Nation branding and the representation of a nation’s identity: the case of the Study in Sweden Facebook page.

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore the Study in Sweden Facebook page, particularly about the use of nation branding identity and its representation on the social media channel during the period for application promotion for Swedish higher education institutions for Autumn semester 2018.

Facebook page has been used as a centre for international marketing activities. With the purpose of promoting brand identity and the brand products, Facebook page has a significance as an online brand platform. Despite the importance of nation branding on online channel, few studies focusing on online channels for nation branding were conducted. Study in Sweden. The Study in Sweden Facebook page is used to promote Swedish higher education and Sweden, which also aims to imprint a positive image of Swedish education and Sweden as a country. Applying nation branding theoretical approach with qualitative content analysis, how nation branding identity is represented on the Study in Sweden Facebook page was investigated. In accordance with cultural approaches to nation branding, nation branding identity was labelled as binders of the imagined community further values of the nation. The study brought a focus on the relations between national identity and Swedishness concerning the core values of the nation. Facebook was investigated as communicator of the nation branding for representing the core values of Sweden.

Keywords: Nation branding, Facebook, Study in Sweden, the Swedish institute, social media, imagined community, Swedishness, Swedish values, internationalisation of higher education
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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Nation branding is not a new term as it has existed for a long time but the importance of nation branding has grown for the last few decades, as a result of the transformation of nation branding to a tool for competing for dominance in economic areas, as well as increasing political influence amongst countries and regions in the neo-liberal global scope (Lomer, Papatsiba and Naidoo, 2016, p. 1). Besides, the implications of nation branding for the national identity have been pointed out by many scholars. Due to the various ranges of the impact of the nation branding, as well as its importance of nation branding enabling to reshape their national identities, efforts to manage nation branding at the governmental levels became more visible in many countries (Park, Kim and DeMatteo, 2016).

Higher education is one of the areas that has been internationalised over the decades and became extremely important. As there has been a considerable increase of international students having their tertiary education abroad (King and Raghuram, 2013; Findlay, McCollum and Packwood, 2017), luring talented international students became significant not only for higher education institutes but also nations in terms of the nation’s competence and potential benefits (Sataøen, 2015). Thus, internationalisation of higher education became a crucial part of nation branding. As a result, many countries are rolling up their sleeves to attract the talented students to their countries by installing a task force for nation branding for higher education which is under the influence the government. Sweden is one of the nations which has shown a decade-long effort to attract international students before and after the introduction of tuition fee around 2011 (Carlsson, 2012). And the nation branding by the Swedish institution has been continued to attract international students.

Swedish Institute is one of the well-known and official government agencies for taking charge of such tasks, established in 1945 (Glover, 2009). The mission of the Swedish Institute varies from promoting interest and confidence in Sweden around the world and to attract young talented people to Sweden (Wirkkala, 2014). For the task, the Swedish Institute has been collaborating with different agencies, as well as launching different projects to achieve the aims. Study in Sweden is a project initiated between 2008 and 2009 and managed by the Student
mobility unit. Study in Sweden is a main project for advertising Swedish higher education as well as a part of nation branding.

1.2 The aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to analyse the contents created by Study in Sweden social media, especially Facebook page, in relation to nation branding identity and its representation. Also, assuming that the characteristics or the value of a country are reflected on nation branding practices, the main question with two sub-questions were posed:

RQ. How is the nation branding represented there on the Study in Sweden Facebook page?

1.3 Relevance and contribution to the field

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate how the Study in Sweden used nation branding on the Study in Sweden Facebook page to achieve their goals through their contents published from January 2018 to April 2018. The study aims to investigate the nation branding identity components in the posts Study in Sweden Facebook page and its representation with Swedish values: Swedishness. The secondary purpose of this study is to explore the Study in Sweden Facebook page, as a communicator of the nation branding, defined in the conceptual model by Dinnie (2008). Accordingly, the two sub-questions will be elaborated at the methods part whilst discussing the scope and the way of the analysis. In detail, nation branding in the RQ refers to nation-brand identity in the customised conceptual model of nation-brand identity. The communicator of the nation branding by Dinnie (2008) and the identity are connected to nation’s value: Swedishness. To answer the questions, first, previous studies of the nation branding and its approaches, as well as the relation between nation branding and the internationalisation of higher education will be delivered. And how Swedish values are used to construct the identity of the brand of Study in Sweden further nation brand will be explored. Based on the review, the theoretical framework of nation branding, focusing on the identity construction and the implementations of national identity for nation branding practices on the social media channel will be articulated. The qualitative content analysis will be conducted to examine posts published on the Study in Sweden Facebook page and how nation branding identity is represented on the Facebook page, as well as which Swedish values are represented through the Facebook. This study is clearly relevant to the study of media communications.
since the study investigates the implementations of nation branding on social media channels. The contribution of this study will be defined. First, this study will provide a recent empirical case study on the use of social media for education nation branding by governmental agencies, which is hardly found. Second, it gives new insights of nation branding with value dimensions as most of the approaches to the nation branding refer to nation branding with marketing dimensions, political implications or identity formations. Lastly, the investigation of nation branding identity and its connection to Swedishness will contribute to the understanding of representing/constructing nation’s narratives in the global markets as a way of deriving benefits in various dimensions.
2. Background

In this chapter, the relevant background information for the better understanding of this study will be delivered. Firstly, a concise definition of brand and how brand is relevant to the nation branding will be presented. Next, a background of internationalisation of higher education, as well as its connection to nation branding will be illustrated; the Swedish internationalisation of higher education and Swedish Institute and the project to promote Swedish education: Study in Sweden will be addressed in the perspective of internationalisation of higher education. Besides, a brief explanation of Facebook, including the unique features of this platform and Facebook as a platform for branding will be delivered as this study focuses on nation branding on Facebook. Finally, the use of Study in Sweden Facebook page will be briefly covered.

2.1 Brand

For Anholt (2013), brand can be defined with three dimensions: a designed identity of a product, the culture of the organisation and the reputation of the products or the organisations producing the products perceived by its target audience. Based on these ranges of definition of the brand, Anholt (2013, p. 7) connects brand with the business of designing the livery of products: the tasks of branding agencies, building/creating an enhanced sense of culture or mission within the relevant organisation and the means by the organisation or its product to acquires the reputation. In this way, the brand is connected to the economic profits that the organisation can achieve through the intangible property. This idea is also found in Cole’s (2012) study. For Cole (2012), brand is related to intangible assets of the corporation such as reputation, which are connected to the economic values. From this perspective, the connection between intangible values of brand to the actual benefits is shown. Dinnie (2016) explored the implications of brand saying that brand has multi-dimensions covering from visual aspects such as name, symbols or designs to the cognitive aspects like the perception of the brand. Based on the exploration, Dinnie (2016, p. 5) connects the concept of brand to nation branding, defining that nation branding is “the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audience”. This definition covers the intangible values of the brand and the importance of the perceptual influence of the nation brand on the target audience. Likewise, the importance of brand is stressed as this forms a collective image of the brand. The importance of brand became larger in internationalised markets.
2.2 Internationalisation of higher education

The traditional meaning of internationalisation is that a country interacts with other different nations in terms of economic, environmental, political and cultural aspects. But in the recent decade, the meaning of internationalisation mainly refers to a multi-lateral change of a subject of internationalisation in line with globalisation (Internationalization, n.d.). Likewise, the internationalisation of higher education was initially at a country level, aiming to promote mutual understanding between countries and to encourage higher education institutions to collaborate with those in different countries (Hénard, Diamond and Roseveare, 2012, p. 7). But the rapid globalisation shifted its spotlight on student mobility, as well as international research collaboration and education as an export industry (ibid.). Hence, internationalisation of education means not only educational interactions amongst nations but also the multi-dimensional changes of higher education, for example, practices in higher education and student practices of higher education.

Knight (2012) explains changes in higher education practices by internationalisation of higher education with two concepts of the pillars of internationalisation: ‘at-home’ and ‘abroad’ or, ‘cross border’. On the one hand, internationalisation at home refers to changes of campus-based education. It includes changes of the proportion of domestic students and international students in the relevant country, as well as changes in the education curriculum, in response to the demand to gain international and intercultural competence or values through higher education (Knight, 2012). On the other hand, internationalisation abroad or cross border involves the mobility of people, programmes, and education providers such as branch of campuses, projects and education policies (ibid.). These two are different concepts but influenced by each other. As regards internationalisation abroad, student mobility is of high importance as there has been an immense growth of student mobility (ibid). In internationalisation of higher education, student mobility, which is defined as any opportunities that students can study or work abroad whilst undertaking the degree programme in the host country, from undergraduate programme to postgraduate programmes (Student Mobility, 2016).

King and Raghuram (2013) categorise two different types of student mobility depending on the time of the stay: (1) “credit mobility”: staying less than a year and students return to the home institution, for example, exchange students; and (2) “degree mobility”: students stay abroad
during the entire programme. In relation to the definition of student mobility, it is suggested that long-term stay such as degree stability is suitable to categorise as student mobility as this type, according to King and Raghuram, (2013, p. 129), “fits the conventional statistical definition of international migration” of students as they have more ‘open-ended’ possibilities of staying after the study. In terms of the mobility experience, it is stated that this type of student mobility will vary depending on level, subjects, programme setting of the study and the destination country (ibid.).

Meanwhile, the benefits that students and the higher education institutions, as well as higher education itself can derive from the internationalisation process of higher education are clear and appear variously, from broadening academic areas for studying to advancement of learning process and program contents for meeting global competency of the education (Knight, 2012); the benefits are shared by stakeholders, from students to institutions. At the same time, it also brings the creation of the new hierarchy of educational institutions such as the different world ranking, resulting in the difference in profits of the institutions and even soft power (Knight, 2012). Students perceive the ranking amongst the universities as a definite indicator of the quality of the institution and pursue to be enrolled in prestigious institutions, although institutions in high-income countries are not significantly affected by university ranking (Abbott and Silles, 2016).

Another hierarchy exists between countries where the official language is English and those where it is not. As a result, there is a general marginalisation of non-English speaking countries on the list of countries for studying (Vuori, 2015). A consequence of this is that non-English speaking countries strive to include to a wider range of languages used in education, especially English (Soler, Björkman and Kuteeva, 2018). Amongst non-English speaking countries, countries in Europe are known as leading countries in English-Taught-Programmes (ETPs) (Pop, 2017). The Netherlands, Germany and Sweden are the top 3 countries having the largest number of English Taught Programmes, and there has been a steady increase of number of ETPs in the whole Europe\(^1\) (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014).

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1 The number of English Taught Programmes (ETPs) in Netherlands is absolutely large with 1,078 ETPs, followed by Germany (1,030) and Sweden (822). The gap between top 3 countries and others are massive as France (499) and Denmark (494), the fourth and fifth largest country in ETPs respectively have less than 500 ETPs (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014).
In summary, changes in higher education by the internationalisation of higher education have been observed. Internationalisation of education brought the movement of a young population from their home country to foreign countries. I believe that student mobility and the internationalisation process of higher education are influenced by each other. On the one hand, increased student mobility affected the practices of higher education institutions like language policies, increasing the strength of English, and global competency of education. On the other hand, such changes in the higher education institutions facilitate studying abroad, attracting more students to study abroad. Thus, it is postulated that internationalisation of education is a process that higher education has changed in its purposes, functions or delivery in accordance with global dimensions of internationalisation (Knight, 2002) and international student mobility international student mobility has transformed the higher education landscape (Knight, 2012). Based on this, I conclude that that internationalisation of education involves changes in higher education itself.

2.3 Swedish higher education and its internationalization

Swedish higher education was first started in 1477 at Uppsala University and has shown a dramatic increase in the number of universities during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There was an acceleration in this trend towards the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Soler, Björkman and Kuteeva, 2018, p. 32). The importance of higher education is well recognised in Sweden, and the fact that higher education is the largest public-sector in Sweden does prove this (Higher education in Sweden, 2017).

It is shown that Swedish higher education was also developed as a prompt response to globalisation and internationalisation trends. One of the important, previously mentioned aspects of the internationalisation of higher education is language. Especially, the availability of education in English has been a big story in the global market of education. Sweden has been ranked in the top countries offering ETPs, and the number of ETPs was substantially increased in recent years (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). The number of ETPs in Sweden was only 123 in 2007 (Soler, Björkman and Kuteeva, 2018), but it increased to 822 in 2014 (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014) and now there are found around 1000 ETPs in Sweden (Study in Sweden, 2018). In addition, the use of English as a parallel language, developed in the Nordic context in the late 2000s was also applied in Swedish language policies. In the Swedish context, the
development of language policies let institutionalise the parallel language use, juxtaposing English and Swedish as working languages in higher education institutions (Soler, Björkman and Kuteeva, 2018). Being prepared international flows of education can be seen as a reflection of the demand of students.

As a result of the prompt preparation in response to the global demands for the higher education, there has been a dramatic fluctuation in the number of inbound students. The number of foreign students studying in Sweden had been increasing in the 2000s. The number of new international students had significantly increased from below 10,000 in 2001/2002 to nearly 30,000 in 2010/11, especially the number of free-mover students (Higher education in Sweden, 2017). The free tuition fee and its geographical location: Europe were considered as the main driving forces of such dramatic increase in the popularity (Phang, 2013). However, after the introduction of tuition fee to non-EU international students in July 2011 (Phang, 2013), the number of new coming students dropped by one third. Especially, the drop in the application from Asian countries like China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, India and Thailand significantly contributed to the decrease (Phang, 2013). Many stakeholders of higher education, including Swedish governments and higher education institutions, had recognised in advance that the drop in the number of students is a likely outcome by the introduction of the tuition fee. As a result, a project for advertising Swedish higher education was launched by the quasi-governmental agency: the Swedish Institute.

2.4 The Swedish Institute and the project: Study in Sweden and Social media

The Swedish Institute (SI) is a quasi-official agency in Sweden established in 1945 (Glover, 2009). In the Swedish Institute Website, it is written that the headquarter of The Swedish Institute is located in Stockholm in Sweden and Paris in France; it has approximately 140 employees with Stockholm and Paris offices (Svenska institutet, n.d.). The aim of The Swedish Institute is to promote of Sweden and Swedish culture abroad in the sphere of culture, education, research so as to construct a strong, positive external image of Sweden and positioning Sweden into an advantaged position in agenda setting and economic relations at the international level (Glover, 2009). The main target groups are talented students, young leaders, decision-makers and policymakers, opinion makers, talented students and skilled workers (Wirkkala, 2014). With this background, SI is referred to as the main institution for Swedish public diplomacy, as
well as a part of a modern foreign policy, thus it constitutes Swedish soft power (Åkerlund, 2015).

The Swedish Institute has its long history as a department for promoting Swedish education around the world. The Swedish Institute has been collaborated with multiple ministries in the Swedish government, as well as universities in Sweden, in accordance with the interview with an employee at the Study in Sweden team at Talent Mobility Unit, as well as the Swedish Institute. Also, the Swedish Institute has a specialised team for promoting higher education around the world: The Study in Sweden team in the Swedish Institute, but a part of the Talent Mobility Unit, taking charge of Swedish higher education thus attracting talent (Wirkkala, 2014).

Likewise, the Swedish Institute has launched different projects for promoting Swedish education. Study in Sweden is one of them. The project was established around 2004, but activities as Study in Sweden was started in earnest between 2008 and 2009, according to the interviewee at the Swedish Institute. Study in Sweden was formerly Study Destination Sweden, working with around 80 universities in Sweden. The project launched in readiness for the introduction of tuition fee for foreign students who come outside Europe to study in Sweden. In other words, the project started to brand Swedish higher education for foreign students. As a result, a branded platform was developed around the same time which is called ‘Study in Sweden’, advertising Swedish higher education targeting to potential international students by operating different channel, from the official website to social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube.

