Complexity Within the Beautiful Game

A Study of Managerial Change In Swedish Football Clubs

Abstract

This study examines managerial change in swedish football. It roots itself in traditional managerial change literature, and further examines the phenomenon from the perspective of institutional complexity, something that has not previously been researched.

The thesis is of qualitative nature and the empirical evidence is collected through nine interviews with three seperate stakeholders; the manager, the sporting director and the player, all with operational roles within the clubs. The results show presence of two separate institutional logics; the profession represented by the managers, and the corporation represented by the boards of directors. The clubs are found to be trying to handle the logics conflicting demands through the strategic response of compromise. This is manifested in two ways; through the manager compromising on their own expert opinions and the presence of sporting directors, who act as intermediaries negotiating and balancing between the logics. The institutional complexity is tied back to theory of scapegoating where the manager is sacrificed and ultimately let go due to tensions arising from institutional complexity.

Joshua Zippis (23657)

Milos Luka Radovic (23716)

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Sincerely,

Joshua Zippis and Milos Luka Radovic

Definitions

Manager	The person responsible for the daily operations regarding the first team of a football club. The jurisdiction of the daily operations varies.
Sporting Director	The person responsible for the long term planning and administrative operations. Overseeing the sporting, administrative and financial tasks.
Player	A member of the first team.
First Team	The squad consisting of players utilized in the most senior level of club competitions.
Board	The board of directors for a football club. The governing body of the organization; selected by the club's owners (shareholders or members).
The Media	The main channels of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet) regarded collectively.
Club	A football club in the form of an association or limited company.
51/49-Rule	A rule by the Swedish National Sporting Association (Riksidrottsförbundet), stating that the members of a sporting association must hold at least 51% of the votes in a limited company with operations within sports (Idrottsaktiebolag).
Footballing Council	A council consisting of members with a footballing expertise, that can be utilised for consulting by the club.
Player Council	A core group of players responsible for communicating on behalf of the first team.
European Competition	Footballing tournaments spanning the European continent (UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League). The teams finishing in first to third place in the league, and the winning team in the Swedish cup receive a qualification opportunity to a European competition.
Transfer Window	A period of time, twice a year, where players can be registered at a new club.
Relegation	The teams finishing last and second last receive automatic relegation to a lower division, whereas the team finishing third from last has a playoff determining whether they are relegated or not.

Table 1

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1. Background

1.1. Introduction

Traditionally sport was strictly a mean of entertainment, a place for fans to come and rejoice in celebrating their team's victory. Today however the global sports industry is worth upwards €450 billion (AT Kearney, 2011). Team's performances are heavily scrutinized by the fans, media, and owners amongst others. In the midst of it all stands the manager whose main purpose is to guide and organise the team for success. In this global industry, frequent managerial change has become the standard.

The largest sport of all, both financially and audience wise, is football (AT Kearney, 2011). Football clubs are particularly good samples for studying managerial change as they have fundamental objectives, are evaluated on a regular, often weekly basis and are comparable to one another as the arena in which they operate is well defined (Rowe et al., 2005). From the start of the 2017, and until the beginning of the 2018 season of the Swedish top football division, Allsvenskan; out of the sixteen teams involved, eleven went through managerial change (SVT, 2017; Aftonbladet, 2017). This actuality is intriguing considering the findings of previous research on the topic of managerial succession which indicates either neutral or harmful effect on team performance following a managerial succession (Audas et. al. 1997, 2002; Bruinshoofd and ter Weel, 2003).

Research has revealed theories on the causes of managerial change, both within a sports and a wider setting. Gamson and Scotch (1964) build upon Gruskys (1963) initial study and present three theories regarding the causes behind managerial change: The common- sense one-way causality theory, The Grusky two-way causality theory and The ritual scapegoating no-way causality theory. Furthermore the monetization of football mentioned earlier, combined with extensive media exposure is an environment well suited for the augmentation of institutional complexity. However the theories on managerial change do not take into consideration the contradictory nature of demands within organisations; in other words, the different institutional orders and logics present within them. The aspect of institutional complexity which arises as a result of contradicting orders (Pache and Santos, 2010) is not accounted for.

Institutional complexity calls for adopting certain mechanisms in order to counteract it. According to Oliver (1991) five mechanisms or tactics are at the organisations disposal: Acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance and manipulation. To function within their peculiar environment, football teams would need to adopt these mechanisms in order to thrive. It is for that reason of interest to investigate the phenomenon of managerial change through the perspective of institutional complexity.

1.2. Purpose of Thesis and Research Question

The purpose of the thesis is to examine the influence of contradicting institutional logics present in swedish football clubs, and their effect on managerial change, Moreover, how this relates to traditional theory on managerial succession.

The presence of frequent managerial change and institutional complexity within the same organisation begs the question whether these two phenomena are related. The report dissects this intensive environment and thus aims to answer the following research question:

How does institutional complexity influence motivations and causes behind managerial change in swedish football clubs?

1.3. Assumptions and Limitations

The study assumes that different, contradicting institutional logics are present within swedish football clubs. The assumption is made due to the distinctive nature of football clubs as organisations with seemingly conflicting demands regarding organisational performance. The study makes no assumptions about which institutional logics and orders are present within the organisations studied, or how they contradict each other.

In the purpose of studying the motivations and causes behind managerial succession, the thesis has been limited to professional swedish football clubs, as these are very well suited for studying the relationship between succession and performance. The objectives of elite teams are extremely fundamental, namely perform on the pitch to achieve satisfactory sporting

results. Although other factors have, as previously mentioned, gained attention; success ultimately transpires from winning games. Moreover professional sports teams are heavily scrutinized by the media and the fans amongst others, thus creating higher pressure to act in times of declining performances. Furthermore, all teams have to abide to the same set of strict rules set by the sports federations in turn diminishing the variation between the organisations. The study has been focused on football as it is the largest sport, revenue wise, in the world (AT Kearney, 2011); resulting in higher pressure and closer monetization of the clubs as well as more structured organisations closer resembling corporations (Rowe et al., 2005). Hence, conclusions from this study, gained by observing teams within elite sport, can potentially be applicable to other organisational compositions; as managerial change in team sports has previously been compared to leader or CEO change in a corporate setting (Lieberson and O'Connor, 1972).

1.4. Research Gap

The review of previous research shows that managerial change has been looked at earlier from a quantitative perspective by studying its effects on organisational performance (Audas, 1997, 2002; Bruinshoofd and ter Weel, 2003). Theories on the reasons behind managerial change in sport have been explored by Gamson and Scotch (1964) and Grusky (1963) on the back of quantitative research. However the research gap is found in that managerial succession has not been looked at through the perspective of institutional complexity. Furthermore, qualitative research has not been done on managerial change in swedish football clubs with this outlook.

2. Literature Review

The empirical evidence is put in context by a theoretical frame of reference. The section begins by describing previous research done on managerial change, specifically within a sporting setting. The following headline brings forward institutional logics, institutional complexity and ways of dealing with it; as a mean to answer the research question. The section ends by describing the media as it has an impact on the environment sporting organisations operate within.

2.1. Previous Research on the Topic

2.1.1. Causes of Managerial Change

With his 1963 study on managerial succession, Grusky (1963) found a negative correlation between the rates of managerial succession and effectiveness. Gamson and Scotch (1964) build upon this to construct three varying explanations of the relationship between managerial succession and effectiveness presented by Grusky:

Firstly, *The common-sense one-way causality theory* recognizes the manager as responsible for the results, and consequently poor performance leads to the replacement of the manager. The new manager is expected to avoid previous errors and in turn achieve increased performance. This straightforward view of managerial change rests on the assumption that leadership and management are direclty correlated with results.. Bolden et. al. (2011) reference this in their popular textbook *Leadership and Organizational Performance: Exploring Leadership* stating that:

"The presence of effective leadership and management processes within an organization increases the likelihood of further training and development being successful. Without a sense of vision, inspiration and direction, HRM and MLD initiatives will not be integrated with business objectives, and employees will lack the motivation and commitment to work towards shared organizational goals."

