STRATEGIC BENEFITS OF THE CHARITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PREMIER LEAGUE AND ITS CLUB MEMBERS: A STAKEHOLDER VALUE PERSPECTIVE

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Marcelo P. Castro

Alliance Manchester Business School

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is framed from a business in society perspective, meaning that it is interested in advancing our understanding on the impact of businesses within the communities in which they operate. In particular, the direction of this dissertation is to focus on the value that the charities associated with England's football (soccer) Premier League create for the league, its club members and the external stakeholders that co-fund their social action projects. In doing so, this research project contributes a conceptual construct (social stretch) as explanatory model on why clubs earn distinct strategic benefits from social action. Furthermore, it offers a plausible process on how signals of trustworthiness from the league translate into factors for stakeholder value for the external groups that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute these social schemes. Lastly, this learning allows me to offer a prescriptive process framework for practitioners aiming at integrating commercial, football and social objectives. The above is reflected in the three papers that I summarize below.

Paper 1 is an empirical paper which operationalises the two processes within the Corporate Social Strategy (CSS) framework: *strategic social positioning* and *strategic social planning*. This allows me to offer and test a typology of what I term *social stretch* (satisficing, embedded, bounded and ideal identity), in order to explain the distinct ways football clubs stretch their standards and expectations to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from a collective identity. This is important, since social stretch has an effect on the strategic benefits that clubs may gain from their social action schemes. The paper extends existing theory by offering a conceptual contribution (the concept of social stretch) and a contextual contribution based on its multi-level approach: geographical (local, national and international) and organisational (league and club levels).

Paper 2 is also an empirical paper which addresses *value co-creation* from a social sustainability perspective. I develop and test a conceptual framework by which the interlinked practices of the Premier League emit *trustworthiness signals* which *translate* into *factors for stakeholder value* for external stakeholders groups. The paper makes a conceptual contribution in the form of a process for stakeholder value creation/destruction based on the congruence/incongruence of the trustworthiness signals embedded in *all* the practices from the PL. Furthermore, its multi-stakeholder approach is a contextual contribution which offers a vivid account of the complexity and tensions that result from managing the divergent interests of legitimate stakeholders.

Paper 3 is a conceptual paper which introduces a novel process framework for collaborative value co-creation based on the P.A.S.C.A.L. ethical decision-making process introduced by Goodpaster (1991). It aims at offering practitioners a plausible way to integrate commercial, football and social objectives within the normative considerations that demand attention to stakeholder interests. The paper makes a contextual contribution since the proposed framework could be applied beyond this setting. Furthermore, it organises and integrates existing literature in a novel and practical way.

Lastly, when the three papers are analysed holistically, this research makes an additional theoretical contribution by shedding light on the *paradox of social stretch*. The evidence shows that those clubs that pursue social action as an *end in itself* appear to be, paradoxically, those that also gain *competitive advantage* from social action and also appear to co-create the most value from their social schemes due to how stakeholders reciprocate to the congruence of their trustworthiness signals.

The planning and execution of this research, its theoretical and practical contributions and the writing of the three papers that resulted from this effort, were carried on by the candidate with the support of his supervisor and the feedback from the peer reviewers at the journals the papers were submitted to. The papers presented here are exactly the submitted/accepted/published versions.

DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife and love of my life, Gabriela, who supported me in every way throughout this journey; to Prof. Paul R. Jackson for his patience, guidance and wisdom; to my mother, Susana, for instilling in me the importance of constant education; to my dad, Carlos "El Tordo", for all the hugs after a goal; to my kids, Sabrina, Joaquin and Mathias for the time they sacrificed so I can reach this milestone. Lastly, I would like to dedicate this to my classmates, Dr. Alexandre Lapersonne and Dr. Dirk Hickert for encouraging me to finish.

To all, I am eternally thankful.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

Sport attracts large audiences and has a major share in all forms of media, crossing over geography, politics, class, race, gender, culture and religion (Davies, 2002), and reflects the values of the social life it is embedded in (Godfrey, 2009). In my research setting, football's Premier League, each of its club members is considered a representative of its local community and therefore, its players and business executives are scrutinised like politicians and pressured, arguably more than other commercial organisations, to go beyond purely financial and winning objectives and accept that they have broader social responsibilities.

The PL and all but one of its club members have responded to this pressure by setting up independent but associated charities (the Premier League Charitable Fund and the clubs' Community Sport Trusts respectively, from this point on PLCF/CSTs) that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute social schemes with external stakeholders in the areas of community cohesion, education, health, sports participation and international projects (Morgan, 2013). However, these social schemes are often criticised as a 'fig leaf' to offset shortcomings in governance (Levermore, 2013) or as social action *after* the money is made, "to 'fix' the value destroyed" (Griffin, 2016, p. 97).

This interpretative research contributes to this debate through three papers (two empirical and one conceptual). Paper 1 (Chapter 3), under review at the Business and Society journal, explains the strategic benefits of these social schemes from the perspective of the Premier League and its club members (PL/Clubs). Paper 2 (Chapter

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4), accepted for publication for a special issue on "The Marketing and Public Affairs of Sustainability" at the Journal of Public Affairs, explains how value is co-created with the external stakeholders that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute these schemes. Lastly Paper 3, published in the Corporate Governance journal (Castro-Martinez and Jackson, 2015), proposes a prescriptive framework for collaborative value co-creation based on an ethical decision-making process introduced by Goodpaster (1991). The methodology that underpins this research is discussed within each paper and in further detail in Chapter 2.

1.2. RESEARCH SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The PL is a private company founded in 1992 with projected revenues to exceed £4.3 billion for the 2016/2017 season, a year over year growth of about 20%. It is the most commercially successful football league in the world, almost doubling the revenues from its closest competitor, Germany's Bundesliga (Boor et al., 2016).

The PL is owned by its twenty club members. However, every year the last three clubs in the standings are relegated and must transfer their shares at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to the three clubs promoted from the lower Football League. This has important strategic implications at the club level and for my research in particular, since for the majority of clubs the threat/opportunity of relegation/promotion brings about great economic loss/gain from TV rights and other sources of income and therefore, must focus on the week-by-week objective of earning enough points to stay at the top of the game at season's end. Furthermore, as Soriano (2012), CEO at Manchester City FC and former General Manager for FC Barcelona argues, managing a football club presents three additional distinct

challenges: first, what he calls "managing in the fishbowl" (p. 34), before thousands of critics that believe they have "the right, the duty, and sufficient knowledge to make constant assessments of the work you are doing" (p. 34); second, managing a young and highly paid labour force that represents about 2/3 of revenues (Gibson, 2013a) and that are both employees highly influenced by their agents, and also marketable assets whose market price constantly fluctuates. Lastly, unlike most industries, success is achieved through wins on the pitch, with profit and financial prowess as means to that end.

At the PL level on the other hand, the league can afford a longer-term strategic horizon that is articulated in what they term the *virtuous circle model*. In the words of its Chief Executive, Richard Scudamore "the model says: 1) Put on the best possible show – by using the top talent I can attract from around the world – in full stadia; 2) generate maximum interest – that can mean commercial interest, public interest, political space; 3) convert that into commercial success, soft power and political influence; and 4) distribute revenues equitably, use power and influence responsibly, balance commercial success with corporate social responsibility and redistribute that money, influence and soft power responsibly to put on a better show" (Premier League, 2013). As I will discuss in chapter 3, I believe that by developing a league-wide agenda for social action as part of its corporate strategy, the PL facilitates and guides social action among its members and creates a normative framework for these activities whether it is done for altruistic or strategic reasons (Campbell, 2007).

The discussion above sheds light on how the external environment at the club level is less conducive to long-term social objectives than at the league level. As I will

discuss in the next sub-section, the PL/Clubs have addressed this imbalance by institutionalising a model of independent charities that is shared by all but one of its members.

1.3. THE COMMUNITY SPORT TRUST MODEL

In the mid-1980s, inspired by the "Business in the Community" initiative, a movement of 800 of the largest corporations in the UK devoted to the explicit development of CSR principles and committed to the improvement of the positive impact of business on society (Rahim, 2013), several professional football clubs became part of a national social action scheme called "Football in the Community" (FitC), a joint initiative by the Football League and the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) in response to the growth in hooliganism, racism and crime in football (Breitbarth and Harris, 2008). Unfortunately, unprofessional governance and lack of stakeholder consideration was pervasive both at the club and association levels (Anagnostopoulos, 2013) and therefore these schemes were widely considered a discretionary expense that could be sacrificed to favour on-pitch success (Hamil and Morrow, 2011), and in some extreme cases, charity income was even used to offset club debts or to hire new players (Brown et al., 2006). In short, the FitC scheme lacked a clear agenda, resources, capabilities and financial independence.

In order to overcome these deficiencies, Brown et al. (2006) proposed a model of governance called the Community Sports Trust (CST). A CST is "a charitable organisation that has a direct association with a football club, yet at the same time has structural, financial and strategic independence" (Walters and Chadwick, 2009, p. 52). The organisation is linked to the club through a licensing agreement, and has its own

Board of Directors and Executive team. Currently, all PL clubs except Arsenal F.C. use this model of governance.

Brown et al. (2006) identified several advantages and disadvantages in the CST model. On the one hand, independence protects charities from the financial pressures of football clubs while providing favourable tax incentives and the ability to raise funds from local governments, grant making trusts and the general public. Furthermore, by being monitored by the Charity Commission, they "build public confidence" (Brown et al., 2006, p. 25). Lastly, as a by-product of changes in government strategy as a result of the recent 'Great Recession', the CST model also fits the National Government's concept of "Big Society" which promotes social action through collective undertakings outside the public sphere, providing the CSTs with unique opportunities to help deliver some social services that "public sector providers may need to relinquish" (Anagnostopoulos, 2013, p. 101).

However, Brown et al. (2006) also warned that the CST model could present a major disadvantage by "absolv[ing] the rest of the club from responsibility for community relations" (p. 22), running the risk of having two separate entities with not only two separate strategies but also two separate identities (Husted and Allen, 2011) under one badge. As my empirical evidence in chapter 4 will show, the above leads to inconsistent and often contradictory trustworthiness signals that result in negative reciprocity from stakeholders (Bosse et al., 2009).

In sum, I believe that the CST model has been effective in the development of a social planning agenda, allocation of resources, improvement of capabilities and financial independence which contribute to the institutionalisation of social action, but

as one my participants (that was also one of the researchers in Brown et al. (2006))

stated, the CSTs usually do not "influence back the culture of the club [so] when it

comes to more business matters like ticket pricing and stadium accessibility

and…staffing policy, the way in which the club operates generally, there is an

opportunity for the club to understand that it has social obligations in all those areas,

as well as having outreach programmes that are very formal and identifiable… as part

of an integrated strategy". As I will argue in the next sub-section, I believe that each

club's social stretch, moderates how effective it will be in pursuing and benefitting

from this integrated strategy.

1.4. SOCIAL STRETCH

Despite clubs having to operate under the same social planning mandate from

the league and the same governance structure (CST), their approach to social action

would reflect the divergent ways in which they *infuse their social action with value*

beyond the technical requirements of social schemes (Scott, 2008) based on their

perceived contextual *complexity*, or how clubs often *experience* environmental

demands as contradictory or in tension (such as concurrently answering to football,

business and social objectives). Moreover, this is constrained by limitations within

human behaviour that are considered the cornerstones of the behavioral view of

corporate governance (van Ees et al., 2009): *bounded rationality*, the imprecise and

selective processing of information that limits awareness and cause inefficiencies in

the *routinization of decision-making;* and *satisficing behavior*, the tendency of actors

to accept choices or judgments that are considered good enough considering their

pressing needs rather than searching for an optimal solution that might require

political bargaining with other actors.

The above results in each club's institutional logic as the "state of an existing

social order" (Scott, 2008 p. 50) that both constrains action and provides opportunities for agency and change. Ghosal and Bartlett (1994) identified *discipline*, *trust*, *support* and *stretch* as dimensions for organisational context as it relates to action. I believe that since social action projects are voluntary and not necessarily tied to core competencies, it is how each club's *stretches* its attention towards social change what drives it to develop the other dimensions towards the pursuit of social objectives.

Therefore, I offer the concept of social stretch as an *attention structure* (Ocasio, 1997) by which organizations voluntarily stretch their standards and expectations to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from a collective identity (Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1994). Social stretch includes the particular commitments clubs will focus their attention on (Ocasio and Radoynovska, 2016) which governs the allocation of resources and acts as a window to what each club perceives as important (Scott, 2008). These choices establish for decision-makers rules of the game that reflect the club's identity and purpose, channelled through a limited number of issues and answers based on its resources and capabilities in the form of *selective coupling*, "the purposeful enactment of selected practices among a pool of competing alternatives" (Pache and Santos, 2013 p. 994), which to a large extent fixes (solidifies) external assumptions about its role within its environment.

Having presented the research setting and aims, in the next sub-section I discuss my research objectives and research questions.

1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overall aim of this research is to explain, through the concept of social stretch, why social action projects from organisations within the same field and facing similar external contexts gain distinct strategic benefits and co-create distinct levels of value with their external stakeholders, in order to offer a plausible path forward that

can be applied by practitioners beyond this setting. I do so in three papers that each

answer the following research questions (summarised on Fig. 1.1. below):

Paper 1 contributes to answer the following research questions:

RQ1) How does the PL contribute to the institutionalisation of social action?

RQ2a) What drives clubs into social action?

RQ2b) Based on those drivers, what are the strategic benefits captured by each

club?

Paper 2 addresses the following question:

RQ3) How do PL schemes translate into factors for stakeholder value for the

external stakeholders that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute them?

Lastly, the third paper proposes a prescriptive process framework for

collaborative value co-creation (Paper 3, Chapter 5).

Focus: PL/Clubs and PLCF/CSTs

Paper 1 (Chapter 3)

- Empirical – Descriptive
- Role of the PL in institutionalising social action.
- Distinct drivers to social action at the club level
- Distinct strategic benefits at the club level

Focus: PL and legitimate External stakeholder groups

Paper 2 (Chapter 4)

- Empirical - Managerial
- Process framework on how trustworthiness signals from the PL translate into motivators for stakeholder value.

Focus: PL/Clubs

Paper 3 (Chapter 5)

- Conceptual - Managerial
- Proposes prescriptive process framework for collaborative value co-creation.

Figure 1.1. The relationship between the three papers in this study

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of this dissertation articulate the conceptual frameworks that underpin each paper individually and how each contributes to the extant literature. However, since those chapters do not discuss how I arrived at the theoretical choices I made along the way nor the implications of this research as a whole, I summarise the fields of scholarship and the contributions of this research in Table 1.1 below. This is discussed in detail in the remaining of this chapter. The significance of this research to this literature is further discussed in Chapter 6 after formally presenting the three papers.

Field of Scholarship	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
Stakeholder Thinking Freeman et al. (2010)	The problem of Managerial Mindset	The problem of Value Creation and Trade	The problem of the Ethics of Capitalism
3S of CSR in Sport (Breitbarth and Rieth, 2012)	Organisational Structure Implementation	Stakeholder Support	Strategic Alignment
Institutional Pillars (Scott, 2008)	Cognitive-Cultural	Regulatory	Normative
Explanatory Devices	Institutional Logics and Templates, CSS, Behavioural view of Corporate Governance, Attention view of the firm	Self-Regulation through Trustworthiness signals; Stakeholder Value, S-D Logic	Alignment of Institutional Logics through an Ethical decision-making process
Contributions	Empirical evidence for Social Stretch (clubs); multi-level Social Agenda (PL)	Empirical evidence for Translation of Trustworthiness signals into factors for Stakeholder Value	Conceptual and Prescriptive Process framework

⟵ Paradox of Social Stretch ⟶

Table 1.1 Fields of Scholarships and Contributions of this research

1.6. PRECURSORS TO MY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

This project's research setting would be naturally situated in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) literature. However, in the next sub-section I present a

brief critique of this literature and my choice of selecting other fields of scholarship as backbone for this dissertation.

1.6.1. A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

According to Carroll (2008), corporate social initiatives and modern philanthropy can be traced back to the mid-to-late 1800s, in response to criticism of the factory system in Great Britain and America, accused of being responsible for social ills such as poverty and child labour. One of those social initiatives was the creation of football clubs to promote social cohesion while offering workers a distraction from the externalities of the industrial revolution (Perry, 2009).

However, the academic focus on the effects of business in society began only in the second half of the last century with the publication of "Social Responsibilities of the Businessman" (Bowen, 1953 in Carroll, 2008), followed by Davis' (1960) view that social initiatives could unlock potential long-term economic gains from an eventual payback from society. The 1970s brought us a seminal New York Times article by Friedman (1970) which synthesised the shareholder view of the firm by positing that the maximisation of profits is the only morally legitimate social responsibility of business. However, the article also argued for compliance with the basic rules of society, embodied in its laws and ethical customs, a key caveat that is often ignored. Consistent with this social contractarian view, Carroll (1979) later in that decade introduced his seminal 'pyramid' definition of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) "encompass[ing] the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organisations at a given point in time."(Carroll, 1979,

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p. 500). Key to this research, the author recently refined this contribution by arguing

that ethics permeates the whole pyramid, and that each firm's CSR orientation is

defined by how it balances the tensions and trade-offs among society's expectations

as part of an integrated and sustainable stakeholder framework (Carroll, 2016). I

believe that the concept of social stretch that I introduce in Chapter 3 is an important

contributor to this discussion.

The 1980's introduced the stakeholder approach to strategic management

which is central to this research. Although the term stakeholder first appeared in an

internal memorandum at the Stanford Research Institute in 1963, it is Freeman (1984)

who is largely credited for bringing stakeholder thinking to the forefront of strategic

management by stretching the attention of managers beyond the interests of

shareholders in order to include the firm's business and social communities. Freeman

defined stakeholders as any group or individual that "can affect or is affected by the

achievement of an organisation's objectives" (p. 46) and graphically represented these

actors in a visually powerful yet simple way (Fassin, 2009) which has been very

popular with academics and practitioners alike. However, the hub and spoke approach

has been criticised for centring on the focus firm (Frooman, 1999). I address this

criticism through the stakeholder value co-creation framework I propose and test in

chapter 4.

According to Carroll (2008), the 1990s was a decade with limited

contributions to CSR since the focus shifted towards the potential "virtuous circle"

(Waddock and Graves, 1997, p. 314) in the interrelationship between the outcomes of

corporate social performance (CSP) and corporate financial performance (CFP) as a

result of the application of principles of social responsibility and processes of social responsiveness that over time may be institutionalised into policies and programmes that result in observable outcomes towards society (Wood, 1991). CSP is sometimes used interchangeably with Corporate Citizenship, although the former focuses more on the performance side of social action while the latter refers to the "activities adopted by businesses to integrate social demands in their activities" (Maignan and Ferrell, 2001, p. 458), including some usually granted to governments (Matten and Crane, 2005).

During the first decade of the twenty-first century the focus shifted to the collaboration between business and non-profits (Austin, 2000), to the globalization of fields such as sustainability, corporate citizenship and stakeholder thinking; and to the recognition of discrete legal and ethical standards around the world.

The past decade also witnessed criticism towards CSR as a "fuzzy" theoretical concept "with unclear boundaries and debatable legitimacy" (Lantos, 2001, p. 595). Garriga and Melé (2004) addressed the issue of boundaries by mapping the CSR territory based on the field of scholarship that provides perspective: economics, politics, integrative theories and ethics. However, as a result of CSR being approached from multiple perspectives and disciplines, definitions of the term abound but there is little consensus on what CSR is (Waddington et al., 2013), becoming "a tortured concept, both theoretically and empirically" (Godfrey, 2009, p. 703).

At first sight, the Creating Shared Value (from this point on CSV) framework (Porter and Kramer, 2011) appears to offer a sound alternative to model the role of business in society. CSV promises to "reinvent capitalism" (p. 1) by calling on

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business to take the lead in bringing business and society back together. The framework is centred on the principle of shared value, which "involves creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges" (p. 4). CSV promises to expand the total pool of economic and social value by the implementation of three strategies: *reconceiving products and markets* to unlock new business opportunities that also create value for society; *redefining productivity in the value chain* by implementing environmentally friendly processes that also cut costs; and lastly, by *building supportive industry clusters* where the firm operates by strengthening the firm's value chain through collaboration with suppliers and governmental and non-governmental institutions aiming at improving productivity, quality and sustainability.

However, even though CSV demands respect for the law and ethical standards, shared value "is *not* about personal values" (p. 5, italics added). In my opinion, this normative pass is where the CSV framework falls into the *separation fallacy* trap (Freeman et al., 2010) by demoting normative considerations including social contracts (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1995) to a secondary role. Although CSV turns some of the firm's social and environmental challenges into opportunities for competitive advantage, I agree with the critique from Crane et al. (2013) who argued that CSV fails to propose a true societal perspective that would include dealing with systemic problems of injustice "in democratically organised multi-stakeholder processes" (Crane et al., 2013, p. 19) in which the common good is to be pursued despite economic, non-economic and opportunity costs. I contribute to addressing this imbalance through the proposed process framework I present in Chapter 5.

Based on the above discussion, I decided to adopt the Corporate Social Strategy (CSS) framework, which brings corporate values to the centre of corporate strategy (Husted and Allen, 2011). Consistent with my research aims, CSS is a strategic *choice* resulting in the leverage of "resources and capabilities to meet both social objectives and financial performance objectives" (Husted et al., 2012, p. 3) simultaneously. I believe that CSS is preferable to CSR since, by social action being a key component to corporate strategy, it overcomes CSR's failure to drive a narrative of business-in society (Freeman, 2011) in which the PL/Clubs would focus their attention (Ocasio, 1997), at least partially, in integrating its practices with the interests of its legitimate stakeholders (Clarkson, 1995). This is why, although I value the importance of CSR as a field of scholarship that stresses the responsibility that business has towards society (Elms et al., 2011), I agree with others in that a CSR-approach to business strategy is a dangerous idea (Freeman and Liedtka, 1991) since by only addressing business concerns when they have an effect on society, it decouples ethics from the totality of business conduct and therefore provides actors with a compliance checkbox while preventing ethics from its fundamental role in guiding business towards the common good (Freeman et al. 2010).

CSS is also preferable over the CSV framework since, by bringing corporate values to the centre of corporate strategy, it also implies bringing issues related to stakeholder interests and the common good to the forefront of strategic decision-making. Lastly, since CSS takes a systemic (organic) view of strategic behaviour, its two processes, strategic social positioning and strategic social planning (Husted et al.,

2012), can be operationalised in order to compare social action among clubs within my sample (Chapter 3).

Paradoxically, by framing this research outside the realm of CSR I answer the call in the CSR in sport literature on the need for a multi-paradigm perspective (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2017) and a multi-level lens approach (Breitbarth et al., 2015) to examine the relationship between CSR and strategy and its implications in a broader institutional environment in order to contribute to the shift in the CSR literature from "existential questions on organizational mission and shareholder value to the mechanisms and processes by which corporations conceptualize and enact their societal obligations" (Wang et al., 2016 p. 1). In doing so, I present an explanatory account of how the PL/Clubs attempt to approach the need to "strategically and effectively [plan] a clear and demonstrable narrative of its *impact* on company and community" (p. 4, italics in original). Towards this end, this research complements the efforts from Breitbarth and Rieth (2012) in the CSR in sport literature, who identified organisational *structural* implementation (addressed in Paper 1), stakeholder *support* (addressed in Paper 2) and *strategic* alignment (addressed in Paper 3) as a '3S model' to enable social change in football.

This research also complements the three broad categories of CSR research identified by Wang et al. (2016): *antecedent*, *outcome*, and *process* (p.6). Paper 1 (Chapter 3) focuses on the "antecedent" by examining the distinct drivers among clubs to engage in CSR while providing confirmatory evidence for the findings from other scholars on the positive effects of a genuine philanthropic motivation for CSR on outcome variables such as attitudes and behaviours (Kulczycki and Koenigstorfer,

2016). Paper 2 (Chapter 4) focuses on the "outcome" category by analysing how trustworthiness signals from the PL translate into factors for stakeholder value through interlinked practices between the league and its external stakeholders. Paper 3 (Chapter 5) contributes to the "process" category by offering a prescriptive process for ethical decision-making and implementation of social action projects, which also accounts for the practical challenges that leaders face. When taken together, the three papers offer both confirmatory evidence and conceptual grounding for what other scholars have referred to as *assessable transcendence*, or how a club's foundation *manoeuvres* stakeholder relationships through its practices in order to *harmonise* its social objectives while *safeguarding* its parent club's business objectives (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2017).

This research is also consistent with the shift on justifying CSR based on purely financial outcomes to a more sophisticated approach that integrates stakeholder interests. As I will discuss in Chapter 4, this approach presents the PL as generator rather than a consumer of trust and goodwill, so that these *social evaluations* (Wang et al., 2016) can translate into factors for stakeholder value by acting as a "mechanism to energize and motivate stakeholders" (p. 3) and "by better specifying and integrating financial and social concerns" (Freeman et al., 2010 p. 236).

Based on the above, this research aims at moving away from the definition of CSR as "actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law" (McWilliams and Siegel, p. 117) to the integrated view of CSR from Aguinis' (2011) as "context-specific organizational

actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple

bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance." (Aguinis, 2011 in

Aguinis and Glavas, 2012). I believe that this definition fits my aims but largely

overlaps with stakeholder thinking and therefore makes CSR unnecessary for the

purposes of this research. Therefore, in the next sub-section I discuss the theories that

underpin this effort.

1.7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This research follows a view of business *in* society, meaning that the practices

of the PL and its club members affect and are affected by the broader societal issues

in which their managers are immersed. In order to further our understanding on how

the charities associated with them co-create value for themselves and their external

stakeholders, in this sub-section I present the main theories that are the backbone for

my conceptual framework. As shown on Table 1.1 earlier, each of the individual

papers also draws on concepts from other fields of scholarship as explanatory devices.

As shown on Fig 1.2 below, the framework is based on a stakeholder view of

capitalism, CSS as strategic option, and the value co-creation approach in the Service-

Dominant Logic framework (S-D logic). Furthermore, the framework addresses the

interpenetration of this strategy with the institutional context and its implications

(Wang et al., 2016). I discuss each of these theories in the next four sub-sections.
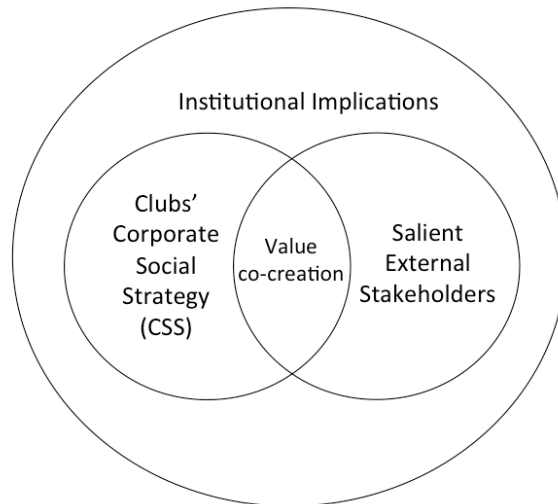
Figure 1.2. The relationship between the main theories in this study

1.7.1. STAKEHOLDER CAPITALISM

Stakeholder capitalism goes beyond tenets largely from economics and politics such as self-interest, private property, competition and free markets to a vision of capitalism based on the pragmatist principles of "*freedom*, *rights*, and the *creation by consent of positive obligations*" (Freeman et al., 2010 p. 280, italics added). First, freedom allows individuals to work together and make voluntary agreements rather than just compete for scarce resources. Secondly, rights allow them to be protected in those agreements. Lastly, those individuals sustain their cooperation over time by obligating themselves to others through formal and/or social contracts.

Over the last three decades, stakeholder thinking has been concerned with the solution to the following three problems in business and management theory: first, the problem of *managerial mindset* which leads to the development of structures and processes which separate business and ethics in the routinization of decision-making

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and its enactment in the real (turbulent) world; second, the problem of *value creation and trade* which excludes stakeholder value from organisational performance; lastly, the problem of the *ethics of capitalism*, which by not accounting for all the effects of decision-making does not align organisational and societal objectives (Freeman et al., 2010). It does so through six key principles (see Fig. 1.3 below) that permeate throughout this dissertation: a) the principle of stakeholder *cooperation* highlights how value is created through shared assumptions and beliefs in a community and it is therefore a "social phenomenon" (Freeman et al., 2010 p. 281); b) the principle of stakeholder *engagement* recognizes the role of a constellation of stakeholders in the process of value creation and the need to engage them in order to create as many win-win situations as possible; c) the principle of stakeholder *responsibility* highlights that since value creation is a social process, ethics is central and inescapable to the daily activities of business; d) the principle of *complexity* broadens the view of human nature as self-interested to include the need to balance the effects of our actions on each other; e) the principle of *continuous creation* is based on how engaging stakeholders in a transparent manner fosters innovation by unlocking imagination; f) the principle of *emergent competition* acknowledges that although not all interactions are win-win solutions, neither are all interactions a zero-sum game. Therefore, a win-win situation ought to be the primary concern.

Based on the above, the key contribution of stakeholder thinking to value creation is to help firms redefine stakeholder interests to create more value for both while rejecting the "separation fallacy" (Freeman et al.2010 p. 6), the widely accepted

view in business that certain business decisions have no ethical content, and/or that some ethical decisions have no business value.

However, stakeholder thinking still views value as provided *to* stakeholders (Harrison and Bosse, 2013). Therefore, in the next sub-section I discuss the S-D logic framework which, by positing that value is always co-created with stakeholders, is consistent with stakeholder capitalism.

The principle of stakeholder cooperation	• Value can be created, traded, and sustained because stakeholders can jointly satisfy their needs and desires by making voluntary agreements with each other that for the most part are kept.
The principle of stakeholder engagement	• A business must engage its stakeholders. Almost every business transaction involves customers, suppliers, communities, employees and financiers. Other stakeholders such as media, additional civil society representatives, NGOs, and so on are often affected or can affect value creation
The principle of stakeholder responsibility	• Value can be created, traded, and sustained because parties to an agreement are willing to accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. When third parties are harmed, they must be compensated, or a new agreement must be negotiated with all of those parties who are affected.
The principle of complexity	• Value can be created, traded, and sustained because human beings are complex psychological creatures capable of acting from many different values and points of view." Individuals are socially situated and their values are connected to their social context.
The principle of continuous creation	• Business as an institution is a source of the creation of value. Cooperating with stakeholders and motivated by values, businesspeople continuously create new sources of value.
The principle of emerging competition	• Competition emerges from a relatively free society so that stakeholders have options. Competition is an emergent property rather than a necessary assumption to capitalism.

Figure 1.3. Principles of Stakeholder Capitalism (Freeman et al., 2010)

1.7.2. VALUE CO-CREATION

Consistent with the discussion in the previous sub-section, Smith et al. (2010) call for an approach to value creation that "embed[s] a stakeholder orientation" (p. 9). In my view, this is provided by the approach to value of the S-D logic framework (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) which defines it as "*benefit*, an *increase in the well-being* of a particular actor" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014 p. 57, italics in original), implying that value is always co-created and defined by the beneficiary. Therefore, value creation is an experiential concept in which every occurrence is unique. It is not defined in-use since it is "contingent on the integration of other resources and actors" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014 p. 23). Therefore, value-in context highlights that value is not created by the firm's value chain but rather co-created with stakeholders in the networked enterprise, beyond the legal boundaries of the firm (Lusch and Webster Jr, 2011).

It follows that stakeholder relationships are not optional since value cannot be created without them. Furthermore, Chandler and Vargo (2011) argue that when actors connect with one another, they simultaneously join each other's networks and from those new positions draw on resources for service-for-service exchanges, both directly and indirectly. This requires an emphasis on more transparent stakeholder collaboration and a shift from transactional to sustained relational exchanges that are bound by knowledge and resource sharing (Frow and Payne, 2011). Therefore, as the evidence on Chapter 4 will show, the role of the PL/Clubs is to be the proactive actor, innovator, developer and promoter; and other actors are not end users but rather affect

other actors positively and negatively through direct and indirect exchanges through human institutions that allow for market, public and private exchanges.

Based on the above, value cannot be provided but only proposed. Therefore, a value proposition (VP) "is a representation of how an actor proposes to positively participate in value creation with a beneficial actor" (p. 57) who *ultimately defines value*. This is important for this research since by VPs "establish[ing] connections and relationships" (Vargo et al., 2008 p. 148), they act as a "value alignment mechanism" (Frow and Payne, 2011 p. 236) in a holistic and integrated way that "align[s] firm, customer and societal interests more closely" (Abela and Murphy, 2008 p. 45). Therefore, S-D logic reinforces stakeholder capitalism by pointing "almost directly to normative notions of investment in people (operant resources), long-term relationships, and quality services flows and 'only somewhat less directly' to notions of transparency, ethical approaches to exchange, and sustainability" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014 p. 94). I agree with Husted and Allen (2011) in that the advantages of managing "business and social strategies together are far greater than the potential disadvantages (p. 48) and therefore such an approach would lead managers to consider CSS as strategic option, which I discuss in the next sub-section.

1.7.3. CORPORATE SOCIAL STRATEGY AND SOCIAL STRETCH

Corporate social strategy (CSS) aims at reintegrating social behaviour to business strategy (Husted and Allen, 2011) by forging competitive advantage for the firm through the allocation of resources to achieve long-term social objectives (Husted and Allen, 1998) in order to "extend and focus the already considerable

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impact they have on the communities to which they belong" (Husted and Allen, 2011 p. 43), through a specific "portfolio of social action projects" (Husted et al., 2012 p. 2).

CSS is a strategic *option* as managers pursue what is best for the firm. CSS is not about filtering the good managers from the bad. It is ethical to create wealth and also to create social good so firms may pursue a social strategy in some markets or for some products and not others. Therefore by definition, it must create value for the firm so it must accept that it might not be considered "morally praiseworthy" (Husted and Allen, 2011 p. 45). The moral motives are within the actors behind the social action projects, not within the strategy itself. Rather than attempting to answer the ethical dilemmas that firms face, social strategy selects the market and nonmarket stakeholders it can "satisfy profitably and organizes social action programs to do so; questions of ethics and other social contributions are managed as well, both inside the social strategy program and as part of general management" (p. 134). This is particularly important in this setting since "fans may be much more responsive to team performance than to teams' involvement in CSR activities" (Waddington et al., 2013 p. 40).

Burke and Logsdon (1996) identified five dimensions of how social action projects support "core business activities" (p. 496): *centrality* (aligned to the core business mission of the firm and the ones that create the greatest value since it may lead to new capabilities and enhanced reputation); *appropriability* (the ability of a social action project to identify dormant resources that are shared with stakeholders since the goal is to scale, not for it to be inimitable); *proactivity* (the ability to

anticipate social trends and go beyond what is required by law or industry practice), *voluntarism* (activities that are performed free of social or legal constraints) and lastly, *visibility* (stakeholders awareness of the scope and benefit of the social projects) (Husted and Allen, 2011).

