Tourism in Mexico: More than Tacos and Tequila?  
A Case Study on CSR Strategies of Swedish and Mexican Tour Operators in Mexico
Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore whether tour operators work with CSR within their organizations in Mexico, and describe how they implement it as well as why they work with it. Furthermore, the paper will analyze similarities and differences between the Swedish and Mexican tour operator’s CSR strategies as well as the reasons for this. Lastly, recommendations will be made to the Mexican tour operators on how they can gain knowledge from Swedish tour operators on CSR strategies and the development of these.

The theoretical framework contains descriptions of theories on strategy, competitive advantage, the CSR Pyramid, stakeholder theory as well as CSR in the context of developing countries, which are all relevant theories for the issue studied as well as for answering the research questions. The empirical findings that have been collected through interviews with two Swedish, and two Mexican tour operators address the respective tour operator’s work with CSR in Mexico.

In the analysis the theoretical framework has been put in relation to the empirical evidence. The analysis consists of how and why CSR activities are implemented in the respective organization. It also addresses the difficulties tour operators from developed countries face when implementing CSR on destinations in developing countries.

Lastly, our conclusions show that there are several ways of implementing CSR in developing countries, as well as different views on why taking social responsibility within the tourism industry is important. Moreover, the main reason for this divergence lies in different perspectives, which has also been shown to be a contributing factor to the challenges faced by Swedish tour operators in the context of a developing country. In the end of the thesis recommendations will be made to Mexican firms on how to develop, and implement CSR strategies more successfully as well as recommendations for further research within the field of CSR in developing countries.

Keywords
CSR, Strategy, Competitive Advantage, CSR Pyramid, Stakeholder Theory, Developing countries, Tourism, Tour Operators, Mexico
Thanks

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This thesis is the result of our visit to Mexico during the spring of 2014. We have not only gained a lot of knowledge and insight into the issue at hand, but have also come to know the country and its culture well, giving us an unique experience that we are very thankful for.

Furthermore, we would like to thank our supervisor Susanne Sandberg for the guidance, support and constructive criticism during the continuation of the process. We would also like to thank our peer opponents for the good advice and observations made during the seminars throughout the process.

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1 Introduction

This chapter will introduce the topic of the study, Corporate Social Responsibility within the tourism sector in Mexico. A problem discussion framing the challenges and difficulties within this field of the study will then result in research questions with a focus on environmental and social aspects within the tourism sector.

1.1 Background

Working with environmental and social aspects within the tourism industry can be regarded as part of a wider responsibility of tourism business, namely Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR (Kasim, 2006). It is the concept of ethical business, and a strategy developed by companies in order to incorporate social and environmental concerns into the daily business operations (Kraus & Britzelmaier, 2012). Studying Corporate Social Responsibility is important due to several factors. It is a wide subject covering many sectors in the world and a concept that has significantly increased in importance for businesses during recent years (Pearce & Manz, 2011). Moreover, the public awareness of the impacts of businesses on the environment and society is increasing and as such CSR is also estimated to play an increasingly important role in the competitive environment, and success, of businesses (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Moreover, it is important to study strategies concerning CSR, as without a strategy and a plan, no consistent result can be achieved. It is important to design strategies and set up guidelines to ensure that everyone in the organization is heading in the right direction at the right time and also, to ensure that resources are used in the right way (McElhaney, 2009).

Furthermore, it is important to study CSR in the context of tourism because of the industry’s fast expansion and diversification around the globe today. Tourism has experienced continued growth over the past six decades; hence today tourism has become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world according to World Tourism Organization, UNWTO. Today the global tourism industry equals, or even surpasses that of the oil exports or food products. Six percent of all the world’s export is related to tourism and despite occasional shocks international arrivals has continued to grow from 25 million in 1950 to 1035 million in 2012. The arrivals in emerging destinations are also growing, between 2010 and 2030 the arrivals are expected to increase and double the pace of that in advanced economies. Furthermore, modern
tourism is closely linked to development and produces economic and employment benefits for many sectors within the country, from infrastructure to agriculture (unwto.org). In 2013 the tourism industry generated 266 million jobs worldwide and stood for 9,5 percent of the global GDP (wtc.org).

Lastly, as Mexico is a developing country that relies heavily on tourism, the context of CSR within the tourism industry becomes of great importance to study. Mexico is a big part of the world tourism sector development. In 2012, 23 403 000 tourists chose to visit Mexico, making it the most visited country in Latin America (Tourism Highlights 2013, unwto.org). The tourism sector represents the third highest foreign exchange earnings in Mexico (Wilson, 2008), it represents 14,6 percent of the total employment rate and the total contribution from direct and indirect tourism activities in Mexico 2013, stands for 13,3 percent of the total GDP (wtc.org). Furthermore, Mexico is looking to expand the tourism industry and its impacts will thus become even greater (Wilson, 2008).

In order for tourism to become sustainable, there is a need for industry-coordinated efforts to be designed and implemented. However, Hopkins (2011) argues that there is an imbalance between different regions of the world in terms of the design and implementation of CSR strategies. Europe is leading within this field, closely followed by US, while developing countries are just getting started, making it difficult to coordinate the strategies and in turn create a positive long-term impact on the host country.

1.2 Problem Discussion
Corporate Social Responsibility poses many challenges for businesses today. Strategies for social responsibility have often been developed by companies as a result of criticism from stakeholders or Non Governmental Organizations, NGO’s. This has led to a defensive approach to such strategies within many organizations and industries. This in turn, leads to CSR strategies that are not elaborated and which will not benefit neither stakeholders, the society nor the business to any large extent (Davis, 2005).

Another challenge CSR may bring businesses and industries are the unequal development of sustainable strategies in different parts of the world. CSR has primarily been an issue for businesses operating in developed countries. According to Borglund, De Geer and Hallvarsson (2009) many of the biggest companies in Europe have information regarding their work with CSR on their websites and the same applies for
companies in Sweden. Several of the Swedish international companies have since some years back comprehensive CSR strategies and are globally leading regarding CSR. The developing countries however, are according to Jamali and Mirsha (2007) often lagging behind with regard to designing and implementing strategies for CSR. As such it becomes difficult to implement industry wide strategies and work together towards common goals. Jones (1999) argues that the economic structure and development as well as socio-cultural environment will greatly impact a country’s level of commitment to social and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, the industry in which a firm operates and the structure of it will also impact the development of CSR strategies.

Today, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. However, as other forms of development, tourism can also cause problems and challenges for a destination. Social dislocation, economic dependence, loss of cultural heritage and ecological degradation is some of the problems that the tourism development brings (unesco.org). Tuan (2011) argues that current unsustainable tourism practices might impact the well-being and health of the community and environment as well as the tourism itself. The tourism industry often creates negative impacts on society, environment, culture, and sometimes even the economy. CSR standards and practices have been developed by the private sector within most industries in regard to these issues. In tourism however, the use of certification and code of conducts are neither widespread nor based upon agreed international standards.

Continuously, within the tourism industry it is generally agreed that there are increasing environmental as well as social problems. These problems will increase the demand for more sustainable destinations and travel preferences. In turn this will increase the pressure for both destination management policies and tour operator responsibility that may take the form of different sets of strategies (Tuan, 2011). A strategy is a plan, and what gets planned often gets done. However, CSR strategies are more problematic than typical corporate strategies. This because the actual goals for CSR efforts are rarely in support of typical corporate functions like the service, marketing or sales and so forth. Therefore, many companies are unsure of what goals or strategies they should aim for or pursue in order for it to gain both the organization and all stakeholders (McElhaney, 2009).
As the tourism sector is widely developed in Mexico problems of this sort has arisen and furthermore, as tourism is under constant development, Mexico will have an increasing challenge in handling these issues (Wilson, 2008). Environmental problems caused by the tourism development include the destruction of wetlands, mangroves and coral reefs (aida-americas.org). Social problems are among others the marginalization of local populations and dislocation of local residents from land that sometimes have been occupied for generations as well as the growth of low-waged and precarious tourist jobs. Moreover, another consequence of the tourism development is Mexico’s increased dependency on loans and foreign capital. Consequently, despite all the positive outcomes tourism has for Mexico, the successful development of tourism also has a dark side (Wilson, 2008).

According to Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense, AIDA, the former president of Mexico, Felipe Calderón, made efforts to raise Mexico’s profile as a global tourism destination. Policies were implemented in order to create a more competitive and sustainable industry, by addressing issues of environmental and social character. However, it has been shown that these regulations and policies are failing (aida-americas.org). Tourism earnings constitute a very large, and important part in the country’s economy and as this sector is under constant development Mexico will become continuously more dependent on tourism in the future (Wilson, 2008). As such it becomes important to set up and implement strategies that will address these issues successfully, otherwise it is expected to affect Mexico's competitiveness as a tourist destination negatively (aida-americas.org).

A lot of studies have discussed and debated the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. Moreover, the concept has also been examined in relation to the tourism industry in developed countries relatively thoroughly. However, we find that the concept of CSR within tourism in developing countries, such as Mexico has not been examined sufficiently. Furthermore, we have identified a research gap concerning the comparison between the CSR practices of tour operators from developed and developing countries, more specifically between Swedish and Mexican tour operators.

1.3 Research Questions
Based on the above problem discussion and problematization we have identified the following primary research question:
How are CSR Strategies undertaken among Swedish and Mexican Tour Operators within the Tourism Industry in the Developing Country of Mexico?

In order to answer the above primary research question, we have identified the following secondary research questions:

*How do Tour Operators work with CSR?*

*Why do they work with CSR?*

*What Challenges lies in Implementing CSR Strategies in the Context of a Developing Country?*

1.4 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to explore whether tour operators work with CSR within their organizations in Mexico, and describe how they implement it as well as why they work with it. Furthermore, the paper will analyze similarities and differences between the Swedish and Mexican tour operator’s CSR strategies as well as the reasons for this. Lastly, recommendations will be made to the Mexican tour operators on how they can gain knowledge from Swedish tour operators on CSR strategies and the development of these.

1.5 Delimitations
Based on the Minor Field Study Scholarship we applied for from SIDA, and were later granted, our focus was on developing countries. We chose Mexico because of its large tourism industry and fast expansion as a tourism destination, characteristics we found to be interesting for our research topic. Moreover, due to Europe’s leading position in the field of CSR strategies, and the closeness to, and ease of contacting Swedish tour operators, we decided to use Sweden as the comparative country. This thesis has thus been narrowed down to specifically be applied to the two case countries of Mexico and Sweden.

Furthermore, a CSR strategy is a very wide subject. We have chosen to concentrate our attention on two aspects of it, that we find most important in relation to tourism; the social and environmental aspects. This has thus limited, and given focus to the
collection, and analysis of the empirical evidence. With regard to the case companies, we have not focused on one particular type of tour operator. The case companies are a mix of hotel operators as well as excursion operator. Moreover, we have not taken the size of the case companies or their resources into consideration when analyzing and comparing them to each other.

1.6Disposition of the Thesis
Illustrated on page seven is the disposition of the thesis (figure 1). The second chapter will give an explanation of our chosen methodology used for this thesis. Thereafter chapter three will present our selected theories in order to give a deeper understanding of the subject, followed by chapter four and our empirical findings from the interviews held with the selected case companies. Chapter five presents the analysis, which will connect and discuss the theories related to our empirical evidence. Chapter three, four and five will follow a structure based on our research questions, more specifically, how the tour operators work with CSR and why, as well as the difference between them. Lastly, chapter six will present a conclusion of our thesis, the answers to our research questions as well as limitations of the thesis and recommendations for further research within this field of study.
Research Question

How are CSR strategies undertaken among Swedish and Mexican tour operators within the tourism industry in the developing country of Mexico?

Theoretical Framework

The Concept of CSR
CSR as Strategy
Competitive Advantage
The CSR Pyramid
Stakeholder Theory
CSR in Developing Countries

Empirical Findings

Analysis

Conclusion

Figure 1. Disposition of the thesis (created by authors).
2 Methodology

This methodology chapter will present our choices and motivations for using an abductive research approach and a qualitative research method for this thesis. Furthermore, it will present and discuss the choice of conducting a case study, the selection process of cases and the data collection process, including our interview guide. Lastly, a note about research quality will be presented.

2.1 Research Approach
A study can, according to Bryman and Bell (2005) be conducted with a deductive, inductive or abductive research approach. This is consistent with what Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008) discusses. They add that deduction starts from theory, induction from empirical findings, and abduction thus becomes a mix of the two approaches and is derived from both theory and empirical evidence (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). As the mix of theory and empirical findings have formed the outline of this thesis and the research questions we found induction to be the most suitable approach in order for the study to fulfill its purpose as well as cover the existing research gaps to the largest extent.

We started by choosing a topic for our thesis and continued with searching for appropriate theories that would frame the theme, and guide us to the research questions, as is consistent with the deductive research approach. According to Bryman and Bell (2005) previous knowledge within a specific subject, including theoretical frameworks, represents the basis for this approach, on which it then is possible for the researchers to highlight one, or several hypotheses. Due to the application for the SIDA Scholarship, we outlined this a while before the study was about to start and as a result, the study changed direction as our work progressed and we got a deeper understanding of the concept of CSR. Furthermore, as the two first interviews were held, the previously chosen theories were not applicable to any large extent. Consequently, in accordance with the inductive research approach, which according to Bryman and Bell (2005) is used by researchers who choose to let the theory become the result of the research activities, we decided to let the majority of the theories become the result of the empirical data collected. Moreover, Patel and Davidson (2011) state that induction enables researches to present generalized conclusions based on the observations made.
In this manner, inductive researchers generally create theories from the empirical data collected.