Secondly, The *Grusky two-way causality theory*, which once again suggests that the manager has major influence over the results, however it is not simply the manager's actions causing deteriorating results, but the change itself has consequences on patterns of behaviour. Managerial change results in informal coalitions, disturbing the informal network and interpersonal relationships leading to a lower morale and performance causing further managerial change continuing the negative spiral of events. This is closely related to an argument made by Lieberson and O'Connor (1972) who examine managerial change in the form of CEO succession in corporations. They point out that the effects of leadership or management can come to be wrongfully attributed to a post succession manager. Lagging positive effects from a previous incumbent of the managerial role are ascribed to their successor while the successors shortcomings are attributed to mistakes made by the predecessor.

Thirdly, *The ritual scapegoating no-way causality theory* assumes managerial change to be simply a ritual with the aim to rekindle the hopes of the supporters and lift the spirits of the squad and others involved. The managers effect on performance is taken to be unimportant; instead, performance is seen as a result of the available talent. The act i viewed as a way of increasing performance, although real progress can in actuality only be achieved through long-term decisions. Gamson and Scotch (1964) also introduce regression to the mean, or as they call it the slump-ending-effect. Meaning that managerial change is usually performed after a series of poor results, therefore the probability of increased performance becomes greater after a managerial turnover. The slump-ending-effect, thus accounts for the belief in the effectiveness of the ritual. Teams that perform poorly will resort to more rituals explaining the correlation between effectiveness and rate of succession. The *ritual scapegoating no-way causality theory* dismisses the skill of managers and hints towards the situational context and points towards the "pool of former managers" frequently reemployed by varying teams as proof of the managers insignificance.

Leaderships theorist Pfeffer describes these kind of ritual actions as symbolic ones (Pfeffer, 1977,1981). Managerial change as Gamson and Scotch (1964) describe it, is a symbol of a fresh start, the end of bad results and new hope for a bright future when interpreted through Pfeffer's (1977,1981) research. Pfeffer (1981) claims that the path is already predetermined, and the role of leadership is not to influence the path but to create meaning. Likewise scapegoating is just a way to give a sense of action rather than an active choice to improve

results; it is a way of creating meaning. Edelman (1985) speaks of political leadership as tasked with dealing with symbols to affect people's conceptions. A parallel could be drawn to Gramson and Scotch's (1964) explanation, as managerial change is simply trying to symbolise change for the better and change the stakeholders conceptions for the positive.

Lieberson and O'Connor (1972) conclude their article with an interesting observation, in the corporate setting, closely resembling *The ritual scapegoating no-way causality theory*. Namely the overestimation of the effect that a single leader or manager has on firm performance. The authors suggest that by emphasizing the effect of leadership, other environmental factors and influences might be overlooked. This is consistent with management research that highlights the importance of the context in which a leader or manager is taking action (Pettigrew, 1990,1997). Beatty and Zajac (1987) examined the effects of CEO announcements on firm performance, and come to the conclusion that the strategic nature of announcements of CEO change should not be neglected and that an announcement of this sort serves as a signal to the investment community; similar to scapegoating in a sporting setting where managerial change signalises potential change for the better to the stakeholders.

2.1.2. The Effect of Managerial Change on Organisational Performance

Audas et al. (1997) compiled a quantitative study on English football and the managerial changes that occured between 1972 and 1993. Comparing the results of team's that changed manager with the one's sticking by their managers, and arrived at several conclusions. The study found that managerial change had a harmful effect on performance immediately following a managers termination. It also found that due to regression to the mean, there is a natural tendency for results to improve after a bad spell which makes the managerial change seem successful. However teams of similar quality that stuck by their managers recovered quicker and exhibited overall higher performance than teams terminating their managers contracts, indicating the harmful effects of managerial change. The same conclusion was reached by Bruinshoofd and ter Weel (2003), namely that sacking a manager is neither efficient nor effective in improving team performance.

In order to investigate if the manager's leadership has any impact on team performance, Andersen (2011) examines studies done on three different team sports (baseball, basketball and football) completed in two countries, including ten earlier quantitative studies. Andersen (2011) agrees with Audas (1997,2002) regarding the conclusion that teams should not change manager during an ongoing season even though the team is underperforming.

The study by Audas et. al. (2002) revisits and expands on the Audas et. al. (1997) study by looking for patterns in managerial changes and manager turnover within English Football. Based on empirical results from the quantitative data, Audas et al. (2002) make several statistically supported interpretations. The authors argue that while managerial changes have been found to lead to worse short- term results, this result is not uniform. In some cases a manager is able to come in and re-invigorate the team reaching great success in the short-term post dismissal. Based on this assumption, a correlation between managerial change and a spike in the variance of the results is found; leading to the conclusion that a major reason behind managerial change is a gamble. The management or owners take a gamble on a new manager hoping for the higher variance to tip over to the side of positive results. Audas et al. (2002) suggest further two possible reasons for managerial change in spite of the negative trend that has been shown. One is the owners and managements hubris in overestimating their own ability to select the right manager to take over. The other is deliberately sacrificing short -term results in order to build a team for good results in the long- run with the new manager. Audas et al. (2002) however still insist that managerial change has a harmful effect on organisational performance.

2.3. Institutional Logics

2.3.1. Institutional Confusion and Complexity

Organisations have more blurred and ambiguous definitions than institutions as an organisation can draw structural and ideological inspiration from more than one type of institution. Brunsson exemplified this in 1994 through the concepts of company-ization and politicization; in other words companies can embrace certain characteristics of political institutions and vice- versa. Brunsson (1994) also points out that there is a third type of institution, the association. Associations are just as prone to adopting characteristics of companies and political institutions, the reverse is also true, refered to as associationization.

When this mixing of characteristics happens and the boundaries between the different types of organisations become blurred, institutional confusion occurs according to Brunsson (1994). The author points out three different processes and the reasons behind them that might lead to institutional confusion:

Firstly, picking Out Individual Bits; which means introducing certain attractive characteristics from a different institutional form. The introduced features would not mean going against any existing internal logics, rather adapting attractive features to suit the current institutional form.

Secondly, realizing Institutions; which entails realizing the attractiveness of another institution as a whole and striving towards becoming more like it. Not necessarily like other organisations of the desired institutional form but rather a stereotype of the institutional form in question

Thirdly, adaptation; this involves a change in institutional form due to external factors. Change in the environment that necessitates a movement towards another institutional form.

These processes lead to institutional confusion which in practice means that an organisation faces conflicting demands and ideologies which are most prominently present at the moment of transformation, when an organisation is in the process of adopting certain characteristics (Brunsson, 1994).

Pache and Santos (2010) acknowledge the existence of multiple institutional logics as being present in all kinds of organisations. These logics can due to their inherently different natures lead to conflicting demands on the organisation, resulting in *organisational complexity.* The authors bring up the nature of demands that are put on the organisations as one of the main factors causing institutional complexity. Conflict over means and conflict over goals are the two dimensions mentioned. Contrasting or conflicting ideas on how to attain goals due to different logics and different types of goals for organisational performance result in conflicting demands according to Pache and Santos (2010).

2.3.2. Logics Extended

Similar to theories developed by Brunsson (1994), Thornton et al. (2012) argues that there are six different institutional orders present in general social and organisational contexts; family, religion, state, market, profession and corporation, as opposed to Brunssons (1994) three. These are aligned across an X- Axis with the Y- Axis of the model (*Table 2*) defining several categories for these orders to be described and evaluated by. These categories along the Y-Axis act as guidelines for understanding how individuals belonging to the different orders perceive reality. For example, how they identify with each other, where social norms are developed or how authority is defined. The axis together aim to create an understanding of the frame of reference used for sense-making in each of the orders (Thornton et al., 2012).