Scoping on digital strategy of the Swedish Institute for social media and coordinating with Swedish universities, through Study Destination Sweden-network (28-member institutions) (Wirkkala, 2014). Originally, the most important channel for international students was Studyinsweden.se-website but the importance of other social media has been shown a significant increase (ibid.). Thus, a crucial role is given to social media. Study in Sweden has different types of Social media including Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, as well as the official website. Thus, in the Study in Sweden team, many works are related to Study in Sweden
digital marketing. The Study in Sweden team also has special members, not regular employees but temporary members, either working in Sweden: Member 1 for China market or working for both the Study in Sweden project and the embassy in their home country: Member 2 and Member 3. Students are working as digital ambassador for student blog, Instagram with almost full autonomy. An overview of the Study in Sweden team is available in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. An overview of the Study in Sweden team**

2.5 Facebook and branding

Facebook is one of the most popular media in the world. Due to the popularity, the influence of Facebook on various areas is huge, and the utility of Facebook has been increased a lot. Nowadays, the Facebook page has been a way to use as a centre for international marketing activities (Yan, 2011, p. 689). As more functions that used to be found in other media such as blog were imported that holding users to stay on Facebook without going away to other sources, companies could use Facebook for approaching to audience or customers, as well as do a direct communication with their supporters thus bridge the gap between audience and organisations (ibid.). As a result of upgrading and importing other functions in Social media, Facebook offers various ranges of posts to share: status, photo, video and link, which represent different ranges of media richness, so that be utilised differently (Pletikosa Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013, p. 843). Based on the different posts, the company can provide contents on the Facebook page for their brands, from brand-related to information to motivations for participation, able to spurring to a high level of engagement (Pletikosa Cvijikj and Michahelles,
2013). Also, Facebook pages have a significant impact of attracting and creating followers, that subsequently continue to improve the follower’s perception of the brand having Facebook page by pictures of the brand products, news about contests and promotions, links to favourable reviews, and introductions to employees at the brand (Dholakia and Durham, 2010). In other words, the Facebook page has a positive function of improving the perception of the brand through uploading contents either presenting the brand products, promotions, links for favourable opinions about the brand, etc.
3. Literature Review

This study aims to investigate how nation branding is represented on a particular social media by activities of a quasi-governmental agency for promoting the internationalisation of Swedish higher education. The subsequent aim of this study is to scrutinise the representation of the nation's identity with value(s) through the nation branding practices. Thus, this study is the intersection of talent mobility studies, branding management studies, and the cultural approach to the nation branding, rather than economic, political approaches. For figuring out how nation branding practices for internationalisation of a nation's higher education is conducted through online media channel(s) by the nation's public agency, it is crucial to see what the nation branding is, how internationalisation of higher education, as well as governmental agencies and media is related to nation branding. Likewise, the usage of nation's core value(s), particularly Sweden's value is relevant as the study aims to see how a nation's identity is represented from the perspective of value. Hence, in this section, an overview of nation branding, existing literature about the relation between nation branding and internationalisation of higher education as well as nation branding, public agency and media and values of Sweden: Swedishness will be investigated.

3.1 Nation branding: an overview

Nation branding, as a term, was coined by the British brand consultant Simon Anholt in the late 1990s (Castelló and Mihelj, 2017). The concept of nation branding derives from product branding (Aronczyk, 2013, p. 8). Thus, “nation branding is broadly conceived as a marketing strategy that targets external markets to establish and communicate a specific image of national identity” to deliver economic interests of the country such as increasing exports and tourism, investments and influx of skilled workforce (Varga, 2013, p. 826). Accordingly, nation branding is an external, commercialised representation of a nation and is based on the unique traits and heritage that the country is believed to have in the world (Aronczyk, 2013). In nation branding, the idea of a meaningful correlation between ‘image of a country’ as a brand and the popularity of global consumer goods is highlighted (Anholt, 1998; Castelló and Mihelj, 2017). To put it differently, in nation branding, a nation can influence the perception of brands from that nation, and brands from a nation can also influence the perception of that nation (Anholt, 1998) as the image of nation and the commercial brands of the nation can have a mutual influence to each other (Kania-Lundholm, 2014).
As nation branding is rooted from the concept of product branding, a functionalist perspective of nation branding: “a strategic tool for enhancing a nation’s competitive advantage in a global marketplace” exists (Kaneva, 2011, p. 121). Kaneva (2011) differentiates approaches and themes of nation branding: techno-economic, political and cultural. The approach to nation branding as a branding tool for economic interests in global space corresponds with a techno-economic approach. In this approach, nation branding is indifferent from banal branding (ibid.) and nation branding is likely to be managed by external experts in branding or marketing areas, not by the government (Aronczyk, 2013). In this sense, nation branding is approached as place branding and public diplomacy in terms of fostering economic growth and capital accumulation in an efficient manner (Kaneva, 2011). Direct, tangible profits in the longer term such as foreign direct investment, import-export trade to tourism, higher education, and skilled labour are adduced as benefits from nation branding (Aronczyk, 2013). Here, the tactics of nation branding and product branding was considered converging and nation branding was used as a way to re-make the nation’s image (Olins, 2002, p. 246).

Concurrently, public diplomacy can be applied to nation branding with a political dimension, different from the techno-economic dimension. Kaneva (2011) categorises such approach as political approach, focusing on nation branding in terms of the impact of international relations and reputation management. Nation branding, in this approach, can be defined as “the phenomenon by which governments engage in self-conscious activities aimed at producing a certain image of the nation-state” (Bolin and Ståhlberg, 2010). Jordan (2014) states that a common ground exists between nation branding and public diplomacy in the way that both long to enhance power and influence in international relations by inducing people to perceive the relevant nation with a specific image through achievements, values, beliefs and qualities by governmental activities of nation branding. Sataøen (2015) also connects nation branding and cultural diplomacy as both refer to activities of countries, concerning the values and identities of the relevant countries in the strategic view for developing their image to be external presentation so as to manage the nation’s reputation (Sataøen, 2015). Likewise, the connection between public diplomacy and nation branding is clearly shown in this approach (Kaneva, 2011). Bolin and Ståhlberg (2010, p. 82) use Nye’s idea of soft power, meaning “the means to

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2 Sataøen (2015, p. 705) argues that concepts such as nation branding, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, competitive identity and national image reputation as both deal with “how countries develop and reflect upon their images, and how values and identities within a country are strategically presented to their external environment”. 

make others do what you want them to do without forcing them, a kind of hegemony in practical application”. As written in Aronczyk’s book (2013), soft power entails the creation of a cosmopolitan centre that an image of what it means to be nationally competitive and nationally effective for globalisation exists. In this way, nation branding can be an enhancing tool for countries’ competitiveness on the soft side.

Whilst nation branding is used to promote a country to take advantages in the global space, nation branding also impacts on the identity of the nation. Nation branding aims to imprint or to improve the presence of a particular country, place, or its reputation towards the external audience who might have little information or misconceptions about the particular country (Ståhlberg and Bolin, 2016). During the process of nation branding, particular elements which are believed to represent the nation are used for representing the nation. Dinnie (2016, p. 5) defines nation branding as “the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences”. Here, nation branding components should be representative components of the nation. But it is unclear that by whom it is agreed that the nation branding components can represent the whole nation. The obscurity contains the implication of nation branding for national and cultural identity, which Kaneva (2011) calls cultural approach to nation branding. In cultural approach, national identity is seen as dynamics of struggle and negotiation by various agents from local to extra local levels (ibid.). And a particular organisation can be promoted of power, knowledge and exchange in the articulation of collective identity (Aronczyk, 2008, p. 46). In this sense, it is postulated that the components of nation branding are not naturally inherited but selected for specific purposes.

Through this part, approaches of nation branding and the relevant themes were explored, categorised by Kaneva (2011). The categories and themes provide the overview of nation branding related to different approaches and the themes, related to each approach. However, Kaneva (2011) also points out that the categorisation should not be considered as strict, instead heuristic views as plural approaches can be used together, although predisposed to one approach. In this study, cultural approach to nation branding will be used as the main approach and other approaches can be subordinately used if necessary.
3.2 Nation branding and internationalisation of higher education

Nation branding endeavours to frame countries with concise and effective ways, aiming at positioning their countries favourably in the global market (Anholt, cited in Silvanto, Ryan and McNulty, 2015). And one of the areas that nation concentrates efforts to leverage the image of the nation as a strategy of nation branding is higher education. From the historical view, education and educational institutions have played an important role in nation branding and it came out as exchange programmes, cooperation in cultural initiatives or dissemination of knowledge about the countries abroad as a post-war apparatus for preventing international conflict in Western countries (Sataøen, 2015). These days, however, education systems became competitive not only on a domestic scale but also on a global scale. As a result, internationalisation of higher education has stood out and become a part of nation branding practices in many countries and it shows a clear increasing trend for decades, increasing the influx of foreign students in higher education institutions. In this part, therefore, how nation branding and internalisation of higher education is related will be explored.

For explaining nation branding and internalisation of higher education, there is a need to understand the dynamics of the globalisation of tertiary education, the increase of student mobility and the influx of students to higher education abroad. As mentioned earlier, globalisation facilitated the globalisation of higher education and the movement of the population to other countries. Likewise, student movement for getting the higher education has also increased in line with globalisation, and it brought higher mobility of students with higher education. The globalisation of higher education was interwoven with any given country’s economic prosperity as “the development of knowledge economy and globalization of higher education have given rise to state policies targeting international students as prospective skilled workers” (Mosneaga, 2013, p. 14).

Since the influx of international students through higher education will be a potential profit for the host country, a competitive atmosphere for attracting international students to their higher education has been formed (Silvanto, Ryan and McNulty, 2015; Dinnie, 2016) and it correlates with another objective of nation branding: talents attraction to highly educated students and skilled workers (Dinnie, 2016). In this context, higher education organisations are a part of nation branding practices as they also promote the country towards foreign students, potential
employees and different stakeholders (Sataøen, 2015). There are various criteria that attract foreign talents. Criteria such as favourable conditions for visa or residency, an attractive lifestyle are important factors for all foreign talents but the country’s reputation of higher education is a significant role for potential foreign students, particularly for MBA or master students (Dinnie, 2016). Silvanto and Ryan (2014) proposed a strategic framework for attracting the foreign talented and how it can be used in the branding context. Delivering the importance of adjusting the banal branding framework to the nation and place branding in the context of talent mobility, Silvanto and Ryan (2014) proposed the five key visions drivers for the brand strategy for attracting foreign talents, as well as skilled professionals.

These five key vision drivers are

(1) employment, economic dynamism and opportunity;
(2) cultural diversity and inclusiveness;
(3) clear immigration policies and effective governance;
(4) Geographic concentration of talent;
(5) quality of life and lifestyle; (Silvanto and Ryan, 2014)

The key drivers listed above consist of cultural, social, economic and political factors. Silvanto and Ryan (2014) note that economic factors used to be traditionally crucial factors for talent mobility but the importance of political factors, cultural and social factors have shown by many scholars. Particularly, intangible factors such as lifestyle, freedom, intellectual stimulation, acceptance, open and tolerant culture were considered as the most crucial factors by several scholars (ibid.). Accordingly, developing the branding strategy to convey the intangible qualities is vital for attracting the foreign talents, which is also important for formulating the essentials of the brand (Dinnie, 2008).

Concurrently, the internationalisation of higher education system of a country can improve the country’s national brand image. Park, Kim and DeMatteo (2016) argue that the experience of international students in the host country can influence their image or perspective of the relevant
nation, bringing African students in South Korea. In their article, the governmental effort to attract international students as a mean of national branding is seen as having resulted in the enhancement of the image of South Korea amongst African students who had their tertiary education in South Korea. (Park, Kim and DeMatteo, 2016). In this context, more foreign students in the country enhance the nation brand but it requires them having a favourable experience in the host country.

At the same time, internationalization of education can build a soft power enhancer. Stein (2017) analysed Canadian’s approach to international higher education in the last several years as an effort to rehabilitate the global image of Canada after the deterioration of the country due to the negative framing that Canadian immigration system with stratified, racialised and economic-oriented policy. Stein (2017) found that the Canadian education brand enhances the image of Canada as a country as a safe, multicultural and stable democratic society having a very high standard of living, as well as Canadian people as friendly, polite, well educated, and interesting. EduCanada, a Canadian education brand “emphasizes positive elements of Canada’s global reputation as ‘selling points’ for potential customers” through their channel (ibid.). This fact indicates that an education brand of a nation can use a strategy of positioning a nation with a positive image, which is seen as similar to nation branding strategy, enhancing nation and nation’s traits. Therefore, education branding for internationalisation of higher education can play a role of a soft power enhancer, as nation branding is rolled.

Through this part, it is found that there is a relevancy between nation branding and internationalisation of higher education. First, internationalisation of higher education can bring the influx of foreign skilled immigrants who can leverage nation’s competency in the global economic market, improving country’s nation brand. The importance of the skilled or professional immigrants for the nation’s long-term economic profit is recognised (Silvanto, Ryan and McNulty, 2015). Second, cultural, social, economic and political factors consist of the key factors for attracting the foreign talents. The importance of intangible values for advertising was concurrently pointed out. Third, Education branding partakes of nation branding’s role as a soft power enhancer of the nation. Stein’s study (2017) demonstrated that how branding for the internationalisation of higher education improve and induce the image of a country a particular frame. The involvement of branding higher education to global markets.
was also marked (Park, Kim and DeMatteo, 2016). Lastly, Education branding and nation branding shares common grounds in terms of strategy: Positioning and enhancing the brand image of the nation and nation’s competency through their online channels through Stein’ study (2017). Therefore, it is indicated that internationalisation of higher education and nation branding are related. Also, education branding, as a strategy of internationalisation of higher education is used, led by governmental agencies and online channels. Based on this, it is believed that Study in Sweden, operated by the Swedish Institute as a governmental agency for nation branding is a project for education branding of Swedish higher education; and that their channels are used for education branding, using the traits and image of Sweden.

This part reviewed how nation branding and internationalisation of higher education is related. Studies about how internationalisation of a nation’s higher education can contribute to nation branding, its importance, as well as the adjusted strategic framework for branding for luring the talented students in the context of nation and place branding, were found. However, there is a lack of how the intangible factors for attracting the foreign talent are represented in nation branding context amongst the existing literature. Thus, this study will endeavour to deliver the representation of intangible factors as a strategy for education branding, in the context of nation branding.

3.3 Nation branding, public agency and media

In nation branding, different stakeholders in the country exist as nation branding influences various sectors and different stakeholders. Also, the direction of nation branding can be influenced by politics, similarly to when the new chief executive officer or director in marketing department can affect the existing marketing direction of the brand (Dinnie, 2016). This can mean that nation branding policies can vary in the different politic regime and even countries.

Likewise, nation branding governmental policies about internationalisation of higher education in different countries showed difference amongst countries and the governmental action of two countries: South Korea, Canada will be used as a case in point as South Korea has shown a dramatic increase in the number of international students in 8 years through the effort of the Korean government (12,314 in 2003 and 89,573 in 2011) (Park, Kim and DeMatteo, 2016);
Canada has developed the positive discourse of the nation through the education branding of the nation (Stein, 2017).

Looking at the South Korean nation branding case, governmental support such as launching the relevant projects or funding scholarship was pointed out as a key strategy of nation branding in higher education (Park, Kim and DeMatteo, 2016). In the Canadian case, the facilitation and creation of the residence permit for international students as a state-level effort for promoting the internationalisation of their tertiary education were shown (Stein, 2017). The South Korean government concentrated on policies for financial support whilst the Canadian government concentrated their effort on a more convenient and easier residence permit process. Such difference derives from nation branding policies of the country about internationalisation of higher education; but it also shows that different factors such as target group for the nation branding can affect the direction of policies for supporting nation branding policies. Governmental and quasi-governmental bodies for managing nation branding in the long term are created as an effort to institutionalise branding the nation within state structures (Kaneva, 2011, p. 118).

