-like generalizations based on their data. The data will be collected in a more value-free way and is claimed to be external from the researcher. Realism refers to that there is a reality rather independent of the human mind. Both realism and positivism assumes a scientific approach to how we develop knowledge (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 132-135).

As mentioned, our research philosophy is nearer to interpretivism. We argue that law-like generalizations are too narrow and that we need more understanding for such complex research areas as ours. It is essential in our research to understand the different social actors and their perceptions, “…we interpret the social roles of others in accordance with our own set of meanings.” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 137). Our aim is to understand the interviewee’s complex and unique point of views and their world; it is therefore highly appropriate for us to use an interpretivist perspective within our management research (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 137).

3.3 Research approach
In the subjects of research approaches and the relationship between theory and research Bryman & Bell (2011, pp. 11-14) are discussing mainly two approaches: deductive and inductive. Deductive is when theory is used first, to further execute observations and generate findings, this is the most common one and mainly associated with a quantitative research strategy. Having the theoretical basis, the researcher develop hypotheses, collect data, review the findings, reject or confirm the hypotheses and finally revise theory if possible. The process is clear and logical, however the process might change due to, for instance, new findings or a poor fit between data and hypotheses. Inductive research approach is reversed from the deductive, observations and the generated findings are used as the foundation when developing new theory. Inductive approach is mainly associated with qualitative studies. Nevertheless, it is common that qualitative studies having an inductive approach use theory as the background to their research and that they do not generate theory. Due to this, it is suggested that deductive and inductive research approach should be seen as tendencies rather then a set distinction (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 14).

For this research we argue that we are using an abductive approach, commonly used in business and management research (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 147). This could also be described as a combination of deductive and inductive research approach. Referring to our purpose an inductive research approach enables us to explore and better understand our chosen research area, rather than testing theory that already exists. However, we are using theory as the background of our research, which is why we argue that deduction is also a part of our research approach. Hence, we refer to our research as abductive.
3.3.1 Qualitative versus Quantitative research strategy

Qualitative studies stress the qualities of processes and they do not experimentally examine the results or measure them in terms of amount, intensity, frequency, or quantity. “They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 8). Moreover, Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.8) state that “. . .quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes.”.

Regardless of chosen research method the research is about capturing the individuals' own standpoint. Qualitative researches often view the interpretive methods used by qualitative researchers as non-objective and unreliable. Conversely, the qualitative researchers argue that their interviews and observations enable them to get closer to the participants perspective that quantitative researchers are not able to capture through their methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 10).

We are doing a qualitative study since it enables us to better clarify and understand how organizations practice the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies in their daily work. Moreover, that is the research method that has been mainly used in previous studies and therefore we have historical support for our chosen approach. Through interviews we can gain deeper knowledge from the workers personal experience, information and observations. Denzin & Lincoln (2000, p. 3) state that “. . .qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.”, this is what we aim at doing with our study.

We have studied the organizations through interviews in their natural settings and also we have reviewed the documents they use for their gender equality guidelines. The figure of our main steps in this qualitative study is based on the figure stated by Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 390), our own figure can be seen in Appendix 2.

3.3.2 The nature of the research design

There are different approaches to the nature of research design. Our research aims towards seeking new insights into organizations' CSR policies regarding gender equality and to clarify the nature of problems that comes with this. We are therefore taking an exploratory approach. We wish not to explain the relationship between variables and therefore an explanatory approach was excluded (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 171, 670). Descriptive research is defined as "research for which the purpose is to produce an accurate representation of persons, events or situations" (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 669). Therefore, our research is likely a combination of an exploratory and descriptive research approach, however we will refer to it as explorative.

3.3.3 Research design

Qualitative researchers often use different interpretive practices that are interconnected since each practice gives a different perspective, as a result one receives a better and deeper understating of the research area (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, pp. 3-4). Due to this, we have chosen to use both case study and view of documents.

The first chosen research design was a multiple case study, meaning a detailed and intense analysis of the different organizations within two separate industries (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 59-63). The topic is also explored within its context as the interviews that were
used as our strategy are conducted at the workplaces of the participants. The different organizations was treated as single cases as we seek to answer how gender equality as a part of CSR is practiced within the different organizations (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 179-180). In the study it was not possible to manipulate one of the variables or to collect data over time, therefore experimental and longitudinal design were excluded. The data was not gathered at a single point in time and can therefore not be recognized with a cross-sectional study (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 45-59).

The second research design was view of documents. As we were interested in the design on the statutory equality plan we choose to include documents in our study to gain knowledge about the decisions taken within the organizations regarding gender equality. Documents have normally not been created for the business purpose and therefore are they non-reactive. Meaning that the risk for a reactive effect is diminished as a limitation on the validity of data (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 544-545).

Some organizational documents are public domains and the risk with these documents is that they may not be a correct representation of how the different actors within the organization observe the situations. It has therefor been argued that documents need to be recognized for what they are, meaning a text that has been written for a specific purpose and not necessarily a reflection of reality. We have therefore chosen to use both documents and interviews as our data collection methods to get a broader picture of the reality in the organizations (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 550-552).

3.4 Sampling
The main concern when adopting a sampling method is to what extent it can be seen as representative sample of the information needed (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 441). The methods we have used to ensure that the result will be as representative as possible will be further presented below.

3.4.1 Data collection method
We have chosen to use the non-probability sampling method purposive sampling. The goal with this sampling method is to find cases or participants in a strategic way, that will best answer our research question (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 442). Since our purpose is to explore and understand how the two organizations practice gender equality, this sampling method was selected. The purposive sampling cannot be statistically representative and generalized for the whole population, however that is not in our concern as it is not our purpose to generalize (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 287-289).

During the sampling process there was a use of snowball sampling, meaning that we initiated contact with a person and used these to find other potential participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 192-193). A problem in this sampling method is the risk for bias, as the respondents are likely to recommend someone who is similar to themselves (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 289). However, as we were interested in reaching those people who were most knowledgeable within the practice of CSR and gender equality concerns, we trusted that we were recommended to the most appropriate managers within the organizations. Our goal was to get in contact with managers who had knowledge about our research topic, therefore we were interested to get in contact with the HR department, senior executive or
other employers who work with gender equality questions. This was also fulfilled, which will be explained in section 3.4.3.

In the search for our sample we used Umeå municipality's website to find large-scale employers in Umeå (www.umea.se). These organizations have more than 25 employees and should therefore according to Swedish law have an equality plan. From this list we selected the largest service and manufacturing organizations and sent them an email with our stated research question, purpose and some brief information to ask if they were willing to participate in our study.

We emailed 10 companies and out of these two organizations were willing to participate, one from the service industry and one from the manufacturing industry. The other organizations had to decline due to time constraints. Both of the organizations that chose to participate are large-scale organizations and a more detailed description of the organizations can be found in our empirical findings. Below we will present the type of interviews conducted.

### 3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

Because of our study's exploratory nature to gain a better understanding of the topic we used semi-structured interviews (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 171). We were interested in what the participants viewed as relevant and important and therefore it was welcome to wander off the topic (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 466-467). Our interview guide, see Appendix 3, is created from the main themes that we found during our literature search and there is a mix of open and probing questions. This allowed the participants to give extensive answers as well as providing us with important information to enable us to answer our research question and purpose (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 391).

Before scheduled interviews we sent information regarding our themes to the participants as well as a request to receive the statutory equality plan and other documents of interest. This to ensure the validity and reliability of the information we were interested in during the data collection (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 10). All interviews were conducted face-to-face as we perceived it easier to clarify potential misunderstandings when meeting in person. We were also able to observe the participants behavior, which can be seen as a benefit compared to for example telephone interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 489). Furthermore, to ensure the participants were comfortable in the situation, the location of the interviews were chosen by the participants (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 386-387), which in all cases were at their workplace. All interviews except two from the service industry were conducted without any other individuals besides the participant, Josefin and Sofia present in the room.

As our first meeting with the participants was on the day of the interviews, it was necessary for us to spend 5-10 minutes of conversation with the participants to establish a comfortable situation amongst us and establish our credibility, which would have a significant impact on the outcome of the interview (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 388-389). We started all interviews by presenting information about our research question, purpose, and definitions of CSR and gender equality, confidentiality and anonymity. Moreover, the participants were informed that they could abort the interview at any time and was not obligated to answer any of the questions if not feeling comfortable. We also spent a few minutes after the interviews to talk about the topic in general as well as other related areas
of interest. When interviewing we had one active interviewer who lead the interview and the passive interviewer listened and asked additional questions and clarified where needed (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 474). Furthermore, the initial questions in our interview guide provided qualitative data and therefore we felt no need to change it.

To ease the data collection and analysis we recorded and transcribed all interviews. To reduce the risk of transcription errors and ensuring factual errors the transcripts was sent to the participants (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 550). However, only three participants confirmed the transcriptions while the others did not respond. We do not consider this an issue as they were given the chance to review their transcripts. Below we will elaborate on the participants of our semi-structured interviews.

### 3.4.3 Participants

We were not able to choose our interviewees freely, hence they had different positions within the organizations and we can therefore not guarantee that the interviewees gave a correct and fair picture of the organization as a whole, and their work within gender equality. However, as we interviewed at least two managers within the same organization we are likely to gain reliable and accurate information of how they practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies.

In this study we conducted 4 interviews from a service organization and 2 interviews from a manufacturing organization. Referring to our purpose, we wanted to explore and understand how the organizations practice CSR focusing on gender equality including the design of the plan and policies, how they are communicated and the challenges the organizations face in this work. Hence, it seemed most appropriate to get in contact with managers, as these are the ones most likely to implement those standards.

We wanted to gain the personal thoughts and viewpoints of managers in reference to how the organizations practice these issues. To ensure that the participants did not feel pressured to answer in a certain way in accordance to the organization, we chose to keep them anonymous. We also chose to keep the organizations anonymous, as organizations are often unwilling to corporate if the topic might put them in a negative light (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 223). In the table below we have summarized the participants of this study, their different positions, industry, type of interview, time and date for the interviews:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Interview type</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>HR manager</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>65 min</td>
<td>2015-05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Communication manager</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>62 min</td>
<td>2015-05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>HR manager</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>65 min</td>
<td>2015-05-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Finance manager</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>45 min</td>
<td>2015-05-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Retail manager</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>52 min</td>
<td>2015-05-07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Regional head manager</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>75 min</td>
<td>2015-05-07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Summary of interviews.

