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Einstök’s Customer-Based Brand Equity in the Icelandic & Swedish market:
A perception-based application of Keller’s CBBE pyramid

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Name of student: Jannika Yasmine Lövendahl
Kennitala: 250990 – 4999
Supervisor: Dimo Dimov
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Name of author/authors, ID number:
Jannika Yasmine Lövendahl, 250990-4999

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Name of supervisor:
Dimo Dimov

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Abstract

This is a perception-based application of Kevin Lane Keller’s Customer-based brand equity (CBBE) Pyramid in two Nordic markets; Iceland and Sweden. The CBBE of the Icelandic craft beer brand Einstök was investigated through the chosen framework. Interviews with company representatives and focus groups with consumers from the target group the “Modern Viking” gave answers to the research questions; What are the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden?; Is the “Modern Viking” perceiving the brand identity of the brand in the same way as Einstök is trying to communicate it?; What are the most mentioned brand features/associations of the brand Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden? And What are the consumers’ experienced brand perception of Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

The findings from focus groups were first analysed through thematic analysis. The adjectives used to explain the Einstök brand was categorised into matching themes in form of mind maps. After the mind maps were created, a word cloud for each focus group was created. When the analysis was completed, the following answers could be withdrawn in order to answer the research questions;

Due to different level of exposure of the brand in the home market Iceland compared to the Swedish market; consumers show a different level of brand equity. Findings from the interviews with the company representatives show similarities in ways to express the brand identity of Einstök. The most common themes used by Icelandic consumers in order to explain the brand are attractive, authentic, Icelandic, reliable and tasty. Attractive, character, creative, Icelandic and quality are the most common words used by Swedish consumers when explaining the Einstök brand.

Keywords:

Customer-based Brand Equity, Focus Groups, Qualitative Study, Thematic Analysis, Craft Beer
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Thirdly, I would love to thank the two company representatives Guðjón Guðmundsson and Jack Sichterman for bringing me on board the Viking vessel of Einstök – It has been an amazing journey.

Figure 1: Kinnafjöll in Húsavík

And of course a huge thanks to Reykjavík University and my supervisor, Professor Dimo Dimov for being an important part in the process of bringing me to the top of the mountain by giving me the right tools to accomplish, what I think, has been a journey all the way to the top.

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Jannika Yasmine Lövendahl
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Chapter 1 (introduction)

1.0 Introduction

Craft beer is a worldwide trend where the experience of the product is in focus. The search for something special, new and brewed in a small scale has led to a revolution in the beer market. The beer is no longer just a drink on the side with food; beer tastings and factory tours are now offered around the world in order to create a beer experience and to live a brand, not only consume it (Campbell, 2005).

This research will investigate the brand Einstök that was founded in 2009 and is now the biggest exporter of beer in Iceland. The brand is currently available in 22 markets with plans to expand even more. Einstök has positioned themselves as a mainstream craft beer brand; a craft beer that does not require an acquired taste to enjoy. To be Icelandic is one of the most outstanding brand features.

“[…] many times, the identity of the brand gets lost along the way to the customer” (Madhavaram, Badrinarayanan & McDonald, 2005). This research is exploring this gap between the customer and the company through a Customer-based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework. While the area CBBE has been widely explored and researched, no research has been conducted and conceptualized around the relationship between CBBE and a perception-based approach to a theoretical CBBE framework. The research is based focus groups conducted in Iceland and Sweden where consumers share their perception of the brand Einstök. This research is the first of its kind and will create a deeper understanding for how to practically apply the CBBE framework in a customer perception-based marketing research.

The CBBE framework is applied to the Icelandic craft beer brand Einstök. Einstök is classifying themselves as a mainstream craft beer brand, created for people that want to go from traditional beer into the craft beer segment of the market. The brand elements were created according to the chosen target group “Modern Vikings”. The “Modern Viking” is a person with higher education, in the search for affordable and accessible
adventures. The target group is said to have the urge to conquer new places and leave them better than they found them.

The first chapter of this research is setting the base for the study with chosen research area and objectives. Chapter two, the literature review, is exploring two different CBBE in order to find the most suitable framework for this study. Chapter three explains in detail what methods have been used. Chapter four presents the findings from the research in form of mind maps and word clouds. The fifth chapter is discussing the findings, limitations, further studies and conclusions from the conducted study and recommendations for the company.

1.1 Objectives

The objectives with the following research are to explore the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden through the usage of a CBBE framework. The focus groups with the target group “Modern Vikings”, conducted in Iceland and Sweden will highlight the differences in brand equity between the two markets. Semi structured interviews will determine the viewpoint from the company. This study will also compare the differences between consumers’ brand perception and how the company wants consumers to perceive it.

1.2 Research area

The research area is divided into the following four research questions;

• What are the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden?

• Is the “Modern Viking” perceiving the brand identity of the brand in the same way as Einstök is trying to communicate it?

• What are the most mentioned brand features/associations of the brand Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

• What is the consumers’ experienced brand perception of Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?
Chapter 2 (literature review)

2.0 Introduction

The following research is investigating and comparing the brand equity of the Icelandic craft beer company Einstök in two operating markets; Iceland and Sweden. In order to capture and compare the feelings, thoughts and emotions from consumers and potential consumers, a united definition of Brand Equity is needed. There is a need to both define brand equity and customer-based brand equity (CBBE) and to find a suitable brand equity framework within the chosen subject. Starting with defining brand will lead to the different definitions of brand equity. In order to choose a brand equity framework mostly connected with the topic, two well-used brand equity frameworks are investigated.

This research will focus on narrowing a gap between several attempts of trying to create a framework capturing the customer-based brand equity from a perception standpoint; the feelings and opinions of both consumers and potential consumers. It is important as a marketer to manage brands from three aspects; financial perspective, customer perspective and employee perspective (Farjam & Hongyi, 2015). This research will also focus on capturing the emotional value of the brand equity instead of only gathering data through surveys, with already given answers that participants has to choose from. When narrowing this gap, it will be possible to use the CBBE-framework in order to determine the level of brand equity of a market through analysis of mentioned adjectives from consumers. Even though brand equity is a well-discussed topic and has been for more than twenty-five years, the emotional aspect of the subject is not well explored. As Kidwell et al, 2011) states; the subject has either been misunderstood or overlooked.

2.1 Brand terminology

The concept of branding started out as a way to mark and distinguish one owner’s cattle from another. Each owner had his own mark, brand, which later has been defined as logo or logotype (Bonchek & France, 2016). When focusing on branding as an
identification of a specific company, logo and design are the main distinguishers. This will reduce the risk of replication, which protects both customers and producers (Aaker, 1991). Branding can also be seen as a combination between input and output. The input is the branding made by the company and the output is the mental image consumers get of the brand based on the marketing. The intended brand communication is not always the perceived picture of consumers. “People interpret messages and images through their own perceptions, often with very different results.” (Chernatony, L., 2010a). The brand image can be described as a brand’s current brand associations whereas the brand identity can be seen as inspirational. The brand identity is a set of goals in the brand strategy of what the brand wants to stand for (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

2.2 Brand Equity & Customer-Based Brand Equity

Marketing is used to attract consumers through both tangible and intangible attributes. When putting brands into context, brand equity is a common used term. The subject brand equity is widely defined, yet hard to define because of the many different definitions of the same topic, focusing on different aspects of the subject brand equity. Below, in table 1, are the four most used definitions of brand equity summarized. Different definitions of the subject are used depending on the setting of usage. “As noted, brand equity has been defined in a variety of ways, depending on the particular purpose.” (Keller, 1993).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Definition of Brand Equity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vázquez et al., (2002)</td>
<td>The utility that the consumer associates to the use and consumption of the brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kotler and Keller (2006)</td>
<td>A bridge between the marketing investments in the company’s products to create the brands and the customers’ brand knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasin et al., (2007)</td>
<td>Consumers’ favoritism towards the focal brand in terms of their preference, purchase intention and choice among brands in a product category, that offers the same level of product benefits as perceived by the consumers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Definitions of Brand Equity
The significance of brand equity started over twenty-five years ago and both usage and definitions are getting wider. In table 1, a few of all brand equity definitions are listed. The mentioned brand equity definitions are all connected to the consumer viewpoint of the subject. Kevin Lane Keller (1993) is defining brand equity as “The differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand.” His definition is focusing on the two dimensions; brand awareness and brand image, which suits the purpose of this study. Consumer response is how the consumers react to the marketing, or in this case brand message of a brand.

Four brand equity definitions, which are mentioning the consumers, are found in recent research (table 1). Because of the many definitions and dimensions of what brand equity is, as many as eight dimensions of brand equity can be used (Mishra & Datta, 2011). Yasin’s definition is mentioning consumers but with the focus on comparing brands and consumers’ favouritism. Kotler and Keller (2006) are on the contrary defining brand equity as a bridge between investments and brand knowledge. Keller’s (1993) definition of brand equity is both aligned and with a focus on the consumer response and associations of the brand. This definition of what brand equity is, will create the base for this study. Keller (1993) is focusing mostly on the two dimensions of brand awareness and brand image in his study, which lead to his definition of brand equity. He has come to the conclusion that only when the consumer hold strong and favourable brand associations the customer-based brand equity can exist.

Keller (1993) is defining customer-based brand equity as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand”. Brand knowledge is a mixture of brand image, brand awareness, brand associations and the implications on the brand regarding to these factors. The consumer reactions to the chosen marketing mix are the consumer response. When conceptualizing and defining CBBE like this, the value of brands through marketing is set into focus and enables the marketers to create a strategy accordingly. Because CBBE is something created and evolved around a brand, it needs to be maintained and measured. Several frameworks are trying to capture the various factors important when building CBBE. Keller’s brand equity pyramid (Keller 1993; 2001) and Aaker’s brand equity framework (Aaker 1992;
1996) are two well-used CBBE-frameworks. Because these frameworks have shown significant usage in the creation of CBBE, the frameworks will be further investigated in order to determine which one best fits the purpose of this study (Kuhn et al, 2008).

It is not only important to define the subject, but also to put brand equity into context. The importance of the subject of brand equity is closely connected to customers’ willingness to a higher price for the products. When a customer has a positive connection to a brand, they are more willing to choose that brand instead of its competitors, recommend the brand to other potential consumers, make repeat purchases of the products they have tried before, and consider buying other products offered by the brand (Hutton, 1997). It is therefore important for companies to focus on having a high level of brand equity.

2.3 CBBE Frameworks

2.3.1 Keller’s Customer-based Brand Equity Pyramid

“The basic premise of the model is that the power of a brand lies in what customers have learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand over time” (Keller, 2001). Kevin Lane Keller is a renowned author within marketing and branding and his CBBE model is considered to be “[...] the most comprehensive brand equity model available” (Kuhn et al, 2008). Keller first defined consumer-based brand equity in 1993 as “an associative network on an individual level” where he also stated that the brand associations are like nodes in a network (Taleghani & Almasi, 2011). Keller’s definition of brand equity from 2003 is focusing on the differences in customer response to a marketing activity from a certain brand (Keller, 2003). Keller says that this is the foundation where the company is building an arena for consumers to form an opinion about the product or service provided.
As seen in figure 2; the pyramid consists of four stages with accompanying questions; 1. Brand Identity: Who are you?; 2. Brand Meaning: What are you?; 3. Brand Response: What about you?; 4. Brand Relationships: What about you and me?. The figure has also been described as a ladder because of the need of fulfilling step one before being able to move further up the steps in the framework. Kevin Lane Keller’s recipe to create a strong brand is by describing the six dimensions of brand equity; brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, consumer judgements, consumer feelings and brand resonance. Once all steps in the model are fulfilled, the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) of a brand is created.

2.3.1.1 Brand Identity: Who are you?

The first step, brand salience, is a part of understanding and describing the dimension of brand identity. This first step is also about creating brand awareness and finding what makes the brand stand out compared to competitors. “Who are you?” is the guideline question for the company in order to create a clear brand identity in the mind of the consumer (Kuhn et al, 2008). Brand identity is the foundation to build brand awareness and brand knowledge upon. It is through brand identity that a company or brand can show its distinctiveness compared to competitors (Srivastava, 2011). This is when the company is creating the image of how the customers will hopefully perceive the brand. Both brand identity and brand image are crucial ingredients in order to create and maintain a strong brand (Nandan, 2005). Brand salience is divided into two parts; depth
and width. When a consumer has a high level of brand salience, it will know about both the depth and width of a brand. Depth refers to how easily a brand is remembered and recalled whereas width is the measurement of the actual purchase decision (Keller, 1993). Once these parts are clear and fulfilled, it is possible for the brand to move up the ladder to step number two.

2.3.1.2 Brand Meaning: What are you?

Step two in the pyramid is the brand meaning, which consists of the parts brand performance and brand imagery. This is closely related to brand associations of consumers, you want to define what the brand stands for and what it means. When answering the question “What are you?”, the answers can be divided into two parts; tangible and intangible dimensions of a brand. The tangible dimension is referring to whether a consumer thinks that a product or service is performing. The intangible dimension is focusing on what consumers actually think about the brand. The first step to fulfil brand performance is to create a product or service which is adhering to consumer needs and not only fulfilling but is above and beyond the consumer expectations. Brand imagery is not a measurement of the actual functionality of a product or service; it is merely a way to see what meanings and values it is fulfilling among consumers. The foundation of brand loyalty is said to be set through unique and strong brand associations. The brand associations are created through two parts of brand imagery; indirect through advertising or direct through brand experience. Only when this layer is built on a solid foundation and answers the guideline question, the brand can move on to step three in the framework (Keller 1993; 2001).

2.3.1.3 Brand Response: What about you?

Step number three of the model is brand judgments and brand feelings and will answer the question “What about you?”. This is the focus on the rational aspects (brand judgments) and emotional aspects (brand feelings) of the consumer. Rational opinions are based on quality, reliability, superiority and consideration. Quality is based on both perceived and actual quality of the brand, reliability is based on how trustworthy the brand is perceived to be, superiority can be described as how well the brand is
comparing to competitors and consideration is whether a customer perceive the brand to be relevant to their needs. The consumer will create a specific opinion towards the brand based on the brand associations in step 2 of the pyramid. When the consumer has answered the question “What about me?” based on rational and emotional opinions, step number 3 is fulfilled and next step of the pyramid can be pursued.

2.3.1.4 Brand Relationships: What about you and me?

The fourth and last step in the framework is brand resonance. In this step, the consumer is evaluating whether they are ready for the commitment of brand loyalty when answering the question “What about you and me?”. “Brand resonance is the ultimate relationship between a brand and a consumer” (Keller, 2001). The brand relationship can be divided into four categories; behavioural loyalty, attitudinal loyalty, sense of community and active engagement. A customer can be considered to be brand loyal if it fulfils one or more of the categories listed above. Repeat purchases is a sign of behavioural loyalty. When a customer considers a purchase from your brand, it is a sign of attitudinal loyalty. When feeling a sense of community, the customer is feeling like a part of the brand or people associated with the brand. The strongest type of brand loyalty is shown among customers who are actively engaging with the brand, even when not consuming or purchasing it. The brand relationship cannot be created unless step one, two and three of the pyramid are fulfilled. Brand loyalty is positively related with brand equity. This means that customers has an easier time trusting a brand with a consistent brand equity (Lassar, Mittal & Sharma, 1995).

2.3.2 Conclusion of framework

This framework is suitable for research trying to capture both the rational and emotional aspects of brand equity with focus on consumers. The model is based on consumers perception when evaluating the brand equity of a certain brand or company (Kuhn et al, 2008). As Keller (1993) mentions; to conceptualize, measure and manage CBBE is to create a higher level of productivity within marketing. Because the pyramid consists of four stages, the differences in brand equity between the Icelandic and Swedish market can be identified through analysing focus group data through this framework.
2.3.3 Aaker’s Customer-Based Brand Equity Framework

According to Aaker (1992; 1996) brand equity consists of five main areas: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand assets. For each individual step, several ways to measure the dimension are mentioned. Aaker (1996) says that these dimensions are the perception of brands from a consumer viewpoint but can be applied to both products and across markets. Each step of the model (figure 3) will be discussed below.