This combination of deduction and induction thus lead us to the abductive research approach. Patel and Davidson (2003) state that abduction implies that the researcher uses a single case, which then serves as the basis for a preliminary theory. Thereafter, this theory is tested on several new cases. Next step is to develop the preliminary theory to a more generally applicable one (Patel & Davidson, 2003). This is in line with our work process as from the beginning, our theories were more preliminary, however from the result of our empirical findings, new, more suitable theories were applied. Furthermore, according to Patel and Davidson (2003) there are both advantages and disadvantages with this method. The researchers becomes more flexible and less fixed however, no research is generated without previous experiences, which might result in the researcher choosing objects of study based on experiences and formulates a theory that excludes other options (Patel & Davidson, 2003). We have been aware of this risk during our process and in order to not risk excluding options based on our previous knowledge we have done a thorough literature review to find updated theories and new theoretical contributions to match our field of study.

2.2 Research Method
It is common to distinguish between a qualitative and quantitative research method. A quantitative research method is, in accordance with Bryman and Bell (2011), based on the quantification in the collection and analysis of the data. It is most commonly used within scientific approaches and relies on an objective view on reality as well as numbers.

According to Patel and Davidson (2011), the qualitative research is a research where focus is on soft data, such as in form of qualitative interviews and interpreting analysis. Bryman and Bell (2005) argue that in line with this practice, the first step is to formulate general research problems and questions. Patel and Davidson (2011) state that a qualitative-oriented research is about when questions and problems concerns interpreting and understanding and involves questions like what is this? And what are the underlying patterns? Continuously, Bryman and Bell (2005) describe that the next step is selection of relevant study objects and interviewing them for the collection of empirical data, which is fundamental to the qualitative research strategy. Thereafter this
Data is interpreted, analyzed, and put in relation to appropriate theories and concepts. The analysis between the empirical data and the theories will consequently lead to a thinner definition of the research problem, and in turn, clearer research questions (Bryman & Bell, 2005).

This study has been carried out using a qualitative research method. As the purpose of this study is, partly of an examinatory character, we found this to be the best alternative in order to get a deeper understanding of the situation and more comprehensive information about the different tour operator’s CSR practices. A qualitative interview allowed us to gather this information in an easy, efficient way. Furthermore, it gave us the advantage of a personal meeting as well as the opportunity of adapting the data collection to fit the different tour operator’s conditions in order to get the most relevant and useful information from each interview. Using a quantitative research method and a standardized survey, with focus on numbers and statistics, would not have made this possible to the same extent.

2.3 Research Strategy
There are several different strategies on how to design research. The principal strategies are according to Yin (2003) experiments, surveys, histories, archival analysis and case studies. Choosing strategy will depend on a couple of factors, type of research question being the most important determiner. Case studies are preferable when questions of how or why are being posed. A case study can be defined as an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. As we are in place in Mexico, examining the CSR practices of both local and Swedish tour operators in a real-life context, this study meet the requirements for a case study. The case study is a comprehensive research strategy that covers all components of the research, including the logic of design, data collection techniques, and data analysis.

2.3.1 Research Design
The research design is developed in order for the research to become organized and corollary. It is the logical sequence that connects the different elements of the study together; the empirical data to the study’s research questions and lastly, to its conclusions. The main aim of the research design is to help avoid the situation in which the empirical data does not address the initial research questions (Yin, 2003).
There are four types of case study designs. A study can be designed as a single-, or multiple-case study. Furthermore, within these two different variants, there can be a unitary unit (holistic) or multiple units (embedded) of analysis. The second conceptual pair can be integrated with single as well as multiple-case studies (Yin, 2003). For our thesis we have chosen to design the study as a holistic, multiple-case study. Because of the nature of our theme and research questions we wanted to interview several tour operators in order to be able to compare the CSR practices of Swedish and Mexican tourism businesses. Moreover, we wanted to interview at least two Swedish and two Mexican companies in order to get more perspectives on the CSR practices implemented in Mexico, and in turn give our findings and conclusions a greater substance. Lastly, our study is regarded as a holistic design due to the fact that we only held one interview with each company, and as such, only analyzed one unit within each company.

Multiple-case studies have both advantages and disadvantages. Yin (2003) argues that the evidence from this kind of design is often seen as more compelling, leading to the overall study being more solid. However, the performance of a multiple-case study might require extensive resources and time that the researcher does not have at her/his disposal. Even though this study is conducted during a short period of time, we have limited the thesis so that we will have time to take all relevant perspectives and aspects into consideration. Additionally Yin (2003) states that the holistic design is best implemented when no logical subunits can be identified. Potential problems may emerge however, if the case is conducted at an abstract level, lacking any substantial measures or data. Also, critique towards this design has often been directed at the potential shift in the entire nature of the study. The initial research questions may have reflected one direction but as the study proceeds, different orientations may arise. Some however claim this flexibility to be the strength of the holistic approach (Yin, 2003). This has been the case for our study, however we argue that this flexibility has only made the study stronger and more relevant. It has enabled us to use the different perspectives we have gained along the way, and in turn this has enabled us to encompass this field of study to a greater extent.

Lastly, criticism has also been directed at the case study’s lack of generalization ability. However, this critique is mostly aimed at single-case studies (Yin, 2009). We have used a multiple-case study to try and avert this risk in accordance with what Yin (2009)
argues about. He claims that a multiple-case study is more robust and compelling than single-case studies. Moreover, he argues that several cases better the analytical potential substantially. (Yin, 2009). By using a multiple-case study design we thus argue that there is a possibility to generalize the results of this thesis.

2.3.2 Selection of Case Companies
The empirical data used for this thesis has been collected through interviews. Four interviews have taken place with responsible personnel within the respective companies of, Ving, Fritidsresor, Ketzaltour, and Pleasant Transfers and Tours. Due to the nature of the research questions, we selected two Swedish, and two Mexican tour operators in order to be able to perform a comparison between them. Yin (2009) argues that it is very important to select the right case companies from the beginning that are able to help the study forward. The aim of the selection process is to ensure that the right case companies are identified. In situations of several possible case companies it is best to let the criteria speak. The companies that fit the most criteria, is hence best suitable.

2.3.2.1 The Swedish Tour Operators – Ving and Fritidsresor
As there are only three Swedish tour operators established in, and offering tours to Mexico, we did not have a wide range of companies to select from. Moreover, as one of the three companies had already finished its season in Mexico, only two potential case companies remained: Ving and Fritidsresor. As these are the two biggest tour operators in Sweden, they were also our preferred choice. Additionally, both companies have very extensive and elaborated strategies for CSR described on their respective websites. These two factors in combination, made the case companies very suitable for the purpose of this thesis.

2.3.2.2 The Mexican Tour Operators – Ketzaltour and Pleasant Transfers and Tours
We quickly understood that it would become more difficult to find two Mexican tour operators, as we had no knowledge about the industry in Mexico and no contact information. However, through a contact in Mexico City we came in touch with Ketzaltour. The second company Pleasant Transfer and Tours, henceforth PTT, we came in contact with through another contact in Playa del Carmen. Moreover, we quickly learned that the Mexican companies did not have any detailed websites and continuously, no described CSR strategy accessible for us to take part of before the interview. However, due to the lack of knowledge, and contacts within this network we decided to use these two companies as cases. As both case companies are Mexican
owned and operated, as well as highly well known within the region, they fit the requirements for this study and enables the comparison the study is aimed at providing.

2.4 Literature Review
Before starting the process of research, preparation is important. In order to delimitate and formulate relevant research questions it is of high relevance to develop a greater understanding of the chosen theme as well as more knowledge about the issues related to it. A literature review will enable this and in turn, more insightful questions about the topic will be posed (Yin, 2003).

In the initial stages of our thesis work we screened the previous research that has been conducted within this field of study. By using keyword such as CSR Practices, Tourism and Mexico we were able to narrow down the field and in turn get more knowledge and a deeper understanding of the concept of CSR and its relation to tourism. From this literature review we were then able to identify the existing research gaps as well as the major problems identified within this theme. Lastly, it enabled us to go back and refine the research questions in order for them to address relevant issues and current research gaps.

Furthermore, a literature review gave us an overview of the established theoretical frameworks within the field of the study. This in turn enabled us to select relevant theories for our thesis that became the basis for our interview guide.

2.5 Interview Guide
As stated previously, the literature review facilitated the design of our interview guide that we based on the selected theories. As such, the interview questions were mainly derived from the theories, which ensured relevant interview questions, and in turn the collection of relevant empirical data. Furthermore, we developed two slightly different interview guides, one for the Swedish tour operators, one for the Mexican. The main reason for this was that, while we had a lot of knowledge about the Swedish tour operators and their CSR practices, we had no knowledge about the Mexican tour operators. Moreover, as stated before, Swedish and Mexican tour operators have very different preconditions and perspectives on tourism and CSR. Consequently, we designed two different interview guides in order to cover the issue to the greatest extent,
which has been illustrated in figure 2. See Appendix 1 for full list of interview questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Selection of Theories</th>
<th>Interview guide for Swedish Tour Operators</th>
<th>Interview Guide for Mexican Tour Operators</th>
<th>Final Selection of Theories</th>
<th>Research questions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic CSR and Competitive Advantage</strong></td>
<td>Do you think working with CSR is a strategic advantage?</td>
<td>How do you perceive the international tour operators? Threat? Competition?</td>
<td>Five Ps for Strategy and Competitive Advantage</td>
<td>How?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Is CSR integrated into your everyday business?</td>
<td>Do you work with CSR and if so, how?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How do you work with CSR?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CSR Pyramid</strong></td>
<td>Why do you work with CSR?</td>
<td>Do you work with CSR and if so, why?</td>
<td>CSR Pyramid</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do your guests ask about CSR?</td>
<td>Do your guests ask about CSR?</td>
<td>Stakeholder Theory</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholder Theory</strong></td>
<td>Do you work with Mexican companies?</td>
<td>Common with CSR in the tourism industry in Mexico?</td>
<td>CSR in Developing Countries</td>
<td>Similarities and Differences?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>What are the negative/positive impacts of tourism in Mexico?</td>
<td>What are the negative/positive impacts of tourism in Mexico?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Difference working with CSR in developing countries in relation to developed countries?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2.* Interview guide (created by authors).
2.6 Data Collection
There are two kinds of empirical data: secondary and primary data (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). This is further described by Merriam (2009) who states that secondary data has been generated by others for another purpose than that of your own. Primary data on the other hand has been collected by the researchers themselves for a specific purpose through interviews, field studies or observations.

For our study the data collection has mainly consisted of primary data in the form of interviews, however secondary data has also been used to a limited extent.

2.6.1 Secondary Data
Kvale (1996) argues that the application of secondary data is limited due to the fact that it is difficult to ascertain the quality and accuracy of secondary data. It therefore becomes important for the researchers to be aware of this and handle the information accordingly.

The secondary data we have used for this thesis is primarily from the respective tour operator’s websites. Before the interviews were held we used the information available there to gain basic knowledge of the companies and also to look through their CSR strategies, when presented. Afterwards, the websites mainly functioned as a tool for complementary information and verification. With regard to the criticism of secondary data we have taken it into account and have therefore not used it to any large extent. Moreover, as we have only used secondary data that is available on the respective tour operator’s websites we deem it to be reliable. Even so, we have been aware of the risk of biased information.

2.6.2 Primary Data
According to Kvale (1996) a qualitative interview attempts to understand the subjective view of the interview object on a specific subject. The object of the interview does not only answer questions that are prepared in advance by the interviewer, but gives the interviewer his/her perspective on the issues that are discussed. It is through the human interaction that the interview is able to produce scientific knowledge.

There are several ways of structuring an interview. The semi-structured interview frames the themes to be covered as well as a couple of guiding questions. This form of interview encourages discussion and even though some questions have been designed,
there is still room for change of sequence and follow-up questions that emerge from the interaction with the object of the interview (Kvale, 1996). Additionally, Bryman and Bell (2005) argues that a semi-structured interview allows both the researcher and the interviewee to have the possibility of formulating their questions and answers in a more open and personal manner. Thus, the interview process becomes more flexible and adapted to every individual interview.

Bryman and Bell (2011) describes two additional types of interviews, the structured and unstructured. The structured interview is based on a fixed interview schedule; by doing that all of the interviews results in the same content. Hence, all the questions will be formulated in the same way and does not give opportunities for following questions. This type of interview is most common when doing surveys. Lastly, the unstructured interview does not involve any specific questions; instead they are formed on site by the researcher. However, there is usually some sort of theme and the study objects are able to answer the questions freely.

Even though a semi-structured interview is not fully organized, it is of great importance that the researcher has prepared the interview in advance in order to be able to delineate and guide the interview in the right direction. Having examined the issues at hand and developed an interview guide based on this is essential for the outcome of the interview (Kvale, 1996). However, Bryman and Bell (2005) argues that it is important that the interview guide is not too specific. There has to be room for follow up questions, because if not, the interview is not consistent with the qualitative research method.

An interview guide indicates the subject of the research and the sequence of the questions in the interview. The guide can either be carefully developed to contain a detailed sequence of the questions or a rougher guide covering only the topics. The latter is used for semi-structured interview, giving the interviewer more responsibility to outline the interview as s/he see fit (Kvale, 1996).

2.6.3 Implementation of the Data Collection
For our interviews we used a semi-structured interview guide. We found this the most suitable form for our purposes as it allowed us to form the interview in line with the different experiences and knowledge the different interview objects have. However, having prepared a guide with a clearly defined theme of the interview was also
important in our case. This, due to the fact that we held interviews at several occasions with one interview object each time. In order for us to get answers that were comparable in relation to each other it was good to have a clear aim of the interview as well as a number of questions that formed the base of the interview. A structured interview would also have been possible for this study as it would guarantee the answers being comparable, however as the companies have very different prerequisites we found the semi-structured approach to be more suitable as it allowed us to be more flexible and in turn, collect more relevant data for the thesis. An unstructured interview however, would not have been suitable in this context as the risk of not collecting comparable data from the different interviews would have been too great.

Two of the interviews were held in English, two in Swedish. Even though two of the interviews were held in English, which is neither our, nor the interview object’s native language, it has had very little, or no, impact on the collection of empirical data. The high level of English proficiency from all parts made it possible to avoid confusion and miscommunications. Furthermore, as the two interviews held in Swedish needed to be translated into English for the transcription and further use in this thesis, they have been subject to our interpretation. We have translated the interviews directly from Swedish to English to the best of our ability, but there is always a risk for interpretations and preconceptions to get in the way of a completely correct translation.

