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**The Impact of Supply Chain Management on Dealer Satisfaction
in the Automotive After-Sales Business**

—
A Study on Dealers of an Automotive Company in Sweden

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ABSTRACT

Title: The Impact of Supply Chain Management on Dealer Satisfaction in the Automotive After-Sales Business – A Study on Dealers of an Automotive Company in Sweden

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Aim: The objective of the study was to create knowledge on how supply chain management (SCM) can generate and impact satisfaction related to dealer - original equipment manufacturer (OEM) relationships. In this context, the after-sales market was investigated since it became the cash cow of the automotive industry after the financial crisis in 2008. The aims were to design comprehension of:

- Impact/importance of satisfaction
- Interrelations of SCM/relationship elements
- Recommendations for SCM strategies

Method: The qualitative research focused on dealers and experts, who were questioned via structured interviews. Thereby relational content analysis was used to detect and categorize 15 codes, condensing the findings in a context model.

Result & Conclusions: The research identified commitment, trust and communication to be substantial important within relationships. The OEM has to ensure a sustainable, transparent, adaptive and open relationship while guaranteeing satisfying experiences. The outcome is a “Relationship-Satisfaction Model”, where each element is placed in different importance groups, including adjustment recommendations. As a supporting concept for strategy adaptation, the “4S” model of SCM was deduced.

Suggestions for future research: The limitations are related to the examination of a single industry sector and the derivation of theory from dealer experiences in one culture solely. Here diversification of the generated model will support and extend the findings.

Contribution of the thesis: The model suggests different focus areas of SCM to improve future-orientated strategies for OEM’s. This conception can create competitive advantage in SCM, while contributing innovative knowledge to the current theories on satisfaction within dealer-OEM relationships.

Key words: Supply Chain Management, Relationship Management, Dealer Satisfaction, After-Sales Business, Relationship-Satisfaction Model, 4S Model

Table of Content

ABSTRACT.....	I
ABBREVIATIONS.....	II
LIST OF FIGURES.....	II
LIST OF TABLES.....	II
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Problem.....	2
1.3 Aim.....	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.5 Limitations.....	6
1.6 Contribution of the Research.....	6
1.7 Disposition of the Study.....	6
2. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION.....	7
2.1 Supply Chain Management.....	7
2.1.1 Definition of Supply Chain Management.....	7
2.1.2 Elements of Supply Chain Management.....	7
2.1.2.1 Delivery Time.....	8
2.1.2.2 Service Level.....	8
2.1.2.3 Claim Rate.....	8
2.1.2.4 Parts Availability.....	9
2.2 Relationship Management.....	10
2.2.1 Definition of Relationship Management.....	10
2.2.2 Elements of Relationship Management.....	10
2.2.2.1 Communication.....	11
2.2.2.2 Adaptation.....	12
2.2.2.3 Dependency, Bonds and Continuity.....	12
2.2.2.4 Power.....	13
2.2.2.5 Collaboration.....	13
2.2.2.6 Trust and Commitment.....	14
2.2.2.7 Reputation.....	15
2.2.2.8 Loyalty.....	15
2.3 Experience.....	15
2.3.1 Definition of Experience.....	15
2.3.2 Elements of Experience.....	16
2.3.2.1 Positive and Negative Experience – Zone of Tolerance.....	16
2.3.2.2 Dealer Satisfaction.....	18
2.4 Theoretical Framework.....	19
3. METHODOLOGY.....	20
3.1 Research Method.....	20
3.2 Data Collection Process.....	21
3.3 Interviews.....	22
3.4 The Data Analysis.....	25
3.5 Reliability and Validity.....	26

4. EMPIRICAL STUDY.....	28
4.1 Company A - A Company Profile -.....	28
4.1.1 Company A.....	28
4.1.2 Logistics Department Company A.....	28
4.2 GPMS and DSS –Study	29
4.2.1 Introduction.....	29
4.2.2 GPMS.....	29
4.2.3 DSS.....	30
4.3 Findings of the Interviews with Company A Experts.....	32
4.3.1 Introduction.....	32
4.3.2 Supply Chain Elements.....	32
4.3.3 Relationship Management Elements.....	33
4.3.4 Experience Elements.....	36
4.3.5 Summary.....	37
4.4 Findings of the Interviews with Company A Dealers.....	38
4.4.1 Introduction.....	38
4.4.2 Supply Chain Elements.....	38
4.4.3 Relationship Management Elements.....	39
4.4.4 Experience Elements.....	42
4.3.2.5 Summary.....	43
5. ANALYSIS.....	44
5.1 Supply Chain Elements.....	44
5.2 Relationship Management Elements.....	46
5.3 Experience Elements.....	53
5.4 Presentation of the Relationship-Satisfaction Model.....	55
5.5 Answers to the Research Questions.....	56
6. CONCLUSION.....	59
6.1 Benefits of the Study.....	59
6.1.1 Relationship-Satisfaction Model Implications.....	59
6.1.2 Study Contribution.....	62
6.1.3 Further Research Areas.....	63
6.2 Critics and Limitations.....	64
REFERENCES.....	66
REFERENCES 7.1 Books.....	66
REFERENCES 7.2 Journals.....	68
REFERENCES 7.3 Other References.....	70
APPENDICES.....	71
APPENDIX 8.1 Questionnaires.....	71
APPENDIX 8.2 Overview Study Results.....	72
APPENDIX 8.3 Interview Transcripts Experts.....	78
APPENDIX 8.4 Interview Transcripts Dealers.....	88
APPENDIX 8.5 DSS Results.....	113
APPENDIX 8.6 Comparison of Dealer - Expert Importance Evaluation.....	115
APPENDIX 8.7 Results of Expert Analysis.....	116
APPENDIX 8.8 Results of Dealer Analysis.....	117

ABBREVIATIONS

B2B	Business to Business
CoA	Company A
D (Number)	Dealer
DSS	Dealer Satisfaction Study
et al.	and others
GPMS	Global Parts Manager Satisfaction Survey
I (Number)	Interviewee (Expert)
LDA	Logistics Department Company A
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
p.	page
pp.	pages
RFID	Radio-frequency identification
SCM	Supply Chain Management

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Process Diagram.....	6
Figure 2.1: Theoretical Framework.....	19
Figure 4.1: Satisfaction Levels of GPMS Study.....	30
Figure 5.1: Results of Dealer-Expert Comparison: „Relationship-Satisfaction Model“.....	56
Figure 6.1: Relationship-Satisfaction Model.....	59
Figure 6.2: ”Relationship-Satisfaction Model” Recommendations.....	60

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Overview Connection Questionnaire and Research Questions Experts/Dealers	23
Table 3.2: Overview of interviewed experts.....	24
Table 3.3: Overview of interviewed dealers.....	24
Table 4.1: Results Coding Process Supply Chain Elements Experts.....	32
Table 4.2: Results Coding Process Relationship Management Elements Experts.....	33
Table 4.3: Results Coding Process Experience Elements Experts.....	36
Table 4.4: Importance Ranking Experts.....	37
Table 4.5: Results Coding Process Supply Chain Elements Dealers.....	38
Table 4.6: Results Coding Process Relationship Management Elements Dealers.....	39
Table 4.7: Results Coding Process Experience Elements Dealers.....	42
Table 4.8: Importance Ranking Dealers.....	43

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The study deals with the impact of supply chain management (SCM) on dealer satisfaction. SCM is the management of all entities and relations within the network to facilitate, store and distribute services or goods to the destination point (Udin et al., 2008, p.361 and Poirier, 1999, p.2). Competition within the supply and distribution of products is a growing task for companies; simultaneously creating inimitable market position is crucial in order to succeed in the future (Zineldin, 2006, p.430). Concerning these dynamics, the supply of goods and services can generate advantages for a company, given a correct management of the complex entities (including different influencers and relationships) (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.224).

One aim of SCM is to support processes and distribution of information through the supply chain in order to meet demands and expectations better. The intention when cooperating within the supply chain is the maximization and efficiency of each process (Spekman et al., 1998, p.53, 55; Liu, 2012, p.4 and Coyle et al., 2011, p.42). In this conception cooperation within the supply chain network will be a success-factor for the company and therefore a competitive advantage (Spekman et al., 1998, p.53).

A challenge for an original equipment manufacturer (OEM), its management and the supply chain is to deliver the right quality and quantity to meet customers' expectations (Handfield, 2011, paragraphs 7). Studies on customer relationship management (Zineldin, 2006), supplier – dealer relationship (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003 and van Riel et al., 2011), dealer satisfaction (Gassenheimer et al., 1995), B2B relationship (Gil-Saura et al., 2009), SCM relationships (Spekman et al., 1998), service quality (Svensson, 2006) and strategic supplier relationships (Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013) have tried to identify several aspects of influences within the dealer – supplier relationship. After studying these investigations, gaps such as the negligence to combine relational factors, experience and SCM together were found.

In order to create business success, cost reduction, increased revenues and satisfaction of the customers, it is essential for every manager to analyze and understand the setup of supply chain management and the relationship factors (Spekman et al., 1998, p.53; Lee and Katzorke, 2010, p.124 and Rushton et al., 2014, p.104). In this conception the research will concentrate on dealer satisfaction and simultaneously on the impact level of the relationship.

To narrow the research area, the investigation will focus on the automotive supply chain. This sector has undergone tremendous change since 2008 due to cyclical fluctuations based on the

financial crisis (Innovative Verkehrspolitik und Nachhaltige Strukturpolitik Department, 2010, p.6). Thereby, SCM is a management tool to handle supply challenges to ensure delivery towards dealers. This makes it even more worthwhile to draw car manufacturers and dealers attention on improvement on quality and costs in line with development of a well-functioning supply chain (Klapproth and Ramelow, 2010, p.86).

The study by Svensson (2006) already highlighted that the car market has transformed even before the financial crisis. The competition is getting tense; thereby managers have to increase their engagement in supply chain management to retain customer's satisfaction and loyalty (Svensson, 2006, p.56).

Since growth in car sales is slowing down due to the financial impact of the crisis (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.2), the business needs to keep, retain and acquire customers in the aftermarket for their long-term survival (Tayler and Brunt, 2000, pp.8-9).

Furthermore Saccani et al. (2005, p.263) have stated that the focus of the car makes has to be on the after sales service towards the dealers since it will improve customer loyalty and impact their satisfaction level. Here the supply chain towards the dealer is a key for success by providing the dealer with the right part on the right time (Saccani et al., 2005, p.268). Ehinlanwo and Zairi (1996, p.41) have narrowed what after sales in terms of the automotive industry means, it comprises of "all activities geared towards maintaining the quality and reliability of the car carried out after the customer has taken delivery with the goal of ensuring customer satisfaction". Here the importance of focusing on a correct after-sales service is stressed out. Additionally the importance of the after-sales market has been stated by Hecker et al. (2010, p.10) that it will be the most enduring and important business for car manufacturers in the future. Lower gross margin per car sale as well as reduced sales influence the turnover negatively, but with the focus drawn on the high profit generating after-sales market, the car manufactures still have high potential to ensure their survival (Hecker et al., 2010, p.8). The recent events of the financial crisis affected the dealers likewise and there is a need to focus on their collaboration with car manufacturers (Hecker et al., 2010, p.8). This type of collaboration can create an opportunity for the company to gain information of the customers purchasing habits and satisfaction with the car after the initial purchase for marketing purposes, resulting in competitive advantage (Saccani et al., 2005, p.260, 263). These arguments reinforce the urgency to raise managers and researchers attention to this business sector.

1.2 Problem

Despite the large amount of research studies in terms on automotive SCM (Turner and Gooeff, 2005, p.447), the influence on dealer satisfaction and the relationship between dealers and OEMs

is not sufficiently covered in the current literature (Pocsay, 2010, p.8 and Forslund, 2014, p.206). The urgency to produce knowledge about the effects and prominences strengthen the argument for conducting the underlying research even more. Considering this, SCM has to be understood to be a crucial element in the management of relationships (Udin et al., 2008, p.361).

Few studies were identified within the background presentation concentrating on SCM and relationships. Nevertheless, these studies have substantial gaps.

Svensson (2006) has only examined the importance of service quality within the supplier – manufacturer automotive supply chain, leaving the relationship between manufacturer and dealer in the after – sales business unexplored.

Zineldin (2006) drew the attention on the impact of customer relationship management on satisfaction and loyalty while focusing on the end-customer relationship merely. This narrow framework did not take the dealer, into account.

The study by van Riel et al. (2011) concentrated on the European automotive industry and its various challenges regarding the dealer – supplier relationship. Here only few relationship factors (trust, commitment and satisfaction) were identified leaving out other influencers within the relationship (Riel et al., 2011).

The research from Qrunfleh and Tarafdar (2013) extended these findings by capturing the influence of SCM within strategic supplier and OEM relationships. Hereby implications on how supply chain strategies regarding responsiveness and postponement, were disclosed. The outcome was to consider all supply chain members when establishing a supply strategy, with the limitation of examining only supplier-OEM relationships.

Gil-Saura et al. (2009) have tried to illuminate relations between trust, commitment, satisfaction and loyalty towards the supplier-OEM relationship value. All those elements were found to have positive influence on the relationship. However, the research only focused on the company's perception leaving out the supplier's perspective.

These are starting points for the underlying investigation, where the adaptations of strategies referring to SCM, for companies are based on the dealer perspective compared to the company's opinion of the relationship.

Gassenheimer et al. (1995) studied improvements of channel relationships. Dealer perspective was taken into consideration to ensure the dealers' position towards the suppliers. The research concentrated only on the office system and furniture sector. It was investigated how commitment, power, joint action and flexibility influence satisfaction. In their study, social aspects of dealer – supplier relations were stressed.

The current research attempts to close these gaps, by including several aspects of relationship

elements. The underlying research not only focuses on the coherences as Gassenheimer et al. (1995) did, but also adds relevant experiences within the relationship.

Spekman et al. (1998) studied the diverse partnership aspect of SCM. Their result showed that collaboration, trust and commitment could benefit both supply chain partners and customer satisfaction. The buyer and seller perspective and their rating of different elements were taken into account in their study. Supply chain factors; such as purchase order information tracking, quality and delivery tracking etc. were also investigated. The findings were that these supply chain elements not match completely, but provide an area where other investigation is needed. To extent, this research the underlying study captures this fact. Spekman et al. (1998) concluded with recommendations on how supply chain managers can adjust their strategies in order to improve the relationship since it became evident that there is a gap in mutual understanding.

Jansson and Zineldin (2003) conducted an important study on the subject. Their study has identified influencers on the working relationship between dealers and their suppliers in the lumber business (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.224). Their research focused only on a few relationship factors and investigates only on business scope whereas the underlying research takes the interrelation of relationship factors and the influence of experience with the supply performance of the OEM into consideration.

Furthermore van Riel et al. (2011) have stated that little research has been conducted on the effects of the after sales market and the management between OEM's and dealers. It is found that the investigation of this relationship was neglected although it is crucial for car manufacturers to understand the dealer-OEM relationship completely, in order to derive or adapt strategies to obtain high market share (van Riel et al., 2011, p.116 and Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). The commitment within this relationship determines each partners success in the market (van Riel et al., 2011, p.116) and influences both partners satisfaction level.

The car manufacturer Company A conducts each year two studies on dealer satisfaction. The first is the "Dealer Satisfaction Study" (DSS), which captures the entire dealer business, from car sales to services. This research is unfortunately limited, since it concentrates more on performance of car sales and marketing campaigns, and captures only few aspects of the after-sales SCM and relationship factors. The second study, the "Group Parts Manager Survey" (GPMS), is specified on after sales managers at a dealership. But again, this questionnaire does not examine partnership or relational factors in the supply chain at all. Only supply chain elements are measured against dealer satisfaction. Even though both studies capture the satisfaction level of the after-sales services, which provides a first insight into the dealers' mindset, but experiential and relational factors are left out.

Since the available literature of SCM focuses mainly on the effects on customer satisfaction, leaving the intermediate, the dealer, unconsidered (Cohen et al., 2000, paragraph 48 and Lee and Katzorke, 2010, p.124). Pointing out this gap, the study will contribute to the contemporary theories in this field. Frank (2010) has identified several gaps within the exploration of satisfaction of the dealers in the after sales business, which are the narrow focus on just one part of the supply chain and the total negligence of relational impact on dealer satisfaction (Frank, 2010, p.8).

These gaps make it difficult to identify real potential within SCM and relationship management. However the underlying research will close these gaps, by including essential theoretical background and empirical data into the presentation. In this regard, the study wants to examine how dealer satisfaction is connected to effective SCM. Therefore a first step will be the assessment of OEM's current supply chain and simultaneously their main influencers to evaluate the current strategy of an OEM, with further objective to improve satisfaction. Interviews are thus beneficial to reveal and to explore the creation and how does the experience influence satisfaction. In consequence, the current research is important for manufactures in order to understand the dealer's mindset.

1.3 Aim

The aim of the research is to illustrate how SCM can generate and impact dealer satisfaction. By presenting and critically discussing the influences of SCM on dealer satisfaction, the research specialises on the relationship between the company and the dealer. In this notion, uncovering impact elements on dealer satisfaction is another aim of the research. To reveal interrelations of SCM and relationship elements has been not discussed jointly before and are therefore essential to focus research on. Furthermore taking the experience of the dealers into account supports the objective of the study.

The purpose of the conducted study is to discuss the diverse perceptions of the after-sales managers at the dealers and compare their different perspectives also with OEM's expert's input, to reveal improvement potentials. The aim of the identified results is to reveal recommendations for SCM strategy adaptations and provides an understanding of the connection between different SCM and relationship elements.

1.4 Research Questions

Central research question:

How can Supply Chain Management impact and generate dealer satisfaction?

Sub research questions:

What generates dealer satisfaction in supply chain management?

Which elements of the relationship between the dealer and the OEM describe satisfaction?

How does positive/negative experience with the OEM's supply chain performance satisfy/dissatisfy dealers?

1.5 Limitations

The study will concentrate on the down - stream direction of the supply chain, representing the relationship between the dealer and the OEM in the after sales business, leaving the other distribution channels within supply chain management unconsidered. Another limitation is the scope of the research, which focuses on one industry and their dealers only. The research is conducted in one country only, Sweden. Thereby different aspects of dealer satisfaction, based on cultural attitudes are not captured. The interviewed experts are only from company in Sweden, which could also be seen as a limitation since other companies' experts' perspective is left out.

1.6 Contribution of the Research

After reading the thesis, the following knowledge should be obtained by the reader:

- The enhanced comprehension of the effects of SCM on dealer satisfaction
- The impact of relationship elements on SCM
- The elements of satisfaction regarding relationship management theories
- Understanding the theoretical implication of the „relationship-satisfaction model“
- The contribution to current research studies, by defining the main influencers of dealer satisfaction regarding SCM

1.7 Disposition of the Study

The research study is divided into six chapters. After the introduction illustrates the aim of the research, the second chapter summarizes the key theories regarding supply chain management, relationship management and experience. The methodology is presented in chapter three. Followed by the main part of the research presenting the empirical findings, including the outcomes from the GPMS and DSS studies, followed by the presentation of the findings from the expert and dealer interviews in chapter four. The fifth chapter analyses the results with regard to the theories. After discussing the empirical data, the benefits, the implications and the outcome, the „Relationship-Satisfaction Model“ are presented in the conclusion of the study. Figure 1.1 shows the disposition of the research study.

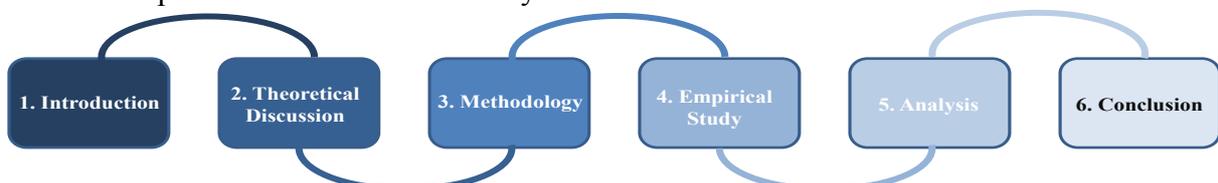


Figure 1.1 Process Diagram (Source: Müller 2014)

2. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

The chapter will present the theoretical backgrounds about the variables; supply chain management, relationship management and experience with after-sales services. Derived from the theoretical discussion the theoretical framework will be shown.

2.1 Supply Chain Management

2.1.1 Definition of Supply Chain Management

SCM is described as “*designing, developing, optimizing and managing the internal and external components of the supply system*” (Spekman et al., 1998, p.54). This organization of sourcing raw material, manufacture products, store, is crucial to ensure the distribution of goods to retailers and end-customers (Poirier, 1999, p.2). SCM does comprise also of the management of partner relationships and processes, including the flow of information and services (Udin et al., 2008, p.361 and Christopher, 2010, preface p.1). The goal of SCM is to „*deliver the right product, at the right time, in the right quantity and quality, at the right cost, and to the right destination.*“ (Coyle et al., 2011, p.24, 26). SCM is therefore the overall management of supply streams within a company (Liu, 2012, p.4) incorporating all partners into the network (Mentzer et al., 2007, p.5) Furthermore SCM is an important feature in managing relationships between suppliers, dealers and the manufacturers in order to meet their various demands (Wu et al., 2004, p.323).

2.1.2 Supply Chain Elements

When considering the elements of SCM, the terminology “supply chain” has to be illustrated first. The supply chain consists of the network of several organizations (manufacturers, suppliers, logistics providers, distributors, dealers etc.); those are interacting with each other to deliver services or goods to the end-customer. SCM is the management of all the connected flows between these members (Sodhi and Tang, 2012, p.6). The task for an OEM is to supervise the streams and share information to other members of the network, which is also called relationship management (Forsslund, 2014, p.205 and Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, p.579). The management of the performance is the key indicator for the success rate of the distribution network and hence related to the perceived performance and relationship by the dealer and customer (Forsslund, 2014, p.205 and Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, p.579). There are several elements of SCM, but the concentration within this presentation is only on the four main factors, which describe the external distribution from the warehouse to the dealer and is thus the most important supply chain towards creating satisfied dealers.

2.1.2.1 Delivery Time

The delivery time describes the time when an order is placed till the parts are delivered to their destination point. The lead-time provides information about the expected delivery time and gives an overview of the duration until the customer receives the parts (Coyle et al., 2011, p.41). Within this process, there are several other sub-processes, such as “order transmittal, order processing, order preparation, and order shipment” (Coyle et al., 2011, p.41). Higher demands of end-customers to receive their parts faster are one driver, which should be taken into consideration when finding the optimal strategy for delivery time planning. According to Davis (1993), management of time components is important to the customer. Similarly the dealers expect their parts at a promised time and plan their repairs accordingly. When this prediction fails and backorders are created, due to missing parts in the warehouse, the dealer will be consequently dissatisfied as well as the end-customers, since their car will not be finished as scheduled (Davis, 1993, p.39). This concept refers to uncertainty, which has to be managed by an organization’s supply chain management (Davis, 1993, p.39). Delivery time is mutually linked to transportation, which is not only the most costly activity but also vital for fulfilling business obligations (Coyle et al., 2011, p.40). The products are moved and transported to their destination point within an assigned network, where specialized firms take care of the physical transportation of the goods (Coyle et al., 2011, p.40).

2.1.2.2 Service Level

The service level is the performance of the logistics system to deliver the ordered parts to their final destination. The service can be either “dealer to customer”, or “supplier to dealer” (Taylor and Brunt, 2000, p.309). This is seen as an indicator, which if the level is high, the service towards the customer or dealer is carried out fast and on time, when being low; the service is prone to fail the promised time (Davis, 1993, p.39). For example, by promising to keep up a 100% service level, would reckon that the supplier promises to deliver the product after being ordered to 100%, without any delays (Forslund, 2014, p.208).

2.1.2.3 Claim Rate

In case of process failure, the dealer might return the part to the warehouse. This is referred to the return process or “reverse logistics” (Rushton et al., 2014, p.106 and Blanchard, 2010, p.139). The measurement for it is the so-called “claim rate”, where wrong quantity, quality and the cause of the return is measured. Such causes can be: failures during transcription of orders, wrong stock information on parts availability, partly delivery, picking differences due to wrong picks (“next best” part is picked due to parts are out of stock (system has not been informed about it)),

inventory returns, restocking, damaged parts, delayed transportations (i.e. wrong delivery address or usage of incorrect network (i.e. same day delivery instead of next day) or incorrect invoicing (Rushton et al., 2014, p.104, 105; Liu, 2012, p.17 and Blanchard, 2010, p.139). The return is usually carried out through the existing logistics networks. When refunded to the warehouse, a special assigned department evaluates the claimed reason of the dealer, reimburses him with financial compensation or resends a new product. In this regard the products, depending on the claim type, are repacked, stocked again or scrapped (Rushton et al., 2014, p.106). As stated by Accenture Consulting (2010), high quality parts, reliable deliveries and qualitative repairs result into reduced repair time and satisfied customers (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.9). That being said, the obligation of the OEM is to ensure high quality of deliveries, by avoiding any claims (Saccani et al., 2005, p.275).

2.1.2.4 Parts Availability

The requirements to have parts on stock to feed the distribution network between the supplier and the dealer is called “parts availability”. Within this concept the main factor is the promptness of the availability of a part, when ordered by a dealer (Draper and Suanet, 2005, p.193). Given this dynamic, the infrastructure of the logistics and network design is significant for the success, equally the location of the warehouse and dealers, in terms of the most efficient and optimized supply chain between these destination points (Draper and Suanet, 2005, p.193). In this line of reasons, SCM has effect on a firm’s profitability, capital, and customer service and of course, on “product availability” (Evans and Danks, 1998, pp.21-22). With a high availability of parts, higher revenues and decreased costs for logistics can be achieved (Evans and Danks, 1998, pp.21-22).

Availability of parts will determine the satisfaction of the customer (Ehinlanwo and Zairi, 1996, p.44). For the dealer the availability of parts is also vital, because it influences his stock level (number of parts in stock) and its profitability, which is based on the necessity to stock parts to achieve high parts availability because the dealer does not have to store them (Ehinlanwo and Zairi, 1996, p.44). On the contrary if the availability at the central warehouse is low, the dealer can either plan in advance and store the parts in his own warehouse or takes the chance that the delivery time for these parts exceeds the adequate level for the customer to be satisfied with the late arrival (Ehinlanwo and Zairi, 1996, p.44).

2.2 Relationship Management

2.2.1 Definition of Relationship Management

This part will illuminate the elements important in a “dealer-OEM” relationship and their respective meaning. Relationship management is stated to be critical for building sustainable competitive advantage (Teipal et al., 2013, p.52). Since Martin Christopher (2010, p.1), definite that SCM is the management of „...*upstream and downstream relationships with suppliers and customers*“, it provides the base for the underlying study, because OEM’s need to ensure satisfaction of customers and dealers to maintain their position in the market by effective SCM; consequently managing relationships is a crucial part of manager’s duties (Deissner, 2007, p.80 and Schiele et al., 2012, p.139).

The relationship has to maintain, develop, improve and enhance business strategy on a constant base, which will help to form a long-term and satisfying relationship with all supply chain partners 2011 (Fitzen, 2011, p.103, 272). Such a good relationship as well as the distribution management impacts the satisfaction of a dealer even further, which was proven by a study, conducted by Fitzen in 2011 (Fitzen, 2011, p.103, 272). The relationship between the OEM and the dealer can be defined as “B2B” (Business to Business), where two companies conduct business with each other. The establishment of a long-term B2B relationship utilizes several benefits. For the companies, “*risk sharing and efficiency creation*” (Barry and Terry, 2008, pp.228) is of significance, moreover, the customer can benefit from the value creation additionally (Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.593).

Having an “exclusive dealership agreement” in place requires the engagement of both parties and the OEM needs the dealer’s cooperation and support to fulfill business goals (Chang et al., 2003, p.132). The OEM provides information, trainings, and programmes; consequently their impact is higher on the actual performance of the dealer (Chang et al., 2003, p.132). A performance-orientated company wants to drive the relationship between the customer, by meeting dealers’ needs and demands (Chang et al., 2003, p.132).

2.2.2 Relationship Management Elements

Managers have to concentrate on several different elements within the relationship. Such as “trust, commitment, and dependence” are building the foundation (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.476). To create a successful and competitive relationship, further attributes are needed, such as “*information sharing, idiosyncratic investments, and effective governance*” (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.476). These are built on mutual investments and shared power of a relationship, where without them, partial dependency can be expected. This argument is further reinforced by another

study by Wu et al. (2004) figured that “*high trust, power, continuity and communication lead to high commitment between SC partners.*” (Wu et al., 2004, p.331).

To this regard, several elements, influencing the dealer – OEM relationship can be recognized. The following elements were identified from other studies: **trust** (Tejpal et al., 2013, pp.51-52; Handfield, 2011, paragraph 1; van Riel et al., 2011, p.117, 124; Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228; Piorier, 1999, pp.5-6), **commitment** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003; Spekman et al., 1998, p.60), **cooperation** (Frank, 2010, p.10; Udin et al., 2008, p.364, Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.224, 228; Handfield, 2011, paragraphs 8-9; van Riel et al., 2011, p.117; Udin et al., 2008, pp.363-364), **communication** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, pp.226-227, Krizan et al., 2011, p.7 and Udin et al., 2008, p.363) **power** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228; Yitzhak, 1998, p.279), **dependency** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229; Riel et al., 2011, p.117; Frazier et al., 1989, pp.50; Yitzhak, 1998, p.279; Wu et al., 2004, p.324), **bonds** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229), **continuity** (Gallan, 2008, p.35), **loyalty** (Zineldin, 2006, pp.433-434), **adaptation** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, pp.227-228) and **reputation** (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228 and Zineldin, 2006, p.432). These elements will be described in the following section.

2.2.2.1 Communication

Communication between two partners has the aim to improve current situations (for example, the lack of information or to share new strategies). Joint aspiration for benefits will achieve satisfied partners on both sides. That increases the need to distribute information about what each partner can expect from the relationship. The communication about the commitment of a promise (such as on-time delivery) will result into satisfied partners (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.226; Krizan et al., 2011, p.7 and Udin et al., 2008, p.363). The information flow within a supply chain captures advanced shipment information, availability of parts and delivery times, with the benefit of more transparency and security of orders to the customers (Coyle et al., 2011, p.21). But furthermore, increasing the efficient usage of transport consolidation can save costs by subsequently raising customer service and satisfaction (Coyle et al., 2011, p.21).

However, communication is an interaction and exchange of values or information, which can be sent out through information systems or exchanged in personal (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). Communication has a positive influence on the relationship when the level is high to exchange important information for the partners, when issues of any kind occur within a relationship, direct contact can solve problems much faster (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). The threat of misguided communication can yield into misunderstandings, which again can result in dissatisfaction (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227).

2.2.2.2 Adaptation

Supply chain partners who strive to adapt their strategies together, are responsive to the other partner's prerequisites. Thus the assessment of mutual demands can support to find the right strategy (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). Dealers in the aftermarket have to adjust to the given strategies, like new system applications in the order system, releases and trainings to satisfy the OEM (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). Such adaptations are based on "formal" contracts and urge the dealer to fulfill these requirements, on the other hand, the manufacturer promises to keep the claim rate low, high service degree and a short delivery time (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). Informal adaptations are made when other problems occur, which are not specified in a contract (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). The willingness to show adaptation of a supplier provides commitment in the relationship (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228).

2.2.2.3 Dependency, Bonds and Continuity

Dependency can be found in relationships. In terms of supply chain, dependency is explained when one partner being the source to offer resources with no or scarce alternatives for the demander (Skarmeas and Katsikeas, 2001). When the dependency between the partners is high, the input in the relationship is considered to be high (Wu et al., 2004, p.324). Drawing the dependence on an uneven dealer – supplier relationship, the weaker partner, which is often the dealer has high interest in keeping the relationship running due to few or unattractive alternatives (Frazier et al., 1989, p.50 and Wu et al., 2004, p.324). The dealers' obligation is to preserve the relationship with its supplier in order to reach its own goals and often the position to conduct negotiations is not very strong for a dealer (Frazier et al., 1989, p.50 and Wu et al., 2004, p.324). This principle can be used for the dealer and OEM relationship in the automotive after sales industry. Within such an uneven relationship, the dealer has to trust the bigger supplier to act upon both best interests. Consequently the commitment is higher on the dealers' site (Wu et al., 2004, pp.330-331).

If the reliance on a supplier in these fields is shattered, it will result in lower satisfaction and disappointment of the dealer's side (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229). In this regard their position can be seen as the dependent partner, the dealers are striving to fulfill the suppliers' expectation (Chang et al., 2003, p.133). However this position does not imply high satisfaction or even agreeable results (Chang et al., 2003, p.133).

Bonds describe a further "dependency", they define the contract situation of both parties (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229). The interdependency and engagement into a dealer – supplier relationship defines the strength of these bonds, and can positively or negatively affect satisfaction (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229).

Considering that, investing in bonds binds the relationship between the partners, which refers to continuity. It is based on the expectations of a future business relationship with the other party (Gallan, 2008, p.35). Expecting a continuous business relationship is therefore a positive aspect and supports the involvement of both members.

2.2.2.4 Power

Power is a tool of pressure, which is used in order to make another person do something in favour of the power holder (Yitzhak, 1998, p.279). The basis is the power of authorities or superiors to impose justice and sanctions on other partners. When a partner, like the OEM, has more power than the other (dealer), the relationship is influenced by this degree. Often the weaker channel members are dependent on the decisions of the stronger one, which can have the disadvantage of dissatisfying one partner. On the contrary it can be avoided by pursuing a mutual interest to achieve this joint goal (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228).