![Figure 3: Aaker's CBBE Framework (Aaker, 1992)]

2.3.3.1 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is a core aspect of brand equity. It is important because the customer relationship is affecting the loyalty. When a customer has obtained the level of loyalty, they are less inspired to change into competing brands and more willing to pay price premium for the product or service provided by the brand (Aaker, 1996).
2.3.3.2 Brand Awareness

How strong the presence of a brand is in the mind of the consumer, that is how Aaker (2012) defines brand awareness. One of many ways to measure the presence in a consumer mind is “top of mind”; the first brand that comes to mind within a certain category of goods or services (Aaker, 1996). Because brand awareness creates a sense of familiarity, this can create a high repeat purchase level and customer loyalty (Aaker, 2012).

2.3.3.3 Perceived Quality

The perceived quality of a product is known to have an association with brand usage, price premium and is one of the core dimensions of brand equity (Aaker, 1996).

2.3.3.4 Brand Associations

Because brand associations are focusing on image, it is hard to find one measurement that will work across many product categories. Aaker is suggesting three classes or measurements in order to overcome or increase this bridge. The following measurements are suggested; the brand-as-product focusing on the value, the brand-as-person with main aspect brand personality and brand-as-organization where organizational brand associations are in focus (Aaker, 1996).

2.3.3.5 Brand Assets

The category of brand assets refers to competitive advantage such as distributor relationships, patents and trademarks (Aaker, 2012). The first competitive advantage; distributor relationships refers to a channel which can be indirectly controlled by a brand. The second competitive advantage; patents which can minimize or totally prevent direct competition. The final competitive advantage; trademarks can be used as protection from imitation of brand trademarks such as packaging, colours and logo (Ovidiu, 2005).
2.3.4 Conclusion of framework

As Aaker is mentioning in his article *Measuring Brand Equity Across Products and Markets* (1996), to measure all of the Brand Equity Ten will require a lot of different measurements. Aaker (2012) says that trying to pick one single measurement can cause a lack of dimensions and cause imbalance when reporting and tracking the value. His framework is created to both be focusing on markets and products. This framework can be considered to suit a more holistic view of a brand with no explicit focus on emotions. Half of the model; step two, three and four are the ones most applicable to the research being conducted. The suitability of the framework for this research is considered to be low.

2.4 Craft

2.4.1 Craft beer and craft brewers

There are two main types of beer; ales and lager. What differentiates the two types of beer is the fermentation process. The fermentation process is what turns the sugars in the malt into carbon dioxide and alcohol. Bottom-fermenting yeast is used when creating a lager and the fermentations is done at a low temperature in a fermenting vessel. “Authentic lagers then undergo a long period of cooled conditioning in special tanks.” (About real ale, 2014). Top-fermenting yeast is used when brewing ales. This type of yeast creates a thick head on the top of the fermenting vessel. Barley wines, bitters, golden ales, milds, old ales, stouts and porters are included in the ale category. The temperature is higher and the process is shorter compared to lagers. This vigorous method is considered to be the method of brewing traditional British beer.” (About real ale, 2014).

The American definition of being a craft brewer is containing three parts; small, independent and traditional. The production cannot exceed 6 million barrels per year, less than 25% of the ownership must be from a person within the alcoholic beverage industry, outside of the craft beer industry and “ A brewer that has a majority of its total beverage alcohol volume in beers whose flavour derives from traditional innovative brewing ingredients and their fermentation.” (Craft Brewer Definition, 2017). The
Brewers Association also has guidelines for different types of craft beers, which is updated yearly (Papazian, 2016).

One of the reasons why it is hard to find one united definition of what craft beer is, is because of the personal and subjective taste in beer (What is craft beer?, 2017). It is also difficult to define depending on ingredients because brewers like to experiment with different types flavours from coffee to chilli. It is also hard to define a craft beer due to the packaging. United Craft Brewers (UCB) are claiming to try to protect the British beer market by creating a definition of craft beer. The journalist, Tony Naylor, is on the other hand discussing whether this is a positive influence into the craft beer market or not. “Technical problems aside, however, I cannot help but think that any attempt to define craft beer is a retrograde step. The great thing about the craft upsurge is that it has made beer fans question everything.” (Naylor, 2015).

2.4.2 Craft consumers
Craft consumer is a growing consumer segment but far away from being a majority. The craft consumer is a target group focusing on the value of personal crafting within consumer products (Campbell, 2005). To find value outside of price such as feeling special and meaningful might be one of the reasons why the craft consumption is growing (6 Characteristics, 2015). The craft consumer segment does not exclude any social classes due to different levels of income, but people with a higher amount of disposable income might be more likely to be craft consumers. Middle-class and professionals are the main craft consumers and this can be due to the need for self-expression in an environment with decreasing creativeness (Campbell, 2005).

There is a strong connection between the millennial consumer and the craft consumer. A millennial is defined as a person born between the 1980s and the early 2000 (Moore, 2014). Advertising does not influence millennials to the same extent as previous generations; they read blogs before they purchase products, they want to engage with brands through social media, they are brand loyal and want the brands to give back to the society (Schawbel, 2015). There is a clear difference in preference among the traditional beer consumers and the target group of craft consumers, craft beer consumers or craft drinkers. The craft drinkers are, according to studies, more likely to
be a millennial and willing to pay price premium for high quality and for buying a product of a company with the “right” values (6 Characteristics, 2015).

According to millennials, craft beer is defined as a high quality, local, small and independent beer company. 55% of 21-34 year olds are craft beer drinkers according to a study made by Nielsen in 2015 (Craft Beer Drinkers, Yankelowich, 2010). The study also shows that 43% of the 21-34 year olds are more eager to buy a beer labelled as craft beer. 61% of the female participants drink craft beer and this shows an increase compared to previous studies (Tapped in, 2015). Millennials are not only often online and active on social media, they also want to be able to interact with brands and companies online. Even though millennials often have lower income and high student loans, craft beer companies with strong values are more important than the price to this target group. Research also shows that millennials seek affordable luxury and have a higher average education level with an anticipated high average income within 5 year of finishing their studies (see figure 4). The price is not in focus but additional value in terms of giving back to the community and co-creation with brands are the more important factors when choosing brands (6 Characteristics, 2015). Not only millennials are considered to be craft beer drinkers; 41.5% of the craft beer drinkers was in the age between 35 and 49 years old when the study was conducted five years ago (Murray & O'Neill, 2012).

Figure 4: The Craft Beer Drinker (The Craft Beer Drinker Infographic, 2016)
A craft drinker can also be defined as someone who says they drink a micro-brewed beer once a week or more often. 40% of craft beer drinkers are more likely to purchase a brand if the manufacturer is supporting a cause that the consumer cares about. 84% of the craft beer drinkers research products and services before purchasing them and 77% read product or store reviews posted online. Not only, are the cause of the brand and quality of services and goods are important to craft beer drinkers, 55% of the craft beer drinkers think it is important to buy brands that show that they are successful, compared to 36% of all beer drinkers. Compared to all beer drinkers, craft beer drinkers also show that they are more likely to post product reviews online and write their own blogs. 87% of the craft beer drinkers think that it is important to exercise at least three times per week, more than 30 minutes each time. Large amounts, 84%, of the craft beer drinkers are showing an interest for new experiences and influences from other cultures. (Craft Beer Drinkers, Yankelowich, 2010).

2.4.3 Craft beer markets

Iceland has a relatively low number of residents, below half a million in population. Sweden on the other hand has over 10 million inhabitants. The two countries are both Nordic, which means that they to a large extent have culture, language, history and geographical position in common. What the two countries also have in common are the governmental monopoly of the distribution and sales of alcohol. The researcher is conducting the study in the home market of the brand Einstök, Iceland as well as Sweden. Sweden will be a suitable complement to the study in Iceland. Sweden can be seen as a statistically close market to Iceland and is therefor a comparable market with Iceland in this research.

The population of Iceland is a total of 338,349 people as of the 1st of January, 2017 (Statistics Iceland, 27th of March, 2017). The political debate in the country led to a law prohibiting production, consumption and import of alcohol in Iceland between the years 1912 to 1922. Alcohol below 21% was then allowed to produce, buy and import but beer was still prohibited. Beer was not allowed until the 1st of March 1989, which is now called “The Beer Day” in Iceland and celebrated through drinking beer. There are
13 Vínbúðin stores in the capital region and 37 stores in the municipal regions across the country (About Vínbúðin, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sold beer in Iceland in liters by type</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lager beer</td>
<td>14 233</td>
<td>14 093</td>
<td>14 429</td>
<td>14 517</td>
<td>15 435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change (%)</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ale</td>
<td>164 917</td>
<td>281 116</td>
<td>395 100</td>
<td>484 052</td>
<td>564 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change (%)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other beer</td>
<td>67 681</td>
<td>103 483</td>
<td>146 046</td>
<td>244 552</td>
<td>364 903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change (%)</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total beer</td>
<td>14 466</td>
<td>14 477</td>
<td>14 971</td>
<td>15 245</td>
<td>16 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change (%)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of ale and other beer to total beer</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Statistics about the Icelandic Beer Market (Annual Report Vínbúðin 2014; 2016)

The total beer market in Iceland reached sales of 14.466154 litres in 2012, the sales reached 16.365341 litres in 2016. The sales of beer through Vínbúðin are divided into three categories; Lager beer, Ale and Other beer. A significant increase in sales of Ale is seen in the years 2013 and 2014 and between the years of 2012 and 2016 for Other beer (table 2).

The entire range of Einstök products are available in both the Vínbúðin stores and on their online page; Einstök Arctic Pale Ale in can and glass bottle, Einstök White Ale in can and glass bottle, Wee heavy and Einstök Toasted Porter in glass bottle. The products that are limited edition (Arctic Berry & Doppelbock) are only available for the chosen period of time (Available range at Vínbúðin, 2017).

The population in Sweden is nearing 10 million people (Statistiska centralbyrån, 27th of March, 2017). The average beer consumption per capita in Sweden 2014 was 48 litres (Sveriges Bryggerier, 31st of January, 2017). During the year of 2015, beverages containing alcohol was sold for 33 295 million Swedish kronors (SEK), whereas sales for 27 245 million SEK was made through Systembolaget (Swedish Statistical Database, 27th of March, 2017; Ansvarsredovisning, 27th of March, 2017). Systembolaget is the Swedish governmental monopoly selling alcoholic beverages in
Swed

en. Systembolaget was first started in the mid 1800’s and in 1955 it was spread all over the country. Today, Systembolaget is operating around 430 stores nationwide with an e-commerce website. 234 million litres of beer was sold in Sweden 2015, where the premium segment of the market accounted for 19.5 million litres. Premium beer is defined as beer with a price above 50 SEK per litre. The premium segment increased with 25% during the year of 2015. The premium segment was accounting for 5% of the sales in 2013 and 8% of sales in 2015. There were 70 registered craft beer breweries in Sweden 2013; this number was rising to a number of 170 breweries during 2015. The number of available craft beers in Systembolaget has more than doubled since 2013 when the number of craft beers was 631, that number was increased to 1327 items in the craft beer range in 2015. This shows an inclining trend in the craft beer segment of the Swedish market with significant changes in sales since 2013 (Poppels Bryggeri, Hantverksöl i Sverige, 2015).

Einstök is a part of both the online and in-store ordering assortment of Systembolaget. Einstök White Ale, Pale Ale and Toasted Porter are the available to order in boxes of 24 glass bottles (Systembolaget Einstök, 27th of March, 2017).

2.5 Einstök - Consumption creates preference

2.5.1 Conquering of the world - Markets and overall company information

“The Einstök Brewery is located just 60 miles south of the Arctic circle in the fishing port of Akureyri, Iceland. There, the water flows from rain and prehistoric glaciers down the Hlíðarfjall Mountain and through ancient lava fields, delivering the purest water on Earth, and the perfect foundation for brewing deliciously refreshing craft ales.” (Einstök Website, 2016). “Einstök Beer Company” was founded in 2009 by Jack Sichterman and David Altshuler. The ownership of the company is American. “Einstök Ölgerð ehf” is the Icelandic daughter company which was founded in Iceland by Jack Sichterman in 2009 (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 11th of April, 2017).

“So, how it started, David and I were in Iceland in, I believe it was 2009, and we were both consulting to another entrepreneur that wanted to start a luxury bottled water and
he looked all over the world for the best water in the world and found it in Iceland and not subjectively, he objectively looked at the water as far as purity, flavour, pH, all those things and found it in Iceland. The water is, as you’ve seen, it’s amazing, it’s abundant, it’s everywhere, ehm, out of the tap, it’s one of the best waters in the world.” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). There were major changes in the economy and to launch a luxury bottled water brand did not suit the market at that time. In the flight home, Jack Sichterman was looking through the in-flight magazine, all in Icelandic. He was looking for words that could make a good future brand name. “ [...] I was just looking for words that, first of all, looked good and second of all, that I could pronounce, because a lot of Icelandic words, you just can’t even pronounce [...]” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). He found a word that sounded good and looked good in one of the ads; Einstök. Jack asked one of the flight attendants what the word meant, when she told him that it meant unique, special or one of a kind, he thought it was perfect. Because of the Icelandic word, many people mispronounce the name. “[...] at least they are pronouncing it in a way that’s shareable and memorable and attaches to the name that’s on the bottle so ended up to be a big win [...]” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

The table below (table 3) is summarizing the name, positions and location of the Einstök employees. There are two Einstök offices in the world; the headquarters in the US, California, L.A. and one office in Reykjavík, Iceland. The job title “Street Viking” can be explained as an assisting sales force.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office of operations</th>
<th>Job title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Altshuler</td>
<td>L.A., California, US</td>
<td>CEO/ Co-Founder/ Business Developer/ Lawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Sichterman</td>
<td>L.A.</td>
<td>Founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Hoffman</td>
<td>L.A.</td>
<td>Vice President of Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Rose</td>
<td>L.A.</td>
<td>Social Media Marketing Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin Dearborn</td>
<td>L.A.</td>
<td>National Sales Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Ramos</td>
<td>L.A.</td>
<td>Street Viking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The organisational chart below (figure 5) shows the hierarchy of both Einstök Beer Company in L.A. and Einstök Ölgerð ehf in Iceland.

![Organisational Chart](image)

### Table 3: List of employees, placement & titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matt Berg</td>
<td>L.A.</td>
<td>Street Viking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gudjón Guðmundsson</td>
<td>Reykjavik, Iceland</td>
<td>Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.2 The Einstök World Map - Distribution & distributors

The coordinating of orders, shipments and final distribution is coordinated from California. The beer is shipped weekly, directly from the brewery in Akureyri via ocean freight with Samskip to the rest of the world (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 29th of March, 2017). The Einstök products are currently present in 22 markets (see figure 5); Austria, Belgium, China, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greenland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United states (New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Philadelphia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, California, Colorado) (Einstök 5th anniversary, 2016).
Einstök has an estimated market share of 2% in the off trade (governmental monopoly) and around 3% on the trade market (bars and restaurants). The market share of Einstök in markets outside of the Icelandic market is not measured because of its small share; less than a fraction of a percent. Total sales in 2016 reached a volume of approximately 3.2 million litres. Out of that volume was 43% of the sales in Iceland, 40% in the US and 17% in the European countries of sales (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 11th of April, 2017). Einstök faced a major increase in shipments during the first six months of 2015, with an increase of 250% compared to the year before. During the same period, Einstök was the largest exporter of alcoholic beverages in Iceland (Tim, 2015).

The distributors carrying Einstök as one of their brands are selected through a personal selection process. First of all, the distributors need to show a personal commitment and genuine interest of the brand. Einstök does not want to be just another brand in the pile of all the other brands a distributor has in its profile (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). “Our selection criteria is very much about who understands the craft beer business and who gets us. [...] we try to feed them stories and talk more about the brand and being an Icelandic beer brand and with this Viking heritage we can create quite a bit of stories.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).

2.5.3 Deliciously refreshing - The products and packaging

The White Ale, Arctic Pale Ale and the Toasted Porter were all launched at the same time in Iceland, in September 2011. This product range was also launched in the UK and the state of California before the end of the year 2011. Two of the products in the Einstök range; Einstök White Ale and Pale Ale can be seen in the figure below, displayed in glass bottles (figure 6).