Simultaneously, nation branding uses different marketing techniques for generating international awareness of different targeted audiences. The use of media channels is one of the proven techniques (Aronczyk, 2013). As emphasised by World Economic Forum 2013, social media play a key role as a promotion tool for nation branding, allowing more discreet, although customised and targeted promotion (Silvanto and Ryan, 2014). As a tool for online marketing, social media is used for nation branding areas such as higher education for imprinting the strategic vision of the brand and benefits that foreign talents will obtain in the country (Silvanto and Ryan, 2014). For Dinnie (2016), online branding can enhance a positive perception of the nation from word-of-mouth through conventional techniques such as “seeding trials, viral advertising, brand advocacy programmes and influencer outreach initiatives” (Dinnie, 2016, p. 224). For online branding, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are those with the higher profile (Dinnie, 2016) and creating websites is another option for online nation branding strategy (Silvanto and Ryan, 2014) but the usage of social media for online branding differs amongst countries (Dinnie, 2016). The invention of social media, for instance, Facebook and Twitter, provides education marketers with another channel to market and communicate with
prospective students.

This section delivered several aspects. First, nation branding is influenced by governments or regimes of the country. This implies that the governmental influence on the nation branding can increase/decrease in accordance with the countries and the government in the same country. To put it differently, how much the governmental body of nation branding has autonomy varies. Second, communication channels for nation branding for higher education play an important role. In line with the virtualisation of nation branding channels as a result of the advance of the internet, communication channels for nation branding for higher education play an important role. As the social media channels are used as an important realm for nation branding, it is believed that the contents in social media channels for nation branding for higher education reflect the strategic vision of the brand and benefits that foreign talents will obtain in the country.

3.4 Swedish values: Swedishness

Swedishness is a word using ‘Swedish’, as an adjective and a noun suffix ‘-ness’. In Oxford Dictionary, the adjective ‘Swedish’ is defined as relating to Sweden, its people, or their language whereas ‘-ness’ is used to form nouns from adjectives by meaning something in a certain state (Oxford Dictionary, 2018a). Together, ‘Swedishness’ means something or a state or a character of something related to Sweden, Swedish people or the language. Swedishness, in this sense, refers to components of a nation.

To understand the meaning of Swedishness, understanding the nation, as a concept is prioritised. However, according to Anderson (2006, pp. 4-6), there has been “no scientific definition of the nation”, and grand scholars developed the concept of nationalism with their own languages. By doubting hypostatization of the existence of nationalism, Anderson posed a definition of nation as an imagined community: if a scale of a community is larger than face-to-face contact as the member of community cannot figure out the components of society such as members and nation is used to form an imagined kinship, further to ideologise nationalism (Anderson, 2006). In this sense, Swedishness, related to the common ground on the characteristics of the nation, exists as a tool to bind people to belong to Sweden with an imagined kinship.
Looking at how Swedishness has been used in Sweden, above all, Swedishness was used in national education as a way of forming an alliance as a citizen, feeling a sense of belonging and identity. Thomasson (2015) explored how imagined kinship is cultivated in the compulsory education through Swedish compulsory education, through different representations of ‘Swedishness’, from the perspective of nation-building. Thomasson (2015) argued that a driving force of keeping members within the nation is shared conceptions of culture and value that the citizens believe that they have in common. According to Thomasson (2015), such shared values, named as Swedishness were cultivated through a public space, such as education system, as well as daily interactions with people in the nation. For example, in Swedish history education, five meta-narratives on Swedishness were found: ‘welfarism’, ‘the role model country of democracy and ‘the most gender equalised country’, ‘the stranger’, ‘neutrality’ (Malmros, 2012 cited in Thomasson, 2015). Those were tools to create an imagined kinship between children with Swedish education ultimately Sweden, as a nation. Thomasson (2015) further argued that the cultivation of imagined community through shared values bound citizenships by differentiating the others and implant a belief in one nation’s superiority. Besides, Swedishness was used in language education as norms of learning languages. Tholin (2012) examined English-Language education in the last decade of the 20th century in Sweden in relation to ethnic bias. Thomasson (2015) found that students with Swedish background get a better grade in English than those having immigrant-background because the standard of education in Swedish schools is Swedishness: Swedish culture and Swedish language. In this sense, Swedishness is a tool to set the Swedish language as criteria for learning foreign languages and injects Swedish culture to children in Swedish education. But at the same time marginalising students in Sweden with the immigrant background in terms of opportunity to get a better grade in the same condition (Thomasson, 2015).

The review of Swedishness in education reveals that Swedishness in education was used for building imagined kinship amongst citizens that enables and binds citizens in the country to have a feeling of belonging and common interests, goals and preference with others (Alesina and Reich, 2013; Thomasson, 2015). As Thomasson (2015, p. 751) argued, Swedishness is used to shape a citizen in a nation further society and binds citizens in a country or community with the feeling of belonging, which Anderson (2006, p. 7) states the fraternity, bonding people with imagined community. On top of this, it is found that Swedishness, as used for defining a community, has a personal/emotional value. For using words to bind all citizens, it is impossible
to set a concrete value to define the characteristics of a country, as well as the people. Words such as financially stable and highly educated are very hardly used as it is never possible to generalise to all people in a nation. Thus, core values with personal or emotional values are used instead to create fundamental beliefs of people, group or country. Therefore, Swedishness combines core values for forming beliefs or a bond amongst a group or people in Sweden. At the same time, however, Swedishness in the education demarcates Swedes and the others depending on the background of origin, by either implementing narratives of Swedishness to pupils or set the Swedish language as a ‘default’ to understand language.

Simultaneously, Swedishness has been used as a marketing tool to achieve various goals by advertising products with Swedishness. In the design industry, design products made in Sweden have been represented with Swedishness with specific styles and values in the name of Swedish Modern Design or Scandinavian Design. A style of Swedish and Scandinavian Design was colligated with Swedish type of society, developing a discourse of Swedish design as the Swedish democratic model (Jones, 2015, p. 208). The Swedish-style social democracy model with a discourse on Swedish design accented on several narratives such as universal benefits, transparency, and a functional, healthy society was further embodied with the principles of functionalist design (Lindqvist, 2009). Such idea continued to be reproduced by the global furniture brand IKEA which originated in Sweden: from mid-20th century (Jones, 2015, p. 208). The IKEA concept of functionalist and Swedish-style democracy concept was developed in or around the 1950’s and it is still published as a key discourse (Lindqvist, 2009). IKEA has continued to accentuate Swedishness with their internationalisation process (Salzer, 1994). As a result, the performance of the IKEA store as a representation of Swedish-style democracy further extended its political power and cultural authority by showing the semantic link between IKEA products and the democratic culture and model of Swedes (Lindqvist, 2009, p. 44). By accentuating Swedishness in IKEA culture, “IKEA made its culture publicly known and visible and turned it into the key factor of its high brand awareness” (Müller, 2016, p. 903).

Through this, it is shown that how the idea of Swedishness was combined with products of the brand, or the brand itself. On the one hand, Swedishness can be used to build the brand identity of a commercial brand: IKEA. In this sense, Swedishness is an identity marker of the products and brand. On the other hand, the brand itself, having been intertwining Swedishness with
became a part of Swedishness. As Lindqvist (2009) points out, the Swedish enterprise became an archive of Swedish national culture purporting its brand culture as Swedishness. In this case, specific sides of Swedish myths and stereotypes are constructed or stressed through this process. Simultaneously, Swedishness is also used for the brand identity of Sweden as a country: nation branding identity. Swedishness is originated in the nineteenth century to promote the national identity of Sweden through Sweden’s own culture, values and tradition (Facos, cited in Jones, 2015), which has been used as a nation-building tool and marketing tools in accordance with the findings above. However, Swedishness has been also promoted in a way to compete Sweden in the international environment to promote its national image in line with the increased importance of positive image of the nation in terms of obtaining acceptance and as a tool to make international impact, impacting various area; Swedishness is used for nation branding (Czarny, 2018). In 2003, the council for the promotion of Sweden (in Swedish: Nämnden för Svergiefrämjande i Utlandet-NSU) was launched to execute a combined effort to promote diverse sectors of Swedish economy, polity and culture: The Ministry of foreign affairs, the Swedish Institute, Invest in Sweden Agency, the Swedish Trade Council and visit Sweden (Aronczyk, 2013). To construct the strong image, the ministry of foreign affairs in Sweden conducted a major survey of the image of Sweden in 2005 and it was made through workshops, surveys and a questionnaire of which the target groups both inside and outside Sweden (Aronczyk, 2013, p. 156). Based on the results, brand Sweden for nation branding of Sweden was launched (Aronczyk, 2013; Czarny, 2018). The core/brand essence of brand was defined as the progressive image from Sweden a model state and the core/brand connected with four core descriptors of Sweden such as ‘innovative’, ‘open’, ‘authentic’ and ‘caring’, in accordance with the Swedish Institute (Glover, 2009; Aronczyk, 2013). With regard to the practices in nation branding, marketing and promoting techniques has been used as a strategy (Valaskivi, 2016). As mentioned, Brand Sweden is used to appealing to Sweden to the external audience. However, Brand Sweden also defines the core essence and descriptors of “what we are, what we believe and value, and thus what we offer” (Aronczyk, 2013, p. 156). To put it differently, the core essence and descriptors, core values of the brand can function as defining Sweden to the internal audience. Glover (2009, p. 258) argues that strengthening the image of Sweden overseas
through a national campaign means that not only will this strengthen the external image of Sweden but it will also reproduce the image within Sweden by re-strengthening the image of Sweden. For example, when the model state, as a concept of Sweden rose and reproduced, it gained popularity both nationally and internationally during the twentieth century (Glover, 2009, p. 247). In this sense, the identity of a nation is reproduced and constructed by the purpose to represent and bind Sweden as an imagined country towards the external and internal audience (Valaskivi, 2016); Accordingly, core values are means to elaborate internal and external identity of the nation.

In summary, the literature review of Swedishness gave an insight of 1) what Swedishness is, 2) how Swedishness has been used and 3) the implication of Swedishness in relation to nation branding. Swedishness means traits of Sweden, Swedish people, Swedish language or Swedish commercial brands/products which are described through constructed core values for the purpose of marketing private/public organisations. In other words, Swedishness is constructed by connecting goods/people originating in Sweden and core values, which might not be directly related to the products. In addition, Swedishness is used for nation branding of Sweden to promote economy, policy and culture of Sweden with core values of Sweden, named the brand essence of Sweden. The nation branding of Sweden with Swedishness impacts of the external audience by constructing an external perception of the image of Sweden but also reproducing and solidifying the internal image of Sweden. On top of this, it is believed that nation branding as a nation’s commercialisation, or vice versa (Kania-Lundholm, 2014; Castelló and Mihelj, 2017) and the concept of nation branding functions as imagined nation-making in the global history of nations in the contemporary era within the ideology of competition (Valaskivi, 2016).

Through the literature reviews of nation branding as well as Swedishness, several things were found. Above all, studies related to nation branding were mostly conducted with the focus on specific aspects of nation branding, for example, political approach to nation branding, seeing nation branding as an influencer of the international relations. However, as aforementioned, the boundary of approaches to nation branding is not strict, so a synthesised approach to nation branding is possible, although few studies were explored with the integrated manner. This study uses cultural approaches to nation branding, but at the same time various aspects such as economic, political and educational aspects of nation branding will be used as the identity of
nation branding thus it is believed that this research can fill the gap of the research in nation branding studies. Also, this study focused on the values represented through the identity. Notably, the study connected nation’s values: Swedishness to the national brand identity. The literature review of Swedish values: Swedishness revealed the connection between Swedish values and nation branding. However, no study was found concerning the connection between Swedish values and the national identity extracted from the nation branding practices. In this context, this study will contribute to providing a phenomenological study of the connection between nation’s value and the national identities used in the nation branding practices. Lastly, nation branding has been investigated concerning product branding. On the contrary, there is a small number of studies examining the connections and implication of the education branding and nation branding. Thus, it is believed that this study can be an example of the exploration of nation branding for promoting nation’s higher education.
4. Theoretical Framework

In this part, an exploration of cultural approach to nation branding will be elaborated as this study focuses on the implications of the nation branding, which are closely related to the cultural approach to nation branding. Also, the nation branding identity components and communicator of the nation branding will be explored as important parts of the focus of the study. Based on this, an operationalised conceptual model of nation branding for this study will be presented.

4.1 Nation branding: cultural approach

In cultural approach to nation branding, nation branding is broadly understood as a tool of constructing the nation’s identity so as to create a specific perception to either external or internal audience, or both (Kaneva and Popescu, 2011; Aronczyk, 2008; Varga 2013; Kania-Lundholm, 2014;). According to Kaneva and Popescu (2011), nation branding aims to (re)construct the nation’s external identity towards the global target, as well as to create nation’s internal images for the people of the nation. Both internal and external identity were extracted through the symbolised brand message in government-sponsored nation branding campaigns. Similarly, Aronczyk (2008) explains nation branding is conducted to create and a particular version of national identity and communicate globally with the identity, whilst pursuing economic benefits initiated by a government, using marketing techniques of for-profit businesses. Aronczyk (2008, p. 49) also states that “nation branding does not aim for creating a brand of the nation as nations are brand in substance. On top of this, nation branding is perceived as equivalent to creating a national identity (ibid.) and as Kaneva and Popescu (2011) argue, nation branding is self-reflective efforts to re-imagining their national identity through branding logics.

Whilst it is shown that nation branding is connected to identity construction, impacting on the internal/external audience, it is unclear how the identity is connected to the branding in terms of effectiveness of branding a nation. According to Varga (2013), it is observed that the values stressed by the branding for forming the identity are not related to the actual products by many scholars. Rather, non-functional values are linked to the products furthermore the perception of the brand, creating a commonality inside the brand; the commodity is conceived as more valuable than actually related products (ibid). The commonality is constructed and achieved by
collected symbolic ceremonies that might not have its importance in the past but invented and materialised through ceremonies and recognition at public level that Hobsbawm (1983, cited in Varga, 2013) refers ‘invention of tradition’. The commonality, therefore, takes a constructivist view, overlapping with nationhood.

For Kania-Lundholm (2014), nationhood is the process of identification with a nation and further connected to constructivist idea of nationhood such as the concept of imagined community by Anderson (2006), and many scholars use Anderson’s imagined community to explain nation branding identity (Glover, 2009; Kania-Lundholm, 2014; Dinnie, 2016). As mentioned earlier to explain Swedishness (See section 3.4), the nation is imagined commonality in the constructivist approaches and imaginary values are used as narratives to bind the members in the community. In line with this, it is pointed that national identities are always constructed by a specific group such as elite groups (Anderson, 2006). Jordan (2014) argues that nation branding can frame specifically deliberately chosen traits of a nation as representative traits of the nation, thus excluding other traits of the nation, which furthermore maintains the nation’s notion as a primordial framework for the nation’s identity, corresponding to nationalist discourses on the nation. Thus, borrowing Dzenovska’s argument (2005, p. 174), national identity in the nation branding is a result of the selected reflection of the imaginations of the nation by the nation’s elites and inheres the nation branding narrative. In this sense, nation branding is ‘ontological reconfiguration’ of both the nation and the nation branding itself (ibid.).

However, the imagined community by national identity does not refer to a specific group of people. For Ståhlberg and Bolin (2016), nation branding does not define who the subject of nation branding is, rarely reminding people in the nation about who ‘we’ are. The main point of nation branding is to showcase a particular nation towards the external audience and teach them about ‘us’, the entity of nation. Thus, it is shown that nation branding does not give a clear definition of the people but implications of the connection with people inside and the value.