We are aware of the uneven distribution of participants between the two industries. Unfortunately it was difficult to gain access to more participants within the manufacturing organization. This is a factor that we will take into consideration in the analysis of data and when making conclusions.
3.5 Documents
The documents we gained access to from the industries are presented in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Industry</th>
<th>Manufacturing industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Popular version of the Equality plan</td>
<td>Workforce Diversity plan (equality plan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report 2014</td>
<td>Code of conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power point presentation about workforce diversity and gender equality</td>
<td>Booklet of the organizational values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A brief description of their CSR management from their internal network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A brief description of their code of conduct from their internal network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Summary of acquired documents.

We were not able to access the statutory equality plan from the service industry, as this was not a public domain. Instead we gained access to the popular version, which is a simplified version of the statutory equality plan. This created an issue as the plan may have involved valuable information for our study. However, with the popular version and four interviews we were able to receive enough data to make an analysis of the organization in terms of equality.

3.6 Data analysis
Most of the analytical procedures are based on an inductive research approach, however, in practice they are often combined with a deductive approach to analyze the qualitative data. We have used a template analysis, as it is well suitable to our chosen research design, abduction. Template analysis enabled us to use our predetermined codes from our interview guide and to add more codes as data was analyzed. We used mainly the themes from our interview guide (Appendix 3) as headings and the questions where set as main codes, hence the themes where highest in hierarchy followed by the codes. Lower-level codes within the hierarchy are indicators of greater depth. This enabled us to analyze the data and realize our purpose to explore and understand themes, patterns and relationships. Furthermore, we revised our template throughout the process as new codes where added and some were excluded (Saunders et al., 2012, pp. 572-573). The final themes and codes used can be seen in Appendix 5 where the themes are marked in bold letters while the codes are stated as sub-headings.

In the analysis of documents we have chosen to use qualitative content analysis. This method is similar to the coding approaches within qualitative data analysis as it uses a search for predefined themes and categories (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 560). This method was used to ease the process of combining the conducted interviews with the documents as similar codes were used in both analyses. When analyzing the design of the statutory equality plan we used the Equality ombudsman recommendations of how to write an equality plan described in the theoretical framework (JämO, 2004).

Interviews
As mentioned, all interviews was recorded and transcribed. The transcribing was useful to more thoroughly examine the participants answers and to lower the risk of our analysis being influenced by our own biases and values (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 481). When the
participants shared information that was outside our research question and purpose, we used data reduction. This to make the analysis of our collected data more focused on the specific focus of this study (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 10-11).

One importance notice for the reader is that the interviews were held in Swedish, as this was the native language for both participants and us researchers and therefore is seemed like an appropriate choice. The transcribing process of the interviews was also conducted in Swedish and to be able to create the analysis we translated the selected material into English. This could be biased due to change of language, but as both of the authors are fluent in English and studying in English this was not seen as an issue.

Coding
Overload of data is a normal problem within qualitative studies and to prevent this we used our research question and purpose as a base when processing data. However, we kept an open mind to information that we previously had no knowledge about or expected to find (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 55-56). We chose to highlight the sections we found most relevant to our purpose. In the creation of codes, as mentioned, we used our predetermined codes as the foundation and added more codes based on the answers from the participants. These codes were used as labels to assign meaning for the different parts of information that felt useful for our research question and purpose (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). Furthermore, coding required us to put our expected findings aside, rather we searched for the right word or words that best described what we thought the data indicated (Corbin & Strauss, p. 160).

Presentation of findings
When developing our interview guide we included questions regarding how organizations practice both CSR and gender equality in general. However, we noticed that the participants where likely to answer the questions more in relation to gender equality and workforce diversity. Referring to our research question: How do organizations practice CSR, focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies?, we chose to move the information gathered from "CSR in general" and "gender equality in general" that was concerning practice, and instead place it under the theme named “How does the organization practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies”. Overall, since we had semi-structured interviews many of the interviewees touched upon different subjects at the same time. Therefore we have moved some information to the most suitable theme or code, this step can also be seen in Appendix 2. Our interpretations of the collected data were the foundation to the codes and themes used; therefore it is possible that other researchers disagree (Corbin & Strauss, pp. 160-163).

In order to ease the reading and understanding of our total findings, we decided to combine the analysis of the conducted interviews and documents. However, we clearly stated where we received the information to avoid confusion.

Discussion and Conclusion of data
The final step in the analyzing process was to find similarities and contradictions by connecting our findings back to our theoretical framework. This was a highly important part as we wished to explore and gain a greater understanding of how two organizations work with gender equality.
3.7 Ethical considerations
Ethical concerns are of high importance in research that involves human participants and therefore have we taken several ethical principles into account during the research process (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 208).

The first principle was to ensure no harm to the participant (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 128-129). We wanted to ensure that we did not harm the interviewees’ employment or future possibilities within the organization. Therefore, they were held anonymous and could withdraw at any time or reject our questions. Also, depending on the outcome from the interviews and documents, we considered the risk of the organizations being perceived negatively and therefore, we chose to keep them anonymous as well. Another reason to why we made these decisions is the fact that this study will become a public document.

To deal with the ethical consideration of informed consent, we made sure the participants were well informed of our research topic and purpose. This was ensured through emails with information during the initial contact and a more thorough description via email and verbally before the interviews took place. With this information we believe the participants were aware of the implications of their participation and their choice to participate or not (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 231).

The ethical principle of responsibility in the analysis of data and reporting of findings was highly important for us, as we wanted to assure the anonymity of the participants and their organizations. In our findings we have therefore not included any information that could reveal the organizations or identity of the participants for anyone outside the research process in each industry. Furthermore, to make sure we interpreted the gathered information correctly, we asked the participants to confirm the transcriptions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 232).

3.8 Assumptions
We assume that the participants provided truthful and accurate information during the interviews. By conducting interviews and viewing documents we assume that the data gathered is representative of the organizations and that it provides a fair and accurate picture of how the organizations practice gender equality.
4. Empirical findings

In this chapter the findings from the interviews and documents will be presented. The findings are classified into different main themes and codes based on the model of our framework, interview guide and our purpose, this can be seen in Appendix 5. This gives a clear overview of the most important areas for our purpose and research question. First we will provide a description of characteristics of the two industries, this is followed by the findings in the service industry and later the manufacturing industry. The findings from the interviews and documents will be presented under the same heading, to provide an overview of the collected findings from that specific code.

The Service and Manufacturing industries

The service industry consists of organizations that are involved in retail, transport, distribution, food services as well as other service-dominated businesses (Business dictionary, 2015). The manufacturing industry refers to the conversion of raw materials, components or parts, into finished goods. Manufacturing normally use division of labor where there is a specialization of tasks within a production process so that each worker become a specialist in doing one thing, especially on an assembly line (Business dictionary, 2015). The main characteristics of the two industries can be seen in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Industry</th>
<th>Manufacturing Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intangible product</td>
<td>Tangible product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can not be stored</td>
<td>Can be stored by buyer and seller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production and consumption simultaneously</td>
<td>Consumption before production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, consumption and often also the selling happens at the same place</td>
<td>Production, selling and consumption happens at different places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can not be transported</td>
<td>Can be transported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The buyer/customer participates directly in the production</td>
<td>The seller produces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Characteristics of the industries (Norman, 2011, p. 28).

4.1 Service Industry – a case study

The organization within the service industry that we have done our case study on is one of Sweden’s largest cooperation within retail and everyday commodity. As we are based in Umeå we interviewed managers within the organization’s northern section. P1 mentions that the organization engages in questions within CSR and gender equality, as they want to reflect the society as a whole and use the full potential of their employees referring to gender, age and ethnicity.

4.1.1 CSR in general within the organization

All of the managers clearly state that gender equality is a part of their CSR work. P1 argues that it would be stupid not to consider almost 50% of the population, meaning men as they already have many female employees. P6 mentions that the gender equality policies are a part of the work but nothing that the regional head managers reads, rather P6 integrates these policies naturally in the daily work. In the power point presentation about workforce diversity and gender equality the organization states “A retail organization must reflect their customers and the society it operates in”.
The managers further state different areas within CSR. P1 mainly mentions questions within equality, referring to the equality plan and the gender equality policies within the organization, but also business environment, well being of the employees, salaries and parental leave. P2 mentions sustainability policies as a part of their CSR and P6 elaborates on the organizations profile within sustainability and ecological products. P2 mentions that there are general CSR policies within the organizations that are the same for all retail stores in Sweden. P1 says that the board of directors is responsible for the development of CSR policies as well as the goals, the personnel manager is the one providing them with a proposal.

4.1.2 Gender Equality in general within the organization
The interviewees tended to answer this question in great detail, which is why some answers has been placed under another theme or code where it was more suitable.

**Background - historical events**
P6 elaborates on the history of gender and the importance of knowing that there has been a great difference between men and women in our society that cannot be denied. For instance within sports, "The question regarding how many female leaders there are for male groups and controversially, that is when you realize that it will take time. But it is changing and it is nice to see.” However, the regional head manager believes that the present society is equal. Gender equality is a natural part in the daily work and P6 cannot understand how someone can manage an organization with that historical type of approach today.

**The distribution of men and women within the organization**
The annual report from 2014 presents the distribution of men and women within the organization. The whole organization employs 69% women and 31% men. The distribution of managers is 33% women and 77% men, while the distribution of retail sellers is 88% women and 22% men. Within the board there are seven women and five men.

**Workforce Diversity**
P6 states that mixed groups build a better workplace; you need a workforce combined by genders, different nationalities and ages. Agreeing, P1 states, "The best group dynamics and climate is often created when mixing women, men and different ages". The HR manager declares that it is important to get a good balance and also consider the ages of employees to enable them to learn from each other.

4.1.3 Equality Plan Design and Gender Equality Policies
P5 mentions that the equality plan involves that you should show respect for everyone, no matter of gender. P6 says that it is obvious that men and women should get equally paid. Furthermore, the regional head manager mentions roles and labor law as parts of the organizations equality plan. However, P6 states that these areas are a natural part of the daily job, not a part of the agenda. P1 mentions another important factor for the organization, being a parent. As an employee you have to be able to be a parent and a manager or seller.
Goals
The board of directors according to P1 establishes the goals of the equality plan. The organization measures the current equality within the workforce and then the board creates new goals for the coming period. They also try to describe in words what they mean with their goals, including parental leave, that no one should feel discriminated, there should be no differences in salaries depending on gender and the distribution of gender within sick leave.

The four managers state the goal of having an increased amount of female managers and an increased amount of male sellers to have a more gender equal distribution. The long-term goal stated in the popular version of the equality plan is that there should exist an equal distribution of both genders within all areas of the organization. However, P5 emphasizes that the main concern is to create well-functioning groups. P1 also mentions the "soft goals" of having well-functioning groups and that there needs to be a balance between statistics and having a good group dynamic.