The Arctic Berry Ale has been available in cans since 2015. The White Ale and Arctic Pale Ale were available in cans from April 2017 due to the growing demand for craft beer in cans. The demand for craft beer in cans was limited five years ago and is still very limited in some markets because many customers believe that bottles are more
premium (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 29th of March, 2017).

Figure 6: Einstök Products (Einstök Website, 2016)

From conceptual idea to product into market takes from one to two years. Baldur Karason, the Icelandic brew master has created all the beers Einstök are producing (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). Coca-Cola European Partners Ísland or CCEP are producing and distributing the beer on contract for Einstök Beer Company from the Einstök recipes (Saga fyrirtaekisins, 2017).

The entire range of Einstök beers are available on tap in all markets, except for Iceland where the Toasted Porter is not yet available on tap. The entire range can be found below (figure 7). The reason why is because CCEP, the distributor and brewery in Iceland, has a similar product on the market, the Viking Craft Selection Stout (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 29th of March, 2017).

Figure 7: Einstök Range (Einstök Website, 2016)
Einstök has won several awards with focus in the two big craft beer countries; UK and the US. The most outstanding awards won by each flavour of beer in the Einstök range is listed in the table below (table 4). The Arctic Berry Ale, Doppelbock and Winter Ale are all parts of the limited edition range of Einstök.

### List of awards per product

#### WHITE ALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White Ale</th>
<th>GOLD recipient - L.A. Commercial Beer Competition 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SILVER recipient - The International Beer Challenge London 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ARCTIC PALE ALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arctic Pale Ale</th>
<th>100 Best Things - GQ 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOLD recipient - San Diego International Beer Festival 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOLD recipient - Los Angeles International Beer Competition 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BRONZE recipient - The International Beer Challenge London 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd Place - Atlantic City Beer Festival 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### TOASTED PORTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toasted Porter</th>
<th>GOLD recipient - Los Angeles International Beer Competition 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SILVER recipient - The International Beer Challenge London 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meiningers International Craft Beer Award - Silber 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### WEE HEAVY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wee Heavy</th>
<th>Silver Class recipient at World Beer Idol 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93 Rating from The Bros at Beer Advocate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ARCTIC BERRY ALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arctic Berry Ale</th>
<th>None yet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
2.5.4 Einstök (one of a kind) marketing

The Einstök marketing strategy is focused on social media through Facebook and Instagram, PR and attending festivals and events displaying the craft beer. With a scarce marketing budget, Einstök is not focusing on traditional marketing such as direct marketing or placements (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

The company's Facebook page “Einstök beer” has 14,533 followers. The page was started in 2010 (Einstök Beer Facebook, 23rd of March, 2017). Because of the high activity of “fans” on social media their focus is to reply or react to all social media posts. It is a strict company policy to react to both positive and negative engagement from consumers (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Öllgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017; J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

Einstök has 14,096 followers on their Instagram account “Einstök beer” and the account was created in 2010. (Einstök Beer Instagram, 23rd of March, 2017). The followers are called “fans” because of the high level of engagement with the brand. Because the company has decided to focus on organic growth, the followers are acquired organically. (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Öllgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).
Through the social media channels Facebook and Instagram is Einstök trying to extend the brand character, the company is focusing on trying to “[...] sound like an old-school Viking in a modern world, encouraging you to conquer new experiences in this life.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölféh. 14th of February, 2017). “The consumers we love are the ones that connect emotionally with this modern Viking and our brand and make us part of their lifestyle because it makes them unique among the peer group and it’s something that helps them communicate their own personality.” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

Public relation is an important part of the marketing of the company. Einstök has been published in the Icelandic newspapers and magazines; The Reykjavik Grapevine, Morgunblaðið and Fréttablaðið. Einstök Beer Company donated beer for a pre-show tasting in honour of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Reykjavik Festival. The company is also donating beer in order to support various Icelandic artists, including Sigur Rós and Björk (Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, 2017). The White Ale was featured among a selection of Nordic beers on UK morning show, "Sunday Brunch." (Sunday Brunch Facebook, 2017). Einstök was also the official beer sponsor at the Petersen Automotive Museum's opening of the Harley vs. Indian Motorcycle exhibit. The company set up a booth for free beer tasting at the event and was also featured on all event promotion materials. (Petersen Automotive Museum, 2017). In honour of Iceland's Beer Day, the Einstök Wee Heavy was featured in the Reykjavik Grapevine (Quiz: What type of Icelandic beer should you try on beer day?, 2017). New York drinks magazine, VinePair named Einstök the #1 brewery in Iceland, according to Untappd data. The article highlighted the highest rated brewery in every country (VinePair, 2017).

Einstök is also focusing on Untappd, a craft beer app where users can check in and track what beers they have tasted and rate them. It is also possible to share the beers with contacts within the app. The users get incentives in form of badges when they try new types of beer recommended by the user data retrieved from the app. Additional features such as menus and local events are also available through the app. “UnTappd – Drink socially. Discover and share your favorite beer” (Untappd, 2017).
Einstök has 3850 followers on their Twitter account “Einstök Beer”. The account was created in 2010 (Einstök Beer Twitter, 27th of March, 2017). The distributors selling the beer and what locations the beers are available in, are also a part of the marketing strategy (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). “Getting the beer on the shelves in the right places, that’s the fundamentally most important thing we do.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017). A part of the communication strategy is also to have a simple story and brand proposition that is shareable which is the best kind of marketing (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

When attending festivals, the company representatives from Einstök have the possibility to give a personal presentation of the brand and stage the first encounter of Einstök. According to the brand. “[...] we have one or two sentences, you can actually get things through easily, it’s usually first about the beer, but if you get to say something about the brand, the first thing would be; being an Icelandic craft beer brand and people become interested and then you have the opening to talk a little bit about the brand.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017). Even though it is a part of the marketing strategy; Einstök company representatives do not have a specific amount of events that they attend each year. The company decide what events to attend depending on suitability of the brand and the social calendar of the year. A rough estimation is between 20 and 40 events and/or festivals per year, all over the world. Number of direct or indirect participation in different countries also varies. Direct participation is defined as where one or more company representatives are present and indirect participation where distributors are present (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 12th of April, 2017).

2.5.5 Drink. Conquer. Repeat. - The Einstök brand
The brand essence of Einstök can be captured through the saying, or battle cry “Drink. Conquer. Repeat” (figure 8). This saying is called a battle cry because of the personification of the brand as a Viking. When drinking the beer, it is about enjoying the crafted beer and drinking responsibly. Conquering is about conquering new experiences. The modern Viking is always on the look for new adventures and his goal
is to leave places better than he found them. Repeat is the last part of the saying because the conquering of life and new experiences is never fulfilled; life is a circle (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).

The brand is built upon three main factors; The pure and great water of Iceland, secondly the “[…] beautiful places and beautiful people and I think Iceland has the most beautiful people and the most beautiful places in the world so there’s that natural brand que.” and “Thirdly, in the most, kind of, important thing that big brewers use to market their products is sort of macho sense of ability and in Iceland we have Vikings and there is nothing more macho in the world than that and by one way or another, convergence aspect, right along that time too.” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

Einstök was developed from day one to be exportable, meaning that the name and brand would be applicable to markets outside of Iceland. The company also wanted to be well defined from the start in order to be successful in their home market Iceland. The iconography was created to be simple and have a great quality “[…] so that the rest of the world can consume it, understand it and relate to it.” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).

When creating the brand according to the statistics available in the American craft beer market, the founders decided to position Einstök as a mainstream craft beer brand. The products were created to target the volume segment of the craft beer market with a premium quality brand and products. The products was created to attract people that are new to craft beer and the flavours are supposed to be special without being an acquired taste (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017; J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017).
The brand logo (figure 9) is a male Viking wearing a helmet with horns. The reason why the logo is wearing this type of helmet is not based on history. “We didn’t teach the world that the Viking has horns but now, the world thinks that the Vikings has horns on their helmets so we want marketing to that perception, we’re not historians, we’re marketers.” (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). The brand logo was designed by award-winning label designer Tony Auston, Auston Design Group. He has also designed logos for brands such as Sierra Nevada, Diageo and Brown Foreman. The Einstök brand logo was designed to be visual and memorable, a clean design that will stand out amidst the cluttered labels of other craft brands. The iconic Viking logotype is ecognizable worldwide and provides a scalable system for future brand extensions. The battle-axe (see figure 7 & figure 8) provides a strong sub-logo that provides flexibility and opportunities for merchandising. The tap handle, labels and other Einstök merchandise have this sub-logo and brand feature on it (Einstök presentation, 2012). Being Icelandic is one of the major differentiators and outstanding features of the Einstök brand compared to competitors. The Viking brand icon and the Viking heritage of the brand are also important brand features to capture the essence of Einstök (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).

2.5.6 The Modern Viking - The Einstök target consumer

The Einstök target group is called the “Modern Viking”. This target group is based on collected data about the craft beer industry, foremost in the US. The target group is not further researched since the founding of the company (J. Sichterman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017). “The Modern Viking is more a way of life, it’s not only a
demographic, it’s also a psychographic. A way of defining the target. I refer to what I said earlier about the Drink. Conquer. Repeat. Discussion.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölígerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017). Jack Sichterman was using secondary data from the US craft beer industry in order to identify key trends and preferences of the target group that was most likely to adapt to foreign concepts. In order to stay true to the positioning of the brand, the Modern Viking is used as the backbone to all communication from entering a new market to social media posts (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölígerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017). The target group is created and maintained in order to stay focused and optimising the marketing and brand spend. The brand is created in order to be a noticeable brand for the modern Viking. The following story and quote is capturing the Einstök philosophy;

“It’s in so many ways, for me it’s kind of three things that needs to be working for a beer brand, or craft beer brand to succeed and I think we managed to hit all of them in this case. If we look at it from the consumers standpoint. How do they first notice the brand and as we don’t advertise much or do those things? It’s very much about when they see the bottle on the shelf, it sticks out, it’s the way, it’s the graphics, the visuals of the brand that first catches the eye. And of course I’m generalizing here, but I think it’s a very typical way a consumer interacts with the brand. The second would be, it’s a very strange concept, it’s hard in most languages to pronounce the name, it’s like in the US, they say Einstock and you know, all different ways of saying the brand. We have some Icelandic in there that says “Ölígerd”, which it says on the label, so people have no idea what that is and people become curious. They are intrigued about it, so that, in my opinion, raises a little bit the interest for the brand and helps with making the purchase decision for the first time. And for me, also with the first part, of creating the Viking as a very strong symbol and kind of sticks out. But then of course the beer needs to be okay, once you try it and you have a good beer. Those two other elements lead to purchase, then there’s a pretty good chance of people making a purchase and some repeat purchases.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölígerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).

To drink the Einstök beer is also a way for consumers to extend their personality to their friends. In many cases, consumers choose to buy the beer because they think it is a cool
brand and that is something that people like to be identified with. The modern Viking seek out new things, wants to try new things, are active on apps such as “Untappd” in order to find new beers and recommend to other craft beer drinkers. The brand elements of Einstök are attracting that target group and “[...] brand elements are helping a lot; as sticking out, being different, being pretty much the first beer people have seen from Iceland definitely helps us.” (G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).

2.6 Summary and conclusion of literature review

2.6.1 Summary and conclusion of CBBE Frameworks

As mentioned before; several definitions and frameworks have been developed for the topic of brand equity. In order to be able to capture the feelings of consumers and potential consumers of Einstök; interviews and focus groups are taking place. The CBBE framework is a way to capture and sort the emotions withdrawn from the chosen methods. Both Keller’s brand equity pyramid and his definition of brand equity are the ones chosen for this particular study. Like mentioned before, brand equity can be defined in many different ways depending on the purpose (Keller, 1993). After evaluating existing literature within the field, Keller’s investigations into brand equity are the ones most suitable for the purpose of this research.

The gaps and flaws of the literature are that the main focus is on measuring and capturing data through various KPI’s (Aaker, 1996). This research will focus on how consumers perceive the brand, with their own words. There is still a gap in the literature concerning the emotions of the consumer. This study will assist in creating a way to capture and analyse adjectives through a CBBE framework. Because brand equity is such a wide subject, several definitions are available (see table 1) which can cause a difference in results depending on what frameworks that are used throughout the study. Not only does the definition of the subject vary, the dimensions of brand equity that are in focus can vary from two to eight dimensions. Future studies might integrate several frameworks, dimensions and definitions from the CBBE subject to create one full-width way of investigating consumer viewpoints from a brand equity perspective.
2.6.2 Summary and conclusion of Craft (beers, brewers, consumers & markets)

Craft beer is hard to define, not only because of the content and packaging of the product. To agree on whether the definition is expanding or limiting the creation and brewers of craft beer; the revolutionist of the entire beer industry, is still an on-going debate. Different markets are also acting different, whereas the British and the American beer markets are showing different approaches. Statistics shows that the craft beer market is still growing in both Iceland and Sweden, two of the markets where the brand is operating. Einstök is not available in the stores of the governmental monopoly Systembolaget in Sweden, only through ordering of boxes containing 24 bottles. The brand has continuous shelf space in Vínbúðin, the Icelandic governmental monopoly.

2.6.3 Summary and conclusion of Einstök (company)

Einstök is a young, mainstream craft beer company with a clean brand look. Their focus is on making great beer, which is targeting subsets of the millennials. The founders of the brand found a gap in the craft beer market and applied it to the Icelandic market. Einstök is well positioned in the market according to the strategy of being a mainstream craft beer brand that is easily understood in order to work well in markets outside of Iceland. The brand has faced an exponential growth with shipments to 21 markets (excluding the home market of Iceland) in Europe, the US and Asia. The exponential growth is not resting on huge marketing investments but on strategic placement of the brand, focusing on social media and presence in events all over the world.
Chapter 3 (method)

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to find out the consumer perception, what the customers actually think about the brand Einstök and their products. The company is asking for a closer dialogue with its consumers. Interviews with the company highlight the background and create a benchmark for what the company want the brand to be perceived as, and will create a deeper understanding of the Einstök brand from the Founder’s and Managing Director’s point of view.

A combination between brand equity theories and topics of interests from the company will be the foundation for the focus group themes. The purpose of the focus groups is to find out consumer perceptions of the brand and highlight the difference in brand equity between the two markets Iceland and Sweden and the two different age groups; 25-39 years old and 40-55 years old. The themes gained from these data collecting methods will then be categorised and analysed through a thematic analyse. A thematic pattern will emerge from adjectives commonly used by consumers when describing the brand and products. The company wants to know what their consumers think about the brand and products. The focus groups will dig deeper into the consumer perception of the Einstök brand in Iceland and Sweden.

3.1 Objectives

The following method section will in detail go through the chosen methods in order to answer the purpose and research question of the study. The focus groups will answers the research area with the research questions; What are the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden?; Is “Modern Viking” perceiving the brand identity of the brand in the same way as Einstök is trying to communicate it?; What are the most mentioned brand features/associations of the brand Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden? And what is the consumers’ experienced brand perception of Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?
Thematic analysis will highlight the differences in consumer perception and brand equity between the chosen markets and age groups. Through analysing of the transcripts from the focus groups, thematic themes will be created. The adjectives and themes will later be used as a foundation for creation of mind maps. The themes from mind maps will be used in order to create word clouds, which will further highlight the most used adjectives from participants in the focus groups.

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Interviews as a qualitative research method

Interviews are commonly used between one qualified respondent, for example from a company and a moderator conducting research (Greenbaum, 1998). Semi-structured interviews was chosen as the most suitable method in order to gain knowledge about Einstök from the two chosen company representatives; the founder and the Managing Director. This research method was used both in order to get information about the company background, strategy and the operation methods.

3.2.3 Focus groups as a qualitative research method

Focus groups started to become a popular marketing research method in the 1960s but are said to be both misunderstood and controversial (Greenbaum, 1998). Focus groups as a research method are good in order to stay up to date with the emotions, thoughts, attitudes and buying impulses of consumers. Because of the focus of this study, focus groups are seen as the most suitable collection method of consumer emotions and perception of the Einstök brand.