X- Axis: Institutional Orders / Y-Axis: categories	Profession	Corporation
Root Metaphor	Profession as relational network	Corporation as hierarchy
Sources of legitimacy	Personal expertise	Market position of firm
Sources of Authority	Professional association	Board of directors. Top management
Sources of Identity	Association with quality of craft. Personal reputation.	Bureaucratic roles
Basis of Norms	Membership in guild and association	Employment in firm
Basis of Attention	Status in profession	Status in hierarchy
Basis of Strategy	Increase personal reputation	Increase size & diversification of firm
Informal Control Mechanisms	Celebrity professionals	Organization culture
Economic System	Personal Capitalism	Managerial capitalism

Table 2   (Thornton et al., 2012)

2.3.3. Profession and Corporation

As shown in table 1, Thornton et al. (2012) point to the fundamental differences between the institutional orders defined. Especially relevant for this study are the different characteristics presented in Table 2; of the profession and the corporation orders. The root metaphors of these two orders or logics differ as the profession is based on a network of professionals working in relation to each other where as the corporation is structured in a clear hierarchical order. The sources of legitimacy for the two logics are therefore also separate with the professionals drawing legitimacy from their personal expertise, the detail knowledge of their field of work; on the other hand, in the corporation order legitimacy is drawn from the hierarchical position. Personal identity is in a professional order based on the quality of one's craft, one's work, while it is once again the hierarchical position that determines identity in a corporate order (Table 1, Thornton et al., 2012).

2.3.5. Dealing with Institutional Demands

In order to deal with the institutional complexity (Pache and Santos, 2010), Oliver (1991) defines five different strategies; five different responses for organisations to act out when faced with differing institutional demands:

1. Acquiescence; is a type of indifferent approach to conflicting logics where the organisation adopts necessary measures proposed by external sources (eg. present institutional norms).

2. Compromise; entails balancing between logics through compromising on goals or/and means and trying to satisfy all conflicting logics.

3. Avoidance; is a strategy where organisations avoid to comply with institutional pressures or avoiding settings and situations where this compliance is necessary.

4. Defiance; involves the rejection of one institutional demand in order to remove the present contradiction.

5. Manipulation; requires organisations to alter the requirements and demands of institutional logics in order to remove the conflict.

2.4. The Effects of Media Coverage on Organisations

Organisational reputation is defined as the perception, collective knowledge about or the recognition of an organisation (Einwiller,Carroll and Korn, 2010). This reputation is comprised of two factors; the stakeholders perception of the quality of certain organisational attributes and the degree of large- scale recognition that the organisation receives (Rindova et. al 2005).

Einwiller, Carroll and Korn (2010) used the example of firms, and state that they are a part of an economic system together with the stakeholders and the media. The firm is dependent in this system on the media to deliver news and information in order to foster reputation among its stakeholders and the groups invaluable for the firm's value- creation. This is especially true for information that lacks credibility when coming from the firms themselves. The media is in turn dependent on the firms to provide information and content necessary to attract the audience attention on which their revenue stream is based. Einwiller, Carroll and Korn (2010) also point out that the media is dependent on the stakeholders goals on what they want to learn and what reputation factors are significant for them.

3. Methodology

The section introduces the qualitative research method, and inductive approach that has been used by the study; as well as introducing the respondents involved. The section then goes on to discuss the studies credibility and ethical considerations.

3.1. Research Strategy

The study aims to, through qualitative means, understand the reasons and factors behind managerial change in swedish football. This is done by investigating the stances, thoughts and opinions of three parties involved in that particular type of situations; the managers, the sporting directors and the players. A qualitative method was deemed compatible with the studies objective to gain deeper understanding of managerial change; the study hopes to gain understanding of the motivations behind the phenomenon through investigating the experiences and social interactions as perceived by those involved in the organisations of the studies interest, namely football clubs in elite settings.

The studies intended form is inductive, which is in line with qualitative research. The inductive form has provided the study with the freedom to explore new theoretical frames of reference during the data collection process. However, the study accepts that an exclusively inductive study is considered to be out of reach due to the authors' bias as a result of previous knowledge on theories relevant for the topic at hand (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

The inductive form has resulted in an iterative process; the theories used have been selected in conjunction with the authors interpretations of the collected data during the collection process. The literature on institutional complexity was deemed appropriate as a theoretical frame of reference during the coding of the data. After a categorisation process, and interpretation of the categorised data; the theories were deemed fitting by the authors.

3.2. Choice of Study Objects

In order to encompass the factors believed to lead to institutional complexity such as extensive media coverage, European competitions, and comprehensive resources; the study is focused on the top division of Swedish football, the Allsvenskan.

The choice of respondents was limited to three different positions within football clubs; the managers, the sporting directors and the players. These actors were chosen due to their closeness to the day to day operations in the club and operational involvement. The managerial position is the focal point of the thesis. Their perspective, how they see their own position and their thought on managerial change has to be considered. The role of sporting director is an executive management role, involved in all sporting and administrative matters including managerial change and is therefore relevant for the study. The player is the observer in this equation. Players are the ones experiencing the effects of managerial change. In order to gain a full overview of managerial change the players point of view is supplementary.

3.3.1. Data Collection
The data collection was done through nine interviews; six of them were conducted in person, while the other three were completed by telephone. Observations of interview subjects were also a part of the data collection in the case of the interviews conducted in person, with purpose of better understanding the data. The interviews conducted in person always took place in a location of the respondents choosing.

3.3.2. Choice of Respondents
The selection process has been one of purposeful sampling (Bryman and Bell, 2015). In total four managers have been interviewed, three sporting directors and two players. All respondents are of Swedish nationality with the vast majority of their experiences involving swedish clubs, all abiding the Swedish football federations regulations, thus enabling more aligned answers and minimizing the variation of differentiating operating methods. All respondents have swedish as their native language, thus all interviews were conducted in swedish to ensure ease of communication. The respondents have experience from the swedish top division which facilitates the comparability between respondents answers.

All respondents were contacted by email before booking an appointment after agreed participation. Snowball sampling was practiced on several occasions; in other words, several interviews were booked through previous respondents (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

The limited number of people with the experience of a managerial, sporting director or player role within a swedish professional football club in the top division, and their celebrity through media exposure makes the opportunities to find respondents somewhat limited.

3.3.3. The List and Description of Respondents

Name	Role	Employer	Located	Interview Format
Jan Karlsson*	Manager	Anonymous	Anonymous	Face to Face
Kim Bergstrand	Manager	IK Sirius	Uppsala	Face to Face
Ola Beck*	Manager	Anonymous	Anonymous	Phone
Per Olsson	Manager	Sandvikens IF	Sandviken	Phone
Bo Andersson	Sporting Director	Djurgårdens IF	Stockholm	Face to Face
Mats Gren	Sporting Director	IFK Göteborg	Gothenburg	Phone
Ove Sjöblom	Sporting Director	IK Sirius	Uppsala	Face to Face
Jakob Glasberg	Player	IK Frej	Stockholm	Face to Face
Philip Andersson	Player	Akropolis IF	Stockholm	Face to Face

Table 3

 *Arbitrary names due to anonimity reasons.

3.3.4. Interview Design

The data collection was conducted through semi- structured interviews. Anonymity is practiced in few instances in agreement with the respondent ,when it was found necessary for the extraction of all relevant and important information from respondents that had concerns. The reasoning behind a semi-structured interview format is that the free flowing interview gives the respondent the freedom to roam in their own thoughts, associations and indicate to the interviewers their true priorities. This, whilst the interview is able to stay on the subject desired by the interviewers through pre determined topics defined in the interview guides, which once again helps to extract all relevant information. The semi- structured approach also opened up for spontaneous follow- up questions that may have come up during the interview providing a deeper understanding of the respondents experiences (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The interview guides that were used to conduct the interviews were also helpful in comparing the different answers that were provided, making coding of the data easier and the tendencies more legible and recognisable.

After nine interviews were conducted, the researchers concluded that enough empirical evidence was collected, as clear patterns in themes and opinions formed. It was surmised that further interviews would not be compulsory for adding further insights, and the empirical evidence at hand was sufficient to make an analysis and draw relevant conclusions.

3.5. The Credibility of the Study

The study considers the two measures of credibility, adjusted for qualitative research; external and internal reliability and validity, described by Bryman and Bell (2015).

3.5.1. Reliability

To ensure the external reliability of the study, a conversation guide was made for every respondent subcategory. The conversation guide was there to guide the semi-structured interviews in a general direction while giving freedom to the respondent to explore their own priorities. These guides ensure the external reliability by making the study repeatable with the same set of conversation topics and objectives. Although external reliability was considered to be important, it was not of main concern due to the qualitative nature of the study, as the exact same circumstances in which the study was conducted could never be replicated

exactly. replication of an exact same scenario would be impossible to do due to the very subjective and circumstantial nature of the respondents answers.