Concurrently, Kania-Lundholm (2014) states that nationhood used to be understood in a political and a cultural category. This approach is observed in Varga’s study (2013) that explores nation branding and the national identity in the cultural-political measures. However, it is
pointed out that the boundaries shifted in the context of global capitalism, increasing the influence of economic aspects of the process (Aronczyk, 2008; Kania-Lundholm, 2014). Based on this, it is postulated that nationhood is an articulation of national identity within political, economic, and cultural boundaries (Kania-Lundholm, 2014) and national identity can be analysed within political, economic and cultural aspects, which can be seen in the values, linked in the products.

This part explored cultural approach of nation branding, which is a cornerstone of the conceptual model of this thesis, which will be presented later. Through this, a couple of important insights were found. It is suggested that nation branding nation branding is a procedure of construction and communication of identity with specific values and it further creates a commonality of the nation’s brand. Also, as stated above, nation branding aims to create a national identity with non/functional values. Besides, looking at how the scholars culturally approach to nation branding, it is found that other aspects such as economic and political elements were also involved in the dynamics of identity and nation branding. Therefore, it is necessary to explore components of identity in nation branding and how it is related to different values in economic, political and cultural aspects. Also, this study will look at educational aspects since this study explores nation branding of Sweden with the case of Study in Sweden’s practices in social media for promoting Swedish higher education.

4.2 Nation branding: identity components

Nation branding creates and communicates with national identity for achieving nation branding goals thus national identity plays a vital role in nation branding. Dinnie (2008) proposes the elements of nation branding identity as history, landscape, language, territory, education system, food and drink, folklore and commercial brands originating in the country thus national identity for nation branding is based on what the country already has as default. Especially, Dinnie (2008, pp. 4-5) stresses the importance of culture in the nation branding by connecting Grant’s idea of brand as “a cluster of strategic cultural ideas”, saying that national brands have rich and deep cultural resources, more than any other types of brands and “the essence of any nation brand derives not only from the country’s companies and brand, but also from its culture in the widest sense”. In this sense, nation brand identity has cultural roots. However, as aforementioned, national identity is also related to economic and political values; educational values are related
since this study is exploring nation branding for promoting Swedish higher education to the external audience. Thus, this study will focus national identity components mentioned by Dinnie (2008) in the contexts of cultural, economic, political and educational values.

Whilst national identity is the essence of nation branding and derives from cultural resources of the nation, the national identity is used for a marketing strategy in nation branding. Ståhlberg and Bolin (2016) point out that nation brand is conceived in terms of identity and the identity is prominently expressed in marketing discourse. For Anholt (2007, cited in Ståhlberg and Bolin, 2016), nation brand is a tangible, robust communicable version of national identity. Through nation branding, national identity becomes tangible and appeals to the senses as brand identity, according to Wheeler (2009, p. 4), “fuels recognition, amplifies differentiation, and makes big ideas and meaning accessible and brand identity takes disparate elements and unifies them into whole systems”. In promoting national identity in terms of nation branding, national identity is commodity itself, produced and exchanged as a business term and not as an analytical concept (Ståhlberg and Bolin, 2016, p. 281). Thus, it is important to analyse the identity components in the contextualised manners, relation to either cultural, economic, political and educational values and as Kaneva and Popescu (2011) analysed the national identity through how the key themes of the nation branding practices symbolised with the contexts of the branding.

In the meantime, national identity is nation branding is aimed to achieve a desirable image of the nation. Kania-Lundholm (2014, p. 607) states that cohesive, attractive, and recognisable image of the nation is a prerequisite for nation branding which should be reflected upon domestic and international audiences. Whilst national identity is a selection amongst the nation’s traits by a specific group, a national image is based on individual’s own experiences of a country, either direct or indirect (Dinnie, 2016). As nation brand identity and nation brand image have different bases, nation brand identity and nation brand image can be different. However, in nation branding, it is important to maintain consistency in brand identity and brand image as an identity-image gap is a negative factor for nation brand positioning, a key issue in brand management and strategy (Dinnie, 2016). Therefore, to prevent identity-image gap, the nation branding identity components are managed by nation branding communicator (ibid), which will be presented in the next part.
4.3 A communicator of nation branding

Dinnie (2008) uses the term ‘communicator’ for nation branding as a sphere where the national identity is presented and impacts on the formation of nation’s image. Although no clarify the definition of the communicator is delivered through the entire book by Dinnie (2008), Dinnie (2008) places communicator of the nation branding in the middle of nation branding identity and nation branding image. Thus, it is suggested that communicator is aimed to manage the identity-image gap, such as mediating/promoting the national identity and reflects the image of the nation by the external audience (See Figure 2). Scoping on the elements of communicator of nation branding, I suggest four categories of the elements:

- Marketing agencies: Branded export, marketing communications, brand ambassadors
- Government: Government, foreign policy
- Culture: Sports achievements, cultural artefacts, prominent personalities
- Individual experience: the diaspora, tourism experience

This category reflects on firstly, the subject of nation branding. In the categories: marketing agencies and government, nation branding is mainly operated by marketing experts or government. In contrast, in the categories: culture and individual, nation branding is conducted by cultural aspects or individuals. The difference between the former and the latter is that the former is controlled by agencies or groups of people thus predictable and manageable, whilst the latter is relatively uncontrollable and unpredictable as the government or agency cannot control sports or individual experience, such as the winning the matches or tourism experience.

However, this category can be integrated together since countries, for example, can encourage sporting achievements or tourism by supporting the sports with policies, though there are more variables which are not under the control. The focus of this study is the Study in Sweden, operated by the Swedish Institute, a quasi-governmental agency for nation branding. But at the same time, it seems like marketing strategies are used for the communication by operating the social media. Thus, it is suggested that the Study in Sweden, communicator in this study is in the integrated category of government-marketing agencies. This will be analysed and articulated in the analysis part.

To figure out how the identity is conveyed through the communicator, Aronczyk (2008, pp. 51-54) proposes the four-step process of national identity implication in nation branding: 1)
Evaluation, 2) Training, 3) Identification and 4) implementation/communication. Evaluation covers figuring out the existing internal/external perception of the nation; Training conforms to the process of filtering the results of evaluations with the strategy of private and public sector stakeholders; Identification means developing the essence or ‘the core ideas’ of the brand, distinguishing from the competitors but emerging in the competitive environment; Implementation/communication is a stage of distributing the identity to the audience by “brand ambassador,” “brand champion,” “brand exemplary,” or “brand carrier”.

Applying to this study, identification and implementation/communication are relevant as this study explores how the nation branding identity is presented through the social media channels. Identification corresponds to national identity, whereas implementation/communication can be construed as communicator in Dinnie’s conceptual model. As identity was already explored in the previous section, the explanation of implementation/communication part will be delivered here.

For Aronczyk, (2008, p.54), this process includes the communication by the communicators and the implications of the message to the internal/external audience. This study will focus on the communicator for figuring out how the Study in Sweden, as a communicator communicates with nation brand identity. Aronczyk (2008) uses Leonard’s concept of public diplomacy as nation branding because Leonard’s public diplomacy, for Aronczyk (2008), is “a form of communication that correlates to – and is in fact constituted by – the nation brand” hence public diplomacy and nation branding, in this sense, are interpreted in the same way: “a strategic tool in influencing strategic decisions about national policies with respect to both domestic and international relations involving economic, political, and cultural affairs” (Leonard, 2002, p. 9). Thus, Leonard’s conceptualisation of three dimensions of public diplomacy activities in public diplomacy (2002) will be selectively illustrated for explaining how communicator is aimed/used in terms of nation branding.

- Reacting to news events as they occur in a way that tallies with our strategic goals

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3 Aronczyk (2008, p. 54) places communication on the same footing as implementation to the individuals in terms of the involvement of the individuals as a part of ‘brand ambassador’ by carrying the small portion of the brand and disseminate that with whom they contact. However, implementation part is excluded as this study does not explore the implementation of the national identity to the audience.

4 This research excludes the timescales of the activities: daily, monthly or yearly as an estimated time for achieving the results as this study focuses on the activities by the communicator(s) of the nation branding, not the result(s).
• Proactively creating a news agenda through activities and events which are designed to reinforce core messages and influence perceptions

• Building long-term relationships with populations overseas to win recognition of our values and assets and to learn from theirs

(Leonard, 2002, pp. 10-11)

According to Leonard (2002), the axis of this activities come out with political/military, economic and societal/cultural axis, which can be applied to the three dimensions. But the application of the dimensions and axis can be contextualised as each country has different priorities of the dimension(s) and strategy for managing the nation branding, operated by the different set of institutions depending on the countries (ibid.).

This part explored the definition of communicator, the range of communicator and how communicator in nation branding conducts the activities by combining the conceptual model for the exploration. Through this, it is believed that the communicator of the nation branding is used for conveying different dimensions of nation branding with different axis by various communicator groups depending on the country. Based on this, a customised conceptual model for nation branding of the Study in Sweden Facebook page will be proposed.

Figure 2. Conceptual model of nation-brand identity and nation-brand image (Dinnie, 2008)
4.4 A customised framework for nation branding of the Study in Sweden Facebook page

Based on Dinnie’s conceptual model of nation-brand identity and nation-brand image, as well as the three dimensions of the communicator derived from Leonard which were delivered above, a customised analytical framework for this study is created. Since the aim of the study is to analyse the representation of national identity through the nation branding channel, it is adequate to focus on the representation nation branding identity on the Study in Sweden Facebook page. To put it differently, this study will focalise on how the nation branding identity is represented on the social media channel: The Study in Sweden Facebook page and the activities to grasp the nation branding identity components and the aspects of the communication dimensions by analysing the posts uploaded in the channel by the Swedish Institute. In addition, as aforementioned (See section 4.2), the components of nation branding identity will be categorised to economic, political, cultural and educational values for this study.

The definition of the values is based on the reviews of the relevant study that were delivered in the previous session. The operational definitions of each value are found below.

- Economic values: Economic achievements, reputation and competence by industries, commercial brands of the nation
- Political values: Achievements, values, beliefs and qualities by Governmental activities and its presentation
- Cultural values: History, places, language, sport and food of the country
- Educational values: Education system, education quality and the reputation of the elements of the nation’s education

As channels for nation branding uses the nation’s identity for promoting the nation’s higher education, it is believed that the values of the nation: Swedishness is contained in the nation branding identity. Thus, Swedishness as values from nation branding identity will be discussed later. Furthermore, a combined category of communicator: Government-Marketing agencies will replace the components of the communicator as the study scopes on nation branding, operated by the quasi-governmental agency using marketing strategies for the communication; The axis from the activities of communication will be investigated as a way to promote nation branding identity of Sweden. Also, Swedish values: will be elaborated based on the exploration of nation branding identity since Swedishness is used for nation branding with core values (See section 3.4) and nation branding is a process of promoting national identity (See section 4.2).
Based on this model, an analysis of nation branding identity, produced by Study in Sweden Facebook page and the appearance of communications as communicator(s) will be conducted. In the conceptual model, the Study in Sweden Facebook, as an element of communicator of nation branding image which will represent how and of which values nation branding identity is represented through the posts published on the Study in Sweden Facebook page. Thus, the framework starts with examining the elements of the nation branding identity, aiming to figure out the identity components, used for the nation branding. Besides, which core values are used to describe the identity and represent Swedishness will be delivered. Simultaneously, the study will explore which dimensions of the activities are prioritised by communicator. Thus, this customised model can show how nation branding elements and Swedishness differ and converge. A visualised conceptual model is in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Customised conceptual model for nation branding for higher education of the Study in Sweden Facebook page.
5. Methods

In this part, the applied way of research methodology and research design for this study will be explained. First, qualitative content analysis (QCA) will be introduced as the primary method and the reasons for the use of content analysis will be provided. Second, the data design and data analysis will be delivered. Through this, a detailed information of operationalisation of the analysis of data will be illustrated. Lastly, the limitations and ethics with regard to the data and method will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

5.1 Qualitative content analysis as a method

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) is one of the research approaches for describing and interpreting textual data by using the systematic process of coding (Assarroudi et al., 2018) and is a branch of content analysis: a widespread way to systematically analyse analysing media messages in a quantitative manner, in line with the massive growth of mass media industry during twentieth century (Deacon et al., 2014). However, content analysis has been used differently at different times and the range and use of content analysis became wider further to qualitative content analysis.

Content analysis has been widely used as an effective analytical approach to communication, media and cultural studies (Deacon et al., 2014). Content analysis was mainly applied to media and political communication studies, it has also applied to analyse business communication including marketing (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2015). Likewise, qualitative content analysis, as a variant of content analysis is also a useful method for media studies. Particularly, qualitative content analysis is widely used for analysing text data (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The range of textual data which can be used for qualitative content analysis is various like textual information such as interviews, focus groups and open-ended survey questions (Kondracki, Wellman and Amundson, 2002). Also, both verbal and visual text materials can be analysed of messages in the descriptive ways such as internet posts, advertising and printed text (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2015). Moreover, Julien (2008, p. 121) describes qualitative content analysis as a categorizing process that classifies qualitative textual data with similarity, conceptual categories, as well as identifies patterns, relationships between theme or variables. Thus, qualitative content analysis is a highly relevant and appropriate method for analysing
textual data from social media. As qualitative content analysis focuses on developing the knowledge as well as understanding the study phenomenon (Assarroudi et al., 2018), quantitative content analysis is a proper method to understand how nation branding is represented in posts presented in Study in Sweden, as well as an interview with the employee at Si (the Swedish Institute).

The first data set of this thesis is textual data from Study in Sweden Facebook pages. As qualitative data, the analysis follows processes of identifying text through conducting and categorising coding from which conclusions about the message content can be drown (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2015, p. 335). The main data can be coded with descriptive open-ended coding as an initial coding, which will be connected to the code(s) for content analysis. Descriptive coding is a useful coding for identifying the topic of the content with a variety of data forms from textual data such as interview transcripts, journals, documents to visual data such as video. Through descriptive coding, a categorized inventory or summarised form(s) of data can be created, which is essential groundwork to further analysis as well as interpretation (Wolcott, cited in Saldaña, 2009). Furthermore, descriptive coding can be connected to content analysis thus descriptive coding is an appropriate coding method for these data. With regard to qualitative content analysis, directed content analysis, revised by Assarroudi et al. (2018) is appropriate for the analysis of the first data. Directed qualitative analysis is a deductive approach to the textual data based on existing theories or models (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). In this study, the customised framework proposed in the theoretical framework was used. A deductive approach in qualitative analysis enables to validate or extend a conceptual/theoretical framework or theory and facilitates determines initial coding schemes as well as relationships between codes (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Thus, directed content analysis is an appropriate to approach to interpret the data and the theoretical framework.

The second data set of this study contains transcripts of an interview with an employee: Rebecca [Fictional name] at the Swedish Institute. As mentioned, background information of the Swedish Institute was rendered, partly based on the interview. This interview is an important data to figure out how the Study in Sweden Facebook page, operated by the Swedish Institute functions as communicator of the nation branding. In addition, the interviewee is responsible for the digital strategy of the Study in Sweden social media channels. Thus, it is believed that
this interview offers crucial insights regarding the use of strategies for representing nation branding identity and how it is related to nation branding identity.