There are different ways of categorise the different types of focus groups. A group discussion or focus group is a discussion for around 60 to 120 minutes with specifically chosen topics or themes. This research will contain both mini groups and full groups because of the varying number of participants. A mini group contains four to six participants whereas a full group has around eight to ten. The biggest difference between the two groups are the number of people participating. A mini-group has a higher average talking time per participant which according to some researchers create a
way to get more in-depth information from each individual (Greenbaum, 1998). Some researchers also say that it can be impossible to find more than six top-participants fitting the specific selection criteria (Kent, 1999). The trained moderator led the focus group discussions without interfering.

3.2.3 Thematic analysis as an analysis method

Thematic analysis was found to be a suitable analysis tool for the found adjectives from focus groups. Without a numeric scale, because of lack of application for this type study, a lack of marketing scales appeared. Many customer-based brand equity researches are quantitative studies. The reason why this study is filling a gap in the research is due to both the qualitative and consumer perception focus of this study. This study is based on the theoretical model of Keller where the parts of the model are filled with adjectives extracted from consumer focus groups.

3.3 Interviews

3.3.1 Usage of interviews in this study

The interviews were conducted with two representatives from the company; the founder and the Managing Director. Interviews were conducted before the focus group manual was created and focus groups took place in order to gain more background information and a deeper understanding of the brand, company, the products and the perception of their consumers. The focus group manual was based on the information gathered from the interviews in order to find connections between the chosen CBBE framework and Einstök. Once the interviews were transcribed, the focus group manual was created.

3.3.2 Interview manual

The interview manual (exhibit A) was based on Keller’s studies on brand equity, both from the article “Building Customer-Based Brand Equity: A Blueprint for Creating Strong Brands” (2001) and his brand equity pyramid. The themes of the interviews are divided according to the themes of the model; 1. Identity: Who are you?; 2. Meaning: What are you?; 3. Response: What about you?; 4. Relationships: What about you and me?. The answers during the interviews was discovering and revealing the company’s
view of the brand equity of Einstök. The interview manual was used in order to gain insight from the company through the CBBE framework.

3.3.3 Execution of interviews

Two semi-structured interviews took place whereas one was face to face and one was through Skype. Interviews took place on 14th of February with Gudjón Guðmundsson at the Einstök office in Reykjavik and the other interview on the 17th of February with Jack Sichterman through Skype at Reykjavik University. The same interview guide was used during both interviews. Both interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. The transcripts from the interviews were used to find common topics, associations, attributes, values and difficulties within the Einstök brand compared to the focus of Keller’s brand equity pyramid. These common themes were used in order to create the focus group manual with the main element brand equity of Einstök consumers.

3.4 Focus groups

3.4.1 Recruiting and sampling procedure

The sampling method for the focus groups was based on invitations through posters and personal invitations through Facebook. The reasoning behind the selected method was because the focus group should be craft beer consumers divided into two focus groups depending on age in both Iceland and Sweden. Posters, advertising and personal invitations are all well used recruitment tools for samples when conducting focus groups (Holbrook & Jackson, 1996). It is not only important to select participants depending on their demographics, but also on their contribution to a good discussion within the topic. Because many of the participants were unknown to the researcher before the focus group, it was hard to know whether the participants would contribute to the discussion or not. There is no certain type of incentive in order to get the right participants for the research. When advertising the study, the researcher made a conscious decision of not mentioning the incentives, even though focus groups are the most common marketing research method to get paid to participate in (Greenbaum, 1998). To also invite potential participants through Facebook was ensuring enough
participants in the focus groups in Sweden due to geographic hindrance, limited time in the country and restricted means.

The sampling and recruitment process of focus groups are not widely discussed in the literature. As long as the recruited participants are within the chosen characteristics of the research, the participant is considered to be suitable. How the participants are recruited is not criticised in the sampling process for focus groups (Greenbaum, 1998). If the participant is a friend, relative or unknown to the researcher is not seen as an obstacle for the research thus this might have an impact on the attitude of the participant. Whether to have a group of people that knows each other and has already formed its own group with internal history, jokes and stories or select random participants only depending on the selection criteria of the research, is an on-going discussion (MacDougall & Fudge, 2001).

In groups 1, 3 and 4, participants knew at least one other participant, there was one person in focus group 2 not knowing anyone else. Some researchers argue that an already consisting group can give a biased answer with too homogeneous answers and too much agreement among participants. Other researchers argue that an already existing group have an easier time sharing their personal opinion without filtering answers and the group can easier get into a deeper discussion within the chosen topic (MacDougall & Fudge, 2001). The researcher did a conscious decision to not put any emphasis on whether the participants know each other or not. This decision was based on lack of importance to the purpose of the study. In order to reduce the risk of shyness or lack of expression of opinions and comments from participants was to include two questions where participants anonymously wrote their answers on pieces of papers and handed them to the researcher.

3.4.2 Selection process

There are two questions that should be initially asked when preparing the selection of participants in focus groups; Who is it that the researcher need to reach and communicate with?; and What key characteristics are important when choosing participants, a homogeneous or heterogeneous group? (Kent, 1999). The most important
characteristics of participants are chosen because of important attributes for the research such as demographics, buying patterns, common interests or attitudes. When selecting the participants in the focus group study, it was important that they were applicable to the research; that they are of drinking age, and are consumers of beer within the selected markets Iceland and Sweden. The legal drinking age in Iceland is 20 and 18 in Sweden. Based on data from previous studies on craft beer drinkers in both England and the US, the suitable age focus group participants was from the age 25, born 1992 to 55 year olds (born 1962). Data from studies conducted in England and the US shows that the craft beer drinker can be a millennial but also an older demographic. No sufficient studies have been made in the Nordic countries to base the craft beer age groups on. The study executed in England is somewhat applicable to the Nordics because of similarities in culture, size and distance compared to the US (Murray & O'Neill, 2012).

A version of the invitation poster was put up in selected spots in the city Reykjavik in Iceland and in the city Lund in Sweden. The poster was put up in places where the suitable demographic was socializing. The craft beer drinker is as mentioned, concerned about its appearance and work out on average three times per week and has an average educational level of a bachelor degree. This is why places like gyms and universities are suitable locations to put up posters to attract the chosen demographic (Campbell, 2005). The poster invited potential participants through the text “Are you a craft beer drinker in the age 25-55 years old?”. Depending on which country the participant is a resident in, the Facebook group was different. “Craft Beer Study Iceland” and “Craft Beer Study Sweden” are the Facebook groups created for poster.

The researcher decided to make a narrow selection by asking for craft beer drinkers and not only beer drinkers. To display the Reykjavik University logo on the poster was also a conscious decision in order to create a higher validity and reliability for people considering joining the study. The incentives of the study were not mentioned on the poster in order to create a group of participants driven by their interest of craft beer and not from the incentives. The incentive given to each participant after participating was beer from the Einstök product range.
After joining the Facebook group, the potential participants had to fill out a screening questionnaire with the following questions; 1. Are you a beer drinker?, 2. Are you a craft beer drinker?, 3. What year are you born (only able to select from 1962 - 1992), 4. What is your gender?, 5. How often do you drink Craft beer?, 6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?, 7. What is your average monthly income?, 8. What is your email address? “Your personal invitation, if selected to participate, will be sent to this email address!” This questionnaire will determine if the person is fulfilling the criteria for the research. The free software SurveyMonkey was used in order to collect the data from potential participants. Only potential participants fulfilling the criteria of the research were manually invited to participate in the study.

The selected participants in each country were divided into two groups depending on age (25-39 years old and 40-55 years old). The screening questionnaire determined the suitability and diversity of the samples for each focus group. The potential participants needed to fill out their email address at the end of the questionnaire; this email address was used in order to send a personal invite to the participants of each focus group. It was not until this stage that the potential participant would get further information about time, place, incentives and reason for the study. The questionnaire for the Icelandic potential participants was posted in the Facebook group 16 days before the execution of the first focus group in Iceland and 22 days before the execution of the second focus group in Iceland. An exact copy of the questionnaire for the Swedish potential participants was posted 15 days before conducting the first focus group in Sweden and 16 days before the second.

3.4.3 Characteristics of participants, from screening questionnaire

All participants answered the screening questionnaire. The first question was an eliminating question, all potential participants that answered no to this question was automatically excluded from the research. The first question asked potential participants “Are you a beer drinker?”, because of the excluding factor, 100% of the answers from the 22 participants was yes, they are beer drinkers (see figure 10). The second question of the survey was asking whether the participant was a craft beer drinker. 18
participants answered yes, 3 answered that they have no preference and one participant answered no (see figure 11).

The third question in the screening questionnaire asked what year the participant was born. 2 participants were born on each of the years of; 1992, 1990, 1988, 1987, 1985, 1977, 1976, 1969 and 1962. 1 participant was born on each of the years of 1991, 1971 and 1965. The participants are evenly spread out through the chosen age spectrum from the age 25 to 55 years old (see figure 12).
Question number four in the screening questionnaire was asking the participants about their gender. The participants had three options; male, female and prefer not to answer. 20 of the participants were male and two of the participants were females. Non of the participants preferred not to answer (see figure 13). Question number five asked participants how often they drink craft beer. 7 participants answered that they drink craft beer several times per week, 6 participants once a week, 5 participants every other week, 3 participants once a month and 1 participant more seldom (see figure 14).

Question number six asked participants about their highest level of education that they have completed. Out of the total 22 participants; 9 participants answered high school, 8 participants bachelor degree, 4 participants answered master degree and one of the participants answered Ph. D (see figure 15). Question number 7 asked participants about their average monthly income. This was not a compelled question due to level of sensitivity. 21 of the participants answered the question, one person choose not to answer. 6 participants answered that their average monthly income was 300.001-400.000 ISK, 4 participants answered 0-100.000 ISK, 3 participants answered 100.001-200.000 ISK, 2 participants answered 200.001-300.000 ISK, 2 participants answered 500.001-600.000 ISK, 2 participants answered 700.000 ISK - above, 1 participant answered 400.001-500.000 ISK and 1 participant answered 600.001-700.000 (see figure 16).
The table below (table 5) is summarizing the average age, percentage of gender, average education level and average monthly income both within each individual focus group and also a complete average of all participants. A total number of two females participated in the research, both of them was participants in focus group number one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group 1 (25-39 year olds, Iceland)</th>
<th>Average age</th>
<th>% Gender</th>
<th>Average education level</th>
<th>Average monthly income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.71 years old</td>
<td>71.43% males / 28.57% females</td>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>200.001 - 300.000 ISK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group 2 (40-55 year olds, Iceland)</td>
<td>46.66 years old</td>
<td>100% males</td>
<td>Bachelor/master degree</td>
<td>600.001 - 700.000 ISK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group 3 (25-39 year olds, Sweden)</td>
<td>29.50 years old</td>
<td>100% males</td>
<td>Bachelor/master degree</td>
<td>100.001 - 200.000 ISK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group 4 (40-55 year olds, Sweden)</td>
<td>47.20 years old</td>
<td>100% males</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>300.001 - 400.000 ISK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average for all:</th>
<th>Average age</th>
<th>% Gender</th>
<th>Average education level</th>
<th>Average monthly income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.77 years old</td>
<td>90.91% males / 9.01% females</td>
<td>40.91% High school, 36.36% Bachelor, 18.18% Master, 4.55% Ph.D.</td>
<td>300.001 - 400.000 ISK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Average age, gender, education level & income of participants
As seen in findings from the screening questionnaire, the participant data is consistent with previous studies about the craft beer consumers. The educational level of focus group participants is an outstanding result compared to the analysis of millennials and craft consumers. According to the findings presented in figure 3, only 27.8% of the craft beer consumers has an educational level below a Bachelor’s degree whereas the screening questionnaire results of this research (table 5) shows 40.91%.

3.4.4 Process of inviting potential participants

Potential participants were invited through the email they mentioned through the screening questionnaire. After receiving the invitation with attached Focus group invitation letter (exhibit C), participants that did not confirm participation received a reminder to the same email address a few days prior to the conduction date of the planned focus group. The percentage of households with an Internet connection is 94,0% and 96,0% in Sweden and Iceland respectfully, along with 90% using Facebook daily in both countries (Connectivity Executive Summary, 2015). To use Facebook as a way to gather the focus group, invite and update them on the focus group is a valid choice because of the age group and the high percentage of daily Facebook users. Data also shows that 54% of the age group 46-55 year olds in Sweden use Facebook daily (Sweden: Daily Facebook Users, 2016; Connectivity Executive Summary, 2015).

3.4.5 Usage of focus groups in this study

Focus groups were conducted in two markets; Iceland and Sweden. The participants in Iceland were selected in the Reykjavik area through the mentioned sampling and recruitment process. When selecting participants in Sweden, the sample was automatically from the south of Sweden because of the placement of posters and personal invites through Facebook. Two focus groups was conducted in each country, whereas one was from a slightly older demographic (40-55 years old) and one group from a younger demographic (25-39 years old). The reason why, is because the demographic the “Modern Viking” is a wide and not a widely researched target group. The “Modern Viking” target group is a mixture of demographic and psychographic with focus on a subset of millennials. The characteristics are based on statistics from the
American craft beer market. The demographic point of view is people in the age of 25 to 55 with higher education. When targeting for marketing, the age of 30 to 40 years old is the chosen segment of the target group to be considered. The psychographic is focusing on people with sophisticated taste, down to earth, adventurous, speaking a few languages and has travelled above average. (J. Sicherman, Founder, 17th of February, 2017; G. Guðmundsson, Managing Director, Einstök Ölgerð ehf., 14th of February, 2017).

The target group is with a wide range, with the age of 25 to 55 years old. First of all, the focus groups will be divided depending on age, 25 to 39 year old and 40 to 55 year olds. Because Iceland is the home market, to compare to a bigger and less explored and exploited Nordic company will be a good benchmark. The researcher wants to be able to compare and contrast depending on countries. This research is focusing on differences in brand equity; in consumer perception, preferences and opinions (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

3.4.6 Focus group manual

Marketing scales are often numeric scales suitable for questionnaires or interviews, which will need an exact number to analyse through a data analysis program (Greenbaum, 1998). These scales are not fitting this study because the purpose is to research what values, attitudes and emotions the consumers have about the brand. The questions in the focus group manual are focused on giving the researcher adjectives explaining Einstök. There are no predetermined answers to each question being asked, only preselected broader themes. The themes are based on Keller’s brand equity pyramid and the questions asked during each step (1. Identity: Who are you?; 2. Meaning: What are you?; 3. Response: What about you?; 4. Relationships: What about you and me?). It is recommended to not include too many questions in the focus group because this can cause shallow information. It is recommended to create around 12 questions for the focus group manual (Krueger & Casey, 2002). The focus group manual created and used for this particular study (see exhibit D) is containing 10 questions about the main theme excluding the two introductory questions. Two of the focus group questions included making the participants write five words on a note,
anonymously describing, first themselves and their personality and then five words describing Einstök as a brand or their products (exhibit D).

The order of questions changed slightly depending on the group. In some discussions, participants were discussing several topics at the same time and in some groups, the discussion needed more direction and guidance. When creating the questions for the focus group manual, the researcher was trying to create conversational questions with vocabulary the participants themselves would use but still remain focused on the theoretical perspective of brand equity. It is also important to create short, easy and open-ended questions (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

3.4.7 Execution of focus group

This study conducted focus groups with number of participants ranging from four to seven (see table 6). All the participants filled out the screening questionnaire before participating in the study. All potential participants were also invited through the researcher’s personal email, to the email they mentioned in the screening questionnaire. A reminder was sent to all signed up participants on the day of the answering deadline mentioned in the invitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: 7 participants</th>
<th>Group 2: 6 participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 3: 4 participants</td>
<td>Group 4: 5 participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Number of participants

The first focus group, 25-39 year olds in Iceland, took place on Thursday the 23rd of February with seven participants. The average age of the focus group participants was 27,71 years old. Group participants were from five different countries; Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the US and Germany which of all were students at Reykjavík University, either exchange or full-time students at both bachelor and master level. The second focus group taking place was 40-55 year olds in Iceland. This group took place on the 1st of March. The average age of this group was 46.66 years old. One participant was from the U.S. and the rest of the participants were Icelandic. Both of the focus groups in Iceland took place in the Einstök office in Reykjavík. The focus group took place in a
conference room with a circular table so that all participants could easily engage and hear each other.