2.2.2.5 Collaboration

Collaboration will enhance relationships within the supply chain (Hecker et al., 2010, p.10 and Grunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, p.580). One reason is “switching costs”, which bind the dealer to its main supplier because new contracts cause high costs (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.224). Collaborations are thus a good tool to find dual improvements within the supply chain and to maintain this relationship, it is vital for an OEM, to avoid failures along the supply chain (Handfield, 2011, paragraph 9).

The interaction between two parties can result in either satisfaction or disagreement. That being said, cooperation must be maintained and managed. For example, if the dealer perceives the suppliers’ willingness to cooperate, trust and hence satisfaction is likely to be higher (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228). In this sense an integration of the dealers into OEM’s decision-making is realized, or taking their point of view into consideration, will enhance the relationship and so raise satisfaction (van Riel et al., 2011, p.117).

Furthermore, the relationship between the manufacturer and the dealers will be highly integrated when information are shared (Saccani et al., 2005, p.280). In an unstable business world, cooperating with other business partners will create mutual advantages (Udin et al., 2008, p.364).

There is also the term “collaborative SCM” found by Udin et al. (2006), which describes the integration level of all parties in a supply chain to improve customer service, reduce costs, improved allocation of resources, and develop business processes (Udin et al., 2008, p.363).

In order to create such collaboration among supply chain partners; the aim of the alliance has to be pursued by all members. Though finding such a mutual goal can be difficult and thus SCM can help to involve all members in the process (Udin et al., 2008, p.364).

Collaborations are beneficial since dealers have direct impact on the end-customer, as well as can provide information on how supply chain strategies effect their satisfaction. This information exchange can enhance the ability to find new and improved strategies for the OEM (Sacomano Netoand and Pires, 2012, p.392).

2.2.2.6 Trust and Commitment

Relationships are built on trust and commitment; consequently the company has to focus on its partners within the supply chain, in order to build a trustful and committed relationship (Tejpal et al., 2013, pp.51-52). Trust plays a significant role within relationship management (Poirier, 1999, pp.5-6). Both are essential to build a sustainable supply chain, whereas trust is the foundation for a long lasting relationship and commitment is the expectation that both partners are investing (resources and time) into the relationship. Within this framework, a study from Spekman et al. (1998) identified several virtues, which are important for SCM. These findings suggest that in order to raise customer satisfaction the following aspects have to be considered; increase market position, decrease costs, enhance productivity by increasing reliability and improving lead times (Spekman et al., 1998, p.60). This study by Spekman et al. (1998, p.66) revealed that trust and commitment affect satisfaction of the customer or respective the dealers. Especially between a dealer and its OEM, the trust-commitment component is determining the long-term success of the relationship (Kiessling et al., 2004, p.97). Hereby reliability and commitment are entitled to build trust towards a partner by examining the behaviours towards the partner (Kiessling et al., 2004, p.97). Involvement and information sharing are just two features showing a positive behaviour (Kiessling et al., 2004, p.97). Therefore trust can be defined as the reliance on another partner (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229) and the *“willingness to rely on another party and to take action in circumstances where such action makes one vulnerable to the other party”* (Doney et al., 1998, p.604).

Confidentiality, honesty, politeness, shared values (Tejpal et al., 2013, p.58), professionally, reliability, punctuality, providing alternatives, interaction and shared information will form trust between two partners (Tejpal et al., 2013, p.59). Often the dealers are the weaker members of the relationship with the OEM (van Riel et al., 2011, p.117). Given this interrelation, they have to trust the company even more to act responsible and reliable (Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, pp.578-579).

Nevertheless, there is also interdependency in the relationship. Such reliability on each other develops during long durable relationships and builds the base for trust and commitment. Van Riel et al. (2011) found a correlation between satisfaction and dealer commitment, proving that a trustworthy relationship has influence on satisfaction (van Riel et al., 2011, p.124). The commitment between two organizations is based on providing stability and becoming involved into others pleadings to fulfill their needs (Anderson and Weitz, 1992, p.18).

2.2.2.7 Reputation

Reputation describes how the dealer, which is shaped by institutions or people, perceives a company as trustable. Such influence can impact the satisfaction level (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228). A good reputation helps to boost market share and profit (Zineldin, 2006, p.432).

2.2.2.8 Loyalty

Loyalty is described by Zineldin (2006) as the positive and favourable “*state of mind, a set of attitudes, beliefs, desires*” (Zineldin, 2006, p.433), which are beneficial for a firm because it can lead into repurchasing actions. A company should, therefore, strive to achieve loyal customers or dealers (Zineldin, 2006, p.433). It is also stated that loyalty keeps a relationship enduring, where rewards are one function to enhance the loyalty even more (Zineldin, 2006, p.434). For a car manufacturer in the after-sales business, the customer “dealer” is often bound by a contract (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). But the competition grows fierce and cheaper and faster aftermarket providers can be a real threat in the future (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). To be aware of the risk and to react accordingly can help to retain customers.

A positive experience with the service of an organization can result into loyalty (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488), thereby customer expectations will be surpassed and loyalty can emerge (Zineldin, 2006, p.431). To keep a customer loyal requires not only a satisfactory service or product but also incentives to increase their repurchasing intention. In line with this, satisfaction can be derived and loyalty is the result, which is confirmed to have impact on the success of a company and thus creates competitive advantage (Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.597 and Saccani et al., 2005, p.263).

2.3 Experience

2.3.1 Definition of Experience

When considering the experience with the performance of the OEM, the result can be either satisfying or dissatisfying (positive or negative). In order to provide a definition of “experience”, the concept of satisfaction will be illustrated and discussed. Satisfaction originates through an

equation process (Schiele et al., 2012, p.138). Hereby it is a consequence when expected and actual outcomes from an interaction are compared, for instance, if the experience falls below the expectation the result will be a loss of satisfaction, when conversely it matched or even exceeds the expectations, the dealer will be satisfied (Schiele et al., 2012, p.138 and Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.596). Satisfaction occurs when the interaction between two partners has a positive outcome for at least one party (Anderson and Narus, 1990, p.45). Many firms attempt to assess the satisfaction level of their customers (retailers and end-customers), by measuring how the performance influences the relationship, therefor the usage of various questionnaires on customer satisfaction is a plausible tool. In addition the assessment of the quality of the relationship can support those findings (Zineldin, 2006, p.430).

Variables, which are important to create high satisfactions levels, are “*good reputation, close relationship and positive relationship benefits*” (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.224). Thus the evaluation of the perceiving partner is of foremost concern when it comes to satisfaction. Basically, satisfaction is the value perceived after a positive experience. The actual experience has the main influence on the “*cognitive and affective evaluation*” during the relationship (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.225).

It is stated by Jansson and Zineldin (2003, p.226) that customer satisfaction is achieved by combining needs and expectations with continues adaptation of the service/product/relationship. This can also be applied to the dealer satisfaction (Diez, 2012, p.297). In this line of reasoning, the satisfaction concept is based on the close connection between the dealer and the customer, since the dealer impacts their satisfaction through the performance of the actual service and consequently which kind of experience is made (Hiraoka, 2009, p.29).

2.3.2 Elements of Experience

2.3.2.1 Positive and Negative Experience – Zone of Tolerance

First of all the meaning of the experience with service performance of a company, has to be discussed since it is the key determinant of the experience for the dealer. To define what service is, Grönroos (2000) can be stated. He defined that service consists of several features, by applying these features to the distribution of spare parts, the “service” components will be illustrated (Grönroos, 2000). The “distribution” is a service, containing of managing and handling orders by the warehouse, which is considered to be intangible while being simultaneously “produced, distributed and consumed” by the ordering party (Grönroos, 2000). When an order is delivered, this process cannot be stored or reproduced, due to a changing environment depending on delivery conditions (such as weather, traffic or other delays) (Grönroos, 2000). Distribution of

spare parts to the dealer is vital for other services, such as the repair of a car. The dealer is further involved in the process, because he has to be available to accept the order when being delivered. This is based on the intangibility of a service, where the “delivery” cannot be transferred to another dealer (in terms of ownership), since the order is specific (Grönroos, 2000).

Since the outcome of the service can be either satisfactory or dissatisfactory, the theory of the **“Zone of Tolerance”** will illustrate how a company can create satisfaction based on a positive experience.

When it comes to service performance, the “Zone of Tolerance” captures how value, loyalty and satisfaction is created (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). Within this notion, the customer evaluates the service and assesses the performance, which is influencing satisfaction levels (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). When a decrease of the performance underneath the acceptable “zone” happens, dissatisfaction will occur (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). On the other hand, exceeding the “zone” can lead to loyalty (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). This desired performance is equal to what a customer would like to gain from the service (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.372). When expectations are low, it refers to the “adequate performance”, which would be an acceptable service (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.372). The range between the acceptable and the desired, is called the “Zone of Tolerance”, within this zone the customer is willing to tolerate deviations from their own high expectations (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.372).

When the service surpasses the tolerable performance quality, the customer will be even more pleased. But does the performance drop underneath the adequate expectations; dissatisfaction, mitigation and displeasure are potential consequences (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.372). The level that is tolerable depends on individual factors. Ferrell and Hartline (2011, p.373) describe the “Zone of Tolerance” for service quality rather narrow, which would implicate that the expectations are high and the service provider should not fall below it.

For service encounters in the automotive after-sales, the quality is influencing the satisfaction rate of the relationship (Svensson, 2006, p.51). It describes how reliable, trustworthy, punctual, available and successful the desired service is performed (Svensson, 2006, p.52). These findings were further explained by the study by Srivastava and Tyagi (2013), which proved that a bad service quality results into end-customer mitigation (Srivastava and Tyagi, 2013, p.131). Thus makes it important that also the OEM secures a reliable supply of parts to the dealers. Because when it comes to waiting time, the customer tolerance is describes as “average” (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.373). To deliver what the customers and dealers expect, a firm has to understand what different expectation they have (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.374). Due to the fact that there is a high failure rate if expectations are not met and dissatisfaction occurs (Hecker

et al., 2010, p.11). Given this significant impact on services, companies have to avoid the mitigation, by tailoring the service to the customer and the dealer needs.

2.3.2.2 Dealer Satisfaction

Dealer satisfaction can be based on the grounds of the theory about customer satisfaction, since there is a correlation existing as accentuated by Diez (2012). In this sense the evocation of dealer satisfaction is built on an information sharing process, whereas experience with the OEM is the point of evaluation for satisfaction (Diez, 2012, p.297). But how can this be created? Gassenheimer et al. (1995) stated that when expectations are met, satisfaction could emerge. Furthermore the commitment is higher when the dealer is satisfied with the relationship with the supplier (Gassenheimer et al., 1995, p.11).

As Accenture Consulting (2010, p.10) pointed out, the dealers are the key players of the service performance in the relationship with the end customers. They drive sales and quality of services affecting the end customer greatly (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.10). To ensure a good qualitative repair process, the right equipment, tools and strategies are required (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.10). Their performance is the “*reflection of the brand image*” of a car company (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.10). Given this dynamics, when the dealer is pleased with the service, the end-customer will benefit from it, because the dealer carries the own perception of the car manufacturers performance towards the customers (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.10).

The satisfaction of dealers with their OEM is based on an exchange of either “confirmation” or “disconfirmation” of their expectations (Fitzen, 2011, p.84). Within this process the dealers assess the performance of the company (Fitzen, 2011, p.84) using the experience as a reference point. Hereby the business relationship plays a significant role and determines the satisfaction differently than the experience with a product or service, which refers to relationship satisfaction (Fitzen, 2011, p.85). On the contrary it also implies, when delivery fails, low availability of parts exist or the delivery time is exceeded, satisfaction will be withdrawn (Coyle et al., 2011, p.290 and Blanchard, 2010, p.143). Important for dealer satisfaction are social and financial aspects (Fitzen, 2011, p.86). The “social” deals with communication, relations, collaborations and support, as well as the profit from the relationship gained (Fitzen, 2011, p.86). The “financial” aspect captures the outcome of the economic relationship and what financial benefits the dealer receives from the partnership (Fitzen, 2011, p.86).

Satisfaction in context with B2B is based on a positive evaluation of an experienced transaction within the exciting relationship (Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.597). Within B2B relationships, loyalty

is detected by continued business interactions (Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.597). Gil-Saura et al. (2009) identified satisfaction and commitment to influence the future relation between B2B partners.

In summary, sustainable relationships contribute to improvements and growth of business relationships (Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.605). Moreover, dealer satisfaction is determined by the performance of the supplier with none or little switching options (Schiele et al., 2012, p.139). Thus the OEM should provide a satisfying service to avoid emigration (Schiele et al., 2012, p.139), because the success of the company is dependent on the dealers' performance. Working together to find improvements and further business collaboration will lead to durable success in the after-sales market (Schiele et al., 2012, p.139).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The framework is derived from the theoretical exploration. It shall present an overview of the elements of SCM, relationship management and experience, and their impact on dealer satisfaction.

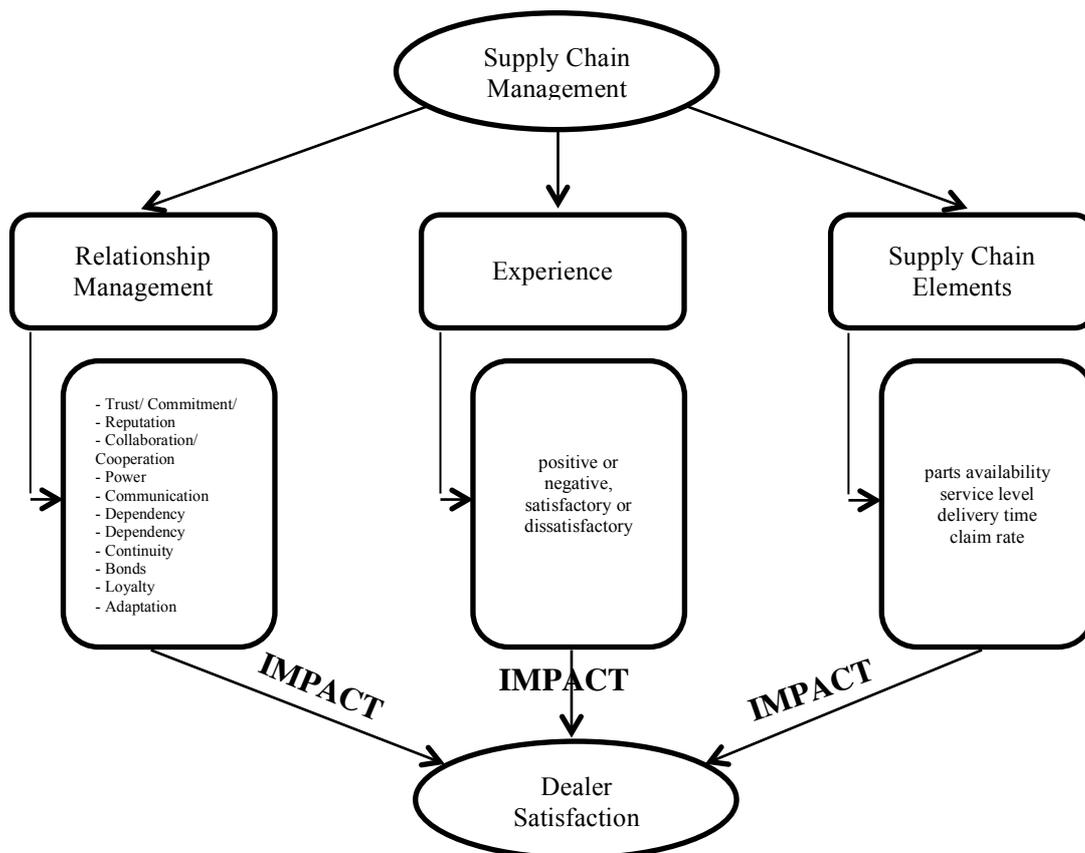


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework (Source: Müller 2014)

3. METHODOLOGY

The methods and related processes have to be presented indepth, so readers will comprehend the purpose and approach used. Within this chapter, the research process, applied methods and analysis tools will be discussed.

3.1 Research Method

To find the right approach to conduct a study, several criteria's have to be taken into account. There are two approaches, which can be utilized for investigations.

The first method to collect data is the quantitative approach. This concept is a tool to obtain interrelations between two or more variables, where one is dependent and the other/s is/are independent (Gummesson, 2005, p.312). Within this method a theory is tested (Greener, 2008, p.17).

However the qualitative approach concentrates on understanding and interpreting different viewpoints, experiences and attitudes. This method avoids distinguishing the reality into solely variables (Gummesson, 2005, p.312). Within the qualitative context, theory is "created" by deducing different aspects using a more inductive approach, which investigates a stated research area or a problem (Greener, 2008, pp.16-17).

The underlying research is based on a qualitative research method. It aims to identify how satisfaction in the after sales business is created and what elements of supply chain management impact dealer satisfaction.

To get a full understanding of dealers' experience, interviews had been conducted. Therefore the relationship between different satisfaction elements was investigated. The usage of interviews was perceived to be a good approach to collect what the dealers mentioned regarding influencers on dealer's satisfaction and experienced with the relationship. Thus structured questionnaires are a good instrument to capture experiences without restrictions and the interviewee has the opportunity to talk openly. The interviews were used to gather a better understanding about the experience dealers made in order to comprehend the internal processes and dealer attitudes (Hennink et al., 2011, p.109 and Rowley, 2012, p. 262).

The researcher prepared questionnaires for dealers and OEM experts. Thereout received results constituted a base for interpretation and discussion with regards to current literature findings, here the aim of the research was critically discussed by interpreting the opinion of the dealers (Gummesson, 2005, p.311). The comparison of the gathered data from the interviewed dealers and experts will support the generation of new concepts and theories (Gummesson, 2005, p.312).

3.2 Data Collection Process

The data collection for the research was based on a gathering of relevant theoretical information, using primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are direct information provided from the initial source, such as company financial reports or statistics (Greener, 2008, p.21). The underlying study is therefore the primary source.

Secondary sources are data's, which are collected from journals, books, conferences, government and consulting companies' publications (Greener, 2008, p.21). Most theoretical implications were derived from journals. They were used to describe the theories of SCM with regards to current developments in the research area. Journals with explicit reference to relationship management and satisfaction were used as an orientation to create the research question and to present current theoretical approaches on the subject. The dealer satisfaction has been studied in only few investigations, and therefore only concepts regarding satisfaction in general and concerning customer's perspective have been presented. After the research of the journals it became clear that there is a significant lack of information regarding dealer satisfaction in the after sales business. For the literature sources, state of the art books were used to describe SCM, services and relationship management.

Further a small group of internal Company A conference presentations, statistics, results from the GPMS and DSS studies, were used to provide a complete picture about the automotive market. Publications from governments and authorities were examined further. After collecting the literature, the sub-research questions were designed and the questionnaires for dealers and experts were created (Kinmond, 2012, p.29).

To ensure reliability and validity of the questionnaires, they were discussed with after-sales area and spare parts managers (two in total) of Company A (Rowley, 2002, p. 265). During the discussion slight amendaments had to be made in order to gain as much information as possible from the dealers, which was to specify the questions even more so the right target (experience with the logistics and after sales service of the OEM) was discussed during the interviews. For the expert interviews no adaptations were made after the consultation with the two managers (Greener, 2008, p.15).

The research was conducted by face to face interviews, via telephone and distribution of questionnaires to the interviewees. The participants were experts from company A in Sweden and five different brand dealers, which are a part of the company group. In total 21 interviews were completed, of which 17 are dealer interviews, which represent the biggest group of the research. After the conduction of the interviews, the collected data was revised. The recordings were

transcribed and written notes were used for receiving a first impression of the relevant material (Rowley, 2012, p. 267). The paper-based interviews were translated into English and reviewed that any language differences were avoided. The next step was to code and categorize all findings into an excel file for better comparison (Rowley, 2012, p. 268).

The two internal studies (GPMS and DSS) were used as additional sources for discussion. They were first presented in the empirical and later critically discussed during the analysis part. After identifying potential gaps of the researches, the studies were extended by the findings of the interviews.

3.3 Interviews

The selection of potential interviewees was derived from the research questions (Rowley, 2012, p. 263), since the main focus group are the dealers, they had to be questioned. Since the dealer satisfaction in the after sales business is the focus, the after sales managers of the dealers were the right target group (Rowley, 2012, p. 264 and Greener, 2008, p.48). They usually have vast experience with the OEM and its performance and could provide the best insightful information. The questions were derived from the research and sub-research questions with regards to the literature review. The aim was to identify the various relationships and supply chain elements and how the current experience of the dealers affects their satisfaction.

The questionnaire was created to reflect on how the dealers perceive the current relationship with the OEM, as well as how the relationship has developed from their point of view. The experts and dealers had to describe what elements satisfy them and what does affect their negative perception. Further their perception on the collaboration, involvement and communication aspects of the relationship was illuminated. For a full overview of the questionnaires, please refer to appendix 8.1.2.

For the expert interviews from the Company A, diverse managers from different areas were questioned. The experts were managers from four departments, after-sales, dealer - management, warehouse - management and the transport division. This selection was due to the approach of the research to identify what triggers and generates dealer satisfaction. The managers provided reliable experience and are therefore considered as experts in the investigated area (Rowley, 2012, p. 264). They had various knowledge in different fields, such as direct interaction with the dealers, logistical matters as well as management and marketing.

The questions, which were used for the expert interviews, were build on the research and sub-research questions, but with a different approach. This was to identify how the OEM perceives the dealer satisfaction. The content was to get an insight view from the managers experience and

a description about their relationship. Additionally the questions were expanded regarding SCM and more information about the benefit and advantage for the organisation were identified. Moreover, the companies perspective about the dealers perception, was asked in order to receive an internal statement on dealer satisfaction effects.

The interviewed experts had experience between four and 30 years in the fields logistics and after-sales management in Sweden. Gathering their point of view and comparing it with the perspectives of the dealers, gives the research a deeper insight into the effects of SCM and how it generates dealer satisfaction. For the full questionnaire please refer to appendix 8.1.1.

The two questionnaires consist of six questions for the Company A experts and eight for the dealers. Thereby the aim was to find answers and comments for the research questions by using special designed open questionnaires, which wanted to gather several aspects in order to find a tendency in the questioned group. But for better distinction each research question can be assigned to several parts of the questionnaire. The reason for it is to measure the various standpoints on the research by avoiding precast answers to the interviewee. Each question addresses several aspects in order to answer the research questions thoroughly. An overview on how the connection between the questionnaire and the research questions is made, is shown in table 3.1 for the experts and the dealers.

<i>Central Research Question</i>	<i>Connected Questions Experts</i>	<i>Connected Questions Dealers</i>
1. How can Supply Chain Management impact and generate dealer satisfaction?	1,2,3,4,5,6	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8
<i>Sub Research Questions</i>		
2. What generates dealer satisfaction in supply chain management?	1,3,5,6	3,4,5,6,7,8
3. Which elements of the relationship between the dealer and the OEM describe satisfaction?	1,2,3,6	1,2,4,6,7,8
4. How does positive/negative experience with the OEM's supply chain performance satisfy/dissatisfy dealers?	3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6,7,8

Table 3.1 Overview Connection Questionnaire and Research Questions Experts/Dealers

(Source: Müller 2014)

13 questionnaires were gathered by addressing the dealers via email, asking them to answer eight questions. This approach was used to reach a higher response rate, by sending out questionnaire to the dealers, due to the high amount (175) and wide distribution of dealers in Sweden, not each of them could be interviewed during the research time and hence were questioned via e-mail (Rowley, 2012, p. 261). The questionnaire sent out to the dealers, were the same questions used for the direct interviews. One difference was that this interviews were structured, since no adaptations during the process of interviewing were possible. The conduction of the interviews took place within April - May 2014. The dealers had three weeks' time to complete their

individual questionnaire, whereas the in person interviews were conducted within one meeting, which lasted between one to two hours.

For an overview of the interviewed persons, please refer to table 3.2, where the experts are listed, who were questioned face-to-face and table 3.3, where the dealers, who have been questioned either via e-mail or over phone-interviews are shown. (For full interview transcripts and codings, please refer to appendix 8.3.)

Interviewee Expert	I1	I2	I3	I4
Data collection	Face-to-Face interview	Face-to-Face interview	Face-to-Face interview	Face-to-Face interview
Duration	60min	40min	70min	60min
Occupation	Transport Manager	Warehouse Managers	After Sales Manager	Dealer Management
Organization	COMPANY A	COMPANY A	COMPANY A	COMPANY A

*Table 3.2 Overview of interviewed **Experts** (Source: Müller 2014)*

Interviewee Dealers	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
Data collection	E-mail interview	Face-to-Face interview	E-mail interview					
Duration	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	70min	(-)
Occupation	Spare Parts Manager	Spare Parts Manager						
Organization	Dealer	Dealer						

Interviewee Dealers	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	D14	D15	D16	D17
Data collection	E-mail interview	Telephone interview	Telephone interview	Telephone interview	E-mail interview				
Duration	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	40min	30min	30min	(-)
Occupation	Spare Parts Manager								
Organization	Dealer								

*Table 3.3 Overview of interviewed **Dealers** (Source: Müller 2014)*

The interviews were held in English, since the mother tongue of the researcher and the interviewed persons, were different (German and Swedish). First it was asked for the permission to record the interviews, since it is important that recorded information are treated confidentially (Rowley, 2012, p. 264). Afterwards general information about the interviewed person, how long their had experience in the field of after-sales or logistics was inquired, where interviewees had the choice to provide the information or not. After the procedure was clear to all participants, the interview started. A quiet and non-disturbing environment was used for all interviews (four experts and four dealers (one face-to-face and three via telephone)).

The sent-out questionnaire to the dealers included an introduction letter where the purpose of the study was stated.

3.4 The Data Analysis

The research wanted to identify the most influencing elements of supply chain management on dealer satisfaction. For the analysis the relational content analysis was used, where different codes were identified within all interviews in order to distinguish a pattern among the collected data (Schreier, 2012, pp.20-30). Therefore the gathered interviews had to be divided into categories (themes) (Schreier, 2012, p.61).

The interviews (divided into dealers and experts) were scanned for prevalent themes based on the research and sub questions. Afterwards the topics were coded into categories (Rowley, 2012, p. 268). Categories, which are used for coding, are: supply chain elements, relationship management and experience. The data was checked for conspicuous answers and if patterns among the participants can be uncovered, which refer to codes (Schreier, 2012, p.61). The categories were therefore the guideline to gather connected codes, which can also be referred to elements. While reading the answers from the interviewees, meanings or descriptions of codes were identified by the analyst. Here different colours for each code was used to highlight the parts in the text (for an overview of codes and respective colour, please refer to appendix 8.2). Thus a definition of each code was created to be used as a instruction to identify the codes according to the previously assigned categories. For example, answers like “The commitment of the OEM is good.” refer directly to one code (commitment), whereas other expressions had to be interpreted according to their definition to allocate them to one code.

To ensure reliability, the coding process were re-checked to recognize any misplaced codes. The 15 identified codes from the answers were collected in an overview (appendix 8.2), they were measured according to their frequency and reference degree, this model was created by the author to present the empirical data.

The “Frequency” refers to the amount how often the codes were mentioned during the interviews. It was measured in total (the sum of all codes from all interviews) and in percentage, which was calculated based on the total share of all counted codes (total sum of codes in expert answers: 145 times mentioned; total sum of codes in dealer answers: 428 times mentioned).

The “Reference Degree” counts how many of the interviewed persons have mentioned the category or code during their interview in order to see how important several topics were. Hereby the highest amount was based on the total of interviewed persons (four for the experts and 17 for the dealers).

Afterwards the codes were evaluated and each element was ranked according to their importance. The calculation model for the ranking process can be described as following. The frequency and

the reference degree were ranked from one to 15 (total sum of identified codes). Same results were numbered with the same rank. For the ranking process an adapted frequency level was used to illustrate when a code was mentioned during an interview, this implies that it has impact on the satisfaction. The “frequency (%)” indicates the highest amount of one code mentioned in one interview. For the experts it was 27 and for the dealers 75 for communication, this is the reference point to calculate the percentage of all other codes in comparison. Therefore 27 or 75 are the base (100%) and the percentage of the codes mentioned less is measured with regard to the base. The following calculation model can be applied exemplary: Code “Power” was only mentioned seven times in dealer answers. The percentage of the total is calculated $(7 \cdot 100) / 75 = 9,3\%$. This implies that only a 9,3% mentioning rate was found for the elements “Power” compared to the highest frequency rate of “communication” with 100%. This figure was used to rank the frequency.

For an overview of the results from the importance ranking please refer to appendix 8.2.1.2 (experts) and 8.2.2.2 (dealers).

Afterwards both ranks for frequency and the reference degree were added and the average was calculated; now another placement according to importance was made. Here both results from the ranking (the frequency and reference degree) were taken into account.

All findings were presented within the empirical chapter.

For the analysis the findings were compared and discussed with regard to the theoretical framework (Gummesson, 2005, pp.311-312). In this conception, inconsistency and conspicuity were stressed out by linking the results to the theoretical findings.

Based on the comparison between the dealers and experts, a grid to illustrate the interrelation between relationship and satisfaction elements was derived. Here the figures of the “frequency total” and the “reference degree” were used to place each code into the grid. For the experts the highest amount of the frequency was 27, and the reference degree four. For the dealers was the frequency 75 and the reference degree up to 17.

The conclusion was drawn from the presented findings. Recommendations on how the theoretical framework could be expended as well as where amendments had to be made by the OEM. In that respect the “relationship-satisfaction model” was presented in order to adapt the strategic focus for each element and meet the dealer satisfaction even better.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability: To ensure reliability, bias contortion had to be avoided. On that account standardized questionnaires were constructed, with same questions for each interview group. The consistency

of the qualitative study method and analysis were illustrated in methodology chapter in order to create transparency and consequent replicable research methods (Greener, 2008, pp.37-45 and Gummesson, 2005, p.312). Biases and errors were avoided by reducing influence on the interviewed person during the conduction of the interviews.

Validity: The data was collected in a way to ensure trustworthiness. “Construct validity” is to measure the research questions with the appropriate method (Greener, 2008, p.37). It should avoid misunderstandings of the questions. Through pre-discussing the underlying questions with OEM managers, it was tried to reach full clarity. “Internal validity” is created when the purpose of the research measured only the identified elements, and environmental factors do not bias the results (Greener, 2008, p.37). All questions were built on intensive literature research and are reflected in the research and sub questions. The usage of structured interviews for all dealers and experts has supported to create replicable interview conditions. Furthermore the findings of the dealer interviews were checked against expert interviews to ensure a valid data collection. This comparison was used to receive the perspective from the company and dealers (Gummesson, 2005, p.312). To avoid a loss of validity, the interview content and coding process were re-checked (Rowley, 2012, p. 269).

“External validity” describes the generalization of the research results (Greener, 2008, pp.37-38), which was aimed at by including dealers from different brands, belonging to the Company A.

4. EMPIRICAL STUDY

A short presentation of the Company A will be given, followed by the results of the GPMS and DSS studies from 2013. The chapter will conclude with the illustration of the findings of the conducted investigation. First the results from the experts are shown, followed by the main presentation of the findings of the dealer perspectives are revealed. In the end of each part a summary of the key themes according to their importance will be given.

4.1 Company A – A Company Profile –

4.1.1 Company A

The Swedish subsidiary was founded in 1948. In 2002 the enterprise became independent and is now a 100% subsidiary of the car manufacturer group (Company A, 2014a, paragraph 3, 6, 7, 8, 10). Today 425 people work for the firm, within 13 divisions: financial services, brand management (for each Company A brand), controlling, business development, logistics, after sales, IT and HR (Company A, 2014a, paragraph 1, 2). In 2013 the company sold around 9600 cars in Sweden. This was a raise of 4,8% from 2012 (Company A, 2014b, slide 8).

The Swedish market of company A is divided into age-segments. In 2014 segment one (age group from zero till four year old cars) comprised 324.519 cars, segments two (age between four and seven years) has 174.841 cars and segments three consists of 562.426 cars, which are older than seven years (Logistics Department Company A, 2014a). The age segment has risen in the last years, segment two and three are the majority of the share in the market (Logistics Department Company A, 2014a). This requires higher maintenance and services of these cars. Due to the high technological necessities, the service and warranty are more complex and expensive. Furthermore assortment of spare parts is predicted to increase between 2013 and 2022 in the Swedish market with up to 50% (Logistics Department Company A, 2014b, slide 10).

4.1.2 Logistics Department Company A

The logistics department of company A is located near Stockholm. In total 120 people are working there. The department has four sub- departments: warehouse, procurement, transport and supply chain management. Most parts are shipped from Germany, where the central depot for the company is located (Logistics Department Company A, 2014b, slide 10).

For delivering the parts to the dealers, company A uses the so-called „double-phased” systems (Ehinlanwo and Zairi, 1996, p.43). For the Swedish market, the LDA is responsible for delivering the parts to the Swedish dealer network. This also incorporates any marketing

activities, trainings and strategies, which company A dealers have to implement (Logistics Department Company A, 2014b).

4.2 GPMS and DSS – Study

4.2.1 Introduction

The studies are conducted every year by company A to measure how satisfied dealers are with the overall service of the OEM. These studies construct a base for the underlying research. Within the two studies satisfaction of dealers is measured but only with a limited scope of SCM. Therefore it is important to illustrate the findings here in order to compare and extend the results by the discoveries of the underlying study, which will be presented in chapter 4.3 and 4.4.