Both P1 and P2 mention two other goals, to encourage men to take our parental leave and to decrease the number of women on sick leave. P1 explains that there should not be a difference in salary or sick leave depending on gender.

How to measure goals
P1 states that they use numbers and percentages to get statistics and clearly measure goals within equality, 50% of each gender is the long-term goal, however there is a long way there. The regional head manager, P6, is working with statistics regarding the gender distribution of retail managers, P6 also states that the HR department are handling statistics to measure goals. P2 says that the goals are measured and followed up in their business plan and there are guidelines within each function of the organization. Some measurable goals should be followed up each month and they are all evaluated at the same time before the new equality plan is created.

The retail manager, P5, has a gender distribution of 50% men and 50% women within the retail store. It is a well-functioning group and therefore they do not follow up any goals at the moment.

P5 says that during the employee performance review the employees have the opportunity to bring up issues regarding gender equality. P1 mentions their employee survey, however it does not include any questions regarding equality.

Participation in the development of plan and policies
P1 is not a part of developing the equality plan as it is the managers job, the HR manager only provides statistics if needed. P5 is one of the board members and have in a smaller extent been involved in the discussion of the plan. P2 and P6 have not been a part in the creation of the equality plan.

Tactic and/or strategies for implementation
P1 mentions the easy accessible equality policies online, that they are communicated to all newly employed managers and within internal education programs. It is important that everyone with higher power and influence know the policies. P2, the communication manager, tries to be aware of what pictures and texts that are used when commutating
within the organization. They use pictures of both males and females with different backgrounds and ages. The communication manager always tries to involve gender equality within guest lectures and training.

P5 are not aware of any tactics but mention that it is important to be alert regarding opinions about gender equality.

### 4.1.4 How does the organization practice CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies?

P2 says that it is mainly through recruitment, goal setting and statistics that the organization work with gender equality, but P2 believes that there is little emphasis on the practical work outside these areas.

#### Recruitment

P2 mentions that is mainly in the recruitment process that they work with equality. P1 states that they focus on recruiting more women within managerial positions and when recruiting sellers and other non-managerial positions they work consciously towards recruiting a larger amount of male workers. However, the HR manager states that it is of great importance to adapt the recruitment to each specific situation and the current gender distribution.

According to P1 they always consider the distribution of gender when recruiting new employees, "*However, we always want the best possible candidate for the job, but if we have two equally qualified candidates - then we consider the gender distribution at that workplace.*" The HR managers continues and explains that there are always exceptions, for instance in a group with only women, the best candidate might not be the best solution for the group. P1 stated an expression like "*The best form of equality is when a intermediate female can go as far as a intermediate male*," meaning that they focus on finding the right person for the job rather than considering solely the gender.

When P6 is hiring new retail managers it is not relevant if the candidate is a man or women, it is not about gender, rather it is about personality. It comes naturally for P6 and it is therefore a strange question to consider as all individuals are valued the same in the recruitment process, what is important is their individual qualifications. In connection, P1 states that gender, age or ethnicity should not be of any concern when recruiting.

#### Job advertisements

P1 who is the HR manager mentions that they clearly state in their job advertisements that they are looking for employees of underrepresented gender within the workplace.

P2, who works as a communication manager, uses pictures and text to communicate the importance of workforce diversity and gender equality. For example, in their job advertisements they use a picture showing a man and a woman. It is important to show pictures of both genders as they work in teams of both men and women. P6 strengthens this and also elaborate on their job advertisements including workforce diversity in the form of gender, age and nationality. P2 and P6 agree that this is done to attract a more diverse workforce.
**Communication**

P1 says that formally the managers themselves should discuss the equality plan at least ones every year, and also if any issue arises. The equality plan is communicated periodically from managers to non-managerial employees and the popular version is easily accessible for all employees online. Where it is possible to influence others, P2 tries to bring up the popular version of the plan. P5 have pinned up the popular version of the equality plan on the retail store's notice board. However, when asked if the popular version of the equality plan has been communicated to the employees P5 replies that: "I have not been going through this one. That is correct. But maybe it is a good idea." The retail manager continue, "But what I realize we can do now is to go through this on a meeting to see if everyone feels familiar with it or not. It could be a part of the employee performance review. That was a good idea. You take a lot for granted. That is how it is."

P1, the HR manager, says that they continuously discuss gender equality, share ideas and have internal training within the HR department. P1 believes that the employees are aware of gender equality and that it is included in everything they do. The plan is also communicated to all new managers and as it is a forcing law it is common that managers feel that it is inconvenient in some ways, feeling that it will interfere with their work. Therefore the HR manager with colleagues has a highly important role as they have to make the managers consider it as positive and a part of life.

P2 mentions that in some lunchrooms the organizations have information screens where information and values can be shared. P2 further mentions that there are no meetings where they discuss gender equality and there is a lack of theme days or other activities where they raise the topic. Other concerns have been prioritized.

P6 does not communicate gender equality policies to the retail managers, as that would not be modern leadership. The regional head manager argues that it would feel dishonest to start discussing these policies with the retail managers, as it is a natural part of their work. To be trustworthy these questions have to be within natural leadership. P6 might push for certain issues if there is an extra need, for instance the importance of recruiting more female leaders. Authoritarian leaders who lack these modern and natural leadership skills are no longer working as a retail manager.

**Parental leave**

P1 mentions that the parental leave act within the Swedish law is very strict and since they have many employees in an "active age" the subject is actively discussed. "Women get pregnant and men have their girlfriends at home who gets pregnant. We talk a lot about being a parent and that it should definitely not be an obstacle when working for us. Rather it is a part of life and the maturity process of adults. You have to be able to be a parent and work for us." P6 states that everyone has the right to be on parental leave. P1 mentions statistics showing that there is an increasing amount of men taking parental leave more than three weeks at a time, their male workers are probably more interested in getting their part of the parenting leave now then they used to be.

In the popular version of the equality plan that we were given, it is stated that individuals should be given the opportunity to combine work and family obligations. It is also stated that the organization has a policy saying that they should encourage male employees to
take out parental leave. This policy is mentioned by P2 who is questioning if this is the reality and if men are encouraged to take out their parental leave.

**Salaries**
According to the popular version of the equality plan there should not exist any differences in salaries between the genders within equal positions. When doing wage setting for managers, P1 mentions that they look at hard facts meaning location, the number of employees and so forth. The gender is not of relevance, however, it was recently and it can still be seen in the newspapers from time to time.

P2 mentions that salaries are one area where they work with gender equality and that a mapping process is made to even out differences. P6 measure leadership skills to ensure that the employees are equally paid for the same job. The regional head manager consider different aspects, for instance how well the retail manager reaches their goals, size of the retail store, profitability, work values and how well they treat the customers within that retail store. The manager does not consider gender, as it is not of concern, the salaries are based on performance.

**Adapt the workplace**
P1 brings up the biological differences between genders, referring to that men tend to be physically stronger then women. Further P1 explains that to ensure that this is out of concern they adapt the work within their retail stores using different resources for heavy lifts and so forth, everyone should be able to work in their stores, independently of gender or if they are physically strong or not.

**Leadership and Training**
The HR manager, P1, with colleagues have an important role as leaders and co-workers to ensure that the managers are positive about laws and regulations. When having internal training the HR managers are also trying to ensure that, especially women, know that they are equally good and that you can be a good employee without knowing exactly everything. The HR manager is referring to a myth saying, "women should know everything before saying that they can do it alright. However, men believe that they are alright at something even though they only feel like they know some parts".

P1 mentions that an important task for especially retail managers is to push and make the employees confident and willing to move upwards in the organization. P6, the regional head manager is constantly trying to be a good leader and encourage employees to become managers as there seem to be some historical culture making women less brave then men when it comes to becoming a leader, "I try to overcome these obstacles that women tend to think about and instead make them think about their work more long-term, by trying to explain that they are equally qualified.” Furthermore, P6 ensures that candidates know what responsibilities being a retail manager includes as there are examples of retail managers who did not understand the responsibilities until after they had enter the position. P6 does not consider gender as relevant; rather the regional head manager believes that individuals are shaped already when growing up, from their family culture. They need to be willing to become leaders.

Another training mentioned by P6 is an example of an efficient retail worker who P6 has used for training. That retail worker has been training co-workers, been a part of new
establishments, renewals and things like that. This has made the individual grow and more confident, it is good for both the ones who gets training and for the retail worker as that person will now feel more comfortable taking a further step in the career. This technique is used to push individuals and to strengthen them in their career so that they will hopefully be willing to become retail managers.

P2 says that the organization lacks steps towards gender equality, therefore P2 would like to see more practical initiatives in form of projects, training and theme days to raise the topic.

**Initiatives**

P1 mentions a historical event where there was a discussion about employees getting a raise in salary if they had an extra responsibility. Due to historical traditions the suggestion was for them to get paid based on the percentages they worked, for instance a person working 75% only got 75% of the raise in salary from the extra responsibility. Hence, this hit women as they worked part-time. This was up for discussion only around 10 years ago and P1 states that it is senseless. If you have an extra responsibility you should get fully paid for that responsibility even if you only work 75%.

P2 mentions that they have made a new initiative regarding their job advertisement where the ads are developed to attract several groups of people. They also work with workforce diversity in project form at the moment. Furthermore, the communication manager mentions that they have been trying to communicate the popular version of the equality plan even more during the last year, "...it can be a fantastic paper product but might not be used in that way practically. We are trying to make a popular version out of all of our policies so that employees or summer workers can see it or pin it on the notice board."

Another new initiative is mentioned by P6, the regional head manager, when they are recruiting they have started to ask the candidates if they are willing to become leaders in the future. This initiative is done in an attempt to increase the possibility of recruiting managers internally. P5 cannot remember any new initiatives.

**4.1.5 Challenges**

**Preconceptions of the industry**

Historically, P6 states that "Women were at home while men worked. Men were leaders, women were not. Women haven't had the right to vote as long as men have, there are many reasons as to why there is a difference". P5 mentions that there used to be mainly male retail managers but referring to non-managerial positions like retail sellers the service industry has historically been a female dominated industry. According to P1, there used to be mainly women doing everyday commodity shopping, however, this has changed and it is more equally distributed between men and women today. However, P2 believes that the organization recruit male leaders out of old habit, that males are used to hire other males to leader positions, women are used to be more cautious in these situations. P2 also believes that biases, stereotypes and norms that still exist in the society affect the decisions organizations and individuals make.