At first sight, profits appear to be incompatible with social performance, requiring a trade-off between the two, unless "where they mutually reinforce each other" (Husted and Allen, 2011 p. 48). The authors identified at least three circumstances when this could happen: where there is an opportunity for differentiation (confirmed by our evidence on Chapter 3), when it can contribute to cost reduction (cost leadership), and when there is a possibility for strategic benefit from a particular governmental intervention through strategic interaction (confirmed by our evidence on Chapter 4).

CSS is operationalized through two processes: strategic social *positioning* and strategic social *planning* (Husted et al., 2012). Strategic social positioning gauges how organisations "include non-economic objective within its mission and purpose" (Husted and Allen, 2011 p. 78) as part of its identity, or how its values and culture reflect its heritage and leadership (Balmer and Greyser, 2002). It also gauges the extent to which it is proactive in responding to social issues relative to its competitors, influenced by shared beliefs that evolve as the external environment changes (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1999). It can do this in a number of ways: by responding to changed expectations in its corporate practices, by going beyond the minimum required by regulators, and by committing more than its competitors to social projects (Husted et al., 2012). The authors identified two main contributors to strategic social

positioning: *continuous innovation* and *stakeholder integration* (Husted et al., 2012).

Continuous innovation implies reconfiguring assets to transform social problems into

opportunities. Stakeholder integration refers to the ability to establish relationships

with stakeholders built on trust and collaboration in order to develop larger theme

capabilities. This integration co-creates value with stakeholders based on the

innovation and collective learning from a changing environment including product

and process development, managerial capabilities, knowledge creation (including the

employees' social capital and social networks). Furthermore, as the evidence in

Chapter 3 shows, a genuine stakeholder integration built on trusting formal and

informal relationships leads to *social embeddedness*, the ability to create competitive

advantage from a deep understanding and integration with the local community.

Social embeddedness improves stakeholder satisfaction and the organization's

reputation, which is "generally an accurate reflection of a firm's identity" (Husted and

Allen, 2011 p. 197). This identity is manifested in the coherence and consistency in

the totality of conduct of the organisation, which allows other actors to predict future

behaviour. In other words, since values influence the selection from available

alternatives, and may lead firms into a strong drive or rejection of social action,

strategic social positioning is a reasonably accurate representation of *who* the firm

really is.

Strategic social planning means backing up corporate identity and values with

action. Firms are said to engage in strategic social planning based on: (a) how they

define a program and agenda for social action, (b) the intensity of investment in social

programs, (c) the commitment of employees, and (d) how they measure the outcomes of programs (Husted and Allen, 2007).

Importantly, as mentioned above, for certain clubs profits and social performance reinforce each other through differentiation. Rather than taking a defensive approach to their social responsibility in order to 'fit' their practices with environmental demands, these clubs create an intentional strategic misfit (Hamel and Prahalad, 1993) between the available resources and the social aspirations they formulate. Therefore, they must *stretch* their resources in order to fulfil this strategic choice and in doing so, the distinction between profit and social motives becomes blurred (Cramer, 1998). I will argue in Chapter 3 that the way clubs operationalize the two processes within CSS discussed above are a reflection of their *social stretch*, or how clubs voluntarily stretch their standards and expectations to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from a collective identity. Their social stretch influences and is influenced by the club's institutional context, which I discuss in the next sub-section.

1.7.4. INSTITUTIONAL THEORY

Scott (2008) describes institutions as "comprised of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life" (p. 48). The *regulative* pillar focuses on expedience by both constraining and enabling action. This includes not only how rules are made and enforced, but also how actors influence their interpretation and dispute resolution. The *normative* pillar defines social obligations, how actors should behave based on *values*, or conceptions of the desirable, and *norms*, which specify the

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legitimate way to pursue value ends (how things should be done). Lastly, the *cultural-cognitive* pillar resides at the deepest level since it gauges the taken-for-grantedness of social understanding as a "common framework of meaning" (p. 59). It goes beyond objective conditions, to include subjective interpretations of a particular actor shaped by cultural (environmental) frameworks.

The three pillars are necessary and complementary rather than separable (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008) and act as "elastic fibres that guide behaviour and resist change" (p. 49). Each pillar provides a different basis for *organisational legitimacy*, or "the degree of cultural support for an organization" (p. 60) based on the congruence of an actor with the institutional order.

The institutional order discussed above is conveyed through institutional *carriers*, mechanisms that specify how (and by who) ideas are spread over space and time. Scott (2008) identified four types of carriers: *symbolic systems* such as the 'virtuous circle model' discussed above, are a collection of versatile symbols which enact *meaning*, "what is signified in institutional structure and practices" (Zilber, 2008 p. 152) and therefore guide behaviour which reflects organizational identity and stakeholder interests (Glynn, 2008); *relational systems* define roles within a network; *routines* reflect on patterns of actions based on tacit knowledge and beliefs; lastly, *artefacts* are consciously produced objects embedded with meaning and influenced by the cultural environment in order to accommodate the issues and answers that PL/Clubs have committed to (Ocasio, 1997). They are embedded with *institutional templates*, "frames or targets that actors use to compare or benchmark their activities, and they prescribe how success should be assessed" (Sahlin and Wedlin, 2008 p.

231). In my view, the first carrier relates to social positioning and is therefore key to gauge the significance of Chapter 3, and the other three enact social planning and are precursors to the process of value co-creation I will discuss in Chapter 4.

Having offered this brief introduction on the main concepts within institutional theory, in the next sub-section I delve deeper on how each of the papers contribute to the two-step process of the institutionalisation of social action: Paper 1 takes the view of institutions as *property* or structures, and Papers #2 and #3 adopt the perspective of institutionalisation as evolutionary *process* or mechanism which not only reflects the interdependence of actors and their environments, but also show how these actors arrive at specific commitments and practices which result in stakeholder engagement/tensions which are reinforced/contested over time.

1.8. PAPER 1: SOCIAL STRETCH: STRATEGIC DRIVER FOR CORPORATE SOCIAL ACTION

Social planning is more likely to occur in situations like the PL with high munificence (Husted et al., 2012) and salient legitimate stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997) such as local, national and international governments, global sponsors, supporter groups, media outlets and multi-level governing bodies with capacity to cooperate or threaten its sustainability. Based on the above, I propose that the PL has articulated its vision to "balance commercial success with corporate social responsibility" (Premier League, 2013) in response to the *paradox of performance* (Barnett, 2007), by which its excessive financial performance signals that it is extracting more than what it is contributing to society resulting in pressure from legitimate stakeholders and public opinion to be socially responsible. It does so by

developing a league-wide social planning agenda which mandates a minimum of social action from its club members (Proposition 1).

At the club level, the paper argues that since clubs are driven by discrete values towards social action and possesses discrete resources and capabilities, they will therefore adopt a different type of CSS based on each club's level of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning (Proposition 2).

Lastly, as a result of its social stretch, each club gains discrete strategic benefits from social action (Burke and Logsdon, 1996) (Proposition 3A). Importantly, all clubs would gain some strategic benefit because of the PL mandate. However, those clubs with high levels of social positioning and social planning will create competitive advantage from their social embeddedness (Proposition 3B).

1.8.1. FINDINGS

Based on the above discussion, this paper offers the following findings: first, it identifies the role of the PL in developing a social planning agenda operationalised through seven strategic and operational roles: social strategy and programme development (national and international), funding (core and discretionary), setting of minimum quality standards, sharing best practices, redefining the value chain, communication and influence of salient stakeholders and reporting to national and international partners. I believe that this finding is important because if clubs were left to their own devices they will either embrace or reject social action altogether based on their values, available resources and perceptions about their internal and external environments.

Second, at the club level, I find that clubs deploy *cognitive frames* (Hahn et al., 2014) to scan, interpret and respond to the external environment in order to define the particular commitments they will focus their attention to (Ocasio and Radoynovska, 2016). These cognitive frames are moderated by factors within human behaviour that are considered the cornerstones of the behavioural view of corporate governance (van Ees et al., 2009): *bounded rationality*, the imprecise and selective processing of information that limits awareness and cause inefficiencies in the *routinization of decision-making*; and *satisficing behaviour*, the tendency of actors to accept choices or judgments that are considered good enough considering their pressing needs rather than searching for an optimal solution that might require *political bargaining* with other actors.

Based on the above and following Husted et al.'s (2012) expectation of "some correlation between planning and positioning" (p. 7), the paper proposes and presents empirical evidence for a typology classified in a matrix with social planning (higher and lower) on the x-axis driven by each club's social ambition (ambition towards addressing social ills in their community), and social positioning on the y-axis driven by their capability of stakeholder integration. Although this research found evidence and distinct levels for all the dimensions of organisational context (discipline, trust, support and stretch) identified by Ghosal and Bartlett (1994), I believe that since social action projects are voluntary and not necessarily tied to core competencies, it is how each club's stretches its attention towards social change what drives it to develop the other dimensions towards the pursuit of social objectives. Therefore, I offer the concept of *social stretch*, by which clubs voluntarily stretch their standards and

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expectations to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from a collective identity. This is important because I find that, paradoxically, those clubs that pursue social action as an *end in itself* appear to also be the ones that earn the *most* strategic benefit and competitive advantage, and also the ones that co-create the *most* value from its social schemes due to how stakeholders *reciprocate* positively to the congruence within their trustworthiness signals (to be discussed in detail in Chapter 4).

Based on the above, the proposed matrix yields four quadrants labelled *satisficing* social stretch, *embedded* social stretch, *bounded* social stretch and *ideal identity* social stretch. Satisficing social stretch refers to clubs in which their social positioning comes not from their social action projects but from the club's capability to integrate stakeholders by responding to their expectations in regards to the club's governance (i.e. supporter trust ownership). Bounded social stretch refers to clubs that display bounded rationality in regards to their external environment and their own capabilities, and how this defines their approach to social action. Ideal identity social stretch refers to clubs in which the CST appears to reflect and reinforce their ideal identity of the club, or "the articulation by strategic planners and others of the optimum positioning of the organisation in its market, or markets, in a given time-frame" (Balmer, 2001, p. 18). Lastly, embedded social stretch refers to clubs that achieve *social embeddedness* (Scherer and Patzer, 2011), the ability to create competitive advantage from a deep understanding and integration with the local community and their social ambition towards addressing community needs which results in an increase in reputation, product differentiation, continuous innovation and stakeholder integration (Husted et al., 2012).

Lastly, I find that clubs are more/less effective in capturing the five dimensions of strategic benefits from social action (Burke and Logsdon, 1996) based on their social stretch. Clubs with low social planning (satisficing and bounded social stretch) appear to follow a business case cognitive frame and by following the mandates from the PL benefit from *voluntarism*, *visibility* and *specificity*. Clubs with high social planning (ideal identity and embedded social stretch) appear to follow a paradoxical cognitive frame by "specifying and integrating financial and social concerns" (Freeman et al., 2010, p. 236). These clubs also benefit from *centrality*. Lastly, clubs with embedded social stretch benefit from the four dimensions described above plus from *proactivity*.

In sum, as presented in Fig. 1.4 below, this paper provides an explanatory account of what drives the social action of the PL and its club members and the strategic benefits they can be expected to gain based on my proposed conceptual framework. Importantly, it shows that clubs that have been genuinely ambitious in addressing the needs of their local community develop a source of competitive advantage from their social embeddedness.
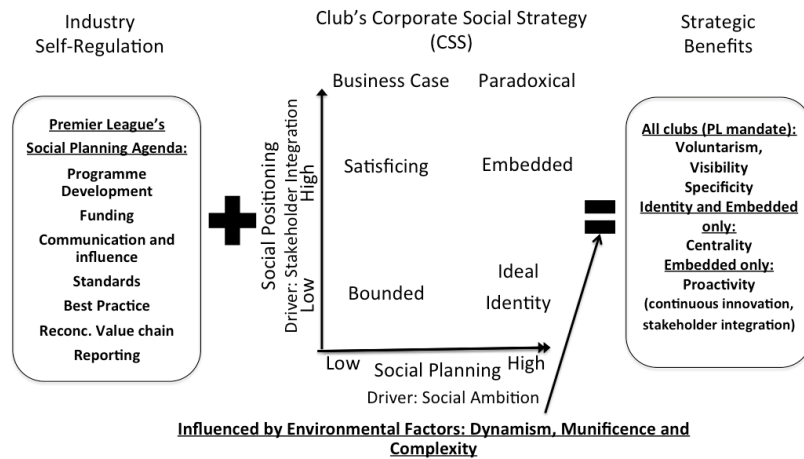
Figure 1.4 Summary of Findings for Paper 1, Chapter 3

In the next section I shift the focus to how the legitimate stakeholders that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute these schemes co-create value with the PL.

1.9. PAPER 2: TRANSLATION OF TRUSTWORTHINESS SIGNAL INTO FACTORS FOR STAKEHOLDER VALUE CO-CREATION

This paper proposes and tests a novel framework for stakeholder engagement (Greenwood, 2007) as precursor to stakeholder value co-creation or value destruction (Lankoski et al., 2016). I propose that the practices of the PL emit *trustworthiness signals* (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001) aimed at engaging the external stakeholder groups that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute its social action projects, which they *translate* (Kjellberg and Helgesson, 2007) into *factors for stakeholder value* (Harrison and Wicks, 2013).

Based on the above, my framework proposes that the value propositions (VPs) from the PL are the result of five kinds of trustworthiness signals: *ability* (disaggregated into managerial competence and technical competence), *benevolence*, *integrity*, *transparency*, and *identification* (Pirson and Malhotra, 2011). These signals

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are interlinked with stakeholder practices through *translations* (Kjellberg and

Helgesson, 2007) which rather than "depicting causalities[,] generate traceable

associations between" them (p. 144). Translations provide the rules and methods for

action and meaning making (Lusch and Vargo, 2014) through "representational

practices, normalising practices and integrating practices" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014, p.

137) which in some instances lead to the four factors that motivate stakeholders to

cooperate in the value creation process (Harrison and Wicks, 2013): stakeholder

utility associated with *actual goods and services*; stakeholder utility associated with

organisational justice; stakeholder utility from *affiliation*; and lastly, a factor that is

embedded in the other three, stakeholder utility associated with *perceived opportunity*

costs (Harrison and Wicks, 2013).

1.9.1. FINDINGS

First, I find that trustworthiness signals related to technical and managerial

competence translate into utility from goods and services; second, signals of

benevolence, transparency and integrity translate into the sub-factors for

organisational justice (distributional, procedural and interactional respectively); third,

signals related to identification translate into affiliation. Fourth, I find that

stakeholders evaluate the congruence of trustworthiness signals from the PL based on

perceived opportunity costs which allows stakeholders to assess the PL as trustworthy

partner *holistically*, based on the congruence and mutual reinforcement of *all* its

trustworthiness signals (Hurley et al., 2013), including those beyond its social

schemes.

Lastly, this paper finds that the PL acts as *broker* (Granovetter, 2017) for a constellation of stakeholder interests which allows it to define a soft power agenda that determines what the issues are and in doing so, respond to the paradox of performance discussed above by showing how its high munificence results in social investments in local communities, which has been independently recognised as generating £7 of social value for each £1 invested (Nevill and Van Poortvliet, 2011). In doing so, the PL justifies its actions to others while preventing its negatives externalities from reaching the public policy agenda. However, my findings also caution that since the PL is part of a system of stakeholder networks, what happens in one part of the system (i.e. value destruction at the supporter group level) can affect what happens in other parts of that same system (i.e. utility for commercial sponsors).

For practitioners, my explanatory model offers a visually powerful way to map stakeholder practices to not only anticipate negative repercussions but also *shape* strategic outcomes. As my evidence has shown, value co-creation is a dynamic process in which stakeholders constantly evaluate perceived and actual value moderated by their dynamic reference states (Mahon et al., 2016) and their internal and external environments.

1.10. PAPER 3: COLLABORATIVE VALUE CO-CREATION IN COMMUNITY SPORTS TRUSTS

Building on Breitbarth and Harris' (2008) call for "football to embrace CSR as an opportunity-driven rather than problem-driven concept" (p. 201), this paper introduces a process framework for achieving collaborative co-creation of social and economic value that integrates clubs, CSTs and their external stakeholders as part of a

single governance model. This is important since as the CST professionalises and

engages in larger social projects, it also risks increasing its strategic decoupling from

the rest of the club. Therefore, I propose a process framework based on an ethical

decision-making process introduced by Goodpaster (1991). The author divided the

decision-making process in six steps (following the, P.A.S.C.A.L. acronym to honour

the French philosopher). The six steps shown in Fig 1.5 below are *perception,*

analysis, synthesis, choice, action, and *learning* (Goodpaster, 1991, p. 56) which I

discuss in detail in Chapter 5.
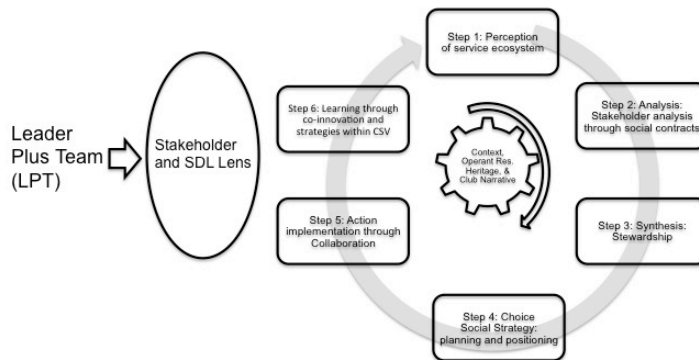
Figure 1.5 Process Framework for Collaborative Value Co-creation

This concludes the presentation of each paper individually. In the next section

I discuss the contributions of this research project.

1.11. CONTRIBUTIONS

Ladik and Stewart (2008) identified three domains in which research can make

a contribution: *theory*, by making a conceptual contribution; *method* by offering a

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novel approach to study a phenomenon; and *context,* by the importance within the range of the phenomenon being studied. Furthermore, these authors offer a continuum that gauges the importance of contributions on a scale from 1 to 8 as follows: 1) straight replication; 2) replication and extension; 3) extension of a new theory/method in a new area; 4) integrative review (such as meta-analysis); 5) development of a new theory to explain an old phenomenon; 6) identification of a new phenomenon; 7) development of a grand synthesis (integration); and 8) development of a new theory that predicts a new phenomenon.

Based on the above, Paper 1 offers a conceptual contribution (the concept of social stretch) and a contextual contribution based on its multi-level approach. In terms of the continuum, I believe that these contributions are in the position 3, since the paper both extends existing theory and also extends the context of its application.

Paper 2 also offers a conceptual contribution by explaining how the interlinked practices of the PL and its external stakeholders are linked through translations of trustworthiness signals from the PL into factors for stakeholder value. Furthermore, its multi-stakeholder approach is a contextual contribution which offers a vivid account of the process of value co-creation and the tensions within the management of divergent interests from legitimate stakeholder groups. In terms of the continuum, I believe that these contributions are also in the position 3, since the paper both extends existing theory and also extends the context of its application by furthering our understanding on the reciprocal effects of the PL and its stakeholders.

The conceptual nature and the practical aims of Paper 3 limit its theoretical contribution. However, the paper does make a contextual contribution since the

proposed framework could be applied beyond this setting. In terms of the continuum, I believe that this paper is situated on position 4, since despite its limited contribution to theory, it "integrate[s] and organize[s] prior research in new and useful ways" (p. 163).

Lastly, when analysed holistically, this research makes an additional theoretical contribution by shedding light on the *paradox of social stretch*, since those clubs that pursue social action as *an end in itself* appear to be also those that earn the *most* strategic benefit and co-create the most value from their social schemes due to how stakeholders respond positively to the congruence of their trustworthiness signals. In terms of the continuum I believe that this contribution is situated on position 3, since it also extends existing theory.

1.12. CONCLUSION

This chapter summarises this research project in order to offer a credible description of what drives the PL/Clubs to social action and a plausible explanation on how clubs gain discrete strategic benefits based on their level of social stretch. Furthermore, it has described what motivate legitimate stakeholders to engage in resource exchange with the PL/Clubs and PLCF/CSTs. Moreover, the frameworks for social stretch and for stakeholder value co-creation are not only valuable explanatory models for this setting, but could be operationalised in others. Furthermore, this project offers a prescriptive path forward that may inform practitioners in this and other settings of one way to integrate commercial and social objectives with the normative considerations that are also required to integrate stakeholder interests.

Lastly, when analysed holistically, this project offers the *paradox of social stretch*, referred to how clubs that pursue social action as *an end in itself* appear to be also those that earn the *most* strategic benefit and co-create the most value from their social schemes.

After presenting an overview of the dissertation, in the next chapter I delve into the methodology that underpins this research project.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY CHAPTER

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed the objectives of this research and offered an overview of the three papers that compose this dissertation, the aim in this chapter is to offer the reader a transparent account of the methodology that underpins this study including my epistemological position and my research strategy and design, including sampling, data collection and how the data analysis contributes to answering my research questions. This is what Piantanida and Garman (1999) calls logic of justification. Moreover, I will also discuss the procedural trade-offs I accepted along the way as to be able to bind this study within its limitations.

Therefore, in the next section I start unpacking the above by discussing the philosophical considerations that underpin my methodology.

2.2 PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS: EPISTEMOLOGY AND ONTOLOGY

Epistemology and ontology are foundational to philosophy and mutually support one another. Epistemology is a "[g]eneral set of assumptions about the best ways of inquiring into the nature of the world" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008, p. 60) as "criteria by which I can know what does and does not constitute warranted, or scientific, knowledge" (Duberley et al., 2012, p. 16). Ontology refers to the "[p]hilosophical assumptions about the nature of reality" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008, p. 60). In other words, ontology refers to what is real in the world or what exists, while epistemology refers to how I come to know about what exists (Schuh and Barab, 2008).

This interpretive study is underpinned by the social constructionism paradigm and the Pragmatism tradition, which I discuss in the next sub-section.

2.3 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM, PRAGMATISM AND INTERPRETIVISM

Social constructionism emphasises the relational qualities and the multiplicity of social realities based on the multiple perspectives of social actors (Steyaert and Bouwen, 2012). Through language, actors not only describe their social world and mental state but also actively construct them through discourse in interaction in order to achieve specific objectives.

The above is consistent with the 'pragmatic maxim' (Bacon, 2012) which defines humans as both natural and cultural beings that use inquiry as a tool to cope with the world around us. Knowledge derives from the "interaction among groups of individuals and the artefacts in their environment, both of which create a reality" (Schuh and Barab, 2008, p. 72) and the conclusions of prior knowledge are instruments for new inquiries that are prompted by an issue or problem that must be resolved. Therefore, truth is functional and contextual. Conclusions are mutable and revisable but are seen as sufficient until there is a need to reconsider them.

In sum, Pragmatism aims at reconciling fallibilism, the epistemological thesis that no belief can ever be rationally justified in a conclusive way, with anti-scepticism by looking at inquiry as self-correcting (Bacon, 2012), with "no pre-determined theories or frameworks that shape knowledge and understanding" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008, p. 76).

The above brief discussion also reflects the limitations of Pragmatism and its main source of criticism. First, Pragmatism embraces pluralism by recognising that none of us is entitled to claim possession of the whole truth and interpretivism, by which "every text has an indefinite number of possible interpretations, and no one interpretation can be seen as superior to others" (King, 2004, p. 13). Therefore, in sections 7 and 8 below I address the techniques that I used to provide confirmatory evidence for my arguments. Second, for pragmatists philosophical inquiry is a cultural practice governed by shared norms, rejecting the claim that all knowledge rests on a foundation of non-inferential knowledge. Although both Dewey and James do address questions related to metaphysics, religion, moral theory, political theory and social problems in general, they do so based on what matters to "concrete life" (p. 35).

The above has two implications for this research. Firstly, I believe that by shedding light on how value is co-created and by presenting the strategic benefits of stakeholder engagement, my research can encourage social action. Secondly, if ours is just one of many plausible explanations for these phenomena, it implies the need for a sound research strategy that enhances the credibility of my interpretation, which I discuss in the next section.

2.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY

This study follows a research strategy based on progressive focusing (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972) which aims at balancing pre-fieldwork preparation (i.e. familiarisation with the research setting) with openness to emergent issues from the field. As the inquiry unfolds, problem areas are gradually clarified and redefined since the whole course of the study cannot be set in advance. Progressive focusing allows

"unique and unpredicted phenomena to be given due weight" (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972, p. 18) while reducing the breadth of the inquiry to give more concentrated attention to the emerging issues.

Progressive focusing implies an iterative process based on the interactions between the issues emerging from the literature ("etic") and the evidence and issues emerging from the field ("emic").

In my particular case there are four distinct phases in the application of this strategy (see Table 2.1 below):

	Focus	Literature	Data Collection	Emerging Themes	Outcome
Phase 1 - Oct 2012	Familiarization	Stakeholder Thinking/CSR	CSR Consultants within Football	Barriers to capture strategic benefits	Pilot Project
Phase 2 - Feb-May 2013	Best Practices	Stakeholder Thinking/CSR	Referent Clubs/UEFA	Understanding of European best practices	Research Proposal
Phase 3 - Jan-April 2014	Internal	Stakeholder Thinking/CSV	Clubs/CSTs	Internal and External Drivers for Social Action	RQ1: Paper 1 - Chapter 3
Phase 4 Jul 2014-Sep 2015	Internal	Stakeholder Thinking/CSS	PL/PLCF and Clubs/CSTs	Role of the PL/Typology of social stretch/ Discrete Strategic Benefits	RQ2: Paper 1 - Chapter 3
Phase 4 Jul 2014-Sep 2015	Interlinked Practices	Trustworthiness/ Translations/Stakeholder Value	PL/Stakeholder Groups	Normalizing, Representational and Integrative Practices that lead to value co-creation or negative reciprocity	RQ3: Paper 2 - Chapter 3

Table 2.1 Research Phases

Phase 1 focused on learning what questions to ask, how to ask them, and who to ask them of (Guest et al., 2012) by getting familiarised with the literature (primarily CSR and Stakeholder thinking) and the research setting. During this phase I interviewed two CSR consultants with expertise in the industry. One of them develops social strategies for UEFA (the European Governing Body) and the other runs a leading CSR news distribution service and managed the CST for a Premier League club for more than eight years. These interviews shed light on the barriers to capturing strategic benefit from social schemes such as lack of experience and skills,

a mind-set of short-termism, unsatisfactory governance, etc. It was also my first encounter with the research process and was the basis for my pilot project. The pilot project also allowed me to broaden the area of inquiry and to clarify concepts (Yin, 2009).

Phase 2 came unexpectedly since it derived opportunistically. Through a colleague I was able to secure an interview with the executive that runs social action for F.C. Barcelona which also coincided with a Healthy Stadia conference in Manchester, so I took advantage of the two events to secure meetings with Vfl Wolfsburg, F.C. United of Manchester, UEFA, Aston Villa, a representative from the PL and the two main supporter organisations in England in order to have a first solid overview of best practices across Europe. The interviews with Vfl Wolfsburg, F.C. Barcelona and F.C. United of Manchester are important reference points for this study, since the first two were the only two clubs that to my knowledge, had at that time published CSR reports endorsed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); the third club was identified by early participants as one with an 'ideal governance model' since it is 100% owned by its members. The data collected from these interviews informed my research proposal.

During this phase I also revised the literature that would underpin this study and adjusted my interview guide to include the strategies within the CSV framework as a potential avenue to address how the PL and its club members may balance football, commercial and social objectives.

Phase 3 started after the research proposal and focused primarily on the potential strategic benefits based on the strategies within the CSV framework.

However, after a preliminary analysis of the data and researcher notes from the first set of interviews, I realised that the CSV framework was not capturing the complexities imbued in social strategy. This was mainly due to two reasons. First, it became apparent that social action is a strategic choice that is influenced by internal and external environmental factors. These factors include, the tradition and history of the organisation; the skills (visionary and managerial) and personal values of its executives (both from the club and the CST), the club's competitive landscape (within its city and league-wide), and the available resources and capabilities for social action. These complexities resulted in rich data that did not fit into the 'neatness' of the three strategies within the CSV framework. The other reason is that although the CSV framework promises to reinvent capitalism, the strategies within it appear to be more tactical in the sense that they represent potential avenues that the organisations can make after the strategic choice for social action is made. Therefore, I decided to take on the advice from Guest et al. (2012) to determine whether "*the topical content of the research should be expanded, contracted, or refined*" (p. 26, italics in original). This implied going back to the literature with what I had learned from my fieldwork up to that point to find a more effective avenue to explain the phenomena. That effort allowed me to identify an alternative for CSV in the Corporate Social Strategy (CSS) framework (Husted and Allen, 2011). This was a theoretical milestone for this research, since the two processes within CSS fit with what my data showed as drivers for social action. Therefore, I adjusted my interview guide based on CSS and placed CSV framework into a secondary and more 'tactical' role since I had found some evidence on one of its strategies (redefining the value chain).

An emergent result of this revision was the conceptual paper (Castro-Martinez and Jackson, 2015) presented in Chapter 5. The concepts from that paper, my early analysis and my researcher notes also became the starting point for my codebook (Guest et al., 2012, p. 53) as I will discuss in section 2.8.

Phase 4 summarises the second half of my fieldwork. During this phase I kept track of my quota sampling strategy to include all the groups identified. Throughout this phase the interview guide for external stakeholder groups was informed by the S-D logic and the factors for stakeholder value, which shed light on how trust influences stakeholder processes and their perceptions of value. This insight led me to the literature on trust and trustworthiness, which led to the research propositions I present in Chapter 4. Moreover, it led me to re-code the data from the three PL interviews that I had originally coded for my conceptual paper (Chapter 5) but from a trustworthiness signals perspective.

Lastly, the interview guide was adjusted as needed to include questions related to the particular participant and potential probing questions that would deepen my understanding.

2.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

Put simply, research design is a logical plan and systematic process to get the researcher "from here to there" (Yin, 2009, p. 26) by organising all research activity including collection and analysis of data in a way that is most likely to achieve the research objectives (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008), while navigating the "complex relationships between the production of knowledge (epistemology), the processes of

knowledge production (methodology), and the involvement and impact of the

knowledge producer or researcher (ontology)" (Haynes, 2012, p. 73).

As shown on Fig. 2.1 below, the design followed the iterative process offered

by Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012):

Step 1: Choosing a topic, literature review, development of

theoretical/conceptual foundations and research questions. Discussed in

Chapter 1.

Step 2: Research Design: "blueprint", seeking a good fit between theoretical

foundations, epistemological assumptions and practical feasibility issues.

Step 3: Sample, context and negotiating access: transition from theory to field.

Step 4: Research method for data collection and preparation.

Step 5: Data analysis and constant comparison with theory.

Step 6: Discussion and final write-up.
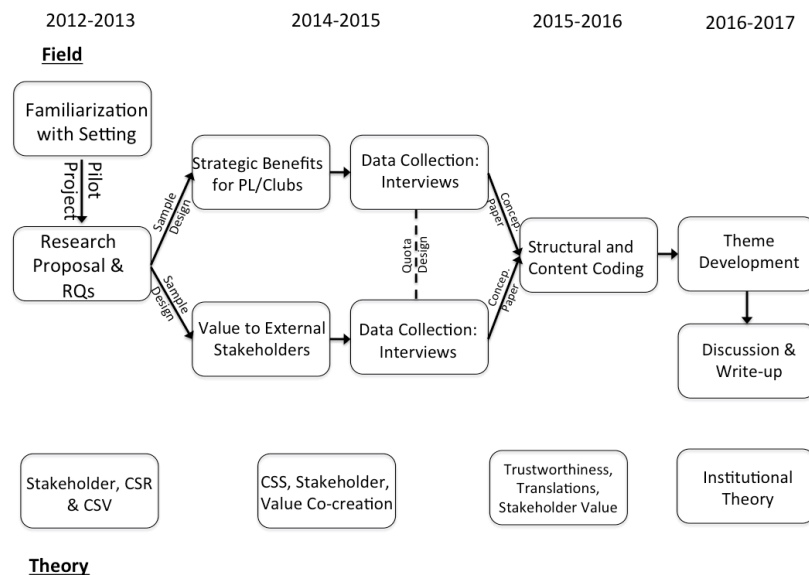
Figure 2.1 Research Design

The main challenge within my design was the multiple layers of understanding that addressing my research questions would require. As I will explain in chapter 3, RQ1 required understanding both the structural dualities of my research setting (PL/PLCF and Clubs/CSTs) and also the functional perspective of managing football/commercial objectives (PL/Clubs) and social action projects (PLCF/CSTs). Moreover, because of the global reach of the PL, my design also required understanding of these social schemes from multiple geographic perspectives (local, national and international levels).

For RQ2 the challenge was the multiplicity of stakeholder groups. Therefore, my design focused only on those that either co-develop, co-fund and/or co-execute social schemes with the PLCF/CSTs.

In the next section I discuss the structure of the sample that led me to achieve my research objectives.

2.6 SAMPLE, CONTEXT AND NEGOTIATING ACCESS: TRANSITION FROM THEORY TO FIELD.

I followed the advice of Saunders (2012) who suggested three criteria for participant selection: first, design a sampling technique to identify participants that are appropriate to the research objectives; second, generate appropriate data to answer my research questions; and lastly, define the number of participants that required to have sufficient data. I address each of these criteria in the next three sub-sections.

2.6.1 PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

Participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique according to a pre-determined criterion (Guest et al., 2006) that fit my research objectives while

balancing diversity with representativeness (King, 2004), allowing for "breadth and variation among interviewees such that they allow coverage of the social category one seeks to explore" (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012, p. 246-247). For RQ1, the participants included representatives from the PL, Executive Directors at the CSTs and their counterpart at the club side where available. For RQ2, the stakeholder groups identified were based on the taxonomy identified by Boon (2000, in Breitbarth and Harris, 2008) grouped according to the typology offered by Fassin (2009): the stakeholders included club sponsors, grantors and programme partners (including local and national government); stakewatchers included labour unions (players, former players and managers) and supporter groups; lastly, stakekeepers included the England and European governing bodies, the sport media and industry CSR consultants that are considered thought leaders and therefore have the capacity to influence how clubs/CST approach social action. Future research could focus on what is arguably the most legitimate stakeholder group, scheme participants.

Participants were identified through the CST, club or stakeholder group websites, internet searches or the professional social network LinkedIn. A portion of the participants (27 of 43, or 63%) was invited directly via regular mail (letters sent Dec 12, 2013 and January 27th 2014) followed up by email. The other 16 (or 37%) were identified through a snowballing technique, a robust strategy to minimise "non-random error" (Goldstein, 2002, p. 669), the error caused by interviewing the wrong sample or a low percentage of the population. I provide a full list of participants in chronological order and with descriptive data on each interview on Table 2.2 below.

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Furthermore, as explained above, I purposively selected three additional clubs as reference points.