A short overview of the most relevant results from 2013 regarding SCM will be illustrated in this chapter. But it has to be accentuated that the studies are rather limited since the direct impact of the supply chain management, is hardly captured. Predominant are hard facts, such as the satisfaction with the delivery. These key performance indicators are important to measure, but soft facts (such as collaboration, trust and dependency) regarding supply chain management performance were not captured by any of the two studies. The GPMS and the DSS are quantitative studies, where dealers have to answer several questions within various categories for each brand. Focus areas are dealer business (from care sales to after sales service), financial support and performance of services (trainings, marketing, pricing) offered to the dealers.

For the presentation of the results a scale in percentage will be used. The scale ranks from 0% (very dissatisfied) to 100% (very satisfied).

4.2.2 GPMS

The "Global Parts Manager Satisfaction Survey", is evaluating the satisfaction with the OEM. It is composed of 150 questions for each brand and is conducted for several car brands around the world. For Sweden, only the major company A brands were a part of the sample size.

The total satisfaction of spare parts managers was 89,82% in 2013 (GPMS, 2013).

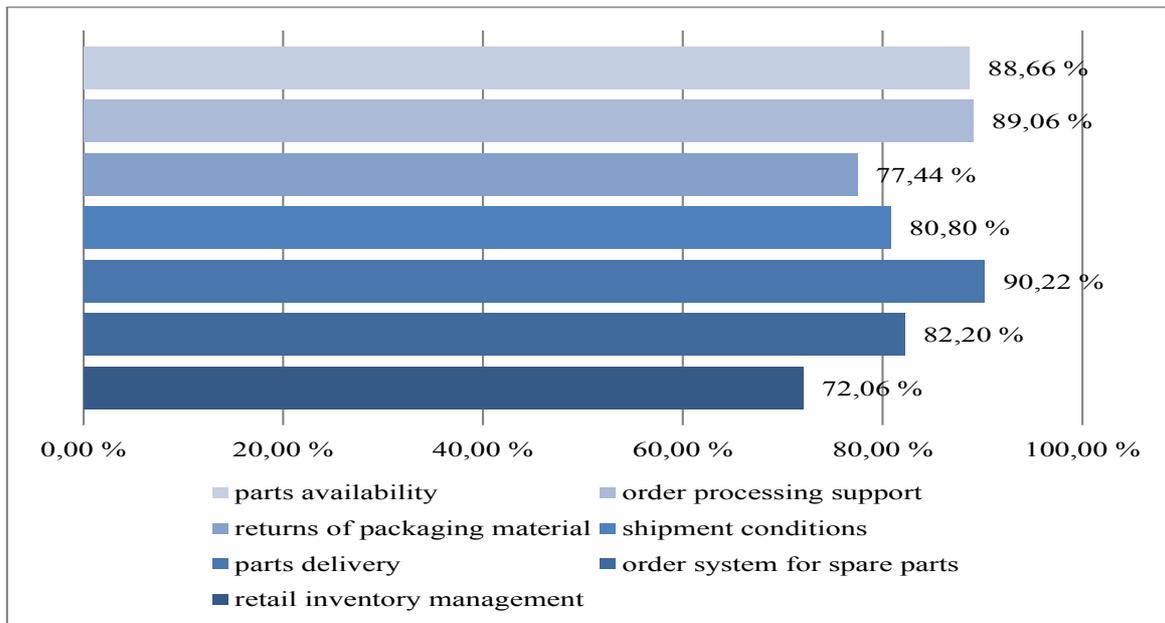


Figure 4.1 Satisfaction Levels of GPMS Study (Data source: GPMS, 2013)

The relevant results (figure 4.1) for SCM were: parts availability, retail inventory management order processing system (order system for spare parts), parts delivery (time, reliability and frequency), shipment conditions (low claims, correct parts, quantity, quality), returns of packaging material, order processing support (providing information about current status of orders). These results show an interesting direction of the evaluation of the supply chain and how the management of it, satisfies the dealers. It never reaches above 91%, though it never drops under 72%, indicating overall satisfied dealers (GPMS, 2013).

Interestingly most results are within the 80% range (GPMS, 2013). Most important elements when it comes to the evaluation of the supply chain are shipment conditions, availability and delivery of parts. Here the OEM impacts the service to the customer and their satisfaction. All results in this category reach above 80%, implying overall satisfaction (GPMS, 2013). While the satisfaction with deliveries exceeds 90% and the shipment conditions are only around 80% (GPMS, 2013).

The GPMS showed in total rather satisfied dealers with the supply chain elements.

4.2.3 DSS

When looking at the DSS (“Dealer Satisfaction Study”) study, there are only few questions related to SCM. The main target group are the managers of the dealership, answering 152 general questions regarding the business situation (DSS, 2013).

Four brands of company A, with 109 dealers were questioned. In total 22 questions were related to SCM, these were mainly answered by the after sales manager of the dealer (DSS, 2013). The analysis of the data from the 22 questions captures the following areas: support for after sales,

spare parts sales (availability, order system, delivery time, price, and quality), partnership, profitability of after sales and business environment.

There are only three questions regarding partnership (please refer to appendix 8.5.1 for an overview of the results). They are based on the overall relationship with the OEM, not precisely the relationship when it comes to the after-sales services (DSS, 2013). 50% of the dealers were satisfied with what the firm offers to be successful, whereas having the entrepreneurial freedom (no imposed power from the OEM) satisfies only one third of the dealers (DSS, 2013). Almost 50% feel treated like a "real partner". The results show that a positive trend is given among the dealers, whereas the tendency that they feel not really independent from the OEM shows dissatisfaction.

The results regarding commitment show that there is average satisfaction (Appendix 8.5.3). The focus is on the dealer commitment to the brand (result: 84,5% are rather committed) with prospects for the future, which is perceived positively by 63,4% of the dealers (DSS, 2013).

Further the study focuses on the satisfaction levels regarding the service performance (appendix 8.5.3). Here the support provided by the OEM, after sales service (including workshop systems, trainings, order system and customer service) and the spare parts price and quality are included. These questions capture the satisfaction with the supply chain elements. The availability of spare parts satisfies 66,1% of the dealers, which is above average (DSS, 2013). The order system captures meeting promised delivery dates have similar results with 63,3% (DSS, 2013). But the prices of the spare parts satisfy only 39,4% of the dealers (DSS, 2013). Also the quality of the spare parts reaches almost 70% (DSS, 2013). The field force, which supports the dealers with the after-sales business and answer questions to orders, satisfies 62,4% (DSS, 2013).

The satisfaction regarding the general business shows interesting results (appendix 8.5.4). The overall satisfaction with the after sales service support for Company A brands is in between the middle range, meaning that only 40,4% of the dealers were satisfied with the after sales service, where the rest is less satisfied or dissatisfied (DSS, 2013). When it comes to the "support with parts sales" over 53,2% of the dealers are satisfied with the OEM engagement (DSS, 2013). But derived from these findings, it is shown that relevant relationship factors of SCM are left out.

The profitability with the after sales business satisfies only 22% of the dealers (DSS, 2013). It indicates that the investments and effort of the dealers is rather high compared to the output of the business. For the future, the dealers are rather pessimistic when it comes to their business perspectives, only 6,4% think very positive about the future, 60,6% are cautious and 33% are

negatively appointed (DSS, 2013). This finding implies a very low satisfaction when it comes to future perspectives of the dealers.

4.3 Findings: Interviews with Company A Experts

4.3.1 Introduction

In this part the results from the interviews with the Company A managers (also referred as experts) is presented according to the three categories; supply chain elements, relationship management and experience. These experts work either in logistics or in the after sales department having experience within logistical processes and after-sales relationship with the dealers. They provided the OEM perspective into the relationship with the dealer. It is important to illustrate this side to provide different perspectives on the subject to answer the research questions from two different angles. The results will be used to reveal scopes of actions for the company and to derive a model for interrelation between satisfaction and relationship. The experts play a significant role for comparison and ensuring validity of the research. All results originated from the coding process, as well as text examples can be found under appendix 8.2.1.

4.3.2 Supply Chain Elements

Codes	Frequency Total	Frequency Total in%	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)
Parts Availability	2	1,38 %	1	25,0 %
Service Level	5	3,45 %	2	50,0 %
Delivery Time	4	2,76 %	2	50,0 %
Claim Rate	8	5,52 %	3	75,0 %

Table 4.1 Results Coding Process Supply Chain Elements Experts (Source: Müller 2014)

Table 4.1 shows the overview of the results for each supply chain element regarding their frequency and reference degree.

The first element “*parts availability*” was only mentioned by interviewee 3 (I3). The expert stated, if the dealers do not get the parts from the OEM, it is likely they will be dissatisfied and drift to other suppliers. Therefore maintaining high parts availability will prevent the risk of emigration of dealers to other suppliers. I3 underlined it with an example, which is also connected to collaboration; he said if the dealers will expand the opening hours on the weekends, they would need parts supplied. But if the OEM does not deliver on weekends, they might search for other alternatives and use other providers. The example refers to high parts availability in terms of dealer needs to create a satisfying relationship on both sides.

The element “*service level*” was found in all four interviews. According to interviewee 4 (I4) it has high impact on satisfaction. The reason is the high productivity (fulfillment of orders within the warehouse) and the right delivery time, which will guaranty a high service level and therefore a high satisfaction level.

Two interviewees accentuated the *delivery time* and three verified *claim rate*. Both elements impact the value of the services for the dealers. In this sense, the OEM has to avoid having too long delivery times as well as high claim rates for the dealers, since this will result in disappointment according to the interviewees. Related to the provision of an excellent supply chain, I3 mentioned that focusing on the right delivery time can create a competitive advantage for the company.

4.3.3 Relationship Management Elements

Codes	Frequency Total	Frequency Total in%	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)
Trust, Commitment	22	15,17 %	4	100,0 %
Collaboration	23	15,86 %	4	100,0 %
Power	10	6,90 %	3	75,0 %
Communication	27	18,62 %	4	100,0 %
Dependency	1	0,69 %	1	25,0 %
Adapatation	11	7,59 %	3	75,0 %
Loyalty	8	5,52 %	3	75,0 %

Table 4.2 Results Coding Process Relationship Management Elements Experts
(Source: Müller 2014)

Table 4.2 illustrates the results from the coding process regarding relationship factors.

All interviewed experts found *trust and commitment* to be one of the most significant aspects, when it comes to relationship management towards the dealers. For instance, I3 stresses out that honesty is an important part when it comes to trust because dishonesty can create suspicion, which should not be a part of the relationship. Within the relationship honesty with possibilities and expectations can avoid disappointments. Correspondingly experienced problems have to be shared with the dealer in order to ensure the trust within the relationship according to interviewee 2 (I2) and I3. When it comes to long term planning, the dealers have to know, understand and be more “engaged” in decision-making processes, resulting into a higher commitment stated by I3.

I2 described the general relationship with the dealers to be very good based on company A’s employees’ commitment and the focus on dealer need. Such investments refer to commitment,

which was mentioned by all experts. It means also that the firm invests in the future of the relationship. These findings were further explained with stating several concepts, which gave huge opportunities to increase the business with the dealers, like wooden pallet replacement or same day delivery. In general, the development of concepts shows a commitment in investing into the future of the relationship with the dealers according to interviewee 1 (I1).

In addition commitment towards the relationship can be based on reliability and interest. I4 suggested to listen to each other implies that the dealers needs and their fulfillment have high importance for the company. SCM is a tool to reach this objective and was perceived to be valuable to strengthen and progress the relationship with the dealers.

In order to ensure and secure relationships, rules have to be confirmed and enforced as stated by I2. For example no dealer has advantages or disadvantages to other dealers. It is also related to power, communication and documentation. *“It is always better to talk to the dealers”* and *“involve them”* (Source: I2) to find out what they need and what are their problems, in order to help them so trust can be ensured.

Comments about **reputation** were not identified.

Collaboration was found in each interview and was the second highest relationship factor. In interview three it is underlined that working together towards the same aims enhances the total relationship. Furthermore I3 wants to include the dealers more into decision-making and logistics processes, since the dealers are the ones who are affected too. The collaboration would support the dealers and the firm’s ability to create mutual benefits. When for example service times for repairs are expanded, the OEM could establish two working shifts. Within this framework the conjoint and constructive approach build the core value of collaborations.

Moreover involving each other and sharing ideas creates advantages according to I3. In this notion, the other interviewees, I4 and I2, focus on a more collaborative improvement strategy. I2 mentioned that the company has to concentrate on the dealers’ desideratum, where a mutual discussion reveals improvements to create a positive aspect of the relationship. Further the interviewee pointed out, that prioritization of goals has to be made together. However dealers also ask for changes according to I4. The overall tonus within the interviews was that the relationship between the OEM and the dealers is very good.

The interviewee I2 stressed out that it is very important to have strict rules within the relationship, which implies to the element *“power”*. Three of the experts have referred to this element during their interviews. I2 sees the power distribution on the OEM’s side, since the decisions have to be made by the company, whereas the interviewee three evaluated the

relationship to be balanced. Decisions made by the firm have to be imposed to create a well-functioning relationship. When decisions are taken without integration of the dealers, it might result in dissatisfaction according to the experts. One example is the obligation to fulfill the target from the headquarter office. This responsibility is shared with the dealers. That being said, within the relationship both parties are urged to fulfill goals.

However, dealers pressure the OEM to find improvements as stated by I4. Given this dynamics, there is also a risk when the dealers do not follow the routines provided by the firm. If they do not implement them, the processes cannot be tested and therefore not adapted if required. Thus the power aspect of the company towards the dealers is important when it comes to relationship management.

Additionally “*communication*” was identified within each interview. Since the frequency was the highest, this element is seen to be the most important when it comes to a satisfying relationship. I3 describes the essentiality to communicate, be transparent and share developments.

Within a well-functioning relationship regular communication is important in order to receive more insight and information about each other’s needs verified by I1. Because when information’s are not shared or problems are not solved together, it can be a thread to a relationship. Overall I3 perceived the current communication towards the dealers to be good. Also I4 described that communication is of utter importance when it comes to improvements of the company’s performance. The dealers also have to give feedback in order to allow the OEM to adapt the dealer’s expectations better.

Additionally I2 describes that communication can be an issue since the information flow between departments and dealers takes long time. Problems with finding out the right information in order to provide them to the dealers have been identified as a problem within the organization. I2 recommends more direct communication between the logistics department and the dealers. The dealers would be independent from the support team to provide them with the information. Furthermore the logistics department could provide its own information about any disturbances during the processes, this would be an adaptation in order to meet dealer needs better. New solutions and consequent engagement in supply chain improvements will benefit the communication according to experts.

When it comes to internal *adaptation* in order to improve the relationship with the dealers, I1 suggested moving the dealer-support to the logistics department. I1 said that this change would support the dealers in a more efficient way. It would create trust and commitment too. Furthermore communication would be positively affected since the information flow would be more direct, three out of the four interviewees mentioned this.

The focus to adapt and change is important for the experts. In this conception the need to move forward and adapt the supply chain was stressed out. The interviewee I2 accentuated that the adaptation to dealers needs as well as the implementation of their wishes should be an overall aim for the firm. When these adaptations are put into place, the dealers will gain more value and experience higher satisfaction levels.

Another system to be adapted is the process for the returns of pallets from the dealer to the OEM. The problem has been mentioned before by I2 and I1. Since this procedure dissatisfies the dealer, the enterprise has started investigation already. This adaptation will be a benefit for the dealer and the company according to I4.

When it comes to the relationship element “*loyalty*”, I2 described the dealers to be less loyal, in case the OEM does not help or satisfy them. It became apparent that emigration can be a consequence and has to be avoided by fulfilling their expectations and needs to the best knowledge. The reason for it is provided by I2, who noticed that the system world for ordering parts is very complicated and hard to work with. Nevertheless they can be described to be loyal to the brand. Further I3 explains loyalty to be an important factor, which can create value for the dealers. The interviewee said that the dealers have to buy their parts where they can get the best offer to stay competitive. This argument can be also associated with a thread if the manufacturer does not offer the best and cheapest supply of parts; they might use other distribution channels. To build and maintain the loyalty is essential toward the dealer relationship as described by I4.

The relationship element “*dependency*” was only identified in one interview, whereas bonding and continuity were not found.

4.3.4 Experience Elements

Codes	Frequency Total	Frequency Total in%	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)
Positive	1	0,69 %	1	25,0 %
Negative	5	3,45 %	3	75,0 %
Dissatisfactory	5	3,45 %	4	100,0 %
Satisfactory	13	8,97 %	4	100,0 %

Table 4.3 Results Coding Process Experience Elements Experts
(Source: Müller 2014)

In table 4.3 the results regarding experience are presented, here the mentioned codes during the answers can be detected.

When it comes to the experience with the OEM service and performance a uniform result can be seen throughout the interviews. Though not many *positive experiences* (one on total) were

mentioned compared to negative ones (three interviewees stated five incidents), it has been clearly identified that the dealers seem to be more satisfied than dissatisfied. For instance, the positive experience was made in comparison with other brands, where I2 emphasized that the dealers perceive the OEM's service better compared to other car brands.

The *negative experience* was related to the service of the manufacturer. One example was given regarding the service failure to meet the expectations of the dealers (correct parts in correct time); consequently it will impact the value creation and satisfaction according to I3.

The *dissatisfaction* elements were experienced in the long waiting time for crediting returns for pallets; but overall the dealers are seen to be "pleased" with the performance of the logistics department. Also the systems cause dissatisfaction. I2 pointed out that the dealers are not dissatisfied with the entire supply chain, but the systems are a part of it, so therefore the firm should try to ease the applications for ordering systems. I4 brings an example on how the supply chain can affect the customer satisfaction when the repair time takes longer due to delayed parts deliveries.

Satisfying experiences are clearly mentioned by all interviewees. I4 claimed that the dealers were overall satisfied with the performance of the company. I2 and I3 described the dealers as satisfied with the general service of the OEM. All interviews referred satisfaction to a high service degree and a low claim rate.

4.3.5 Summary

Table 4.4 shows the findings from the expert interviews, which were ranked in descending order. Here the frequency and reference degree were used as an indicator for importance and impact. The calculation model was described in 3.3. This overview will for the analysis.

Code	Reference Degree (%)	Frequency (%) *	Rank Frequency	Rank Reference Degree	Average	Importance Ranking
Communication	100,0 %	100,0 %	1	1	1	1
Collaboration	100,0 %	85,2 %	2	1	1,5	2
Trust, Commitment	100,0 %	81,5 %	3	1	2	3
Satisfactory performance of the OEM	100,0 %	48,1 %	4	1	2,5	4
Adapatation	75,0 %	40,7 %	5	2	3,5	5
Power	75,0 %	37,0 %	6	2	4	6
Dissatisfactory performance of the OEM	100,0 %	18,5 %	8	1	4,5	7
Loyalty	75,0 %	29,6 %	7	2	4,5	7
Claim Rate	75,0 %	29,6 %	7	2	4,5	7
Negative Experience with the performance of the OEM	75,0 %	18,5 %	8	2	5	8
Service Level	50,0 %	18,5 %	8	3	5,5	9
Delivery Time	50,0 %	14,8 %	9	3	6	10
Parts Availability	25,0 %	7,4 %	10	4	7	11
Positive Experience with the performance of the OEM	25,0 %	3,7 %	11	4	7,5	12
Dependency	25,0 %	3,7 %	11	4	7,5	12

Table 4.4 Importance Ranking Experts
(Source: Müller 2014, appendix 8.2.1.2)

4.4 Findings: Interviews with Company A Dealers

4.4.1 Introduction

The following chapter shows the findings derived from the 17 dealer interviews. The same structure as for the experts will be applied to present the collected data. All dealers were spare parts managers at dealerships around Sweden. Their job is to manage orders, procurement and storage of spare parts at the dealership as well as being the contact person for the manufacturer. Dealing on a daily basis with the OEM is thus a main criterion for the research. Therefore their knowledge is vital for collecting significant material about the satisfaction with the OEM's performance. In the end of this chapter the key themes from the dealer's point of view will be presented.

The results according to the coding process can be found in appendix 8.2.2.

4.4.2 Supply Chain Elements

Codes	Frequency Total	Frequency Total (%)	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)
Parts Availability	17	3,97 %	13	76,5 %
Service Level	11	2,57 %	7	41,2 %
Delivery Time	15	3,50 %	9	52,9 %
Claim Rate	24	5,61 %	13	76,5 %

*Table 4.5 Results Coding Process Supply Chain Elements Dealers
(Source: Müller 2014)*

Table 4.5 displays the results of the supply chain elements according to their frequency and reference degree.

During the evaluation of the information from the interviews, most dealers indicated an overall satisfaction with the supply chain provided by the OEM. It became evident that eight dealers found *parts availability* to be good, where in total 13 dealers mentioned the element. The other five provided negative examples for dissatisfaction. One dealer (Dealer 11 (D11)) criticized the low availability of parts for campaigns, when end-customers come into the dealership and had to wait. These campaign orders were not well planned from the OEM's side. Further two dealers claimed wrong system notice of parts availability, which caused long waiting times for dealer and end-customer.

The *service level* was positively perceived for five dealers. It became apparent that it has improved, because it is imperative for the dealers to have a secure and stable process to fulfill the services towards the end-customer. Two dealers complained about the service level. They

criticized that the reliability and accuracy of the delivery of the spare parts is lacking. The dealers want higher focus from the company to reach 100% service level in order to become satisfied.

Delivery times have been reduced and are kept therefore satisfied five dealers. Another dealer was satisfied with the “two times a day delivery – option”, but was at the same time dissatisfied with service level. The accuracy of delivery times was criticized, due to the lack of transparency about delivery information. Consequently when the parts take long time to arrive; it can cause dissatisfaction, so the dealers request more information about it.

When it comes to the **claim rate**, six dealers were satisfied with it. The quality of the deliveries (improvements with damages) was experienced to be good. When failures occur, such as wrong deliveries to dealers, picking differences or damages, the dealers would like to see that it has been taken care of in a much better way, 10 dealers arrogated this.

4.4.3 Relationship Management Elements

Codes	Frequency Total	Frequency Total (%)	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)
Trust, Commitment	60	14,02 %	17	100,0 %
Collaboration	29	6,78 %	16	94,1 %
Power	7	1,64 %	4	23,5 %
Communication	75	17,52 %	15	88,2 %
Dependency	2	0,47 %	2	11,8 %
Adapatation	49	11,45 %	14	82,4 %
Loyalty	2	0,47 %	2	11,8 %

*Table 4.6 Results Coding Process Relationship Management Elements Dealers
(Source: Müller 2014)*

In table 4.6 the total amount of each code is illustrated, which provides an overview of relationship elements.

The findings suggest that the relationship and **commitment** of the OEM and the dealers is “very good” as stated by 11 dealers. Whereas six others claim that the relationship is only “ok”. All interviewees have been given a comment about this element. For example, by explaining commitment with the encouragement of the regional managers and spare parts support towards the dealers.

Three dealers were slightly dissatisfied when it came to the process to find solutions for problems. It became obvious that the dealers want to see commitment of the enterprise to take care of their issues. Another issue mentioned by dealer 15 (D15) was that the supplier is too far away from the customers and loses connection to them. Higher involvement into the daily business could be a benefit.

A positive example is the effort made by the logistics department to solve problems over the last years, as stated by eight dealers. But when the supply processes are reliable, *trust* according to dealer 13 (D13) can evolve. When it comes to current developments at the OEM, only five dealers claimed to be involved. Whereas four dealers did not feel integrated into current developments, proceedings with concepts or that the firm is responsive to their situation, because information were often lacking.

Remarks regarding **reputation** were not provided by the answers.

The *collaboration* aspect was experienced to have improved over the last years as stated by three dealers. It was also seen to be working well, which thought the majority of the dealers with nine in total. Problems have been solved together and it is a good climate between the two partners, which was satisfying for dealer 5 (D5) and D15. In essence with this, other dissatisfying aspects were found. Three dealers did not feel included into any decisions making processes or felt that the whole responsibility is on their side. One remark connected to the low responsibility rate was that the firm should ensure to keep the dealers as their customers. Similarly interviewee dealer 11 (D11) did not feel understood by the OEM and stressed out how important it is to aim for a mutual understanding. Two dealers suggested to increase internal collaboration at the organization with the consequence that better understanding about processes can be achieved.

The malfunctioning contact to the dealer support was an issue of the collaboration, sometimes it is difficult to reach or work with the team, as mentioned by dealer 12 (D12) and dealer 16 (D16). Whereas, some dealers suggested informing better about any problems, which would subsequently benefit the commitment of the relationship and therefore improve the satisfaction of the dealers

The *power* element was perceived in just four interviews. Dealer 7 (D7) claimed that the power to gain relevant knowledge is an issue for the OEM. If the company does not receive relevant information it affects the dealer negatively. Two dealers explained that they are the “customers” of the OEM thus need treatment as such instead of being only a mere “dealer” with no power. Furthermore one dealer underlined the high pressure to fulfill the demands of the firm. Although one dealer expressed that the company and themselves, are under a lot of pressure to follow

certain rules of the business, it came to light that each partner faces power from different stakeholders outside their relationship.

The element “*communication*” was noticed to play a significant role within the relationship, since 15 dealers have talked about it. The majority of the dealers, with nine in total indicated that the communication was good. Positive about it was that it helped to solve problems and to get the information they need, whereas other dealers referred to problems. 10 dealers claimed low distribution of information about delivery dates or backorders. Further they criticized that no response was given.

Even though exchange with the support groups was good, they could not help the dealers with some issues. The assumption by two dealers was that also internal failures in communication must exist, so relevant knowledge could not be shared with the dealers. Also one interviewee did not feel informed or involved in the supply chain development process or informed about it. Whereas others felt they received the necessary information they need.

In five interviews the dissatisfaction with the communication process was prevalent. To communicate honest and openly about any misfits or disappointments has been also discussed to create satisfaction. Five dealers came up with suggestions to improve a more pro-active communication style, like calling the dealer directly when problems occur, change the dealer support to the logistics department or create a website with current delivery or failure information.

The *adaptation* element has been underlined in 14 interviews. The frequency to adapt systems (warehouse and delivery processes) would make nine dealers happier. Conversely other dealers saw positive examples, like improvements in the systems. Similarly pilots for new delivery strategies, such as the returns of pallets, are adaptations in the right direction according to four of the interviewees.

In order to increase the transparency about the accuracy of delivery times, the OEM should create systems to track deliveries via web tools, where the dealers are informed when to expect the parts recommended by dealer 3 (D3) and dealer 4 (D4).

Five dealers recommended to review packaging types because extended express ordering times for the dealers would increase their satisfaction level.

Another process, which would need adaption, is the summertime workforce, influencing lower quality. Picking errors should be eliminated by a zero-tolerance according to dealer 10 (D10). In order to avoid them better and constant trainings of agency and permanent staff should be implemented as accentuated by D13. Moreover the pre order-packed articles were mentioned to

be a potential positive adaptation within the delivery process to the dealers, where they could reduce stock as well as repacking to the goods.

Loyalty was not identified to a significant extent and was only identified within two interviews. One dealer said that he was not satisfied with the performance of the company because the OEM should show more effort to keep the dealer as a customer. Consequently loyalty has to be supported by the firm. Another dealer made a remark with regard to other brands. He compared the different services offered and stressed out the advantages the enterprise has. It shows a “loyal” attitude towards the supplier.

Dependency was only found in two interviews. D7 explained that in his perception the headquarter in Germany has high impact on the decision making process in Sweden and the dealers and the OEM are forced to follow the obligations. But dependency can also be seen from another perspective, when supported by the company the dealer feels secure within the relationship, which will result into higher quality and safer processes towards the end-customer according to D13. In this regard it creates dependency on the actions performed by the manufacturer. Bonding and continuity were not identified during the interview analysis.

4.4.4 Experience Elements

Codes	Frequency Total	Frequency Total (%)	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)
Positive	8	1,87 %	6	35,3 %
Negative	35	8,18 %	14	82,4 %
Dissatisfactory	44	10,28 %	15	88,2 %
Satisfactory	50	11,68 %	17	100,0 %

Table 4.7 Results Coding Process Experience Elements Dealers
(Source: Müller 2014)

Table 4.7 displays the results regarding the experience elements from dealer interviews.

Five dealers provided several **positive examples** with the performance; such as quick response rate and significant improvements (less damage of windshields, system improvements, and returns of accessories).

The **negative experiences** mentioned during the interviews were with 14 times rather high. Examples such as unknown delivery dates and addresses (three dealers), bad quality of parts (four dealers), return process of spare parts (eight dealers), delayed parts, handling of information supported dissatisfaction with the performance of the OEM.

Further complains were given about the forwarder company. Even though the OEM is using a transport firma as an intermediate, there have been several occasions where the forwarder did not perform well enough as verified by one dealer.

It became apparent that the OEM does not satisfy the 15 dealers entirely. The performance of the logistics department *dissatisfied* eight dealers, while the others validated that “heavy processes” created discontent, like the return processes or imposed duties, where dealers do not see any benefits for them. Further projects from the firm were “stuck”, with no real outcome for the dealers according to dealer 12. Dealer three spoke about another aspect, where the reorganization and inexperienced staff causes problems. Dissatisfaction was also found within communication, support and delivery failures.

All 17 questioned dealers’ thought that the performance of the OEM was *satisfying* or ok as given by their statements. But some improvements are needed.

4.4.5 Summary

After the findings of the research have been presented, the key themes are ranked according to their identified frequency and reference degree in descending order (table 4.8). This order will be used for the discussion and analysis of the empirical data.

Code	Reference Degree (%)	Frequency (%) *	Rank Frequency	Rank Reference Degree	Average	Importance Ranking
Trust, Commitment	100,0 %	80,0 %	2	1	1,5	1
Satisfactory performance of the OEM	100,0 %	66,7 %	3	1	2	2
Communication	88,2 %	100,0 %	1	3	2	2
Dissatisfactory performance of the OEM	88,2 %	58,7 %	5	3	4	3
Adapatation	82,4 %	65,3 %	4	4	4	3
Collaboration	94,1 %	38,7 %	7	2	4,5	4
Negative experience with the performance of the OEM	82,4 %	46,7 %	6	4	5	5
Claim Rate	76,5 %	32,0 %	8	5	6,5	6
Parts Availability	76,5 %	22,7 %	9	5	7	7
Delivery Time	52,9 %	20,0 %	10	6	8	8
Service Level	41,2 %	14,7 %	11	7	9	9
Positive Experience with the performance of the OEM	35,3 %	10,7 %	12	8	10	10
Power	23,5 %	9,3 %	13	9	11	11
Dependency	11,8 %	2,7 %	14	10	12	12
Loyalty	11,8 %	2,7 %	14	10	12	12

Table 4.8 Importance Ranking Dealers
(Source: Müller 2014; appendix 8.2.2.2)

5. ANALYSIS

In this chapter the study will analyse how the findings correspond to the research question: “How can Supply Chain Management impact and generate dealer satisfaction?”. Since the investigated elements are connected to SCM (Udin et al., 2008, p.361, Christopher, 2010, preface p.1 and Wu et al., 2004, p.323), their impact on dealer satisfaction will be presented during the following abstract. The different categories; elements of SCM, relationship factors and the experience with the performance of the OEM, will be discussed with regard to each sub-research question and linked to the identified importance evaluation (please refer to appendix 8.6 for an overview).

5.1 Supply Chain Elements

Parts availability

As findings from the literature study stated, high parts availability at a warehouse can create higher revenues and decrease costs for logistics due to the fact that the usage of additional networks can be avoided to deliver the parts to the dealers (Evans and Danks, 1998, pp.21-22). I3 pointed out a similar approach, if no parts are available but the dealer has an urgent repair, the likelihood to leave exists, which indicated a high risk of dealers drifting to other distribution channels. Interestingly the dealers had a much higher importance on parts availability than the OEM. This could be based on the fact that the dealers are much more affected by low parts availability than the manufacturer.

When drawing the attention to the results from the GPMS, 88,66% of the dealers were satisfied with the service, which is also reflected in the research results from the dealers. They accentuated that parts availability is more important to them. That indicates that a dissatisfied end-customer is a big problem for the dealers, whereas the supplying company will not be affected by it immediately. The customer satisfaction will drop when the part for a repair is not available and the supplier (OEM) cannot deliver the part on time, which would cause long waiting times (Blanchard, 2010, p.143).

This influence on satisfaction was also measured during the dealer investigation, which was confirmed by four dealers. One stated that he had experienced the non-availability of an urgent part with no information from the company. Another said the customer had to wait for parts, which were on a campaign sale. Both incidents left the dealer and the customer rather dissatisfied. This result corresponds with the literature findings.

To a small extent the dealers found parts availability to have more impact on their satisfaction level compared to the experts' perception. Comparing the findings from the dealers, the OEM

should focus on maintaining high parts availability and offer services to get parts beyond the normal business, since it was stated by Ehinlanwo and Zairi (1996, p.44) that it impacts the customer satisfaction greatly.

Service level

As Davis (1993, p.39) underlined that the fulfillment of a high service degree impacts satisfaction positively whereas a low degree causes dissatisfaction. The experts verified this. In the article by Helena Forslund (2014, p.208) it was stressed that the service level of 100% ensured a high satisfaction. The experts gave similar examples, while high productivity guarantees a high fulfillment of the service degree, meaning the orders are reaching their destination point on time. Furthermore the research showed that the dealers expect the OEM to strive for a 100% fulfillment rate, stabilization of the service, and on time and precise performance of the delivery service. This effort of the company would then result into a high satisfaction (Davis, 1993, p.39 and Forslund, 2014, p.208).