P6 states that it is of great importance for the organization to work with gender equality policies since it will take time to change old patterns, the regional head manager gave an example saying that "I believe that it will take a long time before we will see a girl as the
national leader of hockey VM or something similar...". P6 thinks that this is something that needs to be worked with from a young age, it is about changing peoples viewpoint and the society. Gender equality has to become a natural part of people’s everyday life. The regional head manager further states the increase of male nurses as another example, it has taken a long time and it is likely to be similar for the retail stores with both managerial and non-managerial positions. It takes time to change old patterns.

According to P6, the next generation is likely to have gender equality as a natural part of their lives as it is widely discussed today, when they are growing up. The more you work with these issues and raise them, for instance through studies like this one, the faster the process will be towards a more gender equal society. "You should not believe that this issue will be solved by itself. I do not believe so. It will not just happen, rather as I was saying, it is about behavior all the way from when kids grow up in school and all other aspects, it will be a part of them in their working life."

P2 states the belief that the service industry has a low status in the society and that a common preconception is that working in a retail store is a simple job however, "In reality it is a rather complex job and you handle a lot of money since you are basically having a small company where there is a profitability. So, it should attract men. To sell and have close customer contact. But I believe that it is old preconceptions that you can always work behind the counter in a retail store, and that it should be a woman and therefore women apply for the positions.". The communication manager finds this highly remarkable. This is also mentioned by P6 who further elaborates on the possibility of the IT boom a few years ago being a reason to why the industry might lack men in their workforce. Another preconception mentioned by P6 is the fact that some men cannot handle having a female manager. However, the regional head managers refer to what is seen lately and concludes that these types of preconceptions have decreased.

P1 mentions that there are no effects on gender equality from the industry they are operating in.

Communication
The communication manager, P2, created the popular version of the equality plan and through webpage statistics the communication manager can see how many times it has been viewed. However, due to the high number of employees and retail stores, it is hard to ensure that the information is communicate to everyone in a proper way. The popular version might be shared in a way that the communication manager cannot see or know about, "it is easier to push for a policy and print it but you question if people really practice it in their daily work".

Market yourself - differences between men and women
P1 states that there is a difference between how men and women market themselves, men tend to be more forward, while women rarely speak up for themselves and communicate that they want to achieve, for instance to become a retail managers. However, managers within the organization are aware of this issue and that there is a difference. P6 elaborates on the fact that the greatest challenge is to convince women that they have the capability to become managers, as they tend to feel that the possibility of becoming a parent is of big concern. The regional manager says, "Then I ask them, don't you have a boyfriend? He is also becoming a parent and we hire men as well, young men. They have the same issues. It might differ the first few months when becoming a parent, but for me it is a great challenge
“to make women step out of their comfort zones and become managers.” According to P6 women are qualified and it is stupidity that they tend to stay in non-managerial positions. Women need more confidence and guts and P6 argues that it is a societal issue shaped at a young age, already in school. Historically, women was acting in the background of men, however, the regional head manager does already see a difference that women tend to take a greater place at work, which is important as a leader. P6 mentions that independently of gender, it is a general challenge to make employees willing to become managers.

Recruitment
One great challenge mentioned by P1 is to attract the right candidates and ensure that skilled people apply for the positions. The dominance of female retail sellers is mentioned by P2 who believes that it is affected by the fact that there are a lot of part time positions and low salaries.

P5 who is the retail manager has not experienced any difficulties in attracting and recruiting male workers to the retail store P5 is managing.

When recruiting and creating teams, P1 mentions that there is a difference between managers, if they consider the workforce diversity perspective of age or not. Some managers fail to see the importance of mixing, not only men and women but also ages.

The Equality Plan - a forcing law
P1 mentions that there is always a risk that people perceive laws as something inconvenient and that P1, in the role of HR manager, has an important role to minimize the risk of managers feeling that the equality plan and employees right to parental leave is troublesome.

Discrimination and Risks
P2, P5 and P6 have not experienced any intentional discrimination at their workplace. P1 states an incident nearly 20 years ago where an older, male leader said that the employees of his department should celebrate their success later the same evening with drinks. However, as there were especially many women with children working at his department they could not attend on such a short notice. This was very old-fashion and has not happened since.

P5 argues that if there is a focus on reaching a 50/50 distribution between males and females, there is a risk of some individuals being excluded due to their gender even though they would be right for the job. This is also a risk mentioned by P1. P2 do not see any negative effects or risks with their gender equality work, P6 agrees and argues that they work with individuals; hopefully the debate around gender equality will diminish.

4.1.6 Future - areas of improvement
The retail manager, P5, wants to go through the popular version of the equality plan with his employees to see if people have any questions or concerns within the topic.

P1 believes that they have to continue to communicate the importance of equality to ensure that everyone know about it and feel that it is important. There are various examples of women that have been within the organization for more than 20 years and recently got promoted to retail managers. Individuals with the right qualifications should be able to
develop from sellers to managers. P1 is therefore questioning why they did not get promoted earlier, the underlying factors, which can be both on individual and organizational level. Furthermore, the HR manager emphasizes the importance of continuing their work. They will continue to measure statistics and set new goals until they are satisfied, which they will probably never be, however a rather equal distribution referring to 50/50 is desirable.

**Equality within managerial and non-managerial positions**
P2 states that an increase of male retail sellers is desired, the communication manager and P5 who is the retail manager further agrees on the fact that they want an increase of female leaders in the future. The regional head manager P6 argues that there will be an increase of female leaders in the near future as the vice retail managers are mainly women. Moreover, P2 mentions that it should feel natural for women to become leaders and for men to be retail sellers. P2 believes that everyone wants to have an equal society but that we all carry a personal responsibility in its creation.

**Individuals, not gender**
P6 states that in the future it is desirable to look at employees as individuals, rather then men or women at the work place. However, what is seen as male and female attributes should not be taken away completely as there are biological differences that are of great importance when creating a successful work force with diversity. Employees should be judged based on their performance and hopefully the future leaders will manage organizations this way.

**4.2 Manufacturing Industry – a case study**
We did our case study within the manufacturing industry on one of Sweden’s greatest producers of products used worldwide. Due to our geographic location, we interviewed employees within the northern section. The document with a brief description of CSR states that CSR includes two things: to create a shared value for companies and the society and to minimize the negative impacts on society. Furthermore it states that they have to take an economic, environmental, social and ethical responsibility for their business.

**4.2.1 CSR in general within the organization**
P4 clearly states that gender equality is a part of their CSR work, this is also mentioned by P3. P3 further mentions social, economical and environmental aspects of CSR. The HR manager explains that the social aspect has an emphasis on human rights, having no discrimination and so on. Further, the HR manager says that since they are involved in the production industry there is a great emphasis on the environmental aspect of CSR, as well as the way they conduct business. P4 mentions equality, discrimination, workforce diversity, religion, ethnicity and environmental issues.

P3 states that because of the large size of the organization most polices are created on a higher level. In their production section in Umeå they receive finished documents of the CSR policies for them to implement. The policies, for example the code of conduct, are the same no matter where in the world you work. P4 also mentions that the CSR policies are developed at a higher level within the organization.
4.2.2 Gender Equality in general within the organization

Background – historical events
The HR manager, P3 explains that they mainly work with equality to "...try to get a better balance between male and female since the industry is, especially the manufacturing industry is historically a male industry where women have been found as seen today, within the economy and HR departments which is rather typical, and then there are a lot of men in the production." P4 raise the same issue and the role of history, as there is a tradition of men working within the manufacturing industry.

The distribution of men and women within the organization
P3 says that they have a total of 13% females at the site in Umeå. However, among the managerial positions the percentage might be higher due to a higher number of female production managers. P4 also mentions this gender distribution.

In the workforce diversity plan we could find percentages of women, based on the total amount of new recruitments. During 2012 32.1% women were recruited and in the following year of 2013 57% of the recruited employees were women.

Workforce Diversity
P4 states that the organization works with gender equality within their workforce diversity group. According to the financial manager, workforce diversity creates a more open workplace and they perform better with different inputs and perspectives. This enables them to be creative and innovative, hence find new and more efficient solutions, "Diversity is an important key to better results." Furthermore, "Gender equality has become more like a part of workforce diversity now, rather than being a specific question, but we had training in that a year ago."

4.2.3 Equality Plan Design and Gender Equality Policies
When we asked the HR manager how they work with the equality plan, P3 mentioned that they have chosen to use the term workforce diversity plan instead of equality plan. The HR manager further states: "We write a workforce diversity plan every third year, and the one we have now is due next year. Then we consider the Swedish Discrimination act and some chosen paragraphs from that act. And then we look a little at how it has been previous years, activities, where we are and what we want. And which activities." P3 explained that they work with equality in two ways, through the workforce diversity plan and their recruitment policies.

In the workforce diversity plan we found that each section starts with a paragraph from the Swedish Discrimination act, followed by previous accomplishments, a description of the current situation, their goals and activities for future progress. The plan is established every third year and it is followed up every year.

Goals
P3 explains that their overall goal within gender equality is to create an organization that can provide opportunities for as many people as possible, "...however, not to focus solely on male and female, it is about other aspects as well, you should be treated with respect if you are homosexual, of another skin color or have another mother tongue or what it might be."
There are many different goals stated in the workforce diversity plan. During recruitment of managerial positions, the organization should have a minimum of 50% female leaders, independently if they recruit internally or externally. When recruiting for non-managerial positions externally, the amount of women should be at least 35%. This was mentioned by P4 who said as an example that they have been working with a goal to recruit more female managers. Other examples of goals found within the workforce diversity plan is for parental leave, the difference between the number of days that men and women use, should diminish and regarding salaries there should not be any differences depending on gender.

**How to measure goals**

It is stated by both P3 and P4 that they evaluate the previous years goals within the workforce diversity plan every year.

P4 states that they measure the organizations "soft goals" through an employee survey. Referring to the workforce diversity plan is the aspiration to perform yearly surveys especially aimed at concerns within workforce diversity. P3 explains that all employees within the organization participate in an employee survey that contains a range of questions where 5-6 of them are focused on workforce diversity. This survey is conducted in the same manner independently of your position in the organization. The financial manager explains how each question in this survey is measured and evaluated based on different indexes. The surveys are divided into to each section within the organization to enable managers to work with the specific improvements needed in each section. If the survey identifies areas that is in a need for improvement, there are specific action plans to follow.

P3 explains that the distribution between men and women are measured with numbers and ratios. P4 confirms that they use hard data, numbers, to measure their goals.

**Participation in the development of plan and policies**

P3, who is the HR manager, is one of the representatives within the workforce diversity group who creates the workforce diversity plan. P4 is also involved in the development of the workforce diversity plan through the board. As mentioned previously, the HR manager and the financial manager are both a part of the workforce diversity plan but not in the creation of the general CSR policies as they are developed at a higher level of the organization.