Organisation	Code	Interview	Duration	Group	Date
Responsiball	GCRDC	Remote	38	Consultant	10/23/12
Coethica	GCCDC	Remote	44	Consultant	10/23/12
FC Barcelona	FCFJC	Face-to-Face	48	Community	2/15/13
Xpro	GFXGS	Remote	47	Former Players Association	3/15/13
Football Supporters' Federation	GSFMC	Face-to-Face	75	Supporters Federation	3/19/13
VfL Wolfsburg	WCWNB	Face-to-Face	73	Community	3/20/13
Arsenal Independent Sup. Assoc.	ASASP	Remote	32	Supporter Group	3/20/13
Aston Villa	ACARM	Face-to-Face	44	CST side	3/21/13
FC Manchester	FCFJE	Face-to-Face	49	CST side	3/21/13
UEFA	GGUPG	Face-to-Face	34	Governing Body	3/21/13
Premier League	PGPSM	Face-to-Face	30	Governing Body	3/22/13
Supporters Direct	GSSTH	Face-to-Face	44	Supporter Group	5/14/13
West Bromwich Albion	WCWRL	Remote	51	CST side	1/20/14
Everton FC	ECEDB	Remote	45	CST side	1/31/14
Cardiff City	CCCSS	Remote	42	CST side	2/18/14
Liverpool Echo	EMLGO	Remote	20	Media	3/5/14
Swansea	SCSHE	Remote	48	CST side	3/17/14
Puma	ASPJK	Remote	42	Sponsor	3/28/14
West Bromwich Albion	WBWAW	Remote	28	Club side	4/25/14
British Council	GPBJS	Remote	34	Program Partner	7/15/14
Children in Need	GGCSM	Remote	28	Grantor	7/17/14
A Love Supreme	SSAMM	Remote	32	Supporter Group	7/18/14
Blue Union	ESBSM	Remote	55	Supporter Group	7/22/14
Satis Fanzine	ESSPP	Remote	11	Supporter Group	7/24/14
People's Group	ESPDK	Remote	70	Supporter Group	7/24/14
Premier League	GGPTV	Remote	38	Governing Body	8/8/14
Comic Relief	GGCPA	Remote	37	Grantor	8/20/14
Homeless FA	GPHLM	Remote	33	Program Partner	9/1/14
Substance	GVSGM	Remote	61	M&E Partner	9/5/14
LMA	GMLGM	Remote	18	Managers Union	9/10/14
Arsenal	AFAFH	Remote	73	Community	9/24/14
Sunderland	SFSKT	Remote	56	CST side	9/29/14
Healthy Stadia	GCHMP	Remote	42	Consultant	10/16/14
MOPAC	AGMGL	Remote	45	Government	10/22/14
Premier League	GGPNP	Remote	43	Governing Body	10/30/14

Organisation	Code	Interview	Duration	Group	Date
Big Lottery Fund	GGBGH	Remote	35	Grantor	11/20/14
Nike	GSNRM	Remote	34	Sponsor	12/10/14
PFA	GPPJH	Remote	55	Players' Union	12/15/14
QPR	QCQAE	Remote	47	CST side	12/22/14
Swansea	SCSAL	Remote	38	Club side	7/24/15
Sport England	GGSPK	Remote	24	Government Agency	8/11/15
FA	FGFPA	Remote	31	Governing Body	9/23/15

Table 2.2 Descriptive list of Interview participants

2.6.2 GENERATION OF APPROPRIATE DATA

In regards to generating the appropriate data, my research design included defining the profile of the participants within the target organisations. For RQ1 the focus was to interview the CST director and members of the business side of the club that were also involved in the affairs of the CST (primarily as members of its Board of Directors). This allowed me to gather data that reflected a first-hand account of the context from both a CST and club perspective and understand the strategic relationship between the two entities. I was able to collect data from eight clubs. Furthermore, my research design required interviews within the Premier League that could provide insights at the local, national and global level. I was able to secure interviews with the executives in charge of each of those three levels.

For RQ2 my quota sample design called for executives that had strategic authority over the relationship with the dualities of PL/Clubs and PLCF/CSTs. In the case of the supporter groups, the participants had to be leaders of supporter groups that could provide insights on the broader view of their members. It is important to note that supporters are in no way a monolithic group and that due to the limitations

of this research design, this study only considered organised supporter activists that could be conveniently identified and contacted. This means that my participants are probably the most vocal, the ones that closely follow the day-to-day activities of the club and because of this level of affiliation may have a more contentious relationship with club owners. Moreover, as the PL becomes more of a global entertainment product, other groups with looser ties to the clubs such as casual fans, followers and flaneurs (Giulianotti, 2002) are becoming commercially more appealing to the industry both directly (merchandise and tickets) and indirectly (TV eyeballs, gambling, etc.).

2.6.3   *AMOUNT OF PARTICIPANTS REQUIRED*

In order to define the amount of participants required to gather sufficient data, my research design combined a quota sampling strategy with data saturation.

For RQ1 this quota called for participants from at least six Premier League clubs so that my sample could represent clubs with different commercial and football ambitions. I interviewed participants from eight clubs. For three of them, I interviewed representatives from both the club and CST. In two other cases, the community work is done within the club so there was no need for separate interviews. In another case, the participant is a top executive in both the club and CST so safely represented both. Lastly, in the case of two clubs I was only able to secure an interview with the Executive that runs the CST.

For RQ2, since the focus of this study is on metathemes referring to the factors for stakeholder value, my goal was to secure an interview with at least one high-level

expert within each of the groups identified. I interviewed a total of twenty-six organisations.

In regards to data saturation, or the "point in data collection and analysis when new information produces little or no change to the codebook" (Guest et al., 2006, p. 65), for RQ1 I reached it after the 17th interview, when I had covered clubs from different levels and the data collected was no longer providing significant insights. For RQ2, due to the variety of stakeholder groups identified in my quota strategy and my limitations in terms of resources and logistics, I gave prominence to the *quality* of the expert being interviewed so that I can get a solid perspective from each of the stakeholder groups identified.

In the next section, I continue my iterative process by discussing how data was collected.

2.7 RESEARCH METHOD FOR DATA COLLECTION AND PREPARATION

The research method that best fit my epistemological assumptions, research objectives and logistical considerations (i.e. time, resources, physical distance from research setting, etc.) was respondent semi-structured interviews, the most common and efficient use of this method, "wherein participants are asked to share their own perspectives and experiences" (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012, p. 241) but are nonetheless "deemed reliable gateways into what goes on in organisations (p. 240). However, from a epistemological standpoint, social constructionists like me see the interview "not as a means of gaining insight into the "real" experience of the interviewee, but as an interaction constructed in the particular context of the

interview" (King, 2004, p. 13). This implies "fuzzy boundaries and muted politics"

requiring "reflexive pragmatics" (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012, p. 240) in which I had

to be aware of the technical and political problems that appear in practice. Among the

technical challenges, interviews were conducted remotely so it limited me from

building rapport with the participants and prevented me from observing non-verbal

cues in the participants. Political challenges included the 'aspirational language of

CSR' by which participants seamlessly intertwine the extent of their social action

with their long-term objectives, and the outcomes of their work with its impact. I

managed these challenges by developing specific probing questions for each

participant based on secondary data sources such as the Report of the Trustees to the

Charity Commission and web searches on each organisation and research participant

(see Appendix I). This allowed me to convey awareness of the participant's setting

despite my 'outsider status', and also ground their responses from aspirations to their

specific projects.

  Despite these shortcomings, the advantages of my 'outsider status'

outweighed the disadvantages. First, being an outsider was not only an incentive to

gather rich data from multiple sources to gain a better understanding of the industry,

but also muted the biases and assumptions that insiders might have about the

participants' environment and industry culture (Useem, 1995). Second, since the

interview setting freed participants into elaborating on each question, (Galaskiewicz,

1987), I was open to new paths and previously unidentified "theoretical avenues"

(Hirsch, 1995, p. 75) as I will discuss in section 2.8. Third, I was able to increase

credibility "by digging deeper and allowing respondents to frame answers in their own way" (Aberbach and Rockman, 2002, p. 674).

However, data collection required ontological reflexivity in admitting and probing the inevitable partiality of research relations and "simultaneously treating it as relational, cultural and political practice" (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012, p. 244). This was particularly challenging in this study since the interviews not only took place remotely, but were also conducted by a foreign interviewer that is not fully immerse in British culture. Furthermore, interviewees are not necessarily "moral truth tellers" (p. 245), and in this area of inquiry interviewees are experienced in communicating political representations of 'favourable truths'. Therefore, as explained above, my methodological reflexivity called for pre-fieldwork preparation based on secondary sources in order to ground my inquiry to each participant's setting, and to emphasise theoretical considerations "as a way to contextualise and temper the prevailing focus on methodical procedure and faith in personal accounts as a mirror on organisational life" (p. 256). This is reflected in the interview guides that I discuss in the next sub-section.

2.7.1   *INTERVIEW GUIDES*

Our interview guides consisted of a set of broad but clearly defined open-ended questions based on the research question the participant was being interviewed for. These questions aimed at providing enough freedom for the participants to pursue themes they deemed important, and were followed by sub-questions that unpacked each of the elements within each of the research questions (sampled in the next two sub-sections below). They also included pre-defined probing questions based on my

pre-interview inquiry on the particular organisation and participant (during data collection other probing questions emerged spontaneously from participant responses). I believe that probing questions allowed me to ground participant responses within their own context beyond the somewhat 'aspirational vernacular' of CSR. They also helped me in dealing with my own biases since it gave the participants the opportunity to explain the complexities of their environment and the logic behind some of their decisions. For example, it allowed participants to give vivid examples of the complexities in executing schemes dealing with social problems such as mental health or drug addiction. Some probing questions also made me revise my understanding and assumptions. For example, when CSTs talk about football development in an international setting, they refer to a revenue stream for the charity, not as an altruistic service to the local communities abroad.

Based on the above and the results of preliminary data analysis that modified data collection itself (Guest et al., 2012), the interview guide for the PLCF/CSTs went through three iterations (the interview guide for external stakeholder groups remained largely unchanged). As explained above, the first iteration was based on the exploratory phase with CSR consultants and referent clubs. The second iteration focused on strategic benefits, stakeholder value and the CSV framework. The third and last iteration included concepts from the CSS framework. From that point the interview guides stabilise except for the participant-specific probing questions. The structures of the latest iteration of interview guides are presented in Appendix A and E.

2.7.2   DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION ON THE INTERVIEWS

Data collection took place between October 2012 and September 2015, although 62% of those interviews took place during 2014 once my procedures and overall research strategy stabilised.

The average duration of the interviews was 42 minutes. Three interviews were unusually short, lasting less than twenty minutes. In one case a participant from a supporters' group showed little interest on my research topic. In another instance the participant appeared to have limited knowledge of the subject at hand and was unusually superficial in his responses. In the third instance, I had a problem with the phone connection and had to email the remaining questions so the participant could answer and complete the interview at a later stage (fortunately he did respond to my request).

In regards to the interview setting, only eight of the interviews were face-to-face (17.78%). The rest were conducted remotely either via Skype or telephone, which required methodological reflexivity as discussed throughout this chapter.

All the interviews were carried out in English except for two that were carried out in Spanish (F.C. Barcelona and for the Arsenal Supporters Club, since the participant had lived in South America for part of his life). All interviews were recorded and complemented by researcher notes. Although the notes informed the papers within this study, they were coded separately as to not compromise the credibility of the data.

The first two interviews in the study and the two interviews in Spanish were transcribed by one of the researchers. Meena Philip, a professional transcriptionist recommended by a fellow student at the DBA programme, transcribed the rest. All transcriptions were checked against the audio and corrected. I found the transcriptions to be very accurate except for some proper names and football or CSR jargon that I was able to correct without incident. There were also a few scattered words that were missed due to poor call quality or the participant's local accent, particularly representatives from supporter groups. However, I believe that in none of the cases the spirit of the response was compromised due to this inconvenience.

In the next section I discuss my process for data analysis.

2.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND CONSTANT COMPARISON WITH THEORY

Data analysis can be defined as "locating meaning in the data" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 49). The technique that I used for this purpose is called Applied Thematic Analysis (from this point on ATA) (Guest et al., 2012). As implied in its name, ATA goes beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing themes, explicit and implicit ideas or units of meaning observed in the data (in this case, data refers to the textual representation of each interview). The term applied refers to its focus on "solving practical problems" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 11) so it is a technique that is consistent with my pragmatist epistemology (see appendices F, G and H).

This technique combines features from grounded theory and phenomenology. The similarities with the former come from systematically comparing themes and

emergent theory to data points. However, it requires more involvement, interpretation and, most importantly, a process of systematic iteration in which through revisions, the researcher has a better understanding of the meaning that participants give of their social reality. The similarities with phenomenology are that ATA gives participants a voice and the process of iteration allows the researcher to guide the inquiry in response to what is being learned.

The data analysis process started by following the advice of Guest et al. (2012) to include a pre-data-analysis planning phase with three important considerations: first, the view or the theoretical and practical perspective of the study. In this case the lens was to have a high-level understanding of the factors for strategic benefit that the work of the PLCF/CSTs provide for the PL/Clubs and for the stakeholders that invest resources in their social schemes. Secondly, the quality of the data in gathering useful data from my purposive sample aimed at "discovering high-level themes that have meaningful and practical implications" (p. 30). The third consideration refers to the availability of resources and time. In my case the challenges were being a part-time researcher with no previous experience. I believe that although the standards applied to this study are up to par with the work of other more experience researchers, I probably took longer to complete the data analysis.

After the pre-data analysis-planning phase was completed, I started identifying and describing themes in the raw data based on the literature and emergent from the data. Once themes were identified I developed codes that were applied or linked to a segment of the raw data that represents the themes, their components and their boundaries so a single theme engendered multiple codes. Codes were organised in a

codebook managed on Nvivo for Mac. As shown on Table 2.3 below, ATA situates coding in the realm of evidence that is linked to ideas through the use of theories and construct. The goal is to clearly map the path between theory and the way data were collected, between data collection and the resulting evidence, and between the evidence and theories about what it all signifies.

RQ	Theoretical Construct	Data Collection	Evidence	Theoretical Significance
1-Role of PL	Corporate Social Strategy	Social Planning	PL plans local, national and international schemes that are executed by the club CSTs and co-funded with external stakeholders	Mandated agenda for social action guarantees a minimum threshold of strategic benefit from club members.
2a-Club drivers for social action	Corporate Social Strategy	Social Positioning/Social Planning	Relationship between social positioning and social planning. Discrete levels for each club	Typology of Social Stretch
2b-Strategic benefits	Strategic Benefits of CSR	Perceived benefits for organization and its stakeholders	Clubs reaped discrete benefits based on type of social stretch	Social stretch is a source of competitive advantage for clubs with embedded social stretch.
3-Stakeholder Value	Trustworthiness/ Stakeholder value	Motivators for stakeholder value	Cognitive and Affective factors evaluated	Trustworthiness signals from the PL translate to factors of stakeholder value

Table 2.3 Data Analysis Map

The codebook is the central instrument in ATA and I developed it using a standard iterative process (Guest et al., 2012). There were two rounds of coding performed on the data. The first round focused on deepening my understanding of the whole research setting and informed the conceptual paper that is presented as part of this study. As part of my research design, the second round of coding segmented the data using two criteria: structural coding was used to segment the participants depending on the research questions that they were selected for; content coding related to the concepts being investigated and defining boundaries around their features (i.e., text segmentation). The codes were defined based on both the literature

and emergent from the raw data. Subsequent steps in the analysis synthesised, summarised, and extended significance through the use of the conceptual frameworks that I present in each of the papers.

In order to prevent conceptual tunnel vision (Guest et al., 2012), the over-categorization of data as examples of the concepts being investigated or the omission of relevant findings, I reviewed the raw data for each code before performing any data reduction techniques. During this process I made sure that the raw data coded were consistent with the code description and made adjustments (changes or uncoding) as required. Once this was completed, I compared the two rounds of coding and made the necessary adjustments (changes or uncoding) as required.

Upon completion of coding of the raw data, further analysis aimed at finding relationships and higher-level themes in order to build the theoretical model and the practical contributions of this study. This analysis included comparing code frequencies, identifying code co-occurrence and graphically displaying relationships between codes within the data set (Guest et al., 2012, p. 10). Although, this implied a trade-off regarding the more nuanced data (Guest et al., 2012), the emphasis of ATA is on "empirical investigation of the way in which meaningful elements or codes are combined to generate thematic or explanatory models" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 52) based on the systematic analysis of the observed meaning segmented and coded into categories, types and relationships (presented below in appendices F, G and H) to show the "systematicity and visibility of methods and procedures" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 15). The ultimate goal of applied thematic analysis is to "use a range of analytic

devices available to make our case" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 13) beyond just an engaging narrative.

This included three forms of triangulation: *data triangulation*, *theory triangulation* and *member checking*. Data triangulation (Olsen, 2004) was performed by mixing qualitative and quantitative data such as the Report of the Trustees to the Charity Commission discussed above and by identifying a purposive group of interviewees from the stakeholder groups that I believe were relevant to this research in order to take advantage of "whatever tools might be appropriate to get the analytic job done in a transparent, efficient and ethical manner" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 18). Theory triangulation was performed through the multiple theoretical perspectives that I discuss throughout this dissertation. Lastly, findings were also triangulated through member checking including CSR expert feedback. This was performed by sharing with participants a brief presentation with an overview of the research objectives, findings and contributions which were then discussed over Skype. This allowed me to get the participants' feedback on the data analysis and their views on my conceptual contributions in order to increase the credibility of my research. Despite triangulation being a controversial topic since it might lead to a naïve realism in that it may suggest that that mine is the single interpretation of the phenomena this research addresses (Bryman, 2004), I engaged in this process to add credibility to my research and as another opportunity to deepen and widen my understanding of the research setting.

2.9 DISCUSSION AND WRITE UP

The result of this step is this dissertation, which went through 16 revisions not only because of supervisor expert feedback, but also because of the complexities

within the alternate method that underpins the structure of this dissertation, particularly the dual requirement of having three papers that could stand and make a contribution on their own, but also that the totality of the papers could make a contribution to the literature that underpins it, particularly what this research implies for institutional theory, which will be presented in Chapter 6.

2.10   CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the objectives of the study, the epistemological and ontological positions that underpin my research strategy and the research design to achieve those objectives, including the research method that best fit these philosophical considerations. I also provided a detailed account of the relationship and iterations between theory and fieldwork including the dilemmas that I faced along the way (primarily in the form of biases from participants and researchers) and the judgments calls that I made along the way (primarily at the data collection and data analysis).

In this chapter, my aim has been to reflect three of the eight keys markers of quality in qualitative research identified by Tracy (2010): (a) sincerity in terms of self-reflexivity about my values and biases and transparency about the methods used and challenges; (b) credibility, achieved by thick description and concrete detail, triangulation, multivocality and member reflections and; (c) ethics, situational, relational and procedural.

In the next three chapters I present each of the three papers which will reflect the other five markers: (d) a worthy topic that is relevant, timely, significant and interesting; (e) meaningful coherence, by achieving the research aims by using

methods that fit those goals and meaningfully interconnect the literature, research questions, findings and interpretations with each other; (f) rich rigor, by using sufficient, abundant, appropriate and complex theoretical constructs, data and time in the field, sample(s), contexts and data collection and analysis processes; (g) resonance, by evocative representation, naturalistic generalization and transferable findings; and (h) significant contribution, in terms of theory and concepts, methodology and practice.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL STRETCH: STRATEGIC DRIVER FOR CORPORATE SOCIAL ACTION

3.1 ABSTRACT

This paper operationalises the two processes within the Corporate Social Strategy (CSS) framework: strategic social positioning and strategic social planning, and introduces the construct of social stretch to explain how football clubs stretch their standards and expectations to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from a collective identity. This allows me to offer and test a typology of social stretch (satisficing, embedded, bounded and ideal identity) as explanatory model on why clubs gain discrete strategic benefits from their social action schemes, and why clubs with embedded social stretch gain competitive advantage from social action. Lastly, the paper highlights the key role of sport leagues in setting a social planning agenda for their members to ensure a minimum threshold of social action. I believe that the construct of social stretch and the proposed typology can be applied beyond this setting, and also serve as a simple yet powerful instrument for practitioners to benchmark and plan corporate social action.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous two chapters I offered an overview of this dissertation and discussed the methodology that underpins this research. In this chapter I begin the discussion of each of the three papers that comprises this project by analysing the role of the PL in setting a social action agenda for the league, and explain why despite being mandated by the same self-regulation, clubs are expected to gain discrete strategic benefits from these social schemes.

Social action schemes are usually approached from a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective, defined as organisational "actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law" (McWilliams and Siegel, p. 117). However, although I appreciate the importance of CSR as a field of scholarship that stresses the responsibility that business has towards society (Elms et al., 2011) and as counter-weight to business interests, I agree with others in that such an approach makes it a dangerous idea for

business strategy (Freeman and Liedtka, 1991) since by only addressing business concerns when they have an effect on society, it decouples ethics from business and therefore provides actors with a compliance checkbox while preventing ethics from its fundamental role in guiding the totality of conduct in business towards the common goal, including being a constraint on self-interest (Freeman et al. 2010).

Therefore, in this paper I move away from CSR and adopt the corporate social strategy framework (Husted and Allen, 2011, from this point on CSS), the use of "resources and capabilities to meet both social objectives and financial performance objectives" (Husted et al., 2012, p. 3) and apply it to my setting, football's (soccer) English Premier League and its club members (PL/Clubs), in order to unpack the drivers for corporate social action and the strategic benefits gained from these efforts.

CSS is operationalised through two processes: strategic social positioning, the extent to which each club is proactive in deploying its resources to respond to social issues relative to its competitors based on cognitive frames or how "managers imbue ambiguous cues [such as social action] with meaning" (Hahn et al., 2014, p. 463); and strategic social planning, the extend to which they back those cognitive frames with action.

This approach allows me to offer two contributions, one conceptual and one contextual (Ladik and Stewart, 2008). From a conceptual perspective, following Husted et al.'s (2012) insight of "some correlation between planning and positioning" (p. 7), I propose and test a typology of social action among clubs based on the assessment of their level of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning. This allowed to develop the construct of social stretch based on the concept of stretch

introduced by Ghoshal and Bartlett (1994) by which clubs voluntarily stretch their standards and expectations to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from a collective identity. The importance of this contribution is that the data analysis on the strategic benefits earned by clubs allowed me to develop the *paradox of social stretch*, by which those clubs that pursue social action as an *end in itself* appear to be, paradoxically, those that also earn the *most* strategic benefit from their social engagement. From a contextual perspective, this paper sheds light on how the PL/Clubs engage in social action from a local, national and global perspective. Furthermore, it highlights the role of sport leagues and governing bodies (as business associations) in the development of an agenda for social action for its members. This is important because as I will explain in the next section, one of the challenges for sport as social institution is to overcome the *paradox of commercialism*, the dichotomy of extracting commercial value without sacrificing the integrity and "spirit of the game" (Smith & Stewart, 2010, p. 6).

The rest of the paper is divided in six sections. In the next section I briefly discuss my research setting. This is followed by my conceptual framework and by a section on methodology. From there on, I present my results followed by a discussion of findings. I conclude by presenting research limitations and opportunities for future research.

3.3 RESEARCH SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The PL is a private company founded in 1992 that is wholly owned by its twenty club members with projected revenues to exceed £4.3 billion for the 2016/2017 season, a year over year growth of about 20%. It is the most commercially

successful football league in the world, almost doubling the revenues of its closest competitor, Germany's Bundesliga (Boor et al., 2016).

Due to its commercial success the PL faces the *paradox of performance* (Barnett, 2007), by which its excessive financial performance signals that it is extracting more than what it is contributing to society, which results in pressure from legitimate stakeholders and public opinion to behave in a socially responsible manner. Moreover, clubs and their local communities have a symbiotic relationship by which clubs symbolise for many their local communities, and clubs depend on that local support to have a sustainable business (Sheth and Babiak, 2010).

In response to the above, the PL co-develops and co-funds social schemes with local, national and international stakeholders in the areas of community cohesion, education, health, sports participation and international projects (Morgan, 2013) through the Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF) and PL Communities. The schemes are executed at the club level by Community Sports Trusts (CSTs), "a charitable organisation that has a direct association with a football club, yet at the same time has structural, financial and strategic independence" (Walters and Chadwick, 2009, p. 52). Currently, all PL clubs except Arsenal F.C. use this model of governance.

The PL invests about £100m a year, or approximately 3.6% of annual TV income (Conn, 2017) in pursuit of synergies between commercial and social objectives (Breitbarth and Harris, 2008) such as the "removal of commercial and community tensions; reputation management; brand building; local authority

partnerships; commercial partnerships; and player identification" (Walters and Chadwick, 2009, p. 58).

The above has allowed the PL to create a system of self-regulation (Campbell, 2007) in which acting as broker (Granovetter, 2017) for a constellation of stakeholder interests, the PL defines a soft power agenda that determines what the issues are and in doing so, respond to the paradox of performance by showing how its high munificence results in social investments in local communities, which has been independently recognised as generating £7 of social value for each £1 invested (Nevill and Van Poortvliet, 2011). Furthermore, its schemes are aligned with the national government's concept of the "Big Society" which promotes collective undertakings for social action complementing or replacing the public sector (Anagnostopoulos, 2013).

However, since social action projects are executed by independent charities, the current structure may "absolve the rest of the club from responsibility for community relations" (Brown et al., 2006, p. 22) and may lead to two separate strategies and identities sharing the same badge. Since the CSS framework specifically aims at reintegrating social and commercial objectives, it is the cornerstone of my conceptual framework, which I discuss in the next section.

3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Two strands within the literature underpin my conceptual framework. First, the two processes within the CSS framework allow me to define the strategic role of the PL in strategic social planning, and also contribute the variables for my proposed typology at the club level; second, the literature on the strategic benefits of CSR

(Burke and Logsdon, 1996) informs the discrete benefits that each club would earn based on how they are situated within my proposed typology. I discuss each of these strands in the next two sub-sections.

3.4.1 CORPORATE SOCIAL STRATEGY

CSS is a strategic option that reintegrates social and commercial objectives by bringing corporate values to the centre of corporate strategy (Husted and Allen, 2011). It does so in a systemic (organic) way through two processes: strategic social positioning and strategic social planning (Husted et al., 2012).

As explained in the introduction, strategic social positioning refers to the extent to which each club is proactive in deploying its resources to respond to social issues relative to its competitors, and on its *cognitive frames* (Hahn et al., 2014), which allows it to scan, interpret and respond to the external environment in order to make sense of their social responsibility. Clubs manifest their social positioning in a number of ways: (a) by responding to changed expectations in its corporate practices, (b) by going beyond the minimum required by regulators, and (c) by committing more than its competitors to social projects (Husted et al., 2012).

Strategic social planning requires backing cognitive frames with action based on: (a) how they define a program and agenda for social action, (b) the intensity of investment in social programs, (c) the commitment of employees, and (d) how they measure the outcomes of programs (Husted and Allen, 2007).

Previous research has found that high social planning is more likely to occur in situations with high munificence (Husted et al., 2012) and highly salient stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997). That is the case in this setting since the PL

manage a diverse group of stakeholders such as local, national and international governments, global sponsors, supporter groups, media outlets and multi-level governing bodies with capacity to cooperate or threaten its sustainability. Based on the above, I propose that in response to the paradox of performance:

Proposition 1: the PL develops a social planning agenda for its club members

Although this would imply that the same social planning agenda applies to all clubs, I believe that it would be enacted differently based on each club's cognitive frame. Based on Hahn et al. (2014), clubs with a *business case* cognitive frame would focus on social action that aligns with business objectives. On the other hand, clubs with a *paradoxical* cognitive frame are aware of the tension between commercial, winning and social objectives and therefore "consider more comprehensive responses" (2014 p. 464). Importantly, I believe that cognitive frames are constrained by factors within human behaviour that are considered the cornerstones of the behavioural view of corporate governance (van Ees et al., 2009): *bounded rationality*, the imprecise and selective processing of information that limits awareness and cause inefficiencies in the *routinization of decision-making*; and *satisficing behaviour*, the tendency of actors to accept choices or judgments that are considered good enough considering their pressing needs rather than searching for an optimal solution that might require *political bargaining* with other actors.

Based on the above, I believe it is important to unpack the distinction among club approaches to social action even though they must all follow the PL mandate. I do so by proposing a typology classified in a matrix with social positioning (higher

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and lower) on the y axis and social planning on the x axis which would result in four types of what I term a club's social stretch, based on how each club voluntarily stretches its standards (through social planning) and expectations (through social positioning) to fulfil a shared social ambition emerging from its collective identity:

Proposition 2: each club's social stretch will result from its level of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning.

It follows that each type of social stretch would result in distinct strategic benefits from each club's social action. I discuss this in the next sub-section.

3.4.2   STRATEGIC BENEFITS FROM SOCIAL ACTION

Burke and Logsdon (1996) identified five dimensions of how social action projects provide strategic value to core club activities: voluntarism refers to the discretionary decision-making by the club in the absence of external pressure; visibility refers to the observability of the social action and the ability of the club to gain recognition from stakeholders; specificity refers to the ability of the club to internalise at least some of the benefit created; centrality refers to the fit between social action and the club's mission and objectives; lastly, proactivity refers to the ability of the club to anticipate social trends.

Since each type of social stretch would generate discrete strategic benefits, I propose:

Proposition 3A: strategic benefits from social action derive from each club's social stretch.

Lastly, I propose that clubs with high levels of social planning and social positioning would create competitive advantage from their social embeddedness

(Scherer and Patzer, 2011), the ability to create competitive advantage from a deep understanding and integration with the local community and their social ambition towards addressing community needs. Advantages would include improvements in reputation, product differentiation, continuous innovation and stakeholder integration (Husted et al., 2012):

Proposition 3B: Clubs with high levels of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning create competitive advantage from their social embeddedness.

Before delving into the empirical side of this research, I graphically represent my three propositions below (Fig. 3.1):
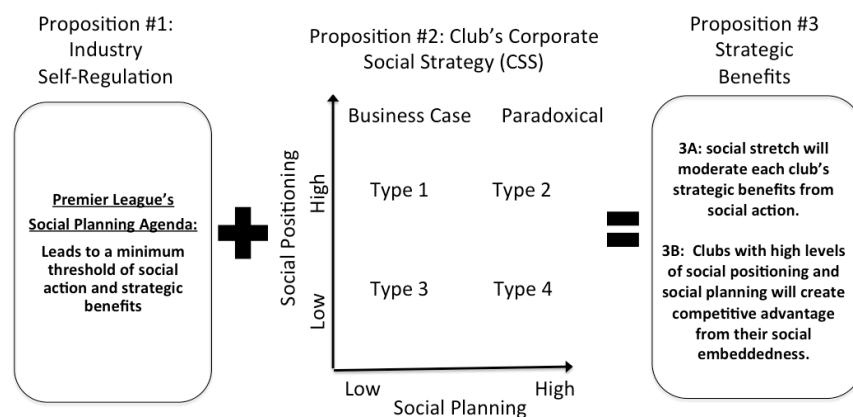
Figure 3.1 Summary of Propositions

3.5 METHODOLOGY

In the next sub-sections I discuss my research design, including my choice of method, sampling, data collection and data analysis techniques.

3.5.1 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method that best fit the epistemological and ontological assumptions that underpin this study (the social constructionism paradigm and the Pragmatism tradition) was respondent semi-structured interviews.

3.5.2 *SAMPLING*

The main challenge within my design was the multiple perspectives that addressing my propositions would require since, as shown on Fig. 3.2 below, my setting is defined as PL/PLCF and Clubs/CSTs from a structural perspective, but from a functional perspective, as PL/Clubs (managing football/commercial objectives) and PLCF/CSTs (social action projects).
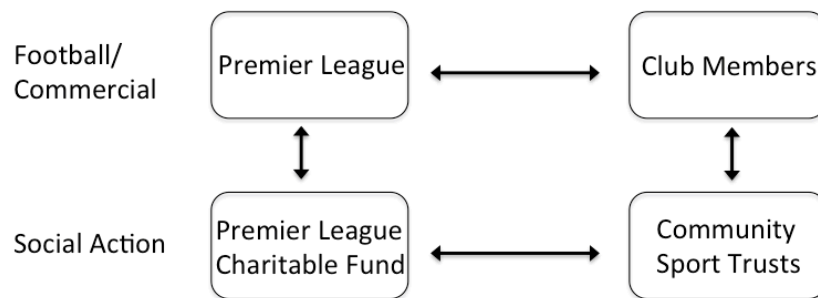
Figure 3.2 Research Perspectives

Moreover, my design also required multiple geographic perspectives since these schemes are planned and executed at a local, national and global level.

In order for my design to fit these challenges, I developed a purposive and quota sampling technique and divided my fieldwork in multiple stages. The first two participants were selected to familiarise me with the research setting. Next, I interviewed three clubs outside the Premier League that served as reference point since their governance models are widely admired in the football industry. This was

followed by an interview with the executive in charge of CSR for UEFA, the pan-European government body, to gain a regional perspective on social action.

The rest of the sample included representatives from the PL, Executive Directors at the CSTs and their counterpart at the club side where necessary. This allowed me to gather data which reflected the multiple perspectives shown on Fig. 3.2 above. Moreover, because of the global reach of the PL, it required interviewing the executives at the PL in charge of each of the geographic levels mentioned.

In regards to the number of participants at the club level, my quota design called for a quota of at least six Premier League clubs and for it to be also a purposive sample that could also reflect global brand clubs, supporter-owned (partially) clubs, mid-table clubs and clubs engaged in a constant struggle to avoid relegation. I was able to collect data from 11 participants from eight clubs (40% of PL members). The above is consistent with the approach from Guest et al. (2006), which found that if the focus is "high-level, overarching themes…a sample of six interviews may have been sufficient to enable development of meaningful themes and useful interpretations" particularly if participants have cultural competence about the area of inquiry. Participants were identified via club and CST websites, internet searches, LinkedIn or through a snowballing technique.

In Table 3.1 below I list the 20 interviews that apply to this paper (this is part of a larger study that also included 23 interviews with external stakeholders that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute these schemes as to understand how value is co-created within this network):

Organisation	Identification	Proposition	Questions Int. Guide	Answers
CSR Consultant 1	CSR Consultant 1	Familiarization	Testing and definition of Interview Guide	Overview of Research Setting: issues and stakeholders
CSR Consultant 2	CSR Consultant 2	Familiarization	Testing and definition of Interview Guide	Overview of Research Setting: issues and stakeholders
Referent Club 1	Referent Club 1	Referent	Drivers to become clubs with CSR being certified by GRI	Drivers for social action in other relevant markets
Referent Club 2	Referent Club 2	Referent	Drivers to become clubs with CSR being certified by GRI	Drivers for social action in other relevant markets
Europ. Gov. Body	Europ. Gov. Body	Referent	Regional Approach to corporate social action	Compares PL's approach with regional approach
Referent Club 3	Referent Club 3	Referent	Compare global club with local supporter-owned club	Drivers for social action in Supporter-owned club
PL (National)	PL 1	1	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
PL (International)	PL 2	1	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c), International (4g)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
PL (Local)	PL 3	1	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club C	Club C	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club B	Club B	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club H	CST-Club H	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club F	CST-Club F	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club E	CST-Club E	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club G	CST-Club G	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club G	Club G	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club A	CST-Club A	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club A	Club A	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club D	CST-Club D	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits
Club D	Club D	2 & 3	Soc. Posit. (Int. Guide 4a); Soc. Plann. (4b and 4c); Prop. 3 (4e)	Drivers for social action and perceived strategic benefits

Table 3.1 Description of Participants for Paper 1

3.5.3   *DATA COLLECTION*

Data collection was based on an interview guide (Appendix A, adapted for PL interviews) consisting of a set of broad but clearly defined open-ended questions based on six areas: organisational structure including relationship between PL/PLCF or PL/Clubs as applicable; identification of main stakeholder groups; identification of drivers for social action (social positioning); description of social action programmes (social planning) including area of provision, funding, employee participation, metrics, etc.; perception of strategic benefits (to participant's organisation and

stakeholders); lastly, deployment of a snowballing technique to identify other relevant participants.