Furthermore, we have recorded three of our interviews in order to facilitate the analysis and transcription. Kvale (1996) discusses the advantages of recording interviews and contends that the interviewer then has the possibility of concentrating on the topic and the dynamics of the interview to a larger extent, as s/he does not need to take notes and focus on remembering details during the interview. Recording the interview is also a requirement for subsequent transcription, as without the recording, transcription cannot take place. Additionally, by transcribing the interviews, the reliability and validity of the research is established (Kvale, 1996). However, one of our interview objects was not comfortable with recording, and as such the transcription of this interview is not as thoroughly and correctly recounted as the others are. This may lead to faults in the transcription where misperceptions have gotten in the way. However, we decreased this risk by giving him the questions in advance so that he was able to make short notes on each question, that we were later given and used for our transcription. Furthermore, we
took notes during the interview to ensure that we did not miss any important empirical evidence.

2.7 Quality of Research
It is important for a study to be valid and reliable in order for it to be as truthful and credible as possible. Validity is the single most important research criteria as it determines whether the findings in the study are related or not. Validity can also be described as measurement validity, which is primarily applicable to a quantitative research strategy. It deals with the issue whether a measurement for concepts really measures the concept in question (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Yin (2003) argues that there are four tests that are commonly used when establishing the quality of empirical social research as well as for case studies. The four different tests are; construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability, and these are more complex than the standard validity and reliability concepts.

2.7.1 Validity
Yin (2003) describe the construct validity to be problematic in case study research, because of the difficulties for the case study investigator to develop an appropriate operational set of measures as well as subjective judgements may be used when collecting data. However, there are available tactics to increase construct validity when doing studies. When collecting data it is of importance to use multiple sources of evidence as well as establishing a chain of evidence, meaning that a reader of a case study can follow the derivation of any argument, ranging from the research question to the conclusions.

To increase construct validity for this study we have used multiple sources of evidence in form of mainly primary data but also strengthened and deepened that data with complementary secondary data. We have tried our best to stay objective and not put our own views and previous perceptions into the study however, it cannot be guaranteed that it has not had implications to some extent. We are well informed on the implications of tourism on the host society and environment, making it difficult for us to sometimes separate our own previous knowledge from the data collected. However, such previous knowledge also gave us the opportunity to be well prepared for our interviews, asking suitable supplementary questions as well as being critical to the information given to us. Furthermore, we have for this study maintained a chain of
evidence in order for the reader to follow our argument and trace our steps in either direction, from our questions to our final conclusions or vice versa.

According to Yin (2003), the second test is internal validity and concerns causal or explanatory case studies, meaning that an investigator tries to find out whether event \( x \) leads to event \( y \). It is of importance that the investigator is aware of the fact that it might be a third factor \( z \) that may actually have caused \( y \), if not the research design has failed to address some threat to internal validity. Another problem concerning internal validity for case study research is the problem with making inferences. If an event cannot be directly observed an investigator might draw conclusions related to other facts. If so, is the inference correct and has all the rival explanations and other possibilities been considered? To address internal validity however, certain tactics can be used during the data analysis; do pattern-matching, do explanation-building, address rival explanations and use logic models.

Regarding the internal validity, for our case study we have analyzed and read both scientific articles, books related to our subject as well as other related course literature, all with different angles in order to create a wide and valid framework for our case study. However, since this case study is limited to a relatively short period of time, we cannot guarantee that all perspectives have been covered and therefore the internal validity might not be reach to its full extent. Our conclusions will be based on both our empirical data as well as theoretical data, however we cannot ensure that we have covered all the rival explanations as well as taking all other possibilities into account when making inferences.

External validity is the third test and concerns the problem of knowing if the findings of the study are generalizable beyond the direct case study. Critics to single-case studies state that it offers a poor basis for generalizing and that they are implicitly compared to survey research. However, a survey research is build upon statistical generalization while a case study relies on analytical generalization. An analytical generalization takes its form when the investigator aims at generalizing the results to a broader theory. However, it is important to have in mind that the generalization is not automatic, a theory needs to be tested by replicating the findings on other cases, where the theory has defined that the same results should occur. Furthermore, the tactics that can be used
during the research design is to use theory in single case-studies and use replication logic in multiple-case studies (Yin, 2003).

Since this case study is a multiple-case study it is easier to generalize the result than for a single-case study. However, we are aware of that a greater number of companies being interviewed would lead to a greater generalization of the result. Nevertheless, we believe that our case study can be generalized to a certain extend especially regarding CSR strategies within the tourism sector in developing contra developed countries. However, factors such as resources and the size of the company has not been taken into account during this case study and might thus have generated other results.

2.7.2 Reliability
The final test concerns reliability. This deals with the issue of later investigators following an earlier investigators procedures, and if the same findings and conclusions would be found. A necessity for allowing the other investigator to repeat the earlier case study is to document all the procedures that were followed in the case study. Without documentation, you are not even able to repeat your own work. To approach the reliability problem the investigator needs to make as many steps as operational as possible. Case study tactics that can be used during the data collection is to use case study protocol and develop a case study database (Yin, 2003).

To gain as high reliability as possible for this case study we have carefully documented our procedures as well as used an interview guide. However, we chose to use one interview guide for the Mexican tour operators and another one, with slight changes, for the Swedish tour operators and these are attached as an appendix in order to increase the reliability. Moreover, we recorded our interviews in order to avoid subjective interpretations afterwards as well as transcribed them and attached them as an appendix. Two interviews were held in Swedish and as such they needed to be translated into English for the use in this thesis. This has an effect on the reliability of this study as our interpretations, and preconceptions of the companies and the issue in question may have had an impact on the translation. This is always a risk when translating and in order to strengthen the reliability of this thesis we minimized this risk by discussing translations and reading through the finished transcription while listening to the recording one by one.
2.7.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are also part of establishing trustworthiness for the study. It is important to make sure that the study is conducted in an ethical manner. With regard to a qualitative research method, ethical considerations become relevant in two situations, during the data collection process, and when the thesis is published. Interview situations bring about certain ethical concerns, such as the lack of control in guiding the interview object in the right direction and the uncertainty of the truthfulness in the answers given (Merriam, 2011).

Due to the sensitivity of our topic we are aware of the difficulties in obtaining unbiased information from the tour operators selected for this thesis. The awareness of the negative impacts tourism and the tourism development has on destinations around the world is increasing and as such, it becomes of greater importance for tour operators to work towards minimizing these impacts. This is where CSR becomes relevant. The interviews we have held with four different tour operators might thus have been subject to embellishment and information about the difficulties of CSR might have been limited as such companies do not want to show their faults and weaknesses to the public for risk of bad implications. If the tour operators would have chosen to be anonymous, perhaps we might have found out more about, for example the difficulties they face when implementing their CSR strategies. Furthermore, there are different views on what CSR is and what the concept involves, leading to a divergence in interpretations among the interview objects and in turn, different answers.

One of our interview objects was not comfortable with recording the interview. Trost (2010) states that it is important to listen to the interview object and stay true to their wishes. As we could not record, we could not transcribe this interview as thoroughly and correctly as the other three interviews. In terms of ethical behavior, it becomes of great importance to not misrepresent the answers given. There is a risk for misperceptions on our part however, as he had written down short notes before the interview that we were later given, minimized the risk for this.
3 Theoretical Framework

This chapter will outline the theories used for the study and describe them. Initially the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility will be outlined, followed by five theories on strategy as well as theories on competitive advantage that aims at covering how tour operators work with CSR. Thereafter, an explanation of the CSR Pyramid as well as the Stakeholder theory will be described that together aims at covering why tour operators work with CSR. Lastly, CSR in developing countries will follow, aiming at covering the challenges posed when Swedish tour operators implement their CSR strategies in a developing country.

3.1 Corporate Social Responsibility
The following three subheadings will present a deeper explanation of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility, strategies on CSR as well as competitive advantage.

3.1.1 The Concept of CSR
As Kasim (2006) argued the environmental and social aspects can be defined through the more general concept, Corporate Social Responsibility (Kasim, 2006). There have been several attempts at defining CSR and the concept has been debated since its inception in the 1930’s. Ever since then CSR has increased in significance, both in academia as well as in practice, mainly due to corporate scandals, financial crisis and environmental threats. Moreover, today it is more widely accepted that companies have responsibilities beyond simply making a profit. However, for a subject that has been studied for so long it is unusual that researchers still do not share a common set of core principles or definition (Kraus and Britzelmaier, 2012).

Hopkins (2007) has stated that defining CSR is of great importance and he argues that his definition is robust enough to frame the meaning for CSR. However, he also mentions that his definition is easier to criticize than to readjust and that it is difficult for any definition of social phenomena to reach a widespread agreement. The definition he has used for several years is as follows:

*CSR is concerned with treating the stakeholders of the firm ethically or in a responsible manner. ‘Ethically or responsible’ means treating stakeholders in a manner deemed acceptable in civilized societies. Social includes economic and environmental*
responsibility. Stakeholders exist both within a firm and outside. The wider aim of social responsibility is to create higher and higher standards of living, while preserving the profitability of the corporation, for people both within and outside the corporation. (Hopkins, 2007:15)

Continuously, other researchers have also tried to delineate and define the concept of CSR. According to Bhattacharyya, Sahay, Arora and Chaturvedi (2008) it can be regarded as a strategy, and a set of activities that companies design in order to interact and relate to stakeholders in an ethical way that does not impact said stakeholders in any negative manner. Furthermore Kraus & Britzelmaier (2012) states that CSR is a strategy developed on a voluntary basis that incorporates social and environmental concerns into the daily business operations.

From the traditional definition of CSR, the concept of Strategic CSR has been developed. It suggests a long-term investment of companies in a limited number of social issues that will not only increase the social value but also the business benefits. Porter and Kramer (2006) suggests that companies identify a set of societal problems that they are best suited to address, and from which they are able to gain the greatest competitive advantage. They believe that it is in shared value where opportunities for development truly lie.

In accordance with this, Borglund, Geer and Hallvarsson (2009), discuss the importance of sector-related responsibilities. Depending on within what sector a company operates in, the responsibility takes different forms; the company’s resources, knowledge and expertise, defines in what way they can implement this policy in order to make an impact. Moreover, they discuss the need for CSR strategies to be embedded in the company’s core values and business strategy in order for it to gain trust among its stakeholders. Lastly, Hopkins (2011) states that Europe is leading when it comes to designing and implementing CSR strategies followed by the US, while developing countries are just getting started.

3.1.2 CSR as Strategy
In lack of one definition that incorporated all aspects of the term strategy, Mintzberg (1987) developed a framework of five different definitions of strategy: strategy as plan, ploy, pattern, position, and perspective. Additionally, he also considered the
interrelationship between these five different approaches. A strategy can be designed for many reasons, one being social responsibility. As Urip (2010) argue the strategies of business people has evolved from making a profit alone into profit, people and planet. This new concept concerns several issues regarding to the people, social issues and environmental issues. A coherent CSR strategy based on ethics and core values offers clear business units, thus acting in a socially responsible way internally as well as externally, becomes more than just an ethical duty for a firm.

Strategy as plan is according to Mintzberg (1987) the most common notion of what a strategy is. It is the idea of a consciously developed set of guidelines or intended course of action. The plan is made in advance and there is a purpose it aims at fulfilling. A plan is the articulation of intentions. Additionally, the plan may be explicitly stated in for example formal documents, however this is not a necessary condition. Urip (2010) argue that well defined and strategic CSR activities will ensure a good balance between the social, economic and environmental factors for both short-term as well as long-term profit sustainability for a firm. Furthermore, Mintzberg (1987) argue that a plan as strategy can be outlined as general or specific. In cases of a specific plan it is often developed as a ploy, a specific action intended to deceive an opponent or competitor. This kind of strategy is primarily used with regard to gaining competitive advantage over competitors and can be linked to the field of strategic management.

Furthermore, Mintzberg (1987) argues for patterns to be a strategy. Strategies as plan and ploy are intendedly designed, however their definitions do not cover the actual implementation of strategies. In contrast, the definition of strategy as patterns aim at encompassing the resulting behavior of a strategy and additionally, patterns do not have to be intended and consciously developed as a strategy in advance. Strategy as a pattern is thus developed through the consistency in behavior.

Strategy as position is the fourth definition Mintzberg (1987) offers. The position a business takes, and the strategy that is developed accordingly, constitutes the link between the company and the environment. This definition aims at locating the company in the external environment and finding the link between the internal and external contexts. This form of strategy can be compatible with either one of the previous definitions as a position can be reached through a plan, but it may also be derived from a pattern of conduct. The position can be considered in the context of one,
or several competitors and may regard not only competition, but economic and other aspects as well.

Lastly, *perspectives* can also be seen as a form of strategy. This definition of strategy is an internal one, looking to explain the design of a strategy based on different world perceptions and perspectives. Strategies are thus designed in accordance with the organization’s personality and characteristics. Moreover, the collective mind is central to this definition. The perspective needs to be shared among the members of the organization in order for it to become a strategy.

These five definitions offer a wide variety of relationships. Mintzberg (1987) describes and discusses several interrelationships between strategy as plan, pattern, position and perspective. For example patterns can evoke plans, a position can create a pattern and perspectives can give rise to plans and in turn, patterns and positions may well give rise to perspectives. All in all, these different definitions complement each other and no matter how they are combined, not one takes precedence over another. Lastly, while plans, patterns and positions may change over time, perspectives stay consistent.

### 3.1.3 Competitive Advantage

Porter and Kramer (2006) argue that CSR should contribute to firm value chain practices and also a way to improve the context of competitiveness. Moreover, when a firm’s CSR activities improved their competitiveness, the CSR activity itself becomes a strategic in nature. CSR activities should be designed so that they improve the competitiveness of the firm and in turn the industry. However, Reinhardt (1998) state that a firm engaging in a CSR-based strategy can only generate a greater return and become competitive if the firm can prevent their competitors from imitating their strategy. This is unlikely in competitive markets since CSR is highly transparent. Continuously, Porter and Kramer (2006) argue that in developing countries the logic of implementing CSR needs to be modified due to that in a developing country the competitiveness of firms are weak. Thus, even if the CSR initiative just betters the context of competitiveness it is still of strategic importance for the firms.