**Tactic and/or strategies for implementation**

When the new workforce diversity plan is established, P3 states that it is shared on their internal network. The HR manager further explains that once a month there is a meeting with all managers from the organization's northern section. They share important information and afterwards it is the managers' task to share the necessary information with their employees. P4 also mention the monthly meetings where information is shared.

Within the workforce diversity plan it is stated that all employees should receive a review of the new workforce diversity plan by their manager during 2014. Furthermore, every year the workforce diversity group is responsible for highlighting an important issue in the field of workforce diversity within their internal newsletter. There is also a "workforce diversity award" given to encourage good work within workforce diversity, internally or externally.
P3 describes that all employees should read the code of conduct as this is demanded from the board. In addition, the employees are required to complete an e-learning course focusing on their code of conduct. This is also mentioned in the document with a brief description of the organization’s code of conduct, stating that it is mandatory for all employees to read the booklet of the organizational values and to complete the e-learning regarding their code of conduct. According to the HR manager, P3, if the board members create a policy, there is usually a specific action plan that should be followed. For instance, the new policy can be communicated through workshops and meetings. P3 mentions that there are workshops for managers with a focus on workforce diversity. This is confirmed by P4 who also discuss the fact that they have had different lectures to raise certain questions and increase the awareness within the workforce.

4.2.4 How does the organization practice CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies

Recruitment
P4 and P3 states that during the recruitment process it is required to involve both a male and a female employee. P3 further states that when hiring consultants from a consultant agency, they have a requirement saying that 30% of the newly employed consultants need to be females.

Job advertisement
P4 mentions that it is stated within their workforce diversity plan that they should add information about gender equality within their job advertisements. The workforce diversity plan also includes a great emphasis on designing the job advertisements to attract more female candidates during internal and external recruitment.

It is stated in the workforce diversity plan that during internal and external recruitment there has been a great emphasis on designing the job advertisements to attract more female participants.

Communication
P3 says that each production manager should communicate the knowledge about the equality plan to his or her employees. It can for instance be in the form of a short power point presentation where the managers present the most essential parts. P4 mentions that they work with gender equality when the workforce diversity group communicates their current work.

Salaries
In the production section the HR manager, P3, explains that tariff wages are used, this ensures that there are no differences between the genders. Within the office section, wages might differ and at some occasions it has been proven that the females have received a higher salary compared to their male colleges.

The workforce diversity plan states that a mapping and analysis of the salaries should be made to discover potential salary differences within the organization. Furthermore, it states that in 2010-2013 there were no differences in salaries depending on gender within the office agreements, within the collective agreements there was a small difference between the genders.
Adapt the workplace
The workforce diversity plan states that after an evaluation of an employee survey in 2012, a need for adapting work tools and work wear for women was found. The organization responded with the introduction of new work wear in year 2013. Another action mentioned in the workforce diversity plan is that during new product and process changes, the tools and work environment should be created in consideration to their diverse workforce. It further states the importance of different perspectives to develop a workplace adapted to a diverse workforce and due to that, the workforce diversity group who creates the workforce diversity plan, should every year invite an external partner to gain new insights to their work.

Leadership and Training
The HR manager, P3, declares that the organization is in a period of change and need to dismiss employees. Therefore, there will be new group formations. To handle this effectively the organization will organize team-building exercises where some parts are focusing on workforce diversity. Another example of how they practice training is also explained by P3, "..we have recruited unemployed young people who have gymnasium education, they have been able to get a one year employment where theory and practical things have been alternated and where one requirement also has been to have a fifty, fifty distribution of girls and boys." P4 further elaborates on this project saying that "..it is a way to get young people to work within the manufacturing industry and show that it is something different from tough and dirty." This training is done in the form of one year’s internship and training within the organization.

P4 mentions different training sessions they have had within equality and that they have discussed having a award for someone working hard for gender equality, however since gender equality is a part of their workforce diversity they have chosen to direct the employees to work more broad with workforce diversity.

In the workforce diversity plan previous training within workforce diversity for the years 2010-2013 is mentioned. One of these being a training program for board members, managers and trade union members. Moreover, materials have been created to enable discussions regarding attitudes and values during group meetings and it is stated that a few group meetings have been completed based on this material.

Initiatives
Both the financial and the HR manager mention one new initiative, explaining that they have a recruitment policy that says that there must be both a man and female in the recruitment group during the recruitment process. Furthermore P4 mentions lectures, workforce diversity award and their generous parental leave regulations as examples of initiatives beyond the law. P3 states another initiative beyond the law, mapping and analysis of the salaries every year, instead of every third year.

4.2.5 Challenges
P4 mentions that these questions are complex and it is easy to forget about workforce diversity in the day-to-day tasks. One challenge is therefore to know how to work with these questions to keep them accurate.
Preconceptions of the industry

P4 elaborates on preconceptions within the manufacturing industry and states that "It is probably seen as dirty, tough and challenging, I would say. Which is untrue. Therefore, we would probably need to open up and show more, for instance that has been made through a specially designed program where young people are given the chance to intern within our organization." P3 agree that it exists preconceptions and mentions traditional gender roles. However, the HR manager argues that the technical development have made great improvements, which makes the tasks within the manufacturing industry less physically demanding.

Communication

The HR manager, P3, explains that the challenge for those employees who work within production is to find the opportunity to complete the e learning regarding the organizations code of conduct. It is not always possible to distribute time for this during their working hours since many of them work on a line, meaning that they cannot deviate from their workplace. They have group meetings but it is tough for the production managers to allocate time for discussions regarding equality, as there are often other, more essential issues that need attention. In addition, the employee’s work in shifts and therefore the production manager might not meet the employees more than every fourth week.

P3 further states that everyone who has an email address within the organization receive a reminder if the e learning have not been carried out on time. However, some employees do not have an internal email address and therefore it is not possible for everyone.

P4 mentions that the gender equality concerns should be more focused on working with the whole aspects of workforce diversity. There are so many more factors to consider than just the biological gender, for instance ethnicity. The financial manager states that it is hard to define differences without including a broader perspective.

Recruitment

The HR manager says that when recruiting there is a lower amount of females having the right competencies and educational background for the positions within the organizations. P3 explains that only a few females are studying technical related subjects during high school and at university level. P3 argues that there is a need for more women to study technical oriented subjects and that this discussion has existed for a long time in the society, however there is very limited change of the women's choice of education.

P4 mentions a challenge regarding downturns in production, when they have to discharge employees. According to the financial manager the concern is that the managers would like to maintain workforce diversity, however when there is a downturn the ones that has been hired for the shortest amount of time will be discharged. Hence, mainly older males get to keep their jobs. This is also mentioned by P3 who states that the group of discharged employees contains several females, which makes the gender distribution even more uneven then before. The financial manager, P4 elaborates and explains that one reason to this is the strict regulations that the labor unions have regarding discharging employees.

It is stated in the workforce diversity plan that there are no external recruitments at the moment, which makes the opportunity to recruit more females to the organization limited, this issue is mentioned by both P3 and P4. P3 believes that this leads to a stop in the development of a more gender equal workplace.
Discrimination and risks
Neither P4 nor P3 have experienced any direct forms of discrimination. P4 thinks that it is generally beneficial for organizations to work with workforce diversity. However, there is a risk that some people might feel that it is tough to work with these questions and there might be tough discussions where there is a risk for people feeling offended. It is therefore important to train the managers so that they have the skills needed for these issues. The HR manager, P3, sees no risks with their equality work.

4.2.6 Future - Areas of improvement
The long-term goal stated in the workforce diversity plan is to create a workplace with a more even distribution of males and females as well as increase the amount of employees with different ethnicity to better reflect the society.

Equality within managerial and non-managerial positions
P3 thinks that they should have more female workers within the organization in the future as a 50/50 distribution of men and women is known to create more efficient and enjoyable groups, workforce diversity makes the teams perform better.

P4 emphasizes the importance of discussing different aspects within workforce diversity in the future, for instance sexual orientation that has generally not been discussed. P4 says that it would be desirable to have workforce diversity as a natural part, rather than a big thing when there is training. It is likely that they would have to work with it frequently using training and seminars to make the workforce feel as if workforce diversity is a natural part of their work and organization.

P3 mentions that they should create an interest for technical subjects at an earlier age among girls.

The table below provides a thorough description and summary of the main themes and codes used as well as whom or what documents that provided findings. The themes are marked in bold, while the codes are stated as subheadings under each theme. The other columns describe what interviewees and documents that have provided data for the specific theme or code under each industry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes and codes</th>
<th>Service industry</th>
<th>Manufacturing industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>CSR in general within the organization</td>
<td>P1, P2, P5, P6, power point presentation</td>
<td>P3, P4,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality in general within the organization</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Background – historical events</td>
<td>P6</td>
<td>P3, P4</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The distribution of men and women within the organization</td>
<td>Annual report 2014</td>
<td>P3, P4, workforce diversity plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Workforce Diversity</td>
<td>P1, P6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equality plan design and gender equality policies</td>
<td>P1, P5, P6</td>
<td>P3, workforce diversity plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Goals</td>
<td>P1, P2, P5</td>
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<td>- How to measure goals</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participation in the development of plan and policies</td>
<td>P1, P2, P5, P6</td>
<td>P3, P4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tactic and/or strategies for implementation</td>
<td>P1, P2, P5</td>
<td>P3, P4, workforce diversity plan, brief description COC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the organization practice CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recruitment</td>
<td>P1, P2, P6</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Job advertisement</td>
<td>P1, P2, P6</td>
<td>P4, workforce diversity plan</td>
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5. Discussion

This chapter will provide an analysis based on our interpretations of findings, previous research stated in the theoretical framework and our own opinions. We have chosen to combine the discussion for the industries in some themes were we found it suitable, while some areas are still divided per industry. To ease the reading and understanding, we have used the model of our framework, which provides a similar structure as in the previous chapters.

5.1 Gender Equality - a part of CSR?

It was clearly stated by all managers within the service industry and the manufacturing industry that gender equality is a part of their CSR work. Grosser (2009) found that it is beneficial for gender equality as a subject to be included in CSR within organization. Referring to section 1.1 it was not evident for us that gender equality was a part of CSR and we were therefore positively surprised by these findings. Worth mentioning is however the fact that this has not been brought up during our university level courses within CSR, which we perceive negatively.