The third focus group took place in Sweden with 25-39 year olds on the 7th of March. The average age in the group was 29.50 years old. All the participants have been living in Sweden for the major part of their lives and having Swedish as their first language. This focus group took place in the common room in the basement of a student house in Lund. All of the participants were familiar with this location before participating in the focus group. The fourth focus group, 40-55 year olds in Sweden was conducted on the 8th of March. All the participants joining the study were Swedish. This focus group took place in Staffanstorp, a village outside of Lund in the dining room of a private house. This location was used due to the calm and private setting, which most of the participants was familiar with since before. The computer or phone was located on the table but not used during the conduction of the focus groups. The moderator took notes of observations and comments.

The participants were greeted with non-alcoholic beverages and snacks to the room where the focus groups were going to take place. Participants could then sit down and wait for all participants to arrive. In front of each participant, a pen and a small notepad were located. All participants were asked to write their name on one of the notes and stick to their shirt. Participants could choose whether they wanted to use their first name or a nickname. The nametag helped participants to remember names of other participants and the moderator. The audio recording through the computer and the phone started once all participants were seated, had a nametag and were served snacks and beverages. The audio recording through the computer was done through the software Quicktime player and the application “Audio Recorder” was used when recording the audio with the smartphone.

The setup during part of the focus groups with the beer tasting was varying from countries. During the first two focus groups, the participants could try the beer in whatever order they wanted to and the focus was not on the difference in taste between the different types of beer. During the two later focus groups, conducted in Sweden, another setup was used. After the brand was introduced, the participants got three
bottles of Einstök beer in front of them; White Ale, Arctic Pale Ale and Toasted Porter. The participants then tasted the beers in the mentioned order above, starting with the lightest taste in the range and ending with the heaviest taste. This change was due to the beer interest of participants, the knowledge gained about the importance of tasting order of the beer and questions asked by participants about how and when to taste the different types of beer.

During the two last focus groups, two notes were prepared; one with the headline “Personality” and the numbers one to five, the second note had the headline “Explaining Einstök” and the numbers one to five. This setup was also changed due to confusion from participants about how many words and what exactly they would explain. In order to make participants familiar with the concept of writing down five words on a piece of paper and hand into the moderator, the researcher choose the first question to be about writing down words about their own personality. This question can be seen as more simple because it is related to themselves and not to an external product. The second time the participants were asked to write down five words on a piece of paper with a certain topic, they were familiar with the procedure and could focus on the associations between adjectives they think explains the brand Einstök.

After the participation, the participants got Einstök beer as an incentive for their participation. The incentive was unknown for the participants before the executions of the research. Because the selection process is mentioning alcohol consumption during the focus group (exhibit B, focus group inviting poster; exhibit C, focus group invitation letter), and the participants are of legal drinking age, this gift was suitable for the participants.

3.5 Thematic analysis

Once the data collection through interviews and focus groups was conducted, a thematic analysis of the answers was performed on the transcribed data. The thematic analysis has taken an inductive content analysis approach where the data collected was taking form depending on the results and not has a pre-decided theoretical categorization. There are six phases is the thematic analysis; 1. Familiarizing yourself with your data;
2. Generating initial codes; 3. Searching for themes; 4. Reviewing themes; 5. Defining and naming themes; 6. Producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The steps of the analysis is described in detail below;

3.5.1 Familiarizing yourself with your data

In step one, all data collected through interviews and focus groups was transcribed. To transcribe was not only the process of putting the verbal communication into text but also a way to familiarize with the content. Because the researcher was the one forming interview questions, creating focus group manual and collecting the data, she has prior knowledge within the subject. The data was then read, re-read and this was the start of the thematic analysis. Codes later formed the candidate themes. The researcher found deeper meanings and connection within the data set. Qualitative studies usually have a smaller data set than for example questionnaires because of the time-consuming analysis of the content. The researcher followed recommendations and made notes during the active reading as a start to the second phase; initial coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.5.2 Generating initial codes

During the first stage, transcription, initial notes and ideas of coding themes were written down. The second phase started by creating initial codes, which created organized groups according to mentioned features or elements in the data. Coding was done both manually by printing the transcripts and underlined with pens in different colours. When coding, the search for as many patterns or themes as possible was done through the entire data set. It was hard to place all adjectives into themes but tension between patterns or themes should not be ignored or overlooked. This was the phase in which the start of the final thematic map was created (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.5.3 Searching for themes

When the process of initial coding and comparison was finished, identification of themes among the codes was further organised and identified. This created a pattern on how different codes fit together across the entire data set. A broader thematic map was created in order to fit codes into candidate themes including sub-themes. Codes that did
not match the rest of the candidate themes and sub-themes were not discarded at this early stage (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Even if it is important to create themes and review them in several stages, it is also important to keep the vision on the analysis open. “If qualitative data are compressed too much, the very point of maintaining the integrity of narrative materials during the analysis phase becomes lost.” (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

3.5.4 Reviewing themes

The forth phase included two sets of reviewing of themes. In the first step, the initial candidate themes of grouped codes were reviewed. Some candidate themes were discarded because of a lack of data and because of homogeneity between several themes (see further information in chapter 4, findings). It was not possible to move on until a candidate thematic map was created. In the second step, the researcher was going through the same review but for the entire data set. The validity of the data is based on the entire data set and candidate themes. The question; “Is this an adequate representation of the data set?” needs to be answered. This phase created the story of the data with the overall themes and how they all fit together. The refinements stopped when the adjustments did no longer add anything substantial (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.5.5 Defining and naming themes

The fifth phase was about finding the essence of each theme through refining and defining. The themes stayed both diverse and consistent without being too complex. The themes chosen was either a single word used on several occasions or a word suitable for a group of similar words (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The mind maps were created, both for each focus group (exhibit E, F, G & H) and one mind map highlighting the main themes of Einstök (figure 21). The software XMind was used when creating the mind maps.

3.5.6 Producing the report

When the themes of the analysis and the thematic map were fully created and described in the beginning of this final phase of the thematic analysis. A full list of the chosen themes is shown under chapter 4, findings where arguments and the story of the data set is explained (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
3.6 Reliability and validity

3.6.1 Possible implications with interviews as a method

The interviewer was the researcher of the study. She was also the one creating the interview manual and was gathering all data for the study. The positive aspect was that the researcher got a holistic view of the project. Unfortunately, can this also create a biased viewpoint with little or no external input to the researcher’s interpretation of the data. Another possible implication might be that participants during the conducted interviews with company representatives have wanted to give the “right answers” which can give ambiguous or even refined answers. The founder of the company can also give nuanced answers due to being the creator of the company, brand and its products. The founder has also done analysis of the market and is still involved in the strategy and development of the company. The combination of insights to the company and their view of the brand and company in combination with the view, reaction and attitude of consumers will get a two-pointed and more neutral view. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to get further insight into the brand and its products. Because the researcher asked for the founder’s and the Managing Director's point of view, whether the opinion of the answers was biased or not, would create little or no difference in data collected from the interviews.

The researcher, which also acted as the interviewer decided to mention a short definition of what brand identity is, in the question “What kind of identity does Einstök have? (def. brand identity: how a business wants to be perceived by consumers)” (Keller, 1993). Several definitions of what brand identity entails and what it really is are available; this means that different people have different perceptions of what brand identity is. To mention a short definition may or may not affect the answer of the respondent. The respondent might answer according to his or her own perceptions of brand identity or might try to answer according to the mentioned definition. Because the interview questions are not revealed before the interview is taking place, the respondent does not have any time to prepare for changes like the one just mentioned.
3.6.2 Possible implications of focus groups as a method

The moderator is supposed to be trained and have previous experience for the most accurate result. This might affect the results of the focus group and cause certain topics to not be deeply discussed when needed because of lack of experience. Unlike an interviewer, the moderator will say as little as possible but makes sure that the group is staying within the frames of the chosen research topics or themes. To stay within the frames of the topics can also be particularly challenging when executing the research due to lack of expertise (Kent, 1999). The author will take on the role as moderator throughout the focus group studies. This is the best fitting solution due to the author’s insight into the topic and purpose of the study. The author is usually the one conducting the research herself when it comes to studies like this one, research on a master level. The moderator conducting the focus groups in this study is not experienced in executing focus groups. The moderator is merely educated in theory about how to execute and lead this type of research, which can cause implications to the research method. The researcher is, as mentioned, taking on the role as both the interviewer, moderator of the focus groups and analysing the material. The researcher therefore also did the translations from Swedish into English from focus group 4.

The focus groups have been a way to observe and get closer both to the existing consumers of Einstök and potential future consumers of the brand. To have a mix of consumers that has either encountered the brand before and has a set of attitudes and opinions about the brand people that were completely unaware of the brand's existence before the research has proven to be valuable. The goal is to compare and contrast consumers in Iceland with consumers in Sweden and analyse where these consumers will be placed in the four steps of the CBBE pyramid.

3.6.3 Possible implications of selection process

Because of the long selection process, a high percentage of dropouts may have occurred. The poster was the selected recruiting method in order to find, for the researcher, unknown consumers and potential focus group participants. The placement of posters was to a high degree determining the selection sample. The brand remained
unknown for the participants until halfway through the focus group, this might have caused confusion for the participants. The reason why the brand stayed unknown was in order to create less biased answers. Another way to conduct focus groups for the brand could be to discuss it with educated craft beer drinkers that know about the brand and the products beforehand. That method would on the other hand not suit this particular study because of the purpose of getting to know the brand perception of consumers.

3.6.4 Possible implications with screening questionnaire

Validity of the screening questionnaire is mainly depending on the questions asked, but also in what format the questionnaire is delivered (Greenbaum, 1996). The questions asked were based on the objectives of the final research; to gain consumer brand perceptions of Einstök. The age and whether the potential participant was a beer drinker were most determining characteristics. Questions about average monthly income, gender and education level are asked in order to compare with previous gathered data about the target group craft beer drinkers. The question asked about how often a person is consuming craft beer was added due to a request from the company. It was possible to choose the answer “wish to answer”.

3.6.5 Possible implication of thematic analysis as a tool

When analysing the transcripts from the interviews, some information might be excluded do to the human factor when extracting adjectives and topics of interest. When using thematic analysis, the themes will be based on what the researcher perceive as the most important themes and what adjectives fits under the chosen themes. The researcher and her perception of which words are matched together will also create the sub-groups.

3.7 Summary

This research is based on interviews, screening questionnaires, focus groups and thematic analysis. The methods have been used as a way to gather data about consumer preferences in both the Icelandic and Swedish market. The interviews were conducted company representatives with an interview manual based on Keller’s CBBE Pyramid.
Potential participants went through a selection process based on whether they were beer drinkers and was within the age 25 to 55 years old. Potential participants either found a poster or got personally invited to a Facebook group. Once invited to the Facebook group, they had to fill in a screening questionnaire. After filling out the screening questionnaire, if suitable for the research, the potential participant received an email with more details about the study. The focus group manual (exhibit D) was based on information withdrawn from the interviews and the Keller CBBE Pyramid.

After conducting the focus groups in both Iceland and Sweden, a thematic analysis was conducted on the transcripts. The thematic analysis was summarised in mind maps and thereafter into word clouds. Findings and figures are presented in the following chapter; findings.
Chapter 4 (findings)

4.0 Introduction
This finding section will highlight the adjectives used to explain either Einstök as a brand or their products. These words are extracted from the transcripts from the four focus groups conducted in Iceland and Sweden with craft beer drinkers. There were no right or wrong answers to the questions asked to consumers, only opinions, feelings, associations and attachments to Einstök.

4.1 Research area
This research has the main objective of looking into the brand equity of Einstök in Iceland and Sweden through focus groups. The focus group manual is derived from the themes of the CBBE pyramid of Keller. This research is conducting an analysis of adjectives derived from the data gathered through the data collecting method focus groups. Because of the inductive content analysis approach, there is a research focus but no single research question to answer. The thematic analysis will highlight the major themes mentioned by consumers throughout the research.

4.3 Findings from interviews

4.3.1 Interview 1 (Guðjón Guðmundsson)
Adjectives used to explain Einstök when asked the question “If Einstök would be a person or have a personality, what would it be? How would you describe it?” is summarised in table 7 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality of Einstök</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to conquer new experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Interview 1, adjectives explaining Einstök

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travelled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not snobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down to earth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 Interview 2 (Jack Sichterman)

When being asked the question “If Einstök would be a person or have a personality, how would you describe it?” the respondent answered the adjectives summarized in the table below (table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality of Einstök</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventurous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wants to explore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find new things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go places and leave them better than he found them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking forward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Interview 2, adjectives explaining Einstök
4.4 Findings from focus groups

The findings from the four focus groups were collected adjectives from the transcripts. The adjectives were directly categorized depending on when a participant was mentioning the adjective. Each question in the focus group manual (exhibit D) is belonging to one of the steps in the Keller pyramid (step 1: Brand Identity, 2. Brand Meaning, 3. Brand Response and 4. Brand Relationship). After the adjectives were withdrawn from the transcripts they were categorised into themes depending on the CBBE pyramid by Keller. After the themes were created they were put into a mind map with the help of the software XMind. After the mind maps were created, one word cloud was created for each focus group. These word clouds highlight the most used adjectives to describe Einstök. Figures and further explanations of findings are presented later in this chapter.

All the themes found within the data set is listed in alphabetic order in the table below (table 9). Themes number 7, 10, 13, 17 and 18 are marked with strikethrough because these themes were excluded from the final version of the thematic analyse presented in the mind maps (exhibits E, F, G & H). The themes marked with strike-through were excluded because lack of sufficient data representing the theme created at an initial stage of the analysis process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr. of theme</th>
<th>Name of theme</th>
<th>Nr. of theme</th>
<th>Name of theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Accessible</td>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Icelandic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Attractive</td>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Likeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Authentic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Mainstream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Minimalistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme number one; accessible was mentioned both as an accessible brand which a wide range of people could connect to and that the products are accessible in many bars and restaurants. The beer is also accessible in the Icelandic governmental monopoly. The second theme; adventurous is connected both to the target group “Modern Viking” and that the image of the brand is considered to be adventurous, even consumers explained themselves as adventurous (see tables 10, 11, 12 & 13). Attractive, the third theme, is closely related to both the brand and its design and the products themselves. Many participants mentioned that the design of the logo, design of labels and other brand features attracted them to the brand in the first place (see tables 10, 11, 12 & 13). The fourth theme; Authentic was derived from being true to the heritage and origin of the brand. Cautious was a mentioned adjective by several participants when explaining themselves (see tables 10, 11, 12 & 13) but also about the product range not being bold (see tables 10, 11, 12 & 13). Both the brand with many of its features and the taste of the products were described as being creative (see tables 10, 11, 12 & 13). Determined was mentioned when participants explained both themselves and the growth of Einstök. Energetic is a theme derived from participants’ comments about themselves and how the brand is perceived. Flavoursome was strictly mentioned as a feature of the taste of the products. Icelandic being one of the main features of the brand heritage was also mentioned at a high rate by participants. Likeable was a word used when describing.
how the participants felt about Einstök as a brand. Mainstream was one of the adjectives used both to explain the positioning in the market and the flavours of the beers (see table 10 & 11).

A word that participants used when explaining themselves was professional and therefore a good theme to explain the “Modern Viking”. Quality of the products, how the brand is breathing quality by the choice of colours, details and placement of products was a well-mentioned theme throughout all focus groups. Participants mentioned Einstök as a reliable brand, that you know what you get, it is a certain standard without being too much and therefore suitable in many occasions. Sociable is a chosen theme due to participants mentioning that it is a drink they usually or potentially would consume among friends, at parties or other social gatherings. The last chosen theme was tasty because of the many times participants mentioned that the beer is just that; tasty.

4.4.1 Focus group 1; Iceland (25-39 year olds)

A mind map was created to withdraw themes from the transcripts (see exhibit E), after the mind map was created; a word cloud was conducted for focus group 1. The word cloud is summarizing themes and highlighting according to size, the bigger a word is; the more is it used during the focus group. Tasty, Icelandic and authentic are the three most outstanding words in the word cloud summarizing the themes from focus group 1 (see figure 17 below).