Furthermore Porter and Kramer (2006) consider that CSR activities could improve the input factors of production such as essential infrastructure or skilled labor required to compete. The demand conditions of products and/or services in a given industry could
also be influenced by CSR activities, by setting higher standards for the quality of the products and services, this could be in terms of environment friendliness, product safety features or socially responsible performance features. More refined and substantial local demand conditions are another factor that CSR initiatives could lead to. CSR could also be used as an instrument to influence frame rules and regulations for healthy competition, protection of intellectual property and better investment climate etcetera in order to make the inter-firm rivalry situation favourable. Lastly, CSR could also be designed in a way to build up the capacity for the weak related and supporting industries concerned.

When companies commit to such a CSR initiative, a company can get two different kind of resources, which can be of strategic importance for them. Firstly, they can gain tangible resources such as raw material, increase profits and human resources and secondly, intangible resources such as brand name, goodwill and reputation. If such resources are valuable to the firm’s customers, unique, rare, inimitable or imperfectly substitutable for the competitors, then such resources are seen as strategic resources and can thereby provide competitive advantage for the firm.

3.2 The CSR Pyramid
Carroll’s (1991) CSR Pyramid consists of four components of social responsibilities; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic and is illustrated in figure 3. All of these responsibilities have always existed to some extent but in recent years the ethical and philanthropic functions have taken a significant place (Carroll, 1991). Many researches have been made during the past years using the CSR Pyramid, however according to Visser (2005) most of the researches have been in an American and European context. Nevertheless, earlier empirical studies have shown that the culture might have an important influence on perceived CSR priorities, thus they conclude all levels in the CSR Pyramid but they have different significance and might be interlinked in a somewhat different manner.

Carroll (1979) continues by explaining that the four responsibilities are not mutually exclusive, nor are they meant to portray a continuum with the social concerns on one end and the economic one on the other. Hence, any given responsibility or action of business could have economic, legal, ethical or philanthropic motives embodied in it (Carroll, 1979). The economical responsibilities are most fundamental for organizations
since the other three responsibilities are dependent upon the economical responsibilities of the firm. As such, the principal role of a business organization is to produce goods and services that their customers need and want and at the same time make a profit of it. What characterizes the economic responsibilities is therefore the importance for an organization to be as profitable as possible and maintain a strong competitiveness (Carroll, 1991).

However, in the addition to the profit motive, organizations also need to comply with the concerning laws and regulations; hence firms are expected to practice their economic missions within the framework of the law. The legal responsibilities are depicted as the second layer in the pyramid to portray their historical development; however they are seen as coexisting with the economic responsibilities. The economic and legal possibilities concern those practices and activities that are codified into law and required by the society. The ethical responsibilities on the other hand regard those standards, norms or expectations that exist in the organizations and also the consumers, employees and stakeholders’ moral rights, which are expected by the society. Changing ethics or values precede the establishment of the law due to they become a driving force of the creation of laws and regulations. For example, civil rights and consumer
movements reflects the changes in the social values and thus might resulting in later legislation. Moreover, ethical responsibilities can be seen as embracing new emerging values and norms which the society expects the businesses to meet, even though these values and norms reflect a higher standard of performance and are not required by the law. The movement of the business ethics of the past decade has firmly established an ethical responsibility as a justifiable CSR component. Also since the ethical responsibilities have a dynamic interplay with the legal responsibilities, the ethical responsibilities are constantly pushing the legal responsibility category to broaden, while at the same time placing higher expectations on the organizations to operate at levels above required law (Carrolls, 1991). Carroll (1979) continuous with that ethical responsibilities are difficult for businesses to deal with since they often are ill defined, also there is an ongoing debate on what is ethical and what is not.

The philanthropic responsibilities are according to Carroll (1991) desired by the society. This involves engaging in programs or acts which promote goodwill or welfare. Examples of philanthropy are businesses’ contributions of financial resources to arts, education or the community. The primarily difference between the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities is that the philanthropic responsibilities are not expected in an ethical or moral sense. Communities desire that organizations contribute with their time or money to the society somehow, but the firms are not regarded as unethical if they do not. Therefore, philanthropy is more voluntary or discretionary for the businesses even though there is a societal expectation that business provide it. One important reason for making a distinction between the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities is that some organizations feel that being just a good citizen in the community is the same as being socially responsible. This is of importance according to Carroll (1991) since CSR includes philanthropic contributions but is not limited to them, in fact it could be argued that even if philanthropy is highly desired is actually less important than the other three categories of social responsibility. As a result of this argument, philanthropy is simply the icing on the cake (Carroll, 1991).

The most critical tensions would be according to Carroll (1991) between economic and legal, economic and ethical and economic and philanthropic. This because of that traditionalist may see a conflict between a firm’s concerns for profit versus its concern for the society, however this might be an oversimplification. From a CSR or stakeholder
perspective these tensions might be seen as a reality for all organizations and therefore it is a focus on the total pyramid as a whole, trying to get the firm to engage in decisions, programs and actions that simultaneously fulfill all the different parts. Furthermore, the total corporate social responsibility of a business is a result of the simultaneous fulfillment of the business's economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. Hence, the CSR pyramid shows that CSR firms should strive to make a profit and at the same time obey the law as well as be ethical and be a good corporate citizen. (Carrolls, 1991).

3.3 Stakeholder Theory
The concept of stakeholders has become embedded in management’s thinking as well as in management scholarship. The stakeholder theory tries, according to Mitchell (1997), understand which of the stakeholders deserve or require the management's attention and which does not. An actual or potential stakeholder can be everything from a person or group to an organization, institution, society or even the natural environment. Another definition of what defines a stakeholder is the one offered by Freeman (1984):

*Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievements of the organization's objectives* (Freeman, 1984:46).

However, this definition has been discussed extensively and Mitchell (1997) argues that the definition by Freeman needs to be clarified. He further claims that there needs to be an identification of whom or what a stakeholder really is, and in turn the managers know whom they should attend to. Managers will prioritize the claims of the stakeholders according to three attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency.

Continuously, Carroll (1991) argues that there is a connection between the idea of CSR and an organization's stakeholders. The word *social* in Corporate Social Responsibility has been unclear as well as lacking a specific direction to whom the corporation is responsible. The concept of stakeholder implies what specific persons or groups a firm should consider in their CSR orientation, hence a firm should know to whom it must be responsive to, and what stakeholders are most urgent for their business. A stakeholder can represent a legal claim, such as which might be held by a customer who has an implicit or explicit contract. However, a stakeholder can also represent a moral claim such as they want their opinions to be taken into considerations in an important business
decision. The challenge of the management is therefore to decide which of the stakeholder’s considerations should be taken into account in their business decision-making process.

Moreover, from a CSR perspective, the stakeholder’s power and legitimacy is of importance. The legitimacy concerns to what extent a group has a justifiable right to be making a claim on a specific organization, while the power of stakeholders concern to what extent the stakeholders have power over an organization’s management. For a management it is important to ensure that the firm’s primary stakeholders achieve their objectives as well as ensure that other stakeholders are satisfied as well. However, this win-win outcome is not always possible for an organization to achieve, but it represent a desirable goal for management to protect its long-term interests (Carroll, 1991).

Lastly, Neville and Menguc (2006) argue that stakeholders are not always having independent impact and are not independent of each other. Hence organizations do not respond to each and every stakeholder individually but to multiple influences from the entire stakeholder network, these interactions between stakeholders are known as stakeholder multiplicity. Regarding CSR stakeholders such as the government, employees and the customers, they can have both independent as well as multiplicity impact on an organization's position towards CSR. Neville and Menguc (2006) claim that as the intensity of a government's regulatory increases, it will become more prominent form the perception of the organizations, which will result in greater CSR. Moreover, as the environmental sensitivity of the customer increases, it will become more salient from the organization’s perception and this will result in a greater CSR as well. This because organizations are dependent on customer’s resources and therefore the customers have the power to affect the firm. Similar applies to if the employees’ influence attempts increases, they become more salient from the perception of the organization, which also might result in greater CSR. In conclusion, if one stakeholder lacking the power to influence a firm, a collaboration with other stakeholders with more power, might be more successful (Neville & Menguc, 2006).

3.4 CSR in Developing Countries
According to Jamali and Mirshak (2007) the interest in Corporate Social Responsibility have increased during the last years due to the globalization and international trade, which have reflected a greater business complexity as well as new demand for improved
transparency. The fundamental idea of CSR is that companies have an obligation to work with a wider array of stakeholders and meet their needs as well. However, even if there have been an increased interest regarding CSR all over the world, the practice of CSR in developing countries are still quite unknown. This because the national socio-cultural environment as well as the level of national economic development are important variables influencing CSR practice and understanding. However, Muller and Kolk (2009) argue that even though most research still focus on Corporate Social Responsibility in developed countries, the interest in CSR in emerging markets have increased in the recent years. Also there is a perception that CSR as a Western concept is not applicable elsewhere; hence it needs a separate investigation.

Furthermore, Jamali and Mirshak (2007) argue that despite developing countries might have good intentions and awareness regarding CSR, the approach to it remains amateurish and sketchy. The understanding and practice of CSR are formed through specific national and institutional realities, which may encourage an environment where CSR is actively promoted. This together with that the societal development is the basis for if CSR is structurally possible and normatively legitimate or alternatively that CSR is to a large extent a performance of personal initiative. Hence, for developed countries it is easier to implement CSR practices than for developing countries. Nevertheless, Muller and Kolk (2009) study on three large Mexican firms showed that CSR in Mexico is not new, however different because it reflects the individual social and political context. Hence, local Mexican companies deal with CSR in a different way than other foreign companies since they have pressure from stakeholders and are linked to other institutional forces. This is of importance since Jamali and Mirshak (2007) argue that it is in the developing countries that the need for CSR is most acute. Implementation of the CSR practices in developing countries requires more systematic planning as well as stronger determination from the private sector in order to get the CSR practices in motion. Moreover, it is important to realize that it is a major commitment to start a CSR program, as for example changing the way the responsibility management has been approached before. It might also require collaboration between the private sector, the public sector and the NGO sector and to put their resources and strengths together. However, from such crossover collaboration it is difficult to imagine collaborations beyond the boundaries of public relations. However, Muller and Kolk (2009) study on the Mexicans firm gives a different perspective than the traditional assumption that
implementation of CSR outside developed countries is not as developed due to other priorities, lack of technologies or a weaker system of implementation.

Continuously, Muller and Kolk (2009) argue that putting CSR in new settings does not necessarily mean that the performance of it becomes different. Even if value and perception vary regarding CSR it may still be similar practices that are used when implementing it or that different approaches lead to comparable outcomes. In contrast to this, Urip (2010) state that CSR programs in developing countries need to be designed carefully for maximum acceptance and benefit. The understanding of the importance of caring for living areas and to preserve the environment can only be brought through the community’s mindset as well as values through community development. Lastly, Muller and Kolk (2009) argue that by focusing more on the performance of CSR, especially to expand beyond the environment and also include other dimension, more insight can be obtained to what extent CSR performance in emerging market differ, regardless of the context-specificity and origins of the CSR concept.

3.5 Theoretical Synthesis

![Figure 4. Theoretical synthesis (created by authors).](image)

In order to understand how and why tour operators’ work with CSR, there are several factors that has to be taken into consideration. Firstly, there is a need to get a deeper understanding of what CSR is and that there are different views and definitions, hence CSR can have different meanings to different people. Furthermore, when the
understanding of what CSR is and why it should be implemented in their everyday business, a tour operator can use different strategies in order to implement their different CSR activities. These strategies may differ in many ways, for example depending on resources, knowledge and different perspectives. The different strategies and implementation of CSR can also be regarded as competitive advantage in relation to other tour operators. Being involved in social responsibilities, which goes beyond a tour operator’s regular routines/duties is a way to create competitive advantage. Moreover, to implement different CSR strategies and activities and do it in a good way it is of importance for tour operators/organizations to understand why they want to work with it, this in order to get a deeper understanding and meaning of their CSR implementation.

Moreover, by understanding the motives of CSR it might be easier to know how the CSR activities should be implemented and where to aim. Furthermore, in the tourism sector there are many different stakeholders involve. All of the different stakeholders needs to take into consideration for a tour operator when developing CSR strategies, thus they need to know who their stakeholders are and how they are connected to the tour operators, as well as the stakeholders power. Lastly, tour operators operate all over the world and they meet and interact with different cultures continuously. Because of this, there might be different perspectives to what CSR is and what it stands for. Also, CSR as a concept is wildly more spread out in Europe and US, which can be seen as a paradox since social responsibility often is needed the most in developing countries.
4 Empirical Findings

This chapter will start with a presentation of respective tour operators followed by a presentation of the empirical findings gathered from interviews with representatives of Ving, Fritidsresor, Ketzaltour, and Pleasant Transfers and Tours.

4.1 Presentation of the Case Companies
Following are short presentations of the four case companies: Ving, Fritidsresor, Ketzaltour, and Pleasant Transfers and Tours.

4.1.1 Ving
Ving is Sweden’s leading tour operator and offers trips to over 500 destinations in 50 countries all over the world. They are also a part of the international travel group Thomas Cook Group plc. Ving arrange and offer everything from organized package holidays and flexible holidays with schedule airlines to separate flight tickets and hotel reservations. All these different kind of trips you can buy either through Internet, call centers, Ving’s own shops as well as travel agencies all over Sweden (ving.se).

At the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico, Ving’s Destination Manager, Christer Aarum, works together with ten employees that have different tasks such as guides, office work as well as administrative work. Ving has 36 hotels at this destination and they do not own any of them. Furthermore, Ving has 10 000 Scandinavian guests arriving each year to the Yucatán Peninsula (Aarum).