Delivery time

The research showed that one third of the dealers was dissatisfied with the service and the transparency of information sharing by the manufacturer, which was confirmed by Davis (1993). He pointed out that unknown delivery times and no information cause dissatisfaction (Davis, 1993, p.39). In addition the experts also gave similar views. Taking the GPMS results into consideration, it showed that 82,2% of the dealers were satisfied with the delivery (GPMS, 2013). During the interviews more than 50% of the dealers and 50% of the experts found the accuracy of delivery time to be important for their satisfaction, with a rather low degree of impact on satisfaction. The literature found this element to be relevant when it comes to satisfaction generation and emphasised how high the influence of delivery time on the satisfaction level is. It became evident, by taking the different results from the GPMS and the underlying study into consideration that the OEM should focus on a correct delivery time towards their “customers”, besides a high impact on satisfaction. Better planning and distribution of information by the firm to meet the high expectations of the dealers, has been suggested during the interviews by dealers and experts as well was found by Davis (1993, p.39) and Coyle et al. (2011, p.41).

Claim rate

It became apparent that the claim rate is the most important element for dealers and experts when it comes to dealer satisfaction. The interviewees pointed out that even a reduction in claims was experienced; the majority of the dealers were still disappointed about the handling of the claims. The Company A experts were aware of this fact and pointed out the high risk of failures during the delivery process. This was also discussed by Rushton et al. (2014, p.106) and Blanchard

(2010, p.139).

Various types of claims can also cause different dissatisfaction levels as debated by the dealers. In the case of damaged parts are delivered, it was found more dissatisfying compared to an over-delivery of spare parts. Focusing on the quality aspect of the delivery will enhance the satisfaction therefore (Svensson, 2006, p.51 and Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.9). The DSS showed that almost 70% of the dealers are satisfied with the quality of the spare parts, which is a rather good result for the OEM (DSS, 2013). In the underlying study the majority of the dealers (10) wanted the company to become more reliable with the deliveries in order to increase the quality aspect, which was further identified in the study by Svensson (2006, p.52). The different results can be found due to the variation in questionnaire styles. In the DSS it was only asked about how satisfied the dealers were with the service and a standardized questionnaire with five choices was used. The general satisfaction was also verified in the underlying research, but within the open questionnaire, the dealers answered further that the handling needs improvement. This example of dissatisfaction was not captured in the questionnaire by the DSS. Here a clear advantage of the open questionnaire is given.

The responsibility to improve is upon the OEM since the company delivers the parts (Saccani et al., 2005, p.275). The dealers and experts had similar results regarding the importance and satisfaction impact leading into the assumption that their focus on the right quality is the same.

5.2 Relationship Management Elements

Commitment and Trust

Two studies by Spekman et al. (1998, p.66) and van Riel et al. (2011, p.124) revealed that trust and commitment within a relationship affect satisfaction of the dealers. Thus commitment was found to have a huge impact on the dealers' satisfaction, which was also verified by all experts, where both interview groups, had the same importance rate. For the dealers and the experts it was essential to have a committed relationship in order to avoid any suspicions (experts view) and disappointments (dealers view).

To compare the findings even better, the DSS results will be used. This showed that 85% of the dealers had a positive commitment towards the relationship with the OEM (DSS, 2013). With 11 dealers satisfied, just six mentioned the relationship to be ok. They gave examples where they saw improvements and stressed out to have good relations with their respective contacts. The OEM stated to have a good relationship with the dealers. This result and the findings from the DSS are in line.

But the outlook into the future showed only 63% optimistic dealers in the DSS study, but when it comes to the perspectives in the after-sales business, 60% were cautious and 33% negatively appointed (DSS, 2013). These results show low trust in the future. A reason for this could be the tough market situation in the after-sales business, which is a thread for the dealers (Hecker et al., 2010, p.8 and Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.2).

The same findings were found within the research groups. Both groups emphasised that trust could be lost when there is a low rate of information sharing; less development; no engagement, low responsiveness etc. were experienced. This result was also found by Qrunfleh and Tarafdar (2013, p.579). But trust plays a significant role in the relationship (Tejpal et al., 2013, pp.51-52) and in order to provide a reliable supply chain, this aspect has to be strengthened by the firm (Poirier, 1999, pp.5-6).

When the company shares information and shows effort to improve, trust and commitment of both sites will increase. It will also create synergies, resulting in reduced lead-time, costs and efficient distribution networks between the partners (Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, p.579 and Poirier, 1999, p.6, 7). The DSS displayed that only 62% felt to be supported by the company when it comes to run a successful business (DSS, 2013). But the support regarding spare parts was even lower with only 40% satisfaction (DSS, 2013). Some dealers showed the same result during the interviews. It indicates that the dealers experienced the feeling to be either not in a relationship or to have no support from the OEM. The experts have validated that the focus is on the “dealers’ demands” and by involving the partner and share relevant information, positive behaviour towards the relationship is shown (Kiessling et al., 2004, p.97). Honesty and openness to communicate will form trust between two partners (Tejpal et al., 2013, p.59), which was mentioned by one expert too. The dealers also claimed to get better support and information from their partner over time. This behaviour is also an important relationship element, supporting each other and finding solutions for problems together is a vital part of a well-functioning relationship (Anderson and Weitz, 1992, p.18), which was accentuated within the request from dealer D7 and D13.

To show more interest in dealer needs could be a way to improve satisfaction. Consequently, high responsiveness within the supply chain will increase the performance of a firm, which was proven by Qrunfleh and Tarafdar (2013, p.572, 578, 579) as well as within the answers from the dealers. Overall the research found out that commitment and trust to be an important factor when it comes to relationships.

The results from both groups were almost equal; a very high importance and a rather high impact on satisfaction. For the dealers it was even more important. Consequently the OEM should ensure

to keep a stable, supporting (Anderson and Weitz, 1992, p.18) and enduring (van Riel et al., 2011, p.124) commitment within the relationship to generate satisfaction.

Collaboration

This relationship element has been found to be of high importance for both interview groups. The experts emphasized how important it is to include the dealers into decision processes, idea sharing and working towards the same aim since they are equally affected by the end result. The dealers emphasized that cooperation will create advantage and benefits for all partners, which were also indicated by several other authors, such as van Riel et al. (2011) and Jansson and Zineldin (2003).

The experts underlined that they will concentrate on what the dealers want to reveal where potential for developments can be found. Thus shows how important collaboration is for a relationship. Due to the fact that 12 dealers had mentioned the positive aspects of the collaboration, their general satisfaction was found during the research. The reason for their satisfaction can be attributed to the good understanding about a satisfying collaboration of the OEM.

The positive impact of collaboration to create satisfaction was found and that indicates that the contrary had to be assumed as well. Here negative examples like less involvement, difficult contact to the support group, low understanding and too less information sharing, has dissatisfied them. The dealers also pointed out that they felt to take the whole responsibility for the business. In their mindsets the OEM should take more obligations for reaching a good business result. But as found within the literature review, all members have to be involved and obligated to create advantages for all partners (Udin et al., 2008, p.364). When one person feels unequal to another, the collaboration within this relationship will drop. Dealers have to show their willingness to work towards the same aim and exchange information with the company when processes are not working. It is recommended to involve the company into this process (Sacomano Neto and Pires, 2012, p.392). They mentioned that taking the dealer into consideration creates satisfaction, which was also confirmed by van Riel et al. (2011, p.117) and Jansson and Zineldin (2003, p.228). Such an integrated relationship creates improvements within the supply chain for both partners according to experts, as also identified by Udin et al. (2006, p.363) and Handfield (2011, paragraph 8).

In line with these arguments, it can be concluded that literature has suggested a strong involvement into collaborative actions of the firm to create satisfied dealers. At this point the study can contribute to the findings by expanding this view towards the dealers, who have to show pro-active signals towards the manufacturer when problems occur.

Overall both groups found collaboration to be very important, although all experts agreed upon this compared to only 91% of the dealers. The biggest difference was within the influence on satisfaction. The experts emphasised that it had high impact on the satisfaction, while the dealers had only one-third influence on satisfaction. Since both groups had found a high importance level, collaboration can contribute to the satisfaction of each partner to a great extent, when information is shared openly between the two partners.

Power

The element power was perceived totally different between the OEM and the dealers. While the dealers highlighted that power to be less important with a low impact on their satisfaction level, three-quarter of the experts evaluated power to have almost an average impact on the satisfaction level. This was based on how power is perceived. For the experts power is following rules and routines, communicating targets and reaching them. Interestingly the statement from the experts showed that they felt to have a more balanced relationship with the dealer. The dealers did not perceive this.

On the other hand the manufacturer found himself under pressure from the dealer to find improvements, but also the dealers have the obligation to support the company. Here the dealers complained about the low internal power, since no relevant information was distributed.

The most interesting aspect was that two dealers would like to be treated as a “customer”, which implies that they want more power over the relationship. This aligns also with the statement analysed during the literature study, where the customer of the OEM is the dealer in the after-sales business (Poirier, 1999, p.10).

Power can result into satisfaction for the stronger party or into dissatisfaction for the dependent party, which was found in the literature review (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228). But the complaints from the dealers show a more dissatisfied tendency, which indicates the weaker position in the relationship. It is important that the company treats the dealers as a customer in order to meet the end-customers’ expectations too. As an example two dealers mentioned to feel pressure from the firm within their relationship.

Besides criticizing the power aspect, dealers showed an understanding for the OEM. This finding suggests how important it is within a relationship to show “empathy” for the different stakeholders. To treat the dealers correctly and integrated in the relationship, will increase their satisfaction on the long run.

When taking the results from the DSS into consideration, less than 50% felt treated like a real partner, and only 32% felt they could work really independently (DSS, 2013), which shows a

more negative trend from the dealers perspective on how the firm supports them, which was perceived by only 51% of the dealers. These results are comparable to the findings from the research but since the power aspect is not so prevalent in the dealer results, it is still significant since the company will focus on it, which was also proven with the high importance in the answers from the manufacturer.

Communication

According to the majority of the dealers the OEM should increase communication and transparency about current processes or deliveries. The dealers also mentioned that faster response time regarding any issues could reduce any negative experience. Such information sharing is part of the supply chain network, where the dealers get all the relevant data about the deliveries and orders (Coyle et al., 2011, p.21 and Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227). It became apparent from the findings that any problems within a relationship can be solved much faster when direct communication exists. Otherwise the risk for misunderstandings and dissatisfaction occurs as found in the study by Jansson and Zineldin (2003, p.227). For that reason, long communication ways between departments are not efficient enough to meet the dealers' expectations. They want the right information within a short time.

The research also revealed that both groups identified the same problem, which is the waiting long time within communication processes whereas the prevention would benefit the satisfaction. This leads to an asymmetric relationship within the supply chain, where one party has different interests and commitments, as well as unbalanced input. The outcome is a rather unstable, changeable and dissatisfying relationship. This is a reason for companies to avoid asymmetric relationships (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.476, 480). One strategy is to communicate what the expectations each one has are in this relationship (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.485 and Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, p.579). The experts confirmed this as well. They said to share information within a relationship contributes to the overall success.

Additionally the dealers said honesty and open communication benefits satisfaction for them. The findings suggest that both groups had the same intention to increase the level of communication. To speak up in front of the stronger partner and tell what disappointments them is an important part of a well-functioning relationship. But often the OEM has more power as the dealer. One dealer suggested to increase the transparency within the communication flow to gain more data by eliminating important from less important information, which should be distributed to the dealers or not.

Coyle et al. (2011, p.21) stated that transparency in the supply chain has several benefits. Therefore communication and sharing information, is a key factor within a successful

relationship. Moreover the literature said that sharing new strategies and what the partners can expect from each other has positive impact on the satisfaction (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.226; Krizan et al., 2011, p.7 and Udin et al., 2008, p.363). This information acknowledges the results of the dealers and expert interviews. It became evident that communication is vital for both groups. The experts said it to be the most important when it comes to the impact on the dealer. The dealers also found that it would influence their satisfaction level the most, with less importance.

Adaptation

Adaptation was evaluated to be an important element for the satisfaction within a relationship. The dealers found it a small amount more important than the experts but with a much higher degree of satisfaction impact. This result was expected, since the literature review revealed that high engagement into changes and adaptation towards the dealer's needs would result into satisfaction (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228).

Continues adaptations of current supply chain processes generate satisfaction, as stressed by the dealers. Such adaptations are the promises of the OEM to keep the claim rate low, a high service degree and a short delivery time, which are usually based within a formal contract. Informal adaptations are made when other problems occur, which are not specified in a contract. But the willingness to show adaptation of a supplier to the dealer creates commitment in the relationship (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.227).

Interrelations between several relationship elements, especially commitment and communication, were also found in the research results. When for example, company A would adapt or change to the dealer's needs, the dealer would be satisfied and sees the commitment of the OEM to the relationship. It was clearly identified that the dealers request a constant adaptation of the company, which was accentuated by several examples. Also the experts have confirmed this statement by their answers.

Thus both groups evaluated adaptations to be important, where the dealers had a slight more focus on importance. The impact on satisfaction was measured to be higher for the dealers, since they came up with numerous improvement areas. Considering these remarks, the OEM has to raise its focus regarding importance and satisfaction impact to change and adapt the current supply chain compliant with the demands from the dealers. There was a clear advantage identified in terms of dealer satisfaction, corresponding to previously presented studies (Udin et al., 2008, p.364, van Riel et al., 2011 and Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.228).

Loyalty

During the research one dealer has mentioned the same effect on his satisfaction level. Subsequent to discussing negative experience with the performance of the service, there is a risk to lose the dealer. One expert also confirmed it. He said that dissatisfied dealers are prone to emigrate to other suppliers. Since it was stressed in the literature part that loyalty is an indicator for a repurchasing intention (Zineldin, 2006, p.433), it likewise impacts the endurance (Zineldin, 2006, p.434) and importance (Saccani et al., 2005, p.263) of a relationship and the deduction of satisfaction and loyalty (Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.597).

Another example was that one dealer compared the service to the other brands. Since the service of the OEM is better, it could imply loyalty, which would then avoid any emigration to other brands. Thus keeping good services by meeting the demands supports the satisfaction of the dealers and therefore their loyalty. As found in other papers, when the offered service exceeds the expectations, loyalty will be a result (Zineldin, 2006, p.431 and Gil-Saura et al., 2009, p.596).

The experts evaluated loyalty to be much more important compared to the dealers' perception. The results indicate that loyalty has a low impact and is less importance within the relationship to the firm. That shows that dissatisfied dealers will not become loyal as found by Gil-Saura et al. (2009, p.597).

Although the emigration will not be high due to the bond of the contract to the OEM, but there is still a risk existing, since the experts identified disloyal dealers might purchase from other distributors if the performance to be dissatisfying.

Dependency

Dependency was not as important as expected. After the literature study the importance of the element seemed to be obvious. The reason for that is that the dealer has the demand of the service to receive spare parts and therefore faces high dependency on the relationship to the OEM (Frazier et al., 1989, pp.50 and Wu et al., 2004, p.324).

The research showed that the dealers expressed that they were obliged to fulfill the demands from the manufacturer because they had no other choice, which showed a more negative attitude towards dependency. To fulfill OEM expectations does not always imply satisfied dealers according to Chang et al. (2003, p.133). Given this literature implication, similar effects were correspondingly found within the dealer answers. The dealer impression was that the firm had an attitude, indicating that responsibility is upon the dealers.

Even though the research showed that dependency was not identified to be a key theme since both groups showed low importance as well as low satisfaction impact when it came to supply chain relationships. A company should still concentrate more on supply chain partners when it

comes to the understanding of the dependency to create a higher commitment within the relationship (Wu et al., 2004, p.331).

Reputation, bonds and continuity were not identified within the interviews. Therefore these elements are withdrawn from the result presentation and are neglected within the recommendation derived from the study results.

5.3 Experience Elements

Negative Experience and Dissatisfaction

The negative experiences and dissatisfaction were found quite often within the dealer answers. Various examples where the company had neglected to meet the expectations of the dealers had led into dissatisfaction.

Less development of the OEM and involvement, referring to relationship aspects, has been mentioned as dissatisfying occasions too. The supply chain responsibility lies within the OEMs obligations and the company has to ensure the right quality for example (Srivastava and Tyagi, 2013, p.131).

The zone of tolerance is a tool to evaluate a service, which creates satisfaction (Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488). If the expectations have been fallen short off, disconfirmation of the desired zone for satisfaction is a result; this implies occurred failures leading into dissatisfaction (Fitzen, 2011, p.84; Gassenheimer et al., 1995, p.11; Coyle et al., 2011, p.290 and Blanchard, 2010, p.143). In line with these findings, several negative examples found within the dealer answers, underlined the fact of falling below the “zone of tolerance”. These examples showed to some regard, dissatisfaction with the OEM. Waiting for a long time for a part to arrive does not create satisfied dealers (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.373). There is also a high risk that negative experience with the services results into drifting of the dealers (Hecker et al., 2010, p.11), due to the fact that the service performance of the company is underneath the expected adequate service (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.372 and Schiele et al., 2012, p.139). Within this scope the firm should put high attention on the dealer by avoiding further or unnecessary negative experiences. 15 dealers mentioned to be dissatisfied with the performance of the manufacturer and 14 gave negative examples about the experience. This result is rather high based on the expectations towards a service provider, which was also illustrated by different examples by the dealers.

Interestingly, several dealers have complained about the return process, but in the GPMS 77,4% (GPMS, 2013) and in the DSS 66% (DSS, 2013) were satisfied with the process. It could be based on the type of questionnaire conducted. Whereas the underlying study has been conducted with open questions, the GPMS and DSS are based on a quantitative research.

The element “negative experience” was found to be of great importance for the dealers and the firm. Here the dealers had a slight more important view on it. These examples are useful to illuminate starting points for change within the current processes or structures at the OEM. The biggest difference was, however, within the satisfaction impact. The dealers have mentioned quite a few negative experiences, with a medium impact on satisfaction, while the experts saw only a small impact. Regarding the dissatisfaction element, the research showed a similar result, but while the manufacturer found this to be very important when it comes to satisfaction, the dealers thought a bit less important about it. Since the experts reported fewer incidents, this level is rather low compared to the occasions dissatisfying the dealers, with almost 60%.

Positive Experience and Satisfaction

Due to the fact that all dealers “confirmed” to be overall satisfied with the dealers when being asked, the research can prove how a good performance and positive experience create satisfaction. When it comes to the positive performance of the OEM, it was found to have a satisfying result on the dealer and end-customer perception. One dealer claimed with the right support their satisfaction will increase.

Surprisingly some dealers answered that they were satisfied with the service of the OEM but when asked if things could be changed to increase their satisfaction was much lower. Applying the results to the zone of tolerance it was obvious that most dealers accepted the performance to be adequate (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011, p.372). Even when they expressed their satisfaction they all claimed that the service would need improvements, which was only found in the numerous negative examples stated. The literature has identified similar results; here the satisfaction level is influenced by the experience made with the service (Diez, 2012, p.297). Expectations play a great part in the satisfaction process (Gassenheimer et al., 1995, p.11), because when expectations are „confirmed” or exceeded, the dealers are satisfied with the experience (Fitzen, 2011, p.84, 85; Thomas and Esper, 2010, p.488 and Gassenheimer et al., 1995, p.11).

The overall satisfaction was also found in the GPMS study, which showed the result of 89,82% satisfied after-sales manager of Company A. The experts also agreed with this and proclaimed an overall satisfaction of the dealers. The positive experiences were rather low compared to provide negative examples. Only six dealers mentioned examples.

Comprising these results from the dealers the evaluation of positive experience was not significant. Even though the importance for the dealers was within the first half, its effect on satisfaction was low. When taken the experts view into account, they evaluated it even less important with lower impact on satisfaction. For both groups, however, to be satisfied with the performance is most important. Though the similarity in the results the effect on satisfaction was

different. The dealers were mentioning their satisfaction even more compared to the experts statements. Considering all the other negative and dissatisfying findings within the research, this result should be evaluated carefully. Most of the dealers also cited that improvements were needed and gave several examples. Therefore the company should try to raise the satisfaction level, which was also shown in the comparison between the results from the OEM and the dealer.

5.4 Presentation of the Relationship-Satisfaction Model

The aim of the research was to find out which elements can generate and impact satisfaction of dealers in the automotive after-sales industry. The study shows that different aspects of the supply chain, relationship and experience have different levels of impact on the satisfaction, which was not yet discussed in contemporary literature.

This result contributes to a better understanding on how a relationship with the dealers should be built in order to achieve high satisfaction results. To sum it up the identified elements of SCM have influence on dealer satisfaction but have to be considered from different perspectives, such as importance and impact. This was done within the analysis and will be now summarized and structured in a therefore created model. The aim of the model is to identify what factors impact satisfaction in the after-sales business. This so-called “relationship – satisfaction model” (figure 5.1) shows how the dealers (appendix 8.8) and experts (appendix 8.7) have positioned these elements. The model displays the comparison between the two groups, where the arrows show the difference between them. They should indicate where the OEM has to “move” or respectively improve in order to generate dealer satisfaction by applying the elements from supply chain management.

Each element was placed in the grid based on their amount of frequency and reference degree, which is based on results from the importance ranking in 4.3.5 and 4.4.5.

For a better understanding the axes are described below:

- Low importance (based on reference degree) indicates that it was mentioned by up to zero persons during the interviews.
- High importance (based on reference degree) indicated the highest score, meaning all interviewed persons have mentioned the category and code.
- Low satisfaction (based on the frequency) means that the code was not mentioned (zero times) during the interviewees.
- High satisfaction (based on the frequency) means that the code was mentioned very often by the interviewees (up to 27 times for the experts, 75 for the dealers).

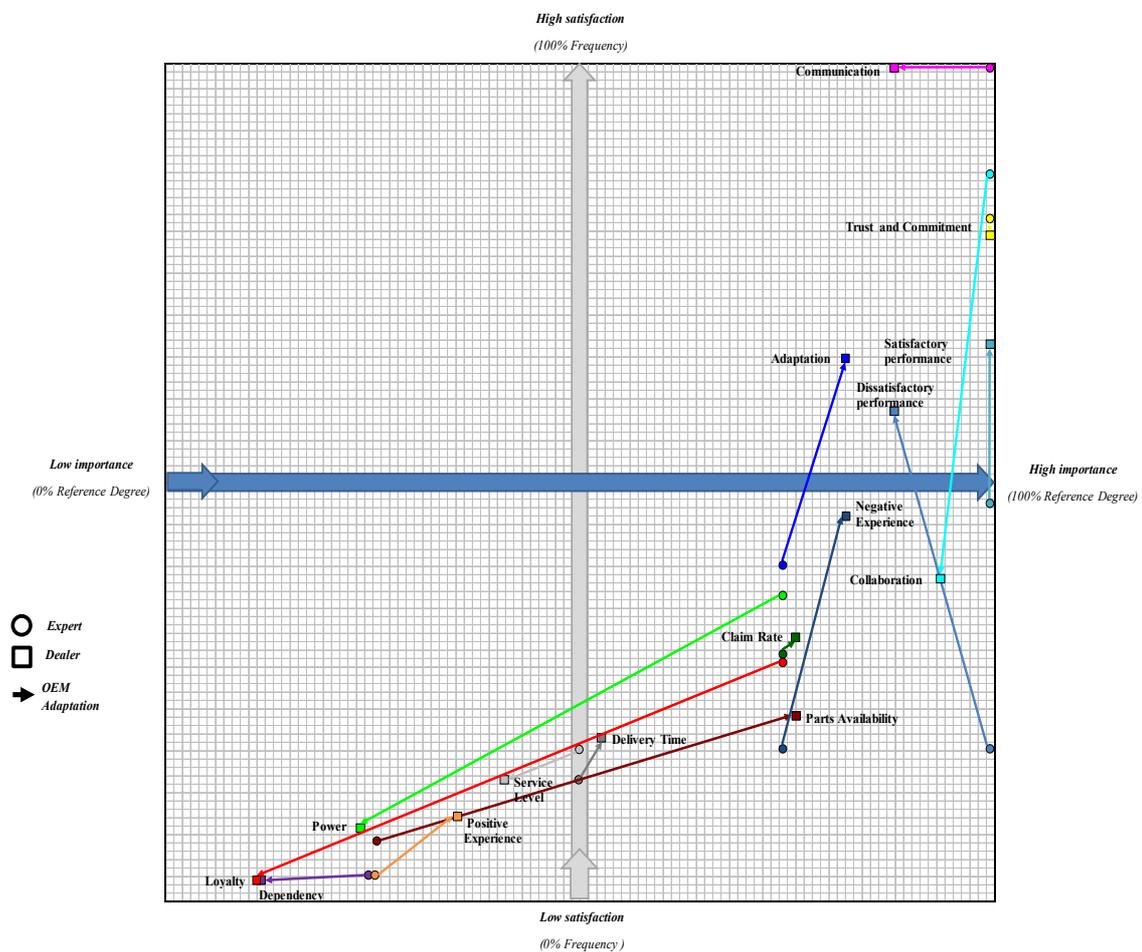


Figure 5.1 Results of Dealer-Expert Comparison: „Relationship-Satisfaction Model“
 (Source: Müller 2014)

5.5 Answers to the Research Questions

The main research question “How can Supply Chain Management impact and generate dealer satisfaction?” was answered during the analysis by identifying the different importance and impact levels of each element. Thus it appears that after grouping them into the model was completed, the difference of several elements and their impact on generating dealer satisfaction was evident and therefore answer the central research question. When drawing the attention to each category and by discussing the “Relationship-Satisfaction Model”, the investigation will provide full answers to the research questions.

Supply Chain Elements

The following aspects can be illustrated to answer the research question: “What generates dealer satisfaction in supply chain management? “. Overall it became apparent during the research that a low claim rate has the highest impact on dealer satisfaction. The result was proven by the dealer interviews as well by the Company A experts with a similar effect. The reason for it is that maintaining a low claim rate will generate satisfied dealers.

The second highest impact was found within parts availability. It was obvious that it was far more important to the dealers compared to the OEM experts. To generate pleased dealers this element

has to be fulfilled, so long lead times and the company can avoid emigration to other supply chains. Consequently increased focus on this element will enhance the supply chain satisfaction. For service level and delivery time there was also a discrepancy in the identified results. The experts had a relative average importance when it comes to satisfaction, with lower impact on the overall satisfaction.

For the dealers the delivery time was slightly more important than the service level. This would also coincide with the results for the parts availability, where the time element also played a significant role. Both elements were found to generate dealer satisfaction far less compared to parts availability and claim rate. As a result the manufacturer should still fulfill a high service level but increase the focus and pay more attention to delivery time and the other supply chain elements in order to reach satisfied dealers.

Relationship Management

When focusing on the answer of the research question: “Which elements of the relationship between the dealer and the OEM describe satisfaction?”, it can be stated that all relationship elements describe satisfaction, but some elements have a higher impact as well as importance when it comes to creating satisfaction.

Within the underlying investigation the different levels of impact and importance per element were identified. The findings include further elements, such as experience and supply chain elements.

The most important elements were trust and commitment, with the highest result in both groups followed by communication, which was perceived to be most important from the OEM’s point of view and with highest impact on satisfaction for the dealer group. The focus for the company should therefore be on commitment and communication, since both have a great impact on the satisfaction level of the dealers.

Adaptation towards the other partners needs was also perceived by both groups to be important, with slight more impact on the satisfaction from the dealers’ perspective. In order to adapt even better to their demands, the manufacturer should thus focus on fulfilling the requirements from the market even better.

Collaboration was an important aspect for the OEM. Even though, the dealers found it equally important with less impact on their satisfaction. Since collaboration contribute to a good working environment, the company should not reduce the prioritization but due to the fact that it was not uncovered to create a very high satisfaction, the current collaboration could be stabilized but include dealers more into decision making processes and provide them a better support.

Interestingly power and loyalty were more important while generating satisfaction for the OEM. Despite a rather low satisfaction impact, the dealers found loyalty and power to be insignificant. Within this aspect the company should focus on the dealers needs and reduce rules and obligations by focusing on a more committed relationship to the dealer. Regarding dependency a mutual result was identified with similar low ratings in importance and satisfaction. Comprising the findings from the researched elements regarding relationship management, communication and commitment were most important for a satisfying relationship, which was also proven by several authors during the literature study.

Experience

Summarizing the results from the negative experience, the dealers found much higher importance and impact on satisfaction compared to the enterprise. This indicates a starting point for the OEM to focus on reducing incidents with negative outcome to the dealer.

Furthermore the dissatisfaction aspect was important for both groups, and here the firm showed more support due to the fact that all interviewed experts mentioned how dissatisfaction affects the relationship negatively.

In order to improve the service towards the dealer exceeding their “zone of tolerance” in the future would create advantage; the OEM should find strategies on how to raise the satisfaction level to avoid dissatisfied dealers. Here the investigation could be useful to find a definition what does satisfy a dealer and where does the dissatisfaction result from. The “relationship-satisfaction model” can therefore be a good tool to help to find this distinction by showing off the important factors within a dealer relationship. After placing the company’s focus on each element, the divergence to the dealers’ point of view can be seen and this enables the firm to concentrate on relevant aspects within the relationship.

Since the result on the impact level regarding „satisfaction with the performance” differs slightly between the dealers and the OEM, the company should ensure a constant satisfying performance.

To answer the question: “How does positive/negative experience with the OEM’s supply chain performance satisfy/dissatisfy dealers?”, it was clearly identified that the fulfillment of the expectations like improvements within the delivery systems and processes, quality, reachability, mutual benefits, communication and support from the OEM will generate satisfaction, whereas negative experience caused dissatisfaction. Overall any positive experience while meeting the high expectations of the dealers will enhance the supply chain perception.

6. CONCLUSION

Within this chapter the benefits of the underlying study will be presented. This will be enhanced by the illustration of the relationship-satisfaction model, with regard to contributions and future research areas. A critical view on the study will be presented and the limitations will be stressed out in addition.

6.1 Benefits of the Study

6.1.1 Relationship-Satisfaction Model Implications

The current business environment is changing dramatically and forces automotive enterprises to find sustainable strategies to preserve and increase their market share in a challenging after-sales market (Coyle et al., 2011, p.6). To exceed the competition, strategic planning and a differentiation within relationship management is a good tactic to create competitive advantage (Rushton et al., 2014, p.81 and Tejpal et al., 2013, p.52). Assessing the current status of the business and therefore the relationship with the dealers can create a new beneficial strategy. SCM is not only the management of supply processes it is in fact the management of relationships of all intermediates in the supply chain (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.224 and Udin et al., 2008, p.361). Here the findings of the research contribute to the state of the art knowledge.

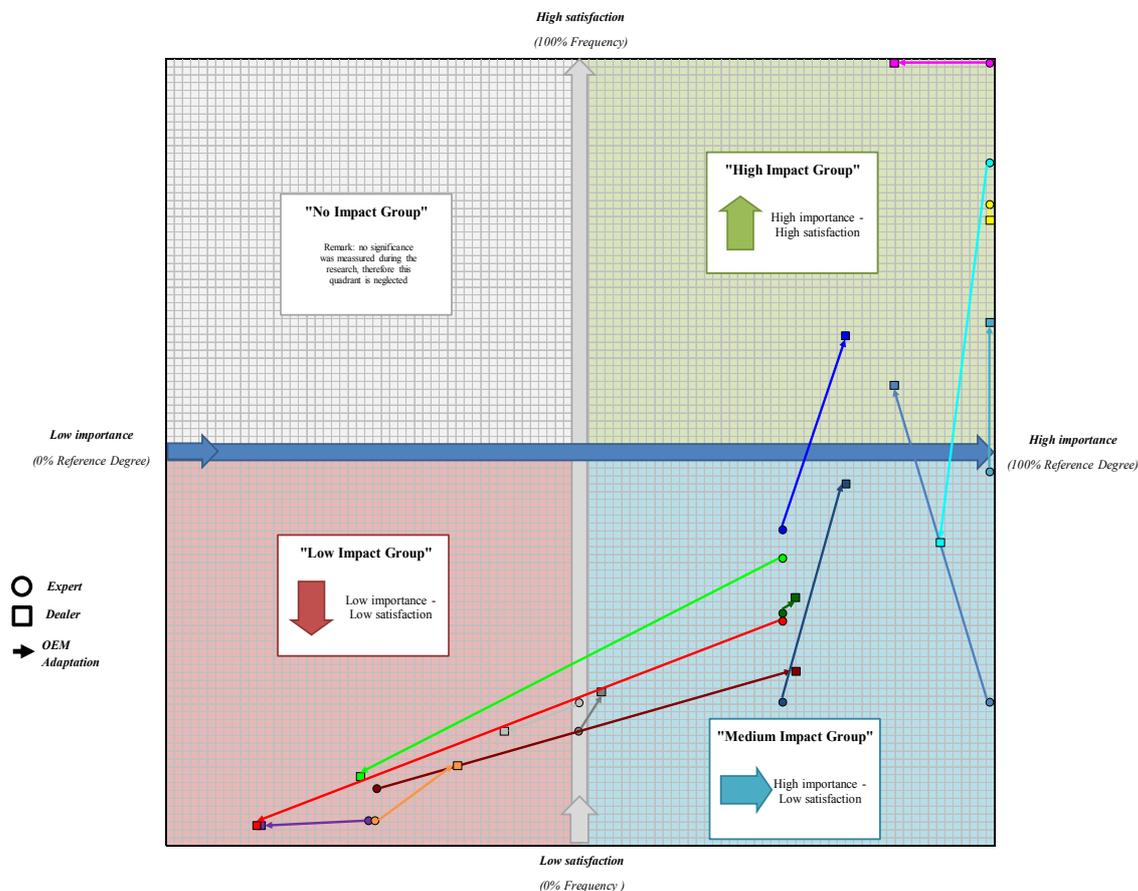


Figure 6.1 Relationship-Satisfaction Model (Source: Müller 2014)

The implications derived from the findings can be compromised in the relationship-satisfaction model (figure 6.1). This model suggests an approach on how to manage elements successfully within the dealer-supplier relationship. It became apparent from the outcomes of the research, where the different elements were clustered according to their impact and importance.