Tools for replication are provided with the list of respondents (except for the ones where anonymity was deemed necessary, or requested) and the conversation guides available.

Internal reliability was enforced through independent analysis of the data by each member of the research team. These independent findings were then compared and a discussion was formed in order to come to an agreement on what was observed.

3.5.3. Validity

The external validity of the study, its generalization and application on other social settings and situations is difficult to argue for with this type of qualitative study. The subjective nature of the findings makes it difficult, or rather impossible to state that the results are applicable in their entirety under different circumstances. Although based on previous research explored in the literature review, management studies based on sport have had large influences in corporate settings and ideas developed from sport management studies have had an impact on academia. For this reason, the findings of this study are believed to be applicable in other areas of management research as well as valid in a broader sport scope as they are in line with previous sport management research.

To ensure internal validity, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. To avoid bias in the observations and transcribing, both authors were present for all interviews to gain a coherent understanding of the background and emotional setting in which the respondents gave their statements. The transcribed data as well as the audio recordings and adjacent notes were then analyzed separately by the two authors. The individual analyses were then discussed and consensus was reached on the results of the interviews and things that were observed and heard; warranting the internal validity of the study.

3.6. Ethical considerations

Managers, sporting directors and players all have a direct influence on the team's performances. Therefore, their opinions are of biased nature. The study addresses relationships between individuals but also the sensitive nature of being let go from an employment. Due to the sensitivity of these situations, the responses might be bias and uncomfortable to discuss for some respondents. To counter these factors, the interviews are of open structure encouraging the respondents to speak about their opinions in a general manner. Also, the respondents were offered anonymity in case of sensitive information being provided.

All participants received information about the subject and potential questions in order to perosnally determine if their participation would be appropriate prior to each interview. Respondents were also asked for permission prior to recording the interviews as well as for permission to use quotes provided by them. Anonymity was provided if deemed necessary or requested out of respect for the respondents who in some cases are closely scrutinized public figures. Those who wished were also handed the thesis prior to its publishing, giving them an opportunity to review and approve the content.

4. Empirical Evidence

The section is divided into four separate themes that were discovered through the data. Each theme is categorised according to the respondents position within the club and includes the depositions of their experiences.

4.1. Expectations

4.1.1. Expectations and External Pressures
<u>*Managers*</u>

All managers, especially Jan Karlsson, spoke about the "new" times within football. A time characterized by the increasing monetary gains, agents and the media. These factors have hampered the clubs from operating long term. The media control huge aspects of the game and blow things out of proportion both in success and failure. Media push for change in all forms, the more change the more they can write about. Supporters crave excitement and the media tries to provide that excitement in every way possible. The supporter expectations are something the club has to control extensively. Kim Bergstrand further spoke of the footballing culture and knowledge present in the city affects and distorts supporter expectations, while Per Olsson acknowledged that in the end football is about selling dreams and expectations and you therefore should expect unnatural expectations.

Kim Bergstrand specified that the way the sporting director and the board manage to work against these factors determines how well the manager can perform his duties. According to Jan Karlsson; everything revolves around the expectations, setting the right expectations that on one hand ignite supporters with excitement but on the other hand does not put unreasonable pressure on the squad is a difficult task. All managers spoke of the swedish first division as extremely competitive. Jan Karlsson stated that out of sixteen teams, three have the expectation to win the league, ten are targeting qualification to the Europa League and no teams want relegation. Considering only one team can win the league, three teams can qualify for a European competition, and two teams are relegated, ultimately the majority of supporters and boards will feel dissatisfied; a conclusion agreed upon among all managers. Since results in football are so transparent managers are evaluated on a short term basis and the teams are constantly performing above or below the expectations. Expectations are also

very subjective and Jan Karlsson called for other more long term forms of evaluation related to leadership, communication and development. Per Olsson and Jan Karlsson agreed upon that the board, sporting director, manager and players shall all together be part of setting objectives. It usually becomes a contest with the marketing division who use high objectives as a selling point.

Sporting Directors

The sporting directors were unanimous in saying that the economics within the sport is of ever increasing importance, especially with international competitions in mind. The bigger the club, the more you have to balance both supporters, sponsors and fans from intervening. According to Mats Gren supporters and sponsors buy in to the clubs long term vision, as opposed to the footballing media who are always out for an exciting new story to publish, usually with a short- term outlook for success or failure. This in turn magnifies the short-term expectations that the fans have for the club, resulting in unreasonable expectations from external parties.

"Those making decisions have to be uninfluenced by external pressures but at the same time the environment has altered and fans today want total transparency, these two aspects collide."
-Per Olsson

"We have spoken to our partners and fans about our long term vision… and they buy into the concept. It is mostly the media who has difficulties aligning themselves with what we communicate".
-Mats Gren

4.1.2. Expectations and the Board
Managers

The managers were unanimous in concluding boards performing insufficient analysis both in recruitment and sacking. As Kim Bergstrand pointed out managers, sporting directors and other entities within the club are obliged to compete educational courses unlike the board members. The boards need to put more emphasis on the fit between the club's philosophy and

the manager's philosophy. Ola Beck went on to state that the clubs footballing philosophy is not ingrained to the extent necessary and changes drastically as time progresses. This, according to Per Olsson, can clearly be seen in the recruitment process and the new manager shortlist: the managers targeted for the same job opportunity can have widely differing footballing and leadership philosophies.

"The majority of the club's strategies seem good at first glance but are not deep-rooted enough in the organisation to withstand poor results."
-Ola Beck

The managers agreed that high competence is of great importance and question whether the boards have the competence necessary as ultimately it is the boards that take the final decision in times of managerial change.

"It is not good that there are so many managerial changes today, but ultimately the boards have to take action and firing the manager becomes the alternative."
-Kim Bergstrand

Regarding the external pressures, Ola Beck talked about how it becomes even more essential for knowledge within the board but also to stand by deep-rooted identity given the pressures from partnerships, supporters and media. Recruiting the right personnel to the board is crucial.

According to all managers, he managerial environment within football is unique in the aspect that there are very limited acceptable jobs in the country. Kim Bergstrand explained that in an ideal situation the managers should be more critical and selective in accepting job offers, but they can not afford to be.

"As a manager you can't be to picky, you have to move, you have a family."
- Jan Karlsson

"From a managers point of view, managers today are bad at examine the conditions at the new club, does my management style fit the club, my playing philosophy, how I approach the squad, training methods and my overall personality."
-Kim Bergstrand

Ola Beck also stated that the limited amount of jobs for managers domestically has an impact on expectations:

"A managers choices are limited and this has implications for the demands a manager can make, you have to raise the expectations to get the job."
-Ola Beck

With the 51:49 rule in place the clubs are to a majority owned by their members and therefore are an association. But with the increased monetary gains the clubs are according to Ola Beck acting in a more corporate manner with hierarchical and predetermined processes. Jan Karlsson described it as following:

"It is a collision between association and company. The clubs want to operate more professionally [in accordance to companies] but you still have to be an association. The professionalism collides with the association aspect, and not being able to commit fully to one or the other is never good."
-Jan Karlsson

Sporting directors

Mats Gren explained the importance of being realistic with the clubs expectations, IFK Göteborg are building for future results and are therefore trying to play down the expectations. At IFK Göteborg the sporting director has a discussion with the board, with a footballing council also involved. The Footballing council consists of people with footballing knowledge with ties to the club. Bo Andersson added that you have to prove yourself before setting high expectations, something a lot of clubs do not do.

"The manager is also involved in setting the expectations but is not a deciding factor, on the other hand we would never announce expectations the manager disagrees with… It is important that people in the board have footballing knowledge, that is a basic guideline you should strive for."

-Mats Gren

Ove Sjöblom is in line with Mats Gren and his views on the importance of knowledge. In fact Sirius are embarking on assembling a footballing council to provide the necessary knowledge in order not to become too dependent on the current coaching staff. The coaching staff has according to Sjöblom provided Sirius with a deep-rooted philosophy of how to play football. A philosophy transcending throughout the organisation, from the academy to the first team.

"I would want nothing less than for the coaching staff to leave us, but if they do we have to be prepared and have a plan B."