The HR manager working at the service company emphasizes that they want to reflect the society and therefore engage in these questions. This clearly reflects that they care for their citizens as mentioned by Alvesson & Billing (1997, p. 5) is a reason to why organizations should engage in these questions. Furthermore, we agreed on the statement made by the HR manager that it would be stupid not to consider almost 50% of the workforce, also referred to as a great example of irrationality (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, pp. 1-2). It was surprising to us that no one of the interviewees mentioned the aspect of profitability in relation to why they engage in CSR, since it is known to be a main factor to why organizations engage in it (Garriga & Mele, 2004, p. 65).
5.2 The importance of Gender Equality as a part of Workforce Diversity

When deciding on our research purpose and objectives we did not consider gender equality being a great part of workforce diversity. However, this was found already in our theoretical framework and was strengthened during our interviews. Both industries mentioned workforce diversity and we have therefore chosen to incorporate these findings with theories and discuss the importance of it below.

The organizations expressed great emphasize on workforce diversity through different demographics, for instance gender, age and ethnicity. It was stated by both organizations that mixed groups create a better workplace and one manager further stated that a diverse workforce enhances creativity and innovation, which leads to better performance; this confirms the arguing of Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 30-31). These statements can further be considered confirmed by Herring (2009, p. 219) who found that heterogeneous groups performed better compared to groups with similar characteristics. All the interviewees were positive towards workforce diversity and this is likely a reason to why the organizations experience positive outcomes, as Homan et al., (2007, pp. 1195-1197) mentions workforce diversity is successful if the group itself believes in it.

Workforce diversity is a natural part of the manufacturing organization's daily work, mainly since their statutory equality plan is named workforce diversity plan instead. In the service organization, one manager clearly states that workforce diversity is a natural part of the daily work for the manager. However, this is not mentioned by the other managers within the service or manufacturing organization, which can be seen as an indicator of the fact that it is not natural for everyone, it strengthens the challenges mentioned by the same manager in the service organization: it has to become a natural part of peoples everyday life. Guillaume et al., (2013, pp. 794-795) mentions this issue referring to that it differs how people and organizations respond to workforce diversity depending on both personal and organizational values. Furthermore, they therefore argue that workforce diversity should be researched with an organizational culture perspective, we did not do this as we chose to interpret the interviewees' own thoughts and standpoints to gain a better understanding.

One manager mentioned the complexity of workforce diversity and that it might raise tough discussions where employees feel offended. Hence, there is a risk of conflicts arising as supported by Williams & O'Reilly (1998, pp. 115-117) and Herring (2009, p. 219). Due to the findings from previous research, we were surprised that only one risk was mentioned in association to working with workforce diversity.

We were positive about the reasoning of one manager who argues that the debate will hopefully diminish if we consider individuals, not gender. This has previously been found to be a wish from female directors, they consider themselves as individuals and want to be chosen based on their qualification rather than gender (Kakabadse et al., 2015, p. 276). We further elaborate on the arguing and believe that no aspect of workforce diversity should be of relevance as the focus should be on qualifications and fit between job and individual.

When further elaborating on equality and gender equality we will incorporate workforce diversity as well since it is proven to be of high importance by both theory and interviews.
5.3 The statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies

The history of gender equality was highlighted in both industries as a reason to why they engage in these questions and why it is of interest. We found this highly interesting, as we had not considered the history still being a big influence on gender equality. Referring to Alvesson & Billing (1997, pp. 54-56) it is known that there has been a great difference of gender distribution between industries, however, we did not expect to find that in 2015 the effects of historical culture are still of great concern.

The recommended long-term goal to have a 50/50 distribution of men and women (JämO, 2004, p. 28), was mentioned by both organizations. However, both the service and the manufacturing industry have a long way to go, as their distribution is still considered uneven (Iseskog, 2005, p. 43: JämO, 2004, p. 28). Manufacturing has the longest way to go as they only have 13% females however; within their workforce diversity plan they clearly show that they work continuously trying to change these numbers. In our opinion, this is one of the most important things for organizations today, to show their awareness and prove that they are trying to change. Noticeable is that the retail manager has reached a 50/50 distribution within the retail store; according to us this is interesting and impressive as the total organization has a much less balanced distribution of genders.

When we asked about potential risks and negative effects of working with gender equality, there were some diverse opinions found from the interviewees within the service organization. Two of them mentioned the risk of excluding qualified individuals due to their gender and the other two did not consider there to be any risks.

5.3.1 Design

Referring to the Swedish Discrimination act there are some common aspects that can be discussed for both industries. These will be presented below followed by a separate section for each industry where specific findings and theories will be discussed. The theoretical framework provides many different aspects to consider in the development of the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies, however below we have chosen to only discuss the main concerns that can be related to the organizations’ studied.

Service industry

The information gathered from the interviews and documents could not identify all necessary areas stated in the Swedish Equality law. However, we are fully aware that this information may be stated in their actual statutory equality plan that we were not able to access. As we had no access to the statutory equality plan, we could not make any observations regarding their goals and measurement stated in the plan. From the interviews we found that there is a use of numbers to follow up the goals, which is recommended by JämO (2004, p. 6). However, the organization do not use any evaluation of the employees perspective, which is recommended by JämO (2004, p. 6) and Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 31-33)

None of the managers had to a greater extent been involved in the creation of the statutory equality plan. It is recommended by JämO to involve several people in the process (2004, p. 6) and Iseskog (2005, p. 33) especially highlights that the managers need to have a clear overview of the working conditions in relation to equality
Manufacturing industry
The workforce diversity plan includes all parts needed in terms of the discrimination act and it follows JämO (2004, pp. 4-8) recommendations of having an overview of the current situation, goals and actions. The plan states clear defined goals for the organization and most of them are measurable, which enables the organization to measure the progress. The use of employee surveys also enables the organization to measure the employees’ perspective, which follows the recommendations from both JämO (2004, p. 6) and Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 31-33).

We believe that the managers can be seen as top managers and as they participated in the creation of the workforce diversity plan, in accordance to Guillaume et al., (2014, pp. 793-794), we believe that their personal beliefs influence the workforce diversity activities.

5.3.2 Communication
This section will provide information as to what strategies and/or tactics the organizations have when communicating the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. It is important that all the employees feels a personal responsibility to follow the policies (Emmot & Worman, 2008, pp. 31-33), however we have found that this might not be the case, especially not within the service industry. It is clear to us that there are some differences between the industries and there are also some diverse opinions within each organization.

Service industry
The equality plan and policies are communicated to all new managers, however not to all employees, which we are questioning. Two of the managers mention that they do not communicate gender equality policies to their employees, in contrast, the HR manager says that the gender equality policies are communicated periodically to all the employees. There seem to be uncertainties and different ideas of how this work should be done, in our opinion this needs to be clarified to ensure that all employees are informed (JämO, 2004, p. 7). The simplified version of the policies is available for all employees online but out of our own experiences, we believe that many of the employees does not read those pages unless they are required to. Hence, we are questioning the effectiveness of their communication. In our opinion, the communication manager has done a remarkable job developing a approachable, legible and visually attractive popular version of the equality plan to enable employees to more easily grasp the idea of their gender equality and workforce diversity policies. This document is mentioned and used by three out of four manager, however, as mentioned by one manager there is room for a wider usage of this document.

Other communication channels mentioned by the interviewees are information screens, notice board and training. However, the HR manager is experiencing internal training within equality while the communication manager lacks activities or theme days were they discuss these questions. Hence, it varies internally and we believe that there might be a need to establish better communication channels as mentioned by Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 31-33).

Manufacturing industry
The manufacturing organization has provided us with thorough documentation of their processes including both what they have done, the current action plan and their goals. By
reviewing the documentation we believe that they are honest and clear with their work. It does not show how successful their communication channels are but it clearly states that during 2014 they would communicate their workforce diversity plan to all employees, until 2016 they will have yearly employee surveys including workforce diversity and at least one important aspect of workforce diversity will be highlighted in their internal news-letter once a year. To further create awareness they have a "workforce diversity award" given to someone every year, which we were positively surprised to hear about. We believe that it is good to encourage workforce diversity and not just gender equality, as it is evident that workforce diversity covers more aspects. Their routine to give out a booklet of the organizational values to all newly recruited employees is also a good example of how the organization ensures that the information has been shared.

5.4 Practice of CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies

Our theoretical framework mainly consists of three parts of practice: communication, training and leadership. There are various parts of the organizations practice of gender equality and workforce diversity as seen in the empirical findings, therefore we can add six more categories: recruitment, job advertisement, parental leave, salaries, adaption of the workplace and initiatives. We did not expect to find this extensive amount of areas within practice but they are all important components and it reflects the fact that workforce diversity needs to be managed through the whole organization as stated by Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 28-29).

We have elaborated on communication above as an important part of having a statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. This, as well as many other categories can be linked to the HR department, which explains why Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 28-29) stress the importance of their role. All managers, except for one, mention recruitment. Both industries are focused on recruiting more female managers, the service industry also aims at recruiting more male sellers while the manufacturing industry focus on recruiting more female workers at their plant. Hence, both lack female leaders and have an unequal distribution of men and women in both managerial and non-managerial positions.

Our study cannot strengthen or weaken the findings conducted by Ali et al., (2011, pp. 1480-1481) saying that the performance of the manufacturing organizations were not affected by gender equality. However, we found that the manufacturing organization is emphasizing workforce diversity and practicing it continuously, which we believe is contradictory to the conclusion made in the previous mentioned research. If that would be true for the manufacturing organization we have studied, we do not believe that they would emphasize workforce diversity to the same extent.

One category that we found unexpected and interesting was job advertisement, we had not previously considered the underlying factors to the choices made within design and execution. The importance of adapting the job advertisements was mentioned by both industries.

Another interesting category is to adapt the workplace, which was found when studying both industries. Different managers mentioned the biological differences saying that men are stronger. We agree that this might be the case, however the health trend is larger then
ever and since not only men lift heavy weights anymore we believe that this view is somewhat obsolete. There might be a difference biologically and physically but in our opinion it is just as common with less well-trained men, as women. We thought that the work wear were adapted to different body types but in 2012 the manufacturing organization found out that there was a demand for female work wear.

Some categories were more industry specific; therefore we will elaborate on them under the headings of service and manufacturing.

5.4.1 Service industry

Our findings show that the service industry practice gender equality and workforce diversity actively. However, our opinions are that the work could be more consistent and clear to better their work even further. The organization has goals and structures but as the managers perceive the policies and practices differently, we believe that a greater possibility to share ideas would create a more united workforce; this is also mentioned by Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 31-33).