For the data gathering, first, meaningful data for this study was extracted from the transcript and was analysed in a qualitative manner. According to Julien (2008, p. 121), qualitative content analysis is commonly used for analysing textual data such as interview transcripts, responses to open-ended questionnaire items; qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, is an analytic method to reduce data and derive meanings from it. When qualitative content analysis is applied on material such as interview transcripts, a closer look of the text is involved to see multiple meanings, context and interpretation of the text, and clusters or codes are produced through analysis that is translated into theme (ibid.). For the initial analysis of the data, descriptive coding was used and then emerged in the qualitative content analysis of the transcripts. As mentioned, descriptive coding is a suitable coding way for identifying contents including textual data such as interview transcripts. Also, it was mentioned ahead. that descriptive open-ended coding can be connected to content analysis. More detailed information about how to design, conduct the research and analysis of data will be described in research design. At the end of this chapter, limitation and ethics of this methods will be discussed.

5.2 Research design for the Study in Sweden Facebook page

5.2.1 Data selection

The first focus of the thesis was on the contents of the Study in Sweden Facebook page. The Study in Sweden Facebook page was chosen as the main social media amongst other channels including Instagram, YouTube, the official website, WeChat and Weibo, since the Study in Sweden Facebook page had the largest number of followers (380,751, on 20 April 2018). Having a large number of followers means that the media has power of influence on the followers; thus, contents in the media have also its importance. The Study in Sweden Facebook page is an appropriate channel to see the branding components of the Study in Sweden as it has its importance as an English-language channel.

Specifically, 50 posts released in January 2018 and April 2018 were selected for sampling. This period was chosen due to its significance of nation branding as almost the whole process for
Swedish university admission in 2018 is concentrated on this period. For example, January is the last month for Study in Sweden to appeal to students why may apply to universities in Sweden for the Autumn semester and April is the final month that students inform the results of the application and confirm the admission (Universityadmissions.se, 2018). Thus, all posts published from January to April were chosen for further investigation. With regard to the data collection, the data collection process was highly dependent on manual collecting contents released in Study in Sweden. The author traced posts at the Study in Sweden Facebook page by manually scrolling down, and also accessed to other platforms as the majority of Facebook posts consist of an outbound link to other different channels. Contents from each link were manually copied and pasted by the author. After collecting the data, the data were inspected from various aspects, based on the theoretical framework and research questions. Also, only textual content was chosen thus only 30 posts were chosen and 19 posts were eliminated. This is based on a number of reasons. First, the research aims to figure out the representation of the contents through systematic coding of the data and the relations with categories. Coding visual data is a complicated work, requiring the interpretation of the visual dimension. The aim of the research is to figure out the meaning of the data, rather than how the contents is analysed with different types of symbols (Schreier, 2012). To put it differently, the study does not explore the symbolised message of the contents. Rather, the study aims to analyse the literal message of the content. Based on these reasons, textual data was prioritised for an efficient and reasonable analysis.

5.2.2 Analysis of Data

For the better understanding of the analysis, a precise and detailed data analysis procedure of applying content analysis will be described. First, before analysing the contents in the Study in Sweden Facebook page from the nation branding perspective, an overview of contents from the chosen period will be described, including the number of Facebook posts excluding video contents, types of the contents: text, photo, link or video, for example. This information will provide a basic schema of the use of the Study in Sweden Facebook pages, which can be a bridge to grasp the use of nation branding identity.

To figure out how the nation branding, ultimately nation branding identity is represented in the Study in Sweden Facebook page, directed content analysis was applied. Since directed analysis
is based on the theoretical framework, a categorisation matrix was created (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Educational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is nation branding identity represented?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. A categorisation matrix of the nation branding identity representation in the Study in Sweden Facebook page.

For initial coding for the data, the descriptive open-ended coding was conducted, without demarcation of the posts. The descriptive coding aimed to create sub-categories of the main category: Economic, political, cultural and educational. The units of analysis of the posts varied since the type of the posts were various from sharing a link with a few comments to reposting from others. For having an accurate sub-category for nation branding identity, key components of branding identity by Dinnie (2008) were used. However, branding identity can differ, based on the type and the subject of nation branding. During the process of coding, variables of sub-category were adjusted. According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008, p. 112), it is possible to choose the aspects that do not fit the categorisation frame can be used; Accordingly, the texts which could not be categorised with the initial coding scheme can be coded with a new code (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Based on this, “Language”, “Architecture”, “Literature”, “Art”, “Religion”, “Icons”, “Sport” and “Music” were deleted due to the low frequency or the relevancy to the posts. At the same time, “Political regime” was replaced by “Governance” as “Governance” covers the action or manner of governing a state, organisation thus it covers a wider range of governmental activities. Also, “National economy”, “Industry”, “Commercial brand”, “Human capital”, “Sightseeing” and “Education methods” were added based on the result of the analysis and relevance of the theoretical model. The detailed explanation of the categories will be delivered in the analysis part. In addition, core values were related to the components of the subcategories were extracted together with the descriptive open-ended coding. As the nation branding identity is believed to have Swedish values, the analysis was essential to figure out the implications of the core values of each category. The categorisation matrix was pre-tested to different posts in the Facebook (Assarroudi et al., 2018). The tabled conceptual category is presented in Table 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategories: Identity</th>
<th>Main categories: values</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Economic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial brand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human capital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nation branding identity: Swedish values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folklore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education system</td>
<td>Educational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education methods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The tabled conceptual category for nation branding: Identity

5.3 Research design for interviews with an employee at the Swedish Institute.

5.3.1 Data selection

The second focus of this study is an interview with an employee at the Swedish Institute. Especially, the interviewee with Rebecca [Fictional name]: employee 1 (See Figure. 1, p. 15) was conducted. The choice of the interviewee rests on the fitness of the interviewee for this study. The interview with employee aims to figure out the strategies and the goals of nation branding in the Study in Sweden Facebook page. Thus, the interviewee of the employee who is responsible for contents, strategy and management of social media managed by the Study in Sweden was crucial. Since the Study in Sweden team consists of 5 people, taking responsibility for different areas, Rebecca [Fictional name] was the only and vital interviewee for this study. The author has several connections since the author has experience of working as a digital ambassador for Korean student5, but the author did not have an overview of the organisation as

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5 The digital ambassador Korean team is a part of Study in Sweden project in Korea. However, there is little connection between digital
there was no direct connection. To find the interviewee for this study, a snowball sampling method was used. As Rose, Spinks and Canhoto (2015, pp. 193-194) describe, snowball sampling is used when it is difficult to identify the sampling frame; the researcher starts sampling with “a few known numbers of the population who meet the sample characteristics”. As there is not sufficient information of the population of the employee at the organisation, the fieldwork started with interviews with relevant employees at digital ambassador Korean team. First, contact with the special member 1 was made in December 2017 for asking the interview and the information for the connection. The connection to one Korean student who was working both digital ambassador Korean team and Study in Sweden (in Sweden) was made by the special member 1. Through the contact with the Korean student at the end of January 2018, the contact information of was given. Based on the information, the first contact with the interviewee was done and the appointment for a face-to-face was made.

A limited number of the employee was interviewed, partly due to the limited amount of time, but primarily due to the limited number of the employee specialising in social media management of Study in Sweden social media channels. However, an in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interview enabled the interviewer to tailor questions to a specific contest and free-format questioning rich data from by allowing interviewees to express and articulate their opinions (Deacon et al., 2014). Thus, it is believed that the method is a suitable way for the interview with a limited number of the employee at the Study in Sweden Facebook page.

The interview with Rebecca [Fictional name] was conducted in English. The aim of the interviews was to figure out the overview of the nation branding practices in the Study in Sweden. The interview was conducted on 27th March. The interview was conducted once but the list of employee and the overview of the employee (Figure 1, p. 15) was confirmed by Rebecca [Fictional name] on 28th March and 27th April respectively. Also, the interview was recorded after notifying the use of record machine. After the interview, the transcription work was conducted. The length of the interview was 50 minutes. The transcription was subsequently

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6 The interviews with two Korean people: Special member 1 and Korean student were made in Korean as the mother tongue of the author and them is Korean.
conducted in a combination of transcription programme and manual transcription by the author. Results from the transcription programme were cross-checked by the author.

After the transcription, the transcription of the interviews was coded manually. As mentioned, descriptive open-ended coding was chosen for coding way as a way to identify the content as well as to connect further analysis. The interview with Rebecca [Fictitious name] was conducted based on the interview guide (See Appendix A).

5.3.2 Analysis of Data

In order to give the better understanding of the interview, a detailed process from gathering data to analysing data was delivered. First, the concise representation of the Study in Sweden Facebook page, as well as the goal of the Study in Sweden Facebook page was delivered, which could be connected to the use of the Study in Sweden Facebook page in relation to the nation branding. After this, the initial coding data based on the interviewee was connected to the communicator model, based on the process of directed content analysis. After the initial analysis, modification of the main categories was conducted based on the results of the analysis and the research question. First, the category “Building long-term relationships” was modified to building narratives of the brand as the research was focusing on the nation branding and the representation of nation branding identity. Furthermore, the formation of a relationship with the audience was not related to the research question. Thus, how nation brand builds the narratives of nation brand was more appropriate for the category. The initial analysis of the data was directly connected to the main category in the theoretical framework as the initial analysis revealed how communicator functions. The tabled conceptual category is presented in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reacting to news events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating/reinforcing a news agenda and influence perceptions</td>
<td>Representation of nation branding identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building narratives of nation brand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. The tabled conceptual category for nation branding: Communicator
5.4 Operationalisation of the research question

To sum up, the representation of nation branding identity was investigated with the Study in Sweden Facebook page and the interview with the employee at the Study in Sweden team at the Swedish Institute. And two sub-questions were used to answer the main research question.

Sub-RQ1. How are different values of nation branding identity represented in the Study in Sweden Facebook page?

Sub-RQ2. In which way is the Study in Sweden Facebook page used for the nation branding?

Based on the analysis of the two sub-questions, a synthesised analysis of the representation of nation branding identity, in relation to the communicator was delivered by reflecting the analysis presented above. Also, how the representation is related to Swedish values as well as Swedishness was analysed based on the analysis.

5.5 Limitations

Although it is believed that this research design is appropriate for answering research questions posed, there are several limitations of the study. First, the period of gathering data, especially the first data set does not cover the whole nation branding activities as the period only covers the main nation branding activities for the university admission in 2018 autumn semester. Also, it has the limitation as visual contents such as video and photos were excluded from the analysis due to the efficiency of analysing and the limitation of time. Thus, the study is not representative data of nation branding by the Study in Sweden Facebook page so difficult to generalise. However, the aim of this study is to deliver a case of the nation branding identity representation. Hence it is believed that the study can be a cornerstone of how a case of nation branding identity is represented on social media.

Also, the second data set has a limited number of the interviewee. Although it is believed that the interviewee can deliver the insight of practices of the Study in Sweden Facebook pages, it
would have been great if more interviewees could present the practices so as to have the increased credibility. However, the interviewee is the one who specialises in digital strategy, digital marketing and manages digital contents and other employees specialise in different areas (See Figure.1, p. 15). Also, it is believed that in-depth interviews with the interview can deliver a deeper insight into the narratives of nation branding by the Study in Sweden Facebook page.

5.6 Ethics

Ethics in research is considered as an appropriate concern for conducting research in relation to the effects on participants of the research and the relevant others (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2015, p. 144). The important part of ethics is to avoid any harmfulness due to the research (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2015, p. 145). The main topic of the research is nation branding. This topic is a neutral topic that does neither involve sensitive or provocative issues nor threaten or give a bad influence on society. Regarding data collection through Study in Sweden Facebook page, first, the author collected the officially published data in open social media, allowing anyone to access without requirements of permission. On the one hand, posts in Study in Sweden Facebook page or contents linked in Study in Sweden Facebook webpage are contents which are officially published. On the other hand, channels such as Study in Sweden Facebook or linked pages that author accessed to gather the data is open channels so as the author legitimately accessed and gathered data. To protect official authors of the contents, name of the author was concealed. As regards the interview with the employee at the Swedish Institute, a research was made with ethical concerns, based on ethical guidelines (ibid.). First, information about the research and research topics was informed ahead of time. The interviewee had enough opportunity to ask about researches and topics. Second, the use of voice recorder was informed before starting the interview. Third, participant’s name was pseudo-named, as well as data from the interviewee were protected and concealed, without any exposal\(^7\). Lastly, the interview was conducted voluntarily. Therefore, it seems that no ethical issues are caused by this study.

\(^7\) In fact, the interviewee: Rebecca [Fictional name] said that it is okay to use the real name of the interviewee, the name was pseudo-named, considering the geographic location of the interviewee and the research ethics.
6. Analysis

The aim of this chapter is to figure out the answer to the research question raised in the introduction: How much nation branding is the nation branding represented there in the Study in Sweden Facebook page? To answer the research question, the Study in Sweden Facebook page and the interview with an employee at the Study in Sweden were chosen and gathered as data, based on 2 sub-questions: 1) How are different values of nation branding identity represented in the Study in Sweden Facebook page? And 2) In which way is the Study in Sweden Facebook page used for the nation branding? The analysis will be continued by exploring how the nation branding identity representation in the Study in Sweden Facebook page is related to Swedishness. Lastly, discussions related to the theoretical framework of the nation branding will be explored based on the result of the analysis.

6.1. The Study in Sweden Facebook page

6.1.1 An overview of the Study in Sweden Facebook page

The period of the data set of Study in Sweden Facebook page is 4 months, from January 2018 to April 2018. Specifically, 49 posts were published on the Study in Sweden Facebook page from 9th January to 27th April 2018 by the employee at the Study in Sweden Facebook page, but posts with video, links with the contents such as photos and video were not analysed. Thus, 30 posts published between January to April 2018 were selected. As regard to the type of the posts, all posts were written with contents such as 1) a linked from the official Study in Sweden official website, 2) other websites or 3) posts published by the official social media channels of other organisations related to the Study in Sweden project. universities and the official website of Sweden. In other words, all contents posted in the Study in Sweden Facebook page contain a link connected to other channels listed below with a few sentences of describing the connected contents. Thus, it is observed that Study in Sweden mainly used secondary content: information articles and blog posts repeatedly published on the official website or blog (Credible Content, n.d.), as well as the re-shared posts and the posts on the connected site(s). The dominant parts of the contents on the Facebook page were link(s) and this implies that Study in Sweden selected contents with links, inducing followers to interact with content by clicking and a result having high interactivity, in accordance with the previous findings from the background (Pletikosa

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8 This was confirmed by the interview with Rebecca [Fictional name].
Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013). Moreover, the majority of the contents (22 posts out of 30 posts) are linked to the Study in Sweden website. This result is consistent with the findings from the background that Facebook pages for brand are used for marketing activities, complementing the website (Yan, 2011, p. 689).

6.1.2 The representation of the nation branding identity in the Study in Sweden Facebook page

The directed content analysis of 30 posts on the Study in Sweden Facebook pages showed that nation branding identity might be represented with four main categories of different values: 1) Economic, 2) Political, 3) Cultural and 4) Educational, in accordance with the theoretical framework proposed earlier. In addition, nation branding identity components were found and connected as sub-categories to the main categories. This part, therefore, the presentation of the sub-categories and how the sub-categories are connected to each category will be firstly delivered. The existence of core values in each category will be additionally analysed. On top of this, how core values of each category are different/similar will be delivered, based on Jeffrey’s list of core values (2017).