-Ove Sjöblom

Bo Andersson described the complexity of operating football clubs. He explained how football clubs fundamentally are associations not companies but have to operate as the latter. But at the same time acknowledged the vital characteristic of the voluntary work members of the club do. Football clubs are unique, shareholders of a company demand financial returns whilst members of a football club demand sporting results.

"We can be a professional club, but to operate all year round we are dependent on the voluntary work from our members."

-Bo Andersson

"I was tasked in 2014 with establishing sporting and financial stability, and forming mens, womens, boys, and girls sporting sections."

-Bo Andersson

4.2. The Managers Expertise and Influence

Managers

Most managers pointed out that the situation varies from club to club; in some places the manager has a bigger role, more power and therefore more responsibility. They are also careful to point out that a manager's influence on results is very much dependent on how much power and responsibility he has. Kim Bergstrand said that as a manager you always want to have a bigger role and be involved as much as possible. Jan Karlsson argued as well that as a manager, you want as much power as possible in order to make a difference. He however added that a big workload can be straining, a good relationship and communication between the manager, the sporting director and the board can therefore be a replacement for this. Jan Karlsson went on to talk about the importance of managers own people on the field of play, leaders among players who can be the managers voice. In order to have this kind of players, a manager needs either time to develop them, or the authority to be able to buy them for the club. Even Ola Beck confirmed that:

"Influence dictates how much you can affect the teams' performance."
-Ola Beck

Jan Karlsson said that a managers' influence is always overstated in the eyes of supporters. A manager can make tactical changes and prepare for games perfectly; but in the end it is the players decisions on the field that determine the outcome, according to him.

"The manager gets too much criticism [from the supporters, the media and the club] in times of poor performance, and too much praise when the performance is good."
-Jan Karlsson

All interviewed managers pointed out that the manager is a symbolic, front figure that the clubs rely on; as Kim Bergstrand of IK Sirius put it:
"It is the manager who is in the line of fire". [When it comes to bad results or any type of problem or scandal that the club might be involved in]
-Kim Bergstrand

Sporting Directors

Mats Gren, of IFK Göteborg, said that the manager plays a big role in team performance, without further explanation. He however made it clear that all managers who come to the club have a clearly predefined amount of influence and power, an extent that does not change. An example that he provided was that the club would not buy a player that the current manager did not approve of; but it was clear that it was not wholly the managers' decision showing the constraints on the manager's influence at the club.

Ove Sjöblom, the sporting director of IK Sirius, said that their current manager, Kim Bergstrand, has had a lot of success with the club due to his leadership capabilities and qualities as a coach confirming the importance of a manager for team performance. He however pointed out that when a club has certain structures in place, certain ideas; the manager no longer becomes indispensable. Sjöblom also showed understanding for the restrictions that a manager might face such as injuries in the squad, lack of squad quality and lack of confidence among players.

Players

Both players that were interviewed regarded the manager as an important factor for team performance, both for tactical and motivational reasons. Andersson went on to say that a managers tactical prowess is more important in professional clubs due to the higher standard of player ability. Jakob Glasberg put more emphasis on the managers' ability to create a good relationship with the players.

"How you thrive under the manager is crucial. He motivates you, he gives you confidence".
-Jakob Glasberg

Both Andersson and Glasberg spoke about the symbolism of a new incoming manager. Both argue that sometimes new energy is needed to lift the group, sometimes even in the middle of the season.

"Bad results can turn into a negative spiral and lead to the players losing their confidence. In this situation, it is not necessarily new competence that is needed, but rather new energy and a positive spirit. It is the [managerial] change itself that gives new energy, not necessarily the new manager himself.".
 -Philip Andersson

4.3. Relationships and Communication

Managers

Ola Beck explained the reason behind the use of sporting directors and their roles; The clubs have grown at a tremendous pace and it is increasingly difficult for the boards to keep track. In times like these the demand for someone to be responsible for the organisation's' long term outlook and not results on a week by week basis has grown stronger. A sporting director who represents the football in a board setting has now become the norm at most clubs. Unlike managers, changing sporting director is a lot more seldom.

"The arrival of sporting directors responsible in the long term have made the managers less essential"
-Ola Beck

"The responsibility of sporting directors has evolved lately, the power has shifted more towards them and you never change the sporting directors"
-Per Olsson

All the managers agreed upon the communication flow between the board, sporting director and manager as a necessity for a healthy relationship, and in turn achieving success. Like-mindedness regarding how the football should be played and how the club should be run is essential. Jan Karlsson was adamant that the boards have to improve at equating the manager and sporting director in terms of power and importance. Both Jan Karlsson and Ola Beck explained the dangers of boards putting the sporting director in between the board itself and the manager thus hampering the communication, and in Jan Karlssons words:

"Enabling misrepresented information to be stated between the board and sporting director… The sporting director is the one representing the footballing side to the boards and when they pursue their own agenda they exploit information to their own advantage.".
-Jan Karlsson

"As a club you have to invest in continuity and the development of players long term and when making these investments there is a risk that managers are not a part of them, there is a filter and information does not reach the manager."
-Ola Beck

Jan Karlsson also pointed out how it is the boards responsibility to structure and lead the organisation in a way that gives the sporting director and the manager equal amounts of power and influence. He followed up by stating:

"It seems that the board changes chairman constantly and this is not good. The board is the central decision making unit and these changes hamper the organisation."
-Jan Karlsson

Kim Bergstrand and Jan Karlsson poined out the clubs financial standings as the most defining factor correlating to results. Jan Karlsson added the environment as a second factor since everyone has to feel comfortable to be able to thrive and develop. Cooperation and communication become key underlying factors. The dialogue between the sporting director and players needs to enhance. The manager's task is to defend the players at all costs and in turn the sporting directors task is to defend the manager at all costs. However several sporting directors follow their own agenda and interests. The discrepancies between the manager and the board then become too large in order for the manager to defend himself.

"How many times have you in declining times witnessed a sporting director giving a statement and admitting that the players he bought are not adequate enough, zero!"
-Jan Karlsson

Ove Sjöblom desribed that the circumstances differ between clubs, but the sporting directors main function is regarding the long term planning and this includes goals and creating a vision, more concretely balancing the sporting stability and the economic stability. According to Sjöblom a sporting director is responsible for the squad, recruitment, planning player transfers and player sales. Also for justifying these to the board. The sporting directors prepare the organisation to make quick decisions. All the sporting directors agreed that you have to listen to the players but in the end you need faith in the manager. The majority of clubs have a player council who speak for the team.

"The sporting directors job is considerably more long term than the managers and with this in mind it becomes easier if they are two seperate people."
-Mats Gren

"The communication channel between us and the players is open, if the players are dissatisfied and can not get the manager's attention I sincerely believe they would turn to me."
-Ove Sjöblom

"As a sporting director you can sense dissatisfaction in the squad… I am responsible for the first team; player recruitment. The justification of player purchases and sales toward the board."
-Bo Andersson

4.4. Time and Continuity

Managers

Jan Karlsson spoke of the clubs expecting quicker results and the managers therefore being given increasingly little time to make their mark on the team. This transpires into managers compromising their long term vision in order to achieve short term goals. The long term vision incorporates things as development (of players). Both Per Olsson and Kim Bergstrand acknowledged development as a key aspect of the job, but explained further how they put aside development to instead focus on short term matches and results, since if the manager fails short term the long term vision becomes insignificant.

"A football club and a manager are never better than their most recent match."
-Kim Bergstrand

In the last ten to fifteen years managers have been seen as more disposable, but it is not just a high turnover of managers but the turnover of players has also risen leading Jan Karlsson to question the notion of continuity in such conditions. The managers all expressed the importance of having a backbone of players which one can rely on. Building this backbone of players who can express leadership qualities themselves requires time and patience. As Per Olsson recalled, he succeeded in four transfer windows with high player turnover at Djurgården IF, but as soon as he failed to make it work the fifth time around, his time was up.