Methodological reflexivity in my research design called for the inclusion of specific probing questions for each participant as part of my pre-fieldwork preparation, based on secondary sources. This was done in order to ground my inquiry to each participant's setting and to narrow the 'aspirational language' of CSR by which participants sometimes intertwine aspirations with action and outcomes.

Data collection took place between October 2012 and September 2015, although 60% of those interviews took place during 2014 once my procedures and overall research strategy stabilised. The average duration of the interviews was 42 minutes and they were carried out either face-to-face (n=6, 30%) or via Skype or telephone.

3.5.4   DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed through a technique called Applied Thematic Analysis (from this point on ATA) (Guest et al., 2012). ATA aims at identifying and describing themes, based on the indicators identified by Husted et al. (2012) for strategic social positioning, by Husted and Allen (2007) for strategic social planning and by Burke and Logsdon (1996) for strategic benefits of social action. These themes were represented by codes applied or linked to a segment of raw data organised in a codebook managed on Nvivo for Mac. Codes are explicit and implicit ideas observed in the data, based on the literature or emerging from the data and representing themes, their components and their boundaries. Two rounds of coding were performed on the data.

For Proposition 2, since some of the indicators identified by Husted et al. (2012) and Husted and Allen (2007) such as metrics and evaluation and employee participation are present in every club thanks to the PL mandate or player contracts, my research design called for complementing my qualitative data with quantitative data from each CST reporting to the UK Charity Commission. This allowed me to design key indicators and ratios that served as proxies for social positioning and social planning in order to compare, at least partially, clubs/CSTs in my sample (see Table 3.2 below). The Club to CST revenue ratio (from this point on CCRR) serves as proxy for social positioning by measuring the proportion of CST revenues in comparison to club revenues. The CSTs total revenue and the percentage breakdown by source of income (percentage income from services, percentage income from PL funding and percentage income independently sourced from local partners) illustrate the CSTs social ambition and intensity of investment towards social action and therefore serve as proxy for social planning.

	Club A	Club B	Club C	Club D	Club E	Club F	Club G	Club H
Starting Year/CST adoption	2008	2013	1985/2012	1992/2000	1994/2009	1988/2003	2001	2009
Latest Report in this study	2014	2014	2014	2015	2014	2014	2014	2014
Staff (part-timers counted as 1/2)	23	13	20	66	58	94	115	58
Sale of Services as % revenue	12.09%	14.20%	N/A	48.61%	37.42%	15.04%	10.68%	51.40%
PL Funding	21.66%	56.78%	N/A	36.75%	27.13%	20.39%	12.45%	13.04%
Independently Sourced	66.25%	29.02%	N/A	14.63%	35.45%	64.57%	76.87%	35.56%
Total	£680,845	£548,339	£1,500,000	£1,643,938	£1,086,003	£2,715,151	£4,591,494	£1,649,340
CST to Club Revenue Ratio	0.69%	0.47%	0.49%	1.89%	1.78%	2.24%	4.41%	1.99%

Notes:
Data sourced from Charity Commission reports and research participants
Revenue breakdown for club C is not available because they do not report independently from the club
Club A has a Grant Pot of 12% of revenue
Club H has 8% of its revenues coming from owner, executive and player donations
Club to CST ratio refers to club to CST revenue

Table 3.2 Key Indicators and Ratios

Further analysis aimed at finding relationships and higher-level themes in order to build my conceptual framework and the practical contributions of this study. Data collection and analysis concluded with member checking, by which participants were presented with a summary of my findings and provided valuable feedback which enhanced the credibility of the results that I present in the next section.

3.6 RESULTS

In the next three sub-sections I discuss the results of my research based on each of my three propositions:

Proposition 1: the PL develops a social *planning agenda* for its club members

Proposition 2: each club's social stretch will result from its level of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning.

Proposition 3A: strategic benefits from social action derive from each club's social stretch.

Proposition 3B: Clubs with high levels of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning create competitive advantage from their social embeddedness.

3.6.1 *PROP 1: THE PL DEVELOPS A SOCIAL PLANNING AGENDA FOR ITS CLUB MEMBERS*

I identified the following seven components that underpin the PL's strategic social planning, which ensures a minimum threshold of league-wide social action from its club members: social strategy and programme development (national and international), funding (core and discretionary), communication and influence of salient stakeholders, setting of minimum quality standards, sharing best practices,

redefining the value chain and reporting to national and international partners. I discuss each of them in detail in the next sub-sections.

social strategy and programme development (national and international). The PL has evolved from being led "by funding perhaps, led by what the latest fad was" (PL 1) to a strategy that integrates salient national and international stakeholders to achieve "local delivery on a global scale" (PL 3).

At the national level, it follows a three-pronged strategy that centres around "facility development working with the Football Foundation, the FA [Football Association, England's Football Governing Body] and Sport England, sports participation and education/employability" (PL 3), "all club branded, club led" (PL 1), in which CSTs act as "hubs" (PL 3) with facilities "quite central to that community where all of [their] programmes can be delivered" (PL 3) while leveraging their main assets (branding and first team players) as "the hook that brings…people in" (PL 3). The PL claims that over five hundred thousand young people participate in their national programmes (Premier "Premier League Communities 2014/2015," 2015), concentrated in the "top 20% IMDs [Indices of Multiple Deprivation] where clubs are mostly located, "hitting the right areas" (PL 3).

In terms of facility development, in 2013 they were investing "£12 million a year to the Football Foundation…football's biggest charity funded by government and Sport England, the FA and the PL" (PL 1), fitting with "socioeconomic development plan[s]" that include the development of sport facilities (PL 3).

In regards to sport participation, the League's flagship project (PL Kicks) started as a pilot project in 2006 in partnership with London's Metropolitan Police

(PL 3) and now covers "the whole of England and Wales" (PL 3) via around fifty CSTs on a "50:50 funding partnership with Sport England" (PL 3). This scheme also contributes to talent identification for the clubs' academy system (in 2014, 167 male and 196 female football players were identified (Premier League, "Premier League Communities 2014/2015," 2015)); also, the PL4Sport programme provides talent pathways for "twelve other sports" (PL 3).

In regards to education and employability, the PL promotes entrepreneurship through the PL Enterprise scheme that complements other alternative education programmes developed by the CSTs (such as the Free School at Everton FC).

Internationally, the PL's community work focuses primarily in Africa, Asia and the Americas, which are "very, very different in terms of infrastructure, political, social and all of the other economic influences" (CST-CLUB G). Since the PL lacks staff outside the UK except for a representative in Brussels, it relies on the British Council as the global partner for Premier Skills, their international flagship program. Since 2007, the British Council has been providing local knowledge, logistical support and access to salient local stakeholders such as "Ministry of Sport, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education" (PL 2) and NGOs such as "Magic Bus in India through to Grassroot Soccer in South Africa and Zambia". Conversely, the PL adds value to the soft power agenda of the British Council by contributing its assets (players and club branding) for education programmes that establish cultural relations while promoting English culture and the English language.

At the time of my interview, Premier Skills was "active in 25 countries" (PL 2) with the support of "around 28 different clubs" with "130 different staff…[with] a

wide range of expertise" (PL 2) having delivered football programmes to "around half a million young people" (PL 2). In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the scheme, they trained over "twenty-five hundred coaches and referees at the community level" (PL 2) that further amplify the football development efforts including women participation. In Zambia, for example, they have achieved a "50:50 [gender] split" (PL 2).

The PL's global commercial partners are also leveraged internationally, particularly where their strategic objectives overlap. For example, Nike provides the "kits and equipment" (PL 2) for Premier Skills and collaborates with the PL in entering the Chinese market (PL 2). At the club level there is a similar integration with CSTs supporting their sponsors' CSR projects, sometimes planning trips so that Premier Skills sessions coincide with sponsor CSR events. Five of the eight clubs in my sample currently have this overlap.

core funding and discretionary funding. The PLCF provides two types of funding: core funding, each CST's share of the co-funding from national partners and the PL; and discretionary funding based on the "strength of the application" (PL 3) rather than the power or influence of a club within the PL and granted "on the proviso that [CSTs] go out and get [match-funding]" (PL 3) from local stakeholders. This not only stretches resources further, but also multiplies 'buy-ins' that increase fit-for-purpose and adds layers of monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Funding is tied to specific KPIs meaning that if CSTs "don't meet that target, then they don't get the funding" (PL 1). Conversely, "if a club is really performing strongly, then we've got

the possibility to grant their performance enhancing so they can go and deliver in more areas (PL 3)."

communicate and influence salient stakeholders. The PL "strategically positions the community work that clubs do" (Club C) through a communications strategy that "gets key messages out" (PL 1) primarily through its national and international broadcasting partners "which gives the programme a really good profile" (PL 2), generating political goodwill for the PL and its partners, particularly overseas.

Furthermore, the PL influences national stakeholders through lobbying (PL 2) and aligning itself with the national government's agenda (for example, ahead of the London Olympics it created PL4Sport to promote participation in other sports). Furthermore, it responds to contentious stakeholders such as supporter federations by supporting a "Fans Fund" (about £1 million a year, (PL 1)) channelled through the Football Foundation.

setting minimum quality standards. Funding is only granted to clubs and CSTs that comply with what the PL calls *Capability Status*, a 'fit-for-purpose' standard that "raises the bar" (PL 1) by making sure that clubs are fulfilling their legal, financial, safety, staff training and risk management obligations (Anagnostopoulos, 2013), while leaving enough room for each club to flexibly address their local needs since "Sunderland in the North have very different issues to Queens Park Rangers in London" (PL 1). The standards are reviewed annually to assure compliance with charitable law and with governance and transparency standards.

share best practices. The PL also shares best practices at a national and pan-European basis to "improve [CSTs] performance…making sure that all the funders are happy so…they all want to put more money in" (PL 3).

A good example of shared practices is PL Enterprise, a scheme started by Middlesbrough F.C. that due to its success is a "model [utilised] right across the PL" (PL 2).

Internationally, the PL shares best practices with other professional leagues through a social responsibility committee within the EPFL (European Professional Football Leagues, PL 1).

redefining the value chain. One of the criticisms from the former player association I interviewed was that the PL does not provide adequate support to its former players, whose lives abruptly change when their football careers end. I found that the CSTs partially address this issue by redefining the clubs' value chain by training players that do not make it to the first team as community coaches, providing them with a 'soft landing' mechanism.

national and international reporting. All CSTs share the same reporting software called *Views*, co-developed with a Manchester-based organisation called *Substance*. The tool allows the PLCF and CSTs to measure, comply and learn through descriptive, quantitative and qualitative reporting which is shared with co-funding partners and mapped against national statistics and partner targets.

A similar protocol is followed internationally through "internationally renowned monitoring organisations" (PL 2) in order to "encourage [foreign governments] to play a part" (PL 2).

In sum, the PL has developed a deliberate framework for strategic social planning operationalised through seven strategic and operational roles which define its national and international agenda, its mandate for a minimum threshold of social action from all its club members, and its response to stakeholder pressure. As one of the PL participants put it: "there is now in some cases reluctant, but still acceptance, that what the PL is doing in the community is of high quality, it is of value, it is good, it is making a difference" (PL 1).

3.6.2 PROP. 2: TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL STRETCH

In the next sub-sections I shift the focus to the club/CST level, and delve into each club's level of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning.

club strategic social positioning. The level of social positioning for each club was defined based on their CCRR and the evidence that I present in the following paragraphs (key evidence summarised in Appendix B).

Our evidence shows that clubs B, C and D have low social positioning. Club B is last in CCRR, limited to following the PL mandates in the types of programmes it deploys except for an initiative to reach out to BME (black and minority ethnic) communities in its region. The CST is also situated within the club's Marketing department, which appears to limit the proactivity of its social action. I found no evidence of stakeholder integration or continuous innovation except for this club being the first one to feature a charity partner as main sponsor when they changed ownership in 2006.

Club C is the only club in the PL that does not have an independent CST. It is 7th out of 8 in CCRR. Their social investment is comparable with other clubs despite

being one of the 'global clubs' with revenues of over £300 million per year. This club's social action appears to follow two objectives: first, it aims at reflecting organisational excellence (i.e., the social ROI of their work has been recognised by the Laureus Foundation) and secondly, it positions the work in a strategic way with government stakeholders. This was a powerful incentive to innovate in reporting and led them to co-develop the Views software with Substance, which is now used by all clubs in the PL. Stakeholder integration is limited to scheme execution due to its limited internal resources.

Club D is 4th out of 8 in CCRR. However, since it is located in one of the most deprived areas in England, the CST must contribute to business objectives in terms of ticket sales and talent identification, as part of the club's 'all hands on deck' approach to avoid relegation, which limits its contribution to social positioning.

This club is also venturing into the international arena by taking advantage of a new law in a major Asian country that requires firms beyond certain revenue to invest at least 2% of profits into CSR projects. I found evidence of stakeholder integration with the local education system.

Conversely, I find that clubs A, E, F and G have high social positioning. Although club A is 6th out of 8 in CCRR, its high social positioning derives not from its CST but from being one of the few clubs that is partially owned by its supporters trust. Furthermore, the club is managed with "sensible finances" prompting the PL leadership to depict its governance model as "ideal" (Gibson, 2013b). The club's social positioning is anchored in its 'rags to riches' narrative (turned into a popular movie) where the supporters took over the club in the verge of bankruptcy and drove

it all the way to the PL. Interestingly, it appears that this story has a satisficing effect, since even the leadership of the CST agrees that the focus of the club must be on the playing side and the infrastructure of the club and not in social action. There appears to be limited stakeholder integration beyond transactional projects.

Club E is 3rd out of 8 in CCRR. It appears to be a club committed to its community regardless of team performance and is in the process of constructing a new facility to improve scheme performance. In terms of stakeholder integration it cooperates with other major clubs in London in an initiative called "London United" which allows them to bid for pan-city projects that each club executes in its local borough. Its stakeholder integration earned them the political goodwill from local government to support the construction of a new stadium.

Club F is 2nd out of 8 in CCRR. It appears to 'own' its community's social needs, consistent with its narrative of being the "People's club". This ownership is operationalised through the effective integration of internal and external stakeholders. Internally, the CEO of the CST is also Deputy Chief for the club. Their first team Manager shows his commitment to the CST by motivating and demanding his players to actively support it. Externally, they have gone beyond a successful donation model which raises over a million pounds a year, to a commissioning model that integrates local and national government stakeholders. This integration evolved into a positive snowball effect by which positive results increase goodwill and present further opportunities to bid for even larger projects. The CST's proactivity also presents opportunities for continuous innovation, such as being the first CST to establish a

Free School funded by the Department of Education. This CST has been recognised extensively, winning multiple local and national awards.

Club G is first in CCRR. It appears to be the most proactive in responding to changes in expectations by staying "on the pulse" (CST-CLUB G) of its local government agenda with a sophisticated network of well-positioned trustees. This club also 'owns' its social responsibility by integrating stakeholders in a way that fits its narrative of being a "team of all talents" (CST-CLUB G) inspiring participation of internal and external stakeholders regardless of social strata. Thanks to this stakeholder integration, the CST received funding from their City Council for the construction of a new community facility. In terms of continuous innovation, this club is one of the first adopting the CST model. It is also one of the few that has extended its area of provision beyond stadium surroundings, by setting up eight satellite regional locations. Furthermore, its intellectual property has been turned into CSR-related services for national and overseas clients that generate additional revenue for the CST. As is the case with Club F, this CST is integrated into the overall strategy and narrative of the club.

I discuss club H separately in section 3.5.3 since I believe that it is an interesting outlier.

club strategic social planning. Social planning was defined based on each CST's total revenue, breakdown by source of income and the evidence that I present in the paragraphs below (key evidence summarised in Appendix C below).

The evidence shows that clubs A, B and E display low social planning. Club A is 7th in CST revenue and 5th in staff. It limits itself to following the PL mandate,

except for small projects and a philanthropic celebrity match that generates most of the 66% of independently funded revenue. The club has also put in place a grant-giving pot to support smaller charities and the development of grassroots football. There is limited employee participation in CST schemes beyond the player participation mandated by the players union (PFA).

Club B is last in CST revenue and staff and focuses on programmes mandated by the PL, accounting for 60% of its revenue. There is limited employee participation in CST schemes beyond the players' contractual mandate.

Club E is 6th in CST revenue and 7th in staff. It follows a plan for action that mirrors the mandate from the PL with the additional remit that since the club is now foreign-owned, this community club is now involved in philanthropic activities in Asia. There is limited employee participation in CST schemes beyond the players' contractual mandate.

Conversely, my evidence shows that clubs C, D, F, G and H display high social planning. Although club C is 5th in community budget and 7th in staff (due to the use of third parties for execution), it follows a plan for action that goes beyond PL mandates which is operationalised through its own local and international schemes which are further complemented by an independent grant-giving foundation. Employees participate in fundraising for community projects, and its players not only participate in its schemes but also donate a portion of their wages each year to the club's foundation.

Club D is 4th in CST revenue and 3rd in staff and has one of the oldest CSTs. It executes schemes beyond the PL mandate, particularly in sports and education

(which coincides with the expertise of its Executive Directors). Furthermore, they have a business development team and raise almost 50% of its revenue from service provision. However, there is limited employee participation in CST schemes beyond the players' contractual mandate. In terms of metrics and evaluation, they add value to the club by using its data collection to recruit and engage new fans.

Club F is 2nd in CST revenue and staff. It appears to follow a clear mission and plan for action. Employees are expected to participate in CST projects. Players are assigned as ambassadors to causes they care about so they can genuinely engage and get personal fulfilment from their involvement, while amplifying communication through their own social media channels. Commissioning projects account for 2/3 of its revenues fuelled by the quality of the service provision and its metrics, which help the CST to align itself with partner objectives.

Importantly, this was one of only two clubs that spoke about its social action in terms of "ambition" (CST-CLUB F) to genuinely impact its local community.

Club G is 1st in CST revenue and staff. It has a clear mission and values operationalised through a plan for action built around flexibility in order to continually refit-for-purpose to meet community needs. Employees participate in CST projects and there is evidence of the CST being embraced by the whole club. The PL has recognised the depth and scope of its metrics, which is key in creating goodwill for commissioning projects and integrating co-funding stakeholders (that account for about ¾ of its revenue). As is the case with club F, it refers to its social action in terms of "ambition" (CST-CLUB G).

Interestingly, the two CSTs that display social ambition also face a local competitive environment with a larger/global club. The rival for Club F is double the size in revenue, yet has a CST that is half the size in revenue and one quarter its size in staff. In the case of Club G, the rival club is 25% larger in terms of revenue but has a CST that is less than half the size in terms of revenue and staff. When I prompted participants from these CSTs on whether the local competitive environment influenced their social planning, both participants disavowed it arguing that their were driven by their clubs' values. However, in my member checking interviews one of the participants (who is no longer employed by the CST) did confirm that its strategy aimed at countering the global prowess of its local competitor.

In the next sub-section I discuss club H, which I identified as outlier.

3.6.3   CLUB H: OUTLIER

Despite being 3rd in CCRR, the social positioning for this club appears to be low due to a tumultuous change of ownership that has split its supporters. On the one hand, the new foreign owner invested in playing talent which promoted them to the PL for the first time, but on the other, he changed the club colours and badge to make the club more appealing to its emerging Asian fan base. This decision led to an outcry from supporters that had a negative effect on season ticket sales and has created a negative atmosphere at the stadium. For some, the "re-brand has cost the club its identity" (Johnson, 2014). Interestingly, the CST appears to be a buffer in this context by acting as a "very valuable tool to spread the word" and "definitely [a fan] engagement tool…because you want people to love your club and you want people

when they grow up for their children to support the club as well and leave that legacy" (CST-CLUB H).

This engagement is operationalised through its high level of social planning. It is 3rd in CST revenue and 4th in staff. It follows a plan for action with specific KPIs that are reviewed monthly by their eight department heads (Primary Education, Secondary Education, Sports Development, Soccer Schools, Disability, Social Inclusion, Education and Sport and a Media Department (CST-CLUB H)). It is also the CST that generates the largest share of income from its own service provision and is among the least dependent on funding from the PL (13%). Employees and players not only participate in CST schemes but also donate to the CST. Donations from owners, key executives and players account for 8% of CST revenue.

In sum, my results for Proposition 2 confirm that despite being mandated by the strategic social planning from the PL, each club has a distinct approach to social action based on its level of strategic social positioning and strategic social planning. Furthermore, the evidence from outlier club H shows how a club's social stretch is influenced by external market conditions. These conditions include *dynamism*, *munificence* (Husted et al., 2012) and *complexity* (Husted and Allen, 2011). Dynamism refers to "the difficulty in forecasting external events" (Husted and Allen, 2011, p. 68), and for most clubs this means that being relegated to a lower league is "like falling off the face of the earth" (CST-CLUB D). Munificence is "the relative abundance or scarcity of resources to support sustained growth" (p. 69). Complexity drives managers "to take into account a wider range of environmental factors and resources" (p. 70). Paradoxically, the association of the CST with the club is both its

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"biggest strength and the biggest weakness" (CST-CLUB D) since on the one hand it is "a massive benefit that opens doors" but on the other "why should a company give [the CST] £10,000 when [the club] pays a player £50,000 a week? I've had this argument forever" (CST-CLUB D).

3.6.4 PROP. 3A: STRATEGIC BENEFITS FROM SOCIAL ACTION DERIVE FROM EACH CLUB'S SOCIAL STRETCH.

Our results show that clubs with low social planning appear to follow a business case cognitive frame and therefore the strategic benefits gained appear to be limited to voluntarism, specificity and visibility achieved primarily by complying with the PL mandate. On the other hand, clubs with high social planning appear to follow a paradoxical cognitive frame. For these clubs, their CSTs are an extension of their mission. Therefore they earn from the strategic benefit of centrality. Lastly, clubs with high levels of social positioning and social planning are the only clubs that appear to benefit from their proactivity, since their strong stakeholder integration allows them to anticipate social trends.

3.6.5 PROP. 3B: CLUBS WITH HIGH LEVELS OF STRATEGIC SOCIAL POSITIONING AND STRATEGIC SOCIAL PLANNING CREATE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FROM THEIR SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS.

Clubs with high levels of social positioning and social planning appear to create competitive advantage. Their social positioning is driven by the organic and holistic (club and CST) integration of stakeholders that results in competitive advantage from the increase in reputation and product differentiation (particularly attracting new fans, enhancing supporter identification and strengthening relationship

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with internal and external stakeholders). Their social planning is driven by their social ambition towards the eradication of social ills in their communities. This aspiration leads to continuous innovation by which schemes are refit-for-purpose as the needs of the community change. Key evidence for proposition 3 is summarised in Appendix D.

I discuss the implications of these results in the next section.

3.7 DISCUSSION

Our findings for Proposition 1 show that the PL has developed a strategic social planning agenda that engages its club members in normalising practices that contribute to the institutionalisation of CSS which over time has led to an increase in the social planning of all its club members. This is important, since if clubs were left to their own devices they will either embrace or reject social action altogether based on their values, available resources and capabilities, and perceptions about their external environment.

Moreover, the results for Proposition 1 show the PL as *broker* (Granovetter, 2017) for a constellation of clubs and external stakeholder interests in order to exert its power to define a soft power agenda that allows the PL to justify its actions to others while preventing its negatives externalities (questionable governance structure, fan alienation, high ticket prices, etc.) from reaching the public policy agenda.

In regards to Proposition 2, in Fig. 3.3 below I graphically represent each club within a typology classified in a matrix with social planning (higher and lower) on the x-axis and social positioning on the y-axis. Each quadrant represents a type of social stretch.
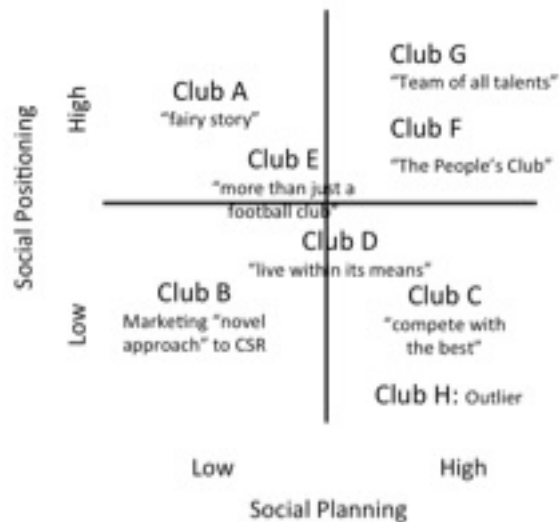
Figure 3.3 Position of each Club within Typology

Clubs with high social positioning and low social planning exhibit what I define as *satisficing* social stretch, since their high social positioning does not come from their social action but from having its supporters trust as partial owners of the club. Since there is only one club with these characteristics in the PL, I took advantage of my research design and analysed a club from a different division that is fully owned by its supporters. In both cases it appears that their high social positioning in their governance model limits their social planning potential and their social ambition towards the creation of social value. This is further illustrated when club A is compared with club H (both located in the same region). Although club A is larger in revenue, has a fan base that is double the size (we used followers in the social media network Facebook as proxy to account for worldwide fan base), and spent five more years in the PL than club H, its CST is half the size in staff and five times smaller in the amount of unrestricted funds.

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Clubs with high social positioning and high social planning engage in what I refer to as *embedded* social stretch since they achieve competitive advantage through their social embeddedness.

Clubs with low social positioning and low social planning have what I call *bounded* social stretch, based on the bounded rationality about their perceptions about their external environment, their capabilities and what their role towards social action ought to be. Importantly, bounded social stretch does not necessarily imply a disregard for the local community. Rather, it means that the club is bounded by a key factor such as a limited social responsibility orientation and/or lack of professional expertise or experience.

Lastly, clubs that appear to have low social positioning but high social planning are part of a group that display *ideal identity* social stretch, where the CST appears to be a reflection of the ideal identity of the club, or "the articulation by strategic planners and others of the optimum positioning of the organisation in its market, or markets, in a given time-frame" (Balmer, 2001, p. 18).

In Fig. 3.4 below I graphically represent the four quadrants in my proposed typology. The importance for such a typology is best summarised by one of my PL participants who posited that strategic integration of club and CST "varies massively. You've got some clubs who have really, really bought into the fact that actually by working in their local community, they are developing the next level of fans, they're developing players for the future and they are acting as good corporate citizens and you've got some clubs that haven't really got that relationship with their local

community trust and foundation, and so it's a bit of a piecemeal approach, I would

say" (PL 3).
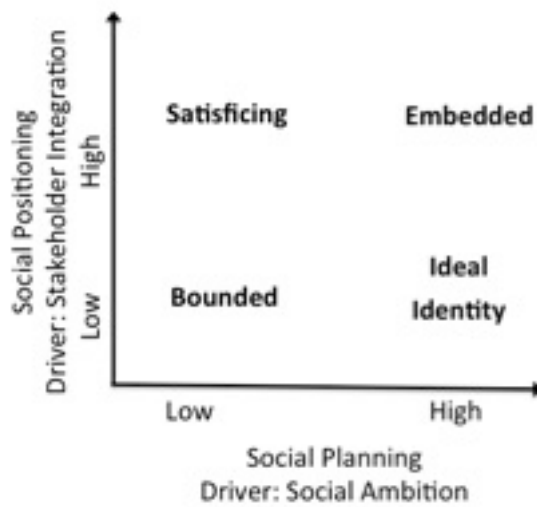
Figure 3.4 Typology of Social Stretch

In regards to Proposition 3 and as shown on Fig. 3.5 below, clubs with

satisficing and bounded social stretch which follow a business case cognitive frame

benefit from voluntarism, specificity and visibility achieved primarily by complying

with the PL mandate. On the other hand, for clubs with ideal identity and embedded

social stretch which follow a paradoxical cognitive frame, their CSTs are an extension

of their mission. Therefore they gain from the strategic benefit of centrality. Lastly,

clubs with embedded social stretch are the only clubs that appear to benefit from their

proactivity.
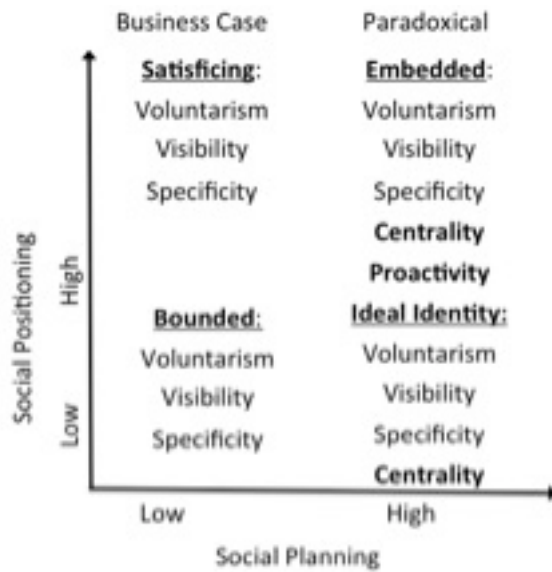
Figure 3.5 Strategic Benefits by Type of Social Stretch

Clubs with embedded social stretch also create competitive advantage from their social schemes by creating integrative mechanisms (Smith & Tushman, 2005) and other intellectual property that engages internal and external stakeholders in a meaningful way that is also leveraged in the clubs' go-to-market strategies. As one of my participants put it, it "is that balance between on-pitch performance, social engagement and development and growth…we work very hard each day to deliver that as a cross-club team" (CST-CLUB F).

Interestingly, the outlier case I identified (club H), shows the importance of a strong CST as a valuable 'strategic buffer' as governance matters are settled, while also creating an incentive for key internal stakeholders to value and support their work. However, since supporters are more responsive to governance issues than CSR activities (Waddington et al., 2013), this strategic buffer effect is limited. In other words, the CST might generate vicarious pride on supporters but cannot compensate

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for bad governance or controversial decision-making. This is the reason why I argued elsewhere for the need for a unified governance model for football (Castro-Martinez and Jackson, 2015) in order to mitigate the "separation fallacy" (Freeman et al., 2010 p. 6) which decouples business decision-making from normative considerations.

In Fig. 3.6 below, I summarise my propositions and findings:
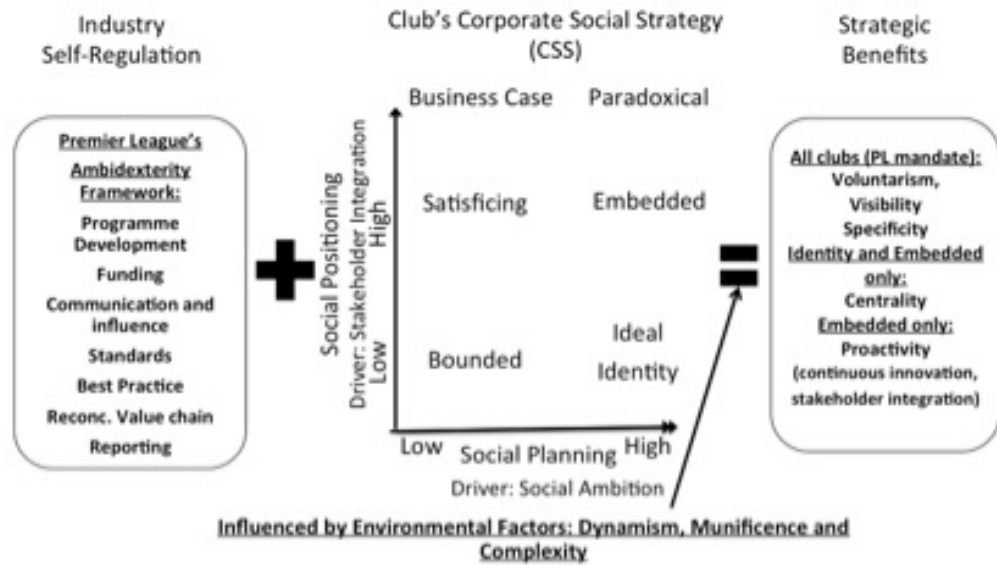
Figure 3.6 Summary of Propositions and Findings

I believe that my research has important implications beyond this setting since other researchers could operationalise my proposed framework to compare organisations within any industry. Secondly, practitioners could also apply the construct of social stretch to benchmark their social action with competitors.

Lastly, social stretch offers practitioners the opportunity to assess CSS as strategic choice by understanding the potential strategic benefits that they could be expected to gain based on their organisations' social positioning and social planning.

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3.8 LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Since the proposed typology emerged abductively, placing each club within the matrix required a judgment call from the researchers. Future research could further unpack each of the proposed variables in order to challenge the proposed concept of social stretch. Furthermore, I believe that a larger sample with clubs from multiple divisions and countries could provide a more nuanced understanding of how social stretch varies among discrete contexts.

Future research could also address whether having a 'global brand club' as local competitor drives smaller clubs towards selecting CSS as strategic option. my results on this are somewhat contradicting, so I believe that there is fertile ground for other researchers to pursue this possibility further.

Lastly, another opportunity for future research is to further our understanding on whether women in leadership roles in CSTs have an effect on social stretch, since the two clubs with embedded social stretch are led by women.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This paper provides an explanatory framework to further our understanding on what drives the PL and its club members to social action and why clubs gain discrete strategic benefits from those engagements. Importantly, the construct of social stretch and the typology that derives from this study can be applied beyond this setting and may serve as a simple yet powerful instrument, which can be operationalised by academics and practitioners alike.

Lastly, this paper provides evidence of organisations that have gained competitive advantage through social action based on a systemic and holistic (club and CST) approach to social action driven by stakeholder integration and social ambition.

In the following chapter I shift my focus in order to further our understanding on how value is co-created between the PL and the external stakeholder groups that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute its social schemes.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSLATION OF TRUSTWORTHINESS SIGNALS INTO FACTORS FOR STAKEHOLDER VALUE CO-CREATION

4.1 ABSTRACT

In this empirical paper I address value creation from a social sustainability perspective. my evidence shows that during the interlinked practices of a focal organisation and its external stakeholders, the practices from the former emit *trustworthiness signals* which *translate* into *factors for stakeholder value* for the latter, as precursor to stakeholder value co-creation or value destruction. Therefore, utility is not the *result* of an organisation's decision-making and actions but rather, it is *shaped* by these interlinked practices, moderated by each stakeholder group's dynamic reference state. I believe that my explanatory model, by showing that trustworthiness and stakeholder engagement are endogenous to value creation, is consistent with the view of corporate sustainability as a persuasive and effective organisational management idea.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I discussed how each club's level of strategic social planning and strategic social positioning defined its social stretch. Mahon et al. (2016) convincingly argued that a path to improve long term strategic planning and positioning is to better understand the "inextricably intertwined" (p. 8) relationship between issues management and stakeholder management and called for more research that recognises their potential synergy.