Economic values

In the category of economic values, three sub-categories: National economy, Industry, commercial brand and human capital were connected. Each subcategory covered different areas but connected to economic values. “National economy” is different from “Industry” as “National economy” refers to the economy of the nation or its internal/external state, without mentioning the specific industry, whilst “Industry” denotes the structure of the industry in Sweden and its reputation. Since “Industry” indicates the entire structure of the industry, the commercial brands and the relevant information of the brand can be categorised as “Commercial brand”. “Human capital” and “Industry” are different as “Human capital” focuses on the ability of the individual(s) or a group of the workforce in Sweden which can produce economic values so as to enhance the economic growth and “Industry” refers to the entire industry and its structure of Sweden. The concise definition of each subcategory is found in Table 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National economy</td>
<td>Economic system, economic growth and economic reputation of the entire nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Industry structure, industry reputation, without mentioning specific brand(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial brand</td>
<td>Commercial brands or relevant issues related to commercial brands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human capital</td>
<td>Human resource and the knowledge the individuals for economic growth, the ability to perform labour so as to produce economic value⁹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. The description of subcategories in Economic values

As regards “National economy”, national economy’s competence, as well as the growth of the economy, acknowledged by external ranking, were mostly mentioned. The ranking by Forbes called ‘The best country for business’ was found in the two posts on 26th January and 6th March; The reputation ranking by RepTrak was also used in the post on 26th January. Sweden was 1st place in both rankings (both in 2016). Both refer to the global reputation of the economy of Sweden in common so as to stress the competence of Sweden. In addition, the index of Global Competitiveness 2016 was also mentioned, written that

…The World Economic Forum publishes a Global Competitiveness Index every year, and this year it put Sweden in sixth place. “Growth has been robust, at 3.7 percent in 2016, and the country has managed to significantly decrease its deficit in 2015, jumping 30 places to 22nd on this indicator. “The labour market functions reasonably well and Sweden has a high employment rate, with a high level of women’s participation in the workforce.

Through the analysis of subcategory “National economy”, several aspects were explained. First, how Sweden has the global competence and how much Sweden has shown the improvement regarding the global competence. Second, the stability and the equality of the economy of Sweden is described through the high employment rate and high level of the participation of the woman in the economy as the workforce. Therefore, values such as ‘competence’, ‘stability’ and ‘equality’ are indicated through the subcategory “National economy”.

⁹ This explanation is a reflection of the definition of human capital in Oxford dictionary (2018c): The skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual or population, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organization or country.
Meanwhile, the subcategory: “Industry” indicated the fame, competence and fast growth of Swedish start-ups and Swedish companies as a whole through the posts on 6th March and 29th March. Particularly, the fast growth of the Swedish start-ups and its fame was mentioned the most; The formation of an industrial complex in Sweden, describing it as Swedish Silicon Valley was mentioned together. In line with this, European Digital Index was used to indicate how the Swedish city (2016, 2nd place), notably Stockholm is well developed concerning infrastructure, financial supports, workforce and the network. Also, the balanced structure in the industry between start-ups and big enterprises to prevent monopoly was mentioned together to supports the overview of Swedish start-ups. Through this, core values such as ‘growth’, ‘reputation’, ‘competence’ and ‘balance’ were extracted.

Subcategory “Commercial brand” was found in posts on 26th January, 6th March and 4th April. In the post on 26th January, the famous commercial brands were mentioned to explain how Swedish enterprises are innovative.

…It(Sweden) is also home to plenty of tech innovation and to “some of the most venerable, well-known brands in the world, including Volvo, Electrolux, Ericsson, IKEA and H&M.”

The Swedish enterprises were mentioned to demonstrate how Sweden has innovative enterprises in technological aspects. In the post of 6th March, meanwhile, Spotify and Skype were cited as a representative example of well-known Swedish technology start-ups. Regarding Spotify, Spotify was covered in the whole post on 4th April to explain how Spotify underwent innovation, called the “Spotify model” of Agile management. Through is, it is believed that values such as ‘innovation’ and ‘famous’ were implied through this subcategory.

Lastly, in “Human capital”, the competence of human resources about fluency in English was emphasised in the posts on 26th January and 29th March. As regard to the post on 26th January, The European Commission’s European Innovation Scoreboard was used to indicate Sweden as a highly innovative country (2016, 1st place), of which the driving force is human resources in terms of the availability of a high-skilled and educated workforce as well as the quality of academic research. Besides, language proficiency in English was mentioned both in the posts on 26th January and 29th March. English Proficiency Index was commonly used as an indicator
of the English proficiency of Swedes (2017, 2nd place). The accessibility to the digitalised resources as well as the facilitating factor of the internationalisation of Start-up companies as well as the vast amount of the multinational companies in Sweden. Through this, values such as ‘competence’, ‘reputation’ and ‘innovation’ of “Human capital” in Sweden were stressed.

In summary, several things were found through the directed content analysis of the posts. First, indexes which represented the external reputation of Sweden regarding the economy was used in common to emphasise the global competence of Sweden. Sweden was highly ranked in all indexes referring to the economic competence, which also implies how Sweden is recognised external audience with the objective indicators. As Kaneva (2011) pointed out (See section 3.1), nation branding is used as a strategic tool to enhance a nation’s competitiveness to improve the advantages in the global market. Also, three core values: ‘competence’, ‘reputation’, ‘innovation’ were commonly extracted through the investigation of the subcategory. Particularly, ‘Competence’ and ‘Innovation’ have shown the most amongst the core values. These values correspond with the object of the nation branding: to enhance the nation’s image. Thus, it is believed that the use of the official indicators to stress the economic competence of Sweden leads to the enhancement of the advantage of the nation, having economic values thus a part of nation branding in economic approach.

**Political values**

In the category of political values, only one subcategory: “Governance” was connected (See Table 5). However, the governance covers a various range of governmental performance from policies, the composition of governments to the social system in Sweden, which further indicates different core values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Governmental activities for the country in general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. The description of subcategory in Political values

Contents in three posts: 25th, 26th January and 23rd April have shown the connection to “Governance”. The whole post of 25th January refers to the index of green living in Sweden.
Sweden was ranked in the first place as a country for green living based on the governmental policies for a healthy way of life in terms of the environment, access to the healthcare. This index implies a value ‘Sustainability’ as a green living means the maintenance and protection of the natural environment and the health of the citizen(s). In the post on 26th January, governmental policies for supporting gender equality and family was mentioned, as well as the index of gender equality (World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index: 2016, 4th place), low corruption of government (Transparency International's latest Corruption Perceptions Index: 2016, 4th place) and passport power of Sweden (Henley and Partners Passport Index: 2016, 2nd place), whereas national policies for the education of disabled people was covered in the post of 23rd April. The index of gender equality, policies for gender equality and the disabled people for education stressed a value: ‘Equality’ since equality, regardless of sex or the disabilities is given to everyone the opportunity to the participation to economic and administrative activities and education. Also, a social system for supporting the family was shown. This implied the efforts of the Swedish government to care for the citizen concerning social welfare. Thus, it is postulated that a value ‘Caring’ came out based on this aspect. Lastly, the indexes of low corruption of the Swedish government and passport power emphasise ‘Transparency’ and ‘Power’ or Swedish government.

To conclude, the analysis figured out that a political aspect of the nation was used to nation branding. As mentioned earlier, nation branding can promote a specific image of the nation through achievements, values, beliefs and qualities of government and its activities, functioning as public diplomacy (See section 3.1). The analysis of a subcategory of political values revealed that external indexes related to the Swedish government, as well as the policies and systems constructed by Swedish government, were intertwined with the values such as ‘Sustainability’, ‘Equality’, ‘Caring’, ‘Transparency’ and ‘Power’ were shown in the political values.

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**Cultural values**

In Cultural values category, seven subcategories were listed, following the theoretical framework: “History”, “Territory”, “Landscape”, “Sightseeing”, “Sport”, “Food and drink” and “Folklore”. “History” refers to the history of Sweden or things/people/place of Swedish territory. “Territory”, “Landscape” and “Sightseeing” has a common ground as all are related to geographical regions in Sweden. However, three subcategories indicate different aspects.
First, “Territory” and “Sightseeing” are different as “Territory” refers to the region from country to a specific place in Sweden, whereas “Sightseeing” covers the action of visiting a specific area of Sweden and activities that are done in the visiting area. Also, “Landscape” covers the visible features of an area or land or the view of it concerning aesthetic aspects. Thus, the three categories: “Territory”, “Sightseeing” and “Landscape” are different. “Food and drink” refer to beverage and food that are eaten in Sweden and “Folklore” refer to the traditional culture of Sweden, believed to be an inherited belief, myths, customs a story of a community. This category also includes indigenous people in Sweden, for example, The Sami as the Sami are also part of Swedish people as the official minority in Sweden (Hult, 2004). The definition of the subcategories of cultural values is available at Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>History of Sweden or related to Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territory</td>
<td>Territory such as region, city to a particular place in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>Landscape of the places or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>The activity of visiting places of interest in a particular location and activities that people do in the visiting location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; drink</td>
<td>Swedish food and drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folklore</td>
<td>Swedish traditional culture, myth including that of indigenous people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. The description of subcategories in Cultural values

During the process of analysing the subcategories in cultural values, it was found that different subcategories were used together to explain various aspects of the categories used in each month. Thus, the analysis of the subcategories in Cultural values was conducted on a monthly basis.

In January, five subcategories: “Territory”, “Landscape”, “Sightseeing”, “Food and drink” and “Folklore” were found. Regarding “Territory” categories, “Territory” was mostly found in the post on 24th January. Notably, areas or places in the northern part of Sweden were intensively mentioned in this post. For example, a part of the post on 24th January mentioned ice hotel in Sweden.

10 (Oxford dictionary, 2018b)
...For a long weekend, you can head up to Jukkasjärvi, close to Kiruna, to bed down in the world’s first ice hotel. Opened in 1990, the Icehotel is rebuilt every year based on designs from various artists, using ice blocks made from water collected from the Torne River.

This part might be seen as sightseeing as this part is written in the way of encouraging visiting the relevant place. However, this part is not a description of the actual activities of visiting the location which corresponds with “Sightseeing”, although the relevance of the subcategory “Sightseeing” is postulated. Thus, this part was categorised as “Territory”. Through this, ice hotel in Sweden called Jukkasjärvi, near to Kiruna was emphasised. Likewise, areas in the northern part of Sweden was stressed in the whole post as this post was written for places and activities that people can visit and do during the winter time. Meanwhile, the subcategory “Sightseeing” was also mentioned in 24th January in line with the “Territory”. Activities, where people can do whilst visiting the relevant places were mentioned.

Also, the subcategory: “Sightseeing” was found in the post on 19th January. This post was written from the perspective of a student who has visited and experienced the place. Thus, activities related to “Sightseeing” were written with how the author has reckoned the experience. For example, the experience of dog sledging in Kiruna was written with a tone of satisfaction.

...A while later, we finally got to meet and cuddle with the dogs. We got some tips about how to work with the sleds and we were ready to go. The next two hours we toured through the most amazing landscapes, got to see two elks, and took about 200 pictures.

In this excerpt, the procedure of the experience and how the author felt about the experience was written. The author mentioned that it was an amazing experience with a beautiful landscape. Therefore, the value written here is ‘Satisfaction’, related to the tourism experience.

Furthermore, the landscape was also written together with “Sightseeing” or “Territory”. In the same post, the landscape of northern lights was described for several times.

... ‘Go outside, the Northern lights are visible’, we’re told. I don’t think I’ve ever gotten dressed quicker and about 10 seconds later, we all run outside. As our eyes adjust to the darkness, the white stripes in the sky slowly turn green. I get out my camera and try to take a picture. The result amazes us all.
Looking at the relevant excerpt from the post on 19th January, the positive tone of describing the experience with enjoyment was clearly shown. Thus, the relevant value of the experience is ‘enjoyment’.

Regarding “Food and drink” and “Folklore”, both were observed in the post on 24th January. Particularly, a theme of Christmas market in Sweden was found in the part where the two subcategories were used.

If you’d rather stick to bustling city life, be sure to check out some of Sweden’s classic Christmas markets in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. Stockholm’s Old Town (Gamla stan) comes alive during winter with the sweet smell of warm glögg (mulled wine) and pepparkakor (gingerbread cookies) wafting through the air, and rows of stalls filled with handicrafts, toys, Christmas decorations and seasonal food items like smoked meats, jams and sweets. You can also try your hand at traditional candle making as well as check out the market at Skansen, the world’s oldest open-air museum....

In the text, Swedish food and drink: mulled wine, gingerbread cookies, smoked meats, jams and sweets were used to explain Christ market in Sweden. Also, places such as Gamla stan, Skansen as well as cities such as Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö were mentioned together to illustrate traditional Christ markets in Sweden thus “Territory” was found. Concurrently, the subcategory: “History” was mentioned in line with the landscape of Sweden in the post on 22nd January. Since the post covered the landscape of Sweden, with a lot of red houses in Sweden, the Swedish red colour, found in the red houses: Falu(n) red was explored in terms of history and dissemination. Therefore, two categories: “History” and “Landscape” were intertwined together in the post.

The analysis of the subcategories of cultural values used in the posts in January 2018 indicates that different subcategories might be combined together to describe different subcategories. “Territory” and “Sightseeing” were used together in the post on 24th January in the context of presenting touristic place(s); “Sightseeing”, “Territory” and “Landscape” were used together to explain the experience of enjoying landscape in the touristic place; “Food and drink”, “Folklore” and “Territory” were intertwined with the description of the territory in the specific holiday related to Swedish culture. Lastly, “History” and “Landscape” were mentioned together to
describe the landscape found in Sweden. And values such as ‘Enjoyment’ and ‘Satisfaction’ came out through the representation of the subcategories.

Likewise, the subcategories used in February 2018 were also combined together. Looking at the post on 19th February, “Territory” and “Landscape” were used together to present to different places for photo shooting in Stockholm. Through this positive values of the place and the landscape: ‘Beauty’ or ‘Enjoyment’ were extracted. For instance, Stadshuset in Stockholm was presented as a photo spot with a beautiful landscape in the post on 19th February.

> Stadshuset is an incredible place for photography because there are multiple places where you can take some great shots. At the waterfront, you have a great view of the lake and Södermalm. The courtyard is perfect place for capturing the building itself. And finally, go up into the City Hall tower for a view over the entire city!

The extracted text denotes the beautiful landscape of the photo spot. Thus, a value ‘beauty’ of the landscape in the territory was described through this text. If the subcategories in the posts in February have different meaning through combining each other, subcategories of cultural values in March 2018 has a different implementation.

In the posts released in March 2018, “Territory”, “Landscape”, “Food and Drink” and “Folklore” were used. Particularly, in the posts on 2nd March, all subcategories were used together. The main topic of the post was Sami people, the indigenous people living the northern part of Sami. Therefore, all subcategories used in the posts were related to the Sami culture, people and tradition, thus a subcategory: “Folklore”. “Territory” and “Landscape” covered those in areas where Sami people are living such as Kiruna, Övre Soppero; In the subcategory “Food and drink”, traditional Sami food and drinks belonged to the subcategory.

Different from other months, amongst the posts released in April 2018, one subcategory: “Landscape” was found in the post on 13th April. Two different kinds of the landscape were represented in the post. On the one hand, the landscape of the winter was covered. On the other hand, the spring landscape was covered. Although the kinds of the landscape are different, both indicate a similar value: ‘Joy’. The excerpt of post describing the spring landscape is presented as an example in the post on 13th April.
... when daylight savings changes, when sunlight is bountiful and the
temperatures are rising in Sweden, everyone is clambering to be outside all of the time. When you have a book to read that’s okay, as you can pop outside and sit on a bench in the sunshine to do that. If it’s assignment writing which binds you to your power cable...outside is less of an option. People start actively scouting out the places to sit with the most sun.

Through this part, the positive value: ‘Joy’ was connected to the landscape in the spring in Sweden. Likewise, the subcategory “Landscape”, used in April 2018 denotes a core value ‘Joy’.

The analysis of the subcategories in Cultural values revealed several things. First, the subcategories were used together to describe the landscape of specific area(s) in Sweden. In the overall, “Landscape” of a place described in combination with “Territory”, “Sightseeing” or “History” and the core values such as ‘Joy’, ‘Enjoyment’, ‘Satisfaction’ and ‘Beauty’ were shown through the subcategories, which were related to the experience of landscapes, sightseeing or territory. Especially, two values: ‘Enjoyment’ and ‘Satisfaction’ were found the most. This implies that the landscape of places or visited areas and the activities in the relevant areas are connected to the values of enjoyment or an aesthetical appreciation. In the way that the landscape, places and the activities are enhanced with positive core values, it can be said that the cultural values can enhance the tourism of Sweden.