![Figure 17: Word Cloud, focus group 1](image-url)
Table 10 below is a summary of important comments from participants from the first focus group. The table is also highlighting the atmosphere of the group when including parts of conversations. The number of quotes from each participant is not a representation of the amount of time the participant was talking during the focus group. The quotes are presented in the order it was said during the research. (Participants 1-7, focus group 1, 23rd of February, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group 1 23rd of February, 2017</th>
<th>Participant (P)</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1, P5 &amp; P6 (part of conversation)</td>
<td>P5:</td>
<td>It feels very iconic for Iceland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P6:</td>
<td>Yeah, it really does. It has a good name and great layout and I think they made a lot of effort into making a good logo and that attracts you, absolutely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P1:</td>
<td>Yeah, I agree, like especially the white ale, like when you go into Vínbúðin and kinda like, it pops out, yeah ehm I think it’s just really, it’s got a really clean look, it definitely stands out compared to all other beers on the shelf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P6:</td>
<td>But it feels like they want to build a brand with the typical Icelandic nature and eh, I haven’t seen any commercials but you can almost imagine how it would look if they were to make a new commercial video for TV or, not TV but, you can almost see the waterfalls and the beers standing on a rock with the cold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P6:</td>
<td>It feels like it’s an old brand, a natural product in some way, it feels like the mother of beers of Iceland for me. We have the same thing, a Swedish beer, they have the same feeling, this is the first one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P6:</td>
<td>Eh, because of, actually I think that the beer could be less good but you can still be proud of it because it has a great logo and you can just imagine how nice it would taste just by looking at it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P7:</td>
<td>But if you see the Viking on Gull, it’s kind of cheap and then you see the Einstök logo and you think, yeah this is good beer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P6:</td>
<td>I would like to add something to the discussion because why I think it’s so successful in other countries, I think that people from other countries think that it is kind of unique because of the small island, the small population, and kind of, yeah, and because of the nature too, because of the isolated island in the middle of the middle Atlantic ocean. It feels like a unique product, I think that’s why also it’s so successful in such a short time, from the start.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P7:</td>
<td>I buy it because I’ve tried it and really enjoy it. The first time I just bought it because I wanted to try something new, something Icelandic, a beer. That’s basically it and I stuck to it because it was really nice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P4:</td>
<td>I think now I would buy it when I’m, when I would be somewhere abroad because it would remind me, like I would remember my time here and that’s why I would buy it somewhere.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
P2: I think I would buy it because I can be sure it’s good even though it would be a type that I haven’t tasted before.

P5: I was going to say the same thing, I think I would, I would try a new Einstök just because I know that it’s going to be a certain quality even though it might be a different type or a different flavour.

P6 & P7 (part of conversation)

P6: It might sounds ridiculous but if you drink this, I usually send snapchats to my friends back home because they also like the name because of the translation but also the logo and ehm, I feel like, not proud but this, I don’t know how to explain this..

P7: That kind of status?

P6: Yeah, yeah, could be! Yeah, could be, it’s more status to snapchat on the brand than a Gull beer…

P1- P7: (group laughing)

P6: I don’t know, it’s difficult to say!

P7: I’ve spent some money tonight and I’m going to drink some quality beer. (laughing) It’s kind of a status thing, like if you show a 10-pack of Gull or you bring a 6-pack of Einstök, yeah, it says something about, like, not your personality but identity, I think, you wouldn’t feel ashamed, kind of putting it in the middle of the table like, yeah!

P5: I feel like you could always bring Einstök and it would be appropriate, you would never feel like, you know, you would probably spend more than someone else but I think you would feel comfortable just because of the quality, I can’t think of a situation where it wouldn’t be received well if you show up with Einstök.

P2, P5 & P7 (part of conversation)

P7: It was kind of like when I went to the hot river and we were just bringing a couple of beers because we wanted to enjoy ourselves, I bought Einstök. And that was like yeah, we are going to enjoy ourselves.

P2: Relief, when you see it in the shelf, uh, nice, there it is, I know something and I know it’s good.

P5: Like an old friend!

P2: It’s like an old friend, yeah!

P6: And every bar we’ve been to so far, almost everyone has Einstök on tap or in bottle but it still feels like, when you walk into a bar, you expect the bar to have Einstök and it still feels unique and yeah, they’ve got this.

P6: I think it’s a brand that they, the country can be really proud of, they’ve done their marketing, the “logo-ing”, the successful way to, you can almost understand what country it is from the logo and even the text if you just put out Icelandic.

P1, P5 & P6 (part of conversation)

P5: It would be cool if there was a brewery or something, some place you could go to.

P1: A tasting room or something.

P5: Yeah, like a Einstök place of some sort. Because I know that a lot of the craft beers in the U.S, the brewery itself is kind of a big deal and people kind of make a program out of the factory, Shoots or whatever brand it is, ehm, just to experience the source to the beer that I find everywhere, in the liquor store or whatever, so that’s the only thing I think to me is where it comes from, other than, like it says on the label, Akureyri. But maybe that’s just because I haven’t been...
P6: Maybe that’s making it even more unique, that it’s not from Reykjavik, you have to go to another place to find it.

Table 10: Highlighted quotes from focus group 1

Many of the participants in focus group 1 were foreign exchange students. The origin of participants did not create any outstanding answers when compared to the answers from other conducted focus groups in this study. A large amount of the participants had encountered the Einstök brand and tasted the Einstök beer in Iceland. This outstanding feature will be discussed more in chapter 5 (discussion).

4.4.2 Focus group 2; Iceland (40-55 year olds)

The word cloud conducted for the second focus group is highlighting the most used adjectives; Reliable, authentic and attractive are the three most outstanding themes from focus group 2 (figure 18). The word cloud is based on the mind map in exhibit F.

![Word Cloud, focus group 2](image)

Figure 18: Word Cloud, focus group 2

The table below (table 11) is a summary of commonly used comments in focus group 2. These comments are also showing significant value for further analysis. The number of quotes from a participant is not representing total talking time during focus group. (Participants 8-13, 1st of March, 2017).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group 2</th>
<th>1st of March, 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant (P)</td>
<td>Quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>I don’t think it, well when I first started drinking Einstök, I thought it was really, really good but when I started to enjoy drinking beer more and more. I don’t think they are keeping up with all of the high-class craft beers. I think they are falling a bit behind. I think they are good but just.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Yes, because when I was in Florida, they were selling Einstök there and people really liked it there. Looking at them, they are extremely well designed but lacking a bit of nerves moving forwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Some of the craft beers are an acquired taste, like the sour beers, you have to, eh, start somewhere but with Einstök you could probably just start anywhere within the range they have. So it’s accessible, it’s not that, non of them are not repulsive or hard to... Mainstream yes, but not an acquired taste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>I’m thinking of Einstök as being an Icelandic beer and I would think of it primarily as being an Icelandic, I know it’s not a national beer, but you know, if I would get it anywhere outside of Iceland, I would think that yeah, that’s the Icelandic beer. And it would be The Icelandic beer in my mind, partly that’s partly because of the name, partly because of the label, partly it’s because it’s very accessible here in Iceland and it’s accessible outside of Iceland as well. So if I was in the United State and somebody said; what are Icelandic beers like? Well (holding up the bottle).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>And that’s most likely what I would recommend that they’d try. And it’s not necessarily The beer of Iceland, it’s one which I’m familiar with and I could recommend it, understand that it’s Icelandic and I would have fulfilled my mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>I think they, it’s a clever, these guys are clever because, it’s not in any sense an Icelandic beer apart from it’s just being brewed in Iceland then being exported from Iceland. I mean, the owners, you know, the brewers and everything is foreign, so I mean, they are smart people, you know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Repetitive quality. You always get the same, you know. I buy this Arctic Pale Ale a lot, it’s a nice beer, everybody drinks it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Above mainstream brands and little bit lower, in the middle of the...micro... it’s a craft beer, it’s not a microbrewery and they are not mainstream, they are somewhere in between.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>But it’s not challenging. Not demanding or challenging. That’s the thing. Just nice, easy and if you like beer, really do like beer, you want to go to the next level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>I can almost say that this Arctic Pale Ale is probably my best friend and I travel a lot and when I go through the duty free, I always pick up that beer because there is not a lot of choices when it comes to craft beer in the duty free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>That’s the thing, their palette and their logo are just 100%, that’s why you want to buy them in the first place! They just look like quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Being special without being too hard to say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>The gateway drug is basically that you go to a bar and you get a taster and then you buy it at Vinbúðin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Like you said before. This is starting to be the Icelandic, solid brand. People know that this is good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
P12 | It’s reliable, you know what you get.
---|---
P9  | You know, I identify myself with this because everything is well-designed.
P9  | I was thinking about honesty, but you know, it’s obviously, no I’m going to, I’m not going to say that because this is not honest. It’s an American owner that are pretending to be Icelandic.
P11 | It’s good for Iceland of course; they’ve actually put Iceland on the map when it comes to beer!
P11 | We’re always scared that the money is going out of the country instead of in one pocket somewhere in Iceland, it’s going into a pocket somewhere else. You know, some people think that it’s better to have all of the money in Iceland, which is true but, you know.
P8  | They are doing that very well, turning that craft beer cult into mainstream products. I think that is what they are doing and I think that they are doing it quite well, which is admirable.

Table 11: Highlighted quotes from focus group 2

4.4.3 Focus group 3; Sweden (25-39 year olds)

The word cloud below (figure 19) is a summary of all the themes used from focus group 3. The themes are based on the mentioned adjectives during the conduction of the focus group (see exhibit G). The most used themes in this focus group, and therefore the most outstanding words in the word cloud are; Icelandic, attractive, creative and quality.

![Figure 19: Word Cloud, focus group 3](image)
The table below (table 12) is a summary of quotes and parts of the conversation that is in need of highlight as a part of the findings from the focus group. The order of quotes is following the order of the conversation whereas number of quotes per participants is not a representation of talking time during the focus group (Participants 14-17, focus group 3, 7th of March, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group 3</th>
<th>7th of March, 2017</th>
<th>Participant (P)</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P15</td>
<td>It’s probably a beer that quite a few girls would like because it’s very light and still a bit like a drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P16</td>
<td>But I think this is a very good, like, if you want to get into beer, this is a pretty good way of doing it. They are not too extreme, any of them but they are still very complex in their taste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P14</td>
<td>You have to have a certain palate to enjoy this type of beers. I had problems learning to like normal beers so I’m still working on this part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P15</td>
<td>All three of them are complex in their own way so they really show that they really care about it and try to make something that stands out. It’s not like every other beer. They really want to just stand out and actually be something special.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P17</td>
<td>I would say, first of all, it’s kind of interesting to drink a beer from Iceland. I’ve seen that they captured the history of the Vikings as well. I noticed on the label that there was, that they put the north and west longitude and latitude and I have no idea why. But of course, that is the area where they brew it, I guess, and I guess it’s a local… I think that there is a clothing brand that has this north/west that has this as well. This I’m a little bit skeptic about but as a person… If you first go with the labeling. The first, with the white ale, it’s kind of like “wine-ish” labeling on it. It seems like a wine and I guess the one getting this, first of all, wants to try something different and especially, all of these beers have some kind of weird twist to it, just like coriander and orange peel and yeah, like the Arctic Pale Ale instead of the American Pale Ale, that’s also, roasted coffee - there is a couple of beers that has this but I still think that the person is a little bit nerd-ish about beer and hipster-ish about it, someone that wants to try something different. It doesn’t feel like it’s a beer that you buy a lot of, just for a party night, it’s more like you buy it at a restaurant, you will find this kind of beer where there are enthusiasts and it kind of attract that kind of people as well, yeah hipsters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P17</td>
<td>No! I think this is very interesting, from a design perspective, because of the labels, because there are a very nice walk-through of the brand of the beer, which I like a lot, not representative to how they taste, they’re so very distinct and different in how they taste. I really like these beers and the minimalistic visual identity, is not bland but minimalistic. It’s a bit funny, because that goes well with the hipster personality but when beers taste this much, they tend to be more visual, the labels, than these are, which I think is a contradiction but is also funny because, me, being a bit of a hipster, I really enjoy the minimalistic look but I also enjoy the complex flavours of the beers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 12: Highlighted quotes from focus group 3

**4.4.4 Focus group 4; Sweden (40-55 year olds)**

The word cloud is a summary of the adjectives used the most by the participants in focus group number four (see figure 20). Character, attractive and quality are the three most outstanding words in the word cloud due to the highest usage in the mind map (exhibit H).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>And they have like nothing there, only one city! It feels like Iceland when I see this label. Just one quick note, the middle one (pale ale) doesn’t have as much fun information here, so I think, this might not be updated yet or they, the first one, I don’t really know about, I really like dark one, that’s where they get the humour just right and the first one (white ale) is a little bit dry, second one has nothing at all, the information is not in the same place. You want more fun, I really like Oatly here in Sweden, things that are serious right now, they just step back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>If you would go with a big bottle, then it would be more appropriate as a present, for a dinner, you don’t come with a six-pack but if you come with a bunch and put on the table, it gives more of an exclusive feeling when you have a big bottle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>I’d say that it’s a bit funny, it is a bit serious like you guys said, I really, it’s fun with the serious look of the Viking and the very minimalistic labeling and it’s so nerdy that you almost have a perfect froth of the beer, it’s one thing if, a good beer and with the froth, that’s just amazing for me. And then they have this, we don’t take ourselves too seriously, on the backside, which makes it, it sort of gathers it, some labels you have that one thing, they don’t have, they embrace so much more than just one niche.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14, P16 &amp; P17</td>
<td>P17: But I think it’s like you said, quite important for a label, think I wrote it on the note, the impression is cold, it’s an Icelandic beer, it’s cold. Also, you get a cold impression. You need the warmth to get a cosy feeling to it. In the back you see the people behind it, the people are…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>People!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>Yeah, people and you feel that connection, eh, and work with that kind of contrast is also.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>It’s good marketing, tough versus the …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P16</td>
<td>There is a pretty cold touch to it, due to the minimalistic visual language. Just if you look at the labels here. The colours are…fucking ice!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>That’s what I like about the bottle; it’s so simple and not trying hard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13 is a summary of outstanding quotes from focus group 4. The focus group was conducted in Sweden due to request from participants. Mark that the translation is made by the researcher, which native tongue is Swedish (Participants 18-22, focus group 4, 8th of March, 2017). The table below has the original Swedish quotes followed by the English translation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group 4</th>
<th>8th of March, 2017 (conducted in Swedish, translated by moderator/researcher)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant (P)</td>
<td>Quote (first in Swedish, followed by English translation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P19</td>
<td>Frågan är om vi gjort rätt, vi skulle haft större glas och sparat grundsatsen, för där är en grundsats i ölen, då ska man hälla allt och sen ska du skaka den och sen ska man slå på det. The question is if we have done right, we should have had bigger glasses and saved the RESIDUE, because there is a RESIDUE in the beer, then you should pour almost everything and then shake it and then pour it on the top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P20</td>
<td>Sen är det Trevligt när det är mindre kolsyra. Jag tycker att det är Trevligare med mindre kolsyra. Then it is nice with less carbonation. I think it is nicer with less carbonation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>En kvalitetsöl ska aldrig vara på burk, så enkelt är det! Den ska vara på glas! A qualitative beer should never be in a can, simple as that! It should be in glass!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P20</td>
<td>Burk är ju fattigmansöl men ska man dricka många så är det ju lättare med burk. Can is poor people's beer but if you are going to drink many it is easier with can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P20</td>
<td>Inte en värsting IPA men väldigt god. Perfekt till mat. Härlig beska!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20: Word Cloud, focus group 4
Not a badass IPA but very tasty. Perfect with food. Lovely bitterness!


No, it's wholesome in itself. Quality improvement element in my own time is this one, If I am only drinking one. In my time for me, when I really want to enjoy. But if you like this about watching sports and you sit there and you feel good.

Förpackningen motsvarar inte smaken.

The packaging does not correspond to the flavor.

Känns ungt och fräscht och kvalitativt.

Feels young and fresh and qualitative.


Well a young brand, which has high quality beer with the wide spectrum, you have to think that it is pretty damn impressive. I think so at least. They have found so right.