"A manager has to resist short term failure to accomplish long term success, but nobody dares to do so with the fear of the consequences from the media and supporters."
-Jan Karlsson

"I have to rethink how I work with development to keep up with the industry."
-Per Olsson

"A manager has to be focused on the present, and this leads to compromises regarding all the decisions one takes."
-Kim Bergstrand

The managers were unanimous when it comes to the statement that time is a crucial factor when coming to a new club. One needs time to implement ideas on footballing tactics and philosophy; but most of all, a manager needs time to get to know the people that they will be working with on a daily basis, something defined as vital by Jan Karlsson and Kim Bergstrand.

"Time is of great importance. You need to get to know the people that you will be working with everyday and the people that you need to be a leader for."
-Kim Bergstrand

Sporting directors

Bo Andersson explained that the number one thing a club has to do is to define how long term it should operate. At Djurgården IF they divide it into separate stages and with that it becomes natural to explore the possibility of finding a specific fit between a certain stage and a certain manager.

"Per Olsson was brought to stabilize the club and accomplished this, and although difficult we had reached a point where new energy was necessary".
-Bo Andersson

"A long term vision is vital, and to not provide a long term vision to the manager never ends well. There has to be a mutual consensus and understanding between the club and manager regarding which stage the club is at"
-Bo Andersson

Mats Gren emphasized how it always is the club that should evaluate the suitability of the manager and never the opposite. The club builds a profile of a potential manager regarding game philosophy, tactics etc. However, in IFK Göteborgs latest managerial succession the process of finding a new manager had not begun until the previous managers sacking. Instead an interim manager or assistant manager is put in charge. Ove Sjöblom questioned such a process and the emphasis put on the cause-effect analysis. Although understanding of the short term effects and psychology a managerial change can provide.

"I have difficulties seeing the effect of managerial change. Today in many cases searching for the next manager is step number two. It is pointless to first sack a manager before afterwards hiring a new manager who in many regards is a "copy" of the previous one."
-Ove Sjöblom

Players

The two players interviewed had varied views regarding the sporting directors interference. The sporting directors Jakob Glasberg has expirienced have been close to the team and regularly watched training sessions.

"If something happens in the team or in the dressing room the sporting director can sense it"
-Jakob Glasberg

Philip Andersson however said that the sporting director and board have little, to no insight into dressing room. Communication wise it is the experienced players or the player council who discuss matters with the manager. Not a lot of communication is conducted with the sporting director or any members of the board according to Andersson.

"The sporting director and board have no insight into the dressing room, and can at times blame the manager after receiving external pressure". (supporters and media).
-Philip Andersson

5. Analysis

In accordance with the theoretical frame of reference, the empirical evidence has been analysed. The analysis is presented in the following section.

5.1. Institutional Logics Within Swedish Football Clubs

In Swedish football, most clubs have the word "association" as a part of their name; as our empirical evidence shows, most operate on the assumption that they in fact function as associations. The reality is found to be more complex. The results presented show signs that two differing institutional orders are present within clubs: the profession and the corporation.

5.1.1. The manager as a part of the professional institutional order

The professional institutional order is characterized by relations within a profession, and personal expertise as the source of legitimacy, acceptance and power (Table 2). Results show evidence of the managers identifying themselves with this specific institutional order. The manager is the person within the organisation with the utmost footballing knowledge, with expertise ranging from tactical awareness, development of players to their overall leadership within a footballing context. They highlight footballing competence in combination with well established communication channels as necessary for sporting success. The managers all question the footballing competence within the organisation but mostly within the board placing themselves in the position of experts. Pointing out that the more influence they have within the club the greater their and thereby the clubs performance would be, showing signs that they recognise expertise as a source legitimacy and authority; placing themselves in bracket of the professional institutional order.

5.1.2. The board as a representation of the corporate institutional order

The corporate institutional order is characterised by a clear hierarchical structure, and defined bureaucratic roles which in turn determine the status one has in any given context. In this order, the highest authority is found within a board of directors (*Table 2*). The members of the boards of directors in swedish football clubs have the most authority and the final say regarding the majority of the organisational decisions, despite not having the most professional expertise in the matter; which points towards influence being derived from hierarchical positions rather than expertise and knowledge. This is in line with the corporate institutional order. At IFK Göteborg, Mats Gren validates this mindset by stating the

managerial role as very predefined with a set amount of influence and power. Bo Andersson further confirms that the boards basis of strategy is in fact to increase the size of the organisation and to reach economic stability, in combination with achieving satisfying sporting results. The sporting directors also speak of financial growth as an important aspect of being successful in sporting terms and an objective for the club, that it is necessary to have the means to reinvest money in the club to increase stature. This evidence points toward the board having a corporate institutional mindset where the size and diversification of the organisation is of importance and one of the main tasks given to the sporting director.

5.2. The Collision Between Conflicting Institutional Orders

Two separate institutional orders can be observed within clubs, as mentioned earlier. When multiple orders and logics are present, institutional complexity arises due to contradicting views and demands from the different logics (Pache & Santos 2010). This is true for the clubs in swedish football.

On one hand there is the board, structuring the club in a corporate manner, and on the other hand a manager trying to succeed through applying personal expertise in the form of leadership, a pedagogical approach and technical footballing knowledge. This is noted in the different approaches towards evaluation; with managers preferring evaluation according to profession specific criteria, as exemplified by Jan Karlsson who speaks of communication, development and leadership. The board on the other hand use non specific and sometimes arbitrary criteria such as short- term performance due to the lack of expertise. Problems arise when the people with absence of expertise are the major driving force behind setting expectations prior to the season. Therefore it is not at all strange that a clear majority of all boards are disappointed at the end of the season. Boards demand the clubs to grow at a steady pace, but in football it will always be at someone else's expense, meaning that for one club to grow another club has to fail to meet its expectations of steady growth. The managers therefore call for more expertise within higher management ranks in order to get fair treatment and reasonable expectations. A sign of the professionals disapproving of non professionals having, according to them, undeserved authority founded on hierarchy rather than expertise; generating institutional complexity.

These discrepancies in expectations are partly rooted in separate natures of demand of the two institutional logics. The managers, professionals, are always out to develop their team, instill a footballing philosophy of their choosing, develop players and leaders for long term sporting success; and that way increasing their personal reputation within their profession. The board on the other hand is also focused on sporting success, as this is the main type of performance indicator for a football club. However, their expectations are rooted in the idea of constantly climbing the footballing ranks and thereby increasing the stature of the club, the perceived size of their corporation. These conflicting natures of demand result in institutional complexity within the swedish football clubs.

5.3. Solving Complexities

When institutional complexity arises in organisations, there are multiple ways of dealing with it, ways of defying the contradicting demands put on an organisation. When it comes to swedish football clubs, the main way of dealing with these contradictions appears to be compromise. Compromising on goals or/and means to reach them and that way trying to satisfy the conflicting logics. The study finds evidence of this among managers. In order to satisfy the individuals in the highest hierarchical positions, managers tend to compromise on their own ideas, philosophies and goals rooted in their profession. These compromises however appear not only to be based on uppeasing the conflicting demands, but also on personal survival. The managers profession is a unique one in that only a very limited number of jobs/positions are available, making securing and withholding a job increasingly important. This leads to submission to the opposing logic, the corporate order, for personal professional survival. Submission is necessary for the preservation of one's livelihood as a manager. As Per Olsson points out; he has to rethink how he works with development in order to keep up with the way the industry is going. Compromising can also lead to managers accepting expectations they in reality do not view as reasonable in their expert opinion and as Ola Beck stated in some cases even raise the expectations themselves in order to keep or get a job. The conflicting demands due to institutional complexity thereby put their position, their job, in peril.

The managers compromising on own ideas and expectations because of submitting to the corporate logic based on hierarchy has not just led to unreasonable expectations, but also short- termism within football clubs. Per Olsson and Kim Bergstrand heavily emphasize

development as an aspect of the managers responsibility that is compromised on. Development is closely aligned with the professional institutional order since improvement and quality of craft are sources of identity and status. Instead they now submit to a corporate order where growing, and not necessarily development and inherent quality, is central.

5.3.1. The Intermediary

The analysis has indicated the presence of two different institutional orders present within swedish football clubs, resulting in institutional complexity. The one logic represented by the managers, and the other by the boards. There is however one crucial participating position without a clear and determined position within these logics, the sporting director.