**Educational values**

In Education values, two subcategories: “Education system” and “Education method” were connected to Educational values. As described at Table 7, “Education system” and “Education methods” imply different aspects as “Education system” refers to the systemised of the education in Sweden, whereas “Education methods” refer to the methods of education, which might depend on the individual educational institutions.
### Table 7. The description of subcategories in Educational values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education system</td>
<td>University, the name of programmes, professor(s), educational policies for student by education institutions, composition of registration, semester, exams and students at the education system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education methods</td>
<td>Study materials and facilities, the student-instructor relations(^{1}), methods of education such as lecture, discussions, collaborations with different programmes and industry-academic cooperation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the two subcategories, it is found that the two categories were shown during the whole period of the post. Such result might be seen as reasonable, considering that the nation branding in the Study in Sweden Facebook page is conducted with another purpose of enhancing Swedish higher education. Although both categories were all around the posts released during the chosen period, each category had the common things, which were connected to the category. In “Education system”, various education programmes for students including English programmes and programmes, which are collaborated with the enterprises so as to have theoretical and practical educations were presented. Besides, the quality of the education which is supported by the high-performing professor. The reputation of universities, as well as the Swedish higher education, was mentioned in common. Furthermore, diverse background of the students, which can enhance the diversity of the perspective of the education was specified. Policies for international students which can support students in difficulty was also marked. Through this, core values such as ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’, ‘Support’ came out. An exemplified sentence is found below.

> Umeå Institute of Design is an inclusive and supportive community that makes sure its students get the best education possible. Being surrounded by such a diverse student group and incredible professors has made this journey to a foreign place an experience I value greatly.

This sentence was extracted from the post on 10th January. These sentences cover the diversity of students as well as the quality of professors, further stress the quality of the education in Umeå Institute of Design. Therefore, ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’ of Swedish higher education.

\(^{1}\)The relationship between student and professor impacts of the education methods. For example, institutions where the relationship between students and professors is vertical, the common method of instruction is one-way lecture, whereas discussions and debate happens more if the relationship between students and professors is horizontal. Since the student-instructor relations impact the way of education, it can be used as a subcategory of education method.
Concurrently, in “Education methods”, similar aspects of Swedish education were covered. The diverse background of students and various types of lectures, which enhance the quality of education through joint-lecture from the enterprise, seminars by practitioners was commonly mentioned through the whole period. Also, qualified and open facilities and materials for students appeared. Thus, it is indicated that core values such as ‘Diversity’, ‘Quality’ and ‘Openness’ of education methods were emphasised through the relevant category. For instance, the diverse background, as a driving force of enhancing education quality was explained in the post on 6 March, which denotes the ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’ of Swedish higher education.

...Another reason for the success is the cultural diversity. Almost all universities have a good mix of people from different parts of the world. This diversity enables a more diverse exchange of ideas, leading to better solutions. Many universities aim to increase the number of international students, at the same time, universities are constantly supporting and pushing forward great ideas, the so-called “business incubators” are one way of getting a business running...

This excerpt reveals that values such as ‘Quality’ and ‘Diversity’. Particularly, ‘Diversity’ was additionally connected to the facilitator of enhancing business.

6.1.3 The representation of Swedish values through the nation branding in the Study in Sweden Facebook page

The analysis of four different values in the category of nation branding identity revealed the various components with different values were included in the posts of the Study in Sweden Facebook page during the chosen period. This analysis is related to the Swedish values, used by the Study in Sweden Facebook page for nation branding.

In Economic values, core values such as ‘competence’, ‘Equality’, ‘Innovation’, ‘Stability’, ‘Growth’ and ‘Balance’ were found. The values mentioned here indicate economic values of Sweden, thus represent the economy of Sweden: ‘Competence’, ‘Equality’ and ‘Stability’ or the commercial brands: ‘Innovation’, industry of Sweden: ‘Growth’ and ‘Balance’ or human resources: ‘Competence' and ‘Innovation’. As aforementioned, the values: ‘Competence’ and ‘Innovation’ was used most frequently amongst values as ‘Competence’ was found in “National
In Political values, ‘Sustainability’, ‘Transparency’, ‘equality’ and ‘caring’ were found through the analysis of the subcategories in Political value. ‘Sustainability’, ‘Equality’ and ‘Caring’ refer to the policies enforced by the Swedish government, thus related to the performance and the capacity of the government. ‘Transparency’, on the other hand, is closely related to the credibility of the government. ‘Transparency’ might not be directly related to how good government functions. However, ‘Transparency’ of government leads to the accountability and low corruption of the government, which impacts the external reputation of the government as transparency of government implies the functionality of the government, as well as the relationships with other governments concerning sustainable development (Turkewitz, 2011). Thus, ‘Transparency’ can be overlapped with ‘Sustainability’. Based on this, it can be said that ‘Sustainability’ of Swedish polity was stressed the most amongst the values.

As regards Cultural values, ‘Joy’, ‘Enjoyment’, ‘Satisfaction’ and ‘Beauty’ were the values which represented the core values of the subcategories. Values: ‘Joy’ and ‘Beauty’ were related to “Landscape” of Sweden, whereas ‘Enjoyment’ and ‘Satisfaction’ were found in “Territory” and “Sightseeing”. And as aforementioned, ‘Enjoyment’ and ‘Satisfaction’ were found the most. The values were extracted through the different subcategories: Territory and Sightseeing, but the values imply in common the positive sentiment of Sweden related to the experience that people can have when visiting Sweden.

In relation to Educational values, ‘Quality’, ‘Diversity’ and ‘Openness’ were the values detected. ‘Quality’ and ‘Diversity' were found in common in all subcategories in the Educational values: “Education system” and “Education methods”, whilst ‘Openness’ was only mentioned in “Education methods". ‘Quality’ in the “Education system” is directly related to the excellence of the Swedish higher education, whereas ‘Diversity’ in the Swedish education is related to the diverse ethnic background of students, which can leverage the quality of education. Also, ‘Diversity’ is one of the key drivers that attract international students: cultural diversity and inclusiveness thus an important factor of nation branding for the economy” and “Human resources” and ‘Innovation’ was found in “Commercial brand” and “Human resources”.

...
internationalisation of higher education (See p. 21). In this sense, ‘Diversity’ is not only the value with educational values but also related to the cultural values.

To conclude, the investigation of values, which were used in each main category revealed that the representative values of each main category are different. In Economical values, ‘Competence’ and ‘Innovation’ were stressed, whilst ‘Sustainability’ was the representative value of Political values. Regarding Cultural values, ‘Enjoyment’ was the main values extracted from the category of Cultural value. In Educational values, ‘Quality’ and ‘Diversity’ were extracted, although a value: ‘Diversity’ is overlapping with cultural values. Based on this, it is believed that ‘Competence’, ‘Innovation’, ‘Sustainability’, ‘Enjoyment’, ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’ is core values, connected to Sweden for presenting to the external audience in the Study in Sweden Facebook page. In this sense, such values are representative values of Sweden, therefore, Swedish values: Swedishness. As aforementioned, Swedishness can be used for representing the products and ultimately form a perception of the brand even if there is no accurate relevancy of the values with the products; Accordingly, Swedishness functions as the core essence of nation branding by (re)constructing the national identity, as well as promote products of the nation (See pp. 29-30). In the way that the listed core values are promoting Sweden’s economy, polity, culture and education, Swedishness is the identity of the nation brand of Sweden and economy, polity, culture and education are the parts of the selling product: Sweden.

6.2 Study in Sweden and the communicator of the nation branding identity

So far, the nation branding identity and Swedish values that were reflected in the posts released in the chosen period was analysed. This part will deliver the Study in Sweden Facebook page, as a social media channel of nation branding, thus a communicator of the nation branding of Sweden by an interview with Rebecca [fictional name], working for Study in Sweden. First, a concise presentation of the Study in Sweden Facebook page will be delivered. Second, the analysis of the Study in Sweden as a communicator will be delivered based on the theoretical framework. Lastly, how Swedish values are represented through the Study in Sweden Facebook page, a communicator of the nation branding identity will be elaborated based on the results.
The Study in Sweden Facebook Page

The Study in Sweden Facebook page was firstly used on 31st May 2010 by uploading its first post. As mentioned earlier, Study in Sweden is a project operated and managed by the Study in Sweden team, a part of the Talent mobility unit at the Study in Sweden. This means that Study in Sweden is under the influence of the Swedish government and it was confirmed by Rebecca [Fictional name], confirming that Study in Sweden is influenced by the government in terms of the financing and tasks. This result is consistent with the findings in section 3.3. According to Rebecca [fictional name], the Study in Sweden Facebook page is used with several goals.

First, the Study in Sweden Facebook page is used as a central brand platform. Study in Sweden supports “four core areas” deriving from Brand Sweden: Swedish sustainability, creative industries of Sweden, Swedish innovations, and Swedish lifestyle. Swedish sustainability refers to values such as green living, whereas creative industries of Sweden indicate industrial areas such as design, fashion, art film. Swedish innovations mean the favourable environment of Sweden that facilitates innovation through the easiness of doing business, industrial cooperative universities. Swedish lifestyle refers to style such as the non-hierarchical and equal environment. Brand Sweden was launched as a way of conducting nation branding of Sweden, which was mentioned in the previous part (Czarny, 2018). Therefore, the core/brand essence deriving from Brand Sweden is a reflection of nation branding identity and contents supporting the brand are uploaded in the Study in Sweden Facebook page contains components of nation branding identity.

Second, another important goal of the Study in Sweden Facebook page is to share information related to university applications or a life in Sweden, according to Rebecca [Fictional name]. Sharing information related to the application process can be a navigate post to application procedure so increase the application. Also, information related to life in Sweden is used to engage the currents students or alumni by empathy or nostalgia so thus to improve the

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12 The author checked this fact by manually scrolling down the Facebook page.
engagement by reacting and sharing. But even if topics are various, the topic has an informative value, according to Rebecca [Fictional name].

“I think on Facebook we try to be kind of broad and post content that supports the brand and is generally interesting but isn't necessarily about lifestyle as much as it is about sharing information. And it could be fun information or information about a blog post event like talk please to take photos in Stockholm or something like learning Swedish. But it's still more content that has an informational value”

Therefore, two main goals regarding the goal of the posts can be filtered: General Branding and information and sharing information can be divided into the recruitment of prospective students and endorsement for former or current students (Table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>The goals of the platform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branding</td>
<td>General branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Recruitment of international students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Endorsement from former, current students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. The goals of the platform through the Facebook Page

The exploration of the goals of the platform implies that contents in the platform are divided into two categories: General branding and different information for potential/current/former students. One might consider that only contents for branding are related to the nation branding. However, nation branding is not only about the direct advertising the nation as nation branding can be enacted through the stressing of factual data related to positive sides of the nation (Stein, 2017). Thus, it is believed that two types of data contain the theme of nation branding.

**Study in Sweden as communicator of the nation branding identity**

The interview with Rebecca [Fictional name] revealed how the Study in Sweden Facebook page is used for achieving nation branding. As mentioned earlier, nation branding is a process of constructing national identity through representing the national identity to the external/internal audience (Kaneva and Popescu, 2011). Thus, nation branding mentioned here should be understood as the act of representing nation branding identity.
Regarding the aims/uses of the Study in Sweden Facebook page, three categories of the uses of the Study in Sweden Facebook page were found through the directed content analysis: “Reacting to news event”, “Creating/Reinforcing a news agenda and influence perceptions” and “building narratives of nation brand”. According to the Rebecca [Fictional name], the linked contents posted in the Study in Sweden were chosen by the employee of the Study in Sweden team based on the principles of the uses of the page. Thus, it is believed that the posts chosen by the authors are all related to the category listed below. The tabled definition of the three categories is available below (Table 9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reacting to news events</td>
<td>Reacting the news or events, related to Sweden or application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating/reinforcing a news agenda and influence perceptions</td>
<td>Creating/Reinforcing agenda related to the application to Swedish universities and the brand themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building narratives of nation brand</td>
<td>Stressing the core values of the brand, which are a reflection of the nation branding identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. The aims/uses of the Study in Sweden Facebook page as a communicator of nation branding

In terms of “Reacting to news events”, “Reacting to news events” can be connected to the events related to the application of the Swedish universities as the Study in Sweden aims to promote the application to Swedish universities. Rebecca [Fictional name] clarified this by saying that

The (type of) can be like responding to the coming up events such as the application date thus to apply or here's this college link or you know or what have you.

This implies that the posts related to this aim can be related to the events related to the applications or promoting Swedish educations, thus connected to educational values.
In regard of “Creating/reinforcing a news agenda and influence perceptions”, Rebecca [Fictional name] gave an answer that most of agenda is related to the encouraging, supporting the application to Swedish universities, as well as to reinforcing the brand themes.

...Basically, we try to create and post content that we can kind of see like why someone would be interested in it and then maybe they'd like to share it...We also will do like these QnA sessions, or just post a link like how to apply. So, it's partially kind of inspirational and fun but also sort of along the brand themes.

On this wise, the range of agenda can be varied since the interviewee mentioned the agenda of the topic in the broad sense.

In “Building narratives of nation brand”, the role of the communicator in constructing and emphasising the brand narratives of the nation was emphasised. As aforementioned, the Study in Sweden brand platform has four core values, which are based on Brand Sweden: Nation branding of Sweden. And through the interview, it was found that such core values of nation branding were emphasised through the posts, so as to create the narrative of the nation branding by Study in Sweden.

“...Sweden is really known for innovation and start-ups and that's something that they really try to emphasise. The goal or the message of are the core message of our branding isn't like ‘Sweden is cute; we have Dala Horses or Fika’. Those are nice things about Sweden but we want the reason people come to be more of career and innovation and the future...”

This excerpt points out that the Study in Sweden aims to emphasise the innovation and start-ups of Sweden, as one of the core values: Swedish innovations through the operation of the social media channels for branding: The Study in Sweden Facebook page. Likewise, it is believed that the core values of the Study in Sweden are emphasised for the building narratives of the nation brand.

The analysis of the transcript of the interview with the employee at the Swedish Institute, responsible to the management of the Study in Sweden social media channels delivered the insights of the Study in Sweden Facebook page in terms of the goals/aims of the platform. In accordance with the analysis, three sorts of roles as communicator of the nation branding:
Reacting to news events; Creating/reinforcing a news agenda and influence perceptions and Building narratives of nation brand were used for implementing the nation branding. Notably, the use of values in the process of implementing nation branding was confirmed by the interviewee. In terms of reacting to news events, it is believed that the educational values were mostly used, whereas all values can be used in the creating/reinforcing the news agenda and influence perception. Regarding building narratives of nation brand, the interviewee clarified the use of core values deriving from Brand Sweden: Swedish sustainability, creative industries, Swedish innovations and Swedish lifestyle.