4.1.2 Fritidsresor
Fritidsresor is one of Sweden’s leading tour operators. They are part of the bigger group TUI Nordic, which in turn is owned by the world’s largest travel group, TUI Travel plc. Fritidsresor have about 1600 employees and offer package holidays to destinations all over the world. Leading destinations are the Canary Islands, Turkey and Greece (fritidsresor.se).

4.1.3 Ketzaltour
Ketzaltour is a Mexican tour operator established in Mexico City. They are a wholesaler incoming tour operator with connections all around Mexico as well as Cuba and Guatemala. The company was founded in 1997 and has of today 22 employees (ketzaltour.com.mx). Ketzaltour specializes on cultural tourism and develops package
tours that brings approximately 10 000 tourists per year, from 58 countries around the world, to visit Mexico. They are spread out all over the country with local offices in every city they work. During the years they have created a vast network within the tourism business and have for example contact with over 600 hotels all around Mexico. As such, they have the ability of offering their customers the highest quality to the lowest cost. The general manager of Ketzaltour is René Rodríguez (Rodríguez).

4.1.4 Pleasant Transfers and Tours
Pleasant Transfers and Tours was established in Playa del Carmen in 2008. It is a local company that develops and operates tours to archaeological sites as well as aquatic sites around the Yucatán Peninsula. Their staff is composed of 26 employees with diverse tasks such as guides, drivers, sales team and administrative staff. In addition to this they have a varying number of employees promoting and selling excursions on the streets of Playa del Carmen and Cancún. Pleasant Transfer and Tour’s customers are primarily hotels and other tourism establishments in the area that in turn sell PTT’s tours to its guests, the end customers. Approximately 5000 tourists, from all over the world, take tours with PTT annually. Depending on the season, the geographical spread of customers vary, however, the majority of the customer base is from Europe. Dario A. Zavala Jiménez is the Public Relations Manager at Pleasant Transfers and Tours (Jiménez).

4.2 How Tour Operators work with CSR
Here will be presented the empirical evidence we have found that will enable us to answer the research question of how the tour operators work with CSR.

4.2.1 Ving
In Mexico, Ving implements CSR in different ways. Firstly, they are involved in a city called The City of Joy, located in Cancún. This is a village for vulnerable social groups, such as women that have been victims for violence or are living under threat, children without parents, and the elderly. Ving donates money to this village each year and this money is collected through for example trips where one dollar of the ticket price goes to City of Joy. In March 2014 Ving donated 20 000 SEK as well as 2 500 dollars to this cause. Moreover, Ving does not own any of their hotels and because of this arrangement Ving has no influence on the employee’s salaries or working conditions and does not make any demands on their hotel suppliers. However, Ving is careful to work with hotels that are not just interested in earning money, but taking care of their employees
so that they in turn can give the right service to Ving’s guests. If the hotels cannot do this there is a risk that they will lose Ving as a customer (Aarum). Moreover, in regard to the environmental aspect, Ving puts certain demands on their hotel suppliers by contracting them to follow certain basic environmental standards (ving.se).

According to Aarum, just donating money is not always a solution, there also needs to be some sort of action. For Ving this translates into helping their local partners with cleaning the beaches as well as collecting clothes for the Mayan villages for example. They also recommend and encourage their guests to go out and explore restaurants and other businesses outside the tourist area in order to benefit the locals. This is important since many of the restaurants on the main street in Playa del Carmen are owned by the different hotels and are thereby not dependent on the income from the restaurant, unlike the local restaurants situated on the side streets.

Aarum believes that working with CSR and different projects might be one of the reasons for a guest to chose Ving as a tour operator, especially among people that are interested in, and informed about these issues, even if other tour operators such as Fritidsresor work with similar projects. However, he also said that the he believes the majority of the guests chose Ving due to their reputation of providing the best hotels, friendly staff and the best air travel company in combination with their CSR work. However, he does not see it as a competitive advantage. Ving is proud of what they do and glad that they are able to do it.

4.2.2 Fritidsresor
Fredrik Lindblom told us about the strategies for CSR within Fritidsresor and what they do in order to make a positive impact on their destinations. Lindblom explained that much of their work, and efforts are dependent on the volume of the destination. As Mexico is a rather small destination for Fritidsresor, the specific CSR programs and projects they are involved in are limited in the case of Mexico.

Specifically in Mexico, Fritidsresor has however developed a project together with their local agent, Delphinus. It aims at collecting clothes and toys, both from the head office in Stockholm, and the guests in Mexico, and then handing these out to Mayan children in the nearby villages of Cancún. According to Lindblom this is also a good way to involve the guests and twice every season Fritidsresor makes a trip to these villages to
hand out what has been collected. Guests are welcome to take part in this and thus experience another aspect of Mexico.

More generally speaking, Lindblom told us that Fritidsresor is very concerned with the certification of their hotel suppliers in all of their destinations, including Mexico. In their contracts with hotels, Fritidsresor make certain demands that have to be fulfilled in order for them to work together. The hotels have to get certified in accordance with Travelife, or another equivalent sustainability program. In these certifications are rules and guidelines regarding different aspects of CSR that has to be followed, such as written employment agreements and good working conditions for the hotel employees. It is the task of an outside, third party to follow up and make sure that the requirements are continually being met.

Lastly, in terms of competitive advantage, Lindblom explained that Fritidsresor are very aware of its responsibilities and work hard to make a positive impact on their destinations. Their work has also been recognized with several awards. Lindblom stated that if they continue with their efforts and build up their brand, he definitely believes it will become a competitive advantage towards its competitors.

4.2.3 Ketzaltour
With regard to Ketzaltour’s policies on CSR, the general manager, René Rodríguez, explained that they do not have a drafted strategy on how to work with these issues. However, they try to incorporate the social aspect into their business. By developing packages that involves the local community: local companies, cultural traditions, food, and art crafts, Ketzaltour benefit many of the communities in which they operate. They are continuously trying to develop new packages and programs, and many times these programs are developed in cooperation with local people and companies. For example, by involving local farmers, women who prepare traditional food and other skilled local residents, they create employment opportunities. For every visit to haciendas, meal or massage, Ketzaltour pays the local people involved and thus benefit the local communities. As such, Rodríguez points out, Ketzaltour works very directly with the people and the community.

Concerning the environmental issues however, Rodriguez explained that he does not see the negative impacts tourism brings to the environment as a big issue in Mexico and this
is thus not something Ketzaltour puts any effort into. When visiting cultural heritages and archeological sites, they have to comply with the local legislation and the rules set up to preserve the areas. However, as a tour operator, further concern about the environment and preservation of cultural heritage is voluntary and not something that Ketzaltour concern themselves with.

Regarding competitive advantage, Rodríguez explained that Ketzaltour stand out among its competitors by offering uniquely developed cultural tours. This is done by collaborating with local communities and using their special skills and knowledge for the benefit of all.

4.2.4 Pleasant Transfers and Tours
Jiménez explained that Pleasant Transfer and Tours is a responsible tour operator, dedicated to taking care of the conservation of natural resources, protecting the natural flora and fauna as well as the different Mexican cultures. Moreover, they aim at helping the local community.

Jimenez argues that they help and benefit their community by employment. This creates direct income, which leads to a higher quality of living. He continued by explaining that by promoting and selling excursions, employees learn more about their own culture as well as other languages. Moreover, PTT and its employees participate in events and courses that will help them learn more about tourism, its impacts and service so that they in turn can give better information and service to their customers. This is how Pleasant Transfers and Tours are directly involved with the community.

Additionally, PTT see themselves as an environmentally friendly company. However, Jiménez continued by explaining that besides following the local rules that are related to tourism and the preservation of certain sensitive areas, there is nothing more to do. He sees the tourism impact as overwhelmingly positive for Mexico and states that tourism has helped and benefited the conservation and protection of the nature and environment. Thus, more efforts to preserve the environment become redundant.

4.3 Why Tour Operators work with CSR
Here will be presented the empirical evidence we have found that will enable us to answer the research question of why the tour operators work with CSR.
4.3.1 Ving

According to Aarum the main reason for Ving to work with CSR is to give back to the community. Ving has been operating in Mexico and Playa del Carmen for such a long time and Aarum thus stated that giving back, and helping them is the least they can do. Ving wants to show that they do not only think about in-flow but also out-flow and thereby be a part of the destination they work at. In the case of Ving and their ongoing donation to City of Joy, Aarum argues that this is a good way to help the community and it is important that these sorts of projects continue to develop. However, he means that it is important for a company to think about why they want to work with the local community and it is important that it is for the right cause.

*An increasing focus at Ving is to be involved in the local community, regardless of whether the destinations are Thailand, Mexico or Mallorca, Ving is always looking for possibilities to help, in order for people to see that Ving is not just a selfish company but a generous one as well* (Aarum, Ving, 2014-04-04).

Furthermore, Aarum believes that the CSR work Ving does in Mexico can be seen as a goodwill, but at the same time not. They want to help and do this through several different projects. However, there is another side to it. Ving is very grateful to be able to work in places like Playa del Carmen and the fact that the Mexican people accept the masses of tourists arriving here every year makes it even more important to give back to the community. The host population’s attitude is crucial for the success of the destination.

Working with CSR in Mexico also has its legislatory reasons. As an international tour operator there are certain rules and regulations that has to be followed, and taxes that has to be paid in terms of not over exploiting, and destroying sensitive attractions. Aarum holds that it is important to comply with these rules, due to certain demands that are being put on Ving and in turn, their supply chain. In order to control that the regulations are being met, there are certain control groups that looks over the buses, hotels and excursions Ving use.

When asked if their guests ask about their CSR work and different projects, Aarum stated that they promote tours to The City of Joy to their guests, so if they want to visit the village and get a tour, this can be arranged. However, the number of guests visiting
City of Joy differs from week to week (Aarum).

4.3.2 Fritidsresor
Lindblom explained that the primary reason for Fritidsresor to develop and implement CSR strategies is to handle the risks associated with these issues. It is important for them to show their customers and other stakeholders, in an easily accessible way, that they work with these issues as well as how. Otherwise, stakeholders may become upset that Fritidsresor, the tour operator of their choice, do not take responsibility for their impacts. Additionally, Lindblom added that in terms of a longer perspective, it is a risk that has to be handled in relation to future potential investments. If the CSR risks are not handled in a proper way, Fritidsresor becomes uninteresting for investors. Moreover, another reason for Fritidsresor to work with CSR, Lindblom believes is the expectation that tour operators should work with environmental as well as social issues in their respective destinations.

Continued work with, and development of the CSR strategies is necessary in order to maintain the reputation Fritidsresor has built over the past years. Just this year Fritidsresor was voted the greenest brand in Sweden as well as the best in business with regard to sustainability work. They have thus been recognized as the leading tour operator in Sweden with regard to these issues, and as such they need to continue with this work in order to meet outside expectations.

According to Lindblom, guests do not often ask about the CSR strategies of Fritidsresor. He believes this has to do with the general lack of information and knowledge about CSR in the context of tourism.

*Poorly put we are working with mass tourism; we fly happy Swedes to the sun. And these people may not be the most involved in sustainability issues, which makes it rather difficult to offer them a better product in terms of these issues* (Lindblom, Fritidsresor, 2014-05-05).

Lastly, he believes that the awareness about sustainability and responsible action will increase, with the result that CSR strategies will become of even greater importance in the future. Additionally, when asked if their customers ask about the CSR strategies, and if he thinks they matter to their customers Lindblom hold that people more or less
expect companies to work with these issues today and thus there is no need to ask about it.

4.3.3 Ketzaltour
When asked why Ketzaltour works with the local communities and incorporates local people and companies into their tours, Rodríguez said that it is important to create work and benefits. By creating these unique packages they are able to not only benefit the local community but also give the tourists an insight into, and knowledge about the true Mexican culture, which he believes is their strongest competitive advantage.

*In a certain way, we help them by doing this. The local people receive money, we receive money and the tourists receive all the satisfaction and experiences* (Rodríguez, Ketzaltour, 2014-04-02).

With regard to the environmental responsibility, Rodríguez explained that this is not something Ketzaltour puts any effort into due to several reasons. Primarily, he does not see the negative impacts they, or the entire tourism industry, has on the environment in Mexico. Rodríguez believes that tourism has an overwhelming positive impact on this country and stated that tourism is the third biggest source of revenue for Mexico. He further explained that the majority of tourists are from North America and they like the beach, meaning that they are not interested in the cultural heritage and thus, they do not destroy anything.

*We have more than 70 or 80 percent from Unites States or Canada, and these people like the beach. All-inclusive hotels, beers and stay by the beach and swimming pools. So they do not destroy anything* (Rodríguez, Ketzaltour, 204-04-02).

Moreover, he did not see any other negative impacts this kind of tourism would have on the environment as a big risk.

He further explained that there are some local legislation in some areas with archaeological sites and which address the issue of conservation. Tour operators, domestic or international, have to comply with these rules and if not, they will be asked to leave. Moreover, NGOs have set up rules and guidelines that tour operators are recommended to follow. Lastly, there are also several certificates and programs tour
operators can enter, but this is not something Ketzaltour have done or are planning to do, because as Rodríguez explained that is for other functions to handle, not the companies.

According to Rodríguez there are not many customers who ask about their CSR activities. He believes this is due to the fact that they do not know about it since information about it is not available anywhere, and that many customers do not expect them to work in this way.

4.3.4 Pleasant Transfers and Tours
Jiménez explained that it is very important for PTT to create shared value. They are thus not only concerned with building a business, promote tours and make money, but also to benefit the local community as well as offer their customers the best experience possible.

Jiménez told us that at PTT they see it as part of their mission to work in a fair way that helps the local community, which is done primarily by the benefits of employment, and courses in sales and service. He believes it is important to promote a positive interaction with the local community, which consist of both local residents but also, he argues, the tourists. They are also part of this community and must thus be taken into consideration. Jiménez further explained that it is important for the local residents and the local businesses to understand this in order to be able to create harmony. Developing a culture of service and understanding helps to create a positive experience so that visitors will come back. This is very important for many businesses in Mexico.