The sporting director is, as previously mentioned, the person the board relies on regarding the sporting side of the organisation and is thus a central member of the organisation responsible for the communication flow between the board and the manager, or in other words the communication flow between the two institutional orders. The sporting director is an intermediary. The creation of the sporting directors role within swedish football can be seen as the organisation's own way of dealing with institutional complexity through compromise. The clubs task an individual with balancing contradicting internal interests rooted in different institutional orders.

As previously mentioned, there are multiple demands regarding the expectations within the organisation. Within compromise as a response, balancing can be used to achieve unity between interests and stakeholders (Oliver 1991) and this is precisely what sporting directors do. The sporting directors role involves communicating and educating the boards of the managers' expertise; in other words translating the professional mindset to stakeholders with a corporate perspective. As Jan Karlsson points out, like mindedness regarding how the club is run is essential; proposing that the clubs succeed when the sporting director manages to compromise between the two institutional orders. Danger arises when sporting directors do not balance the orders as necessary and submit themselves to one or the other. Jan Karlsson describes instances when sporting directors conform to a corporate order characterized by pursuing their own agenda and status within the organisation by misinforming the top hierarchy to their advantage. The sporting directors tendency to conform may in some cases depend on their own identification with a certain institutional order. The players, Andersson and Glasberg, witness of certain sporting directors being closer to the sporting side of the

organisation and constantly present in networking with the players while others are barely visible or reachable to the players, strictly sticking to the clubs official hierarchical order. An indication that certain sporting directors identify more with the institutional order of the profession which managers belong to, while others are more attune to the corporate order. The reason behind the sporting directors identification with one order or the other has not been explored; but could be explained by their differing backgrounds. Some sporting directors have playing or even managerial backgrounds while others do not.

5.4. The Media as an Amplifier

The task of compromising in order to counteract institutional complexity is made more difficult with the strong external pressure from the media. Both managers and sporting directors speak directly of the media's amplification of the decisions, statements and results that the club provides. Even when a sporting director tries to take the side of the professional institutional order and set, what are assumed to be reasonable, expectations in line with the manager's expert opinion, the media's interpretation is seldom aligned with the clubs assurances. This creates a further conflict between the orders as the board, who lacks footballing expertise, is made biased by the media. That is because, as Jan Karlsson states, the media has the agenda of selling as many copies as possible to increase their profit. The media's self interest is not in line with the clubs goals, and is in turn achieved by blowing things out of proportion both in success and failure. In summary the media is perceived as a external source of pressure, increasing institutional complexity within the swedish football clubs. Moreover, this external pressure contributes to a more short term outlook in the football clubs. As Mats Gren exemplifies the media are always searching for new exciting news stories to publish, with not only exaggerating success or failure, but also having an urgent, short- term outlook.

This situation is consistent with theory on media which states the media's reliance on organisations to provide interesting content leading to income. It should not be neglected that although the media's attention puts pressure on clubs, it is highly likely that the clubs are in need of this attention in order to build organisational reputation and stay relevant in the public eye thus ensuring survival. (Einwiller, Carroll and Korn 2010).

5.5. Managerial Change

Tying back to theories on managerial change and in particular Gamson and Scotch's (1964) three theories regarding managerial succession and its effect on organisational performance, the study reveals how institutional complexity highlights another explanatory dimension to these theories; in particular to the ritual scapegoating no-way causality theory. The theory explains the use of the manager as a scapegoat for general organisations shortcomings that lead to poor organisational performance. The institutional complexity can in turn partly explain the reasons behind how come it is the manager who becomes the scapegoat. Moreover why the managers level of skill (expertise) becomes insignificant, as is the case according to the ritual scapegoating theory.

The board identifies with and has a outlook in accordance with the corporate institutional order. It is the board who have the final say in important decisions as they belong to the highest hierarchical position. As previously mentioned, the managers have a tendency to submit to this fact and to a certain degree so do the sporting directors. In times of poor performance the board is protected from any shortcoming through their hierarchical rank. The sporting director, the intermediary between the institutional orders, controls the flow of communication between the managers and the board; putting this person in the position to manipulate information and protect themselves from repercussion. The manager however is the one seen directly responsible for sporting results as the leader of the first team and therefore becomes the scapegoat. The media searches for scapegoats as this provides content. Since the manager is, unlike the board, exposed publicly; the media will promote the scapegoating process. Thereby, it is the manager who suffers the most during times of poor results, and receives the ultimate punishment; dismissal. Thus appeasing stakeholders both within and outside of the organisation through a symbolic change, a gesture indicating better things to come.

The first theory presented by Gamson and Scotch (1964), the common-sense one-way causality theory, although simple in essence seems plausible in an environment where the professional institutional order is dominant. In a situation like this, it is the manager's expertise that determines the outcome. However, where institutional complexity is present, the managers position is diminished through limited influence and lack of long-term commitment. Thereby by the expertise is never fully utilized, making it unlikely for this theory to be relevant in a complex situation corresponding to the one swedish clubs are facing.

6. Conclusion and Answering the Research Question

This section highlights the findings in the analysis.

Institutional complexity is present within swedish football clubs. This results in managers submitting to the corporate institutional order, even though they identify themselves with their profession and not the hierarchical order of clubs. This submission is due to the particular nature of their work, more specifically the absence of job opportunities present. The managers choose to compromise on their own beliefs in order to survive within their occupation.

Sporting directors then become the organisations' way of balancing the two conflicting institutional orders, trying to tame the institutional complexity. It is the sporting director who is in control of the flow of communication between the conflicting institutional orders, a position where compromise is the tactic utilised to reduce complexity.

An external pressure further amplifying the institutional complexity is media. Since the media has a seperate agenda not correlated with either the manager or the sporting director, the media's content seeking agenda results in a short term outlook and exaggerated content both in success and failure; pressuring and destabilising the balance within the organisations.

The institutional complexity can through this be considered as an explanatory factor behind the ritual scapegoating no-way causality theory. The complexity puts pressure and raises expectations on the managers and shortens their time frame. It is thereby made difficult for the managers to utilise their skill and expertise to produce results. The other accountable parties, are protected from this; the board through its hierarchical position within the corporation and the sporting directors through their unique position of influence over the information flowing between the manager and the board. In summary, managerial change can be seen as scapegoating as the managers influence and thereby accountability is minimised by the clubs.

7. Discussion and Suggestions for Further Research

This last section summarises the studies contribution to research and suggestions for further research on the topic, as well as highlighting criticism of the study.

7.1. The Studies Contribution

The study contributes to existing research and theories on the subject in several ways. Firstly; the institutional complexity is explained through the discovery and definition of two inherently different institutional orders existent within clubs, the professional institutional order and the corporate institutional order.

Moreover, the study adds an explanatory dimension to the ritual scapegoating no- way causality theory. This is achieved by linking the conflicting demands that characterize institutional complexity to the reasoning behind managerial change through scapegoating. As the ritual scapegoating no- way causality theory is relevant in other settings outside the sporting one (Lieberson and O'Connor, 1972); the link between the complications and obstacles caused by institutional confusion and managerial change can be applied on other environments such as the corporate one.

7.2. Criticism of the Study

A criticism with the report is that no interviews were held with board members, despite this fact, the study argues for and draws conclusions on the board having an outlook in line with the corporate institutional order. These conclusions were made solely on the accounts from people in positions outside the board. This is due to several reasons. Firstly the initial thought was to interview personnel in operational positions within the club, personnel accountable for the day to day workings of the organisation. The individuals chosen were seen as suitable due to their close involvement with the clubs daily inner workings. Secondly, the weight of the boards mandate and involvement with the clubs decisions was underestimated. It was after the interviews and close analysis of the data with the help of the theoretical frame of reference that the boards tendencies, to fall within the corporate institutional order and to be closely involved in major operational decisions such as firing a manager, were discovered.

Although interpretations were made about the board strictly from managers, sporting directors and players; it is these actors who experience a discrepancy between their own outlook and the outlook that they perceive the board to have. This is understood to signal the presence of institutional confusion and of conflicting logics within football clubs.

Choosing players as interview subjects can be questioned in this instance since the insights they provided were not always applicable in answering the research question. The reason being the study overestimating their understanding and vision of the intricate relationship between the other major actors; the manager, the sporting director and the board. However the insights provided by the players were enormously helpful in placing the managers within the profession institutional order, thereby contributing to the analysis.