I do so here by proposing a framework based on a novel approach to *stakeholder engagement* or the "*practices* the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organisational activities" (Greenwood, 2007, p. 315, italics added) as precursors for stakeholder value co-creation (Lankoski et al., 2016). I test my framework empirical evidence for how the practices of my focal organisation, football's (soccer) English Premier League (PL), emit trustworthiness signals (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001) aimed at engaging the stakeholder groups who co-develop, co-fund and co-execute its social action projects and how these signals translate (Kjellberg and Helgesson, 2007) into factors for stakeholder value (Harrison and Wicks, 2013). Therefore, the synergy between issues management and

stakeholder management is constructed and shaped by interlinked practices among stakeholders that affect their direct exchanges, the objectives they establish for themselves and others, and the images of the synergy as it is produced (Kjellberg and Helgesson, 2007). This is a timely discussion since the Public Affairs Council recently proposed that the recent rise of populism is the *result* of a trustworthiness crisis (Impact, 2016).

This paper has important theoretical and practical implications beyond this setting, particularly for commercial enterprises whose income results from their global reach (technology companies such as Facebook and Google, for example). First, my approach addresses value creation, the raison d'être for the marketing scholarship, from a social sustainability perspective that goes beyond bio-physical environmental issues to include how stakeholders "interpret, and incorporate concerns about, the places in which they live and the world around them" (Vallance et al., 2011 p. 347). I do so by presenting empirical evidence for how translations, the linkages between the practices of the PL and its stakeholders, shape utility rather than it being the "result of corporate decisions and actions (Lankoski et al., 2016 p. 228, italics added). Second, my framework complements the strategic framework from Mahon et al. (2016) by offering a 'closer to the ground', tactical level way for practitioners to map stakeholder practices in order to construct strategic outcomes. Lastly, my empirical evidence shows how based on the stakeholder group's reference state (Lankoski et al., 2016), these translations either align the behaviour among stakeholders resulting in value co-creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) or signal unfairness resulting in value destruction.

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The rest of the paper is divided in six sections. In the next section I briefly discuss my research setting. This is followed by my conceptual framework and by a section on methodology. From there on, I present my results followed by a discussion of findings. I conclude by presenting research limitations and opportunities for future research.

4.3 RESEARCH SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The PL is a private company founded in 1992 that is wholly owned by its twenty club members with projected revenues to exceed £4.3 billion for the 2016/2017 season, a year over year growth of about 20%. It is the most commercially successful football league in the world, almost doubling the revenues from its closest competitor, Germany's Bundesliga (Boor et al., 2016).

This growth is largely due to the monetization of what Castells (2000) defines as *real virtuality*, the flattening of boundaries of time and space through information technologies (TV, internet, social media) that allows for the instantaneous and worldwide consumption of the PL product. Interestingly, this results in the interpenetration of local and global forces (Andrews and Ritzer, 2007) which have altered the PL clubs themselves, since the riches and the global reach of the PL has also attracted foreign investors, players and fans. Today, 80% of PL clubs have foreign investors (Cave and Miller, 2016) who in some cases design questionable ownership structures that could potentially lead to tax avoidance (Conn, 2015); only one third of players are English (BBC, 2014) which limits opportunities for local talent; and lastly, traditional supporters have not only witnessed the loss of the 'local' and the "sense of 'moral ownership' of their football club" (Kennedy, 2012 p. 343),

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but are also tasked with financing the PL operations directly (through high ticket prices and merchandising) and indirectly (through their TV/Internet subscriptions).

Based on the above, the PL is pressured by legitimate stakeholders and public opinion to behave socially responsible as a result of the "paradox of performance" (Barnett, 2007 p. 808), by which its excessive financial performance signals that it is extracting more than what it is contributing to society. The PL has partially responded by setting the Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF) and PL Communities which, in three-year cycles (corresponding with the TV rights contracts), co-develop, co-fund and co-execute social schemes with local, national and international stakeholders in the areas of community cohesion, education, health, sports participation and international projects (Morgan, 2013). These schemes are executed at the club level by Community Sports Trusts (CSTs), "a charitable organisation that has a direct association with a football club, yet at the same time has structural, financial and strategic independence" (Walters and Chadwick, 2009). Currently, all PL clubs except Arsenal F.C. use this model of governance.

In the next section I present my framework on how the PL engages its stakeholders towards value co-creation.

4.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Social action schemes are usually approached from a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective, an area of scholarship that is informed by and defined from multiple perspectives (Garriga and Melé, 2004). For my purposes I will adopt the widely cited definition by McWilliams and Siegel as organisational "actions

that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law" (2001 p. 117).

Although I appreciate the importance of CSR as a field of scholarship that stresses the responsibility that business has towards society (Elms et al., 2011) and as counter-weight to business interests, I disagree with its separation of commercial and social interests which makes CSR a dangerous idea for business strategy (Freeman and Liedtka, 1991) since it provides organisations with a compliance checkbox that prevents ethics from its fundamental role as constraint on self-interest (Freeman et al., 2010). Therefore, I agree with others in that CSR has become "a tortured concept, both theoretically and empirically" (Godfrey, 2009, p. 703).

Based on the above, I prefer to focus on stakeholder practices as points of impact where the PL and its stakeholders "intersect, [and] opportunities exist for value to be created or destroyed" (Griffin, 2016, p.4). I discuss this in the following two sub-sections.

4.4.1   STAKEHOLDER VALUE CO-CREATION

Consistent with the "integrative impulse" (Elms et al., 2011, p. 10) of cooperation for higher performance that underpins stakeholder thinking, the S-D logic framework (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) views value creation as the result of service-for-service exchanges among stakeholders as they pursue outcomes (solutions and experiences) not outputs (products and services). Value is a "*benefit*, an *increase in the well-being* of a particular actor" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014, p. 57, italics in original) and therefore value is always co-created and defined by the beneficiary. my framework is based on the idea that social value is not delivered to stakeholders

through CSR activities, but rather co-created with stakeholders through social practices.

The above contributes to my conceptual framework by supporting the idea that the practices within stakeholder engagement are points of impact and endogenous to value creation, since they motivate stakeholders to cooperate in their pursuit of the four factors for utility identified by Harrison and Wicks (2013). First, utility associated with the benefits created for stakeholders by the PL's actual goods and services. Second, utility associated with organisational justice addresses the multiple dimensions of fairness, disaggregated into distributional, procedural and interactional justice. Through distributional justice stakeholders gauge whether the perceived material outcomes of their linked practices with the PL are fair in comparison with those of others. Procedural justice relates to the perceived fairness in the rules and procedures used in the decision-making process that affects stakeholders. Interactional justice highlights how actors treat each other during their interactions. The third factor, utility from organisational affiliation, gauges how the PL aligns with what stakeholders value. Lastly, utility associated with perceived opportunity costs is embedded in the other three and relates to whether stakeholders perceive they are getting a good deal compared with other actors with similar resources.

Based on the above, for true resource exchange to occur between an organisation and its stakeholders, stakeholders need to trust the organisation which in turn needs to show itself willing "*to be vulnerable*" by its actions (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712, italics in original). I propose that the PL can enable such resource exchange by

engaging in practices that emit trustworthiness signals, and thereby reduce uncertainty

and ambiguity (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001). I discuss this in the next sub-section.

4.4.2   *ORGANISATIONAL TRUSTWORTHINESS*

Mayer et al. (1995) introduced three independent signals that stakeholders

look for to gauge the trustworthiness of organisations with whom they interact:

ability, benevolence and integrity. Based on more recent research by Pirson and

Malhotra (2011) I unpack trustworthiness into six factors: ability (disaggregated into

managerial competence and technical competence), benevolence, integrity,

transparency, and identification. Ability refers to the PL's skills, competencies and

characteristics to have influence, including the managerial competence to shape and

administer stakeholder relationships and the technical competence to develop quality

schemes. Benevolence refers to exhibiting goodwill and concern for the well being of

its stakeholders. Integrity gauges its propensity to act fairly and ethically.

Transparency gauges its willingness to share trust-relevant information. Lastly,

identification refers to understanding and internalising stakeholder interests based on

commitment and shared values.

The central argument of my framework is that trustworthiness signals from the

PL translate into factors for stakeholder value. In order to develop my explanatory

model, I adopt from the marketing literature the concept of translations (Kjellberg and

Helgesson, 2007), which are not cause-effect linkages between the practices of the PL

and its stakeholders, but rather are associations between practices which enable

meaning-making (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). Therefore, the PL spreads its

trustworthiness signals across space and time in the form of a value proposition (from

this point on VP), "a representation of how an actor proposes to positively participate in value creation" (p. 57). As shown on Fig. 4.1 below, the VP from the PL is proposed through *representational*, *integrative* and *normalising* practices. Through representational practices the PL re-presents images of its VP through their virtuous circle model. In the words of its Chief Executive, Richard Scudamore: "The model says: 1) Put on the best possible show – by using the top talent I can attract from around the world – in full stadia; 2) generate maximum interest – that can mean commercial interest, public interest, political space; 3) convert that into commercial success, soft power and political influence; and 4) distribute revenues equitably, use power and influence responsibly, balance commercial success with corporate social responsibility and redistribute that money, influence and soft power responsibly to put on a better show" (Premier League, 2013). Integrative practices refer to how the PL integrates market (i.e. sponsors, supporters), public (i.e. local and national governments) and private resources (i.e. grantors and partners) in a complex stakeholder network that co-develops, co-funds and co-executes social schemes. Lastly, normalising practices are guidelines for stakeholder engagement based on shared norms and logics that strengthen the social bond between the PL, its club members and the communities in which they are embedded, in the pursuit of normative objectives such as the "removal of commercial and community tensions; reputation management; brand building; local authority partnerships; commercial partnerships; and player identification" (Walters and Chadwick, 2009).
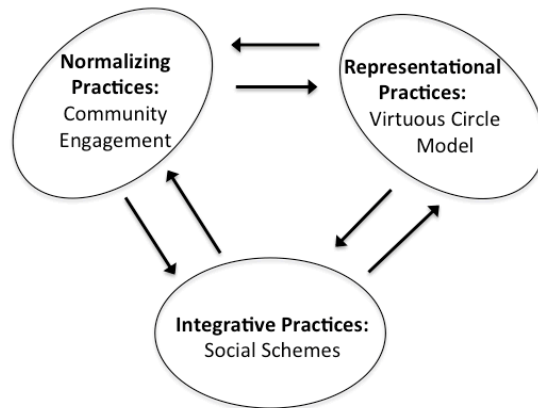
Figure 4.1 Practices within the PL's Value Proposition

As shown on Fig. 4.2 below, stakeholders contribute to the survival of this VP by how their practices shape and are shaped by these translations. Following Kjellberg and Helgesson (2007), I argue that normalising practices influence integrative practices through *rules* operationalised through *tools* and conversely, integrative practices influence normalising practices by enacting stakeholder *interests*. Normalising practices influence representational practices by defining *what* and *how* to measure (measures and methods of measurement) and conversely, representational practices influence normalising practices by re-presentations in the form of *descriptions*. Lastly, representational practices influence integrative practices based on *results* and conversely, integrative practices influence representational practices through *measurements* of an altered exchange.
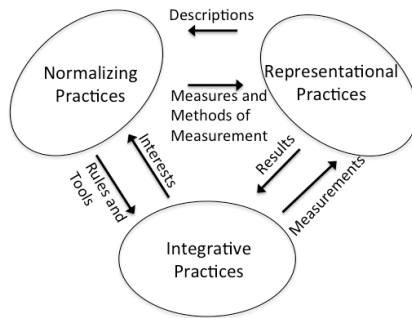
Figure 4.2 Stakeholder Interlinked Practices

Based on the interlinked practices between the PL and its stakeholders, I propose that each type of trustworthiness signal translates into three of the factors for stakeholder value as follows:

Proposition 1: technical and managerial competence signals translate into utility from goods and services.

Proposition 2: benevolence, transparency and integrity signals translate into the sub-factors for organisational justice: distributional, procedural and interactional justice respectively.

Proposition 3: identification signals translate into affiliation.

Hurley et al. (2013) found that a frequent contributor to loss of trust is the development of strategies that favour one stakeholder group while betraying others (regardless of whether this is by accident or by design), particularly the precedence of shareholders over other legitimate groups such as employees, customers and communities. I propose that since the factor of stakeholder utility associated with perceived opportunity costs is interconnected to the other three factors for stakeholder

value (Harrison and Wicks, 2013), stakeholders evaluate the congruence of trustworthiness signals based on this factor.

Proposition 4: stakeholders evaluate the congruence of trustworthiness signals from the PL based on perceived opportunity costs.

Having presented my conceptual framework and its associated propositions, I next discuss the empirical side of this study.

4.5 METHODOLOGY

In the next sub-sections I discuss my research design, including my choice of method, sampling, data collection and data analysis technique.

4.5.1   RESEARCH METHOD

The research method that best fit my epistemological and ontological assumptions, and my research objectives was respondent semi-structured interviews.

4.5.2   SAMPLING

Our research design called for interviews with the three executives that manage the work of PL Communities at a local, national and international level and a quota sample technique in order to include at least one representative that had strategic authority over the relationship with the PL from salient legitimate stakeholder groups following the typology introduced by Fassin (2009) and the typology of industry stakeholders developed by Boon (2000, in Breitbarth and Harris, 2008). First, stakeholders are those with a contractual relationship with the firm and an economic claim towards it (and here I include sponsors, grantors and programme partners, including local and national governments). Second, stakewatchers are those intermediary groups that protect stakeholder interests (and here I include labour

unions, supporter activists and associations of former players and managers). Lastly, stakekeepers are independent monitors with power to influence the PLs behaviour (and here I included the England and European governing bodies, the sport media and industry CSR consultants that provide thought leadership).

Our choice of sampling also aimed at presenting what stakeholders value from three clearly distinct perspectives: the PL, the co-funding stakeholders and the supporter activists (Dawkins, 2014) whom not only mobilise to pursue specific objectives but also to express their identity (Rowley and Moldoveanu, 2003).

In total, I conducted 29 interviews with different stakeholder groups identified via stakeholder websites, internet searches, LinkedIn or through a snowballing technique. I included at least one representative from each of the groups identified and three from the PL (see Table 4.1). With regard to the number of participants, Guest et al. (2006) found that if the focus is "high-level, overarching themes…a sample of six interviews may have been sufficient to enable development of meaningful themes and useful interpretations" particularly if participants have cultural competence about the area of inquiry. Based on the above, my twenty-nine interviews exceed this minimum threshold.

Organization	Identification	Type
Premier League (national)	PL 1	Focal Organization
Premier League (international)	PL 2	Focal Organization
Premier League (local)	PL 3	Focal Organization
Children in Need	Grantor 1	Stakeholders
Comic Relief	Grantor 2	Stakeholders
Big Lottery Fund	Grantor 3	Stakeholders
MOPAC	Local Gov.	Stakeholders
Homeless FA	Partner 1	Stakeholders
Sport England	Partner 2	Stakeholders
British Council	Partner 3	Stakeholders
Puma	Sponsor 1	Stakeholders
Nike	Sponsor 2	Stakeholders
Responsiball	CSR Consultant 1	Stakekeepers
Coethica	CSR Consultant 2	Stakekeepers
Healthy Stadia	CSR Consultant 3	Stakekeepers
FA	Football Association	Stakekeepers
UEFA	Europ. Gov. Body	Stakekeepers
Liverpool Echo	Media 1	Stakekeepers
Substance (software)	Substance	Stakekeepers
Xpro	Former Player Assoc.	Stakewatchers
LMA	Manager Association	Stakewatchers
PFA	Players Union	Stakewatchers
Football Supporters' Federation	Supporter Federation 1	Stakewatchers
Supporters Direct	Supporter Federation 2	Stakewatchers
Arsenal Independent Sup. Assoc.	Supporter Group 1	Stakewatchers
A Love Supreme	Supporter Group 2	Stakewatchers
Blue Union	Supporter Group 3	Stakewatchers
Satis Fanzine	Supporter Group 4	Stakewatchers
People's Group	Supporter Group 5	Stakewatchers

Table 4.1 Description of Participants for Paper 2

4.5.3   DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was based on an interview guide (Appendix E, adapted for PL interviews) that through open-ended questions unpacked my research aims for each half of the interlinked practices: from PL participants I aimed at understanding how

the PL engages its legitimate stakeholders into their social schemes. From stakeholder group participants I aimed at understanding their decision-making process in order to evaluate the PL as partner. Questions were based on the factors for stakeholder value, the perceived value of the relationship and the effect on reciprocation of their interlinked practices.

Methodological reflexivity in my research design called for the inclusion of specific probing questions for each participant as part of my pre-fieldwork preparation, based on secondary sources. This was done in order to ground my inquiry to each participant's setting and build rapport with participants, particularly those interviewed remotely. Data collection took place between October 2012 and September 2015, although 62% of those interviews took place during 2014 once my procedures and overall research strategy stabilised. The average duration of the interviews was 42 minutes and they were carried out either face-to-face (n=4, 13.79%) or via Skype or telephone.

4.5.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed through a technique called Applied Thematic Analysis (Guest et al., 2012). ATA aims at identifying and describing themes, explicit and implicit ideas or units of meaning to solve practical problems. Coding the raw data on themes related to the factors for stakeholder value shed light on how trust influences stakeholder processes and their perceptions of value. This insight led me to the literature on trust and trustworthiness, which led to the research propositions I present herein. Moreover, it led me to re-code the data from the three PL interviews that I had

originally coded as practices for a proposed process for value co-creation (Castro-Martinez and Jackson, 2015), but from a trustworthiness signals perspective.

Furthermore, my research design called for structural coding to purposely segment the data based on each reference state. I also performed content coding to define boundaries on the raw data since this article is part of a larger study on the strategic value of social schemes for PL clubs. Two rounds of coding were performed on the raw data organised in a codebook managed on Nvivo for Mac.

Upon completion of coding further analysis led me to identify the potential linkages between trustworthiness signals and stakeholder value.

4.6 RESULTS

Below I present evidence for my four propositions:

4.6.1 *PROPOSITION 1: TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE SIGNALS TRANSLATE INTO UTILITY FROM GOODS AND SERVICES.*

The PL's "deliberate strategy" (Substance) is re-presented through three pillars: "facility development working with the FA [Football Association] and Sport England, sports participation and education/employability" (PL 3) and executed through a description of a "staffing profile [that] probably isn't too dissimilar from big charities" (Substance), that "promotes partnership" (PL 1) by balancing the "professionalism and rationality that you would expect around process and operations" with "a real commitment to social change" (Substance). This fits grantors' measures of "planning and implementation" since this is "really the difference between success and failure" (Grantor 1).

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A thorough application process operationalises this rule to guarantee the availability of "the tools to actually do the job in their local settings" (Partner 2). The PL further enacts its stakeholders' interests of "Sport for Change [by which] sport can have a broader role than just sport" (Grantor 2), by being a resourceful co-funding partner with relevant assets such as players and club branding to attract participants, while benefiting from the positive reputational effect. The re-presentation of competence influences schemes by demanding results "driven by outcomes [and a] quality threshold" (Grantor 3) re-presented by descriptive, quantitative and qualitative measurements that offer an "audit trail" (Substance) that is mapped across the country (PL 3).

Grantors and partners participate in the value co-creation process by exchanging valuable resources that make these schemes possible, including funding that "pays for the outcomes to be achieved" (Local Gov.); "skills" (Players Union); branding assets (like Comic Relief, Grantor 2); access to mass media (Children in Need, based in the BBC, Grantor 1); their own stakeholder networks by "bring[ing] other people to the table" (Players Union), including "influence with governments, funders [and] commercial providers" (Football Association) and other "tools [such as] political connections" (Partner 2) which in some cases influence local council into giving clubs the "green light for [a new] stadium" (Football Association).

However, from the reference state of supporter activists they "care much more about what happens on the pitch than their club's CSR" (Supporter Group 1).

As summarised on Fig. 4.3 below, value co-creation from the translation of technical and managerial competence into utility from goods and services appears to

be the result of the interlinked practices between the PL and only those stakeholder groups with a reference state which focuses on the efficacy of the schemes and therefore prioritise cognitive over affective variables: "planning and implementation; good intentions are secondary" (Grantor 1).
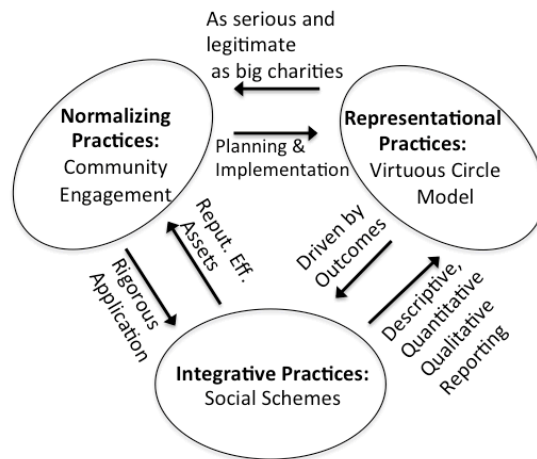
Figure 4.3 Translation of Competence into Utility from Goods and Services

4.6.2   PROPOSITION 2: BENEVOLENCE, TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY SIGNALS TRANSLATE INTO THE SUB-FACTORS FOR ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE: DISTRIBUTIONAL, PROCEDURAL AND INTERACTIONAL JUSTICE RESPECTIVELY.

In the next three sub-sections I discuss each of these three translations.

translation of benevolence into distributional justice. Rather than simply engaging in 'CSR interventions' that give away resources to other organisations, I found that the PL re-presents its benevolence through descriptions of being "very committed to the idea that they are the deliverers of the services" and a serious partner which "can be trusted [, is] financially stable and [is] not going to disappear"

(Substance). This is particularly important for scheme participants, since "70% of sessions [are] delivered in top 30% deprived areas" that "are perhaps hotspots for local youth antisocial behaviour" (PL 3).

However, since the method of measurement for distributional justice appears to be moderated by social contracts that go beyond the scope of social schemes, the translation to distributional justice appears to vary widely, from the PL being a "catalyst for improvement in social, education and health issues" (Football Association) to it being accused of engaging participants "during the week [while] shut[ting them] down on [Match Day] …because they can't afford to go" (Supporter Federation 2). Furthermore, there is a contested argument by which the PL originally engaged in these schemes as a description to the European Union that in exchange for permission to "negotiate TV rights as a collective [they would] give 5% away to good causes" (Supporter Federation 2).

For sponsors, being a trusted deliverer translates into distributional justice by fitting their interests to engage in "social responsibility… not just in the UK but globally" (Sponsor 2) which is a "sensitive" rule (Sponsor 2) operationalised in sponsorship contracts as a tool that mandates "a CSR piece written into it [so] that there is something that goes back into the community" (Sponsor 2).

Lastly, the measurement of the global reach of the PL results in a snowball effect by attracting its stakeholders' stakeholder networks. For example, the British Council brings the "Conflict Pool, which is FCO, DFID and Ministry of Defence money [and others such as the] Qatar Foundation" (Partner 3). At a local and national level, these schemes integrate several government agencies since the schemes provide

"channels and routes into further education, further employment, further training, it ticks all the government boxes now" (Players Union).

As summarised on Fig. 4.4 below, value co-creation from the translation of benevolence into distributional justice is observed in stakeholder groups which trust that by their contribution to increase the resource density of the PL they will benefit vicariously from the direct reach and reputational effects of those efforts. Supporter activists however, governed by social contracts based on the traditions and heritage, reject these benevolence signals based on their perceived incongruence between community engagement and questionable club governance and unaffordable ticket pricing.
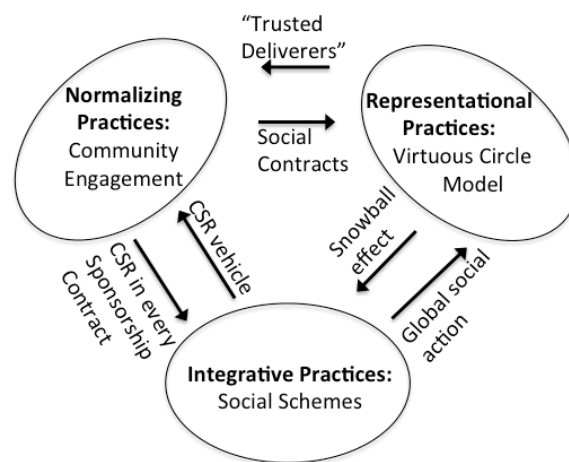
Figure 4.4 Translation of Benevolence into Distributional Justice

translation of transparency into procedural justice. my interviews show that the PL signals transparency through a description of financially independent charities at the league and club levels that include "reporting mechanisms" (PL 3) to stakeholders and to the Charity Commission that provide descriptive, qualitative and

quantitative metrics of their outcomes, managed through a software tool called Substance Views. Internationally, their "direct monitoring" is complemented by "external evaluation" (PL 2). Furthermore, transparency is re-presented by descriptions of a "completely impartial" evaluation of grant applications from its member CSTs "based on the official strength of the application" (PL 3).

I found that transparency translates into utility from procedural justice through a method of measurement "to see financial expenditure explained…to see how my public money in effect is spent and it can be accounted for" (Partner 2). This measurement of expenditures results in future opportunities for co-funding.

Furthermore, attracting multiple partners to its schemes fits stakeholder interests by strengthening resource density, which gives decision-makers a degree of "confidence that actually others too have bought into this idea, and…maximise my money" (Grantor 3). This is operationalised through "fairly rigorous" rules and tools based on a clear "assessment process behind it" (Grantor 2).

However, from the reference state of supporter activists, procedural justice would result from opportunities to express their interests by rules around "shar[ing] a lot of ideas [and where] improvements can be made" operationalised in a tool for a "structured dialogue", that could result in "everyone feel[ing] they're in it together" (Supporter Group 2). However, some supporters feel that clubs "have no interest in real, deep dialogue" (Supporter Group 1).

As summarised in Fig. 4.5 below, value co-creation from the translation of transparency into procedural justice is observed in stakeholder groups that require understanding of specific outcomes as direct effect of their investment and as

multiplier effect from multi-stakeholder buy-ins into the schemes. For supporter

activists, however, procedural justice would come from participation in the club's

decision-making, which is beyond the scope of the charity work.
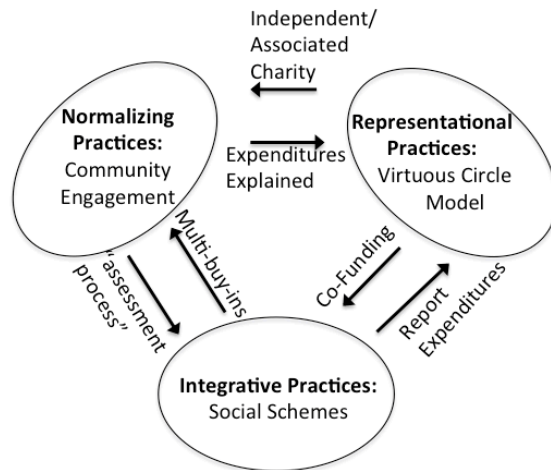
Figure 4.5 Translation of Transparency into Procedural Justice

translation of integrity into interactional justice. The PL signals integrity by

descriptions of it being an empathic partner to stakeholder interests by "looking at

where [partner] priorities are, and also of course where there are areas of need [and

how] projects can really add value on the ground" (PL 2). It translates into

interactional justice by fitting the method of measurement based on "the calibre of the

adults involved [as] a good role model [because] some of [the scheme participants]

don't have other adults in their lives with whom they have relationships" (Grantor 1).

This rule is operationalised through a tool called "capability status" which

"raises the bar" (PL 1) in terms of performance and acts as incentive mechanism since

the PLCF "has got the option to hold back money if a club isn't performing" (PL 3).

This has resulted in charity leaders that have become "enlightened critical thinkers"

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(Substance) whose measurements include "caveats [so that they] don't overstretch the claims" (Substance).

Furthermore, for sponsors procedural justice comes from the opportunity to benefit from this integrity vicariously by being "seen to be doing [social action], but we don't necessarily push the fact that we are doing it" (Sponsor 2).

From the reference state of supporter activists, clubs have appointed Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs) as a tool to integrate supporter interests in a way that also influences normalising practices towards the PL/Clubs interests. For some, this has resulted in an "improvement with fan engagement" (Supporter Group 3), but for others it means being treated as consumers, something they are "seeing more and more" (Supporter Federation 2), resulting in a normalising practice that is perceived as a "kind of betrayal of the traditions, heritage" (Supporter Group 5) of football clubs.

As summarised in Fig. 4.6 below, value co-creation from the translation of integrity into interactional justice is observed in stakeholder groups that invest in increasing the resource density of the PL so that scheme participants can benefit from capable local experts that can truly bring positive change to their lives. For supporter activists, however, the PL's interactional justice appears to be perceived as a relationship marketing exercise beyond the scope of the charity work.
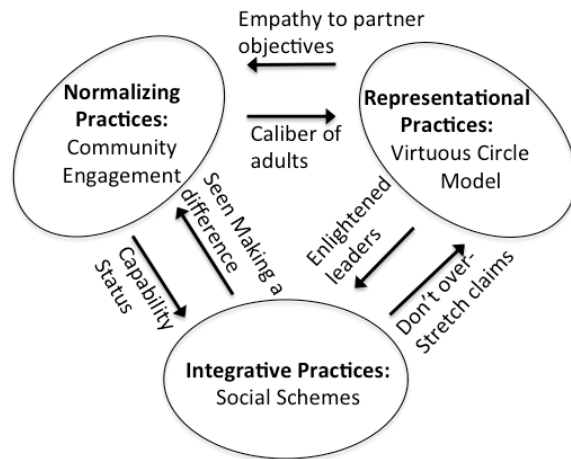
Figure 4.6 Translation of Integrity into Interactional Justice

identification signals translate into affiliation. The PL signals identification

through descriptions of "inspiring local people" (PL 3) in order to emphasise its

clubs' locality despite global ambitions. In doing so, it fits partners method of

measurement of these schemes as an engagement "hook" (Partner 2) that results in a

"quite compelling" (Grantor 3) way to attract young people. This rule is formalised

into the players contract as a tool that mandates "three hours a week for community"

purposes (Players Union), measured by the "forty thousand player appearances" per

year (Players Union).

Furthermore, this also fits stakeholder interests of clubs as relevant partners

beyond Match Day (PL 3).

Moreover, by matching player passions "whether it be in health, in education,

social inclusion or equalities" (Players Union) enables them not only to co-create

value by "rais[ing] awareness of the good work" (Players Union) but it also increases

their affiliation to their club since they "can get a sense of what the club means to

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people [and] make them feel part of…a more ethical organisation that actually does good in the community" (Media 1), although there is recognition that social schemes take "second place to what happens on the pitch" (PL 1).

From the reference state of stakeholder activists, I found that identification translates into affiliation by making them "incredibly proud" (Supporter Group 5) and a "quite refreshing [feeling since it] reaffirms why you love the football club so much" (Supporter Group 3). Paradoxically however, in some instances the charities may also amplify incongruences within the club's strategic ambidexterity since on the one hand "they do many good things in the community but [on the other] clubs have alienated the relationship with their supporters" (Supporter Group 1).

As summarised in Fig. 4.7 below, identification translates into affiliation for stakeholders with an affective reference state (i.e. supporter activists and players). However, since affiliation derives holistically from their relationship with both club and charity, incongruences between the behaviour of these two organisations can exacerbate perceived negative externalities. Importantly, I found that stakeholder groups that prioritise a cognitive reference state (sponsors and partners) still gain utility vicariously from the affiliation of scheme participants to their club.
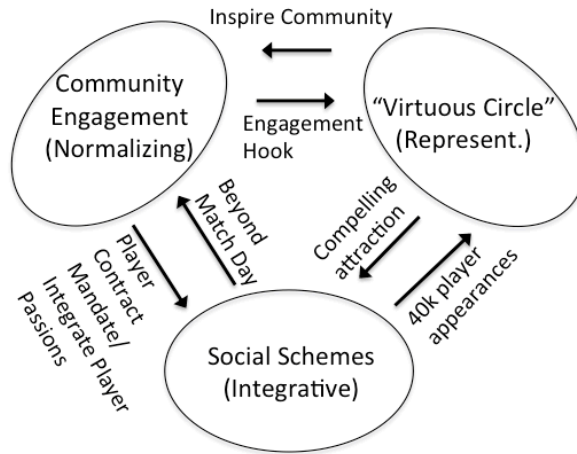
Figure 4.7 Translation of Identification into Affiliation

4.6.3 PROPOSITION 4: STAKEHOLDERS EVALUATE THE CONGRUENCE OF TRUSTWORTHINESS SIGNALS FROM THE PL BASED ON PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITY COSTS.

I found that stakeholders evaluate the trustworthiness signals form the PL based on three types of opportunity costs: resource integration, strategic fit and mission fit.

In regards to resource integration, the PL appears to have two competitive advantages over other charities. The first is through the adoption of third sector best practices, which is an area where smaller charities "sometimes struggle with" (Local Gov.). The second source of advantage is that it can leverage its "brand, status and money" (Grantor 2) by offering access to "a larger following" (Partner 1) that increases "awareness [which] is a really big challenge" (Local Gov.). Moreover, its ability to co-fund the schemes "sets it apart" (Local Gov.) particularly in an era of "fiscal spending cuts" where government agencies are trying "to diversify [their] business models" (Partner 3).

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Strategic fit varies based on the stakeholder group's reference state. For sponsors like Nike, for example, their participation in the Players' Kit scheme serves two strategic objectives: first, participate in a visible CSR campaign as an opportunity for a "demand creation piece, product placement" (Sponsor 2); second, an opportunity to leverage its contracted players to ambush the sponsorship of clubs by its competitors (McKelvey and Grady, 2008). For grantors and partners, strategic fit means "sport as the means to an end [to] reach a particular group or in order to address a different sort of need" (Grantor 3). For example, the Homeless FA works with charities that "were already seeking to work within this sector" (Partner 1).

For government, the PL fits the national government's sport strategy of "physical [and] mental wellbeing of the nation, the development of the individual and …the social and economic development of the country. Football ticks all of those boxes" (Football Association). For local government, the schemes "cut across a number of different areas [we] are really interested in" (Local Gov.). For the national governing body, the PL schemes fit their "double strategy…of developing grassroots football while identifying talent" (Football Association). Internationally, the PL schemes fit the UK's "soft power agenda [while] promoting and pushing the UK and the English Language" (Partner 3).

For the local sport media, strategic fit refers to a "symbiotic relationship whereby they cooperate with us and we [give] some coverage to their community initiatives" (Media 1).

In regards to fit with organisational mission, the schemes underpin "what the PFA is all about" (Players Union) by matching players with issues "close to their own

hearts" (Players Union). Similarly, it also fit the mission of larger grantors such as the Big Lottery Fund whose "whole ethos [is] to support communities and those most in need" (Grantor 3) and Comic Relief's "broader mission around social justice and poverty" (Grantor 2).

From the reference state of supporter activists however, opportunity costs is constrained by the inelasticity of their affiliation. The other stakeholders groups mentioned have alternatives to the PL to pursue their outcomes. Supporters, however, if they "don't like what happens at Arsenal [for example, they] will not go to Tottenham, because it is a cultural matter. And the clubs know that and they exploit it" (Supporter Group 1).