*Tourism has become the business of which we all depend*
(Jiménez, Pleasant Transfers and Tours, 2014-05-17).

With regards to the environment, Jiménez stated that there are quite a lot of local rules and regulations they have to take into consideration when developing, and operating tours to certain areas of the Yucatán Peninsula. He also stated that as the tourism sector has increased in Mexico, and as the interest for culture-, and ecotourism has increased, these rules and regulation has become increasingly more comprehensive and strict. As such, Jiménez argues that following these rules are sufficient enough and that PTT does not need to do more in order to protect the environment.
According to Jiménez, not many of their customers ask about what they do for the local community and how they work with decreasing their impacts on the environment. He does not believe they are aware and/or concerned with these issues. They are here on vacation and to have a good time and Jiménez do not believe that they are concerned with the impact they have here in Mexico as the majority of customers are only here for a short period of time.

4.4 Challenges of Implementing CSR in Developing Countries
Lastly, here will be presented the empirical evidence we have found that will enable us to answer the research question of what challenges the Swedish tour operators face when implementing CSR strategies in a developing country context.

4.4.1 Ving
Working in a developing country, such as Mexico, is according to Aarum different from working at more developed destinations such as Mallorca or the Canary Islands. The majority of the Mexicans at the Yucatán Peninsula are poor and they do not earn much money. Around the tourist area it might look very clean and new but just a few blocks away the surroundings are quite the opposite and shows more of the real Mexican living. Due to this, the Mexicans are trying to take advantage of the benefits of tourism to the greatest extent possible, because if not there will be no income at all. From many different perspectives, the tourism industry is everything to many Mexicans.

As such Aarum believes that CSR becomes of greater importance in these destinations because of the threat of over exploitation. He argues that the growth and development of a destination such as Playa del Carmen does not only lead to advantages such as new jobs. The Yucatán Peninsula is still developing. The demand is growing at a fast pace leading to overbooked hotels and crowded tourist areas. As a result, more hotels have to be built and in turn, this will lead to an even greater negative development of this part of Mexico, leading to a downward spiral of exploitation and all the while Mexicans are becoming more dependent on the tourism incomes. Aarum wonders what will happen if Asia becomes more popular again and the tourists decide to travel there instead?

Aarum holds that it is important to comply with local rules and even though their Mexican partners and suppliers did not follow them from the beginning Ving is careful that the rules are being followed today. He continues by stating that this is the case for
most international tour operators. Because of the growth of the tourism sector and that the international tour operators has gained a greater influence on the Mexican tourism industry and its development, the local business has needed to adapt to the changing conditions. The International tour operators need to take greater responsibility because they have stronger pressure from the home countries, to make sure that the whole supply chain is acting responsibly. As the need for CSR becomes bigger in destinations like Mexico, it is also important to be able to implement the strategies and projects. This is not a problem to Ving according to Aarum. As they have worked with the same partners for 25 years, they are aware of the focus Ving has and what they want to accomplish and help Ving fulfill their CSR strategies to the fullest extent.

4.4.2 Fritidsresor
When asked about potential difficulties of implementing CSR strategies in Mexico, an undeveloped country, Lindblom stated that yes; he believes there are some difficulties. However, even though it is a minor destination for Swedish travellers, there are a lot of tourists from other countries there. As such it has become very exploited and the specific impacts of Fritidsresor thus become very small. He continued by explaining that in destinations where they are big and have large volumes, for example on the Canary Islands, they have a larger impact, but can also take more action as they have a higher influence over the tourism industry there. For Mexico, Fritidsresor’s small present does not give them much influence, and in turn, their positive impacts, and actions in the host destination cannot be taken in any large extent.

However, Lindblom also sees a bigger CSR risk in Mexico, as it is an undeveloped country, in relation to other, more developed destinations. It can thus be argued that there is a bigger need for CSR in Mexico and Fritidsresor are aware of this. Therefore, they are working in close connection with their hotel suppliers and that the different certification demands becomes of even greater importance in destinations with an increased CSR risk. By demanding hotels to get certified in accordance with Fritidsresor’s requirements, Fritidsresor makes sure that there is a level of responsibility in their supply chains and that there is no gaps in their social responsibility.
5 Analysis

This chapter will include the analysis and the chosen theories will be compared to, and discussed in line with the empirical findings that have been collected through interviews with four tour operators. Arguments concerning how and why tour operators work with CSR in Mexico will form the basis for this analysis, where further arguments concerning underlying causes and challenges will be build upon.

5.1 How Tour Operators work with CSR
Mintzberg (1987) argues for five different definitions of strategy: strategy as plan, ploy, pattern, position and perspective. He believes there is a need for all of these different aspects in order to understand the concept of strategy. Companies can thus develop strategies of different kinds in five different ways. Many times, strategies are a result of a combination of several aspects (Mintzberg, 1987). Moreover, according to Porter and Kramer (2006) CSR can be used as a competitive factor. This because it can lead to higher standard for the quality of service, more substantial local demand conditions or influence rules and regulations. When we put these definitions in relation to the tour operators studied for this thesis, we can see that they have different approaches to the development and implementation of CSR strategies.

5.1.1 The Swedish Tour Operators
Ving and Fritidsresor both work with CSR in Mexico in several different ways. They put efforts into the social aspect as well as the environmental and thus we argue that their strategy for CSR has been developed in accordance with several of the aspects Mintzberg (1987) argues for, because there are different intentions and backgrounds for the different CSR actions.

Ving raise money for the City of Joy, collect clothes to Mayan children, help clean the beaches, and encourage guests to interact with, and benefit the local businesses etcetera (Aarum). Fritidsresor are not as involved with the local community as Ving however, they too collect clothes and toys to give to children in nearby villages. This sort of CSR activities we claim to be a mixture of strategy as plan and pattern. Mintzberg (1987) defines strategy as plan as an action that has been planned in advance with clearly stated aims and guidelines of how to reach them (Mintzberg, 1987). Ving’s ongoing donation to City of Joy is a good example of this form of strategy. The activity has been
integrated into the company by involving guests in the donation process and constantly raising funds through excursion tickets. This strategy has thus been planned in advance, and in combination with having a clear aim and clear guidelines of how to reach this aim, we conclude that this specific aspect of Ving’s CSR strategy in Mexico has been developed as a plan.

Moreover, with regard to the more sporadic, and flexible activities both tour operators perform, such as donating clothes, cleaning beaches etcetera, we argue for has been developed in accordance with strategy as pattern. This is also the case with Ving encouraging guests to visit local businesses. Mintzberg (1987) defines this as strategy developed through consistency in behavior. It does not have to be intended and consciously developed as a strategy in advance (Mintzberg, 1987). Seeing as these activities are more ad-hoc in nature and have not been planned for in the same way as for example the fundraising to City of Joy, we state that they are of a pattern character. They have not been intentionally planned for in advance; rather they have become a habit that by repetition year after year, has become a strategy.

In terms of the environmental aspects of the tour operator’s CSR strategies, they both work with it but in somewhat different ways. Lindblom explained that their primary initiative concerns the hotel suppliers and making sure that they get certified in accordance with Travelife or other certifications equivalent to it (Lindblom). Similarly, Ving also work towards making sure that their hotel suppliers operate in a sustainable way by setting certain contractual demands (ving.se). We claim that these actions are strategy as plan. They are consciously developed in advance and have a very purposeful, clearly defined aim. Respective tour operator have this demand on all of their hotel suppliers and in both cases there is an elaborate control process to make sure that the hotels live up to the expectations and requirements. As such the guidelines are also very clearly defined.

Furthermore, both of the Swedish tour operators have explicitly stated strategies on how to work with CSR as information is available on their website about their different projects, as well as it is marketed to the respective guests, both before departure as well as on the destination. With regard to the environmental aspect, these are also explicitly stated strategies as the demands and requirements are written down in agreements between the parties in question.
It can be demonstrated by the empirical evidence that Ving does not use their CSR strategies for positioning. Mintzberg (1987) describes strategy as position as the link between the organization and its environment. The context primarily concerns position among competitors (Mintzberg, 1987). In addition Porter and Kramer (2006) state CSR is a way to improve the competitiveness. However, Aarum explained that they do not see their CSR strategies as a competitive advantage and that, in any case, their main competitors, Fritidsresor and Apollo, both have equally elaborated strategies (Aarum). However, the case of Fritidsresor is a bit different. Fritidsresor are very aware of its responsibilities and work hard to make a positive impact on their destinations. Their work has also been recognized with several awards. Lindblom stated that if they continue with their efforts and build up their brand, he definitely believes it will become a competitive advantage towards its competitors. This can be related to Porter and Kramer (2006) argument regarding that commitment to certain CSR initiative can gain intangible resources such as brand name, goodwill and reputation. As such we conclude that they have partly developed their CSR strategy for positioning purposes. Lastly, in terms of strategy as ploy, we cannot see any similarities with how the Swedish tour operators work with CSR issues.

5.1.2 The Mexican Tour Operators
Ketzaltour and Pleasant Transfers and Tours work with CSR in rather similar manner. Both are more focused on the social aspect of CSR and neither put any efforts into decreasing their impact on the environment. According to Rodríguez, Ketzaltour are very conscious about the social aspect of CSR. They are constantly trying to develop new tours in collaboration with local communities all over Mexico. Furthermore, Jiménez stated that PTT works with the community by employing people, increasing their welfare and raising their levels of competence in areas such as language and service. This is how they perceive working with the local community (Jiménez). In a way, we argue that both tour operators have the similar motives behind their CSR activities. Rodríguez stated that they, too, regard employment to be a benefitting factor to the local community. By collaborating with local businesses, they create job opportunities, and in turn help the local community. However, we further argue that Ketzaltour have taken this one step further and become more organized in their activity as well as reach out to a bigger community with their activities. PTT on the other hand are only benefitting a very small number of people by employment.
As such we argue that Ketzaltour have developed their CSR strategy in accordance with Mintzberg’s (1987) definition of strategy as plan. Even though Ketzaltour have not set goals and developed guidelines to help them reach these goals, they still have a consciously intended course of action and a purpose to fulfill through these actions. In contrast, we do not consider PTT to work with CSR and in turn, no CSR strategy as well as the use of CSR strategies as competitive advantage can be identified. However, Jiménez argued that by educating staff in the service profession, tourists will come to have a more pleasant experience of Mexico, which will lead to an expansion of the tourism industry. In turn this will benefit the local community that are very dependent on the tourist income, on a long-term basis. This is more in accordance with a CSR strategy, but not to a sufficient extent. As it cannot be regarded as a strategy, it cannot be put in relation to any of Mintzberg’s (1987) five definitions of strategy.

The programs Ketzaltour have developed in order to benefit local communities and businesses cannot be regarded as neither strategy as ploy or pattern. However, it can be argued it is also partly developed as strategy as position in relation to their competitors. Rodríguez explained that Ketzaltour specializes in cultural tourism and aims at providing their customers with custom made trips that are unique in composition. He continued by saying that he believes this is their strongest competitive advantage (Rodríguez). According to Porter and Kramer (2006), CSR activities can improve the input factors of production such as skilled labor required to compete. This can be applied to how Ketzaltour involving the local communities and using their different skills and/or land to develop these unique tours, we argue that they are using their social responsibilities as a tool for reaching competitiveness to a certain extent. However, at the same time, it is not the social responsibilities per say that constitutes the competitive advantage, but rather the result of these social responsibilities.

5.1.3 Cross Case Analysis
By putting Mintzberg’s (1987) theory on five strategies in relation to the empirical evidence from the case companies we can draw the conclusion that Ving, Fritidsresor and Ketzaltour's CSR actions are partly developed in accordance with strategy as plan. They have been planned for in advance and there is an action plan in place. Ving, Fritidsresor and Ketzaltour are all involved in working with the local community, though in slightly different ways and with slightly different motives and perspectives.
Pleasant Transfers and Tours also consider themselves to work with the community. They all do it as a way to help the community and give back.

Additionally, Fritidsresor and Ketzaltour’s CSR strategies have to varying extents been developed in positioning purposes. Neither have developed their CSR programs for the primary purpose of positioning however, it has become a result of the actions that have been undertaken in both cases.

Lastly, both Ving and Fritidsresor also have some pattern characteristics in their CSR strategies, where habits have become a form of strategy. Regarding explicitly stated strategies, the two Swedish tour operators work in this manner, whereas the two Mexican does not. Urip (2010) states that it is important with well-defined strategies in order to ensure a balance between the social, economic and environmental factors for both short-term and long-term profit sustainability for an organization. With regard to this, we claim that Ving and Fritidsresor might have a greater success of implementing their strategies than Ketzaltour and PTT due to their more well-defined and organized strategies that enables them to see the goal more clearly. We argue that the clearer the guidelines and goals an organization has, the better.

Consequently, Ving, Fritidsresor and Ketzaltour work CSR as a combination of different strategies, which Mintzberg (1987) claims to be the most common way of going about strategies of all kind. We find the mix of strategies to be good, as we believe it to encourage more flexibility in terms of CSR actions, which will enable a faster reaction, and adaptation to changing conditions, which in turn will create a higher level of benefit for the host destination.

Furthermore, with regard to Mintzberg’s (1987) fifth definition, strategy as perspective, we argue that this is something all case companies are impacted by in their development of CSR strategies. This strategy is according to Mintzberg (1987) based on different world perceptions and perspectives. The strategy is developed from the collective mind of the entire organization (Mintzberg, 1987). As such we claim that this is the basis for all CSR strategies and is a fundamental aspect of in what direction a company decides to aim its efforts. Moreover, we state that the Swedish and Mexican tour operators have very different world perspectives, and outlooks on their respective impact on the environment and culture in Mexico, leading to a diversification in the development of
CSR strategies.