Another criticism of the study is the simplification of the organisational structure within the swedish football clubs. The conclusion assumes a similar institutional complexity in all professional swedish football clubs due to the presence of two different institutional orders, the profession and the corporation. In reality, the organisational structure of the clubs might differ in a way where this complexity is avoided, minimized or otherwise dealt with in different ways. Certain clubs do not have a sporting director, this role is instead carried by the manager leading to more influence and power with that person; this would mean the elimination of the "intermediary role" argued for in the analysis of this report. Other clubs might have more than one person in the intermediary role with the sporting directors responsibilities divided between multiple individuals.

7.3. Suggestions for Further research

To give a more nuanced and precise view of the institutional complexity present in football organisations a qualitative study including the board's perspective would be of value; a further confirmation of the conclusions presented in this study. Furthermore stakeholders such as the media could be researched further to determine the institutional order they identify with and if this ads to the complexity that football clubs face. Is the media the face of another institution, the market order, pulling on football clubs with yet another set of conflicting demands?

Decoupling is a strategy for dealing with and overcoming institutional complexity; it involves symbolically conforming to a certain institutional logic while in reality adapting all actions and important decisions to another logic. This can often be the case if pressure is applied from external sources. (Pache and Santos, 2013). This would be an interesting strategy to investigate in the case of swedish football clubs and managerial change; as a potential case for the utilization of decoupling can be made. It could be investigated whether the professional logic is only of symbolic value while the organisations mostly conform to the corporate institutional order, as the managers have been found to do.

8. References

8.1. Literature

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9. Appendix

9.1. Conversation Guides

All interviews were conducted in Swedish therefore the conversation guides are provided in swedish.

9.1.1. Manager

Ämne 1: Vilken är tränarens skyldigheter och hur mycket kan han påverka prestation, och vilka andra faktorer ligger utom hans räckvidd? (expertis, personlighet, taktiska preferenser- i olika utsträckning dessa)?

- Vilka andra centrala faktorer finns? (lagets kvalite, skador, löner, motivation, stämning i omklädningsrummet, stämning i ledningen)
- Hur mycket förhåller du dig till den tidigare tränarens upplägg? Eller klubbens egna filosofi kring hur fotbollen ska spelas?
- Har sportchefen synpunkter på hur fotbollen ska spelas? Hur är relationen tränare gentemot sportchef?
- Kan den organisatoriska delen ibland känna att de tappar det sportsliga, hur är makt dynamiken?
- Har du haft olika mycket kontroll över andra befattningar inom klubben. I så fall hur mycket kontroll borde man ge tränaren? Och vad föredras?
- Hur viktig är den assisterande tränaren, hur väljs denna? Någon som är van vid klubben eller tränaren?
- Stommen i spelartruppen- ledarna ute på plan, hur viktiga är dessa för tränaren, hur får man/utvecklar dessa?
- Långsiktigt vs. kortsiktigt kompromissa?
- Förändring med sportchef

Ämne 2: Hur ställer du dig till tränarbyten under säsongens gång vs. off season?
- Hur många tränarbyten har du varit involverad i? Några under säsongens gång?
- Har du upplevt att andra kollegor blivit orättvist behandlade/blivit sparkade för faktorer de inte kunnat påverka?

- Hur är skillnaden att ta över ett lag under säsongens gång jämfört med mellan säsongerna?
- Hur viktig är försäsongen?
- Symboliskt

Ämne 3: Vilka förändringar brukar du som tränare inför först när du kommer in?
- Skillnad under säsongen vs. off- season?
- Kompromiss?

Ämne 4: Sport har blivit mer och mer kommersiell, hur har denna utveckling påverkat turnover of managers? Blir pressen för goda resultat allt större?
- Finansiellt tryck/mindre tid?
- Kan en tränare idag ha en långsiktig vision eller måste man ständigt kompromissa denna?
- Har spelarna andra krav på tränaren?
- Mer pengar står på spel och linjen mellan lag/ förening och företag är allt mindre klar. Hur förhåller du dig till detta påstående? Hur påverkar detta manager turnover, relationen till tränaren och.
- Mediernas påverkan

Ämne 5: Kontexten och hur bra styrelsen gör grovjobbet för att försäkra sig att tränaren passar klubben (Vad har de för visioner, vilken fotboll står han för, vad har klubben haft för ledarstil tidigare... från båda hållen)
- Finns bara 30 jobb är tränarna tillräckligt kräsna?
- Finns det en tendens från ledningens håll att skylla på tränare för hela klubbens brister?
- Bortser styrelsen och klubben ibland från tränarens spelsätt och går på namn för att tänka att de kommer lösa sig, eller att de inte spelar så stor roll?

Ämne 6: Förväntningar utifrån förutsättningar? (för många blir missnöjda vid säsongens slut, Styrelsens kompetens kring fotboll, inte för defensivt lockar ingen marknadsavdelning)
- Blev förväntningarna för stora?

9.1.2. Sporting Director

Ämne 1: Hur ställer du dig till tränarbyten under säsongens gång vs. off season?

- Hur många tränarbyten har du varit involverad i? Några under säsongens gång?

Ämne 2: Hur central är tränaren för lagets prestation (expertis, personlighet, taktiska preferenser- i olika utsträckning dessa)?

- Vilka andra centrala faktorer finns? (lagets kvalite, skador, löner, motivation, stämning i omklädningsrummet, stämning i ledningen)
- Har du gett tränare olika mycket kontroll över andra befattningar inom klubben (transfers, ungdomslagen osv). I så fall hur mycket kontroll borde man ge tränaren?
- Hur viktig är den assisterande tränaren, hur väljs denna? Någon som är van vid klubben eller tränaren?

Ämne 3: Vilka förändringar brukar en tränare inför först när han kommer in?

- Skillnad under säsongen vs. off- season?

Ämne 4: Vilka faktorer spelar in vid beslutet om att byta tränare, hur går processen till?

- Kontexten och hur bra styrelsen gör grovjobbet för att försäkra sig att tränaren passar klubben (Vad har de för visioner, vilken fotboll står han för, vad har klubben haft för ledarstil tidigare... från båda hållen)
- Finns bara 30 jobb är tränarna tillräckligt kräsna?
- Förväntningar utifrån förutsättningar? (för många blir missnöjda vid säsongens slut, Styrelsens kompetens kring fotboll, inte för defensivt lockar ingen marknadsavdelning)
- Ledning, spelarna, fanns, "ekonomiska faktorer", resultat rent statistiskt, attraktivt spel, media.
- Tidsperspektiv- Hur mycket "benefit of the doubt" får tränaren innan byte blir relevant?
- In vs. off season
- Är tränaren en del av sportchefen och stabens långsiktiga vision gällande spelsätt eller är det tränaren själv som sätter prägeln på laget?
- Dyrt att sparka tränare?

Ämne 5: Sport har blivit mer och mer kommersiell, hur har denna utveckling påverkat turnover of managers? Hur har det blivit en skillnad om man jämför med de olika divisionerna?

- Blir pressen för goda resultat allt större?
- Finansiellt tryck/mindre tid?
- Har spelarna andra krav på tränaren?
- Mer pengar står på spel och linjen mellan lag/ förening och företag är allt mindre klar. Hur förhåller du dig till detta påstående? Hur påverkar detta manager turnover, relationen till tränaren och

9.1.3. Player

1. Berätta gärna om när du erfarit ett tränarbyte vad har varit resultatet av det, vad hände?
2. Har en tränare orättvist fått sparken?
3. Upplevde du bytet som en färsk start? Symbolisk handling? Bättre tränare, passade gruppen bättre?

4. Upplever du att tränare får tiden som är nödvändig för att genomföra förändring?
5. Hur mycket upplever du att försäsongen hjälper lagets prestation (hur mycket lär man sig/kommer närmare varandra etc.)?
6. Hur mycket upplever du att resultaten är tränarens förtjänst?
    a. i så fall vad är det (taktiken/motivation/värvningar?)
7. Målsättning- vem är det som sätter upp målen för säsongen; tränare, ledning, spelare? Är dessa realistiska? (Institutional confusion)