The managers of the service industry clearly state the importance of finding the most suitable individual for the positions during recruitment. We believe that it is positive to consider finding the right person instead of a desired gender, however it is important to ensure that the organization does not solely look for the best possible candidate as that could lower their employee engagement and possibility to recruit more talents (Emmot & Worman, 2008, p. 28). As mentioned by one of the manager we also believe that each situation has to be adapted to the specific position and group that the employee would function in.

The possibility to combine work and being a parent is mentioned by three of the managers as well as in the popular version of the equality plan, according to the Swedish Discrimination act (SFS 2008:567) this is one of the sections that have to be included in the statutory equality plan.

Parental leave seems to be a currently strong question within the service organization and as mentioned by one manager the statistics of men taking out parental leave are positive. However, another manager questions this. Referring to the statistics it can be argued that their encouragement has worked, however we do not feel that we have sufficient findings to create our own opinion. There can be several reasons as to why there is an increase of men taking out parental leave, for instance the change in society.

5.4.2 Manufacturing industry

During the interviews we found out that the organization is downsizing, due to the challenges they will be facing the leadership and training will be even more important as it can facilitate the management of a diverse workforce (George & Jones, 2012, p. 143). We found that there are well-planned procedures for handling the new group formations and within that area evident that they seem to have a well-functioning HR department as they clearly plan for their actions, which is very important as mentioned by Homan et al., (pp. 1195-1197). Within their research they also state the importance of practicing workforce diversity through the whole organization, which we believe the organization is successful in.
The managers stated one practice that we want to highlight, their initiative to use a male and a female recruiter when recruiting new managers. We found this very modern and up-to-date as it minimizes the risks of biases depending on gender. We do not know to what extent this method is already used by other organizations but in our opinion this would be beneficial for more organizations to implement.

5.5 What challenges are they facing?

5.5.1 Service industry

Through interviews it became apparent that the managers believe in historical reasons behind the current gender distribution in their organization. The discussions showed that preconceptions regarding gender and profession still exist and one manager also expressed the belief that men still recruit men out of habit. As there still exist major gender segregation in the organization as a whole, and on managerial positions, we have the reason to believe that their statements are correct.

Our findings indicate challenges in the communication of the equality plan, most evident is the retail manager who had not communicated the policy to his employees as it was taken for granted. The employees' knowledge of the plan can therefore be questioned. We believe the lack of communication can result in employees being doubtful in the actual use of these policies, this was also concluded in a study conducted by Lauring & Thomsen (2008, p. 32)

The managers expressed that men and women market themselves differently. Gender is a socially constructed concept created by the society, we therefore believe that men and women are formed by the environment where they have grown up and hence, used to
market themselves in a specific way. These gender roles are thereafter recreated by adjusting to these expectations as stated by Council of Europe (2004, p.8) and Genus (2012).

The wish to increase male sellers and female leaders within the retail stores was clearly found through the interviews. Despite the uneven gender distribution the organization seemed to lack a clearly defined recruitment policy or goals for new recruitments to change the current situation. We see this lack of recruitment policy as a challenge, however, one possible explanation to why the organization does not seem to focus on implementing that type of policy can be that they expressed a desire for workforce diversity in general.

Discrimination was not evident for the managers. However, as this study focused on gender equality from a managerial perspective, we could not measure the perceptions of other employees. The organization does not use employee surveys to evaluate the perceptions in the whole organization. Therefore we believe it is difficult for the organization to fully know how the employees perceive the equality and potential cases of discrimination. The use of employee surveys to measure such faultiness is recommended by JämO (2004, p. 6) and Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 31-33).

5.5.2 Manufacturing industry

It was clearly stated by the managers that preconceptions of the industry had a great influence on the gender distribution. Men and women have historically had different professions (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, pp. 54-56) and therefore the expressed belief that traditional gender roles still exists in our society, can be true.

All employees should obtain a review of the workforce diversity plan, but how this communication will be measured is not mentioned. We believe this is a good ambition that needs to be properly executed to establish credibility in the policies, which are also the findings of Lauring & Thomsen (2008, p. 32) research. The other reasoning behind the importance of communicating these polices are to inform everyone of their responsibility to follow these polices as discussed by Emmott & Worman (2008, pp. 31-33).

Due to downsizing in the organization they are currently lacking resources to continue to work towards a more gender equal distribution through new recruitment. However, they seem to treat workforce diversity as a business investment, which is the recommendation from Robinson & Dechant (1997, p. 30) to gain a competitive advantage.

It further became evident that the organization put in resources to increase the female job applicants. However, women often lacked the right educational background to be qualified.

5.6 Future work within Gender Equality as a part of CSR

Both of the organizations have future goals. However, when asking them about the future we wanted to explore their own thoughts and identified areas of improvement.

5.6.1 Service industry

One manager mentions the importance of continuing their work and to communicate the importance of equality, we agree and believe that this is important to the service organization as our findings show split views. This is also supported by theory that for
their work to be successful it has to be well communicated throughout the whole organization, it is also argued that for the programs to be successful they should reflect the employees perceptions of workforce diversity (Homan et al., 2007, pp. 1195-1197).

There is a distinct need for female managers and male sellers but it is also clear that the organization mainly focuses on finding the right person for the job.

Referring to Alvesson & Billing (1997, pp. 1-2) it is likely to be more effective to have a workforce where there are no conservative ideas about gender and what men and women should and should not do. This is clearly stated by one of the managers who emphasize the importance of working with individuals rather than gender. We, as well as the manager, believe that there is a long way there but in our opinion it is a good thought and a great goal. He highlights the importance of and trust in the future leaders, this is also pointed out in theory (Emmott & Worman, 2008, pp. 31-33; Guillaume et al., 2014, pp. 793-794).

5.6.2 Manufacturing industry

The long-term goal mentioned in the workforce diversity plan is to have a more equal distribution of genders, this was found by Frink et al., (2003, 144-145) to enable the organization to perform better and was also mentioned by one manager who said that they gain from different inputs and perspectives. This corresponds to our own thoughts and experiences from working and studying in diverse teams.

The managers mentioned two highly interesting future area of improvement. First, raising the technical interest at an early age for especially girls. Second, to discuss more different aspects of workforce diversity, for instance sexual orientation. We found both of these suggestions innovative, feasible and well argued for. However, we believe that the achievements should be directed to a diverse group, meaning that for instance if having events to create a technical interest at an early age, this should be done to all young kids. Focusing on, as suggested, young girls is likely to raise the number of female workers in the future, however we believe that to create a equal society everyone should get the same treatments.

6. Conclusion

This chapter will present the conclusions drawn from this study. The research questions and purpose are to be answered and finally, recommendations and societal implications provided.

This study was conducted aiming to answer two questions: How does organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies? What challenges may organization face when practicing the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies?

We believe that our findings in the form of interviews and documents enabled us to answer both of our research questions from a managerial perspective. However, we had more interviews and less documentation in the service industry and reversely less interviews and more documentation from the manufacturing industry, which can reflect the differences
between the findings from each industry. When developing our theoretical framework we included workforce diversity but we failed to see the potential of including it when formulating our research questions and as a theme within our interviews. We have found that the organizations do not clearly separate gender equality and workforce diversity as they are in close relation. Hence, we have chosen to incorporate workforce diversity in our conclusion and discuss this as a dimension of gender equality policies.

During the interviews we started out by getting a more general view of the organizations work within CSR and gender equality. We found that both of the organizations value CSR and gender equality, in conclusion the organizations practice statutory equality plan and their own gender equality policies jointly and as a part of CSR and there are no negative effects of working with workforce diversity. Our primarily purpose with this study was to explore and understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies within the service industry and the manufacturing industry, however as we chose to use three sub-purposes instead we will describe how we have met them below.

In order to meet our first sub-purpose a theoretical framework was presented to describe how to design and communicate the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. In our study we failed to see how the service industry designed their statutory equality plan as we did not gain access to it. In this study, we can therefore only conclude that the manufacturing organization designed their workforce diversity plan in accordance to the forcing law. Furthermore, we argue that both organizations communicate their policies throughout the whole organization. Communication is mentioned throughout our study within different parts both in the theoretical framework and in our empirical findings. In conclusion, communication is crucial when practicing policies as well as when considering challenges. We want to highlight the complexity and importance of communication as found in our study. There are diverse opinions about how well the communication is functioning internally, this was mainly found within the service organization where we argue that they lack routines for communicating equality guidelines to new employees and non-managerial employees. The managers have a strong willingness to change and develop but we did not find any clearly formulated actions to how the communication should function. We noticed a distinct difference between the industries and argue that the manufacturing industry has a more structured and thorough communication.

Statistics and employee survey was used in both organizations to measure goals and gather the employee’s perceptions of the workplace and work culture. The service industry lack questions regarding gender equality or workforce diversity within their employee survey, we further found that the manufacturing industry includes several questions regarding workforce diversity within their employee surveys. It can also be concluded that it is beneficial to include these questions within the employee survey as our findings showed that through this, the manufacturing organization discovered a need for work wear adapted for women.

Our second sub-purpose was also our main purpose, to explore and understand how organizations practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. Our theoretical framework captures communication, training and leadership as some aspects practice. We found that there are several aspects of interest when studying practice of the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies and that they are all
important to reflect the workforce diversity in as many aspects of the organization as possible. We conclude that the manufacturing industry practice solely workforce diversity as they do not have any plan or policies focusing only on gender equality. Based on the documents and interviews gathered from the manufacturing industry we argue that it is beneficial to consider workforce diversity rather than gender equality separately. It broadens the work and brings a greater focus to all the aspects of workforce diversity referring to mainly gender, age, religion, nationality and mother tongue.

*Neither the service industry nor the manufacturing industry is gender equal.* This is well established in previous research and our findings.

The third sub-purpose for our study was to identify and understand the challenges that the service industry and the manufacturing industry might be facing when practicing CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. We can easily conclude that organizations meet several challenges when practicing the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies. The challenges that we have identified are: preconceptions of the industry, communication, how men and women market themselves, recruitment, the equality plan - a forcing law, discrimination and risks. We found that all interviewees highlighted one challenge: preconceptions of the industry. Hence, we argue that *preconceptions are the greatest challenge* for organizations working with CSR focusing on gender equality and workforce diversity.

Our findings show that the service industry is struggling to change people’s preconceptions of the job as a seller, simultaneously the manufacturing industry is struggling to change the preconceptions of manufacturing. Hence, the *industry does still effect preconceptions* greatly. History is an important aspect as to why there is an unequal distribution of men and women within the service and manufacturing industry. This study conducted year 2015 indicates that people still have preconceptions based on historical. Both organizations raise the issue of finding female managers and to make efficient workers willing to become managers. In conclusion, there is a difference between how men and women market themselves. We argue that, women need to be more forward and have guts. This is also an issue that can be argued emerging from historical events and preconceptions.