Most significantly, this can be shown by comparing the environmental aspects of the respective tour operator and the attitudes towards the impacts tourism has on the environment. Neither Mexican tour operator saw any challenges in relation to the environmental degradation and in a similar way, both company representatives considered the local rules and regulations as adequate efforts in protecting, and preserving the natural environment and archaeological heritage. Moreover, both Rodríguez and Jiménez mainly saw the tourism industry as a good contributor to the national economy and did not have that much to say about exploitation and other negative impacts tourism may bring to a destination. Additionally, Ketzaltour do not work with the local community to avert or decrease the negative impacts they have, rather in order to benefit the poor people and create employment. We argue that this perspective on tourism that is shared by both Mexican tour operators has a large impact on the development, or non-development of CSR strategies. If the general perception is that tourism brings no negative impacts, then there is no need for CSR strategies to be implemented.

In contrast to this, the Swedish tour operators are very aware of the negative impacts the tourism industry as a whole, as well as they themselves have on destinations. As Lindblom of Fritidsresor said, they always measure the CSR risk in every destination and due to several factors; the risk is quite high in Mexico. As such it becomes even more important to implement CSR strategies and making sure they are being followed continuously (Lindblom). Moreover, we argue that the Swedish tour operators are working in a more preventative way with CSR than the Mexican tour operators do. This by compelling hotel suppliers to get certified in accordance with Travelife and thus setting certain requirements for environmental aspects as well as working conditions for employees which both Aarum and Lindblom stated is an important aspect in their respective company’s CSR strategy.

Lastly we argue that the perspective of CSR strategies may also be impacted by the context of national versus international tour operator. Mexican tour operators are established and work in their own country, meaning they use their own natural resources, whereas international tour operators, such as the Swedish, take advantage of the same resources that does not belong to them. As Aarum stated, Ving are very
appreciative of the opportunity to work in Mexico and as such feel a higher sense of responsibility for their impacts. We regard it as important as an outsider tour operator to be aware of the negative impacts one has on the host destination and work towards decreasing these as much as possible. However, this is also the case with national tour operators and we argue that even though local rules and regulations have been implemented for the preservation of the environment, Mexican tour operators should also try and do more for this cause. In the end it does not matter who has the biggest claim on the resources, but that they are preserved for the benefit of a sustainable tourism development.

5.2 Why Tour Operators work with CSR
In order to understand why the different tour operators work with CSR we have chosen to analyze their answers and put them in relation to Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid as well as the stakeholder theory. Carroll (1991) argues that there are four components of social responsibilities, which are illustrated as a pyramid (Figure 3), with economic aspects in the bottom followed by legal, ethical and lastly, philanthropic responsibilities. These four responsibilities are not always mutually exclusive, nor are they coherent. Additionally, a stakeholder is, according to Freeman (1984), a group or individuals who can affect, or is affected by a firm's achievements. Mitchell (1997) continues with stating that it is of importance to identify whom or what a stakeholder really is, in order for a firm's manager to know whom they should attend to.

5.2.1 The Swedish Tour Operators
According to Carroll (1991) the first step in the pyramid concerns a firm’s economic responsibilities, which is fundamental for the pyramid as the other three components are dependent upon it. It describes that the principal role of a firm is to produce goods and services that their customers need and at the same time make a profit of it (Carroll, 1991). Both Ving and Fritidsresor operate as any other company, trying to make a profit and at the same time producing the services that their customers want and need. However, Carroll (1991) continuous by stating that in addition to the profit motive a firm also need to comply to the concerning laws and regulations. Both Lindblom at Fritidsresor and Aarum at Ving stated that they have regulations to comply with in Mexico regarding CSR. For example there are different rules and taxes that has to be paid in order to not destroy or over exploit different tourist attractions. We argue that following the different laws and regulations is of great importance since they help to
preserve the environment, which often constitute popular tourist attractions, such as snorkeling the reefs. Preserving these sites is of importance because if it gets to be exploited the tourist might choose another destination and/or country to spend their holiday in and then Mexico will have a decreased number of arriving tourists and in turn a reduced income from the tourism sector.

Ving does not only apply their CSR strategies to what is required by Mexican law. Aarum told us that the main reason they work with CSR in Mexico is because they want to help the local community as well as give something back. Therefore, Ving is involved in different projects such as donating money to City of Joy, and collecting clothes to help the Mayan villages. This can be related to what Carroll (1991) describes as ethical responsibilities. These are standards, norms or expectations that exist in an organization as well as the consumer’s, employee’s and stakeholder’s moral rights that are expected by the society (Carroll, 1991). Ving as well as Fritidsresor do this partly because of expectations from customers and other stakeholders that tour operators should work with social and environmental issues, and partly because, as Aarum stated, it can be seen as goodwill towards the local community. Ving wants to show that they are grateful to be able to work in a place like Mexico and if the host population is treated well, they in turn will treat Ving’s customers well, leading to a good tourism experience. Additionally, Lindblom stated that taking responsibility for their impacts is a way for Fritidsresor to handle the risks associated with CSR issues. They do not want their stakeholders to be upset, or lose interest in the organization due to lack of CSR actions. This is consistent with what Carroll (1991) discusses, that ethical responsibilities can be seen as embracing new values and norms which the society expect the business to meet, even though these values and norms are not required by law. Because of the different responsibilities that Ving and Fritidsresor meet, they fulfill the economical, legal as well as the ethical responsibilities.

Regarding the stakeholders, the interest of Ving’s and Fritidsresor’s CSR activities among its customers are varying. The interest is according to Aarum and Lindblom depending on the awareness of, and interest in these issues as well as the lack of knowledge. Mitchell (1997) argues that it is of importance to know who your stakeholders are. According to Aarum and Lindblom, there are certain standards and norms regarding CSR that their stakeholders expect them to work with even if the do
not explicitly ask about it. As such we claim that it is important for Ving and Fritidsresor to know whom these different stakeholders are, in order to be able to reach their expectations. However, we argue that it is not always easy to identify all the stakeholders within the tourism industry since usually many different stakeholders are involved in the development of a tourism product.

Moreover, Neville and Menguc (2006) state, that organizations are dependent on customer’s resources and therefore the customers have power to affect an organization. Both Fritidsresor and Ving want to meet their expectations, and avoid risks associated with CSR. Nevertheless, they are dependent on their customers; therefore we argue that the customers, as important stakeholders, can have the power to affect these organizations. More knowledge, awareness and interest regarding CSR among stakeholders and customers, might lead to a greater power to affect the tour operators to implement even more with CSR activities.

5.2.2 The Mexican Tour Operators
Both Ketzaltour and Pleasant Transfers and Tours fulfill both economical responsibilities as well as the legal responsibilities. However, it can be shown from the empirical findings that PTT are more aware of the specific laws and regulations that need to be followed. According to Jiménez, there are a lot of local rules and regulations they have to take into consideration, since the tourism sector in Mexico has increased the past years, the rules and regulations has become more strict and comprehensive. The reason for this divergence in knowledge about local rules and regulations we believe is due to the fact that tourism is much more developed on The Yucatan Peninsula, where PTT are established, than in Mexico City where Ketzaltour operates from.

According to Visser (2005) there has been little research regarding the CSR Pyramid in developing countries. This is important since studies have shown that culture might have an influence on perceived CSR priorities. This can be shown when examining Carroll’s (1991) argument about the ethical responsibilities, as they are expected norms and values from the society. According to Rodriguez at Ketzaltour and Jiménez at PTT, working with the local community is done primarily through the benefits of employment. Thus, this is what is seen as working with the ethical responsibilities and what is not required by the law. Therefore, we can draw the conclusion that the CSR Pyramid needs to be put in relation to the culture and in the context of developing
countries’ conditions. Both Ketzaltour and PTT have different perspectives on what is ethical, for them it is more basic, than for example Ving or Fritidsresor. Moreover, neither representative sees the negative impacts tourism might have on the environment in Mexico; hence they do not do anything to preserve it, more than follow the mandatory regulations. Since neither Ketzaltour nor PTT can be seen as having reached the ethical responsibilities, they do nothing that is of philanthropic character either.

According to Rodriguez and Jiménez, their stakeholders in terms of customers, do not ask about CSR and what they do for the local community or the environment. This because they believe that the stakeholders do not know about it since information about their work is not available anywhere, or that many customers do not expect them to work in this way. Additionally, Jiménez believes those tourists are in Mexico for vacations and having a good time and are therefore not concerned with the impact they have. This we consider to be of an issue, since if the stakeholders should have had more knowledge about this issue; they might have the power to affect the tour operators.

5.2.3 Cross Case Analysis
The Swedish tour operators, Ving and Fritidsresor, work with CSR mostly in an ethical way. To be profitable and follow the Mexican laws and regulations is of great importance, however the reason why they work with CSR is primarily because it is expected of them as well as goodwill and giving back. Ketzaltour and PTT on the other hand, working with social responsibility is a way to create work that in turn will benefit the local community. We argue that this, in a way, can be more related to the economical responsibilities and the importance for a firm to be profitable, even though from their perspectives, it is social responsibility.

According to Carroll (1991), the philanthropic responsibilities involves engaging in programs or acts that promote goodwill. The primary difference between the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities is that the philanthropic responsibilities are not expected in an ethical or moral sense (Carroll, 1991). We do not consider any of the tour operators to do anything that can be considered as philanthropic responsibilities, mainly because in tourism the ethical responsibilities are expected in an already well-developed way, especially among the Swedish tour operators. However, we argue that Ving is the tour operator that has CSR activities that are closest to be of philanthropic character. This because they work with CSR activities that are not connected to the tourism
industry and does not benefit them in any way. Moreover we argue that it is more difficult to reach philanthropic level in regard to environmental aspects, than social. General public and potential customers are more aware of the tourism impact on the environment than the social aspects such as cultural degradation. Consequently, tour operators are held accountable to a larger extent for the environment than the social aspects of CSR. Lastly as Carroll (1991) states, philanthropic responsibilities can be seen as icing on the cake. Therefore we claim that the ethical responsibilities are the responsibilities that are of importance.

According to Carroll (1991), a stakeholder can represent a moral claim. However, none of the tour operator’s customer asked about CSR to any large extent. Reasons to why customers do not ask about it may differ between the Swedish and Mexican tour operators. We argue that the main reason for this is accessibility. When travelling with a tour operator from one’s home country information becomes much more easily accessible, than when travelling with a local tour operators at the destination. Moreover, travelling with a domestic tour operator may include more planning and consideration, whereas using a local tour operator might be more of an ad-hoc decision while on place at the destination.

5.3 Challenges of Implementing CSR in Developing Countries
Urip (2010) argues that it is of importance to design the CSR programs in accordance with the destination, and this is especially significant in developing countries. We agree with this statement and based on the empirical evidence we can see that there is a greater need for more adapted and destination-specific CSR activities. According to Lindblom, Fritidsresor implement their CSR strategies depending on the volume of tourists to the specific destination, therefore Mexico is not as prioritized as other destinations because of Fritidsresor’s limited presence there. We consider this to be a paradox since it is destinations in a developing country like Mexico where these CSR programs are needed the most, and make the most impact on the everyday life of the local community. Aarum maintained that there are a lot of poor Mexicans, living on the incomes from tourism. This is corroborated by the fact that tourism generated income is Mexico’s third largest source of revenue (Wilson, 2008). As such we argue that the extent to which a tour operator should design and implement CSR strategies should be based on need, rather than volume. This is in line with Jamali and Mirshak (2007), who claims that it is in developing countries that the need for CSR is most acute.
However, Lindblom continued by stating that since they are such a small part of all the international tour operators operating in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, they do not have as great of an impact as other tour operators have from other countries. Moreover, due to their small presence, their influence on the destination becomes rather small, meaning they do not have the possibility to perform any larger activities and make an actual impact on the community. Despite this argument, Lindblom also states that Fritidsresor have identified an increased CSR risk in developing countries, such as Mexico. In terms of this, he argues that it becomes of even greater importance to make sure that their hotel suppliers becomes certified in accordance with Fritidsresor’s requirements so that it is made sure that there are no gaps in their responsibility chain.

In terms of developing specific destination-related CSR activities, and thus adapting the strategy to fit new contexts, Urip (2010) argues that companies should, the Swedish tour operators does this to a certain extent with regards to the social aspect of the CSR actions. Additionally, Urip (2010) argues that CSR programs in these countries need to be designed carefully for maximum acceptance and benefit. It is important to understand the mindset and needs of the local community in order for this to occur (Urip, 2010). Both Ving and Fritidsresor work with the local community to varying degrees. We claim that Ving has taken it a step further as they have integrated the collection and donation of funds to City of Joy into the company and its activities in Mexico. However, both tour operators’ are involved in other ways as well such as donating clothes and toys to nearby Mayan villages. We see this as developing specific destination-related activities as they have been adapted to fit the conditions and have thus listened to the needs of the Mexican local communities and implemented strategies thereafter.

In contrast to Urip’s (2010) argument, Muller and Kolk (2009) argue that putting CSR in new settings does not mean that the performance of it becomes different. Value and perception may vary regarding CSR, but still there should be similar practices used for implementation (Muller & Kolk, 2009). Empirical evidence show that this too is true in the cases of the Swedish tour operators, however with regards to the environmental aspect of CSR. Both companies make contractual agreements with all hotel suppliers in terms of this issue, and this is the case in all of their destinations. Both Aarum and Lindblom stated that it is important with consistency regarding environmental aspects.
However, the difference with working in a developing country is that control processes becomes of greater importance to ensure that all requirements are being followed correctly and continuously.

Apart from the need for better control processes, Aarum told us that Ving does not have any challenges with the implementation of their CSR strategies in Mexico. This because they have worked with the same partners for 25 years and they are aware of Ving’s focus and goals. However, he continued by explaining that many local tour operators, and partners to international tour operators, have not always followed the mandatory regulations. Though, as the tourism sector has grown bigger and international tour operators has gained a greater influence on the development of the Mexican tourism industry, local businesses has had to adapt to changing conditions. International tour operators have stronger pressure from respective home country to take responsibility for negative impacts and thus it is important that this responsibility is consistent through the entire supply chain.