The motive behind this model is that the knowledge of the positioning of the elements of SCM is vital in order to improve strategies to create savings, increase loyalty and satisfaction (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.5 and Poirier, 1999, pp.1-2). The model will benefit managers in the automotive after-sales industry to assess their relationship with the dealers and deduct conclusion for developments.

Each quadrant has different implication, which will be consolidated in three different groups. These will support to place each element accordingly and accentuates focus areas for managers with recommendation drawn from the analysis. The big arrows indicate the direction of the focus for each group. Figure 6.2 summarizes the recommendations for each impact group of elements.

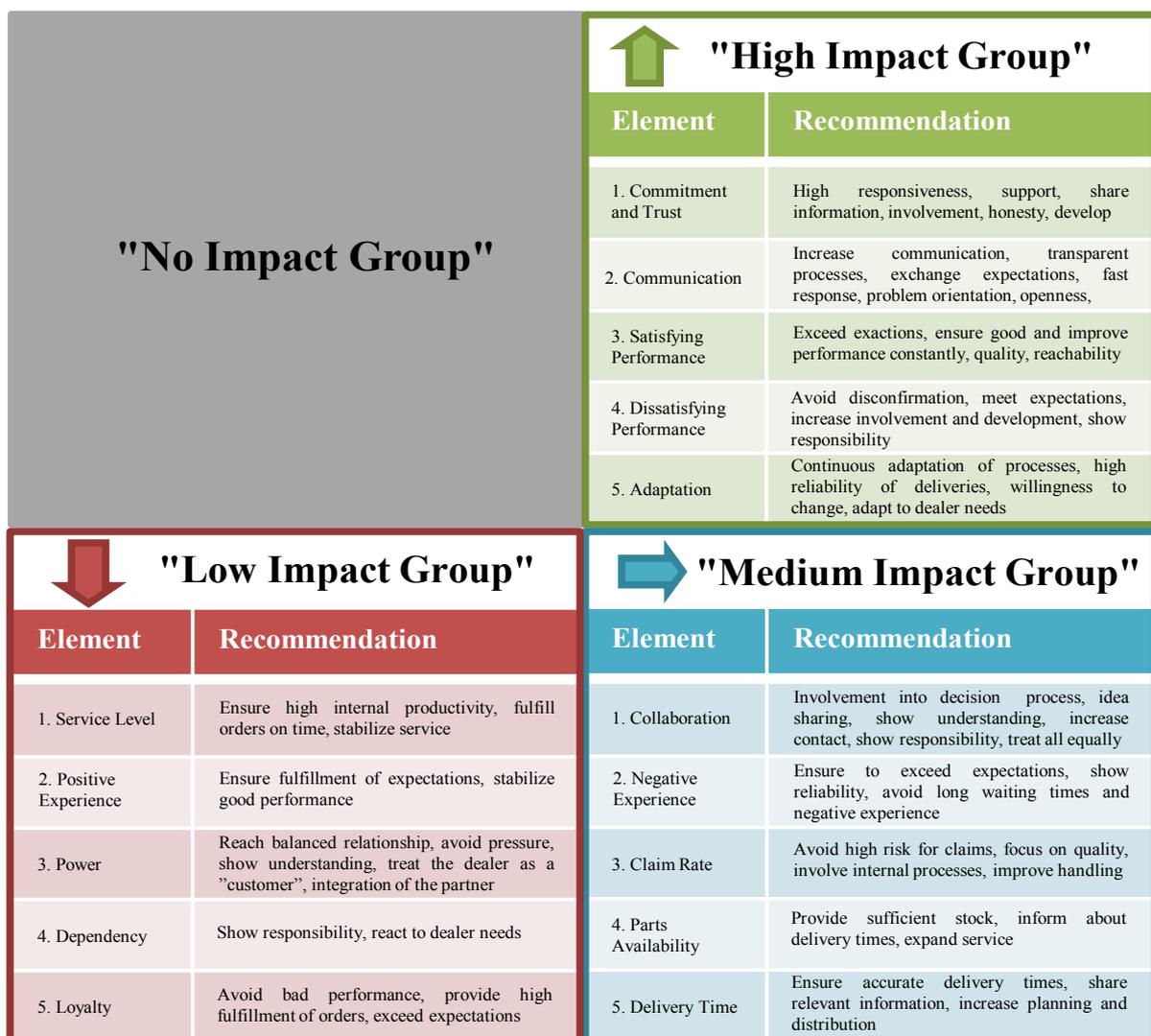


Figure 6.2 "Relationship-Satisfaction Model" Recommendations (Source: Müller 2014)

The focus should be on the “High Impact Group”; here the elements have high importance and impact on dealer satisfaction. The OEM has to show their true interest into the dealer, to receive its trust and loyalty. Therefore the “relationship-satisfaction model” can be used as a tool. In particular reliance, collaboration and communication are used to maintain relationships and the satisfaction of the dealers. Having a trustworthy and consistent relationship supports satisfaction and commitment. In line with this, dealers are convinced of their severity of their product (“service”), it will also convince the customer to rely on the company itself (Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, p.229). Additionally the “Medium Impact Group” has also advantages for the OEM; here focus has to be on a collaborative working style within the relationship to reach a sustainable supply chain. Within this quadrant supply chain elements are rather relevant due to the fact that ensuring the delivery of the right parts at the right time, will positively affect dealer satisfaction (Accenture Consulting, 2010, p.8). Hence an additional focus area should be on this quadrant. The “Low Impact Group” consists of elements that were identified to have a low degree of impact on dealer satisfaction. Although the attention should be on the other two groups, here recommendations suggest to distinct which capabilities can enhance the satisfaction and which are less important for the company. The results from the OEM are a good starting point to derive individual focus areas. Since no elements were found to belong to the fourth quadrant, which would imply high satisfaction impact but low importance, this group will be titled with “No Impact Group”. The reason for not detecting any elements in this group could be that when having high impact on satisfaction, the elements are equally important. Both criteria’s can be discussed as mutual excludable.

Satisfied dealers can be generated through an improved and revised strategy. In the style of the “4P” model by Kotler and Armstrong (2009) for marketing (price, promotion, place and product) (Kotler and Armstrong, 2009, p.76), the research has derived a “**4S**” *model of SCM* regarding dealer satisfaction generation. This can be used as a guideline when it comes to the adaptation of SCM strategies. The four “S” stand for the following words, with their meaning captured in brackets:

- *Supplied:* (correct parts are supplied, packed and shipped)
- *Secured:* (deliver right quantity, right quality, undamaged shipments)
- *on Schedule:* (punctual, accurate, on time delivery)
- *Satisfied:* (good service and relationship, support, informed about shipments, right costs)

Overall the “relationship-satisfaction” and the “4S” model will enhance the understanding of the relationship to a dealer while assessing the manufacturer’s focus when it comes to supply chain management, not only for managers but also for other researchers.

This research provides a good starting point for them, since it has shown the interrelations of SCM elements from different perspectives, such as importance and impact level. Furthermore it can create competitive advantage since it enhances the current SCM strategy by creating a better comprehension of the dealer (Tejpal et al., 2013, p.52 and Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013, p.571). Based on these conclusions, these two instruments combine elements of classical supply chain factors, such as claim rate and parts availability, but enhance it with relationship factors and compare the satisfaction with the performance of the OEM. This approach can help to extend the current theories when it comes to relationship management within SCM.

6.1.2 Study Contribution

The study contributes to the current status of contemporary research for the reason that the investigations on the dealer-OEM relationships were limited (Hecker et al., 2010, p.8, Gil-Saura et al., 2009; van Riel et al., 2011, p.116; Gassenheimer et al., 1995; Svensson, 2006; Spekman et al., 1998; Qrunfleh and Tarafdar, 2013 and Jansson and Zineldin, 2003, pp.224-225). Whereas the study by Jansson and Zineldin (2003) already suggested a positive influence of relationship factors, the underlying research enriches this exploration, since the other was only conducted in the lumber business, by including several experience and logistics factors into relation to influencers on satisfaction.

Furthermore it extends the existing theory with a model to assess impact and importance of individual elements in the automotive after-sales industry. Taking both research results together, a broader view on dealer relationships can be derived. The reason is that both businesses (lumber and automotive) have shown similar results when it comes to satisfaction, thus a generalization could be expected, but would require further testing to support this assumption.

In addition the study is a contribution to the automotive industry. Since the after-sales supply chain represents an important business (Hecker et al., 2010, p.10) and influencers, such as relationship and logistics variables are vital to be comprehended. The research supports to create this understanding of the interrelation between the different elements regarding relationship management, supply chain elements and experiences. On this account, to satisfy the dealers should be the incentive for an OEM to generate future orientated strategies of SCM (Poirier, 1999, p.10 and Gattorna, 1998, p.8).

The “relationship-satisfaction model” and the “4S” are innovative knowledge about the connection found and can help a company to adapt their current strategy. It became evident that

the elements are also interlinked with each other. For example a committed relationship required more communication, adaptation and collaboration. The model showed off where main driving factors of a satisfied relationship exist, which are emphasised within the “High Impact Group”. Companies can use this approach to assess their current supply chain management factors. All of the presented elements have not been considered together before, leaving out important interrelations. Here the study provides a valuable contribution to the existing studies, while extends it by relationship factors and situational experience.

6.1.3 Further Research Areas

Future research would be necessary to expand the results of internal supply chain factors influence (for example procurement rate, productivity etc.) and how internal relationships benefit from the outcome. This could be prolonged with other relationship factors concentrating on the enhancement of each element. Furthermore other car manufactures around the world could be investigated based on the current approach, which could show an interesting new perspective on how other OEM-dealer relationships interact. In this effort the cultural aspect of different nations should be taken into account.

Another implication could be that this model can be applied to various industries in order to create relationship-models for different suppliers, customers and manufacture relationships, extending also the findings from the lumber business in the study by Jansson and Zineldin (2003). All members of the supply chain can be assessed through the identified categories to classify which elements of a relationship and of the supply chain are important to create satisfaction. In addition the relationship academics within supply chain management can benefit from the findings of this study, since new interrelations between different elements (supply chain, relationship and experience) have been revealed. This could also be seen as a starting point for supplementary research, which could contribute to an extended in-depth comprehension on the satisfaction effects in dealer-OEM relationships.

The usage of standardized questionnaire (quantitative research) can be used to test each element in depth and to find out more details about satisfaction of the dealers. By applying a scale question where the dealers can evaluate the impact and importance, could test each element. Here it would be interesting to see how a company’s current SCM elements influence future strategies, after they have been adapted according to the underlying results. In this notion, the “relationship-satisfaction model” can be tested and expanded by applying it to different industries and companies.

Furthermore the “No Impact Group” could be investigated to find explanations why no elements were found here with potential expansion of various influencers on the relationship. Deeper analysis of the reason could be beneficial to understand the meaning of the group and the impact. Additionally comparative studies could be an advantage for future research, where comparative interviews are held within long-term periods, to capture different experience points of the dealers.

6.2 Critics and Limitations

Considering a more specific pitfall, the study has only concentrated on one industry, the automotive after-sales business. On the other hand the research has covered different attitudes from different car brands, as part of Company A Group. This supports to gain a better understanding of different dealer demands. But still a generalization can be difficult. Nevertheless objectivity was found within the research, since two perspectives (the dealer and the OEM) have been considered and questioned.

During the research process it became evident that a quantitative study would have been also another option how to approach this subject. But the necessity to use the qualitative approach was to identify the impact of supply chain elements and which factors generate satisfaction, therefore open questionnaire were a good data collection method. It was beneficial since more detailed information about satisfying or dissatisfying aspects were found. The aim was to create new theory and interrelations between the identified variables (Greener, 2008 pp.16-17). Different impacts from different perspectives (dealer and company’s point of view) were tried to identify, therefore the qualitative approach was most suitable for this approach (Gummesson, 2005, p.312).

The “relationship-satisfaction model” was created for summarizing the results, but it captures only the view from one company. Furthermore no elements in the “No Impact Group” were identified, which could be also seen as a constraint since the reason for this has not been explored further yet.

For comparison of the results from the dealers, experts within the after-sales and the logistics department were questioned, leaving other viewpoints out of the discussion.

The small sample size of dealers (17) and experts (four) were considered to be a limitation since a brighter interview scope could define the results even better. Sample size is limited and does not capture all dealers in Sweden. On these grounds, the return of the answered questionnaire does only show a limited scope of the dealers perceptions, which could be argued to be a limitation.

The generalization of the results could be difficult since personal experience with the performance of the OEM can differ greatly between dealers.

Another limitation can be that only one country was considered in the analysis, which shows a rather narrow view on the overall satisfaction. Different cultures have different values and therefore perceive different aspects of SCM as important and as satisfying. Thus it was discussed to expand the research to other cultures to reduce this drawback.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 8.1 Questionnaires

APPENDIX 8.1.1 Interview Questions Experts

1. How would you describe the effects of open communication about failures within the supply chain (warehouse management, parts availability, delivery streams, claims)?
2. What would you describe to be important within a relationship between COMPANY A/LDA and the dealer to create a successful relationship?
3. Do you think high engagement in supply chain management will put COMPANY A/LDA ahead of its competitors?
4. How would you describe COMPANY A/LDA's ability to create advantage and value for its dealers?
5. From your perspective, how would you describe the dealers' satisfaction with the service and performance of COMPANY A/LDA?
6. What threads do you see in the future, if COMPANY A/LDA does not include dealers in the planning of the supply chain?

APPENDIX 8.1.2 Interview Questions Dealers

1. How would you describe the relationship to Company A, with LDA in particular today?
2. How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA in particular, over the last few years?
3. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why!
4. What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of Company A?
5. How could Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?
6. How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel involved or informed about it?
7. How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information and reliability of LDA (for example when it comes to parts availability, claims, and long lead times?)
8. Do you feel that LDA fulfills your demands, needs or requirements, please explain why or why not!

APPENDIX 8.2 Overview Study Results

APPENDIX 8.2.1 Overview Study Results Experts

APPENDIX 8.2.1.1 Overview Text examples Experts

Code Colours	Categories	Codes	Content	Text examples		
<i>Supply Chain Elements</i>						
		Parts Availability	High or low parts availability will impact satisfaction	I3: If they can't get the parts, the dealers always try to find another way to get the parts. So it has a huge impact on dealer satisfaction,		
		Service Level	High or low service levels will impact satisfaction	I2: [...] good service degree	I4: [...] improve the productivity	I4: [...] service degree it is really good.
		Delivery Time	Short or long delivery time will impact satisfaction	I2: [...] this is the kolli (delivery) for today and it will be in some Hubs	I3: [...] delivery times are long	I4: [...] when the part arrive at the right time
		Claim Rate	High or low claim rate will impact satisfaction	I2: claim rate is low	I3: quality of the deliveries they get	I4: improve the quality
<i>Relationship Management</i>						
		Trust, Commitment	Relationships have to be committed (investment, involvement and meet expectations) to be trustworthy (reliable) to create satisfaction. A good reputation supports trust into a relationship.	I1: [...] increase it the trust [...]	I2: [...] to be very open with if we have some problems.	I3: We need to be very honest, this is what we have, this is what we can offer, and this is what you can get.
		Collaboration	Cooperation is the joint integration into the relationship and the creation of joint aims, which can create mutual benefits and improvements.	I1: Meet up directly with the person who is meeting the dealers on a regular basis.	I2: We have very good relationships with our dealers.	I2: focus on what the dealers want
		Power	Power is the pressure to urge a fulfillment of an imposed duty, which impacts satisfaction	I2: It has to be very strict	I3: I think it is a balance	I4: ("[...] just taking decision over their heads even if we have the right to do that, [...].
		Communication	The level of exchange and share of information between partners influences satisfaction	I1: speed up the support, faster answering for their questions	I2: we sent just information in between	I2: It is also an old history that CoA never going to talk to the dealers. Sometimes it would be better if they do
		Dependency	Dependency is the bond of a party within a relationship and the level impacts the satisfaction. Also the future bond towards within the relationship describes continuity.	I2: They can seek for some information themselves.		
		Adaptation	Adaptation of joint strategies (ETKA, Autopart systems), fulfillment of promised supply chain factors	I1: [...] recommend it to take the whole department and move it to CoA, this would be more efficient because here we have the transport, the parts and it is closer to the business.	I2: [...] that CoA can provide information by themselves.	I2: [...] what they really need, we have to do something and not just only talk about it
		Loyalty	Positive aspects of a relationship creates satisfaction	I2: So if we cant help them with satisfying them, they will go to others.	I2: [...] they are very loyal right now to us	I3: [...] if we are the best supplier, with the easiest transparent systems, they will buy everything from us
<i>Experience</i>						
		Positive	Positive experience with the performance and service of the OEM	I2: they think that CoA and LDA are much better		
		Negative	Negative experience with the performance and service of the OEM	I1: the problem is in the past we had not got the resources to do that (create advantage and value for the dealers)	I2: credits, they don't get it fast enough. the emballage, return of assets, that is the big issue.	I3: but if they don't get the correct parts in the correct shape in the correct time, they see it immediately and suddenly they think nothing works
		Dissatisfactory	Dissatisfactory experience with the performance and service of the OEM	I1: issues with the crediting of the returns	I2: it is very difficult to work with our systems. There they are not satisfied.	I3: So sometimes, it can be some small things in the nearest days, they don't think that works.
		Satisfactory	Satisfactory experience with the performance and service of the OEM	I1: I think they are very pleased with us.	I2: They are very satisfied with the warehouse and the support from the after sales	I3: . The overall satisfaction for spare parts was very high for commercial vehicles and also CoA were very satisfied.

Categories	Codes	Text examples			
<i>Supply Chain Elements</i>					
	Parts Availability				
	Service Level				
	Delivery Time				
	Claim Rate	I4: [...] get the wrong part with the wrong quality			
<i>Relationship Management</i>					
	Trust, Commitment	I3: [...] the same day delivery, which is a huge advantage of course.	I4: [...] ability to have the money to invest in new solutions or priority from the mother company.	I4: [...] have to find out is there really a big need in the dealerships.	
	Collaboration	I3: [...] try to involve the dealers into improvement projects and stuff like that. [...] tell us what they think about certain steps we would like to take.	I4: [...] everyone in the organization, because have the big picture and understand the total goal of our business.	I4: [...] we have the discussion to what they can do to improve [...].	
	Power				
	Communication	I2: always better to talk to the dealers	I3: [...] everything today is about communication and transparency.	I4: [...] if we don't get feedback from the dealers to us about the quality or claims, we cant improve in the right way.	I4: [...] we will still have unsatisfied dealers if we don't have the communication.
	Dependency				
	Adapatation	I4: [...] and we also have looked in into a new solution.			
	Loyalty	I4:[...] really important to build up the loyalty to our brands.			
<i>Experience</i>					
	Positive				
	Negative	I3: exchange parts, it is very complicated.			
	Dissatisfactory	I4: the customer will be less satisfied if they leave their car on Monday but the part is not coming until Wednesday			
	Satisfactory	I4: the overall satisfaction was really really good.			

APPENDIX 8.2.1.2 Overview Categories, Codes and Calculation Model Experts

Categories	Codes	Frequency I1	Frequency I2	Frequency I3	Frequency I4	Frequency Total	Frequency Total in%	Reference Degree	Reference Degree (%)	Frequency (%) *	Rank Frequency	Rank Reference Degree	Average	Importance Ranking
<i>Supply Chain Elements</i>														
	Parts Availability	0	0	2	0	2	1,38 %	1	25,0 %	7,4 %	10	4	7	11
	Service Level	0	2	0	3	5	3,45 %	2	50,0 %	18,5 %	8	3	5,5	9
	Delivery Time	0	0	1	3	4	2,76 %	2	50,0 %	14,8 %	9	3	6	10
	Claim Rate	0	1	1	6	8	5,52 %	3	75,0 %	29,6 %	7	2	4,5	7
<i>Relationship Management</i>														
	Trust, Commitment	5	2	8	7	22	15,17 %	4	100,0 %	81,5 %	3	1	2	3
	Collaboration	4	2	7	10	23	15,86 %	4	100,0 %	85,2 %	2	1	1,5	2
	Power	0	3	1	6	10	6,90 %	3	75,0 %	37,0 %	6	2	4	6
	Communication	7	6	6	8	27	18,62 %	4	100,0 %	100,0 %	1	1	1	1
	Dependency	0	1	0	0	1	0,69 %	1	25,0 %	3,7 %	11	4	7,5	12
	Adapatation	5	3	0	3	11	7,59 %	3	75,0 %	40,7 %	5	2	3,5	5
	Loyalty	0	4	2	2	8	5,52 %	3	75,0 %	29,6 %	7	2	4,5	7
<i>Experience</i>														
	Positive	0	1	0	0	1	0,69 %	1	25,0 %	3,7 %	11	4	7,5	12
	Negative	1	2	2	0	5	3,45 %	3	75,0 %	18,5 %	8	2	5	8
	Dissatisfactory	1	2	1	1	5	3,45 %	4	100,0 %	18,5 %	8	1	4,5	7
	Satisfactory	2	3	5	3	13	8,97 %	4	100,0 %	48,1 %	4	1	2,5	4
						145	100 %							
based on mentioned amount in the interviews (27 in total)														

APPENDIX 8.2.2 Overview Study Results Dealers

APPENDIX 8.2.2.1 Overview Text examples Dealers

Code Colours	Categories	Sub-Categories	Content	Text examples		
	Supply Chain Elements					
		Parts Availability	High or low parts availability will impact satisfaction	D11: One must bring order to have enough parts at home such as for campaigns , promotions , etc. . When customers come and want to book their cars for actions must be able to take in the car rather quickly and not have to wait for parts to be available.	D12: [...] reasonable delivery standard (parts in stock.)	D4: Very pleased over stock and supply capacity.
		Service Level	High or low service levels will impact satisfaction	D7: [...] the reliability of spare parts is not so good.	D12: Satisfying is that it is a high grade of service.	D13: Security of supply has gone from good to better, especially perhaps you could say it has become smoother, more stable.
		Delivery Time	Short or long delivery time will impact satisfaction	D7: [...] higher accuracy of delivery times.	D8: [...] takes an unnecessarily long time.	D6: [...] terms of lead times , they are way too long .
		Claim Rate	High or low claim rate will impact satisfaction	D12: [...] not that many faults when picking parts for us.	D13: [...] it picks very inaccurate articles.	D9: packed it a little bad in the stools.
	Relationship Management					
		Trust, Commitment	Relationships have to be committed/investment, involvement and meet expectations) to be trustworthy(reliable) to create satisfaction. A good reputation supports trust into a relationship.	D7: I would describe the relationship as very good	D8: [...] helps us with problems that arise and try to solve them.	D10: [...] problems that arise do I resolve with CoA primarily
		Collaboration	Cooperation is the joint integration into the relationship and the creation of joint aims, which can create mutual benefits and improvements.	D7: And many of the processes they are not including the dealers. (Ahm), I think it is important to include the dealers,	D7: The understanding between us need to get better.	D11: The partnership will be better. There is still a lot to be desired,
		Power	Power is the pressure to urge a fulfillment of an imposed duty, which impacts satisfaction	D7: you don't have the power to communicate with the right person	D7: I think CoA have to understand that the dealers at CoA customers and we have a customer	D11: It's all about information. We need to know your situation
		Communication	The level of exchange and share of information between partners influences satisfaction	D7: But I think if you don't tell people what is wrong and how you can improve you have to speak constructive	D10: have a network of contacts that solves my ev. questions.	D12: it is very important that we can talk directly to CoA and not to go via reservelssupport.
		Dependency	Dependency is the bond of a party within a relationship and the level impacts the satisfaction. Also the future bond towards within the relationship describes continuity.	D7: [...] they control people coming here and you have to do things. You cant say I wont do it because it is stupid, you have to do things somehow [...].	D13: it gives a sense of security in our relationship with you, which in turn leads to an increase in quality and safety from customer.	
		Adapatation	Adaptation of joint strategies (ETKA, Autopart systems), fulfillment of promised supply chain factors	D7: Autopart, we have one example we would like to update it more frequently.	D10: Introducing "zero tolerance" around picking errors.	D13: maybe a basic training in product customer relationships would be of value This might have to do with you periodically seem to have a lot of temporary "agency" staff.
		Loyalty	Positive aspects of a relationship creates satisfaction	D1: it takes more effort and ensuring AF as their customers as they want to help in their business.		
	Experience					
		Positive	Positive experience with the performance and service of the OEM	D13: ZEXT part without charge, Mälardalen car to Dalarna, live. info in SAP. key order directly in SAP, return on accessories, etc.. things that significantly enhances our relationship with customers.	D5: Very good engagement when we had problems with the deliveries and pick up of the return goods.	D16: We get "Malarbilen" it is a good thing. So and often they have the parts at CoA, they dont have to go to Germany. I think it is the best thing about it.
		Negative	Negative experience with the performance and service of the OEM	D7: we are no getting a delivery date from CoA	D7: they can give better support to the dealers	D11: The crediting of emballage takes way too long , if they even get one . The return system is quite complicated.
		Dissatisfactory	Dissatisfactory experience with the performance and service of the OEM	D7: not completely satisfied with the result they are accomplishing	D11: Some heavy processes pulls down the score	D1: would have been highly desirable in a little more dedication to get the goods to the right af right away and not wait until tomorrow.
		Satisfactory	Satisfactory experience with the performance and service of the OEM	D7: say overall we are satisfied, but you have points, where you need to improve.	D10: I am happy with the service I get in contact with CoA	D13: Is of course, that it almost always works very well.

Code Colours	Categories	Sub-Categories	Text Examples			
	Supply Chain Elements					
		Parts Availability	D5: availability is pretty good.			
		Service Level				
		Delivery Time	D16: [...] they dont get back to us and say when it is gonna come. So it is very hard to get a delivery date on things.			
		Claim Rate	D6: Decreased amounts of missing goods and much less damage to the goods.			
	Relationship Management					
		Trust, Commitment	D13: [...] if supply and support functions and is to be trusted.	D13: [...] mental attitude that we experience from / CoA "that we solve the problem".	D12: I am not very involved.	D15: [...] the longer you gets away from the customer, it is a little bid riskier that you maybe not take it that serious that we have to take it.
		Collaboration	D8: [...] collaboration works well, which helps us with problems that arise and try to solve them.	D10: An exchange in the form of internal between CoA & spare parts support to get a better insight into the process I think may be useful.	D1: [...] feels like af's requirements.	D3: Good understanding that we are working together towards the same goal .
		Power	D2: The elaboration goes against us to do more.	D13 CoA just like us, driven by a lot of rules		
		Communication	D1: Difficult to get in touch.	D3:[...] lacking accurate and precise answers .	D15: [...] nice climate of conversation nowadays.	D14: But I need to know and if you can maybe sent a mail when you know and tell us, when it will come to you.
		Dependency				
		Adapatation	D4: Easier pack notes / delivery notes . (time saved each day) Timed deliveries. Work Packed	D16: So I think better feedback on delayed parts.	D15: return things to you with the spare parts are returning there are different ways to return it.	D14: Totally good information to us, so I don't think there is a problem at all. It is good.
		Loyalty				
	Experience					
		Positive				
		Negative	D10: goods end up at the wrong AF. This is still a problem that we encounter each week	D2: is also VERY confusing that there may be perhaps 3-4 or 5 pieces with the same line number.	D13: we experience periods of very careless mistakes in picking.	D6: it's lack when one lacks major freight and try searching for it .
		Dissatisfactory	D3: Have the feeling that the organization might slimmed down too much, both officials and on the floor, for very inexperienced agency staff who may cost more in the end result.			
		Satisfactory	D16: It works and I think it is very satisfied.			

APPENDIX 8.2.2.2 Overview Categories, Codes and Calculation Model Dealers

Categories	Codes	F. D1	F. D2	F. D3	F. D4	F. D5	F. D6	F. D7	F. D8	F. D9	F. D10	F. D11	F. D12	F. D13	F. D14	F. D15	F. D16	F. D17	F. Total	Frequency Total in %	Reference Degree (%)	Frequency (%) *	Grade Frequency	Grade Reference Degree	Average	Importance Ranking	
		F. D1	F. D2	F. D3	F. D4	F. D5	F. D6	F. D7	F. D8	F. D9	F. D10	F. D11	F. D12	F. D13	F. D14	F. D15	F. D16	F. D17	F. Total	Frequency Total in %	Reference Degree (%)	Frequency (%) *	Grade Frequency	Grade Reference Degree	Average	Importance Ranking	
Supply Chain Elements	Parts Availability	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	2	2	17	3,97%	76,5%	22,7%	9	5	7	7
	Service Level	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	1	1	11	2,57%	41,2%	14,7%	11	7	9	9
	Delivery Time	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	5	0	0	15	3,50%	52,9%	20,0%	10	6	8	8
	Claim Rate	2	0	1	0	2	2	3	0	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	1	0	0	24	5,61%	76,5%	32,0%	8	5	6,5	6
Relationship Management																											
Trust, Commitment		4	1	3	1	2	1	14	4	1	4	2	4	8	4	4	2	1	60	60	14,02%	100,0%	80,0%	2	1	1,5	1
	Collaboration	1	1	2	1	2	1	6	1	1	3	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	29	29	6,78%	94,1%	38,7%	7	2	4,5	4
	Power	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	7	1,64%	23,5%	9,3%	13	9	11	11
	Communication	6	2	6	1	1	0	16	0	3	5	4	8	6	3	5	8	1	75	75	17,52%	88,2%	100,0%	1	3	2	2
	Dependence	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	0,47%	11,8%	2,7%	14	10	12	12
	Adaptation	3	0	4	3	1	0	5	1	0	2	1	9	6	7	4	1	2	49	49	11,45%	82,4%	65,3%	4	4	4	3
	Loyalty	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0,47%	11,8%	2,7%	14	10	12	12
Experience																											
Positive		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	8	8	1,87%	35,3%	10,7%	12	8	10	10
	Negative	2	1	4	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	2	4	4	6	2	2	5	35	35	8,18%	82,4%	46,7%	6	4	5	5
	Dissatisfactory	2	4	2	1	0	3	5	1	0	1	2	6	2	3	1	3	8	44	44	10,28%	88,2%	58,7%	5	3	4	3
	Satisfactory	1	1	2	1	2	4	5	3	3	2	3	5	4	5	5	1	50	50	11,68%	100,0%	66,7%	3	1	2	2	
																			428	100%							

based on mentioned amount in the interviews (75 in total)

APPENDIX 8.3 Interview Transcripts Experts

APPENDIX 8.3.1 Interview Expert 1

07.04.2014 Interview 1 Transport Manager Logistics Department Company A.

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: Thank you very much for the opportunity to meet me today and that I can ask you a couple of questions regarding supply chain management.

R: No problem, you are more than welcome.

I: I will ask you 6 questions and you are free to give any comments you like during the interview. The documentation will be via voice recorder, if this would be ok for you and the data is collected anonymously. Ok, lets start.

First of all I would like ask you how long have you been working with logistics?

R: From the transport business, it is from 1984. I worked at the Swedish post as a, what you call it (pause) arbetsledera.

I: Teammanger?

R: Yes, exactly. We start with that.

I: Was it related to the warehouse?

R: No, not at all, it was for the transportbusiness.

I: And ever since, you worked with transportation?

R: Yes, it was till 2000 and then I started at Company A as a warehousemanager for 6 years I think, till 2007 and then I took over to the transport department.

I: Thanks. So, first questions. How would you describe the effects of open communication about failures within the supply chain to the dealers? Like warehouse delivery streams, transport, delays?

R: Communicate...well we have the open report from the transport companies, which we get every day and we are forwarding this to the after sales department.

I: And the after sales department...?

R: They forward this to the dealers so they know when the goods are delayed or whatever it may be.

I: Ok, good. And do you also have dealers, who come and ask you about issues with transportation?

R: Yes, but not so often because it is the responsibility of the after sales, they have the reservedelssupport. But sometimes they do call me.

I: How do you describe this communication, which we have right now to the dealers or would you think it is "good enough"?

R: Well, if we could change something we would do more reporting directly to the dealers. We have to have a different support structure here at LDA because right now we don't have the number of people, but the after sales has a whole department for it.

I: Would you recommend this to have the support here at LDA?

R: I would recommend it to take the whole department and move it to LDA, this would be more efficient because here we have the transport, the parts and it is closer to the business. I would really recommend it.

I: What benefits would you see in this change?

R: They can go down and look to the parts in the warehouse very easy and they understand the problem much quicker to report to the dealers. We also have the incoming and outgoing area for the parts, and some questions come every day from the dealer, instead of using emails and telephone and miscommunication, they would be closer to the process. And they would speed things up.

I: Do you think this changes, would definitely be positive for the dealers to get faster replies, more information

R: Yes.

I: Thank you.

And now a more general question. What would you describe to be important within a relationship between COMPANY A/LDA and the dealers to be successful? What do you think has to be in this relationship?