This has led to supporters who feel "totally disenfranchised with the football club" (Supporter Group 5) and reciprocate negatively through activism in social media and "demonstration[s] outside [sponsors] offices" (Supporter Federation 1). Interestingly, this alienation has led supporter activists to unite based on common interests (ticket pricing, safe standing, etc.) despite their rivalries. This is exemplified in a campaign called "Football Without Fans is Nothing" (Supporter Group 3) that has succeeded in "forc[ing clubs] into consulting with fans" (Supporter Group 5).

In sum, through the factor of utility based on opportunity costs, stakeholders can evaluate the congruence of trustworthiness signals as precursor to their engagement in value co- creation or value destruction, based on their reference state.

4.7 DISCUSSION

Although it was expected that the factors for stakeholder value would overlap to some degree (Harrison and Wicks, 2013), my evidence confirms my explanatory

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model of how stakeholders translate trustworthiness signals related to technical and managerial competence into utility from goods and services (proposition 1); how they translate signals of benevolence, transparency and integrity into the sub-factors for organisational justice (proposition 2) and how they translate signals of identification translate into affiliation. Moreover, stakeholders evaluate the congruence of trustworthiness signals from the PL based on perceived opportunity costs (proposition 4), which allows stakeholders to assess the PL as trustworthy partner holistically, based on the congruence and mutual reinforcement of all its trustworthiness signals (Hurley et al., 2013), including those beyond its social schemes. Therefore, the governance issues I raised in section 4.2 have a negative spillover effect on the PL's charity work as source for social sustainability, which was identified in the literature as one of the social responsibility pillars in sport (Babiak and Wolfe, 2013). This prevents the PL from being an ethically relevant institution (Breitbarth et al., 2011) and gives credence to critiques of these schemes as just a fig leaf (Levermore, 2013) to offset these shortcomings.

I also find that the PL acts as broker (Granovetter, 2017) for a constellation of stakeholder interests which allows it to define a soft power agenda that determines what the issues are and in doing so, respond to the paradox of performance discussed in section 4.2 by showing how its high munificence results in social investments in local communities, which has been independently recognised as generating £7 of social value for each £1 invested (Nevill and Van Poortvliet, 2011). In doing so, the PL justifies its actions to others while preventing its negatives externalities from reaching the public policy agenda. However, my findings also caution that the same

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ubiquitous information-sharing media that has benefited the PL commercially is also a vehicle to expose its negative externalities since when "value is destroyed and stories go viral, information-based risks multiply rapidly" (Griffin, 2016 p. 12). Since the PL is part of a system of stakeholder networks, what happens in one part of the system (i.e. value destruction at the supporter group level) can affect what happens in other parts of that same system (i.e. utility for commercial sponsors). This is the reason why I argued elsewhere for the need for a unified governance model for football (Castro-Martinez and Jackson, 2015) in order to mitigate the "separation fallacy" (Freeman et al., 2010 p. 6) which decouples business decision-making from normative considerations.

For practitioners, my explanatory model offers a visually powerful way to map stakeholder practices to not only anticipate negative repercussions but also construct strategic outcomes. As my evidence has shown, value co-creation is a dynamic process in which stakeholders constantly evaluate perceived and actual value moderated by their dynamic reference states (Mahon et al., 2016) and their internal and external environments.

Lastly, my evidence sheds light on how stakeholders exert power in order to become more effective and efficient in value co-creation. Granovetter (2017) identified three distinct sources of power: power based on *dependence,* power based on *legitimacy,* and power based on influencing actors' *definition of the situation* or agenda. Grantors and partners (commercial and governmental) influence the scope and breadth (Lusch and Webster Jr, 2011) of the PL's value propositions by exerting power based on the PL's dependence on their resources and on the legitimacy of their

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commercial and political power. Player unions exert power through the dependence

on its players. Supporters exert their power based on the perceived legitimacy

emanating from their moral ownership of football club but are limited by the

inelasticity of their affiliation. Lastly, the PL exerts its power by defining the social

action agenda.

4.8 LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The practices described in this paper are not exhaustive, so future research

could deepen my understanding on the practices that are precursors to value co-

creation in this setting. Another limitation is my focus on legitimate stakeholders

within the industry. Therefore, future research could address which are arguably the

most important stakeholder groups, scheme participants and the local communities

that have a peripheral relationship with the PL. Lastly, since I arrived at this

explanatory model abductively, future research could apply it to this or other settings

and challenge its promise while providing a more nuanced understanding on how

translations are also representations of power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al.,

1997).

4.9 CONCLUSION

In my introduction I discussed the concerns in the public affairs community

about a crisis of trustworthiness in my democratic institutions, and I believe that this

paper can contribute to that discussion, since sport reflects the values of the social life

it is embedded in (Godfrey, 2009). By looking at social schemes from multiple

reference states, my paper offers an explanatory model on how the social investments

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of a focal organisation in smaller-scale aspects of larger issues that 'move the needle', can be endogenous to value co-creation by improvising pragmatic solutions that fit the unmet needs of its stakeholders while managing its organisational impact before its negative externalities reach the public policy process or the court of public opinion (Griffin, 2016). However, perceived incongruences among the trustworthiness signals from commercial and social practices may reinforce scepticism towards social schemes as action after the money is made, "to 'fix' the value destroyed" (Griffin, 2016, p. 97).

Based on my learning from this and the previous chapter, in the next chapter I propose a path forward by offering a prescriptive process framework for collaborative value co-creation.

CHAPTER 5: COLLABORATIVE VALUE CO-CREATION IN COMMUNITY SPORTS TRUSTS AT FOOTBALL CLUBS

5.1 ABSTRACT

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to introduce a new governance model for football underpinned by the literature on Corporate Social Strategy (CSS), the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D logic) framework of value co-creation and stakeholder thinking. It offers a process framework based on the P.A.S.C.A.L. decision-making process (perception, analysis, synthesis, choice, action and learning) introduced by Goodpaster (1991), which contributes to the strategic integration of football clubs and their community trusts and in doing so, mitigate the separation fallacy that decouples social schemes from football and commercial objectives.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In the last two chapters my focus was to offer explanatory models on how

social schemes provide strategic benefits and empirical evidence on how those

benefits are co-created. In this chapter my focus is conceptual in nature, aiming at

prescribing a path forward for the "establishment of a best practice code" (Michie and

Oughton, 2005, p. 529) that identifies and takes advantage of opportunities for the co-

creation of value between the PL/Clubs and their stakeholders. The need for "best

practice" is particularly important in English football, because of the discrete

experience and expertise among clubs, ranging from some with more than twenty-five

years of engagement with their local community, to others that started less than five

years ago.

Sports clubs are subject to the same pressures as other commercial

organisations to go beyond purely financial objectives and accept that they have

broader social responsibilities (Freeman et al. 2010). Furthermore, other researchers

have called for sport to adopt a strategic approach to their social responsibility

schemes (Sheth and Babiak, 2010), since social projects that are "poorly linked to

core business objectives are therefore less likely to be taken seriously and succeed"

(Levermore, 2010, p. 223). However, less attention has been paid to ways in which

sport, and football in particular, can achieve positive synergies between commercial and social objectives (Breitbarth and Harris, 2008). Although these authors call for the integration of social projects in a way that furthers the development of the game and creates additional value for stakeholders, the literature is yet to answer the call for a best practice code.

Building on Breitbarth and Harris' (2008) call for "football to embrace CSR as an opportunity-driven rather than problem-driven concept" (p. 201), this paper draws upon recent developments in the business literature and introduces a process framework for achieving collaborative co-creation of social and economic value that aims at helping clubs develop a social strategy, the use of club "resources and capabilities to meet both social objectives and financial performance objectives" (Husted et al., 2012, p. 3) that would integrate the CST into their overall business strategy. The authors make this contribution to help this industry balance the tension between the long-term strategic vision required by the clubs' social projects, and the short-term objectives of having to win every week, balancing the finances of an organisation in which key employee wages (players) represent 67% of revenues (Gibson, 2013a), while simultaneously being stewards of a community symbol.

Furthermore, by understanding the drivers for the Clubs/CSTs integration, my research will contribute to answer the question posed in the CSR in sport literature: "[i]s there a need to better integrate CSR across all aspects of the organisation rather than consider it the role of a particular department or a specialised function?" (Paramio-Salcines et al., 2013, p. 346). The evidence I present in this paper in order to illustrate and bring my process framework "to life" (Smart, 2009, p. 303), is drawn

from interviews with officials at the clubs and key stakeholder groups (supporter groups, national and European governing bodies, grantors, sponsors and the media).

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section provides a brief introduction to the community sports trust model and its limitations. The second section discusses the proposed process framework for achieving collaborative co-creation of social and economic value and unpacks the theoretical underpinnings for this research including specific strategies to expand the integrated creation of economic, football and social value. The last section summarises the aims of this conceptual paper and implications for future research.

5.3 THE COMMUNITY SPORTS TRUST MODEL

The CST is "a charitable organisation that has a direct association with a football club, yet at the same time has structural, financial and strategic independence" (Walters and Chadwick, 2009, p. 52). The organisation is linked to the club through a licensing agreement, has its own Board of Trustees and Executive team that develop and implement the club's own social schemes, and also execute schemes developed and largely-funded by the Premier League and its social partners (Walters and Panton, 2014). The schemes focus on areas such as community cohesion, education, health, sports participation and international projects (Morgan, 2013).

This model of governance was one of the two recommendations from a research study funded by the Football Foundation Community and Education (C&E) Panel that ran from October 2002 to October 2005 (Brown et al., 2006). The authors identified several advantages for this model. Independence protects the CST from the

financial pressures of the football club. It can also benefit from favourable tax rates and from raising funds from local governments, grant making trusts and the general public. Lastly, by being monitored by the Charity Commission, it can get valuable guidance and "build public confidence" (p. 25).

Although previous research has recognised the exemplary work that clubs do in their communities (Chadwick, 2009), the current model is yet to succeed in addressing the second recommendation from the Football Foundation study: the need for community issues to cut "across the full range of football clubs' activities" (Brown et al., 2006, p. 5) and it therefore "absolv[es] the rest of the club from responsibility for community relations" (p. 22). This is a major problem since management research has found that a strategic approach to social engagement offers a better chance for positive social and economic value creation (Husted et al., 2012). Therefore, although other researchers have highlighted the social engagement features within sport such as youth appeal, positive health impact and social interaction (Smith and Westerbeek, 2007); and its unique resources such as stadia, signage and ticket donations (Babiak and Wolfe, 2009), the current model prevents clubs from fully understanding and leveraging the value that the CST could bring to the club in terms of football value (i.e. talent scouting), and economic value (i.e. as a valuable complement to sponsors that lack the qualities to be perceived as involved at the grassroots level (Levermore, 2010)). In regards to the club relationship with external stakeholders, the current model prevents the "outward-facing" (Brown et al., 2006, p. 5) culture of the CST to influence the inward-facing culture of football clubs.

As I will discuss in the following section, the theoretical underpinnings of my process framework address each of these issues. The process framework leads clubs to a better understanding of their environment including its sources of opportunity and obligation and highlights the need for leaders to have the competence and genuine desire to engage with club stakeholders. It also illustrates how these relationships are governed so that the clubs can have their self-interest constrained as they search for incentives for further engagement. Moreover, it explicates how value is always co-created by social actors and how to simultaneously pursue and expand social, football and commercial objectives. Lastly, the process framework integrates these theoretical underpinnings into a decision-making process that can be replicated by less-developed clubs and operationalised by other researchers.

5.4 PROCESS FRAMEWORK

From a behavioural perspective, "corporate governance research addresses the nature of interactions and relationships between the firm and its stakeholders in the process of decision making and control over firm resources" (van Ees et al., 2009, p. 307). Value is defined as the way those resources are combined innovatively to increase productivity (Moran and Ghoshal). In order to understand how value is created within the stakeholder network, the Service Dominant (S-D) Logic framework (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) argues that value is always co-created by actors "through resource integration and service-for-service exchange" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014, p. 10), and defined by the beneficiary (value-in-use). The distinction between producer and consumer of value disappears. Clubs become both producers and consumers in a constellation of actors (or service systems) that integrate their operant resources (e.g.

knowledge and skills) to develop value propositions that "establish connections and relationships among service systems" (Vargo et al., 2008, p. 148) in a way that "align firm, customer and societal interests more closely" (Abela and Murphy, 2008 p. 45). At the club level, this alignment is driven by leaders in charge of the design of the club's social strategy, which I discuss in the next sub-section.

5.4.1   ROLE OF LEADERS

Rost (1993, p. 99) offers a definition of leadership that is consistent with the collaborative essence of S-D logic: "[l]eadership is an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes". I believe that, consistent with this perspective, distributive leadership theory allows us to see leadership as a group activity that operates within and through relationships rather than individual action (Bolden, 2011).

Also, contrary to the dominant agency perspective that sees corporate governance institutions like boards as hindrance to their managers' self-interest in a context of formal contracts and rewards, the behavioural perspective see these institutions "as problem-solving institutions that reduce complexity, create accountability, and facilitate cooperation and coordination between stakeholders" (van Ees et al., 2009, p. 308).

Based on the above, the design and implementation of strategy and the consequent process of problem-solving and value co-creation fall beyond the boundaries of the Board of Trustees and the Executive team and includes all other actors within the club, what in the distributive leadership literature is defined as leader

plus (Spillane and Diamond, 2007). Therefore, from this point on I will refer to this group as the Leader Plus Team (LPT).

It follows that the LPT would apply strategic leadership skills, made up of both visionary and managerial traits, or "the ability to influence others to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance the long-term viability of the organisation, while at the same time maintaining its short-term financial stability" (Rowe, 2001, p. 81-82).

Our research found that PL clubs shows evidence of an evolution in some of the CSTs towards trustees and executives with professional profiles that mirror those of executives in leading organisations in the third sector. One of the study participants stated that as their competence improves in "delivering against government targets" they are able to participate in more ambitious projects. This is possible because each member of the LPT operates in their "areas of expertise, and all very clear on what the vision and targets are. We have a business plan […] and it is designed to deliver to community needs […] so more and more people are coming to our door because of the sophistication of my programmes". Also, in my interviews with two national grantors, the competence and track record of the Board and Executive team were highlighted as key variables in the grant approval process.

However, as the CST professionalises and engages in larger social projects, it also risks increasing its strategic decoupling from the rest of the club furthering the need for a unified governance model of club and CST. Towards that goal and as shown on Fig. 5.1 below, I propose a process framework for achieving collaborative co-creation of social and economic value based on the decision-making process

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introduced by Goodpaster (1991). The author divided the decision-making process in

six steps (following the, P.A.S.C.A.L. acronym). The six steps are *perception*,

analysis, *synthesis*, *choice*, *action*, and *learning* (Goodpaster, 1991, p. 56).
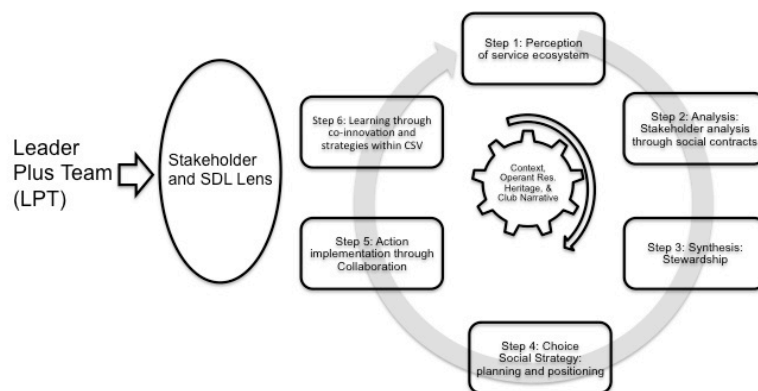
Figure 5.1 Process framework for collaborative value co-creation

5.4.2   *STEP 1: PERCEPTION OF THE SERVICE ECOSYSTEM*

Strategic leadership does not occur in a vacuum "but rather in a socially

situated context and by individuals whose interpretation of the context is itself

socially constructed or constituted" (Westphal and Zajac, 2013, p. 608). In S-D logic,

context is the service ecosystem, a spontaneous structure of social and economic

actors operating in time and space to "(1) co-produce service offerings, (2) engage in

mutual service provision, and (3) co-create value" (Vargo and Lusch, 2011, p. 185).

Therefore, the LPT will drive, influence and, to some degree, control the market by focusing on resources and opportunities for value creation as it constantly searches for solutions to existing problems (Lusch and Vargo, 2014), influenced by the environment, the industry and what is important to each stakeholder group (Hult et al., 2011). Perception of the ecosystem is about "fact-gathering about the options available and their short- and long-term implications" (Goodpaster, 1991, p. 56). However, this perception is limited by bounded rationality, the imprecise and selective processing of information that limits awareness and causes inefficiencies in decision-making (van Ees et al., 2009).

According to the literature, the LPT perceives the industry environment through two variables: dynamism, the perceived rate of change and difficulty in predicting external events, and munificence, the availability of resources to support growth from resources developed internally or from market, private and public sources (Husted et al., 2012). my research shows evidence for both variables. I have seen clubs accommodate their value propositions based both on changes in their social environment (such as a spike in mental health problems in the local community; or cuts in government funding due to the 2008 financial crisis) and on partnership opportunities that complement their operant resources (i.e. implementing a football social inclusion project in close collaboration with a law enforcement programme by the local police). Additionally, the history and narrative of the club (the story they tell about themselves) appear to be a powerful incentive in the design of a social strategy, as I will discuss below. In my research, clubs usually refer to their foundational principles as the raison d'être for their work in the community; and this

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is not unique to the English Premier League. For example, FC Barcelona with its motto of 'more than a club' stands not only for their representation of the region of Cataluña, but also for their sensibility towards social issues at a local and international levels. This was showcased in 2006 with the agreement they signed with UNICEF, that included a yearly commitment of 1.5 million Euros and the placement of the UNICEF logo on the FCB shirt (Fundació FC Barcelona, 2014). This agreement opened up new opportunities for working with other international organisations such as the Gates Foundation and the InterAmerican Development Bank. Examples just as these illustrate the application of my process framework by showing how football clubs can work as partners with external stakeholders in the co-creation of both economic and social value.

In the next step of my process framework, I discuss how clubs identify the available alternatives like the examples shown above, in order to position themselves as socially responsible in a way that fits with their narrative.

5.4.3 STEP 2: ANALYSIS: STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL CONTRACTS

Stakeholder thinking (Freeman, 1984) is essentially about "managing potential conflict stemming from divergent interests" (Frooman, 1999, p. 193). However, the analysis step goes beyond a simple mapping of a stakeholder network and identifying their often conflicting stakes (Fassin, 2009). If an integrated co-creation of social and economic value is to be achieved, clubs and their stakeholders need to focus on "an effort to clarify systematically" (Goodpaster, 1993, p. 7) the available alternatives to

the decision-maker, including the *"relevant sources of obligation"* (p. 7, italics in original) that the nature of each of these relationships entails.

To identify these sources of obligation in a way which is consistent with a behavioural approach to corporate governance and S-D logic, Integrative Social Contracts Theory (from this point on ISCT), "defines correct ethical behaviour through the device of a hypothetical social contract emphasising the moral understandings of living members of economic systems and organisations" (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1995, p. 86). These contracts are governed at a macro level by *hypernorms*, the "fundamental moral precepts for all human beings" (p. 95-96); and at the micro-level by norms of conduct created by the community, a "self-defined, self-circumscribed group of people who interact in the context of shared tasks, values or goals and who are capable of establishing norms of ethical behaviour for themselves (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1994 p. 262), in order t

to address the common sense issues that moral theory cannot fully guide. ISCT is particularly useful to understand and re-evaluate social contracts between the clubs and their key stakeholders. For example, in the case of fans, the CST plays an important role, as one study participant put it, in "building an extra layer of loyalty…just enforcing and endorsing the vision and mission and that set of values that underpins [the club] and [club] in the Community". However, although the representatives of clubs' supporter groups that I interviewed echoed this sentiment, they believe that their most important issues are not being addressed. I discuss this in detail in the next step of my process framework.

5.4.4   STEP 3: SYNTHESIS: STEWARDSHIP

The third step in the process framework builds on the analysis of the rights, obligations and communities identified in step two, and involves a synthesis process with the LPT as steward of a cultural asset that is part of the heritage of the community. The synthesis process aims at serving the ecosystem through balancing the tensions between community sustainability and stakeholder consequences, and the commitment to what is best for the club. The stewardship role of the LPT follows what (Goodpaster, 1993, p. 16) calls "the utilitarian 'greatest good' principle, and contractarian fairness principles in policies affecting stakeholders" (p. 16).

The stewardship concept is particularly important in the clubs' relationship with their fans, defined by one of my club participants as the "golden thread between both the club and the community programme". Although fans have adapted, out of necessity, to football's new common sense of market variables (revenues, efficiency and profits) taking over cultural symbols (tradition, social cohesion and ties to local community), they still "share strong bonds, a common identity and a sense of 'moral ownership' of their football club" (Kennedy, 2012, p. 343). This moral ownership, also termed "fan equity, reduces the likelihood of switching allegiances" (Walters and Tacon, 2013, p. 238) but in return, as part of the club-fan social contract, implies fan-perceived entitlements such as reduced ticket pricing, investment in a winning team and redevelopment of stadia surroundings (Millward, 2011). Although all clubs in my sample argued that they have made efforts to cap ticket pricing and made ticket available for underprivileged groups and those that volunteered their time for worthy causes, a third of fans feel that they are no longer able to afford season ticket prices (Preston, 2013).

From a behavioural perspective of corporate governance, these conflicts are addressed through political bargaining between groups with different objectives and priorities (van Ees et al., 2009): on the one hand, the entrepreneurial force of the clubs' owners, which provides direction and is considered legitimate if it leads to performance. The counterweight to this force is social fragmentation, a force made up of the institutions, rules and practices that "prevent power from being concentrated" (Gomez and Korine, 2008, p. 7). These two political forces are paradoxically opposed yet validate each other and are mutually reinforced by public opinion, "the manifestation via the media of communication of the collective sentiment of broader society that, in the final analysis, establishes what is and what is not acceptable" (Gomez and Korine, 2008, p. 206).

Evidence from my interviews with supporter groups shows that fans from rival clubs have realised that they have more in common than they previously thought and have started to collaborate and mobilise on issues that are of common interest (i.e. standing terraces, affordable away ticket pricing, etc.). Supported by the amplifying power of social media, they had some success in achieving their objectives by mobilising against the Premier League and its sponsors. Moreover, their campaign for safe standing has caught the attention of one of England major political parties that has included it as part of their 2015 General Election pledge (Conway, 2014).

The synthesis step situates the LPT in relation to its environment but also acts as a constraint on self-interest (Freeman et al.2010). Paradoxically, this constraint opens new opportunities for creating both social and economic value, as I will discuss in the next step of my process framework.

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5.4.5   STEP 4: CHOICE - SOCIAL STRATEGY

Put simply, this step relates to selecting "among the available options based on the synthesis" (Goodpaster, 1991, p. 56). The previous steps lead clubs to develop their Corporate Social Strategy, "a portfolio of social action projects" (Husted et al., 2012, p. 2) that must fulfil the dual demands of creating social and economic value. my on-going study shows that clubs can create both social and economic value if their strategies are designed properly. For example, in the case of a key stakeholder group like sponsors, moving beyond 'logo placement' to social projects with longer-term horizons, serves to strengthen the commercial relationship between the two parties. Everton FC has built a ten-year relationship with its main sponsor following this kind of strategy. In renewing this agreement, the President and CEO for the sponsor (Thai Beverage) stated that their "sponsorship with Everton football team is my proudest accomplishment, as we are inspiring people, especially youngsters, regardless of status to become responsible people in society, with positive thinking and attitude – all gained through football" (Sirivadhanabhakdi, 2014). Therefore, during this step the LPT would develop its social strategy by engaging in the two processes of strategic social planning and strategic social positioning (Husted et al., 2012), in a way which is informed by the narrative of the club and influenced by the club's competitive environment.

The first process is strategic social planning, and this requires setting long-term goals, the specific actions to achieve those goals and the allocation of resources to carry them out. In the dynamic and unstable 2nvironment of most Premier League clubs, planning for the long term is problematic since the main focus is on the short-

term objective of winning every week. Clubs are said to engage in strategic social planning depending on: (a) how they define a program and agenda for social action, (b) the intensity of investment in social programs, (c) the commitment of employees, and (d) how they measure the outcomes of programs (Husted and Allen, 2007). Therefore, strategic social planning would only be possible for clubs characterised by strong values and highly salient stakeholders, such as civil-society organisations, employees, and governments, among others. Clubs that see the CST as a genuine extension of what the club is really about, rather than what they want stakeholders to perceive, would engage in social planning, especially since "fans may be much more responsive to team performance than to teams' involvement in CSR activities" (Waddington et al., 2013, p. 40). As one of my study participants put it, "I think that the reason why our programme is very different is because we have a very sincere and genuine reason to connect with our community. Something we have done before people discussed CSR contributions".

The second process is strategic social positioning, and this refers to the extent to which the club is proactive in responding to social issues relative to its competitors. It can do this in a number of ways: by responding to changed expectations in its corporate practices, by going beyond the minimum required by regulators, and by committing more than its competitors to social projects (Husted et al., 2012, p. 7). Along these lines, one of my participants expressed that "we do tackle issues that maybe other people wouldn't want to engage with. I mean mental health, dementia, […] working with recovering drug addicts and alcoholics. Maybe some clubs would be resistant to align themselves with some very high profile and sensitive social

matters, but for [the club] we are very clear that the people within my community who […] are living with those difficulties should, if we can, be able to receive support from their football club.

Based on the above, a social strategy can generate both social and economic value as long as it is driven by a genuine desire to go beyond just business objectives. The collaborative culture of the CST is key in the implementation of this strategy, as I discuss on the next step of my process framework.

5.4.6 STEP 5: ACTION – IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH COLLABORATION

During implementation, actors need to collaborate by negotiating and adapting their value propositions based on learning from their interactions as they search for the best and right combination of resources (Lusch and Vargo, 2014) to achieve both social and economic value. From a behavioural perspective on corporate governance the purpose of the LPT is to enable cooperation not only in terms of conflict resolution and control, but most importantly "by solving problems of cooperation and coordination and engaging in collective processes of organised information and knowledge gathering" (van Ees et al., 2009, p. 308).

I believe that it is this stage of collaborative integration of club and CST resources that enables clubs to create collective agency or "the capacity to influence a host of relevant outcomes beyond what individual organisations could do on their own" (Koschmann et al., 2012, p. 333). One way in which they can do this is by co-orienting and organising communications to attract capital (efforts to acquire economic, social, cultural, and symbolic). For example, the Premier League follows

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the strategy of matching pound for pound the funding from national partners, while simultaneously allowing clubs to bid for discretionary funding for projects that also have a matching local funder. It is in the implementation step of my framework that clubs can marshal consent by persuading other internal and external stakeholders "to accept a given definition of the situation, an agenda for problem solving, a conception of insiders and outsiders, procedural rules, or preferred decisional alternatives" (p. 337).

Successful collaboration to create both social and economic value comes from a virtuous circle of joint action (Husted et al., 2012), an iterative process of setting aims that are clearly defined from the outset but can be adjusted as joint tasks are performed. Social schemes can thus be an effective expression of the principle underpinning my framework, building both social and economic value. An example is the Premier League's Kicks Project which is reported to generate about £7 of social value for each £1 invested (Nevill and Van Poortvliet, 2011), in addition to the economic value that it generates for the League and its clubs in terms of reputation and goodwill. Service-for-service exchange provides opportunities for additional value being co-created from new resource integrations (Vargo and Lusch, 2011). Other forms of resource integration can generate social and economic value through imaginative service exchanges between stakeholders. In London, for example, clubs are coming together in London United, an initiative which allows clubs to join forces to access citywide funding which each of them can then invest in their community schemes at the borough level.

Effective collaboration is challenged by satisficing behaviour, the tendency of actors to accept choices or judgments that are 'good enough' based on what their pressing needs rather than searching for a more difficult but ultimately optimal solution (van Ees et al., 2009). Furthermore, although social actors in collaborative stakeholder networks can exchange different resources, their objectives are often different as well, even when they agree on the broad advantages of the collaboration (Huxham and Beech, 2003). This tension may nevertheless be empowering when it is recognised by the actors involved and is used to co-create value which is truly shared by each actor, "allow[ing] concepts of CSR, sustainability and the stakeholder approach to find their natural homes, whether at a strategic or a managerial level" (Wheeler et al., 2003).

Learning from iterations of collaborative co-creation of social and economic value and how this process leads to opportunities to expand the value co-creation potential what I will address in final step of my process framework.

5.4.7   STEP 6: LEARNING THROUGH CO-INNOVATION AND IMITATION

The learning step refers to the "reinforcement or modification (for future decisions) of the way in which the above steps have been taken" (Goodpaster, 1991, p. 56).

From a behavioural perspective, decision making is an "experiential learning process" where "decision makers learn by trial and error what can be done, and they adapt their goals, attention rules, and search rules accordingly". (van Ees et al., 2009, p. 312).

As the iterations of co-creation through collaboration develop, the ecosystem changes and so does the viability of each actor's system as they develop new "specialised and applied knowledge and skills, service exchanges, and resource integration" (Lusch and Vargo, 2014, p. 71). Learning from these iterations leads to co-innovation by "taking advantage of network effects to apply resources in new ways to create new value for all stakeholders" (Lee et al., 2012, p. 824). my research found clubs that might competing fiercely at their city's derby but at the same time co-create value by sharing their skills and knowledge to fulfil their social projects within their communities while respecting their gentlemen's agreement not to overstep each other's neighbourhood boundaries.

These iterations of collaboration, learning and co-innovation are fertile ground for clubs to overcome the limitations of the existing Community Social Trust model and expand their social and economic value potential. my approach builds on the Creating Share Value (CSV) framework (Porter and Kramer, 2006, 2011). I support the authors' argument that the relationship between business and society need not be a zero sum game. A study participant from UEFA, European football's governing body, agrees as well when he stated that "CSR is not at the expense of profits but it's about how profits are being made. And so, if this is part of the football club's philosophy, I think that there is also a way of identifying the added value in terms of financial revenues. If your club is being perceived as socially responsible, that makes it more attractive to your potential sponsors". For Porter and Kramer (2011, p. 5), "the total pool of economic and social value" can be expanded by the implementation of three strategies that aim at reconciling the clubs' economic and societal objectives: by

reconceiving products and markets, by redefining productivity in the value chain and by building supportive industry clusters at the company's locations. I now consider each in turn, giving examples based on my research. I found evidence for the first strand of the CSV framework (reconceiving products and markets). my research suggests that as some clubs develop their global footprint, the value propositions from the CSTs are being reconceived and achieve greater strategic importance. Examples from my research include a club expanding its footprint in Asia by attracting corporate partners that must comply with new CSR legislation; another club supporting their main sponsor in CSR activities during a tsunami in the sponsor's country of origin. Furthermore, the City in the Community programme is taking a commanding role in the global expansion of Manchester City F.C. as they develop or acquire clubs in the U.S. and Australia respectively (Masanauskas, 2014). The international arena appears to present both new challenges and opportunities for PL clubs and for their community work. In particular, it offers a "clean piece of paper", as one study participant put it, to develop the grassroots game overseas while creating social value without the cloud of scepticism that sometimes overshadows their community efforts in England.

I have also found evidence for the second strand of the CSV framework, redefining the clubs' value chain. In regards to efficiency, clubs are investing resources to make their stadia and overall operations more sustainable, although this falls beyond the responsibility of the CST and therefore falls beyond my research aims. However, although clubs are motivated by compliance requirements from local and European regulations, they are yet to unlock commercial and social action

opportunities from their sustainability, as is the case in Germany. In my interview with a German Bundesliga club, the participant discussed partnering with local industry to reduce the club's carbon footprint while using the club as medium to educate its fans about sustainability. Additionally, the UEFA representative I interviewed offered that "compensating [for UEFA's carbon footprint] is a great issue and trying to push our fans to use and travel more on public transport is the right strategy". I also found evidence of clubs using their CSTs as 'soft landing' for players that will not make it to their first team, and are therefore provided with an alternative path through community coaching.

Lastly, there is some evidence for the third strand of the CSV framework, building supportive industry clusters at the company's locations. Despite clubs being quick to point out that their community work is not a vehicle for talent scouting, one of the clubs in my sample pointed out that their CST will be the face for football festivals and assessment centres aiming at bridging the gap between the CST and their Academy. These activities are also being conducted overseas in partnership with club sponsors. Additionally, the Premier League's Chief Executive has argued that schemes like the Kicks Projects should be leveraged to improve England's talent pool and offered the examples of Raheem Sterling and Wilfried Zaha as two players that made it all the way to the national team after being 'discovered' while participating in this scheme (Winter, 2014). Similar examples can also be found in other professional sports like Major League Baseball (USA), where clubs invest in youth academies in the Dominican Republic, an important source of players, while also providing educational facilities and services to the local communities (Babiak, 2010).

Additionally, an indirect opportunity for value creation is that thanks to the prestige and worldwide reach of the PL, other clubs and governing bodies overseas may replicate their social strategy through imitation. Therefore, if a club is unclear about how to develop and implement a social strategy, it will copy its competitors' actions further expanding the value creation potential.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This conceptual paper discussed the shortcomings of the current governance model of Community Sport Trusts in Premier League clubs as a mechanism for meeting their social obligations as well as their football and business objectives. I offer an alternative model based on collaborative co-creation, together with a process framework through which competent leaders could engage with their local communities to implement social strategies that simultaneously achieve at social, football and economic value. The evidence that I have presented show that some clubs are already applying some of these strategies, and will probably deepen and extend their commitment to their communities since it is consistent not only with the strategy of the club but with the history and narrative that underpin their existence.

The framework can also be instrumental in guiding leaders in less-developed CSTs on how to develop and implement their social strategies, in the understanding that "a good theory has to help managers create value for stakeholders and enable them to live better lives in the real world" (Parmar et al., 2010, p. 411).

The paper also offers the strategies within the Creating Shared Value framework as a roadmap for expanding value co-creation in a way that benefits the clubs and society at large.

As implications for future research, the steps in the conceptual framework can be tested empirically. Another opportunity is to explore how competition from other clubs in the same city influence the focal club's social strategies, or how Government, the media and other important stakeholders pressure the Premier League into strategic social planning. Future studies might also focus on how the international footprint of the CST influences their strategic integration with the rest of the club. Lastly, the LPT might be used as a new unit of analysis in future research.

This chapter concludes the presentation of the three papers that comprise this research. In the next and concluding chapter, I link the three papers together in order to present and discuss a holistic view of the contributions of this project.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1   INTRODUCTION

In the last three chapters I discussed how the proposed concept of social stretch can further our understanding on why organisations, within the same field and facing similar external contexts, co-create and capture distinct levels of stakeholder value from their social action projects. In this chapter, I discuss the implication of this research project the literature that underpins it and its managerial implications. I also discuss the limitations of this effort and opportunities for future research.

6.2   SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

In the next four sub-sections I discuss the significance of this research by how it situates within the literature that underpin my conceptual framework.