Different understandings and perceptions of the impacts of tourism and the need for CSR between developed and developing countries becomes evident from this empirical evidence. Even if the interest regarding CSR in emerging markets have increased in the recent years, Muller and Kolk (2009) state that there is a perception that CSR as a Western concept is not applicable elsewhere. This is corroborated by Jamali and Mirshak (2007) who argues that the CSR concept in developing countries is still quite unknown, due to that the national socio-cultural environment as well as the level of national economic development is important variables influencing CSR practice and understanding.

This can be put in relation to what Aarum discussed. Since many Mexicans are poor, and dependent on the tourism income, they all want to try to get as much benefits of the tourism as possible. Thereby their main concern is in being as profitable as possible and thereby working with social and environmental responsibilities comes second.

Because of this, we claim that CSR is still seen as a Western concept, due to the differences in priorities. Organizations from developed countries have the resources, knowledge, and thus possibilities of designing and implementing CSR all the while still making a profit. Because of this, we claim that it becomes even more important for the
international tour operators, including the Swedish tour operators, to implement and work with CSR in a developing country like Mexico. After all it is the international tourism that contributes to many of the negative impacts of tourism, such as overexploiting and environmental destruction. Another reason to why the four tour operators have different perspectives on why they work with CSR might be because of what Kraus and Britzelmaier (2012) states, that even though CSR has been studied for so long, there is still no common set of definitions. Without a clear definition on what CSR really implies, we consider that there will always be different perspectives and interpretations of CSR, many times related to the countries social and economical development.
6 Conclusions

The chapter will present a conclusion of the case study. Firstly, the secondary questions as well as the primary research question will be answered, followed by recommendations to the Mexican tour operators. Lastly, the limitations of the thesis will be presented as well as recommendations for further research in the field of CSR within developing countries.

6.1 Answering the Research Questions

Following is the conclusions that have been drawn from the analysis in the previous chapter, in line with the posed research questions.

6.1.1 How Tour Operators work with CSR

Our analysis shows that among the case companies there are different ways to go about Corporate Social Responsibility and different strategies have been developed in order to fulfill these perceived responsibilities.

When putting the empirical findings in relation to Mintzberg’s (1987) theory on five definitions of strategy we found that four of these can be seen as relevant within the context of tour operator’s CSR in Mexico, namely strategy as plan, pattern, position as well as perspective. From this we draw the conclusion that there are different ways of dealing with CSR and different activities have different motives and thus, require different strategies. We find it good to have a mixture of strategies. Some activities needs to be planned, organized and developed during a longer period of time due to the nature of the specific activity, hence designed in accordance with Mintzberg’s (1987) strategy as plan. However, we argue that at the same time there is a need for more flexible strategies in order to adapt to, and customize activities to certain circumstances and/or cultures. By developing strategies in accordance with Mintzberg’s (1987) definition of strategy as pattern, this can be done to a greater extent. Since CSR can be seen as a social phenomenon that is constantly developing and changing direction we regard flexible strategies, to a certain extent, to be of great importance in order to be able to follow the changes.

Moreover, we conclude that Ving and Fritidsresor, in comparison to Ketzaltour and PTT have developed, and are implementing more diverse strategies and are covering
both the social as well as the environmental aspects in their CSR work. There can be several reasons for this dissimilarity. Resources and size of the organization definitely has an impact on this, however we argue that no matter resources and size, tour operators have the possibility to do something with regard to both CSR aspects. We argue that the most fundamental reason for this divergence between the Swedish and the Mexican tour operator’s CSR activities is different perspectives. We argue that perspective is the basis for how tour operators decide to design their CSR strategies, as perspective is the basis for how we see and perceive the world. The Swedish tour operators’ representatives both stated that they want to help, as help is needed. Lastly, both Swedish tour operators are highly aware of their impacts, positive and negative, and are continuously trying to balance these in order to gain not only themselves, but all stakeholders involved, including the host destination and population.

In contrast to this, both Mexican tour operators’ representatives expressed positive feelings towards tourism and had difficulties in seeing the negative aspects to any large extent. Moreover, as Jimenez stated, tourism has become the business in which they all depend (Jiménez). Thus, we can conclude that sometimes certain things have to be overlooked in order for tourism to continue to grow and be a lucrative business for local communities and businesses. Therefore, the short-term consequences of an income, becomes more important than the long-term consequences of social and environmental degradation.

Lastly, we conclude that working with CSR as a competitive advantage and as positioning is not common among tour operators established in Mexico. Only Fritidsresor and Ketzaltour mentioned competitive advantage as a possible, and a partial explanation for their CSR activities. We see this result as a positive expression of the development of CSR as it shows that companies have left the traditional perception of only generating profit, to consider the environment in which it operates to a greater extent.

### 6.1.2 Why Tour Operators work with CSR

From the empirical findings as well as the analysis, we can draw the conclusion that the reasons for the tour operators’ to work with CSR differs, both between each company but mostly between the Mexican and Swedish tour operators. This mainly due to the fact that as the tour operators have different cultures and perspectives, they have
different views on what CSR is and what it involves. Thereby, the reasons to why they work with CSR differ. Firstly, in Europe, CSR is a common, widespread and a well-discussed phenomenon. Because of this there is a greater expectation on Swedish tour operators from the society as well as from their customers to take responsibility for their impacts. Even if only a few customers ask about the Swedish tour operator’s CSR activities it is given that they do it, because if not, it could upset the stakeholders, and thereby the interest for the organization would decrease.

Secondly, with regard to the CSR Pyramid (Carroll, 1991), we conclude that the Swedish tour operators work in accordance with the first three levels, economical, legal and ethical responsibilities, while the Mexican tour operators are only involved with the first two levels. The economical responsibilities are fundamental for the firms’ survival and the legal responsibilities needs to be adapted to the Mexican laws and regulations. The empirical findings showed that reaching the first two levels were not a problem for either tour operator, Swedish as Mexican.

Concerning reasons for why the tour operators’ work with CSR, findings showed that this differs between the Swedish and the Mexican tour operators. The main reason for why the Swedish tour operators work with CSR is as Aarum stated, to give something back to the destination. By involving themselves in the community in slightly different ways, both Swedish tour operators fulfill the ethical responsibilities of Carroll’s (1991) pyramid as well. Ketzaltour and PTT on the other hand see the work opportunities that they created as a way to support the local community. We argue that his might rather be seen as a responsibility of economical character, where they employ people in order for them to be able to operate, and hopefully, be profitable. Thereby they do not fulfill the ethical responsibilities. Regarding the philanthropic responsibilities, none of the tour operators had any activities that were of this character. As such we conclude that yet again, it is the unequal development of CSR knowledge and the different perceptions of tourism and its impacts that influence why, and to what extent CSR strategies has been implemented.

6.1.3 Challenges of Implementing CSR in Developing Countries
We conclude that there are some challenges for the Swedish tour operators when implementing CSR strategies in a developing country context. This, mainly due to the higher CSR risk present than in relation to destinations in more developed countries.
There need to be a balance between destinations-specific strategies that aims to helping the local community with what is needed, while at the same time implement standards CSR strategies, that gives the basis for the overall CSR activities. Ving and Fritidsresor have done their best to balance this however, we state that Ving have succeeded a bit better, since they, as working in a developing country, see the need for aid and are thereby more involved with the local community. Fritidsresor adapt their CSR activities with regard to the volume of tourists they have on the various destinations. Thus, since their presence is limited, so are the efforts. In relation to this we also conclude that as there is a bigger CSR risk in developing countries, efforts should be made in regard to the need of the destination, not the tourism volume. Furthermore, other challenges Swedish tour operators have met in Mexico has been the need for a more extensive control processes. The local tour operators have not always followed the regulations however, as the tourism sector grow bigger, international tour operator’s influence has grown bigger and as such their demands of altered conditions.

Lastly, we conclude that progress has been made on the CSR implementation in Mexico, both from the international tour operators due to stakeholder pressure, as well as from the local tour operators due to their dependency on international partners and the need to adapt to their standards. However, there are different understandings and perceptions of the impacts of tourism as well as of the concept of CSR among the tour operators. This we claim is due to the fact that CSR is seen as a Western concept. The main concern for many local Mexican businesses is to be profitable; hence working with social and environmental responsibilities comes second. While for the international tour operators, they can be profitable and still making a profit due to their knowledge and resources. Due to these differences in priorities challenges when implementing CSR in developing countries occur.

6.1.4 How CSR Strategies are undertaken among Swedish and Mexican Tour Operators within the Tourism Industry in the Developing Country of Mexico

In conclusion there are great differences between how the CSR strategies are undertaken among the Swedish respective the Mexican tour operators. The Swedish tour operators have elaborated CSR strategies and different activities that they implement in destinations all around the world, including Mexico. The reasons to why they work with CSR are partly because they want to give something back to the community, but also as it is expected from their stakeholders. To not work with these CSR related issues is seen
as not taking responsibility for their negative impacts. Even though Swedish tour operators have a lot of knowledge and know-how regarding CSR as well as resources to implement an array of CSR strategies, they face challenges when implementing their strategies in developing countries due to clashes between culture and different perspectives.

The Mexican tour operators on the other hand are not very involved in the concept of CSR and thus their CSR activities differ from the Swedish tour operator’s activities. The main reason for this is the difference in perspective. They do not see all the negative impacts of tourism, but a very crucial income. However, in recent years, their CSR work has mostly been influenced by big international actors, in the preservation of the environment in order to avoid over-exploitation.

6.2 Recommendations
Our main recommendation to the Mexican tour operators is to raise awareness of the negative impacts of tourism in order to change the mindset and perception of tourism. To create a more sustainable tourism, that also works in the long-term there is a need for CSR activities and strategies. Even if tourism is a big source of income, there is a need to be sustainable, this because to prevent over-exploitation which might lead to a decreased tourism.

A closer collaboration between the Mexican tour operators and the International tour operators might lead to an exchange of knowledge, in form of that Mexican tour operators can learn more about the importance of CSR activities and strategies to achieve a more sustainable tourism. While the International tour operators can learn about Mexico as a developing country, their resources etcetera, and thereby get a greater knowledge for the country as well as its culture.

We recommend Mexican tour operators to raise the awareness of the negative impacts tourism has on the environment. Furthermore, it is important to design strategies that will help preserve and conserve the natural resources of Mexico that has become such popular tourist attractions. It is not sufficient enough to only follow the local rules and regulations that have been put in place, but it is also the responsibility of each and every tour operator to take responsibility and try to decrease their own personal environmental footprints. This can be done by a range of different certifications.
6.3 Limitations
This thesis has been carried out as a case study to examine the CSR practices among tour operators in Mexico. Four case companies have taken part and the result of interviews held with representatives from each company has been the basis for this thesis. Even though only a small number of tour operators have been examined, we argue that the result of this thesis is not only applicable to specifically Swedish and Mexican tour operators. The empirical findings we gathered indicated a pattern that we claim to be generalizable beyond this case study. With some limitations, it is possible to generalize the result to apply to developed and developing countries overall. Because of that CSR as a concept is more developed, discussed and well-known in developed countries and in contrast to developing countries, this affects the perception of CSR and thus the implementation of CSR activities and strategies among businesses. As such our findings can be generalized between other developed countries and other developing countries regarding CSR.

Moreover, we have in our choice of tour operators not take into consideration the size of the company and thereby not the amount of resources they have access to. These are factors that most likely have an effect on how and why different CSR strategies and activities are implemented. Also, the outcome of our case study may have looked different if we had limited our choice of tour operators to a specific kind, such as hotels. This might have facilitated the comparison due to the fact that the conditions in which they operate would have been more similar.

6.4 Further Research
Since CSR is such a broad and hard to define concept there is a lot of further research that can be done, especially regarding research about CSR in developing countries, where it is often needed the most. We suggest that further research within this field would be interesting from several angles. Firstly, we suggest a development of our case study where more tour operators are involved as well as the aspects of how the size of the companies and their resources affect the development, and implementation of CSR strategies.

There is also a need for further research concerning the development of frameworks for CSR that can be useful, and applied to cases where international tour operators operate
in developing countries. Additionally there is a need to develop frameworks for CSR from the perspective of tour operators from developing countries. Due to the very different conditions and perspectives between tour operators from developing and developed countries, it becomes difficult to apply theories, designed in relation to developed countries, to developing. Regarding this issue, we also suggest further research within the field of perspective. It has become evident through this thesis that tour operators from developed and developing countries have different perspectives on CSR. The reasons for this divergence is interesting to study as it will give a deeper understanding of the meaning of CSR in tourism destinations and among local tour operators. This in turn will facilitate even further, more profound research within this field.

Another interesting aspect that would be interesting to research is the customer role in the development and implementation of CSR among tour operators in developing countries. We suggest a survey be undertaken to establish to what extent tourists are aware of these issues and how it affects their choice of destination as well as tour operator.

Lastly, all these suggestions for further research within the field of CSR in developing countries, can also be applied to the wider, more encompassing tourism industry, and does not have to be limited to research among tour operators. The tourism industry is very wide, covering many sectors and in order for tourism to be truly sustainable, they all have to work together towards a better development.
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Appendices
Appendix A Interview Guides

Interview Guide for the Swedish Tour Operators

- What do you do? Tell us about you and your company
- How many tourists do you receive per year?
- What is CSR to you?
- What CSR activities have you implemented in Mexico?
- Why?
- Are there any Swedish rules you need to comply to?
- Do you work with local partners at your destination in Mexico?
- Do your partners work with CSR?
- Is CSR integrated into the everyday business?
- Do your customers ask about CSR?
- Do you see a difference working with CSR in this developing country related to work in a developed country?
- Is there some sort of follow-up regarding the CSR work in Mexico? How?

Interview Guide for the Mexican Tour Operators

- What do you do? Tell us about you and your company
- How many tourists do you receive per year?
- What is CSR to you?
- Do you work with CSR, and if so how?
- If yes, why?
- Do you have any rules that you need to follow here in Mexico?
- Do your guests ask about CSR?
- Common with CSR in the tourism industry in Mexico? Why do you think that is?
- Negative/Positive impacts of tourism and further development in Mexico?
- How do you perceive the international tourism operators? Threat? Competition? Pros/Cons?