R: I think that ..., what we have been talking before, that the support department for the dealers, if we have this department here and also the procurement of accessories (which is also an after sales responsibility) and for the spare parts together here, this would benefit the relationship.

I: And from a more "relationship" point of view?

R: Because when the processes are leaner and direct, we would have all the support for the dealers, at LDA. Now it is more, that COMPANY A has the support for the dealers and they call LDA to have some support to them and too long support way, I think.

Then you have of course, that the after sales department is responsible for the dealers because LDA is doing more or less the logistics for the after sales department.

I: How would you describe or do you think LDA has to have more responsibility?

R: The right department has to be here, it is more efficient if the right departments are located here at LDA.

I: And how would this have impact on the relationship?

R: It would increase if the trust. Because now...it is a little difficult, right now the after sales has contact with the dealers but LDA is doing the work for the dealers. So...in the best ways the support to the dealers would be best if it would be here and the other departments too.

I: And how would you describe this have an impact on dealer satisfaction?

R: You could speed up the support, faster answering for their questions.

I: So they would save time?

R: Yes and they get the right answer from the beginning.

I: And when we look just at the supply chain, everything just involved in the transportation to the dealers, what would you say if LDA even more engages into supply chain management? Would it put COMPANY A ahead of its competitors?

R: I think we are already ahead of our competitors. But I am sure it would speed things up and we would take another step to become even better.

I: So do you think there is a need for COMPANY A and LDA to engage more into supply chain optimization?

R: Yes, I think so.

I: Also in terms of the future or current developments?

R: (Pause) Just for now, I think we have almost done what we can because we have the distance to the dealers in Sweden, it is the challenge.

I: So but to sum it up, COMPANY A and LDA are already ahead of the other competitors?

We provide a better and different service than the others?

R: Maybe we have to look more into the Same Day Delivery Concept., to be able to deliver to the southern part of Sweden. But then we are back to the distance in Sweden and the times and they have to have the possibility to us the spare parts when they arrive at 3 or 4 o'clock.

I: But do you think that more focus on the future and the optimization would be a benefit?

R: Yes.

I: Good. (Pause) Now a more personalized question regarding the ability of LDA, how would you describe the ability to create advantage and value for the dealers?

R: Yes, I think we do a lot. And we are trying to get better all the time and the problem is in the past we had not got the resources to do that. Now we have the new department, which works with developments but we didn't have this before. And I was happy that I also got some support to do some focus on the future, but now I m responsible on my own again. So I think we have to have the resources to work with optimizations and to be better.

I: But do you think LDA creates value with improvements or with the new optimization?

R: Yes, I think so. We have the great new process regarding the returns and so on.

I: Since you have gotten some feedback and you have talked to dealers, how would you describe their satisfaction with the performance of us.

R: I think they are very pleased with us. They have some issues with the crediting of the returns and that was only two dealers who have spoken to me about it. But I know a lot of them have the same issues. Otherwise I think they are very pleased.

I: And this is just with the service of the logistics where you think they are happy.

R: Yes.

I: Looking into the future again, what threads do you see if LDA does not include the dealers in the planning of the supply chain?

R: Well, I think, more or less we have 2 times a year where we meet the dealers at a conference. And if we are not able to talk to them and discuss it on a regular basis, we lose a lot of input because we cannot wait for the conferences just to hear their ideas.

I: And who do you think has the responsibility?

R: After sales department and usually we get some information from the regional managers. But not so often, I am not sure if anyone else hears from them more than I do, maybe I have five phone calls from them every year regarding transport issues.

I: Do you think it also makes more sense to have them closer to LDA? But they are also covering topics like marketing, but it would be also good to use them for logistics topics?

R: Yes, they are responsible for the logistics topics as well because we have different kinds of regional managers. The best would be to have a meeting with them, a couple of times a year to hear what is the issue, which the dealers have in different areas? Meet up directly with the person who is meeting the dealers on a regular basis.

I: Thank you very much for the interview and the time!

APPENDIX 8.3.2 Interview Expert 2

14.04.2014 Interview 2 Manager Dealer Support After Sales Department COMPANY A

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: Hello, thank you very much for meeting me today. If it is ok with you I would like to record the interview, but it will be anonymously reported.

I first would like to ask you what is your experience in the fields of logistics and dealers and the after sales?

R: I have been working 1,5 year at LDA and at the after sales 2 years.

I: Before?

R: I was in the mobile phone industry. I was the manager for the production for a major telephone company on a site in Sweden.

I: Good, this questionnaire is basically about how you perceive, since you are working closely to the dealers every day, how do you perceive their satisfaction with our service with us?

R: They are very satisfied with the warehouse and the support from the after sales. They think if the warehouse has good service degree and the claim rate is low, they would be more satisfied if there would be something wrong out in the warehouse. This year, from Jan till April, it has been a good year. 2013 was not so good.

I: From your perspective, you would describe the satisfaction as positive? But in general how would you describe the performance with COMPANY A and LDA.

R: They are very satisfied and they rate us very high. They say that, we have dealers they work with other brands, and they think that COMPANY A and LDA are much better than other brands.

I: And any negative experience? You said in 2013 they weren't so happy?

R: It is almost about the question about, the credits, they don't get it fast enough. That is the best issue when it comes to money.

I: Anything else what went wrong or was difficult?

R: It is the emballage, return of assets, that is the big issue.

I: Thanks, that is good enough for this question.

How would you describe the effects of open communication about failures or mistakes within the supply chain? Like warehouse, delivery streams, parts availability.

R: That issue, because we are just in the middle the dealer and warehouse, we sent just information in between, we don't have contact with Germany our self, if we had more contact with the headquarter it would be better. Because the answers would go faster between us and the dealers.

I: So you mean the communication flow within COMPANY A should improve?

R: Yes. And of course if there are some problems in the warehouse, if there are any goods left at the warehouse or at the Hubs, I think that would be something we could work with because when the dealer come in the morning and they are missing something. Maybe they should go on an internet site, where they see, this is the kolli (delivery) for today and it will be in some Hubs from.

I: Like delays?

R: Yes, so they can seek for some information themselves. That they don't need to wait until we write them too late (7:45) in the morning. There are two hours where they can seek their own information.

I: Like a news website with the time of delays.

R: Exactly. It would be also something when we have a big issue with the Manhattan Area then or something like that. We know the information between 5 and 6 they could already have the information late in the evening but the support is not here. So we cant tell them, so this could be also something that LDA can provide information by themselves.

I: Thanks! It is a really good remark, since this investigation also wants to look where the supply chain can be improved.

R: It is also an old history that LDA never going to talk to the dealers. Sometimes it would be better if they do.

I: The warehouse, logistics should be more involved.

R: Yes, I think so. But it is politics.

I: Ok. So what would you describe to be important within a relationship between COMPANY A and the dealers to create a success.

R: I think we are always going to be very open with if we have some problems or something. We have very good relationships with our dealers. The employees of this departments are really good, and the team at accessories they have been working so long. They know the dealers very well. But if we are going to have a change of the employees we have to think of other ways of how the relationship with our dealers can be as good as it is now so it is very laying on a personal level. We have to have a really clear move how we work with the dealers. Because they are knowing some people here, where they can get some information, price, benefits. It has to be very strict.

I: You mean towards the dealer?

R: Yes, do you understand what I mean?

I: Yes, what else do you think is important about the relationship to the dealers? Like when you compare it with a personal relationship?

R: I think it is important, to be very clear and straight. You have to stand above the decisions you take and be the same for everyone.

I: That you don't change the whole time?

R: Exactly. And of course documentation. When you talk to the dealers you have to write everything down. If I have to be replaced or going on vacation and I have to be replaced, that they know about my cases. So they have the same answers from everyone and not difference, it depends on who you talk to.

I: Is it also about responsibility?

R: Of course.

I: Thank you. Do you think high engagement in supply chain management will put COMPANY A ahead of its competitors? Like if COMPANY A would focus more on supply chain management. LDAS has a new optimizations department. Do you think this is an advantage for LDA and COMPANY A?

R: I think, that this job is very important but we have to focus on what the dealers want. Is it relevant for their work because the pallets replacement, they think it is very good for them. Of course the SDD something like that. Something what they really want is good for supply chain optimization department.

I: Do you think it would put COMPANY A ahead of its competitors?

R: Yes, because we have to think new all the time, there must be a department who takes care of it because everyone else has so much to do and it is good that someone puts it forward.

I: Ok, thank you.

And also related to Supply Chain Management, how would you describe the ability of LDA to create advantage and value for its dealers?

R: If we can realize some of the ideas SDD for south of Sweden, if it would be something, what they really need, we have to do something and not just only talk about it.

I: Like put into action?

R: Yes, that is the word!

I: Like realization of the nice concepts?

R: Yes, of course. Because we can talk and talk about it but it would never happen. We have to do something and not only talk.

I: And do you think, this would then create some value and advantage?

R: Yes, of course.

I: The last question, it is about the future, which threats do you see in the future, if COMPANY A does not include the dealers into supply chain management?

R: (Pause) That is a tricky one. (Pause) The market for our brands is going to be tighter and tighter, so I think that maybe, if we are not involving the dealers, they maybe, they think it is very hard with all the rules, I think it is always better to talk to the dealers and (pause) so we can help them with their problems. If we are not going to involve them, they are going to other brands which are more easier, like other competitors with the Metro concept etc. You know. So they can have the spare parts more often per day, so I think we have to look on everything where we can help them. Because they are not going to be so loyal to us as we hope, so maybe they are going to other brands. I am just thinking so.

I: Like a mitigation, they are moving from us to other brands.

R: Yes, because they are saying it is very hard to work with us.

I: But they are satisfied!

R: Yes of course they are. But we don't have so much problems on our site, like with the spare parts and warehouse. But we have all the system, with the warranty service, ELSA, Apos Pro (order systems for spare parts), it is very difficult to work with our systems. There they are not satisfied. So if we cant help them with satisfying them, they will go to others.

I: Anything else you like to add or share from your experience you had with the dealers?

R: I think they are very loyal right now to us and of course there are always things where we can better at but not right now. It is good. But our new dealers are not, it is another thing. The authorization process, when they want to be our service partner. It is so difficult to get into the "family".

I: But shouldn't it be more easier for them, but they have to comply with the requirements.

R: We have dealers they were trying to get a brand authorization for 4 years.

I: And they did not get it?

R: No, they are not approved in the system.

When they are not in the systems, they are not getting help from us. We have some to dos.

I: Thank you very much for your time!

APPENDIX 8.3.3 Interview Expert 3

14.04.2014 Interview 3 Sales and Marketing Manager COMPANY A

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: Hello, thank you very much for meeting me today. Just some short information, everything is confidential and if it is ok with you I would like to record the interview.

R: Yes, sure no problem.

I: My first question is how long do you have experience in the after sales business with the dealers?

R: I have been working in the after sales business since 20 years. I have actually worked also with logistics issues, with TNT for 3 years and also with sale of logistics systems to companies in Sweden. So I mean, **the logistics is the backbone to everything**. It is the start of everything and of course it affects the business deeply if we have the absolute best logistics situation for the dealers and we are the best supplier we motivate our part in the supply chain. I mean it is only, to be honest, two part, if you have the factory (ahh), the importer, the dealer and the customers, you have 4 parties involved in this. It is only to be honest the factory and the customer, who are certain to survive. The importer and the dealer need to prove they add value into this chain. **To have satisfied dealers, the backbone is to have the situation and all the KPI's around that in line**. And from there, we can build the relationship with the dealers on top of everything. But if they don't get the correct parts in the correct time and also from a competitive point of view, we are better than the competition. With competition, I mean, not the other brands in Sweden but of course the not authorized chains. **If they can't get the parts, the dealers always try to find another way to get the parts. So it has a huge impact on dealer satisfaction and dealer satisfaction has a huge impact on customer satisfaction, that is for sure.**

I: Good, well I think you already started to answer some of my questions. I think I will just go through them. (Ahm), regarding communication, how would you describe the effects of open communication about failures within the supply chain?

R: Nowadays **we are very open with problems, that have occurred** and also everyone, I mean the business we work in is getting more and more complicated all the time. We have more and more cars, more and more models, more and more part numbers and the difference between heaven and hell for a dealer from a profitability perspective is getting more and more narrow. So if something flung, if manhattan (Note: storage area for small parts) goes done, **it is very essential to communicate** and also **try to involve the dealers into improvement projects and stuff like that**. At least the big dealers, because the small dealers more or less have some way to handle things manually but for the big dealers it is really crucial to let them into the business and give them the opportunity to **tell us what they think about certain steps we would like to take**. But it is really about the transparency, **everything today is about communication and transparency** that is for sure. So, it is impossible to hide what does not work.

I: Thank you, I think we can go to the next question. It is also regarding relationships and you have already said some things, but maybe we can go through it. What would you describe to be important within a relationship between COMPANY A and the dealers in order to be successful?

R: I think it is also what we have been talking about, I think all the dealers and the employees at the dealers **they need to know in what direction we want to proceed**. And they realize perhaps this is not a quick fix, we can't have this this year or next year or in two or three years or whatever. But we are here and we would like to go over here, so **they really are more engaged in and committed to our long term plans**, that we sometimes think and that also gives them some perspective what we are struggling against and this is what we have today and but we want to go

here than they have the understanding that we have to goals in the meantime and yes, we gonna implement this and next year this, and in a couple of months this... **The long term strategy from a logistics perspective, because it affects them a lot.** It is also very important for them to understand for us to communicate, definitely.

I: So you say, communication, commitment, involvement.

R: Yes, transparency. There is no hidden agenda. If there is no hidden agenda.

I: And how would you describe, since we are the manufacturer, the Company A Group, and there are other dealers. Do you think this is a misbalance or a balance?

R: No **I think it is a balance.** But also, I mean, when we talk about communication and information, there is a lot of information. It is a non ending buss for our dealers and it is **difficult for them to extract what is important for them and this also a task that we have,** this is an emergency, so you have to take care of immediately, this is something you have to take care of within a week, this is something on a need to know basis, and this is up to you to understand the information and collect it. But I don't think, **I think the communication works well. I don't feel that there are any suspicious minds out there** and everyone is aware of the situation. And also the KPI's for parts logistics is from a historical perspective better than ever, more or less. I think everyone knows that.

I: And when you talk about commitment, when you look at a normal relationship between people, what do you think is also important, not only connected to commitment, but what else is also important to have a good and successful relationship with the dealers?

R: To be honest, this is also something what is more and more crucial in this society is what you see, is what you get. I think this is the same thing when we look at our PR work and marketing. **We need to be very honest, this is what we have, this is what we can offer, and this is what you can get.** It is the same between people and it is the same thing between dealers and us. And also between the dealer and the customer. So they have the **right expectations as well, for what we can provide to them.**

I: Thank you. Good, one question regarding supply chain management, do you think high engagement in supply chain management will put COMPANY A ahead of its competitors?

R: Yes, definitely. I mean, as I said, everything is moving much faster in every year and it is the backbone and when you talk about, a word I don't like is **"dealer loyalty"** when it comes to purchase, **because dealers they purchase and should purchase where it is best for them and the customers for a long term perspective.** But when it comes to dealer loyalty, it is also like this, if we are the best supplier, with the easiest transparent systems, they will by everything from us, **because it needs to be extremely much cheaper from other parties, to add some value to them.** Because if they have to do it manually and they don't know they will get it and the **delivery times are long** and well **the claims are high** and so on, it don't add anything to the value chain. It more definitely is competitiveness, a **competitive advantage for us.**

The problem for us in Sweden is, that we have a very strong other brand, that is the only...no other European country has the same situation with other competitors. It is a special logistics. It is also a special car brand with fairly view models, which means they don't need to store so many part numbers to be able to have a fairly high service degree compared to us. That is something that we can't do it the other competitors way, perhaps in the future we can do it the COMPANY A way, to give them something which is fairly close at least.

I: Well the next question, I think you almost answered it, how would you describe COMPANY A or LDA's ability to create value and advantage for its dealers?

R: Of course it is very high. Most definitely. In particular when it comes to the logistics issue, this is on or off. When it comes to all the clever stuff we do, sales and marketing, it is more abstract and more difficult for the dealers to understand, what to see that we have the best customer care programme in the world though, we have the credit cards with 12 months split, none of the other European countries have this. But they don't really see that, **but if they don't get the correct parts in the correct shape in the correct time, they see it immediately and suddenly they think nothing works.** So it is really an honour of situation, it is the backbone, definitely.

I: Good. Yes, thank you. And from your perspective, dealer satisfaction, how would you describe the satisfaction with the performance and service of COMPANY A or LDA?

R: I think it is **very high**. When we see it from the GPMS results and also when we look at other surveys. When we talk to the experts, the spare parts managers, it is **very high**. They are very well aware of the **quality of the deliveries they get** and also the support and everything. So sometimes, it can be some small things in the nearest days, **they don't think that** works and that affects the grade they give us but when we look at it, it is really high grades we get from them. And also when we interview them **they are very satisfied with more and less everything**. But then we have some things with the **exchange parts, it is very complicated**. But this is also something in the hands of our owners to handle the way they want.

I: So overall you would describe the dealer satisfaction quiet high?

R: Yeah, **really, absolutely**. The **overall satisfaction for spare parts was very high for commercial vehicles and also a brand were very satisfied**.

I: Good. Actually we have the last question already. It is about the future, what threads to you see in the future if COMPANY A and LDA do not include the dealers into the planning of the supply chain?

R: Yeah, I mean with the biggest thread is of course the competition move forward and we don't and (pause) we are today good but when we look at the biggest chains for instance, Mekonomen and Meca, they have the possibility to buy parts till 6 o'clock in the afternoon and they get it in the morning. And we have the possibility to order till 4 o'clock and get it in the morning or **we have the possibility with the Melarenbilen, which is the same day delivery, which is a huge advantage of course**. We also need to move forward and also when it comes to the future, the opening times for the dealers in the future, we are not there yet, it is no big problem today, but when and if the dealer will have open the spare parts departments till 6 o'clock in the afternoon or perhaps also have evening openings **on Saturday or even Sunday openings, that is also a huge task to see what we can do with support them**. How will we organize them, so it works today, the warehouse is not so big but on the other hand we don't work on Saturdays and Sundays. Perhaps **increasing shifts could be a possibility to support our dealers without increasing space or stock value or whatever**. That can be a task in the future, if the dealers have their opening in Saturday and Sunday and also in evenings and stuff like that.

I: And how would you describe it, if you don't involve them. This would be actually a connection they extent the opening hours and to the weekend, we also have to move into the same direction as they do. What would you describe if we don't do this. I think you already said this with the competitors?

R: Yes, of course.

I: That they offer this. So what do you think, that they could move to the others?

R: Yeah at least, when it comes to "Block – exemption" (word not correctly comprehended) regulations they are only obligated to **buy 30% from us and today, I would say they buy 98, so the gap between 30 and 98 is fairly big**. Of course, when they say, **you cant supply the stuff and the Mekonomen store around the corner is actually open Saturday and Sunday as well, so if we need stuff and you cant deliver it, we go to them and bus it of course**. That is a possibility and also, as you said, **to involve them they understand what we do and they say "Hey guys, if you do this instead it would be even better and it would give us more advantages"** and also the bigger dealer it is all about. The small ones they manage one way or another, but the bigger factory they really need our 100% support.

I: Good, yes so I think we are through. Thank you very much for your time!

APPENDIX 8.3.4 Interview Expert 4

14.04.2014 Interview 4 Parts Warehouse Manager LDA

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: Thanks for meeting me today. I would like to ask you first if I could record this interview.

R: Yes of course.

I: Thank you.

First of all, I would like to ask you for how long have you been working with logistics?

R: I worked for another company but with another types of logistics. If you put this in, about 11 years.

I: Ok. Yes, and you can always ask questions if there is anything which is unclear. How would you describe the effects of open communication about failures within the supply chain, like parts availability, delivery times, claim rates towards the dealers.

R: I think the question is how I feel about the open communication.

I: Yes.

R: I think you really need to have an open communication because if we don't have, if we don't get feedback from the dealers to us about the quality or claims, we cant improve in the right way. The thing could be that we are working on the wrong issues and not develop the issues the dealers want us to improve of course. But also it is important to show them the figures we are working on and give them (ahm) our map, the target for us to manage, because we do get our goals from the headquarter in Germany, of course we have to work and fulfill them. It is really needed to have a good communication in both ends, to them and to us.

I: Thank you. What would you describe to be important for a successful relationship between COMPANY A and the dealers?

R: Of course, the most necessary is to ensure that everyone in the organization, because have the big picture and understand the total goal of our business. Of course they can put lots of the dealers, some times request improvements to us, quit just focus on their business instead of have the big head on and see the benefits of the total. So I think the communication of the total picture is really needed. And that we improve and do improvements in our business, which benefits as many dealers as possible.

I: And what else do you think is important within a relationship with the dealers? Think about "normal" relationships?

R: As the question before, it is really important to have an open communication to have the understanding and that they also see that we are working with improvements. Also that we have the discussion to what they can do to improve in the other hand. Because as sometimes we can see we are doing lots of improvements but we also ask the dealers to follow for example, the right routines or whatever, but we can see that you don't follow them. Of course the processes are not working in the right way. (Ahh), this is really really important, because if they don't work after the processes that we have put up, we cant know if the process is the wrong from our site or is it something else. Because the problem is I think, if we think to start to improve the processes but in the end it wasn't the process, who really was the problem. And again it is really to have the understanding what we shall work with and the total benefits for our business. Everyone wants to earn money in the end.

I: And do you think this all together would impact, would result into a good relationship?

R: Yes, listen to each other and try to improve together and do the prioritization together also and have the understanding. We can see it is sometimes hard to, we can just look into our business. For example we just want to change something in the SAP system, it takes quiet a long time to get it trough and also when we shall change something or improve something with benefits for total of all dealers, of course it sometimes can take a bid longer than the dealers really want that to take.

I: Regarding supply chain management, do you think high engagement in supply chain management would put COMPANY A ahead of its competitors?

R: Of course, if you have the focus on the total supply chain, it is really good. Then you have to take the decision if you want to be at the top of it and always want to be the company who is in the front because if you want to be in the front, it will cost you money. Sometimes it is better to

the second or the third, it depends of course what of what we are talking about. When we are talking about claims or just the way how we supply the dealers and so on, but in the total when we are looking to implement new technical improvements or whatever, it is quite expensive to be in the lead but you shall be among the ones. Because I think it is quite expensive to be the one always taking the latest and the most modern solution. So I think it is keep up to have the latest information then pick solutions that you know really work instead to be a pilot every time because this costs money. But I think it is a way to have to take the decision in the company; what shall we do? Is it our task to be number one, when we talk about this. But I think it is of course, we keep up with the latest in logistics and the supply chain management.

I: Thank you. How would you describe COMPANY A ability to create value and advantage for its dealers?

R: I think it is hard for me to answer because I am not in the right department but I think...

I: Or also LDA?

R: Yeah, LDA, but when are out on the conference and meeting the dealers, I think we are quiet good in doing that. Of course it is always depending on the ability to have the money to invest in new solutions or priority from the mother company, what is important for us to do, but I think it is that we have the ability to do this in a good way. But I think it is always a priority, where shall we take the money from or what should wait.

I: And how would describe we could create advantage?

R: In the LDA, we have always started to look into but again when we come to the investments, we can do that. But in my way to do that, we have to find, if we want to improve the quality, we have humans who are doing the work here, this is one way to look into new help systems, one is the scanning, to scan all the goods from inbound to outbound, really be sure that we have put them into the right bin. Of course we can also 100% be sure that it has left the building, so we have good tracking from start from the beginning. Not just for the quality for, of course for the dealers but also for our own housekeeping as you say. That is one and we also have looked in into a new solution for example, emballage, our empty, to look into a more better handling instead of used wooden pallets, frames and lids for the plastic solution. We have started with that, I think this is a really good solution for us and for the dealers of course. And when we look in the total benefits for this process, we can also find how we can...because we have looked into how the emballage, on thing is the scanning and one thing is the handling of all credits for all the emballage, when it comes back. We can see the findings that the total process, it is a common, they are together, so we have to do this together instead we can do them step by step. We also look how to improve our side, by pick by voice for example. I think this could be also one solution. I think it is a really good way, at least to start with in the volume parts, they are needed to work with two hands and if you can have this system and working with it, that you have pick by voice instead of using your hands. I think it is a really good way to improve the productivity but also it is a good way to ensure the quality of the picking. And also in the future we can look should it be a way for us, could it be a benefit for us to work in other shifts. Therefore it is quiet good for the staff to work so late but could it be a benefit in some how but in the other end you have to find out is there really a big need in the dealerships because if they don't find any benefits in it, it is just going to cost us more money.

I: Good, next question. From your perspective, how would you describe the dealer satisfaction with the service and performance of COMPANY A or LDA?

R: When we met all the spare parts managers at the latest conference, I will see, the overall satisfaction from them, the best way for me to know because they are the one who are really handling and all the responsibility for all the parts, we are sending out, the overall satisfaction was really really good. Of course they have some questions for improvements. And I think their, as I talked before, the biggest issue is the work with the return of the emballage and so on. That we really find a way to track them better and give them credit for them and so on. But the overall satisfaction from the conference, that we are really doing a good performance. The quality rate, they didn't have any issues with that because when you look at the total it is quiet good. Of

course, it can happen one or special dealer that the quality faults ends up at one dealer and of course if he has issues with that. But in the total they think it is a **good performance from us** and also about the **service degree it is really good**. But as we can see when you talk to the dealers, I think it is, you can see it the dealer way, you can see it the owner way, which KPI is the most important. But when you ask the dealers, they say if we know when the part shall arrive and **when the part arrive at the right time** and at the **right quality**. That is the main issue, because if we ask them about the service degree, they really cant tell if they have 96, what is the goal, or 92, they cant tell. But they can tell if they **get the wrong part with the wrong quality** in the wrong time. So still the **parts delivery, that is more important for them**. Because the goal of 96%, is this realistic goal, is it a really needed goal or just a goal put by our owner. We really don't know if this is important or not. Because they can tell the customer, you can leave your car here today but you can leave it to us tomorrow because of course, **the customer will be less satisfied if they leave their car on Monday but the part is not coming until Wednesday and they tell them they can get the car on Friday**. I think this is the main thing, it is easier for them to plan and also I think to have the advantage to use the facilities in the best way.

I: Ok, thank you and last question, regarding the future. So what threads to you see in the future if COMPANY A or LDA do not include the dealers into the planning of the supply chain?

R: Of course, I think, it depends, if the solution that we take the responsibility for ourself is **really do the improvements to the dealers also because if we always to the priority to improve the right things that the dealer thinks, I think we will not have a problem**. But I think always in the conference, there is always some discussion something to discuss and improve, so I think in the end, **we will still have unsatisfied dealers if we don't have the communication** with them or **just taking decision over their heads even if we have the right to do that**, we are the importer for the Company A company of course, but it is **really really important to listen what the customer thinks** otherwise I think, it is really hard in the end to really have a successful business. **The whole change, have to know what we are aiming for, what is our wish and goal for the future, otherwise could be so that the dealers start to work against the goals or whatever**. But in the end, of course, one wants to earn more money, (ahh) I don't think it is really an options to start to **not communicate with the dealers in my way to say it. It is not going to improve the business, could be also so, we will have dealers, who leave us, maybe choose another brand to work on**. I don't know.

I think it is also **really important to build up the loyalty to our brands**.

I: That is really good. Anything else you like to add?

R: No, I think I answered most of it. It is important to have a **good connection** and **communication with them**, of course if they have requests, just take for example the **metro concept**, what is the real issue, what is your need. Ok their need it work packages and how we do the solution, could not be to use the metro concept, if we have the name of the other competitor put on it, we have another solution here, we have the order packed to the dealers. So still, we will find a solution, **we have to be the ones who take the decision we will choose in the end to reach the goal**. And of course, when it comes to the end is to reach the goal. It doesn't matter if you take the bike, car or running. Choose something which makes you come to the goal in the best way.

I: Thank you very much!

APPENDIX 8.4 Interview Transcripts Dealers

APPENDIX 8.4.1 Interview Dealer 1

1st How would you describe the relationship to the Company A , with LDA In particular today?

No direct relationship with LDA , all contact is via COMPANY A and RD support. Contact and **relationship with COMPANY A at large is OK**. **Not much response from the LDA when sending div feedback and comments, feels like a monologue** ..

2nd How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA In particular , over the last few years ?

Sure develop even LDA , but unfortunately it feels like ÅF 's requirements (due to factory requirements and CSS) to , inter alia, LDA is growing faster than LDA developed. Time to GAS !

3rd Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why !

Generally quite pleased. However, there is much to improve , and the mills grind slowly

4th What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of the Company A ?

+ High proportion of stored items / high service level
+ Quality will slowly improve , delivery notes on felplockat goods has declined.
- Difficult to get in touch
- Despite the same comments / criticism continuously for several years in a row , nothing happens , and also no response.

5th How could the Company A (LDA) Increase your satisfaction Regarding delivery processes ?

- Ensuring the quality of the packing , such Not heavy items (eg br.skivor) mixed with delicate goods without separators in the same pallet .
- Introduce date controlled deliveries = reduces residual problems AND warehouse space at ÅF . Above all ÅF with injury workshop.
- Introduce pre order - packed articles .
- WHEN goods being stationary transshipment terminal , ended up with the wrong ÅF etc , it would have been highly desirable in a little more dedication to get the goods to the right ÅF right away and not wait until tomorrow . Many times , this affects cars / customers that are already on the west causing negative CSS as a result.

6th How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel Involved or informed about it ?

After the presentations, the RCH Conference , we know that things happen , but this is also the only time during the year, information from the LDA reach .

7th How would you describe the openness to Communicate , share information and reliability of LDA (for example When it comes to parts availability, claims , long lead times ? Bitwise same answer to question 1. All communication is by RD- support, and it works decently. Could have been useful to LDA itself sends out mails , for example, production disruptions (Manhattan works mainly ..) directly to ÅF. Then we would have had the info available in the morning when unpacking instead of just after 8:00 when RD -support opened and we have already begun to call for freight .

8th Do you feel That LDA fulfills your demands , needs or requirements , please explain why or why not !

No.

To be top notch , it takes more effort and ensuring AF as their customers as they want to help in their business. See replies to question 5.

APPENDIX 8.4.2 Interview Dealer 2

1. How would you describe the relationship with the Company A , with LDA especially today?

Relationship ... do not know what I shall answer it ... you 've got no or very little contact nowadays, everything is handled by the computer system. If there are information systems so I have a good relationship with them ☺

2nd How would you describe the development of cooperation with Company A and LDA especially in recent years ?

The elaboration goes against us to do more and more of the work instead loins of LDA before ... it takes sometimes as long time and print all the damn document as it takes , and pack a pallet of goods Λ

3rd Can you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of Logistics Department Company Aand explain why!

Service hmmm ... it's like I wrote the above question , we do all things with paper handling and registration service so I can not call it . Service is if someone else helps one with what you should do ...

4th Which is satisfactory or unsatisfactory aspects of the experience the logistics department at Company A ?

Our packing slips, which we print in the morning (although we do ourselves, is the service ?) Have unnecessarily small font ... lot of empty paper comes with the printouts every morning. is also VERY confusing that there may be perhaps 3-4 or 5 pieces with the same line number.

5th How could the Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

6. How would you describe the involvement LDA within the supply chain development, and do you feel involved and informed about it?

Great commitment ! Good work !

7. How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information , and reliability LDA (for example, when it comes to parts availability, claims , long lead times ?

Good !

8. Do you feel that LDA meet your requirements, needs or requirements , please explain why or why not!

LDA works fine but the entire document management around returns for LDA is cumbersome.

APPENDIX 8.4.3 Interview Dealer 3

1st How would you describe the relationship to the Company A , with LDA In particular today?

Have **good cooperation** and **communication**.

2nd How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA In particular , over the last few years ?

Better communication and overall **understanding of our problems** , but feel that it lately has been difficult to get answers.

3rd Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why !

Broadly satisfied but there are some **moments of irritation** .
Feel that there is **less large errors with entire packages that are misdirected** , missing. Instead, a number of **minor errors increased individual parts that are missing from the podium and that other**
af , 's parts is in our stool

Credit on packaging often takes a long time especially cages and collars , more often than not on these get no credit but after 1 month when the credit is still not get email up and will then usually the credit.

4th What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of the Company A ?

Good understanding that we are working together towards the same goal .

Feel that it has become **more difficult to get answers** and **even more minor errors**.
Have the feeling that the **organization might slimmed down too much, both officials and on the floor, for very inexperienced agency staff** who may cost more in the end result . all wrong ?

5th How could the Company A (LDA) Increase your satisfaction Regarding delivery processes ?

Work packed

Scanning piece by piece with automatic receipt of Auto Master. And if there is a work order packed in the package by working order, with automatic receipt of Auto Master. While **scanning on packaging incoming and rebounds for better control** and **faster kred rivets** that you yourselves are on !

Would also like to have " safer " statement of balance in a system. Happened several times recently **that it says that there is in the headquarter , but then there is not** , but even perhaps replaced by the part that you have in stock and get no notice of this , but still stands as back orders in SAP = bad CSS with unhappy customer who had to wait an unnecessarily long time , maybe even undrivable car, **has examples of this current brake pads Q5 was no "premium " feel to it** , unfortunately .

6th How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel Involved or informed about it ?

Feel that you have **good thinking and ideas for the future**.

Get well with information, especially on the RCH Conference which is always good organized and rewarding.