6.2.1   SIGNIFICANCE FOR STAKEHOLDER THINKING AND CSR IN SPORT

Stakeholder Capitalism addresses three fundamental managerial questions: "the problem of understanding how value is created and traded, the problem of connecting ethics and capitalism, and the problem of helping managers think about management such that the first two problems are addressed" (Parmar et al., 2010 p. 404)

In regards to how value is created and traded, Paper 2 offers a process for value co-creation which also answers the call in the CSR in sport literature for "process-oriented research…associated with the behavioural interactions of individuals, groups and/or organisational units" (Breitbarth et al., 2015 p. 260) and these authors' call for an interdisciplinary perspective in social action research. The paper shows how trustworthiness signals from the PL translate into factors for stakeholder value and how their interlinked practices contribute to the creation/destruction of value, but also to a process of

institutionalisation/deinstitutionalisation (Scott, 2008). Importantly, this multi-paradigm approach to value co-creation can be operationalised beyond this setting.

In regards to the problem of connecting ethics and capitalism, Paper 3 offers practitioners interested in embracing CSS as a strategic choice a prescriptive ethical decision-making model grounded in a behavioural approach to corporate governance. In doing so, this paper answers the call in the CSR in sport literature for research that is "applicable and accessible for practitioners" (Breitbarth et al., 2015 p. 263) and contributes to the construction of "best practice" based on *corporate stakeholder responsibility*, "the obligations to stakeholders that obtain by virtue of the collaborations [the PL/Clubs have] entered into" (Elms et al., 2011, p. 26) while mitigating the "separation fallacy" (Freeman et al., 2010, p. 6), which decouples business decision-making from normative considerations.

In regards to the managerial mindset, the empirical findings from Paper 1 show that despite clubs having developed a similar structure in the CST model, and follow similar systems mandated by the PL, they differ in how they approach social action. I argue and present evidence for how each club's social stretch acts as *attention structure* (Ocasio, 1997) in order to "govern the allocation and distribution of time, energy, effort, and attention" (p. 196) as a window to what it perceives as important (Scott, 2008). Social stretch leads to discrete approaches to the processes within CSS (social positioning and social planning), which result not only in distinct behaviours, but also distinct strategic value. Lastly, it offers empirical evidence on how when stakeholder relations are properly nurtured and aligned like in the case of

clubs with an embedded social stretch, they can evolve into an intangible asset that is part of the club's competitive advantage (Freeman et al., 2010).

In the next sub-section, I discuss how these charities, influence and are influenced by their institutional context.

6.2.2   SIGNIFICANCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL THEORY

In this sub-section I extend the significance of this research to the institutional context. Paper 1 answers the call in the institutional theory literature for empirical studies to uncover field-specific elements that could bridge the gap between institutional and strategic thinking (Ocasio and Radoynovska, 2016). It does so by showing how the PL/Clubs balance their pursuit of *legitimacy* (an institutional construct) with *integrity* (a strategic construct) to its identity, competence and governance which reflect their *institutional logic*, "a set of material practices and symbolic constructions which constitutes its organizing principles and which is available to organizations and individuals to elaborate" (Scott, 2008 p. 186).

The paper shows how the PL guides the *attention* of decision-makers at the club level towards the *issues* and *answers* the PL has committed to. It presents the PL as "institutional entrepreneur" (Scott, 2008 p. 97) by exercising power in and on its organisational field (Hardy and Maguire, 2008) by designing new forms of *organizational archetype* (CST model), by which a conceptual model is embodied within a separate organizational structure and operating systems; *artefacts* (social schemes) and *routines* (processes) through *bricolage,* the combination of symbolic and structural elements from varying sources and traditions to enact its seven strategic

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roles. This is important, since formalising the diffusion of the need for social action throughout its club members organizes the material world according to mental categories embedded in routines and artefacts and in doing so, the two become self-reinforcing.

This research also sheds light on how the power of the PL, in the form of excess resources, is exercised to seek *authorization* and *legitimation* (cognitive, normative and regulative) by adapting previous and current cultural frames (i.e. the traditional football club vs. its post-modern version) and aligning the contradictions inherent in the differentiated set of institutional logics in its environment (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008) to fit its self-regulation interests.

Paper 2 provides empirical evidence for the three dimensions of the relationship between power and institutions identified by Lawrence (2008) as they affect the process of value co-creation: institutional *control* involves the effects of institutions on the PL's beliefs and behaviour (such as grantors and government agencies); institutional *agency* describes the work of the PL in creating, transforming and disrupting institutions; lastly, institutional *resistance* represents the attempts of actors (such as supporter groups) to impose limits on control and agency.

The above may result in friction among stakeholders due to the multiple and often conflicting "underlying mechanisms" for institutionalisation identified by Scott (2008): institutionalisation based on *increasing returns* (regulatory), by which the PL aligns itself with more powerful stakeholders such as government agencies and other regulatory agents and inserts itself in an "interdependent web of an institutional matrix [which] produces massive increasing returns" (p. 123) through incentives in

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the form of containment of regulatory agents, the promotion of self-regulation and the development of cognitive and normative legitimacy. This entanglement of commitments with external stakeholders (related to the normative pillar) is also a source of stability and integration that further contributes to institutionalisation.

Over time, as Paper 2 also shows, the interdependence discussed above may also *increase commitments* to these and other external stakeholders. However, for this to occur it requires the congruence of social action with the centrality of values and organisational identity not only of the PL but also of each club that executes the schemes. This refers to the *totality of conduct* of both club and CST as single identity. This is particularly salient in the competing logics among clubs and supporters which could be both an antecedent or consequence of institutional change (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). The last underlying mechanism, increasing *objectification*, refers to "the development of some degree of social consensus among organizational decision-makers concerning the value of a structure, and the increasing adoption by organizations on the basis of that consensus" (Scott, 2008 p. 127) and how this contributes to the thickening and hardening of institutions through the transmission to third parties of shared beliefs as taken-for-granted assumptions. Taken-for-grantedness is of critical value for a powerful actor like the PL, since it implies "an *absence* of questioning" (Deephouse and Suchman, 2008 p. 53, italics in original) of its practices through the legitimacy earned through its social action. In sum, when alignment is achieved/neglected, these commitments in the form of practices that promote social change strengthen/weaken relationships and solidify/liquefy network forms of organizing.

The above offers a social constructionist way of institutionalisation of value co-creation based on *meaning*, "the interpretations, understanding and shared beliefs that are produced and processed through social action, and specifically through the efforts of institutional actors engaged in power relations and political negotiations, as these are all embedded within particular sociocultural and historical moments" (Zilber, 2008 p. 163). Implied in the above and which becomes apparent in this research's findings is the contested nature of value co-creation since it must account for the theorized account of actors which reshape through translation and contest through discourse in order to produce the social categories and norms that shape understanding among them (Zilber, 2008).

6.2.3   SIGNIFICANCE FOR CSS

Although institutional logics depict the "state of an existing social order" (Scott, 2008 p. 50) and constrain action, they also provide sources for agency and change by offering institutional templates to confront institutional *pluralism*.

This pluralism is imbued with *complexity*, or how clubs often *experience* these demands as contradictory or in tension (such as concurrently answering to football, business and social objectives). Therefore each club adapts the mandates from the league to its own *attention structure* which define its own strategic choices based on "particular combinations of logics to which they choose to make a commitment" (Ocasio and Radoynovska, 2016 p. 290) in order to satisfy symbolic concerns. These choices establish for decision-makers rules of the game that reflect the club's identity and purpose, channelled through a limited number of issues and answers based on its

resources and capabilities in the form of *selective coupling*, "the purposeful enactment of selected practices among a pool of competing alternatives" (Pache and Santos, 2013 p. 994), which to a large extent fix (solidifies) external assumptions about its role within its environment.

In Paper 1 by comparing clubs in the same *organizational population*, I shed light on how organizations in the 'same' field and exposed to similar institutional forces differ in how they adopt social action as reflected in their *organisational moves* (Ocasio, 1997), routines involving generalized ideas and enactments in order to respond or anticipate changes in their external and internal environment.

In my view, the two processes within CSS formulate the "duality" of social structure by highlighting the interdependence of the idealist and material features of social life. Moreover, by analysing the specific behaviour of the clubs based on the behaviourial view of corporate governance (van Ees et al., 2009), it allows me to develop a typology of social stretch based on each club's shared identity and within the intellectual limitations of humans. Moreover, each club's stretch goals (Sitkin et al., 2011) induce clubs into actions that are both rational (social planning) and value-oriented (social positioning) resulting in a reflection of its organisational context (Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1994). This is important since symbolic systems not empowered by resources are eventually abandoned or forgotten, just as resources without cultural schemas to direct their use eventually dissipate (Scott, 2008).

In other words, the concept of social stretch shows the divergent ways in which clubs *infuse their social action with value* beyond the technical requirements of

social schemes (Scott, 2008), and how this has an effect on the strategic benefit that social action will generate for the whole organization.

Having explained how clubs interact with the various institutional logics to which they make strategic commitments to, and how their heterogeneous approaches lead to distinct strategic value, in the next sub-section I discuss how this also shapes the distribution of value among its multiple external stakeholders.

6.2.4 SIGNIFICANCE FOR VALUE CO-CREATION

In Paper 2 I shift the unit of analysis from an organisational population to the broader *organisational field*, the "organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products" (Scott, 2008 p. 86).

The empirical evidence in this paper unpacks a process for value co-creation based on the commitments (issues and answers) that the PL has directed its attention to in order to confront the combinations of the multiple logics they are immersed in. The practices that enact these commitments emit trustworthiness signals (both cognitive and affective) which the multiple stakeholders that co-develop, co-fund and co-execute its social action schemes translate into motivators for value co-creation/destruction (economic and beyond).

Furthermore as discussed above, the paper offers a vivid account on how institutions impose restrictions by defining legal, moral, and cultural boundaries, setting off legitimate from illegitimate activities, and highlighting the

accommodation, tension and pluralism of institutional logics in the process of value creation (Ocasio and Radoynovska, 2016).

In unpacking the practices between this process the paper also presents a *relational system* which defines stakeholder *roles* within this process and the key role of the PL as *broker* (Granovetter, 2017), linking together two or more previously unconnected social sites including the power relations required for social action to be institutionalized.

This study also addresses some of the criticism towards the S-D logic framework by showing theoretical and empirical evidence for how in a global community *meaning* is not beyond the realm of value creation (Venkatesh et al., 2006) since for some stakeholders such as supporter groups, the image and symbolism of their club drives their identification and their willingness to exchange resources. These affective considerations influence the reciprocation of other stakeholder groups as well, and contribute to the creation of authentic trust (try to do the right thing regardless of the circumstances and irrespective of the law), beyond merely contractual trust.

It also answers the criticism from Laczniak (2006) who called for the broadening in the focus of the S-D logic framework beyond consumers to include macro issues such as societal benefits, and to develop learning processes that go beyond financial feedback, highlighting the marketer's responsibility towards understanding all stakeholders as co-participants and co-producers of value as part of a system of checks and balances.

6.3 HOLISTIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

In Fig 6.1 below, I summarise graphically the overall significance of this research as a result of integrating the theoretical and empirical findings of the three papers presented above.

From left to right, I present the leadership plus team as key in perceiving the environment, analysing the legitimate stakeholder landscape and defining its own obligations, influenced by the PL's self-regulation. This is synthesised into each

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club's social stretch that underpins their choice of Corporate Social Strategy, and operationalised through each club's social positioning and social planning that in some cases leads to competitive advantage. Each of these processes is put into action through value propositions embedded with trustworthiness signals which stakeholders translate into motivators for stakeholder value as a result of interlinked representational, integrative and normalising practices among the PL, PLCF, Clubs, CSTs and their legitimate stakeholder groups. These iterative practices, lead to instances of value co-creation or value destruction and through learning from previous exchanges, are reinforced or modified. Importantly, this process highlights the paradox of social stretch discussed throughout this dissertation.
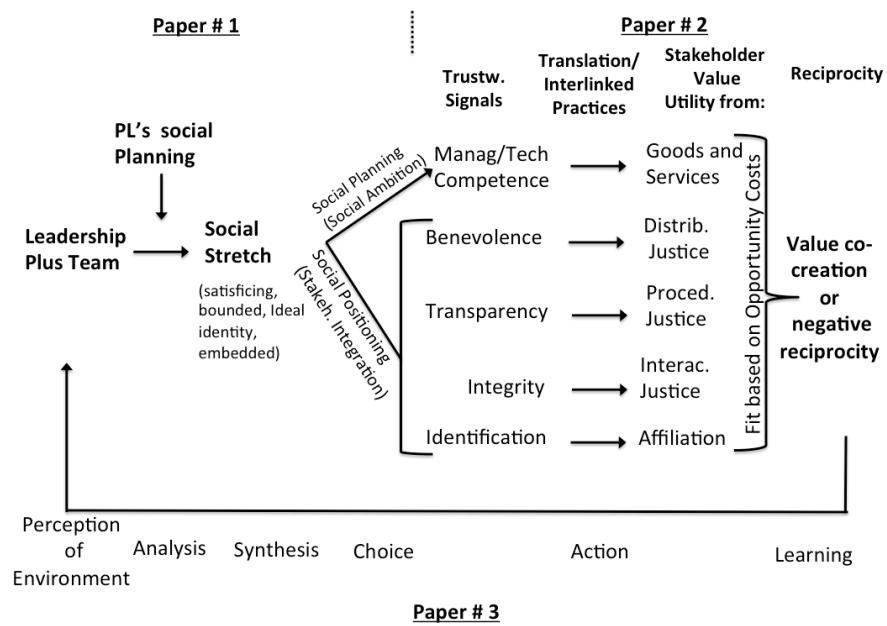
Figure 6. 1 Significance of this Research Project

Importantly, when this study is analysed holistically, it uncovers the *paradox of social stretch* since the evidence shows that those clubs with high levels of social planning and social positioning do so as an end in itself, and are also the ones that earn the most strategic benefit. This appears to be because their approach is perceived as genuine by how the cognitive and affective trustworthiness signals they emit translate congruently, leading to positive reciprocation from stakeholders and to additional opportunities for value co-creation.

6.1. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

I believe that the three papers within this research also have important managerial implications. Practitioners in this and other settings can operationalize the concept of social stretch as a way to benchmark social action within an organisational

population. Furthermore, the paradox of social stretch reminds practitioners that a genuine and truly altruistic approach, congruent to the totality of conduct of an organisation, may lead to the maximisation of opportunities for value co-creation. This research also highlights the dynamic and iterative nature of the practices of value co-creation and the importance of a combination of representative, normalising and integrative practices to anticipate negative repercussions and *shape* strategic outcomes.

Furthermore, this study has presented evidence for the five sources of collaborative advantage (Lusch and Vargo, 2014) that in some cases results in a source of competitive advantage: in the case of *process competency*, I identified the role of the PL in selecting suitable partners for collaboration and managing this collaboration to reach its own and its partners' objectives. In terms of *absorptive competency* I identified how the PL and some of its club members understand trends in its environment in order to develop schemes that are relevant to their salient stakeholders such as the government's need to increase participation in other sports ahead of the London Olympics. In terms of *adaptive competency*, I have presented evidence on how schemes have been refitted for purpose in order to address opportunities such as the increase of girl participation or the Everton FC Free School. In regards to *resource integration competency*, the PL has combined resources with partners such as Sport England and the FA in order to increase resource density in the form of the Football Foundation, a charity that focuses in the development of facilities. Lastly, in terms of *learning competency*, the ever-renewing of knowledge within economic and social exchanges, I identified how the PL's international

scheme, Premier Skills, has learned to train local coaches and referees in order to increase the depth and breadth of their international schemes without jeopardising their own capacity.

6.2.   DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this research has arrived at a clear definition of the construct of social stretch, future research could unpack their factors further and develop frameworks (both qualitative and quantitative) and alternative typologies that could further our understanding and develop metrics that could be applied to this and other settings. Furthermore, the paradox of social stretch be tested in other settings in order to challenge its promise.

For the football industry in particular, future research could apply the construct of social stretch to leagues in other countries, the role that those leagues play in adding a league-wide social dimension of ambidexterity and whether competition with global clubs provides smaller clubs towards selecting CSS as strategic option.

In regards to future multi-stakeholder studies, future research could deepen our understanding on the practices that engender value co-creation or value destruction and how stakeholders synthesise their perceptions based on opportunity costs and generalised exchange as precursor to reciprocation. Lastly, this study has focused only on industry stakeholders and therefore, future research could address how value is co-created with scheme participants and the local communities that have a peripheral relationship with the PL/Clubs and the PLCF/CSTs.

6.3.   RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

This research is bounded by its limitations. First, since I am not a UK national, I could have missed important cultural nuances. Furthermore, the vernacular of executives in the area of social responsibility is problematic, since participants some times intertwine their action with their aspirations, and although I complemented my qualitative data with quantitative data from their government reporting, those report do not cover the totality of my research aims. Lastly, 84% of the interviews were performed remotely and that limited the opportunities generate rapport with the interviewees and observe non-verbal cues that might have been an interesting window into their political posturing and biases.

6.4. CONCLUSION

I believe that this research project has presented a credible description of how the PL/Clubs approach social action and introduced the construct of social stretch that I believe influences each club's choice for social action and the strategic implication of those efforts. Moreover it explains how, paradoxically, those clubs that engage in social action as an end in itself are also the ones that gain the most strategic benefit from these efforts.

Furthermore, this research has described what motivates legitimate stakeholders to engage in resource exchange with the PL/Clubs and PLCF/CSTs and offers empirical evidence for a plausible framework for value co-creation or value destruction resulting from the practices within those exchanges.

Lastly, it presents a prescriptive path forward that may inform practitioners in this and other settings since I believe that every organisation defines its social stretch even when they disregard or do not have a formal plan towards social action.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide Paper 1 – Chapter 3

1) Addressing anonymity, a brief overview of our research study (what we had already explained in our introductory e-mail) and our commitment to share results of our study once completed

2) Organization: searching understanding on the structure
   a. Overview of your organizational structure. How the organization is structured to achieve its aims.
   b. Role of the interviewee within the organization.

3) Stakeholder Network: mapping of stakeholders
   a. What are the main stakeholders and their strategic importance (including probing questions from stakeholder map by Boon (2000, cited in Breitbarth and Harris {, 2008 #238}). Probing was necessary here for two reasons: first, because the question requires an extensive answer. Second, because some participants would focus just on external stakeholders so it was important that they shared their views on internal stakeholders as well (i.e. board of directors, club and employees including players).
   b. Probing questions regarding our research of secondary sources (Report of the Trustees, websites and web searches on the work of the organization and other interviews given by the participant that may have informed our research interest).

4) Strategic Drivers for social action
   a. What drives the organization to social action? We used this question to understand the organization's social positioning. This was followed by probing questions based on the factors for social positioning based on Husted et al. (2012).
   b. Why did they engage in their particular programmes? For every interview we probed with secondary data from the organization's website and their Report of the Trustees to the Charity Commission
   c. How do they fund their projects?
   d. I used the previous two questions to define social planning, followed by probing questions based on the factors for social planning based on Husted and Allen (2007).
   e. Strategic benefits of the CST for the club. We avoided the term value because we thought that participants would be misled into considering this term only in an economic sense. We limited probing questions to understanding or confirming what the participant said. To add credibility, we did not probe the participants with the five dimensions for strategic benefits identified by Burke {, 1996 #536}.
   f. Their views on the strategic benefits of the CST to its main stakeholders.
   g. International work: understand how the role of the CST has been affected by the global expansion of the Premier League and their club in particular: whether they have international projects and how are they integrated with their business strategy.

5) Snowballing strategy
   a. I always concluded the interview asking for a referral to a particular organisation that we believed the participant had access to based on our previous research. For example, when interviewing a representative from MOPAC (London's local government) about the Kicks programme, we requested a referral to his counterpart at Premier League.

Appendix B: Summary of Results for Strategic Social Positioning

	Response to change in expect.	Going beyond minimum	CCRR	Fit with social narrative	Continuous Innovation	Stakeholder Integration	Integrated Leadership
Club A	Low: CST "hand-in-hand" with club but after "the playing side [and] the infrastructure of the club"	Supporter ownership/ "ideal" governance model (PL)	6th	"underdog" narrative anchored on "a little bit of a fairy story"	No Evidence	Low: not perceived as a "big club coming to lord it over them"	No Evidence
Club B	CST is part of a strategy to engage BME communities.	First club in the PL to have a charity partner as the main club sponsor	8th	Marketing approach to CSR "a completely novel approach"	No Evidence	Low: will "try to get better at"	CST sits within club
Club C	sit "strategically on a number of local boards so [they] are able to position this work in a strategic way"	"cost-savings to society and the criminal justice system". International: arm's length support of global charity partner (Save the Children)	7th	"needed to compete with the best…and if you wanted to be ambitious as a football club, we had to be a bit forward thinking…and the Community Department is one of them"	Co-development with Substance of M&E software tool called Views	"we wouldn't call ourselves as experts, so we rely quite heavily on local partnerships, both operationally and strategically"	No Evidence
Club D	Limited: club within one of the most deprived areas in the country	CST "does come a poor third place" (after football & commercial). International: take advantage of Asian country mandate of 2% investment in CSR	3rd	"work within its means"	No Evidence	Work closely with local education system	Everyone follows "very strict business model which is a profitable one… [they] are not in debt.
Club E	"bespoke facility to work from and deliver some of our ever-increasing projects"	"long-term commitment to being a community club and ensuring [they] can make a difference in the community regardless of how the team is performing"	4th	"reinforces that message that we do value ourselves as an organisation in the local community that can make a difference"	Collaboration with competitor clubs in an initiative called "London United" to bid for larger projects	develop political goodwill that has helped them in their pursuit of a new stadium and training facilities.	CST "very much embedded into what the club is doing and…attend senior management meetings and we're fully involved"
Club F	"fantastic profile of impact, instead of parachuting and making a [limited] amount of change"	tackling "issues that maybe other people wouldn't want to engage with". These issues include mental health, dementia, recovering drug addicts and alcoholics, etc.	2nd	"very clear that the people within our community who suffers…or who are living with those difficulties should, if we can, should be able to receive support from their football club".	First to get funding from the Department of Education to establish a free school that works with "young people whose attendance rate was as low as 30% are now boosting to a 98% attendance rate"	"political dimensions, lots of commissioning and local support and national support; political ambassadors really. Stakeholders as "all of the partners who invest in the football club would share the very same… belief and philosophy of what drives this club"	Integrated Leadership: club owner "an Evertonian", the Chief Executive of the CST also Deputy Chief to the club, First Team Manager a "real community-spirited individual"

Appendix B. (continued)

	Response to change in expect.	Going beyond minimum	CCRR	Fit with social narrative	Continuous Innovation	Stakeholder Integration	Integrated Leadership
Club G	"stay ahead of the game" by being "on the pulse" of a dynamic government agenda.	"best align [their] fundraising strategy to those stakeholder groups and open doors" while avoiding the duplication of services... CST's sustainability by leveraging intellectual property into commercial services that further fund the activities of the CST such as the provision of CSR consultancy and planning and execution of CSR projects for local and international organizations	1st	"team of all talents" that fosters a "sense of belonging from each and every participant to the club no matter the age, gender, race or creed...Our Foundation is key to all of this and the Family feel our club promotes".	"were probably the first to establish [themselves] as an independent charity and Foundation". Set up eight satellite regional locations with 200 staff members . "very protective of [their] intellectual property". Replicate "what we have done in Africa, can we copy this and grow it and develop it in, say, America, can we grow it, develop it in Asia	Cultural management" by understanding "how the public sector, private sector and third sector all work together". Sophisticated network "refined over many years" of well-positioned trustee linked to the government funding agencies, external boards and strategy groups. "creating that positive dialogue...where they understand who you are, they understand what you do, they understand why you do it and they understand why we need their support"	CST "knitted into the club's strategic business plan...we're all working towards the same objectives". Links into the football dev. "brand awareness and commerciality" but the "key thing that we're linking with is CSR". From PL rep: first team Manager at CST event "seven first team players... three days before a key relegation match".
Club H	CST action plan and KPI's are reviewed on monthly meetings	sophisticated organization not only in terms of size and reach but also by their diversity of it programmes. Therefore, it is split into eight "department heads": Primary Education, Secondary Education, Sports Development, Soccer Schools, Disability, Social Inclusion, Education and Sport and a Media Department	5th	In transition: "re-brand has cost the club its identity"(Johnson 2014)	No evidence	"very basic level at the moment and it tends to be [that] we're approached by other organisations...is very much how we get a lot of our funding apart from the core funding which is from the PL"	No evidence

Appendix C: Summary of Results for Strategic Social Planning

	Program and agenda	Intensity of Investment (Revenue/Staff)	Employee Commitment	Measurement of Outcomes	Social Ambition
Club A	"patchwork of funding across the board" focused on " "a grant giving pot" (12% of revenue)	7th/5th, "cupboard under the stairs"	Player participation as required by PFA	Limited use of PL-provided tool (Substance). "not using it to the extent we could be"	
Club B	Primarily PL programmes. CEO "actively encourages [the CST] to go out and tackle issues"	8th/8th, some "match funding here and there". 60% funded by PL	Player participation as required by PFA	Limited use of PL-provided tool (Substance)	
Club C	Relies "quite heavily on local partnerships, both operationally and strategically"	5th/6th (based on participant disclosure; no public record)	Player wage donation to Foundation. Player participation as required by PFA. Employee fundraising	Co-development with Substance of M&E software tool called Views	
Club D	Sports and Education (Directors background)	4th/3rd, 49% funded through sale of services	Player participation as required by PFA	Instrumental use of data to increase market share	
Club E	Primarily PL programmes and "coaching tour of South East Asia" to support new owners	6th/7th	Player participation as required by PFA.	KPIs to "increase our turnover… targets around participation numbers so that we can demonstrate the growth as well as the reach, and we've also set ourselves some targets around building the team…[and] a whole new set of programmes running at that new training site as well"	
Club F	"very clear on what the vision and targets are. We have a business plan. We…are very clear on what we need to achieve operationally each day. We have clarity on where we want to be and we don't leave anything to luck… it is a way in which we are having a very structured and staged approach to deliver excellence in the community"	2nd/2nd, "nil satis nisi optimum", nothing but the best is good enough	All employees expected to participate in the work of the CST. First team players are ambassadors to the programmes that fit "their own level of interest" and provide a powerful incentive to share the work of the CST through their own social media channels even though they are not contractually obligated to do so.	positive snowball effect in which the more "success [they] have in delivering against government targets, obviously the more successful [they] are in gathering support in future commissioning calls"	"a very sincere and genuine reason to connect with our community" and their social ambition "to improve the life chances with people in the community….very ambitious for [their] future".

	Program and agenda	Intensity of Investment (Revenue/Staff)	Employee Commitment	Measurement of Outcomes	Social Ambition
Club G	business plan revised every year. Make sure that schemes are "continually refit for purpose". Remain flexible and back that flexibility with quality and a clear understanding of their "core mission, vision and values"	1st/1st "big enough player so that we can influence and then obviously be part of shaping and then delivering work in our region because otherwise you get bypassed"	From PL rep: At CST event "seven first team players… three days before a key relegation match so you could see that the whole club had bought into what their foundation was trying to achieve, and so again that's a really strong relationship" (PL3)	"Our figures are the figures of the people who donate to us, so you've got to be ethical" Outcomes for "almost every single individual that [they] work with"..."aligned to every local government and national government strategy and policy". CST sets strategic targets, measures and reports against them and provide a clear "social return on investment [to] then go for additional funding"	social ambition of being "able to obviously push the boundary and do a lot of things that maybe some other football clubs…might not have as much ambition as ourselves"
Club H	formal plan for action that includes "specific [yearly] KPIs and targets"	3rd/4th. Only 13% of revenue comes from PL (51% from services)	CST received 8.3% of its revenues from the club owner, executives and players. Furthermore, other employees participate in delivering some of the programmes like the PL Enterprise Academy, where club managers can add value to the CST in an area of expertise while taking a break from their day to day.	Limited use of PL-provided tool (Substance)	

	Voluntarism	Visibility	Speficicity	Centrality	Proactivity
Club A	Celebrity Match and Grant Giving Pot	Provided by PL media channels. Own media channels "on the radar"	Internalize that "The community is involved in running the club, a select group of the community but its community"		
Club B	first club in the PL to have a charity partner as the main club sponsor	CST provides content for own media channels	"doing good work especially when the football isn't going so well, it can only serve us well to increase our brand equity"		
Club C	Complement their grant-giving Foundation)	Focused on salient stakeholders "sometimes neglect the promoting and the profile raising of the work that we do"	"cost-savings to society and the criminal justice system) was highlighted by a report funded by the Laureus Foundation.	"a passion to do good and deliver some social good". The community work "underpins [the club's] reputation as a socially responsible business"	
Club D	Vicarious visibility to sponsors that could "also be seen to be putting something back...as marketing and CSR budgets have merged into one"	Add value by "reaching out to the next generation of fans" in a "tangible and quantifiable way"	"as a brand [they] seem to be deeply involved in the community...to lift the spirits and show people that [they] do care"; make sure stadium is "full on a week by week basis"); talent identification programme	CST reinforcing the mission to "live within its means"	
Club E	"coaching tour of South East Asia" to support new owners	Limited: "occasionally we'll be a bit more strategic and the PR team will get two or three of the main players to tweet certain messages"	political goodwill that has helped them in their pursuit of a new stadium and training facilities	In study of club's culture "family and community just keep coming up...our values reflect that; "more than just a football club". New players need to share and understand...the organisation that they join in and who we are and what we stand for"	
Club F	CST "achieved the £1 million financial target" for supporter donations that year"	Embodiment of [club ethos] every single day, outside of Match Day. Web, social media, PR presence and communications protocols at player events. Communicate "with our fan base each minute". Players are ambassadors to the programmes that fit "their own level of interest" and provide a powerful incentive to share the work of the CST through their own social media channels.	"community-based Marketing strategy, which [relies] heavily on the positivity that is emanating from [the CST] to get out and reinforce our message as a club"...integrated to strategy of the club by participating in a "disability programme in Shanghai", by taking part on a TV programme based on developing young Chinese players called "Chinese Football Dreams"; by supporting [their main sponsor] to address a natural disaster in their native country	CST "built very much around the people's club theory" by "enforcing and endorsing the vision and mission and that set of values [and] making sure that when we do act, and when we make decisions we are doing that in the true spirit of who we say we are as a football club"	"a very strong community club that respects and has responsibility for that community" by tackling "issues that maybe other people wouldn't want to engage with"..."very clear that the people within our community who suffers...or who are living with those difficulties should, if we can, should be able to receive support from their football club"

(continued)

Appendix D. (continued)

	Voluntarism	Visibility	Speficicity	Centrality	Proactivity
Club G	partially "delivering the club's CSR, *not all of it*"	"the public face in the community of the football club beyond what people see on a match day". internationally to counter the global brand clubs by appearing to have a commitment that is "long term"	"massive benefit…for the football club to be aligned to [CST social ambition]". Main sponsor posited that "the support that [club G] offers to their local community, setting up the Foundation …and now supporting development of initiatives further afield mirrors the [sponsor] spirit of investing time and funds back into the markets we operate in". CST is "massively integrated into the academy system" starting at 18-months old (Little Dribblers programme), offering a "pathway as as part of EPPP direct from the 26000 kids who we work with in football and sport every year, obviously firstly providing opportunity, but secondly identifying and nurturing talent".	use its "brand for community benefit and for social change [by] targeting hard to reach communities, working with those that are disadvantaged and providing opportunities for people that may not be able to have that themselves".	"very, very rarely [something] comes out of the blue with regards to funding, with regards to changes and fits of purpose of our programmes" . Growth in "market share in terms of the amount of public sector money... just because of [their] reputation and "end[s] up building up a lot of partnerships and relationships [that] end up with a lot of year-on-year regular donors"). From a normative perspective their "figures aren't our figures. Our figures are the figures of the people who donate to us, so you've got to be ethical and…have sophistication around the baseline on people and where you've got them to, what quantitative and qualitative outcomes you've achieved". The CST is clear that they "don't get funding for just working with somebody once. [They] get funding for changing their life"
Club H	change of remit for the CST, since they now need to support CSR projects for the new owner in Malaysia, with a "couple of staff out there delivering coaching sessions, school sessions, tournaments, working with club teams"	"very valuable tool to spread the word of…our football club". media team "update our social media sites" and "provide media coverage for events we have if we have any player appearances" and the brand equity "getting the brand out there…engaging with in excess of 80,000 unique individuals and… just spreading obviously the message that we're trying to get out"	"definitely [a fan] engagement tool as well… is a massive one because you want people to love your club and you want people when they grow up for their children to support the club as well and leave that legacy"	"to have a genuine impact on society"	

Appendix E: Interview Guide Paper 2 – Chapter 4

1) Addressing anonymity, a brief overview of my research study (what we had already explained in my introductory e-mail) and my commitment to share results of my study once completed.
2) Organization: searching understanding on the structure
    a. Overview of your organizational structure. How the organization is structured to achieve its aims.
    b. Role of the interviewee within the organization.
3) Decision-making process (assessment and decision to engage stakeholders). This included probing questions trying to unpack the factors that made the PL a valuable partner.
4) Benchmark with other charities: Are there any advantages or disadvantages in dealing with the PLCF/CSTs compared to other charities?
5) Stakeholder Value:
    a. What are some of the benefits that the PL bring to the stakeholder? Some probing questions included whether it was a form of soft-sponsorship or a communications vehicle (visibility).
    b. What are some of the benefits that the stakeholder brings to the PL? This was followed up with sub-questions about asking for specific examples.
6) Reciprocation. When would stakeholders integrate with the PL beyond a transactional relationship? Sub-questions included what factors made them increase of decrease the support for the PL, examples of a collaborative relationship and innovation in their relationship with clubs or the Premier League.
7) The last section related to metrics and evaluation. How do they measure outcomes and or impact?
8) Concluded with snowball strategy asking for a closely related stakeholder they could refer me to.