Jag hade köpt dem i helt olika syften. Denna är helt klart godast enligt mina smaklökar (white ale), skulle jag dricka jättemånga, då hade jag valt denna (pale ale), det är den andra för tung för, för grötig för att dricka många. Denna (pale ale) är mer lättdrucken. Denna (toasted porter) är mer en efterrättsöl som man dricker en av.

I had bought them in completely different purposes. This is by far the tastiest according to my taste buds (white ale). if I was to drink very many, I would have chosen this (pale ale), the other one is too heavy for, too mushy to drink a lot of. This (pale ale) is easier to drink. This (toasted porter) is more of a dessert beer, which you only drink one of.

Nej men finns det inte mer än som att beställa så är det ju häftigt, är man ute på puben och det inte finns, då är det ju lite häftigt att rekommendera det till någon ju, för att det här är ju någonting man provat och det är ju rätt häftigt ju. Det är ju lite kul ju, och då hade man ju dundrat till med portern där ju, om man skulle imponera riktigt ordentligt.

No but if it is only available to order then it is cool, if you are out in a pub and it is not available, then it is a little cool to recommend to someone, because this is something that I have tried and that is pretty cool. It is a little fun, and then you would have "thundered" on with the porter, if you where to really impress.

Värden för mig inom varumärken och företagsvärlden kan ju även vara abstrakta begrepp och här har man då lagt ner mödan och som du säger, letat upp världens renaste vatten. Jag kan tänka mig då att en av deras värdegrunder ska då vara att de ska ha en så ren produkt som möjligt med så lite kemikalier som möjligt och tillsatser. Det är nog något som kan tillsvara ett stort och brett spektrum av potentiella köpare.
Values for me in brands and companies around the world can of course also be abstract concepts, and since they have put the effort and as you say, looking up the world's purest water. I imagine then that one of their core values will then be for them to have as pure of a product as possible with as few chemicals as possible and additives. It is probably something that can appeal to a large and broad range of potential buyers.

If you put this effort in and consider the costs that it might bring, then you have a little bit like that ambitions are firmly rooted in the company and its values. It is a vast market only with water. It is a good selling point with the water, it should be emphasized.

I have to say that I would have felt pretty calm actually, like you would not need to be worried about what whether people would like it or say or think, if you know that the people at the dinner party are drinking beer and likes beer, appreciate good beer.

4.5 Observations throughout the focus groups

In the first focus group, all participants had encountered the brand and tasted at least one of their products before. In the second focus group, the major part of the focus group had encountered the brand before. None of the participants in the third focus group had seen the Einstök brand or tasted the products before the participation in the study. The major part of participants in the fourth focus group had never seen the Einstök brand or products before the research took place.

Few of the Icelandic participants in the two first focus groups were focused on the information on the bottles. When the brand was revealed, they took a look at the different flavours of beers and choose the one they wanted to drink. The participants in Sweden on the other hand, focused a lot on the information on the bottles, judged the beer both in quality of taste and packaging information. The compared and contrasted information, the colours was highly interested in the Icelandic heritage aspect of the brand. When the brand was revealed after a few introductory questions of the focus group, a brief introduction of the brand was given (see exhibit H). When the moderator
was reading the introduction of the company, the participants in focus group three and four (conducted in Sweden) was commenting on why the water was not more highlighted on the bottles as a selling point or argument for purchase.

4.7 Summary

The conscious decision to analyse the data was with a focus on describing words and adjectives that consumers are using throughout the focus groups in order to explain both Einstök as a brand and as products. There is no differentiation whether consumers are explaining the brand or the products because the brand equity and consumer perception of Einstök as a whole is in focus in this study.

The findings below (figure 21) show the overall themes of the brand equity of Einstök from a consumer perspective. The mind map is first showing the four steps of the Keller pyramid, which is later divided into major themes, these themes was based on the mentioned adjectives during the conducted focus groups. In order to create the mind maps, the software XMind was used.

After the mind maps was created both for each individual focus group and one for the overall groups, word clouds were created. One word cloud was created for each focus group where the number of times the words was mentioned was determining the size of the word in the cloud. One overall word cloud was created to summarise the most highlighted themes throughout the research. The findings will be discussed in further detail in chapter 5, where comparisons are made of answers between age groups and between countries.
In the word cloud below (figure 22) is a summary of the most mentioned themes within adjectives explaining Einstök as a brand. These words are extracted from the transcripts from the focus groups. All the adjectives were divided into groups, separately in all four focus groups. When analysing the main themes over all focus groups, the most commonly used themes throughout the adjectives withdrawn from the transcripts from the focus groups was; **attractive** (total number of 66 words within this category), **authentic** (42 words), **quality** (28 words), **Icelandic** (26 words), **likeable** (26 words), **tasty** (20 words), **character** (19 words), **reliable** (19 words), **flavoursome** (17 words),

Figure 21: Mind map of main themes of Einstök
adventurous (total of 16 words), cautious (12 words), accessible (11 words), professional (9 words), determined (9 words), creative (8 words), sociable (8 words) and mainstream (7 words). Themes used five or fewer times were excluded from the final analysis of the themes. The excluded themes was; outgoing (mentioned 5 times), minimalistic (mentioned 3 times), easy-going (mentioned 3 times), complex (2 times) and hipster (1 time).

Figure 22: Word Cloud, summary of Einstök

The word cloud above (figure 22) is summarizing the findings from the brand equity study of Einstök and the withdrawn adjectives from all research elements conducted with consumers. This is a result showing that the ten most common ways for the consumers to describe Einstök are; attractive, authentic, quality, Icelandic, likeable, tasty, character, reliable, flavoursome and adventurous.
Chapter 5 (discussion)

5.0 Introduction

The discussion chapter is comparing and contrasting findings from conducted methods with the used theories. The results extracted from the interviews and focus groups are also going to be compared between countries of conduction. The first four headlines are connecting the research questions with the discussion in order to explore the answers further.

5.1 Discussion of research questions

5.1.1 What are the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden?

The CBBE pyramid by Keller was chosen as a tool and framework in order to compare the brand equity between Iceland and Sweden. The framework was chosen because of the suitability with the study, which is focusing on emotions, perception and opinions of participants. The following discussion with the Keller CBBE pyramid is highlighting the differences and discussing on what step of the pyramid the two countries are positioned.

Step 1; Brand Identity

In order to create a brand of reference, groups in Sweden were focusing on finding a beer brand in the Swedish market to compare the Einstök brand with as a possible competitor. This is a sign of the participants going through the purchasing path and decision-making process leading them to create a scenario of deciding when and if they would purchase the products. Consumers in the focus groups conducted in Iceland could instead give examples to when they purchase the brand (table 10 & 11).

Step 2; Brand Meaning

The brand meaning is perceived differently in the two researched markets. Iceland is showing a high level of reliability, attachments to the design and categorising the brand as value for money (see table 10 & 11). Due to the lack of brand exposure, the Swedish focus groups are lacking the trust and have a hard time connecting the quality of the
brand with the high level of price (see table 12 & 13). The Swedish focus groups are therefore not fulfilling the step of brand meaning. Because of the shown interest in the products, the consumers are showing significant potential for Einstök in the Swedish market.

Due to the target group of the Modern Viking being a subset of the millennials, data is showing that it is important to give back to the community. A way to create and connect consumers with the brand meaning, is to give back to the community and Iceland as a market and country. Einstök could connect with organisations that favour the industry, which the company is in, for example agriculture or farming associations (Schawbel, 2015).

Step 3; Brand Response

Einstök is showing a positive brand response based on judgments and adjectives connected to the brand. Judgments are based on four categories; Superiority, credibility, quality and consideration. Participants from Iceland are connecting to all categories of brand response (see table 10 & 11). Participants from the Swedish focus groups are on the other hand struggling connecting their reactions, judgements and feelings to anything outside of the focus groups due to lack of brand exposure (see table 12 & 13). Consumers are said to be responding to the brand based on how it makes them feel (Schawbel, 2015). That mentioned adjectives about Einstök are positive is showing a good connection to the brand. That the brand is adhering to positive emotions is a foundation to create a relationship with consumers in order for them to stay brand loyal.

Step 4; Brand Relationship

Brand loyal customers are only found in the Icelandic market according the results from this research and according to the steps in the CBBE pyramid. A majority of the participants in focus groups 1 and 2, conducted in Iceland are behavioural loyal where repeat purchases takes place (see table 10 & 11). Even though a major part of the participants in focus group 1 are exchange students, they are still showing a high level of brand relationship. Only a few of the participants in focus group 1 could be seen as having attitudinal loyalty to the brand where every purchase of Einstök is seen as
special. Several of the participants were mentioning to be actively engaging with the brand through social media. Participants in focus group 1 was showing signs of feeling a sense of community where they feel like being “in the same group” as other people purchasing Einstök products but only within an already existing group of friends. There was no signs of Swedish consumers being loyal to the brand because of lack of interaction with the brand. There is still potential to create loyal consumers due to positive brand reactions.

5.1.2 Is the “Modern Viking” perceiving the brand identity of the brand in the same way as Einstök is trying to communicate it?

In table 7 and 8, the findings from the question asked during the interviews “explain Einstök with a few adjectives” is presented. The words open, outgoing, likes to conquer new experiences, travelled, sophisticated, higher education, very informal, not snobby and down to earth are mentioned during the first interview. Strong, adventurous, wants to explore, find new things, go places and leave them better than he found them, creative, collaborative, focused and looking forward are the words mentioned during the second interview. The mentioned adjectives from the interviews (table 7 & 8) can easily be connected with the main themes mentioned by focus group participants (figure 22); Attractive, Authentic, Quality, Icelandic, Likeable, Tasty, Character, Reliable, Flavoursome, Adventurous, Cautious, Accessible, Professional, Determined, Creative, Sociable and Mainstream.

Both the founder and Managing Director of Einstök was emphasising the Icelandic heritage and the “Icelandicness” of the brand. Consumers in Iceland were on the other hand debating whether they actually considered Einstök to be an Icelandic brand or not. The consumers said that the American ownership was questionable and that the company was fake Icelandic (see table 11).

5.1.3 What are the most mentioned brand features/associations of the brand Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

Focus group 2 (40-55 year olds in Iceland) was barely mentioning any of the attributes of the actual content of the product such as taste (see table 11). This can be seen as the
focus group participants are further up the CBBE ladder, where they are more focused on their relationship to the brand. When asking questions about when to drink the Einstök beer, the participants are mentioning when they buy and when they drink it (see table 10 & 11). The Swedish focus groups on the other hand are creating potential scenarios on when and why to buy and consume the product because of lack of actual experience (see table 12 & 13).

When asking participants in focus group 4 (age 40-55 year olds in Sweden) about how they think people would react if they brought the beer to a dinner party, many of the answers focused on how to present it instead of features of the beer and associations to the brand. This is also a sign that the group of consumers not familiar with the brand has not reached higher in the Keller CBBE ladder. This conclusions is drawn due to the fact that participants are only able to create fictional scenarios on how they might present and interact with the beer in social settings outside of the focus group (see table 13). Focus group 2 is on the other hand putting the brand into context, comparing with other markets and brands and referring to occasions where they see Einstök fit depending on their experience with the brand (see table 11). When asked to explain with five words, the words focus more on the brand than the content and flavour. This can also be a sign that the participants in group 4 are reaching the final step of the CBBE pyramid by Keller. These differences are due to country of residence and level of exposure to the brand.

Price is mentioned as too expensive and seen as a hindrance of buying the product in focus groups 3 and 4 conducted in Sweden (see table 12 & 13). The price was not mentioned in the questions by the researcher unless participants asked for the price of the products. The price was not considered a hindrance for buying the products according to the focus group participants in groups 1 and 2, conducted in Iceland (see table 10 & 11). This can be a sign that the higher brand awareness in Iceland is creating a higher buying power compared to Sweden where the brand is still fairly unknown.
5.1.4 What is the consumers’ experienced brand perception of Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

The focus group manual was directed at consumers and how they explained Einstök, the products, how they felt etc. How a person explains their feelings can vary depending on background. What interests, educational level and work a person has can also form their perception. The results from the word clouds are differing because of different perception from consumers and potential customers of the same brand (Chernatony, L., 2010b). The three most outstanding themes for focus groups participants to express their perception of Einstök from focus group 1 was tasty, Icelandic and authentic, from focus group 2; Reliable, authentic and attractive, focus group 3; Icelandic, attractive, creative and quality and focus group 4; Character, attractive and quality.

Like mentioned briefly in chapter 4 (findings), several of the participants in focus group 1 were exchange students. Because of different backgrounds and therefor perceptions, this might have had an impact on the results in the focus group (Chernatony, L., 2010b). Fortunately, the results from the group are not showing any outstanding findings compared to previous studies and other conducted focus groups in this study. This can be due to the fast that the participants had been living in Iceland several months before participating in the study. This means that the participants had been exposed and consuming the brand during an extensive period of time.

5.2 Problem areas highlighted by the company

The Managing Director, Gudjón and the Founder, Jack are highlighting that the official brand material both internally and externally has little or no global connectivity. When performing “Master classes” where they introduce Einstök to distributors all over the world, the material is varying. The availability of having “Master classes” also vary from once a year to once every other year. Between the classes, the majority or all of the employees working with the distributor might have been replaced. To keep the brand integrity becomes more of a challenge when the company is growing both in number of employees and countries of availability. Einstök is available in 22 markets with three people travelling all over the world to update and inform distributors. The reason why it
is only a few people making these classes and travels are both due to the personal relationship with distributors but also because of lack of eligible resources.

The company is mentioning that they are Icelandic in everything that they do; the production and the brand itself. Icelandic heritage and “Icelandicness” are in focus; thus the social media handled from the states. Participants are mentioning that they do not consider Einstök to be truly Icelandic (Table 11).

5.3 Limitations

The sample collected for this study is small with a total of 13 participants in Iceland and 9 participants in Sweden. With above 10 million inhabitants in Sweden and over 300,000 people living in Iceland, it is hard to draw conclusions regarding the entire population of two countries depending on this research. The market of Einstök in Iceland and Sweden is on the other hand much smaller. Further research with more craft beer consumers should be conducted continuously in order to keep updated on consumers’ preferences.

Even though each part of the method is based on theories of proven methods, this exact research has never been conducted before. To use the Keller CBBE pyramid in a qualitative research focusing on adjectives from consumers in order to compare brand equity between two age groups and two markets has never been attempted before. In order to prove validity and reliability, further studies should be conducted.

5.3.1 Limitations of focus groups

The moderator lacked executional experience before conducting the following research. The moderator was also lacking a research assistant to give second opinions on observations and to take notes throughout the focus groups. Observations from the focus groups included seeing the reaction of consumers being exposed to the brand for the first time. The consumers that had never seen Einstök before was emphasising more on the information and layout of the labels on the bottles compared to known consumers of the brand. This can be connected to branding where the main distinguishers of a brand are features such as logo and design (Aaker, 1991). The consumers were pointing
out differences in information, style and description of the taste of the product. Branding can, as mentioned before, be a combination of input from company in form of marketing where the output is the perceived mental picture by consumers (Chernatony, L., 2010a). When selling products in governmental monopoly, in bars or restaurants, the bottle might be the only brand touch-point for the consumer. As the directions of the observations in the focus groups are pointing at, the information on the bottles might not have the same value for consumers in a mature market like Iceland.

5.3.2 Limitation of thematic analysis

The answers in the analysis should be as close to the original adjectives used during the focus groups, the researcher has made a conscious decision to go against recommendations of Braun & Clarke (2006) when using thematic analysis, simply because the argumentation does not suit the purpose and subject of research. To reduce the number of themes will not increase the understanding further. As “The qualitative content analysis process” suggests; it will neither describe the phenomenon better or generate more knowledge. The analysis does not have a specific start or ending, it is the researcher that has to decide when the analysis has reached its complete value (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). When the researcher and moderator conducted the results chapter, it became clear that to further decline themes would create simplification of the rich adjective-based data derived from the conducted focus groups. It is important that rich content results from qualitative methods are not interpreted according to the perception of the researcher. Instead, the results should only highlight the findings from the conducted research. This is why the researcher rather emphasizes on the discussion of the findings from focus groups rather than narrowing the themes of the thematic analyse further.