7th How would you describe the openness to Communicate , share information and reliability of LDA (for example When it comes to parts availability, claims , long lead times ?

Experiencing a **great openness** on the other hand is often **lacking accurate and precise answers** . See previous answer about packing and balance in the system .

8th Do you feel That LDA fulfills your demands , needs or requirements , please explain why or why not !

In broad terms, with improvement on some points that have been described before .

APPENDIX 8.4.4 Interview Dealer 4

1st How would you describe the relationship to the Company A , with LDA In particular today?

Had **not a major relationship** with LDA and all contact is via COMPANY A

2nd How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA In particular , over the last few years ?

No big noticeable changes , **good with parts in stock** .

3rd Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why !

Very pleased over stock and supply capacity , **good deliveries simply** .

4th What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of the Company A ?

?

5th How could the Company A (LDA) Increase your satisfaction Regarding delivery processes ?

Easier pack notes / delivery notes . (time saved each day)

Timed deliveries

Work Packed supplies so we will not have to pack everything every day. (Especially steel deliveries)

6th How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel Involved or informed about it ?

Less good, many changes (all ?) Is done just because it is easier for LDA , not to AF want / need it.

Is nothing that makes me so annoyed when sending back part or all shipments to AF to be made a minor error , missing a piece of paper , etc. Call / email and tell what you did wrong so you learn right the next time. Environmentally friendly to send cargo 120mil up performed and suitable bake for an A4 paper ?

7th How would you describe the openness to Communicate , share information and reliability of LDA (for example When it comes to parts availability, claims , long lead times ?

The information comes from the COMPANY A , ie we get the no info from LDA , it is only COMPANY A informing that now wants LDA have it like this.

8th Do you feel That LDA fulfills your demands , needs or requirements , please explain why or why not !

Yes, you are doing a good job in general

APPENDIX 8.4.5 Interview Dealer 5

1. How would you describe the relationship to Company A, with LDA in particular today?

Very good.

2. How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA in particular, over the last few years?

Very good.

3. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why!

I would say that we are satisfied with the service we receive from LDA.
In general we always receive what we have ordered and in the correct time.

4. What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of Company A?

In general we always receive what we have ordered and in the correct time.

5. How could Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

They could see to that we would have access to the CLL lists earlier than today.
Today we receive them in SAP around 18:00, if the CLL were available from around 17:00-17:30 would be much better for us.
We could then print them and prepare everything in the evening instead of do everything in the morning stress.

6. How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel involved or informed about it?

Very good engagement when we had problems with the deliveries and pick up of the return goods they were very supporting and we together with the carrier solved the problems.

7. How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information and reliability of LDA (for example when it comes to parts availability, claims, long lead times?)

I feel that we receive the info we need and availability is pretty good.

8. Do you feel that LDA fulfills your demands, needs or requirements, please explain why or why not!

I feel that they fulfill our needs.

APPENDIX 8.4.6 Interview Dealer 6

1st How would you describe the relationship to the Company A , with LDA In particular today?

Good . A few distractions there.

2nd How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA In particular , over the last few years ?

I have seen a positive development. Decreased amounts of missing goods and much less damage to the goods , especially when it comes to windshields.

3rd Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why !

Overall, very happy . However, there are a few things that need to be improved in terms of returns.

4th What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of the Company A ?

The good thing is that valuation on deliveries increased in the last few years. The less good things are long lead times in terms of credit returns and delivery notes. And not to mention all the missing credits of packaging.

5th How could the Company A (LDA) Increase your satisfaction Regarding delivery processes ?

Difficult to answer because I think you are headed in the right direction.

6th How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel Involved or informed about it ?

I think it's lack when one lacks major freight and try searching for it . The result has often been that the goods been left on LDA but no one wanted to look for it

7th How would you describe the openness to Communicate , share information and reliability of LDA (for example When it comes to parts availability, claims , long lead times ?

The availability of spare parts is good . In terms of lead times , they are way too long , especially when returns of packaging.

8th Do you feel That LDA fulfills your demands , needs or requirements , please explain why or why not !

Yes for the most part. That which is of great importance is the supply and all fails you for the

most part. You guys are a little worse at taking him on our returns. But in terms of the whole , we are satisfied .

APPENDIX 8.4.7 Interview Dealer 7

08.04.2014 Interview 5 Dealer

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: Thanks for meeting me today. I would like to ask you first if I could record this interview.

R: Sure, no problem.

I: The first question is how long is your experience with the after sales business at a dealer?

R: My experience in the service department is 7 years. I started working as a service advisor and I worked my way up to the position I have now and I am working as a service manager for Company A. I took over the spare parts department from 1.10.2013 and my position as service manager was from first of January 2011.

I: Good, thank you. Then we can actually start. So first, how would you describe the relationship to Company A and with LDA in particular today?

R: I would describe the relationship as very good. It is a very good organization at the Company A Group. We are happy with the region managers, who I have. They are often very supportive when we have a problem. If you would take LDA as a particular group, I think LDA they are doing their best with the resources they are having. I am not completely satisfied with the result they are accomplishing but I am very happy with the people trying to solve the problems we are having as a dealer.

I: Do you have any examples?

R: Absolutely. A good example would be the Company A Beetle. We have currently a Company A Beetle, almost brand new, in the workshop. The gearbox broke down, so the customer is of course very very upset and want Company A and us to replace the gearbox. And when we are ordering the gearbox we are no getting a delivery date from LDA or from our spare parts support, so I am emailing the manager, she is doing anything she can to get the gearbox. But we still have the ground problem, we don't get the gearbox and we cant get a delivery date for the customer.

I: Where do you think is the problem? Communication or collaboration?

R: I think the biggest problem is probably communication and power I would say. And with that I can explain a little bit more. If you have the power to get in contact with the right people down in headquarter, you should probably know when the gearbox should arrive and also have the opportunity to get the right delivery date and you can perhaps take a gearbox from a line, from a factory. If you don't know how to communicate with the headquarter or you don't have the power to communicate with the right person, you cant give the right information to the dealer and the dealer cant give the right information to the customer.

I: And the result could be?

R: The result could be (ah) customer satisfaction. So our company has quiet a good customer satisfaction with 8,6 in the CSS and currently one of the best in Stockholm but if you have a customer buying a new car, you can get, a CSS customer, both at the sales department, because you have to answer the question there, and the service department. So it is extremely important to help the customer right away and you have too many people, you have to ask for such a simple thing. It should be more easier for the dealers to just get the deliver date or suppose to get your goods.

I: And how does this affect your own position? You are like in between the customer and the Company A?

R: Well, we cant sent the customer to LDA of course. Because then there will be a lot of customers at LDA, so and the customer is upset at Company A because we are Company A and

we don't want to talk about the fault of Company A as a company, so we will have to stand up for this problem and we say that we are working on it, working on it but we cant give an accurate solution and of course, you are very frustrated and that kind of situation. And I think, if I may comment on the first thing you said, our regional manager are often very good to speak with, but they cant help us either, so we have more lines that cant help the customers.

I: Ok, good I think we have the first question.

The second, how would you describe the development of the collaboration with COMPANY A and LDA in particular over the last few years? Have you seen a development change?

R: Absolutely, so (ahm), as I said, I ve been working with Company A since 7 years, it is a huge different if I compare it to 7 years ago. And I think Company A has been more (ahm) focusing on customer satisfaction and you can really notice the difference. When I starting working here, customer satisfaction was important but you would often not pay attention to details if you speak with COMPANY A. They would say customer satisfaction is important but they didn't really meant it. They weren't working so hard with it as they should be and if you are taking the spare parts and LDA, they are paying much more attention to details now. It is much more important to the things going back, they are trying to look at why. They are doing huge improvement with the system as well, but they can give better support to the dealers (ahm) I think the meeting we are having with Company A as well as the spare parts meeting, are a bid better and improving by the years. They are going out with more information, I think they are taking the dealer more seriously. We explain what kind of problem we have and they are listening and taking it further down to the factory. So overall, it is improving in quality as well, you would receive a lot of wrong parts couple of years ago, but the parts logistics now is more accurate, you have higher accuracy of delivery times and parts. So it is going in the right way.

I: Good, yes thanks. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service and performance of the logistics from Company A and explain why!

R: Mhm, so I would say overall we are satisfied, but you have points, where you need to improve. But overall we are very satisfied. Parts where we are need to improve are mostly things further down in the factory. So overall the connection between LDA and the dealers is good. And if you want examples, I can explain.

I: Yes please.

R: Well, we have Autopart, we have one example we would like to update it more frequently. (Ahm) and in the, I was told by Marie, she is going to a big Autopart meeting down in the factory, but it is a bid (ahm), it is in the future so.

I: And regarding the collaboration with Company A are you also satisfied? Are they including you in processes or?

R: Well ok, it is a tricky question actually. Yah, I would say I am mostly satisfied. It is a bid of a drive and "prestation", they are going forward very fast. And many of the processes they are not including the dealers. (Ahm), I think it is important to include the dealers, but I also think you cant include every single dealer into every single decision you have to make because you will get people trying to go into different kind of directions. So, it is important to discuss with certain dealers and I mean you have a good pilots in different projects. So I will say I am satisfied there as well. For a good example is the pilot project you have been speaking about with the returns. You explained that you would pilot at a dealer and this is a good thing.

I: And, yes, you are a dealer and Company A as mother company has more responsibility and how do you feel about this relationship? Do you dare to speak up your mind?

R: Well, absolutely. I really dare to speak up your mind. I think it is very important to speak up your mind. I know for a fact that many people don't speak up their mind because they are afraid to do that. But I think if you don't tell people what is wrong and how you can improve you have to speak constructive. You cant say for example, calling regional manager and saying it is crap. Ok, what is crap, why is crap, what can you do to make it better? You have to explain what and how to improve it. And I think a lot of people are complaining about things and don't know how

to make it better. So, if you don't know how to make it better you shouldn't complain about it. But yes, I had to problem speaking about that.

But Company A is of course a German company, it is an engineering company and we have our, in Sweden, they control people coming here and you have to do things. You can't say I won't do it because it is stupid, you have to do things somehow, if you would be a little more flexible in some matters.

I: Good. The next question is also regarding the relationship with the logistics department in general. What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experience with the logistics department? When you look at the general experience, what do you think, what is good or bad?

R: Well, the good thing is the people, working there. You have very good people working with us, the dealer. They are very devoted to their work and that is a very very good thing with Company A. You don't have people, who are not caring, very good people. And if you would say a general thing they could improve (ahm), it is the returns, you have to improve the system of the return. You can also improve one things go wrong and with that I mean, if the wrong parts are coming to the dealer or they don't show at all or damaged parts. I think it is very important to solve the customers problem right away and I think COMPANY A and LDA have to understand that the dealers are COMPANY A customers and we have a customer, but that is the customer who bought the car. The customer for COMPANY A and LDA is actually the dealer. They can't treat us always as a dealer, they have to treat us like a customer.

I: And you mentioned the example with the caprio, that is also connected to parts availability, do you like to have more information?

R: Yes! I would like to have more information, more transparency. We also have a example with a lot of different cars. We actually have cars, where we are waiting for parts for almost 4 months and we have to find the information LDA all the time. I would like to change this direction and LDA is emailing us. Forward coming to us as a customer, we are working with customer satisfaction. And when we are working with that, we are always calling the customer ahead and not afterwards and LDA has to improve that specific part.

I: That is good. Thank you. How could LDA increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

R: They could improve the information and working in hands. They could call us as soon as they know, so we are not calling them. Call us, don't let us call them.

I: Like you mean proactive?

R: Yes, working a lot more proactive.

I: And how would this benefit you? How would you feel as a dealer?

R: Well, information is very important. Information is kind of power, so if you are working with information the right way you will make the dealer or the customer more involved in all processes and you would make the final customer with the car, also knowing that Company A is doing 110% to solve the problem. They might not be able to solve it right away. But we are working through the lines to solve the problem.

I: So, do you feel not involved in some processes?

R: Well, I don't think the dealer has to be involved in all processes but I think it is very important when you speaking of delivery dates and accuracy of the parts. It is very good, perhaps, Company A should sent out a very easy inquiry, where they are asking the dealer, what kind of processes to you need you feel to be involved in. So the dealers can say they want to be involved into this, this, this and this.

I: Thank you. Next question, how would you describe the engagement of LDA of supply chain development and do you feel involved or informed about it?

R: So it is (ahm) well, no I am not being so much informed about the development at LDA. We have a little information at the spare parts conference, where we were speaking and the manager were speaking as well, but it is kind of quiet from LDA. I am speaking a lot with the manager of the spare parts support but on LDA it is kind of quiet.

I: Would you like to be more informed, to give more opinions about logistics processes in general? I mean you can talk to the area manager but...

R: Yes and no, if you think from the customer's perspective. I am the customer and LDA is the store, as a customer I necessarily need to know the logistics are working, but the big issue is if it is not working, then you have to know it. But if it is working as a customer I am very satisfied so and if the LDA are planning new processes, that are affecting me as a dealer, yes, I would very much like to know it. But if they are planning in processes, that are enhancing the things, necessary don't need to know it.

I: Just what directly affects you.

R: Yes.

I: Good. And next question, how would you describe the openness to communicate, share information and also the reliability of LDA, for example when it comes to parts availability or delivery process, claims, lead times?

R: Often it is very good. As I said before, there are very good people working and I am very happy with the support from the Company A Group in general. (Ahm) but the reliability of spare parts is not so good. I would say it again I mean if you take different manager, they are very often speaking of the accuracy of the parts, we have a 96% of accuracy of our parts.

I: You mean the service level?

R: Yes, the service level and actually for customers it is not so important to know the 96%, it is the less percentage which is the problem. You have to turn it around, if my boss comes to me and ask me if we have 2% of dissatisfied customers, what do you doing? I cant answer him, but I have 98% satisfied customers. You have to also look at the 2% and of course, you have to look at the 98% of the 96% service level, and what are you doing to get such a high level? So you dont stop doing those things, you don't have to focus just on another thing.

I: Ok, yes and about communication and share of information you already said something.

R: Yeah, it is very good people.

I: Ok. Last question actually. Do you feel that LDA fulfills you demands, needs or requirements and please explain why or why not.

R: In general, it is very good. I was down at LDA and I was also looking at the logistics and it is a huge factory or warehouse. So I have a lot of understanding, that things actually can go wrong but in general it is very good. As myself, I have things to improve at our dealer, LDA also has a couple of things, accuracy, you have to make a very aggressive target. I don't think 96% is a good target, you have to go 99% or something like that. And because 2,3,4% of that volume is too many parts. You have to think about the volumes. They could also look at specific cases, you should maybe ask yourself, ok we have a tolerance per case, not in general. This dealer has a percentage of, for example 92%, why is that and then work harder with just that dealer and not with the total amount of 96%. Because maybe you have in the north region of Sweden, you would have 100% and in the middle of have 78% and in the south 100%, you have to ask yourself why this dealer having so many problems. But in general, I am very satisfied.

I: Good. Anything else you like to add from you experience with the handling and collaboration of spare parts?

R: Absolutely, I would like Company A and LDA to overlook possibility for the dealers to make more returns. And with that I mean we have our annual returns, and we have the Autoparts return, sometimes we have article we need to return because of different things. And I would really love them to see if there is a possibility to sent spare parts down to the headquarter through LDA but in a greater amount. Today we have a quiet narrow return possibility, with that I mean not things that have been here 1 or 2 weeks. I mean when you go through the warehouse in a couple of months. Ok, 3 months, this article has changed the number and you cant use it anymore and so on and you could return it.

I: Anything else?

R: Well, the project, you have been talking about regarding returns. I am looking forward to is to see the outcome and also a very good project. A little request, I don't know if it possible. If you

can make it more simple for the dealer to see an accurate time of delivery. The problem is never when the parts are in LDA or the headquarter, then you get the parts. The problem is, when the parts are not located in the headquarter. I would like for an example, you can email an address, like and you can email right away and you can click on something in the SAP, like tracking system. So now you know the new gearbox has been made by the factories somewhere, now it is scanned, now they are checking the quality and now it is going so far.

I: So more transparency?

R: Yes, I think it would be very good for the customers so you can explain why it takes a little bit longer for a customer as well and then you would get higher customer satisfaction as well.

I: Good remark, ok. Anything else you like to add?

R: Well, if I compare to what Marcus explained from Germany, you have the updating from Autopart. It is much more transparent and Autopart is checking local warehouse. I think in Sweden we are a couple of years behind than in Germany, I m not so accurate in this question so I think to speak more about it, we have to ask Marcus.

I: I think there is a project, where they update the system.

R: That us good. Now I am satisfied, I don't have anything more to say.

I: Well, thank you very much for your time and your input.

APPENDIX 8.4.8 Interview Dealer 8

1st It is very good.

Second collaboration works well, which helps us with problems that arise and try to solve them.

3rd There have been some problems with embalage returns and credit of the judgment, but it seems to have resolved itself now.

Fourth moment is mostly good.

5th Try to have better staffing during the holiday season so it's not messing so much there.

6th involvement in the supply chain looks good to us.

7th Parts Availability is good, apart from certain countries where it takes an unnecessarily long time.

8th It works well with LDA and it's problems as you solve it the best way.

APPENDIX 8.4.9 Interview Dealer 9

First relationship I think is good, good help from parts support.

Second good I think

Third to the largest seen satisfied

4th all good

Fifth, in some cases so packed it a little bad in the steel, for example brake discs may be above other things that can be damaged.

6th think it will the necessary info current

7th mkt. Good.

8th meets my needs well. Good transparency, good supplies, etc.

APPENDIX 8.4.10 Interview Dealer 10

First I think it works well. They ev. problems that arise do I resolve with LDA primarily Secondly through parts support due to longer processing time

Second collaboration with LDA works very well and has done so for many years. I have a network of contacts that solves my ev. questions / problems to 99%.

3rd I am happy with the service I get in contact with LDA. Good response quick answers

4th See question 5

5th Introducing "zero tolerance" around picking errors and to goods end up at the wrong AF. This is still a problem that we encounter each week.

6th Commitment there. However, I get a feeling when you are in contact with LDA skimping on internal information to and from. I have nothing concrete to come by with.

7th Man doing the best they can in the spare parts support regarding delivery information etc But the question is how well the statements / information in the headquarter leave to them when it comes to delivery information / access etc. An exchange in the form of internal between LDA & spare parts support to get a better insight into the process I think may be useful. Get the feeling that one is not familiar with how it works in the different departments.

8th Basically, I am satisfied. Sure is a problem on and off. I get quick answers and solutions to my questions from the location. In summary, we think that it has improved the last few years. What needs to be improved is Reduce felplocken and incorrect deliveries (wrong AF) Better delivery info for major packages that run out with separate car. Today we do not know when these packages will. Can take up to 3 days in the worst case

APPENDIX 8.4.11 Interview Dealer 11

1. How would you describe the relationship with the Company A , with LDA especially today?

It feels ok. The understanding between us need to get better . It is we who are the customers that will be extremely satisfied, so we need help from you to make the process as smooth as possible.

2nd How would you describe the development of cooperation with Company A and LDA especially in recent years ?

The partnership will be better. There is still a lot to be desired, perhaps your own website for LDA with information.

3rd Can you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of Logistics Department Company A and explain why!

Quite pleased. Some heavy processes pulls down the score , returns above all.

4th Which is satisfactory or unsatisfactory aspects of the experience the logistics department at Company A ?

That we are not satisfied with the shipping damage , what we are at ease with is that you are trying to solve the problems and that they decrease. The crediting of emballage takes way too long , if they even get one . The return system is quite complicated.

5th How could the Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

Minimize transport damage. Packaging Types need to be reviewed . Prolong without express freight to at least 14:00. Any personal contact at the OEM besides parts support would be highly desirable .

6. How would you describe the involvement LDA within the supply chain development, and do you feel involved and informed about it?

?

7. How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information , and reliability of LDA (for example, when it comes to parts availability, claims , long lead times ?

Quite few information , do not backorder list says something / is sufficient. Car Down works fine .

8. Do you feel that LDA meet your requirements, needs or requirements , please explain why or why not!

One must bring order to have enough parts at home such as for campaigns , promotions , etc. When customers come and want to book their cars for actions must be able to take in the car rather quickly and not have to wait for parts to be available.

It's all about information. We need to know your situation and you have to become more responsive to our situation.

APPENDIX 8.4.12 Interview Dealer 12

1. How would you describe the relationship to Company A, with LDA in particular today?

It is a good relationship overall if I compare to other brands that I have worked for.

2. How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA in particular, over the last few years?

There seems to be many projects running but most of them stays just as projects.

3. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why!

Satisfied, it is a reasonable delivery standard (parts in stock) and not that many faults when picking parts for us.

However there is always room for improvement.

4. What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of Company A?

Satisfying is that it is a high grade of service, a lot of the parts that we order is in stock at LDA and not in Germany.

Dissatisfying is the ways to contact LDA for questions/help etc. I want a contact at LDA (phone/mail) that you can call if something is wrong and not needing to take "the long way around" (reservdelssupport).

Reservdelssupport is good but they are not connected directly to LDA and the answers are often delayed unnecessary.

In case of wrong parts in the right box (problem from producer) it is very important that we can talk directly to LDA and not to go via reservdelssupport. We need an answer to tell the customer if we can get the parts the same day or next week.

It is also dissatisfying that there is no good system for "returemballage", we need that RFID-solution asap. :)

Also it is very annoying when some of the ÅF don't handle their returemballage correctly and returns in. With RFID you can pinpoint the bad ones and give them higher prices or other ways to force them to do it right.

This can also be a good way to do it if you change the wooden crates to plastic ones. I guess that they are more expensive.

5. How could Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

Create a contact on site that you can talk to if necessary. (Of course with clear rules regarding the specific cases that they handle.)

If we need to pick something up from LDA it is VERY annoying that they close for lunch, we are open all day and so should they.

Create a system that notifies us if something goes wrong in the delivery process, no parts at the shelf, broken part, broken "Manhattan" etc.

This info should be instant when they notice it and come directly from LDA.

If something goes wrong and our parts remain at LDA, we want a quick solution, transport by budbil at once. Broken part in box, broken window etc.

Today we (and the customers) are the ones that suffers if anything goes wrong when the parts is being loaded/transported.

I would like a way to report shipments gone wrong in cases where we solves things ourselves. If we get the parts that are going to another ÅF and they pick it up themselves. The statistics only relies on the things reported in SAP and there is often a lot more problems.

An easy form on Insider?

Two "Mälarbilar" a day? /Quicker delivery with it.

ZEXT-orders for the next day should be able to order until 18.00
That would decrease the amounts of Mälärbil ordered.

Reliability of the "Manhattan", small parts are also important parts. :)

6. How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel involved or informed about it?

I am not very involved or informed about it apart from this project and the reservdelschefskonferens.

Scanning all parts when receiving them at site has been a topic for many years, what is happening with that?

7. How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information and reliability of LDA (for example when it comes to parts availability, claims, long lead times?)

See no 4 under dissatisfying.

Our reservdelspersonal often feel like LDA is like a "closed department". They want regular info about what's happening (projects) and as I wrote before, a contact at LDA.

8. Do you feel that LDA fulfills your demands, needs or requirements, please explain why or why not!

We are in need of 100% accuracy and an emergency-system for the times it is below 100%. (Fast contact and a fast solution)
Today it is good but not perfect.

APPENDIX 8.4.13 Interview Dealer 13

1. How would you describe the relationship with the Company A, with LDA especially today?

I feel that our relationship with COMPANY A / LDA is very good.

I feel that there is always a sincere interest in helping out, it is especially concerning LDA, that's the most people we have contact with, COMPANY A / LDA're just like us, driven by a lot of rules. But within them, I think it works very well, you experience a desire to solve any problems, it's very important, it gives a sense of security in our relationship with you, which in turn leads to an increase in quality and safety from customer.

- 2nd How would you describe the development of cooperation with Company A and LDA especially in recent years?

Overall, I feel that I have mentioned above, it works very well, yet it has slowly but surely evolved to work even better, the already high level. The most concrete and most important for us is the supply and delivery reliability and spare parts support.

Security of supply has gone from good to better, especially perhaps you could say it has become smoother, more stable. There are small differences we're talking about, but no less important. Parts Support has always worked very well and still do.

3rd Can you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of Company A Part Logistics and explain why!

I would describe us as very satisfied, if supply and support functions and is to be trusted, then of course the most part already done. When it becomes a problem, which of course becomes sometimes, it wants to of course that it will be resolved as quickly and easily as possible, which in my opinion is made.

4th Which is satisfactory or unsatisfactory aspects of the experience the logistics department at Company A?

Satisfactory

Is of course, that it almost always works very well.

But equally important is the mental attitude that we experience from COMPANY A / LDAK, "that we solve the problem"

There've also introduced some more concrete improvements such as: ZEXT part without charge, Mälardalen car to Dalarna, live. info in SAP. key order directly in SAP, return on accessories, etc.. things that significantly enhances our relationship with customers.

Disappointing is that we experience periods of very careless mistakes in picking. The errors feels very unnecessary many times, it picks very inaccurate articles, eg a tail light instead of a wiper motor, maybe a basic training in product customer relationships would be of value. This might have to do with you periodically seem to have a lot of temporary "agency" staff. I understand the necessity of it but there is a risk that the quality drops. It's actually one of the few things that are annoying. This occurs, as I said in the sessions.

Otherwise, it's the little things that can sometimes be frustrating, eg we do not need to print and send the exchange-return form with items that are returned as "Return Request", but we must remember that the articles that go to the "Warranty", if it's a exchange article, shall have current-return form. It happens to the warranty administrator goes directly to the estate manager at the store and ask him to send it as soon as possible, he sure is not going always that there may be prey item or not. It happened to us recently when a Mechatronic body was sent to the Warranty without current-return form, it means that we lose the frame cost. This is of course our problem, but a tad annoying.

5th How could the Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

It's a very difficult question, the problem is that most things work very well, it is then very difficult to make any radical changes.

It becomes relatively small details that one can change that.

But a few points that I also mentioned above:

Stable personnel group in plucking and moreover, to create the experience and thus higher quality.

Consistent management systems in areas such as return slips. Not that it's sometimes this and sometimes that.

Perhaps an opportunity to be able to order items later example to at: 18.00 against a much higher fee.

And then of course the classic problem, broken windshields. It knows you already and are working with.

Small details like that **Do not paste the picking label on the article's regular number label**. The hides then possible. sustainability dates.

Consistent labeling of items with limited storage. Today there marking in some cases sometimes not. It also looks very different.

6. How would you describe the involvement LDA within the supply chain development, and do you feel involved and informed about it?

I feel the **engagement that very large** and also **feel that we will be good informed.**

7. How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information, and reliability LDA (for example, when it comes to parts availability, claims, long lead times?)

Primarily, we **get the info through systems and the info is actually astoundingly real, it's very seldom we suffer eg hand zeros, and if it happens, we get notified via email. If problems in picking "Manhattan" or the like, we must vengeance. When articles becomes restade and we get a delivery notification via the system, so true it is often very good.**

8. Do you feel that LDA meet your requirements, needs or requirements, please explain why or why not!

LDA meet our requirements well.

With reliable delivery, **good storage**, **good communication**, and a **willingness to solve any problems**, so it is of course not to say other than that it **works very well.**

APPENDIX 8.4.14 Interview Dealer 14

20.05.2014 Telephone Interview 14 Dealer

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: So thank you very much for your time. I just have 8 questions, which I like to ask you about your satisfaction with the performance of LDA. At any time you can ask questions or when you want to mention anything, please go ahead!

R: Yes.

I: The first question is, how would you describe the relationship to LDA or COMPANY A today?

R: **Pretty good. Yes, pretty good. We don't have some dealership, where they can get the parts a second time per day.**

I: Like the same day delivery?

R: **Yes yes yes. We don't, we are too far away from the to get that parts, which we need today.**

I: Do you think it would be beneficial to have a second day delivery?

R: Yes. And then when **you, korosseri-parts**

I: Yes, the metal parts.

R: Yes yes.

I: And you mean the damage of it?

R: **Yes, sometimes when they come to us, it is new. You can see it is a little damaged, but we cant put it on the car. And you can see it has not happened in the transport to us. Some new parts can be damaged when they come to us but it is not on the transport. It is probably something wrong when they make it when they sent it and we get it and we cant put it on, because**

COMPANY A say it has guidelines, that the parts have to look like that and that and that and then we can put it on. But it is not damaged in the transport to us. You have to see it earlier, so we don't get the crappy parts.

I: Yes, I know I take this with me. We have the metal standard.

R: Yes we have that stick, and last week we got two parts, which haven't been damaged on the transport to us.

I: And then you have to sent them back and wait again.

R: But it takes time you know. So we loose time on the guy, who is repair it. If the guy who is repairing it, is not doing anything, we loose money.

I: I understand. We have to handle the parts in a more careful way, because they are prone to be damaged.

R: Do you check that part when it comes to you?

I: Actually they inbound area has to check the parts. But I will take this with me and talk to the department there and then we can hopefully increase the quality on how to handle these parts. Thank you very much!

Ok thank you very much. Then we can move on to the second question.

How would you describe the collaboration with COMPANY A and LDA in particular over the last few years?

R: It, I think it is pretty much the same. We got most of the parts in time. Skoda seems to have a little problem to deliver parts, that are in Czech. It takes some time. It is just the Skoda parts we have some trouble with, but with LDA I think it is working good.

I: Ok, and do you have any negative experience with the relationship, also with COMPANY A?

R: Not really, no, I don't really have many to consider something. I think it is working pretty good.

I: Ok, thanks. The next question. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of LDA and explain why!

R: Satisfied, because it is not so much trouble. The parts are very good quality. We don't get much people and say, this didn't hold, no, the quality is good and it is making it easy to work with when you have high standard on the parts.

I: Good. Thank you. Next question. What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experience with the logistics department?

R: I am not always satisfied with how you work with the returns, we sent back to you.

I: You mean the parts or the pallets?

R: Yeah, the parts sometimes but I mean the emballage, it takes long time, very long time. I have to sent to the support and they have to sent to you. Because if I don't do that, I don't always get my money.

I: That is the negative experience you have. How could COMPANY A/LDA increase your satisfaction regarding the delivery process?

R: It is like we talked earlier. Maybe one more delivery per day. I know it is a long shot but it would ease up some things for us and that I get my credit on the parts back, much faster than today.

I: Good. Anything else, where LDA could make you more happier?

R: No, this is the number one thing for me.

I: Good. Next one, how would you describe the engagement of LDA in supply chain development and you feel involved and informed about it?

R: No, I think the information is pretty good. You also have this parts brochure. I think the information is good, then you know where you can find information about the parts.

I: And what I meant was also, the share of information by presenting current developments and investigations at LDA, the return process optimization etc. And you feel informed about it?

R: Yes, if I was on the conference. But if I wasn't on the conference last time maybe I didn't know about it.

I: Ok, so LDA could improve there a bid to inform all dealers?

R: Yes.

I: Right, how would you describe the openness to share information, communication and reliability of LDA, for example when it comes to parts availability, long lead times. Does LDA inform you about it fast enough?

R: Sometimes it works good. Sometimes...often when we get a part we have ordered but it will be a delay on it. Often the support sent an email with, there will be a delay on the part it was wrong on the logistics or so. But sometimes when you need stuff, which you don't see if it is in Germany, that doesn't exist there, it can often take very very long time to get the part to us. So maybe something more information how long time before we get the part when it is not in Germany. Do you understand?

I: Yah, Ok.

R: Because often it is, no we don't know. But I need to know and if you can maybe sent a mail when you know and tell us, when it will come to you.

I: The last question. Do you feel that LDA fulfills you demands, needs or requirements and please explain why or why not.

R: It is a tough question. No I...I think it is working pretty goods. Because we are getting the parts, there are not often parts that are not handled to us, that should be handled to us. It is not often the guy or the girl who take the parts and put it in our box. It is not so often missing. That is very good. But sometimes you can see, that it is the total wrong part, totally wrong number on it. If I order a mirror maybe, and there I might get a handbrake. And it is the number from the glass on the handbrake, it is the wrong label.

I: So they sent you the wrong part with the right label on it?

R: Yes, it is the wrong part.

I: Ok it is a problem.

R: It is not a big problem, but maybe something to think to know about. You see it should be a mirror and you pick something else, you should think before you pick it.

I: You mean the picking differences?

R: Yes. It is not a big problem, but a small problem.

I: The plockdifferenser it is called?

R: Yes.

I: Ok.

R: But we all have a pretty good view on the LDA and I know you are working with things that you should work on. Yes, and if I can dream I want everything order packed.

I: Yes, a good remark. Thank you very much for your time and your answers!

R: Thank you!

APPENDIX 8.4.15 Interview Dealer 15

20.05.2014 Telephone Interview Dealer 15

Interviewer I
Respondent R

I: Thank you for your time today. The questionnaire comprise of 8 questions and you are free to answer any questions any time.

The first question. How would you describe the relationship to COMPANY A and with LDA in particular, today?

R: Nowadays it is very good I think. We have not agreed all the time but we have a nice climate of conversation nowadays. So I think we, they listen to us when we tell them there is something wrong they seriously listen to us and they make within the possibilities to this changes what we ask for. Some of them are difficult to do so we understand they cant help out all the way. But it is quiet nice nowadays.

I: Good. The next one, how would you describe the development of the collaboration and cooperation with COMPANY A and LDA in particular over the last few years.

R: I think it is very good and it is improving all the time. We have a very good climate to talk to each other and we live in some ways in different worlds. We are facing customer face to face in a real world and longer you gets away from the customer, it is a little bit riskier that you maybe not take it that serious that we have to take it. So I think we have the people coming out to us in the cities and listen to our problems, which we have every day and an error could make our date bad. My English is not that good, but I hope you understand what I mean.