Appendix F: Theme Development - Paper 1

Meta-theme	Continuum of Abstraction from Hight to Low					In vivo
History of CSR engagement						"Something we have done before people discussed CSR contributions"
PL's Deliberate Social Agenda	Funding	Core Funding			Funding from PL	"high quality…value…making a difference"
					Funding from Partners	
		Discretionary			Match funded	"strengh of the application"
		Funding Tied to KPIs			More or less funding based on performance	
	Strategy	From fad to strategy	fad			"led by latest fad"
			strategy	Three pillars	facility development, sports participation, education/employability	"local delivery at a global scale"
				Club branded and led	hook to engage	clubs as "hubs"
				Impact	20% IMDs	"hitting the right areas"
	programme development	national		Kicks	50:50 funding Sport England	
				Pl4Sport	Talent pathway to other 12 sports	
				Facility Development	Football Foundation	"12 million a year"
				PL Enterprise	Promote Entrepreneurship	
		international		Premier Skills	Coaching and Referees	"active in 25 countries"
					Promote gender equality	
		Integrate with sponsor commercial objectives			Product placement	
		Integrate with sponsor CSR objectives			Foreign owners/sponsor CSR projects in native countries	
	Salient stakeholders: communication and influence	influence through communication		Communication	leverage broadcast partners	"really good profile"
				Influence	Lobbying	

					Aligning to government agenda	
					Reduce tension wit supporters	"Fans Fund"
		Sharing Best practices				
					National	"improve performance"
					Take local schemes national	
					European	
					Assure sustainability of schemes	"keep funders happy"
		Quality standards	Fit for purpose	Regulatory compliance	Capability Status	"raises the bar"
			Flexibility		Areas have distinct needs	
					Clubs have distinct approaches	
		Reporting	National		Shared tools	"Views"
			International		Encourage governments	"monitoring organisations"
			Metrics			
			Compliance		Fit with partner targets	
			Learning		mapped against national statistics	
		Redefining value chain	Soft landing mechanism		Former players as community coaches	
Club A	High	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations			CST "hand-in-hand" with club but after "the playing side [and] the infrastructure of the club"
			Going beyond minimum			Supporter ownership/ "ideal" governance model (PL)
			Fit with social narrative			"underdog" narrative anchored on "a little bit of a fairy story"
			Continuous Innovation			
			Stakeholder Integration	Low		not perceived as a "big club coming to lord it over them"
			Integrated Leadership			
	Low	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		Lack of focus	"patchwork of funding across the board" focused on " "a grant giving pot" (12% of revenue)
			Intensity of Investment		Lack of prominence	"cupboard under the stairs"

Club	Level	Category	Dimension	Level2	Description	Quote
			Employee Commitment		Player participation as required by PFA	
			Measurement of Outcomes		Limited use of PL-provided tool (Substance).	"not using it to the extent we could be"
			Social Ambition			
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism		Celebrity Match and Grant Giving Pot	
			Visibility		Provided by PL media channels. Own media channels "on the radar"	
			Specificity		Supporter Trust as community	Internalize that "The community is involved in running the club, a select group of the community but its community"
			Centrality			
			Proactivity			
Club B	Low	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations		CST is part of a strategy to engage BME communities.	
			Going beyond minimum		First club in the PL to have a charity partner as the main club sponsor	
			Fit with social narrative		Marketing approach to CSR	a completely novel approach"
			Continuous Innovation			
			Stakeholder Integration	Low	Lack of proactivity	will "try to get better at"
			Integrated Leadership		CST sits within club	
	Low	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		Primarily PL programmes. Limited guidelines from CEO	CEO "actively encourages [the CST] to go out and tackle issues"
			Intensity of Investment		Limited funding strategy. 60% funded by PL	some "match funding here and there".
			Employee Commitment		Player participation as required by PFA	
			Measurement of Outcomes		Limited use of PL-provided tool (Substance)	
			Social Ambition			

			n			
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism			first club in the PL to have a charity partner as the main club sponsor
			Visibility		CST provides content for own media channels	
			Specificity		CSR moderates effects of losing	"doing good work especially when the football isn't going so well, it can only serve us well to increase our brand equity"
			Centrality			
			Proactivity			
Club C	Low	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations		Politically positioned	sit "strategically on a number of local boards so [they] are able to position this work in a strategic way"
			Going beyond minimum		Arm's length International	support of global charity partner (Save the Children)
					Political importance of metrics	"cost-savings to society and the criminal justice system"
			Fit with social narrative		Excellence throughout	"needed to compete with the best...and if you wanted to be ambitious as a football club, we had to be a bit forward thinking...and the Community Department is one of them"
			Continuous Innovation		Co-development with Substance of M&E software tool called Views	
			Stakeholder Integration		Need for outside expertise	"we wouldn't call ourselves as experts"
			Integrated Leadership			
	High	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		Execution through expert partners	Relies "quite heavily on local partnerships, both operationally and strategically"
			Intensity of Investment		Estimated yearly funding	"1.5 million pounds in terms of budget and that's a mixture between the club and external funding"
			Employee Commitment		Player wage donation to Foundation. Player participation as required by PFA. Employee fundraising	
			Measurement of Outcomes		Co-development with Substance of M&E software tool called Views	
			Social Ambition			
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism		Complement their grant-giving Foundation)	
			Visibilit		Effects of Focus on salient	"sometimes neglect the

			y		stakeholders on visibility	promoting and the profile raising of the work that we do"
			Specificity		social value highlighted by a report funded by the Laureus Foundation.	
			Centrality		Reputational value	"a passion to do good and deliver some social good". The community work "underpins [the club's] reputation as a socially responsible business"
			Proactivity			
Club D	Medium	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations	Low munificence	club within one of the most deprived areas in the country	
			Going beyond minimum		Main foci are football & commercial objectives	CST "does come a poor third place"
					International: take advantage of Asian country mandate of 2% investment in CSR	
			Fit with social narrative		Realistic survival	"work within its means"
			Continuous Innovation			
			Stakeholder Integration		Work closely with local education system	
			Integrated Leadership		Foucs on Remaining profitable	Everyone follows "very strict business model which is a profitable one…[they] are not in debt.
	Medium	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		Sports and Education (Directors background)	
			Intensity of Investment		49% funded through sale of services	
			Employee Commitment		Player participation as required by PFA	
			Measurement of Outcomes		Instrumental use of data to increase market share	
			Social Ambition			
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism		Vicarious visibility to sponsor	"also be seen to be putting something back…as marketing and CSR budgets have merged into one"
			Visibility		Meaningful channel to reach new fans	"reaching out to the next generation of fans" in a "tangible and quantifiable way"
			Specifici			to lift the spirits and show people

			ty			that we do care";
					Contribute to a full stadium and talent ID	make sure stadium is "full on a week by week basis"); talent identification programme
			Centrality		CST reinforcing the mission	"live within its means"
			Proactivity			
Club E	Medium	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations		Adaptive hub	"bespoke facility to work from and deliver some of our ever-increasing projects"
			Going beyond minimum		Long-term commitment	"long-term commitment to being a community club and ensuring [they] can make a difference in the community regardless of how the team is performing"
			Fit with social narrative		Make a difference	"reinforces that message that we do value ourselves as an organisation in the local community that can make a difference"
			Continuous Innovation		Collaboration with competitor clubs in an initiative called "London United" to bid for larger projects	
			Stakeholder Integration		develop political goodwill that has helped them in their pursuit of a new stadium and training facilities.	
			Integrated Leadership		Part of club decision-making	CST "very much embedded into what the club is doing and…attend senior management meetings"
	Medium	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		Primarily PL programmes and "coaching tour of South East Asia" to support new owners	
			Intensity of Investment			
			Employee Commitment		Player participation as required by PFA.	
			Measurement of Outcomes		Established KPIs	"increase our turnover…targets around participation numbers so that we can demonstrate the growth as well as the reach, and we've also set ourselves some targets around building the team…[and] a whole new set of programmes running at that new training site as well"
			Social Ambition			
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism		"coaching tour of South East Asia" to support new owners	
			Visibility		Limited visibility	"occasionally we'll be a bit more strategic and the PR team will get two or three of the main players to tweet certain messages"

			Specificity			political goodwill that has helped them in their pursuit of a new stadium and training facilities
			Centrality		Culture of family and community	"family and community just keep coming up…our values reflect that; "more than just a football club". New players need to share and understand…the organisation that they join in and who we are and what we stand for"
			Proactivity			
Club F	High	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations		Focus on Impact	"fantastic profile of impact, instead of parachuting and making a [limited] amount of change"
			Going beyond minimum		Complex engagement: mental health, dementia, recovering drug addicts and alcoholics, etc.	tackling "issues that maybe other people wouldn't want to engage with".
			Fit with social narrative		Address community needs	"very clear that the people within our community who suffers…or who are living with those difficulties should, if we can, should be able to receive support from their football club".
			Continuous Innovation		Free School	works with "young people whose attendance rate was as low as 30% are now boosting to a 98% attendance rate"
			Stakeholder Integration		Political Integration	"political dimensions, lots of commissioning and local support and national support; political ambassadors really.
					Stakeholder buy-in of club's philosophy	Stakeholders as "all of the partners who invest in the football club would share the very same… belief and philosophy of what drives this club"
			Integrated Leadership		Responsibility to community throughout the club	Integrated Leadership: club owner "an Evertonian", the Chief Executive of the CST also Deputy Chief to the club, First Team Manager a "real community-spirited individual"
	High	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		Formal planning and KPIs	"very clear on what the vision and targets are. We have a business plan. We…are very clear on what we need to achieve operationally each day. We have clarity on where we want to be and we don't leave anything to luck… it is a way in which we are having a very structured and staged approach to deliver excellence in the community"
			Intensity of Investment		Nnothing but the best is good enough	"nil satis nisi optimum
			Employee Commit		All employees expected to participate in the work of the CST.	

Club	Level	Category	Subcategory	Theme	Quote
				ment	
				Fit player interests	fit "their own level of interest"
			Measurement of Outcomes	positive snowball effect	"success we have in delivering against government targets, obviously the more successful [they] are in gathering support in future commissioning calls"
			Social Ambition	Sincere and genuine	"a very sincere and genuine reason to connect with our community" and their social ambition "to improve the life chances with people in the community….very ambitious for our future".
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism	Fundraising target	CST "achieved the £1 million financial target" for supporter donations that year"
			Visibility	Embodiment of club ethos	Embodiment every single day, outside of Match Day.
			Specificity	CST central to Marketing Strategy	"community-based Marketing strategy, which [relies] heavily on the positivity that is emanating from [the CST] to get out and reinforce our message as a club
			Centrality	Fit with People's Club narrative	CST "built very much around the people's club theory" by "enforcing and endorsing the vision and mission and that set of values [and] making sure that when we do act, and when we make decisions we are doing that in the true spirit of who we say we are as a football club"
			Proactivity	Responsible for its community	"a very strong community club that respects and has responsibility for that community" by tackling "issues that maybe other people wouldn't want to engage with"…"very clear that the people within our community who suffers…or who are living with those difficulties should, if we can, should be able to receive support from their football club"
Club G	High	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations	On the pulse of government	g "on the pulse" of a dynamic government agenda.
				Ahead of the game	"stay ahead of the game"
			Going beyond minimum	Aligned with stakeholders	"best align [their] fundraising strategy to those stakeholder groups and open doors"
				Intellectual property turned into CSR products	"very protective of our intellectual property"
			Fit with social narrative	Team of all talents	"team of all talents" that fosters a "sense of belonging from each and every participant to the club no matter the age, gender, race or creed…Our Foundation is key to all of this and the Family feel our club promotes".

			Continuous Innovation		First-mover	"were probably the first to establish as an independent charity and Foundation"
					Satellite locations	
					Replicate worldwide	"what we have done in Africa, can we copy this and grow it and develop it in, say, America, can we grow it, develop it in Asia
			Stakeholder Integration		Understand how sectors work together	"Cultural management" by understanding "how the public sector, private sector and third sector all work together".
					Sophisticated network of trustees	"refined over many years".
					Positive Dialogue	"creating that positive dialogue…where they understand who you are, they understand what you do, they understand why you do it and they understand why we need their support"
			Integrated Leadership		CST knitted into strategy	CST "knitted into the club's strategic business plan…"
					Everyone focused on same objectives	"we're all working towards the same objectives".
	High	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		business plan revised every year	Schemes are "continually refit for purpose". Remain flexible and back that flexibility with quality and a clear understanding of their "core mission, vision and values"
					Flexible quality	Remain flexible and back that flexibility with quality and a clear understanding of their "core mission, vision and values"
			Intensity of Investment		Big enough to influence	"big enough player so that we can influence and then obviously be part of shaping and then delivering work in our region because otherwise you get bypassed"
			Employee Commitment		Genuine commitment	From PL rep: At CST event "seven first team players…three days before a key relegation match so you could see that the whole club had bought into what their foundation was trying to achieve, and so again that's a really strong relationship" (PL3)
			Measurement of Outcomes		Figures belong to donors	"Our figures are the figures of the people who donate to us, so you've got to be ethical"
					Metrics down to the individual	"almost every single individual that we work with"..
					Aligned to government strategy	."aligned to every local government and national government strategy and policy"
					Alignment leads to more funding	provide a clear "social return on investment [to] then go for additional funding"
			Social Ambition		Push the boundaries	"able to obviously push the boundary and do a lot of things that maybe some other football clubs…might not have as much

						ambition as ourselves"
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism		Club has social responsibility beyond CST	partially "delivering the club's CSR, *not all of it*"
			Visibility		Face of the club beyond Match Day	"the public face in the community of the football club beyond what people see on a match day". internationally to counter the global brand clubs by appearing to have a commitment that is "long term"
			Specificity		Massive Benefit	"massive benefit…for the football club to be aligned to [CST social ambition]".
					Talent ID	"massively integrated into the academy system" starting at 18-months old (Little Dribblers programme), offering a "pathway as as part of EPPP direct from the 26000 kids who we work with in football and sport every year, obviously firstly providing opportunity, but secondly identifying and nurturing talent".
			Centrality		Use brand to achieve social benefits	"brand for community benefit and for social change [by] targeting hard to reach communities, working with those that are disadvantaged and providing opportunities for people that may not be able to have that themselves".
			Proactivity		Anticipate need to adapt	"very, very rarely [something] comes out of the blue with regards to funding, with regards to changes and fits of purpose of our programmes" .
Club H	Low	Social Positioning	Response to change in expectations		CST action plan and KPI's are reviewed on monthly meetings	
			Going beyond minimum		Sophisticated organization	split into eight "department heads": Primary Education, Secondary Education, Sports Development, Soccer Schools, Disability, Social Inclusion, Education and Sport and a Media Department
			Fit with social narrative		Re-brand as negative externality	"re-brand has cost the club its identity"(Johnson 2014)
			Continuous Innovation			
			Stakeholder Integration		Limited engagement	"very basic level at the moment and it tends to be [that] we're approached by other organisations…is very much how we get a lot of our funding apart from the core funding which is from the PL"
			Integrated Leaders			

			hip			
	High	Social Planning	Program and Agenda		formal plan for action	"specific [yearly] KPIs and targets"
			Intensity of Investment		Only 13% of revenue comes from PL (51% from services)	
			Employee Commitment		CST received 8.3% of its revenues from the club owner, executives and players. Furthermore, other employees participate in delivering some of the programmes like the PL Enterprise Academy, where club managers can add value to the CST in an area of expertise while taking a break from their day to day.	
			Measurement of Outcomes		Limited use of PL-provided tool (Substance)	
			Social Ambition			
		Strategic Benefits	Voluntarism		change of remit for the CST (Malaysia)	"couple of staff out there delivering coaching sessions, school sessions, tournaments, working with club teams"
			Visibility		Spread the word	"very valuable tool to spread the word of…our football club". media team "update our social media sites" and "provide media coverage for events we have if we have any player appearances" and the brand equity "getting the brand out there…engaging with in excess of 80,000 unique individual
			Specificity		Fan Engagement tool	"definitely [a fan] engagement tool as well…is a massive one because you want people to love your club and you want people when they grow up for their children to support the club as well and leave that legacy"
			Centrality		Genuine Impact	"to have a genuine impact on society"
			Proactivity			

Appendix G: Theme Development - Paper 2

Meta-theme	Continuum of Abstraction from Hight to Low						In vivo
Stakeholder Engagement	Broker			Isolating Mechanism			"70% of sessions are delivered in top 30% deprived areas"
	Interlinked Practices			Synergy of Public and Private funding			
	Interlinked Practices			NGOs moving from pressure groups to partners			
Stakeholder Value		Goods and Services		Reach			"local delivery at a global scale"
				Targeted			"hitting the right areas"
				Appropriate staff			"probably isn't too dissimilar from big charities"
					Three pillars		"deliberate strategy"
			Ability	Skills	Managerial	audit trail	"professionalism"
					Technical	tools to perform	"rationality"
					driven by outcomes	Assets to attract participants	"good intentions are secondary"
							"brand, status and money"
	Normalising Practice	Distributional Justice		Benevolence			"inspiring local people"
				Sponsors	Vicarious Affiliation		
				Other interests	Competition from other sources of entertainment		
	Representational Practice		Power-Dependence	Identification	Issues Management		"everyone feel[ing] they are in it together"
	Points of Impact	Interactional Justice		Integrity	Stakeholder Management	Conflicting Reference States	
		Procedural Justice		Transparency (lack)			"structured dialogue"
	Points of Impact	Distributional Justice	Engaged during the week. Not on Match	Benevolence	Stakeholder Management	Conflicting Reference States	Participants "shut down on [Match Day] because they

			Day			"can't afford to go"
						"demonstrations outside offices"
		Procedural Justice		Transparency (lack)			"force clubs into consulting with fans"
					Unsustainable business model	"bubble burst"
				Consequences	Aging supporters	"stale atmosphere"
			Integrity	Stakeholder Management	Conflicting Reference States	
				Stakeholder Management	Conflicting Reference States	
		Interactional Justice		integrity			"add value on the ground"
	Trusted and stable	Distributional Justice	Interlinked Practices	benevolence			"deliverer of services"
	Normalising practice	Distributional Justice	Snowball effect	Increase Resource Density	Others bought into schemes		"political connections"
						"green light for stadium"
		Distributional Justice		Benevolence	Stakeholder Management	Conflicting Reference States	"CSR piece written into contracts"
				Benevolence	Ambition		"commitment to social change"
				Benevolence	Genuine Commitment	
				Benevolence	Tackle complex issues beyond football	
				Benevolence	Long-term Commitment	
		Procedural Justice		Transparency	Explain spending and outcomes		"reporting mechanisms"
		Strenghtens relationship with sponsors				
		Affiliation		Identification		CST	"incredibly proud"
		Affliation (lack)		Identification (lack)		Club	"alienated the relationship"
				Identification	Meaning		"hook"
				Identification	Activate hook		"three hours a week"
				Transparency			"audit trail"

			Interlinked Practices			"pays for outcomes"
		Opportunity costs	Interlinked Practices	shared mission		"broader mission around social justice and poverty"
		Opportunity Costs	Shared mission			issues "close to their own hearts"
	Normalising practice	Opportunity Costs				"physical [and] mental wellbeing of the nation, the development of the individual and…the social and economic development of the country
		Opportunity costs				UK's "soft power agenda"
		Opportunity costs	Care more for football success than CSR			
	Representational practices	Opportunity costs				"cut across a number of different areas"
	Interlinked Practices	Opportunity costs				"double strategy…of developing grassroots football while identifying talent"
	Interlinked Practices	Opportunity costs				"symbiotic relationship"
		Opportunity Costs				"fiscal spending cuts"
		Opportunity Costs				"sport as the means to an end"
		Opportunity Costs				"awareness is a really big challenge"
		Opportunity Costs				smaller charities "struggle with that"
					Sponsors	"demand creation piece"
		Opportunity Costs	Identification	Inelasticity		"they exploit it"

Appendix H: Theme Development - Paper 3

Meta-theme	Continuum of Abstraction from Hight to Low					In vivo
Perception	Dynamism	Avoid Relegation				
	Munificence	Funding market conditions				
	Complexity	Geographical				"70% of sessions are delivered in top 30% deprived areas"
		Issues-based				
		Partner Needs				
Analysis	Industry Norms	Divergent Interests	delivering against government targets improves governance			
			Sponsorship Beyond Logo Placement			
			Social Contracts			
			Supporter Pride	extra layer of loyalty		
	Conflicting Interests		Supporter Governance vs. Ownership Governance			
	Hypernorms					
Synthesis		What is best for the club	Power			
		Obligations to the community	Legitimacy	Constraint on self-interest		
				Lift participants		"inspiring local people"
				Engaging Participants		"hook"
		Obligations to supporters				"everyone feel[ing] they are in it together"
				Lack of choice		"they exploit it"
	Mistrust	Commercial above everything else	Social Fragmentation		Supporters as Customers	
						"structured dialogue"
				Political Bargaining	ticket pricing	Participants "shut down on [Match Day] because they can't afford to go"

Choice	Club Level	Distinct levels of CSS	Social Positioning	Influence Public Opinion	Product placement	Collective mobilisation	"demonstrations outside offices"
						Go beyond rivalries	"force clubs into consulting with fans"
						Safe Standing	
						Winning at all Cost	
						5% for good causes	
			Influence Public Opinion			Social Media	
			Mitigate tensions	Influence supporters			"incredibly proud"
			Amplify Incongruence				"alienated the relationship"
			Commercial Obligations			Sponsorship mandates	"CSR piece written into contracts"
				Product placement			"demand creation piece"
				Ambush competitors			
Choice	Club Level	Distinct levels of CSS	Social Positioning				
			Social Planning	Social Ambition		Proactively Address Community needs	"commitment to social change"
						Follow League Agenda	
		Metrics				Views Software	"reporting mechanisms"
		Salient Stakeholders	Commercial				
			Pressure				
			Regulations				
	Value Proposition from PL						"deliberate strategy"
							"professionalism"
							"rationality"
							"good intentions are secondary"
			Glamour				"brand, status and money"
			Funding				"fiscal spending cuts"
			Reach				"sport as the means to an end"
			Create awareness for schemes				"awareness is a really big challenge"

Action	Negotiation / Collaboration	Scope / Adaptation / Integration					
			Third sector best practices				smaller charities "struggle with that"
	Player level		Participation mandated by contract				"three hours a week"
	Limitations from League		Metrics				"audit trail"
Action	Negotiation	Scope	Partner Requirements			Empathy to partner and community needs	"add value on the ground"
			Beyond CSR Interventions				"deliverer of services"
			Exchange of resources	Branding			
				Access to media			
				Access to stakeholder network			"political connections"
				Access to stakeholder network (international)	British Council		
						Funders	
						Commercial partners	
						Influence	"green light for stadium"
			Supporter Liaison Officers			Perceived as 'consumer' engagement	
		Adaptation	Available Funding				"pays for outcomes"
			Time commitments				
			League Funding				
	Collaboration	Integration	Beyond what can do on their own	Match-Funding			
				Other Skills			
				Aligned objectives			"broader mission around social justice and poverty"
Solving Problems beyond each stakeholder own capabilities				Social schemes			

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	Managemen t			Supporter Liaison Officers		
Value	Social Value					
	Economic Value		Add meaning to sponsorship			
			Attractive to new sponsors	CSR laws in India		
			Contractual y required by Sponsors			
			Talent scouting			
	Reputationa l Value			CST as club ambassad or in overseas markets		
				Facts to overcome scepticis m		
				Goodwill from players		issues "close to their own hearts"
	Political Value		Deliver Toward Governmen t Targets	Sport strategy		"physical [and] mental wellbeing of the nation, the development of the individual and…the social and economic development of the country
			Deliver Toward Governmen t Targets (internation al)			UK's "soft power agenda"
			Reduce community tensions			
			Local government targets			"cut across a number of different areas"
			FA targets			"double strategy…of developing grassroots football while identifying talent"
			Influence public opinion through media			"symbiotic relationship"
Limitatio ns	Divergent Interests					
	Satisficing Behaviour					
Learning	Reinforcem ent	New Resource integration		London United		
	Co- innovation			Sharing Best practices		

	Imitation	Local					
		International					
	Reconceiving Value Chain	Safe-landing for former players		Former players as disposable assets			
Leaders	Integration	Visionary Skills	History	Foundational Principles			
			Narrative				
	Degrees of sophistication	Managerial Skills	Areas of expertise				
			Business Plan				
			Community needs				

Appendix I: Questions from Secondary Sources

Swansea
Please provide me with an overview of the Supporter Trust and your role within the organisation.
Why is this the ideal ownership model?
How is the ownership structure different than other clubs with supporters as shareholders like Everton FC, for example?
What do you mean with "To bring the football club closer to it's local community" as one of your four aims?
What have you done about it, and what is still missing?
Do you consider that Swansea AFC positions itself as a community club? If so, why?
How involved is the Supporters Trust in the projects that the CST carries out?
Is the charity game that you have every year, the main financial contribution of the club to the CST?
How did that project come about?

Football Association
Can you provide an overview of the new National Game strategy you just launched?
How do you integrate the grassroots and professional sides of the FA into your overall strategy?
How do you balance short-term and long-term objectives?
How do you balance local and national needs?
In your recent interview, what did you mean by "you can't be successful in sports development if you can't speak other people's language."
What is your long-term vision of what being a leading sports development team mean?
What role does the Premier League and its club members play in your key areas: facilities, coaching, participation and developing the football workforce.
How did the idea for the city hubs come about? What role do CSTs play in this process?
What is the value of CSTs to Grassroots Football?
In the case of the Premier League, you have a relationship both with the League itself and also with the individual clubs. Is your relationship both with their commercial and their community trusts?
As a major funder, how concern would you be that the charity is part of a club's business strategy?

Sport England
Do you only support projects that are aligned with your 3 strategic pillars (participation, talent development and facilities)?
What are the bases to split your support among the 46 national governing bodies you support?
What are the factors that go into increasing or decreasing your support? Is on-field performance one of them? Example of Women's football funding boost…
Could you please explain the relationship between Sport England and the Football Foundation?
How did the Football Foundation come about?
In the case of the Premier League, you have a relationship both with the League itself and also with the individual clubs. Is your relationship both with their commercial and their community trusts?
Beyond funding, the value that Sport England offers is the high level of expertise and professionalism that exists within the organization and its open and collaborative approach it takes. Could you elaborate on this with some examples?

QPR
Can you elaborate on your statement about refreshing your strategic plan by looking again at our customer profiles in some detail, the impact your projects are having and your growth ambitions?
Is this related to: Following on from winning some free consultation with Pricewaterhouse Coopers we have worked hard in our strategic planning for the next three years with an operational plan to be completed by the end of 2013 seeking to influence and align stakeholders to Club decision making processes.
What role does QPR in the community play in the international strategy of QPR?
How is this consistent with your Geographical footprint being West London?
Premier League Live: what is it and why is it part of the QPR activities? How is it funded? Part of Barclays strategy?
How did your involvement in SCORT come about?
Can you elaborate on the AirAsia-QPR clinics?

PFA
Why was the decision made to transfer the assets in the PFA Benevolent fund and the PFA Educational fund into The Professional Footballers' Association Charity?
What is the governance through Capability Status strategy about?
How and when did the Best Practice protocol come about?
The PFA provides 7M pounds of funding a year. How is that investment defined and split among the different leagues? Is the yearly income of the charity 13M? Is the strategy to invest 50% of your income yearly?
The flexible fund with the Premier League. How are projects evaluated and measured?
How do your CSR efforts affect your business relationship with the Premier League?
Is there any integration with clubs or Premier League (Premier Skills) and your work with Coaching for Hope?
Is this the first edition of the PFA Community Player Engagement Evaluation 2013/2014' report?

Nike
How did the opportunity for Premier League Kit come about?
How is the scheme funded?
How is the approach with clubs that do not have Nike as their kit provider?
What effect does this type of scheme has on the commercial relationship with the Premier League?

Lottery Fund
How do you think nationally but deliver locally? How are country portfolios different than the whole UK agenda?
Role of Premier League in your mixed portfolio with Three UK-wide themes – Community Learning and Creating Opportunity, Promoting Community Cohesion and Safety, Promoting Well-being. What about sustainability?
In what programmes are Premier League clubs involved? Awards for all or Reaching Communities?
Who are some of your Big Fund/non-lottery partners?
Are funds to the Premier League and its clubs funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and/or by the Big Lottery Fund?
Example Sport teaching in Primary School funding? How is that funding defined?

Sunderland (1)
Is the Football Development Department part of the club or of the Foundation of Light?
Foundation of Light appears to be one of the best funded CTs. Why is that the case?
International work must generate income for the Foundation. How is that achieved?
Africa in particular…work with sponsors in their native countries?
How did the opportunities with Sweden, Spain and Switzerland come about?
What is the Foundation's role in the projects with your commercial partners in Africa?

Sunderland (2)
Please provide me with an overview of three main areas of activity: Raising Standards, Sport activities and Lifelong Learning courses

Premier League – Local
Please provide an overview of Kicks and your role within the scheme?
Creating changes has 3 main areas of impact: facilities, Participation in sports and Education. What role does Kicks play in them?
Can you give me an overview of the specific activities within Kicks?
Why was the name changed from Kickz to Kicks?
How is funding for Kicks defined? Over the years there have been big changes in terms of funders and funding…
How are the provision areas defined?
The Creating Chances report states that with 31849 participations and 2364 qualifications you have exceeded expectations. What were those expectations and how were those outcomes set?

Premier League - National
Can you explain the structure for the delivery of CSR? I understand that part of the efforts come through the Foundations and others through the PFA? Can you explain?
Where does the 3.7% contribution number come from?
Where does the 1 pound becomes 3 pounds multiplier come from?
How are Fans Funds created and distributed?
What are the clubs that are not following the Community Trust Model?

Premier League - International
How did the relationship with British Council come about?
How are individual clubs involved in Premier Skills?
Are there opportunities for the British Council to work with individual clubs in countries with sponsorship overlap?

MOPAC
Can you share a little bit of history about Kicks? How did the idea for the scheme develop?
How is funding for Kicks defined? Over the years there have been big changes in terms of funders and funding…
In one of your reports there is mention of clubs having been able to create links with a number of partner agencies to ensure effective delivery. What are some of these agencies?
Is Kicks a Payment by Results (PbR) scheme?
Can you talk about the 3 P'S? Place, Performance and Promotion

Healthy Stadia
Is your organisation only funded by the EU?
How many facilities are now part of the network?
What are some of the incentives for stadia/clubs to participate?

Arsenal
What is the relationship between the Arsenal Foundation, Arsenal in the Community and the Gunners Fund?
How did the Gap year programme come about?
How did your relationship with Save the Children start, and how did the relationship evolve into an international scheme? Why China and Indonesia?
How did your relationship with Grassroots Soccer start, and how where the particular communities selected?

LMA
Please describe the LMA Community Fund?

Substance
You state that Substance helps projects and organisations to improve and demonstrate their impact and value. How would you define impact and value?
How do you help your clients influence policy?
Impact champions have any periodical review or assessment?
How did the relationship with the Premier League get started?
How many clubs in the Premier League use the Views software?

Comic Relief.
What is the type of projects you are normally involved in with football clubs?
What is the Enterprise programme that is delivered by the Community Trusts and Foundations?
How are clubs involved in Comic Relief's two development projects supported by the Premier League in Africa?
Do you have similar schemes with other sports?

Homeless FA
Homeless FA community network - are they dedicated to Homeless FA?
Of the 200 members, % of individuals vs. organization
Will the Peer Mentor programme continue after the training center 5-week?
Where does the focus on research come from?
What are the benefits of this research to the football community?
Can you share any general information about the Nike-funded research? How did the opportunity come about? What are its aims? Would results be public?
How were the 9 training center opportunities identified?
Prominence of the MU foundation. How did this relationship come about?

Children in Need.
What is the type of projects you are normally involved in with football clubs?
Do you have similar schemes with other sports?

British Council
How does the British Council create soft power for the UK?
What are your view on the British Council as 'entrepreneurial public service'?
How would you describe the process of identifying opportunities and establishing partnerships with particular brands? Skype, Microsoft, HSBC, etc.
Can you provide an overview of your Corporate Scorecard System?
How was the Premier League identified as a potential partner?
How was the Premier Skills programme created?

Liverpool Echo
What value, if any, do the media get from covering EitC?
In your view, why is EFC able to get involved in ambitious (controversial) projects such as the Free School?

Supporters Direct
Future of Football Association Regulatory Authority (FARA)? Is it going to happen? What would be FARA's scope? How will FARA protect cultural assets?
Parliament: is the new licensing model for clubs just for stadia safety?
What does a progressive relationship between supporters and clubs mean?
What are your views on the Supporters Liaison Officers?
Premier League's implication of the "silent majority"? Do supporter trusts reflect the opinions of all fans? Is there any evidence of this?

Wolfsburg
What % of your budget comes from VW?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of CSR as a department within the club vs. outside the club as a separate foundation?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of being owned by VW? Can you compare to the reality of other clubs?
Environmental initiatives are the most challenging or the least present? Why? Is it cost? How could other clubs do it? Could it be done without VW Backing?

Governance VW as both sponsor as owner: what are the challenges?
Is the sponsorship funding you receive from VW comparable to what other sponsors pay to other clubs?
What are Rights of members? Are you governed by the 50+1 rule?
What % of members are employees of VW?
How do you communicate your CSR Sustainability report? Who's your audience?

Xpro
How do players become part of the Xpro database?
Is the Xpro database only comprised of players in need?
Is reality different for younger players? Post-1986 or do they just have different problems?

Supporter Groups
What are your views on your club's Supporter Liaison Officer?
What are your views of Supporters as shareholders in the clubs? Could it happen at your club?

What are your views on Foreign investment in clubs?
What about at a National level? What are the benefits for supporters of the FA Regulatory Authority (FARA), Independent Football Ombudsman?
Are there examples of owner-supporter relationship that truly works?

FC United
Do you have a specific % of revenue assigned to CSR? How has that evolved over time?

Puma
Please share your views on the role that you think sports plays in communicating your vision and specifically the lines of products that are based on a sustainable business model.
Beyond educating the public on the importance of sustainability and the importance that Puma has focused on this particular area, do you think that it will have an impact in business in general that it will have an aura of sustainability that could potentially affect positively on your business?

Responsiball
No secondary sources

Coethica
No secondary sources

FC Barcelona
In your annual report you talk about the dialogues that you established with key stakeholders like sponsors, and how those dialogues are integrated into your CSR strategy. What other actors are key in developing these programmes?

In your annual report you state that players donate part of their salary to the foundation. How did this initiative come about?

Your annual report describes your evaluation mechanism related to the execution of schemes. What about evaluating the effectiveness of your communications?

Aston Villa
In one of your reports you had a section on the environment which is usually not present in most of the community reports. Why would you say that is not as prominent as it could be?
In the report that I read it says that the impact of your efforts is about 6 million pounds, how do you come up with that number? Is that based on the funding you provided to the community, or do you measure it in any other way?

UEFA
One of the things that I read in your report is that you invest 0.7% of your revenue. That comes from the UN recommendation?
I noticed also on that report, that your preference is to have European experts in different areas that could do the deployment on your behalf. Is that part of the strategy?
How does that portfolio of partnerships evolve over time?
I read in your report about your relationship with Supporters Direct and FS Europe. Why are these relationships important?

West Bromwich Albion
In your report you state that you are in the process of developing your own Free School. Can you please share what the scope of that initiative would be?
How close is this project to materialize?

Everton FC
One of the things that I noticed just going over your website is that there are certain unique programmes that other clubs are not engaged in, like the Free School project. What are the unique drivers that lead you to this sort of initiative?
Can you elaborate on the commissioning strategy that you follow?

Cardiff City
I understand that you have a unique ticket buying system in which depending on demand, the ticket prices vary. Is that seen by supporters as a benefit? Do you have any feedback on that? Does it provide opportunities to make tickets more affordable to those in need?
How big is the difference in funding between what you would get from the Premier League and what you get from the Football League in terms of percentages?

Football Supporters Federation
My first question is in regards to the 200 thousand supporters that you claim as followers in your website. How do you come about that number?
How did your seat in the FA Council come about?
I read that you have a close relationship with Supporters Direct. How does that relationship work?
I understand that you are having a supporters summit in June. What is that about? Is it the first time?