5.4 Recommended future studies

A future study could be to connect the millennials with their values as consumers and the emotional aspect of marketing would be a way to dig deeper into the understanding of the causing of positive consumer preferences. Millennials might want to feel like they are a part of the higher good and the bigger picture, more interactive than previous
generations (Schawbel, 2015). They are used to being able to express themselves through the Internet and social media platforms since they were children. The companies should create an arena for consumers to express themselves and start a conversation - not ending it!

Another possible future study would be to look into the differences in marketing message and how the consumers perceive it in the different age groups and markets. This research has only started to compare the brand perceptions between countries and age groups. To discover how cultural differences affects customer perceptions and whether a company should actively change their branding depending on markets is a recommended future study of the CBBE of Einstök.

Studies defining brand is often focusing on what brands are, an addition to these definitions should be to also explore what a brand is not. When interviewing the founder and Managing Director of the brand, examples of what the brand and target group “Modern Viking” contains was given. The representatives from the company also mentioned what the brand and target group was not. The same goes for the participants in the focus groups when mentioning. The definition of a brand should clearly define what it contains and what it does not contain and include through all communication channels; online, offline, internally and externally.

To further research the target group of Einstök; the “Modern Viking” and define specific characteristics of potential consumer would create a clearer path in marketing. There might be a big difference between generations within the target group but this has not been researched before.

5.5 Conclusion

5.5.1 What are the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden?

This research is highlighting the differences in brand equity in the markets Iceland and Sweden. The findings show that consumers in the Icelandic market are reaching the top of the pyramid; Brand Relationship. Consumers in the Swedish market are on the other hand reaching step 2 but not fulfilling it due to the lack of brand exposure. The reason
why consumers in the Swedish focus groups are fulfilling step 1 is because the brand perception communicated through the company introduction and exposure to the products through the focus groups. This introduction was giving participants a coherent brand perception compared to what brand identity Einstök wants to communicate.

5.5.2 Is the “Modern Viking” perceiving the brand identity of the brand in the same way as Einstök is trying to communicate it?

The perception the founder and Managing Director of Einstök wants to portray to consumers is consistent with the participant perception from this research. Thus there is a difference between the market perceptions in Iceland compared to Sweden; the perception is not significantly different. In order to conclude further conclusions and reasoning behind the differences, further research needs to be done. One of the highlighted differences was that participants in focus groups in Sweden were mentioning that the clean design of the bottles are not corresponding to the flavoursome and complex content in the bottles. Icelandic consumers could on the contrary identify with the brand because of the clean design and quality beer.

5.5.3 What are the most mentioned brand features/associations of the brand Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

The Icelandic heritage is seen as more exotic and a cool brand feature in the Swedish market compared to the Icelandic. The Icelandic consumers in the younger age group considered themselves proud of the brand, which put Iceland on the map when it comes to beer (see table 10). The age group 40-55 was on the other hand debating if they
considered Einstök to be purely Icelandic or not (see table 11). Jack Sichterman is stating that Einstök is Icelandic due to many of the ingredients being Icelandic, all the recipes are created from the Icelandic brew master, the beer is produced in Iceland by workforce living in Iceland, the growth is to a large extent staying in Iceland and the entire heritage of the brand is focusing on Iceland. What he also states is that the American ownership of the company is therefore contributing and adding a wider perspective to the brand and Iceland. Sichterman also states that instead of trying to use the Icelandic culture as a foundation of a profitable brand and then lead the profit out of the country, he is focusing on maintaining a good relationship in the home market, both with the Icelandic business world and the Icelandic consumers.

5.5.4 What is the consumers’ experienced brand perception of Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

The conclusions from the conducted research are aligned with Keller (1993) when concluding that “[…] only when the consumer hold strong and favourable brand associations the customer-based brand equity can exist. […] (Keller, 1993). This means that the Icelandic market has stable brand equity where consumers have positive brand associations to the brand Einstök. The Swedish market has potential of reaching the same level of brand equity due to positive reactions to the brand and products. The perception of the brand is therefore hard to compare because the brand perception of consumers in Sweden only are based on their reactions during the participation in he focus group.

5.6 Recommendations

Einstök is recommended to take the following actions based on the knowledge gathered in the following CBEBE research;

5.6.1 What are the differences in brand equity between Iceland and Sweden?

- Even though Iceland is a mature market for Einstök, education of consumers in Iceland with focus on products, heritage and origin is considered to be important. This education can be done through the information on the bottles and specific Einstök events.
• It is important that the communication material of Einstök is highlighting what the makes the brand Icelandic.

• Education in foreign markets should be focused both on the information on the labels and also focusing on what the bars and restaurants are telling customers.

5.6.2 Is the “Modern Viking” perceiving the brand identity of the brand in the same way as Einstök is trying to communicate it?

• A brand manual with brand guidelines should be conducted for Einstök due to the exponential growth of the company. When the company is growing both in number of employees and countries of trade, to keep the brand integrity becomes more of a challenge.

• Official educational and informative brochures should be material available in all locations where Einstök is sold.

• “Master classes” should be contributed according to Einstök guidelines and be updated on a regular basis.

5.6.3 What are the most mentioned brand features/associations of the brand Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

• The brand identity of Einstök is showing high integrity. In order to keep this integrity, the target group Modern Viking should be defined more in detailed, this in order to develop in along with consumers.

• The brand meaning should show a high level of reliability, attachments to the design and categorise the brand as fairly priced in comparison to the quality of products.

5.6.4 What is the consumers’ experienced brand perception of Einstök in Iceland compared to Sweden?

• Modern Viking being a subset of the millennials, data is showing that it is important to give back to the community. A way to give back to the community and Iceland as a market and country is to connect the brand with organisations
that favour, for example organic agriculture or farming associations that are only using renewable resources when farming.

- Einstök is showing a fair level of brand response, judgments are based on four categories; Superiority, credibility, quality and consideration.

- Brand loyal customers are only found in the Icelandic market through this research. A majority of the participants in focus groups 1 and 2 are behavioural loyal where repeat purchases takes place. Only a few of the participants in focus group 1 could be seen as having attitudinal loyalty to the brand where every purchase of Einstök is seen as special. Several of the participants were mentioning to be actively engaging with the brand through social media. Participants in focus group 1 was showing signs of feeling a sense of community where they feel like being “in the same group” as other people purchasing Einstök products but only within an already existing group of friends. This means that the brand should focus on creating loyal customers within all four kinds of brand loyalty.

5.7 Last words from writer

The combination of the CBBE pyramid of Keller, focus groups and thematic analysis is not used before. The findings show that the focus groups gave valuable insight to the minds of consumers, the CBBE framework created a way to sort the information and thematic analysis a way of presenting it clearly. The application of the method is limitless considering product, service, market, language or culture.

If Einstök follows the recommendations created and based on this study; the brand should continue to thrive and develop according to their chosen market and the perception of consumers.
Reference list


Yankelowich (2010). *Craft Beer Drinkers: What’s important to them when they’re not drinking beer (and why it matters when they are)*.

Exhibits

A. Interview manual

The purpose of this interview is to provide information about the company, the brand and what Einstök is according to you as a company. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. The goal is to get an overview of the brand Einstök today and where it started off.

This research focuses on the Brand Equity of Einstök, the perception of the brand from both consumers and potential consumers. Many Brand Equity studies are using questionnaires with pre-chosen answers from a Likert scale 1-5, how much do you agree or disagree. This research will ask about the consumers’ perception from broader themes of questions. Depending on which the direction discussion takes; this will capture their feelings and opinions about the Einstök brand.

Interview questions

Start of interview:
• Is it okay that I tape-record the interview in order to use the information as a source of reference in my thesis?
• Maybe you can start by just telling me - Who is Jack Sichterman/Guðjón Guðmundsson?
• Can you explain a little bit about your responsibilities within Einstök today?
• Briefly start by explaining the story of Einstök. Where and how did it all start?

1) **Identity - Who are you? (Salience)**

• What makes a strong brand?
• What makes Einstök a strong brand?
• Is Einstök an Icelandic brand?
• How did you build the Einstök brand?
• What is Einstök according to you?
• What kind of identity does Einstök have? (def. brand identity: how a business wants to be perceived by consumers)
• If Einstök would be a person or have a personality, how would you describe it?
• If explaining Einstök with a few adjectives, what would they be?
• Do you feel like you have the same values as the brand? Are you a consumer yourself?
• Your target group is the “Modern Viking”. Who is that?
• How did you create this target group?
• How is the “Modern Viking” defined?
• How and when is it used?
• In which way is Einstök a noticeable brand?
• What outstanding features does Einstök possess?
2) Meaning - What are you? (Performance & Imagery)

- What does the brand Einstök entail according to you?
- What are the most important attributes of the brand?
- How does the distributors share and explain the brand?
- How are you portraying the Einstök brand to consumers?
- What picture do you want consumers to get through your marketing channels?
- Why do you think consumers choose Einstök?
- What does the consumers appreciate with the products?
- Who is the Einstök consumer?
- How would you describe the demographic of the consumers? (Age, education level, income level, returning customers)
- What is the best way to target these customers?
- Where does the consumers find Einstök?
- When are people consuming Einstök?

3) Response - What about you? (Judgments & Feelings)

- In what countries is Einstök present today?
- Does the brand have the same meaning in all countries?
- What feelings does the Einstök brand evoke?
- How do you think consumers feel about Einstök the products?
- Is there a need for consumers to talk about the brand and express their experiences and feelings?
• What feelings do you think consumers have about the brand (both positive and negative)?

• How does the company deal with complaints? Can customers contact you as a company?

• How are consumers reacting regarding the American heritage of the company?

4) Relationships - What about You and Me? (Resonance)

• What type of consumers do you think the Einstök brand attracts?

• Does Einstök have loyal customers?

• How would you explain the customer and market in Iceland?

• How would you explain the customer and market in Sweden?

• Do you think there is a difference in customers between countries, Iceland and Sweden in particular?

• How and why do you think that the consumers are attracted to buy the brand?

• Do you think that the consumers feel like they have the same values as the brand?

• How are you creating resonance and lasting relationships with consumers?

Summary of interview

• Is there anything within the Einstök brand, values and meaning that we have forgotten to talk about?

• Is there anything that you would like to add?
B. Focus group invitation poster

Are you a CRAFT BEER DRINKER between 25 - 55 years old?

See if YOU are eligible to take part of a study by joining the Facebook group:

“Craft Beer Study Iceland/Sweden”

Only a few spots available

- Make sure to secure YOUR spot now!

More detailed information about the study will be found in the Facebook group
C. Focus group invitation letter

Invitation to Focus Group

You are getting this email because your profile suit the demographic needed for this study – Congratulations!

You are invited to participate in a focus group regarding craft beer.

When: X
Where: X
What time: X

You are invited because we want to know what You think as a consumer, no prior knowledge needed (except enjoying a good beer).

There will be no right or wrong answers to the discussion questions.
The focus group will be audio recorded and taken place in English.
Alcohol consumption will occur during the focus group.
As a token of gratitude, an assorted gift will be handed out after participation.

Please leave an answer on whether You can participate or not at (day, date, month) at the latest.

If you want to know more about your participation or know more about the project do not hesitate to contact me either through Facebook or email; jannika.lovendahl@gmail.

Thank you and welcome,
Jannika Lövendahl
D. Focus group manual

Focus group manual

Participants

- Age groups 25-39 year olds / 40-55 year olds
- Craft beer drinkers
- Living in Iceland or Sweden

Insights

- Consumer preferences in attributes of craft beer brand
- Consumer perception of brand and products
- Why does consumers choose Einstök?
- Do they identify with the brand?

Questions

- Opening questions
- Introductory questions
- Transition questions
• Key questions
• Ending questions
• Total time for questions: 110 minutes

Introduction (10 minutes)

Hello everyone and welcome! My name is Jannika Lövendahl and I am studying my masters at Reykjavik University. I will, as mentioned in the invite audio record this session in order to be able to listen to the discussion again. Your answers will remain anonymous in the final research paper. This research is taking part as a part of my thesis in Marketing at Reykjavik University. The main topic is brand equity, the customer perception of a brand and that is exactly what we are going to talk about today.

• Why are we here? I have invited you here today because I want your opinions as craft beer consumers!
• The brand will remain unknown for the first part of the discussion when we talk about the overall craft beer market. After that part of the discussion, you will get a brief introduction to the brand and their products.
• We will start off by introducing ourselves. Please mention your name and a fun beer memory or when you tasted your first beer.

Start of focus group - overall questions about craft beer (20 minutes)

Introductory questions

1. When I say craft beer, what do you think of?
2. What attributes/features motivates you to buy a certain brand of beer? First talk about the monopoly stores (Iceland - Vínbúðin/Sweden - Systembolaget) and then we can talk about bars and restaurants).

Transition question

3) Response - What about you? (Judgments & Feelings)
3. Write down 5 words on your note, explaining You and Your personality. You have 20 seconds to complete this task, do not speak about the answers to anyone else and then hand me the notes.

Introducing the brand and handing out drinks (10 minutes)

Einstök is an Icelandic craft beer brand, founded in 2010 brewed in the north of Iceland in a town called Akureyri. The reason why the founders decided to brew the beer in Iceland was first and foremost because of the great quality of water, one of the purest and tastiest in the world. Second of all was the beautiful culture, people and nature. Einstök is now present in 22 countries all over the world with focus on the U.S. and Europe. You will be able to try different types of beer here today; Einstök White Ale, Einstök Arctic Pale Ale, Einstök Toasted Porter and Einstök Wee Heavy.

**White Ale:**
Wheat malt, pilsner malt, oats, Bavarian noble hops spiced with coriander and orange peel. A clean and crisp start with a smooth mouth feel thanks to the oats, citrus and spice round out a refreshing finish.

**Arctic Pale Ale:**
Cascade hops give it the American character, while Northern Brewer hops add just enough bitterness to make this Ale refreshingly Icelandic.

**Toasted Porter:**
Lager malt, Munich malt, chocolate malt, Bavarian hops, with the slight addition of authentic Icelandic roasted coffee. Smooth, roasty with some chocolate, toffee and licorice notes.

**Wee Heavy**
Scotch Ale, brewed with locally farmed and smoked barley and spiced with native Icelandic angelica – a fabled herb ancient Vikings used as
currency. A rich color, creamy head, a sweet malt aroma and a hint of the smokiness delivered by the birch. The malty richness and caramel notes hit the tongue, with savory smoke coming later.

Summary of brand introduction:
It is now time to start the essence of the focus group, to discuss your thoughts about the Einstök products and brand. The word brand will be used throughout the study, just as a collective word to describe the company, the products, the logo and all other parts of Einstök as a whole.

If you have not seen the Einstök brand before, just share your thoughts as a consumer after tasting it now and after seeing the products here today. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions!

Key questions about the brand equity of Einstök
(60 minutes)

5) Identity - Who are you? (Salience)
(15 minutes)
4. What do you think of Einstök, have you tried their beer before?
5. If Einstök would be a person or have a personality, how would you describe it?

6) Meaning - What are you? (Performance & Imagery)
(15 minutes)
6. Has anyone seen any marketing, ads or reviews of Einstök or seen them through social media? If yes, where and what is your thoughts about it?
7. Write down 5 words on your note describing Einstök, as a product or as a brand. You have 20 seconds to complete this task, do not speak about the answers to anyone else and then hand me the notes.

7) Response - What about you? (Judgments & Feelings)
(15 minutes)

8. What would drive you to buy an Einstök product in monopoly compared to a bar or restaurant?

8) Relationships - What about You and Me? (Resonance)
(15 minutes)

9. Do you feel like you have the same values or can identify yourself with Einstök? Why/why not?

10. How would you feel, coming to a dinner or party with a few bottles of Einstök? How would people at the dinner or party react to it?

End of focus group (10 minutes)

11. (A short summary of the discussion made by moderator). How well does that sum up our discussion here today?

12. Is there anything we have forgotten to talk about today concerning the customer experience of the Einstök brand and products? Something you would like to add?
E. Mind map, focus group 1, Iceland (age 25-39)
F. Mind map, focus group 2, Iceland (age 40-55)
G. Mind map, focus group 3, Sweden (age 25-39)
H. Mind map, focus group 4, Sweden (age 40-55)