When asking questions about the organizations future and long-term goals they talked about the ambition of reaching a 50/50 distribution of men and women. We found that managers believe that there is a long way to go but based on our findings we can also concluded that it is *possible to reach a 50/50 distribution of men and women.* We are aware that the retail store can be considered a small part of the organization and that other factors can influence the distribution of gender, for instance demographics, but we argue that this can not be the only reason to the success of the retail manager in reaching an equal distribution of men and women.

**6.1 Recommendations to the organizations**

We argue that it would be beneficial for the whole service organization and other organizations to closely study the management of the retail store that managed to reach an equal distribution of male and female workers. It is evident that they are doing something that others do not. We believe that if other managers and organizations look deeper into the factors contributing to this success and learn from it, they could increase their profitability through the positive outcomes of workforce diversity. Other recommendations for the
service organization would be to increase the amount of training, for instance, teambuilding activities and workshops to ensure that the importance of workforce diversity is clearly communicated throughout the whole organization. We argue that an employee survey including these questions and routines for yearly reviews of policies would be beneficial for the organization to increase the awareness and engagement of employees.

For the manufacturing organization we would recommend them to continue their work and if possible, try to influence the rules of the labour unions as these seems to be the main reasons as to why it is tough for the organization to increase the workforce diversity. Furthermore, we believe that it is a great idea to influence children and try to establish an interest for technology at an early age. The organization could establish one, or if they already have one, increase the cooperation with schools to develop for instance theme-days.

The organizations defined several challenges; hence we believe that it is important to study these challenges in the attempt to develop strategies to overcome them. This could be done both internally and externally by other researchers.

6.2 Future research

For future studies we recommend them to focus on workforce diversity rather than gender equality, as it is an important part of the concept and it was found that one organization already focuses on workforce diversity rather than gender equality. Furthermore, we believe that the globalisation and high level of integration between different cultures strengthens the belief that further research should consider workforce diversity. Studies could also benefit from being less broad as we found it hard to capture all aspects of workforce diversity in one study. Therefore, we also recommend that specific areas should be studied separately. Previous research and our findings found some lack of communication within the subject of CSR, gender equality and workforce diversity. Hence, there is a need to further study communication and the practice of these policies to ensure that it communicated as efficiently as possible.

Another suggestion for future studies would be for them to use another sampling method, for instance probability sampling. This in reference to the risks associated with using snowball sampling as mentioned in the methodology chapter. The abductive approach of this study enabled us to develop a model that combines the defined foundation and themes. The model could be further used and developed by researchers within this subject, one suggestion being to have the model as the foundation when studying one of the themes, for instance challenges. The model could then be developed into more parts and aspects.

6.3 Societal implications

Through the findings of this study and recommendations we aim at contributing to an even more efficient society where businesses value workforce diversity and hence there will be greater workforce diversity where everyone are equally valued. If managers and other researchers follow our recommendations, this could lead to more well functioning businesses and organizations as well as an increased understanding and engagement. In the long run, this can result in workforce diversity being a natural part of the employees’ daily work.
As stated within this study, gender equality can result in a competitive advantage for organizations. By conduction this study we have looked into how organizations actually practice CSR to reach a more gender equal workforce. We believe our study contributes to existing knowledge as few previous researches have not, in our knowledge, looked at the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies, practice and challenges in the same study. Hence, this study provides a broader perspective.

We are proud to conclude that our study already has had an impact on the work of one organization as the retail manager within the service industry clearly stated that as a result of us bringing it up, the manager will start to go through the popular version of the equality plan with the employees. Through our findings and conclusions from studying one organization within the manufacturing industry and one within the service industry we hope that our study can be an inspiration for other organizations and researchers practicing or studying CSR focusing on workforce diversity.

### 7. Truth criteria

*In this section we will elaborate on some of the most relevant truth criteria’s for this study.*

To enable evaluation of our study we have used criteria’s recommended for qualitative studies by Bryman & Bell (2011, pp. 394-399).

The first evaluation criteria *credibility* considers that the social world can be interpreted in different ways. To ensure we understood the social world of the organizations and the participants, we sent the transcripts to the participants for them to review and make changes if any errors occurred (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 396).

The findings of this study are based on the social world of the organizations and their participants. The *transferability* of the findings outside its context can therefore be discussed. To ensure this judgment a detailed description of the social world should be included (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). To ensure the anonymity of the organizations and the participants we have included information that will not reveal their identity. However, we believe the description of the industries and organizations are sufficient enough to enable transfer of this study in other contexts. However, as previously stated are we not aiming to generalize our findings. Instead we aimed to explore and understand how CSR aimed at gender equality is practiced in the two organizations.

If the study is repeatable refers to the evaluation criteria *dependability*. To enable this study to be repeatable we have provided a detailed description of all phases of the research process (Bryann & Bell, 2011, p. 398).

To be completely objective in business research is a hard task and refers to the evaluation criteria of *confirmability* (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). Due to the chosen epistemological standpoint, interpretivism, we as researchers are a part of what is studied. Hence, the study is subjective and we cannot consider us being objective. However, to
show the reader that we have acted in good faith, we have clearly stated where our own opinions are used.

The concept of authenticity raises the question of the impact and importance of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 398-399). As mentioned we had no previous knowledge about gender equality being a part of CSR and we are hesitant that this connection is well known by others than the departments developing these policies. During this study we aimed to explore the social context and therefore we involved different people in the data collection. To enable a presentation of interesting and valuable viewpoints from the interviewees, we used quotations. This further enabled a fair presentation of our findings. During interviews the participants highlighted our research field as highly interesting but also complex. This study has helped to explore different viewpoints and we believe it can develop discussions for future progress towards gender equality and workforce diversity in the organizations. Our discussion and conclusion further explain areas we have chosen to highlight as we found them interesting and in the need of attention. Finally, we have provided recommendations for the organizations and future studies.


Appendix 1 – men and women working within manufacturing and service industries

Translation of the model from SCB
Employed 15-74 year olds, in thousands according to agreed number working hours, per branch of industry, during April 2015.

Orange: Number of women within manufacturing industry.
Grey: Total amount of employees within manufacturing industry.
Blue: Number of women within service industry.
Green: Total amount of employees within service industry.
Appendix 2 – Outline of the main steps of this qualitative study

(Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 390)
Appendix 3 - Interview guide

Please provide us with some information about your position and your time within the company. This will help us to give a better presentation of your role in our study. We will ask you the following questions within our main 6 themes:

**CSR in general within the organization**
1. How do you practice Corporate Social Responsibility in general within the organization? Please explain.
2. What does CSR mean within your organization?
3. Who or whom are responsible for your CSR policies?
   a. Have you participated in the development of these policies?

**Gender equality in general within the organization**
4. How do you practice Gender Equality in general within the organization? Please explain.
5. What does Gender Equality mean within your organization?
6. What is the distribution of men and women within the organization? Why do you think that the distribution looks like that today?
7. How do you believe that the industry you are operating in effects your distribution of gender? Please give example.

**The statutory equality plan and gender equality policy – design and communication**
8. What does your equality plan and your gender equality policies look like? Please give example and explain.
9. What are your goals within gender equality? Please give example.
   a. How do you measure your goals?
10. Have you participated in the development of the equality plan and/or gender equality policies? If yes, please give example.
11. What are your tactics/strategies for implementing the plan and policies?
12. How do you communicate your plan and policies within the organization?

**Practice CSR focusing on the statutory equality plan and gender equality policies**
13. Is gender equality a part of your CSR? Please explain.
14. Have you recently implemented any new initiatives within gender equality? If yes, please explain.
15. How do you follow up your work within CSR focusing on the equality plan and gender equality policies? Please explain.

**Challenges**
16. What are the greatest challenges in your work with gender equality?
17. Have you ever experienced discrimination in relation to gender equality within the organization?
18. What are the positive effects of your gender equality work? What are the negative effects and/or risks of your gender equality work?
19. Why does the organization engage in these questions?
20. How equal do you consider it being today? Please give example.

**Future**
21. What would you like to improve and/or develop within your gender equality work in the future? Please give example and explain.

*Please provide us with further information if there is anything that you would like to add?*
Appendix 4 - Intervjuguide
Berätta gärna kort om din roll inom organisationen samt hur länge du har varit en del utav organisationen. Detta för att vi lättare ska kunna beskriva din roll i vår uppsats. Vi kommer att ställa frågor till dig inom våra 6 huvudteman:

CSR generellt inom organisationen
2. Vad betyder CSR inom er organisation?
3. Vem eller vilka ansvarar för era CSR policys?
   a. Har du varit delaktig i utformningen utav dessa policyers?

Jämställdhet generellt inom organisationen
5. Vad betyder jämställdhet inom er organisation?
6. Hur många män respektive kvinnor arbetar inom er organisation? Varför tror du att fördelningen ser ut som den gör idag?

Jämställdhetsplanen och jämställdhetspolicyens – design och kommunikation
   a. Hur mäter ni om ni uppnått målen?
11. Vad har ni för taktik/strategier för implementering av planen eller policyens?
12. Hur kommuniceras er plan och policyer inom organisationen?

Praktiskt utförande utav CSR med fokus på jämställdhetsplanen och jämställdhetspolicyer
13. Är jämställdhet en del utav ert CSR arbete? Ge gärna exempel.
15. Hur följer ni upp ert arbete inom CSR med focus på jämställdhetsplanen och jämställdhetspolicyens? Ge gärna exempel.

Utmningar i jämställdhetsarbetet
17. Har du någon gång upplevt diskriminering i relation till jämställdhet inom er organisation?
18. Vilka är de positiva effekterna av ert jämställdhetsarbete? Vilka är de negative effekterna och/eller risker med ert jämställdhetsarbete?
19. Varför engagerar ni er i dessa frågor?

Framtidsarbete

Är det någon information som du skulle vilja tillägga?
Appendix 5 – themes and codes for the empirical findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes and codes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CSR in general within the organization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Equality in general within the organization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Background – historical events</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The distribution of men and women within the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Workforce diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Equality plan design and gender equality policies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How to measure goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Participation in the development of plan and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Tactic and/or strategies for implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How does the organization practice CSR focusing on the statutory Equality Plan and Gender Equality Policies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recruitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Job advertisement</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Communication</td>
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<td>- Parental leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Salaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Adapt the workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Leadership and training</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Preconceptions of the industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Market yourself – differences between men and women</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The equality plan – a forcing law</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discrimination and risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future – areas of improvement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Equality within managerial and non-managerial positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Individuals, not gender</td>
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</tbody>
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