I: No it is good., no problems!

But have you experienced anything negative?

R: Yes, there have been some case. But not where we have been to angry about it. Some problems in the systems where we disagreed. Of course we would like to have some smaller changes, we want some according to the real world. But there could be some more challenge to manage. If you look at it there are just some small things that could be better, but one step at a time.

I: Ok. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of LDA an explain why.

R: We are satisfied, because we have almost everything what we need in the spare parts. I don't know is it 97% service degree, that is enough for us. And if it is not, it is almost always in the headquarter. So in 3 days we have it up here and it is sometimes they carry other car brands they have it, and then it takes weeks to get it from Italy or where ever from. Maybe if you take KIA, it is not bad but it could be better. But there are totally not that much cars going around, so it is not a big market. So we (COMPANY A) don't hear much from the customers. So if there is silence from our customers I presume it is good.

I: And what are the satisfying aspects with the logistics?

R: If I hear you right, the thing could be better when we return things to you with the spare parts are returning there are different ways to return it. If they are damaged from the beginning, it wasn't the correct part, totally... there are so many things coming to us every day, so we are a little bit impressed, that there is so much right coming to us. Some days there are no mistakes at all, perfect. Sometimes when we should have 15, we have 14 or 16. Sometimes it is one too many. But totally it is fantastic. It could be that good somehow. Actually here we are quiet pleased. We are one of the bigger. I think someone at COMPANY A told us we have all brands in one house. Someone said we have the most Company A technicians altogether. It is quiet big here.

I: Good to hear. How do you think could improve the delivery in order to meet your expectations?

R: We have together with the computer bigdata, they are now working on a project. We are today working in Automaster, which does not "speak" with SAPsystem. But I am in a little group, we are meting on Monday, to make it more easily to order in one system and connect to SAP. Today we have to by hand put in all the spare parts we want. But it does not feel 2014, it is a little bit old. So we want to change some settings we could sent it from Automaster into SAP. That would improve a lot. Everyday, I don't how, sometimes is sitting there and then you could do it more easily. Because if you do it manually and you are sitting there and doing one mistake, you get a wrong spare part. But you should do it on the computer and put it automatically from one system into another. That is one hot spot for us.

I: Sounds good. I see you are really engaged. But to come back to question. What could LDA do to improve to make you more satisfied.

R: Some spare parts "express" it would be nice it could be nice if they could be packed separately on top or anything. So when we get all the goods. If there is one, I don't know, with our eyes we could see that there are our express deliveries and hand it directly to the mechanics. Because the customer is waiting and we couldn't repair the car the day before and we took express for the

next day, we would like to start the day like that. Nowadays we have mixed packages. It could be anywhere, we don't know where to start to look. So that would be some small improvements.

I: Anything else?

R: Yes, sometimes when we sent goods back or the, what you call it, emballage in Swedish. We don't get the credit back, the orders lying open for a long time. And then we sent an email, and your are we are sorry we missed it. After that we have the money. I don't know why it is happening and it is happening continuously, all the time it is.

I: We are investigating this right now and hope to have a solution for it fast. We are doing something in this field. Thank you very much for this comment!

R: Ok.

I: Next question would be regarding supply chain development and engagement. So how would you describe the engagement of LDA in supply chain management and do you feel involved and informed about the processes?

R: Yes, you are always on the conferences, spare parts conferences and on the servicemarknadskonference. You always have 2,3,4 guys there. And we let them know our problems and they take notes and they are always come back and telling us we can do that or we cant do that. And ok. They are very interested in hearing what we are saying. As far as I am concerned they are taking it very seriously and want to make a good work. It is a nice climate. I think it is very good.

I: Thanks. How would you describe the openness to share information, communication and reliability of LDA, for example when it comes to parts availability, claims, long lead times. Do you feel informed or involved, or is LDA reliable in their deliveries?

R: Yes, I cant complain. Totally good information to us, so I don't think there is a problem at all. It is good.

I: Good. Thanks. Then last one. Do you feel that LDA fulfills your demands, needs or requirement? Please explain why or why not!

R: Well, to say from 96% it is perfect. Just some small things you can think a little bid better but I am understand it some things take time to manage and sometimes the things get a little bid better. It is a large...and a lot of money to invest to make the small increase things, so don't do it. It is good as it is. Totally quiet alright.

I: Do you have any examples? Like I know you said that some things with the emballage or the express orders, do you have anything else where you could think of where we could improve? Or did you mention everything, just to be sure!

R: But I understand it has to be that way. If we have things coming to us, there is sometimes there is lot of work in the computer just to registertrate the case. But I understand it has to be like that, because otherwise there is a lot of parcels and packages souring around in the whole of Sweden. So I think we have to, the best thing ordered, 100% from the beginning, there wouldn't be time to be spent on making claims in the systems. But I also understand that could never happen. Sometimes in the summer time because of the summer workers, maybe they are not used to it all the ways, usually are some more mistakes in the summer time. And then we have people on holiday and someone not used to it from us does not the claims in the system and it does take some time but yep, it is not a big problem.

I: Then I think, if you don't have anything else to add, want to say anything, we have everything.

R: Yes, that is good.

I: Thank you very much for your help and answers!

APPENDIX 8.4.16 Interview Dealer 16

21.05.2014 Telephone Interview Dealer 16

Interviewer I

Respondent R

I: Thank you very much for your time today. The survey is about how the dealers are satisfied with the service with LDA and how the company can improve regarding the relationship. We have 8 questions in total. I would start now.

How would you describe the relationship to Company A, with LDA in particular today?

R: I think it works rather good. I dont have so much contact with my regional manager. I dont talk to him so much, so I dont have much contact with COMPANY A. It is rather poor. With LDA we have contact with them via the support. That works rather good. It is goes up and down I think. Comes periods where we got wrong stuff and things like that. The problem we have is that we dont get feedback when we want get the parts. Are they not coming, it is a rest-order something like that. You dont have...they dont get back to us and say when it is gonna come. So it is very hard to get a delivery date on things.

I: Ok, good. So you dont feel very well informed about delays, when order will be arriving.

R: That is the problem. That if it is anything is delayed, we call them to know, because we have a car in the workshop, so, and they cant give us any dates. So that is a very big problem.

I: Good. Thank you.

R: ...and then the next day, the part could be here, they dont know yet what it is out there a couple of days later. So I dont know how it works.

I: Yes, the next question. How would you describe the development of the collaboration with Company A and LDA in particular, over the last few years?

R: I dont know, because I havent worked so long. I dont know how it works earlier.

I: But now?

R: Now it works good I think.

I: Any bad experience during the collaboration together with LDA?

R: No, no, not what I can remember.

I: Good. Would you describe your company as satisfied or dissatisfied with the service of the Logistics Department Company A and explain why!

R: Yeah, overall we are satisfied, there are no bigger problems. It is small problems. We can tell when they have the vacation time, things like that. When you can see when wrong parts come or things like that. But that is not a bigger problem I think. No, it is not a big problem. It works and I think it is very satisfied.

I: Good. Ok, What are the satisfying or dissatisfying aspects of the experiences with the logistics department of Company A?

R: I think the return system, when you have wrong part or things like that, it takes so long time before we get our, the money for the part back. We have to pay it first and then it shows up at another dealer, then we get paid. But if it doesnt show up at another dealer, we have to wait and see. And thats doesnt feel that they have the confidence in us in that way. And the return system is rather complicated I think. So it is with, oh it is hard to explain in english, when you sent something back you get a discount, oh what you call it, the discount...

I: Just say it in swedish.

R: "Tillgåda"(not 100% understood) på delar – on parts. I dont know what it is called in english. I cant say it. You waiting get money back on some parts, it takes very long time until you get it. It is hard for us to follow this up. I think it is a very complicated return system.

I: And any satisfying aspects of the experience you made?

R: Thats satisfying is, that we dont have to wait so long for parts. We get "Malarbilen" it is a good thing. So and often they have the parts at LDA, they dont have to go to Germany. I think it is the best thing about it. We dont have to wait too long for parts.

I: Thank you. How could Company A (LDA) increase your satisfaction regarding delivery processes?

R: Oh I dont know, it is hard to tell.

I: Maybe something related to the dissatisfying points or anything else?

R: No it is, that is the...when it is a delay better feedback and that. That we can get a mail and something that you know it is coming in 2 days or like that, than we can plan our works. That is the biggest problem today and it doesn't show up. So I don't know if they don't know but information from Germany or something like that. So I think better feedback on delayed parts.

I: Ok. Right. How would you describe the engagement of LDA in the area of supply chain development and do you feel involved or informed about it?

R: I got information at conference. So I know almost what you do.

I: And do you feel well informed about it?

R: It is ok, I am informed, I think so.

I: How would you describe the openness to communicate, share information and reliability of LDA (for example when it comes to parts availability, claims, long lead times?)

R: Like the earlier answers, better information with the delayed parts. With the feedback.

I: Ok. The last question. Do you feel that LDA fulfills your demands, needs or requirements, please explain why or why not!

R: I think they fill it up because what I said earlier. We got parts very fast and almost every time they have it at home. So I don't think there is a problem at all. I think it works good.

I: Thank you very much for your time!

APPENDIX 8.4.17 Interview Dealer 17

1

The relationship I think is good

2

It was better before! It was easier to get things to marked when there were problems with such crediting of returns. Then phoned Fredrik Granefelt and it was fixed, the day after came the credit entry. Now turn to the parts support with such questions, and then nothing happens. When you then ask them again as they have not received any reply from the LDA. Then it sends an email to Marie Ödlund and so she arranges it.

3

I think we are quite satisfied, except for certain things that I cover in these responses

4

When you can not get parts that are charged, and writes a Loan Request, so it often takes several months and several requests before receiving compensation. I think we should do about the system, so that we get compensation as quickly as it is somewhat damaged goods. When you replace us immediately and then makes you well up with the forwarder after we at the urging of them sent in the damaged material to them.

5

Improve the packaging for it is very bad. You may of course in a lot of money from us through the deposit system, so you should be able to renew and discard it. You have to have gloves on, otherwise you get guaranteed full of wood splinters in his hands. The pallets are often broken, the frames are bindweed and corner irons pointing in all directions so it's hard to stack them. The lids are often so worn that they badly covering stool frames when sending returns. Plastic boxes are often filled with old pieces and glued plastic bags, as it had been slips in. Sometimes there has not been any yellow plastic lock for the lid, and then you have taped it around the entire box. It still happens that metal parts are damaged but it has become much better with those newer packaging you use now.

6

The forwarder behaves terribly. In June 2014 there has been no goods or been misdelivery 8 times, and it's always what's express freight missing and then there will be an end of our production, and our customers become dissatisfied and irritated and even sometimes cursed, and so reflect it in the CSS interviews and drag down our results, but we can influence it or are owed this. The forwarder is also lousy at finding the goods, sometimes finds Parts Support the goods faster than the forwarder it happens quite often that the goods are wrong relieved of any other of Toveks offices and then we fix a transport themselves to solve the problem quickly and get business going again. We have to even been that we got a pallet goods to us, where Skaras and Varas goods remained in the same stool, Varas material at the bottom and Skaras cargo across, and this happened now in the month of June 2014.

7

I have a case I can share with you, about how I think they should not go to. Thu. 8/22 Ordered we 1 st. actuators 3C0959433ARZ01 express the order no. 6163992 Fred. 23/8 section is charged on the delivery note and BWL, but was lacking in the goods. We write a Loan Request 60,987,023th And ordering if the controller on expressordernr. 6165410 Mon. 8/26 member is charged on the delivery note and BWL, but lacking in the goods again. We write a Loan Request 60987480, and calling Jussi doing a manual express orders 6,167,198th This afternoon we received an email from Barbro B. it is handnollad and changed to a ZCD-orders. Called when Jussi about Lev. time and was told SKODA-ZCD is 1-2 weeks delivery, so you get it probably at the end of week 36. Peace. 6/9 Nothing arrived and rang when Jussi about Lev. time, probably middle of week 37. Peace. 13/9 not come. Rang Jussi if Lev. time, and is told that it is underlined and under investigation in the city. Was asked to order it and make an RD car registration. Peace. 9/20 Most arrive to us in Vara. Peace. 1/11 The parts that we wrote Credit Request for credited us after several requests and now on a freshly Loan Enquiry 61,012,974th I do not think it is reasonable to wait 4 weeks on an express cargo, and it is certainly not reasonable that it should take 10 weeks before we receive credit for a Loan Request. I also wonder what it means that it is under investigation in the city, because then it seems like nothing is happening.

8

I hope you can get something out of my responses and comments, which can be used in the era investigation. Would you like to supplement information you can contact us by phone or email. Unfortunately, I'm not so good in German or English, Swedish language is a preference in that case. I have vacation weeks 29-32 and then is not reachable.

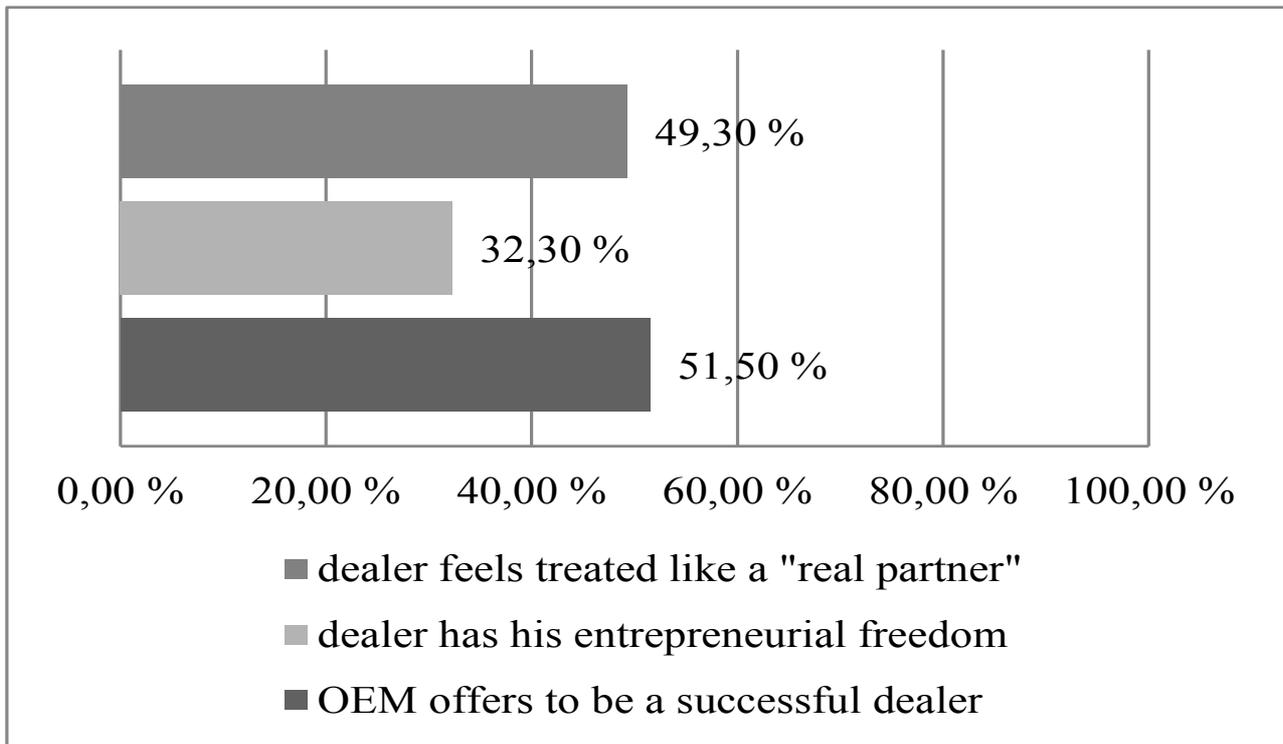
APPENDIX 8.5 DSS Results

Please note:

The percentage indicates how satisfied the dealers were.

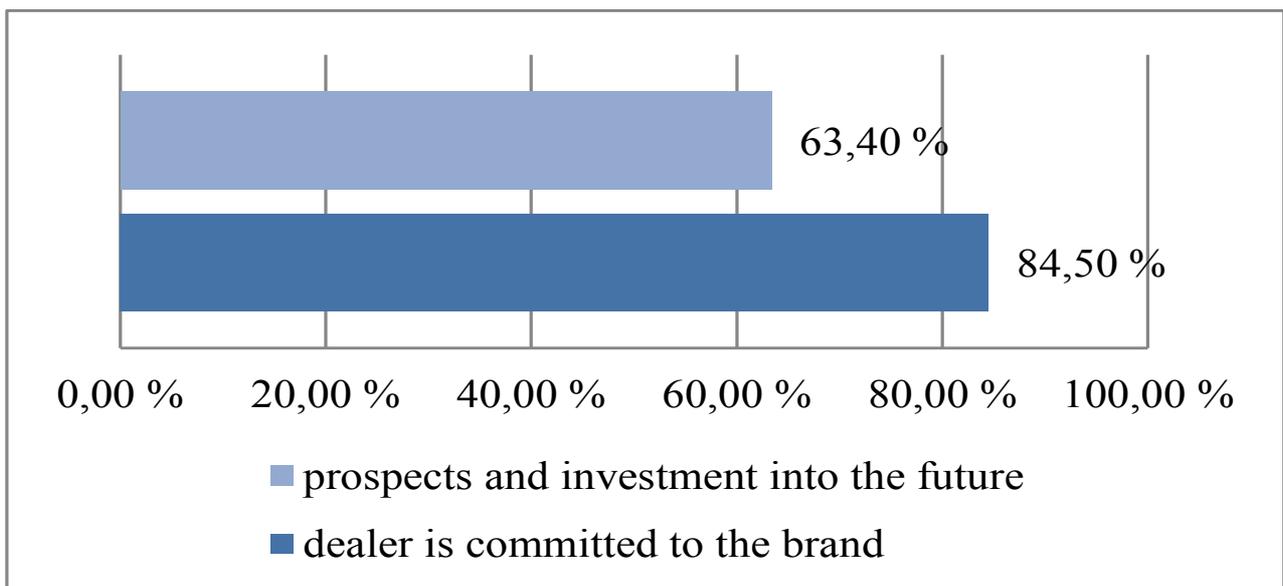
The scale reaches from 0%, which refers to very dissatisfied to 100%, very satisfied.

APPENDIX 8.5.1 Satisfaction Levels regarding partnership DSS



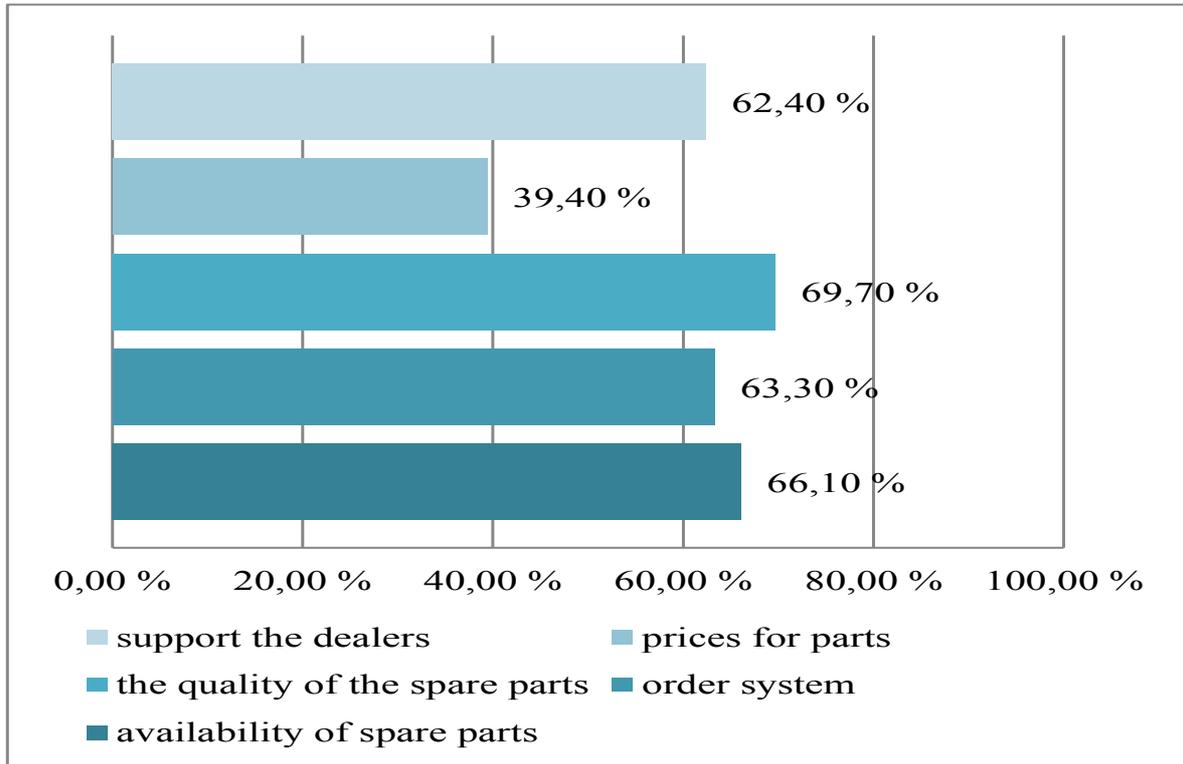
(Data source: DSS 2013)

APPENDIX 8.5.2 Satisfaction Levels regarding commitment DSS



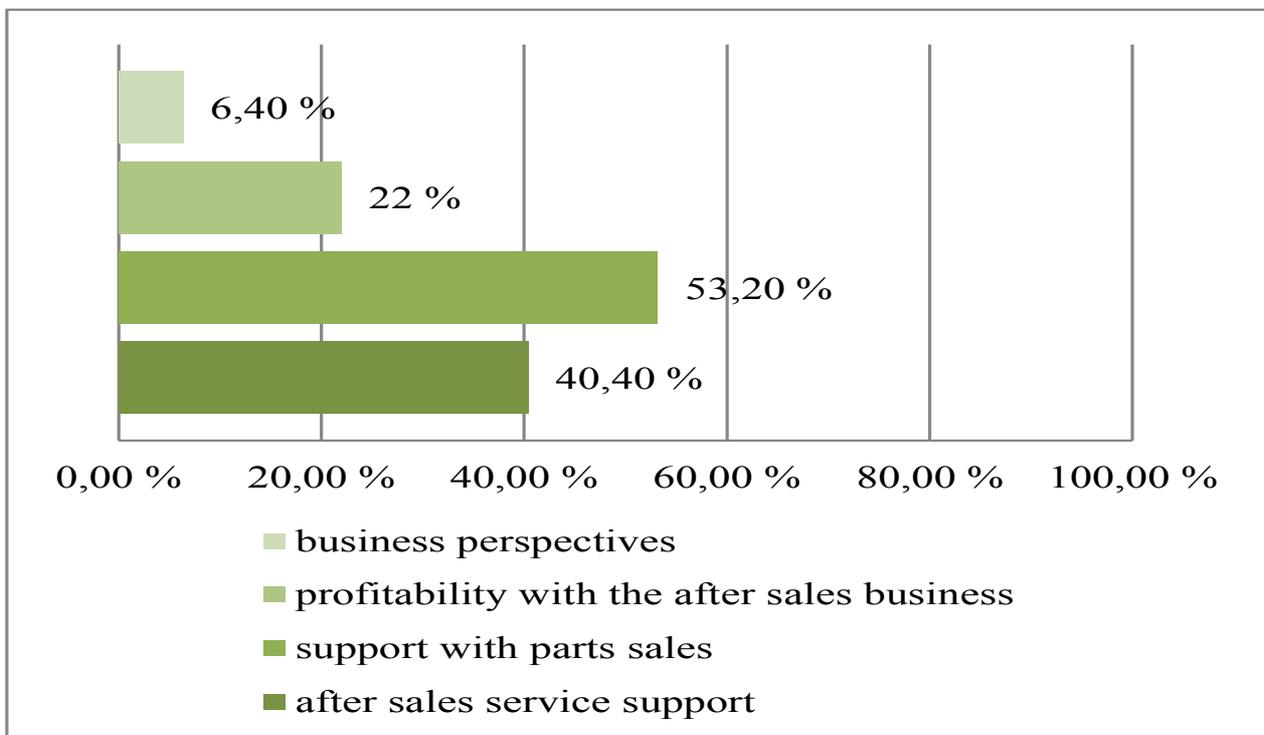
(Data source: DSS 2013)

APPENDIX 8.5.3 Satisfaction Levels regarding service DSS



(Data source: DSS 2013)

APPENDIX 8.5.4 Satisfaction Levels regarding general business DSS



(Data source: DSS 2013)

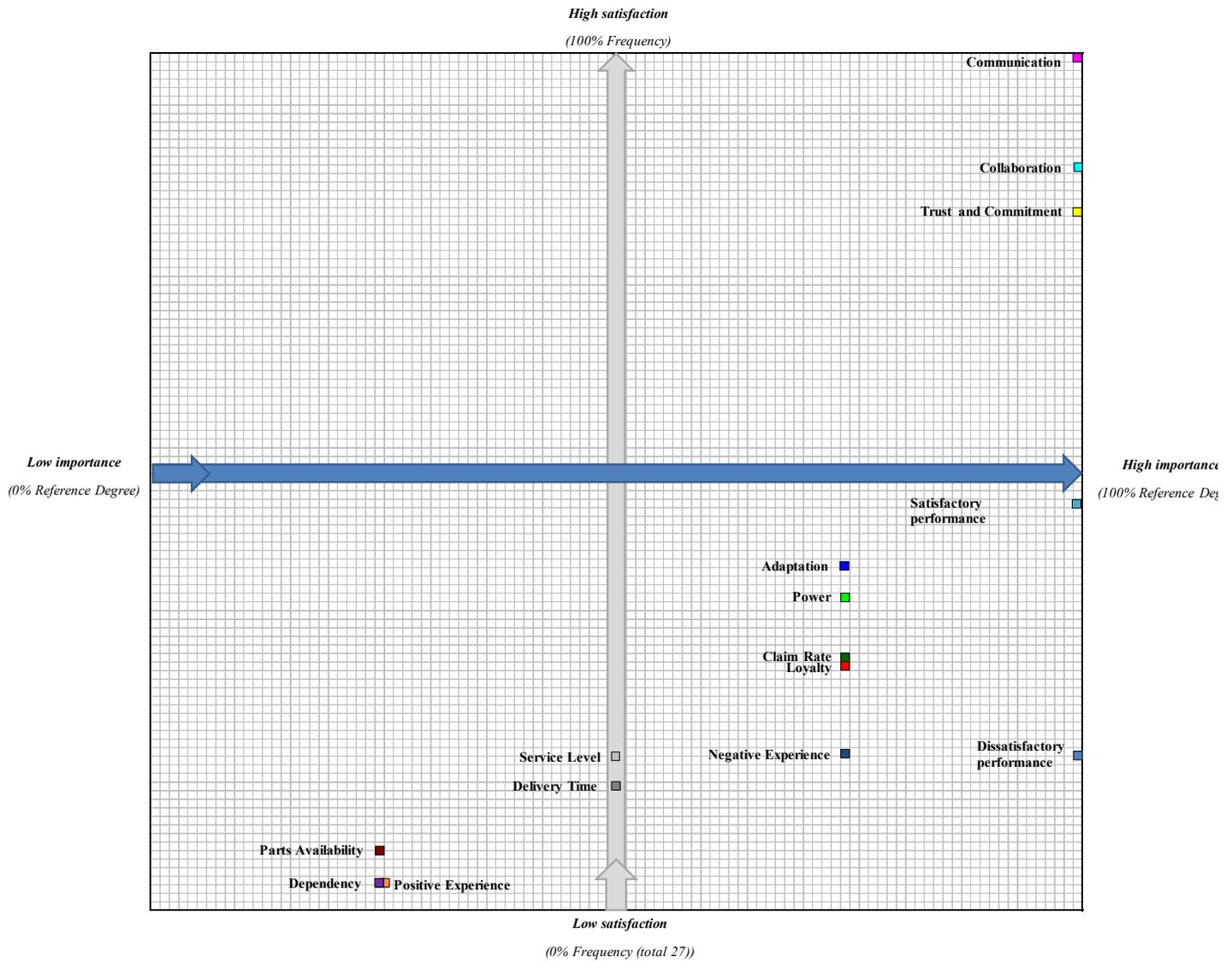
APPENDIX 8.6 Comparison of Dealer –Expert Importance Evaluation

The experts and dealers clustered the elements (the colours support to detect each code in the interviews and in the analysed grids (appendix 8.7 and 8.8) according to their importance as following:

Dealer	Experts
1. Trust and Commitment	1. Communication
2. Satisfactory performance of the OEM	2. Collaboration
2. Communication	3. Trust and Commitment
3. Dissatisfactory performance of the OEM	4. Satisfactory performance of the OEM
3. Adaptation	5. Adaptation
4. Collaboration	6. Power
5. Negative Experience with the performance of the OEM	7. Dissatisfactory performance of the OEM
6. Claim Rate	7. Loyalty
7. Parts Availability	7. Claim Rate
8. Delivery Time	8. Negative Experience with the performance of the OEM
9. Service Level	9. Service Level
10. Positive Experience with the performance of the OEM	10. Delivery Time
11. Power	11. Parts Availability
12. Dependency	12. Positive Experience with the performance of the OEM
12. Loyalty	12. Dependency

(Source: Müller 2014)

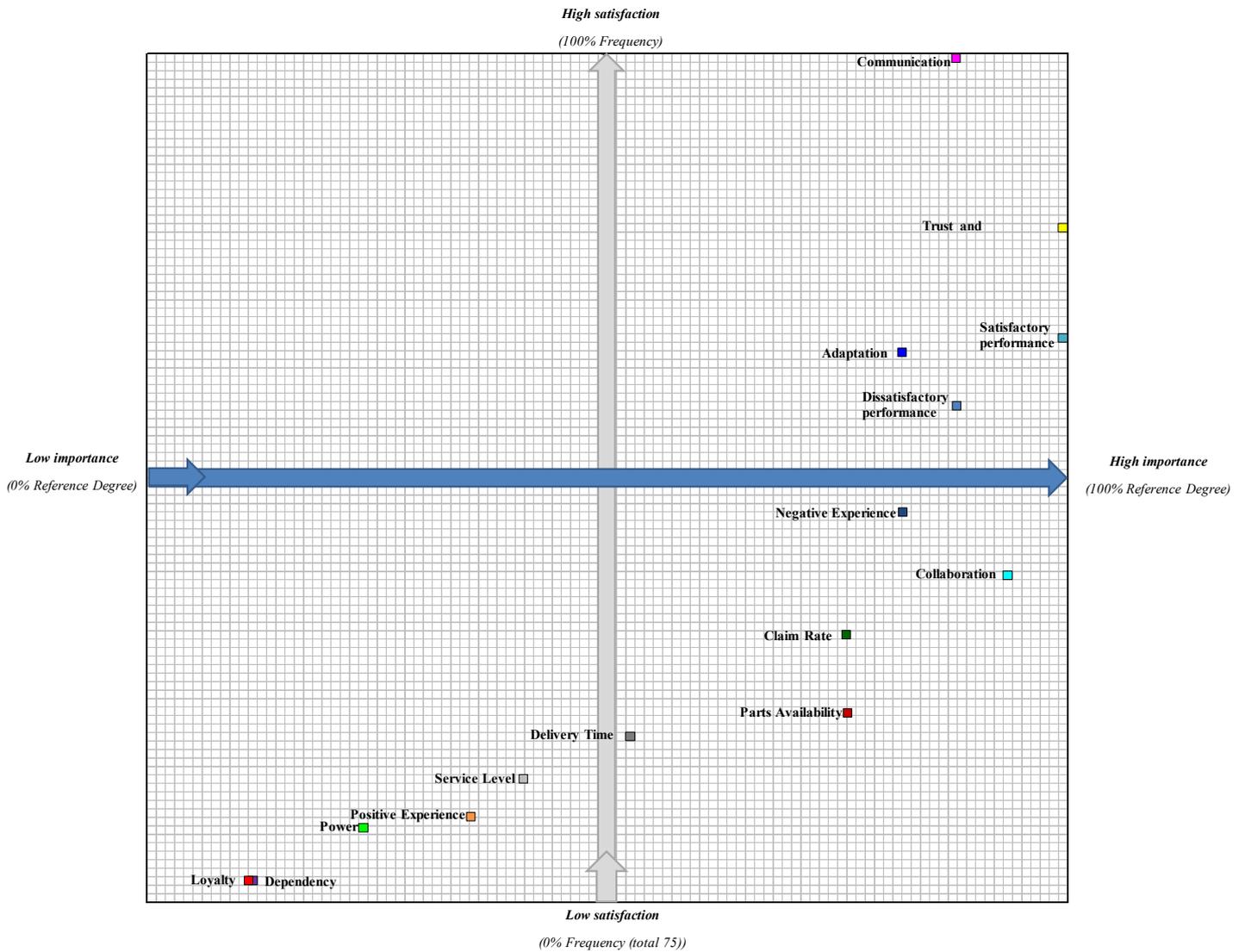
APPENDIX 8.7 Results of Expert Analysis



Overview of importance and satisfaction impact results of expert analysis

(Source: Müller 2014)

APPENDIX 8.8 Results of Dealer Analysis



*Overview of importance and satisfaction impact results of dealer analysis
(Source: Müller 2014)*