6.3 Differences in Swedish values?

Scoping on the core values of Brand Sweden, defined by Rebecca [Fictional name], it partially corresponds with core values that were found as a result of directed content analysis. In the finding of the extracted core values, ‘Competence’, ‘Innovation’, ‘Sustainability’, ‘Enjoyment’, ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’ were delivered as core values representing nation branding amongst Economic, Political, Cultural and Educational values. The values ‘Sustainability’ corresponds with Swedish sustainability of Brand Sweden and ‘Innovation’ is directly connected to Swedish innovations. ‘Competence’ and ‘Diversity’ can be connected to Swedish innovations as ‘Competence’ implies the national competence of national economy, as well as the infrastructure of Swedish industries which facilitates innovation; ‘Diversity’ refers to the background of the students which can improve the quality of the education, as well as contribute to the facilitation of business. In this sense, ‘Diversity’ can be categorised as Swedish Innovations. In contrast, ‘Enjoyment’ and ‘Quality’ are hardly connected to the core values of Brand Sweden. ‘Enjoyment’ is a value related to the visiting or experiencing areas in Sweden thus related to cultural aspects. Amongst the core values of Brand Sweden, Swedish lifestyle is related to culture. However, Swedish lifestyle rather denotes the culture that is found in the working or studying environment, based on the statement from the interviewee. Likewise, ‘Quality’ is related to the quality of higher education in Sweden. Swedish innovations contain educational aspects, but those are mentioned in the extension of the environment of innovations of Sweden. Hence, there is a difference between the core values defined by the interviewee and values which are found. In the perspective of the national identity implications (See section 4.3), identification: values from core brands and implication/communication: representation of the values can be done differently.
However, the goal of the operation of Study in Sweden is to enhance Swedish higher education, and Brand Sweden is used as a tool for achieving the goal. In other words, the promotion of the nation is used as a tool for enhancing Swedish higher education. Dinnie (2008) stated that the strategy for nation branding could be segmented depending on the brand scope: tourism, inward investment and education (p. 44). Applying this, differences between the core values derived from the different brand scope. Looking at the statement from the interviewee, she stated that the core values derive from Brand Sweden, meaning that it can be different from ‘deriving from’ does not mean ‘identical’. Despite the difference of the brand scope, the root of the essence of the project of Study in Sweden and Brand Sweden: Nation branding is identical as those aim to the audience to recognise the country or the education, but differences came out in terms of the range target, or brand scope. Based on this, I argue that the recognition of the country is required to branding higher education before branding their education as a country itself is one of the essential elements that student consider when choosing studying abroad.

6.4 Discussion: The representation of the nation branding identity and Swedish values through the communicator

Directed content analysis of contents on Study in Sweden released between January 2018 and April 2018 contributed to the exploration to the nation branding identity used in Study in Sweden Facebook page as well as Study in Sweden as a communicator. In this part, a critical reassessment of the theoretical framework will be delivered concerning the suitability of the theoretical framework for understanding the analysis of the data.

The main focus of the analysis was to figure out how the nation branding identity is represented through the social media channel in the form of values of the nation: Sweden. As mentioned by Dinnie (2008) and Aronczyk (2008) (See pp. 34-35), a clear connection between nation branding identity and communicator was shown with nation branding identity and communicator by Dinnie (2008) and identification process and implementation/communication process of nation branding by Aronczyk (2008); moreover, Swedish values: Swedishness is used as core values for nation branding, and the values are as descriptors of Brand Sweden: a platform for nation branding of Sweden (See p. 14). In the Study in Sweden Facebook page,
the national identity of the nation branding is articulated through the posts and represented with connected core values. In other words, a constructivist view of nation branding was used. In the constructivist view of nation branding, nation branding identity can be constructed and modified (See pp. 28-29). The result of the study corresponded with the theoretical framework as differences in the core values of the different body of nation branding by Sweden was detected, despite the similarity of the core values.

Concurrently, the theoretical framework leaves us a question in relation to Swedish values. Values in this framework are defined as non-functional values which are linked to the products and furthermore impact the perception of the brand, creating a commonality inside the brand (See section 4.1) divided into four categories of values: economic, political, cultural and educational. The concept of non-functional values was used at Swedishness in a similar vein as core values are used to form the image of the nation in the context of nation branding of Sweden. However, looking at how Swedishness was used and implies based on the accumulated implementation of Swedishness to specific brand or product, Swedishness and brand can be all crossed over concerning. To put it differently, Swedishness can influence of the brand identity and the brand can be a part of Swedishness, if the brand has used Swedishness for a long time and the connection between the brand and Swedishness is recognised by the audience.

The focus of the analysis is how Swedish values: Swedishness is used as nation branding identity for the Study in Sweden Facebook page: a branding platform for Swedish higher education as well as nation branding, in accordance with the finding. In addition, the scope of the data was of short duration, covering the activities by Study in Sweden to promote the application to the higher education institutions in Sweden of which the programmes start in a specific period: Autumn 2018. This fact implies two things. First, the period covers a limited duration of the activities of the nation branding, thus it is difficult to evaluate the accumulated nation branding practices in Study in Sweden. Therefore, the investigation of the Study in Sweden Facebook page, or Study in Sweden as an influencer of Swedish values is believed to be not suitable. Rather, the concentration of the analysis of the represented Swedish values is feasible, as well as appropriate. Second, there is a possibility that the targets of the nation branding are different, depending on the timing. Differentiation of the target and different application of strategy to the target are banal tactics for marketing strategy. However, the nation
branding by Study in Sweden has relatively temporal targets. For instance, once the branding on target group of the relevant period, for example, branding for the application to programmes in Swedish universities starting from the autumn semester 2018 was successful, the people in the target group of branding is no longer a target group of Study in Sweden since the successful branding for Study in Sweden is that the application to the Swedish universities or having changed perception of the Swedish education. Therefore, it is believed that the elimination of the long-term relationship between the brand and the audience is reasonable.

To conclude, it is believed that the customised framework of nation branding identity is an appropriate frame for the data. The empirical data were adequately analysed based on the customised framework and the focus of the study and theoretical framework fitted well. Thus, it is assessed that the focus of the study, conceptual framework and the empirical data are connected in terms of relevancy and effectualness.
7. Conclusion

This study aimed to answer one research question, in relation to nation branding by Study in Sweden and the representation of nation branding identity, as well as Swedish values through the nation branding practices. Based on this, this study endeavoured to figure out the implementation of the nation branding identity in the online sphere of communication, so-called ‘communicator’ of the nation branding. A customised theoretical framework was developed to explore nation branding identity, as well as values in the identity components, which are connected to Swedish values: Swedishness.

7.1 Research questions revisited

The main research question of this study was

**How is the nation branding represented there on the Study in Sweden Facebook page?**

To deliver the answer of this question, two sub-questions were proposed and explored, based on the customised conceptual model with the focus of the components of nation brand identity and the communicator of the nation branding, reflecting on Dinnie’s (2008) model of brand identity-brand image. Thus, the answers of each sub-question will be illustrated. The main research question will be further answered, standing upon the answers of the two sub-questions.

**SUB-RQ1. How are different values of nation branding identity represented in the Study in Sweden?**

The focus of this question was ‘national identity’ of the nation branding theory with cultural approach, seeing nation branding as a process of (re)constructing/(re)producing the national identity, binding members of the society in the society. In cultural approach, many scholars connect nation branding identity with the concept of ‘imagined community’, a constructivist approach to the nation of which the identity: an imaginary common ground perception of the nation. In this conceptual approach, the characteristics of a nation have personal/core values, an identity marker of the nation which constructs the shared perception of the nation. In the case of Sweden, Swedishness was shown as core values of Sweden, representing the characteristics of Sweden ultimately Sweden as a country. Based on this, the thesis connected nation branding identity with Swedish values and explored nation branding identity components
and how the components are connected to Swedish values thus represented in the social media channel for nation branding. As Kania-Lundholm (2014) pointed out, nation branding identity is articulated within the areas of economic, political and cultural boundaries. Thus, values within economic, political and cultural boundaries were explored in the name of economic, political and cultural values. Educational values were additionally explored in accordance with the scope of nation branding. The components of the nation branding identity were connected to each value after the initial coding based on directed content analysis of the posts on the Study in Sweden Facebook page. Through this process, 6 core values of Sweden: ‘Competence’, ‘Innovation’ in economic values, ‘Sustainability’ in political values were extracted, whereas ‘Enjoyment’ came out from cultural values; ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’ were representative educational values of Sweden. These values mostly corresponded with core values of Brand Sweden: Swedish national brand for nation branding, except a few values: ‘Enjoyment’ in cultural values and ‘Quality’ in educational values. However, reflecting on the previous findings, this study postulated that such difference derives from the different scope of nation branding. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that core values in economic, political, cultural and educational areas were represented through the nation branding by the Study in Sweden with 6 core values: ‘Competence’, ‘Innovation’ ‘Sustainability’ ‘Enjoyment’, ‘Diversity’ and ‘Quality’.

SUB-RQ2. In which way is the Study in Sweden Facebook page used for the nation branding?

As regards this question, how Study in Sweden Facebook functions as ‘communicator’ of the nation branding was concentrically explored. In relation to nation branding by Study in Sweden. In Dinnie’s model (2008), communicator was the subject of nation branding and its management. The division of the category of communicator was conducted and 4 types of communicator: Marketing agencies, Government, Culture and Individual experience came out. In relation to this study, the adaptation of the category was made to government-marketing agencies as nation branding by Study in Sweden is activities of the government as well as marketing communications and brand ambassador. Besides, conceptualisation of three dimensions of public diplomacy activities by Leonard’s (2002) was adjusted and used for answering research questions, based on Aronczyk’s (2008) connection of the implementation of public diplomacy to nation branding. The original three dimensions of public diplomacy activities were listed as: 1) Reacting to news events, 2) Creating/reinforcing a news agenda and
3) Influence perceptions and Building long-term relationships with populations overseas. However, ‘Building long-term relationships with population overseas’ was modified to ‘Building narratives of nation brand’ based on the focus of the study. To figure out the answer to the question, directed content analysis of the transcript of the interview with the employee at the Swedish Institute was conducted. The analysis indicated that the three dimensions of the use of communicator were used and each dimension reflected different Swedish values. ‘Reacting to news events’ mostly reflects educational values, related to the event related to the application and the promotion of Swedish education, whereas all sorts of values were used concerning ‘Creating/reinforcing a news agenda’. Regarding ‘Building narratives of nation brand’, it is suggested that the narratives based on Brand Sweden were reflected: Swedish sustainability, creative industries, Swedish innovations and Swedish lifestyle, of which values refer to political, economic and cultural.

Through the exploration of the sub-questions of this study, a synthesised answer to the main research question was made. Above all, the nation branding is implemented through the nation branding identities having core values of Sweden, related to economic, political, cultural and educational area. The representation of nation branding identity on the Study in Sweden Facebook page is conducted by the Study in Sweden, government market-agencies and with three dimensions of the activities: 1) Reacting to news events, 2) Creating/reinforcing a news agenda and 3) Building narratives of nation brand’ with the representation of the core values aforementioned. Therefore, it is found that the Study in Sweden Facebook page is a key branding tool of representing nation branding components, particularly nation identity of which the components are connected to Swedish values: Swedishness.

7.2 Concluding remark, limitations and suggestions for the future study

To conclude, posts from the Study in Sweden Facebook page reflect key elements of nation branding identity as well as Swedish core values: Swedishness, represented with economic, political, cultural and educational values. Regarding the representation of the values through the communicator, the Study in Sweden Facebook clearly functioned as communicator for the nation branding, as government market-agencies for reacting the news, creating/reinforcing the news agenda as well as influence the perception and building nation branding narratives. Thus, I conclude that posts in the Study in Sweden Facebook page reflect nation branding identity
components which represent with Swedish values and the Study in Sweden Facebook page functions as communicator of the nation branding.

With respect to the contribution, as well as the implications of the research, this study approached nation branding with value dimensions, which covers and integrates different dimensions of the nation branding with connects the relations between national values from the national identity and nation branding. As aforementioned, the tendency of approach to nation branding is divided and there has been no study which synthesised and the different dimensions of the nation branding and analysed the practices of the nation branding in relation to values. Therefore, this study has the originality in terms of the theoretical approach. In addition, this study can become a fruitful basis for the exploration of nation branding in the perspective of education branding. The analysis of the study grasped the use of nation branding for education branding and the importance of the national education concerning nation branding. As mentioned earlier, it is shown that nation branding has been investigated in terms of place branding or product branding. However, there is a lack of the studies investigating the connections and implication of the education branding and nation branding. Thus, it is believed that this study can be an example of the exploration of nation branding for promoting nation’s higher education.

However, some limits of this study also exist. First, regarding the posts on the Study in Sweden Facebook page, this result cannot be generalised as the scope of data was limited, covering nation branding practices for 4 months. Second, it has a limited range of social media used by the Study in Sweden Facebook. Although the Facebook page is used as the main brand platform, well reflecting the nation branding identity, this study cannot escape the critiques that the scope of media was limited. In addition, this study is of a limited reflection of the elements of the influencer as well as the audience of the Study in Sweden: international students. Although the focus of the study is the representation of the nation branding identity through the Study in Sweden Facebook page, and it is believed that the study clearly delivered how the nation branding identity is represented, it would have been more fruitful if the study also included the audience of the Study in Sweden Facebook page and compared the similarity/difference of the perception of nation’s identity further nation’s values.
For further studies related to this study, I suggest a comparative study regarding the use of media for nation branding by the same branding organisation, so it can contribute to comprehending a broader view of the representation of the nation branding identity. Moreover, this study could be expanded to a broader targeted audience, which helps to gain the different audience perception, having different cultural background. In addition, it would be fruitful to have a comparative study of how different nation branding by different country is conducted towards the audience. Lastly, a comparative study of nation branding of the same country with different brand scope is proposed for the future studies.
References:


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References of posts and the links:


# Appendix A

## An interview guide for the employee at the Swedish Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of the interviewee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your position in Study in Sweden?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long have you been working in Study in Sweden?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you tell me what your tasks are as (the name of the position)? (The main task)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you describe the structure of your team, if existence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is Study in Sweden related to Si?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any other teams in Study in Sweden that are cooperating with (the name of team)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to know whether some other institutions cooperating with Study in Sweden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you engage with employees, from students to non-student employee? (i.e. regular meeting, communication channels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So, the main communication channel is offline/online?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you describe of the proportion of the employees, regarding country of origin? (Rather heterogeneous, or homogenous)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the main language in the department, further Study in Sweden?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any branch of Study in Sweden outside Sweden?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do Study in Sweden approach to potential (international) students?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have seen that Study in Sweden operates different social media channel. Are there any other channels?

What is the main social media channel of Study in Sweden?

What do you want to achieve through these channels? Is there any difference of the subject?

Which type of contents are produced, depending on the media channel? (Facebook, website, Instagram, etc.)

Which type of contents are produced the most? (Video, text, photo)

Which theme of contents are produced the most? (Swedish education, culture, small talk)

Do Study in Sweden produce/create all contents in the online channel?

Can you tell me about student blog? Is it directly produced and posted by students?

How create students their contents? (So, want to know about the process)

How do you do when you produce contents? (guideline of producing contents)?

What do you think of the strength of contents by students, either current or past who has/had the experience of Swedish education?

How can showing different aspects of Sweden encourage/attract the potential students to choose Sweden as an education destination.

How do you engage with employees, from students to non-student employee?
Are there any offline activities for promoting Study in Sweden?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think is the most important thing for promote a country’s education?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can showing different aspects of Sweden engage the potential students to choose Sweden as an education destination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which aspects of country are Study in Sweden trying to emphasise, when presenting to potential students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you decide the(such) aspects of Sweden that Study in Sweden presents? (Related to how to decide the elements of nation branding identity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think is the most important thing for promote a country’s education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can showing different aspects of Sweden engage the potential students to choose Sweden as an education destination?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is Study in Sweden (promoting higher education) important for promoting Sweden as a country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you plan such education promotion? Is it planned by only study in Sweden?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are activities from Study in Sweden related to Swedish government? If yes, is activities or direction of Study in Sweden affected by it? (policies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are some universities are involved in the promotion activity? Does it change? How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the strength of higher education that Swedish education institute only has?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When was Study in Sweden established?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I contact you when having more questions? (By Email, for example)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>