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Why here?

A case study of how retailers decide where to locate their store in Kristianstad.

André Edvinsson and Herman Falk

Faculty of Business

Authors

André Edvinsson and Herman Falk

Title

Why here? A case study of how retailers decide where to locate their store in Kristianstad.

Titel (Swedish Title)

Varför här? En fallstudie av hur handlare bestämmer vart deras butik ska vara lokaliserad i Kristianstad.

Supervisor

Lisa Källström

Co-examiner

Jens Hultman

Examiner

Helene Tjärnemo

Abstract

This thesis concern how retailers reasons regarding where to locate their store. Previous research stipulates that retailers consider several factors that builds Retail Attractiveness when they decide their store location.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how retailers reason when it comes to where to locate their store. The study is conducted in Kristianstad, Sweden, with retailers located either in the city center, at the out-of-town shopping mall, or both. To fulfill the purpose, semi-structured interviews were held with four retailers that made different decision when C4 Shopping was established. Five interviews were conducted, lasting between 25 and 40 minutes. All interviews were held with store owners and decision-makers.

A conceptual model was created from existing literature in order to analyze the results. The original model includes the factors Cluster effects, Accessibility, Atmosphere, and Place Attachment. Under the factors there are sub-factors to nuance the factors. The model ultimately leads to Retail Attractiveness. In the revised model three new factors were added: Rent, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces. One sub-factor was also removed. It is concluded that retailers consider the factors in the revised model, rate the factors, and thereafter decide where to locate.

This thesis adds insights on how retailers reason when they decide where to locate their store, and what factors they consider the as most important. There is also a discussion on how the conceptual model can be used to measure Retail Attractiveness and explain retailers locational decisions in similar cases elsewhere.

Keywords

Retail, Attractiveness, Cluster Effects, Agglomerations, Accessibility, Atmosphere, Place Attachment, City Center, Shopping Mall

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If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?

- Albert Einstein

Kristianstad 29th of May 2019

André Edvinsson

Herman Falk

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the retailing setting in Kristianstad and how it is changing will be introduced together with theories that evoke interest and relevance for this case. A problematization will also be presented in order to clarify and limit the operational utility of this study. At the end of this chapter the research question will be formulated, followed by an outline of the paper.

1.1 BACKGROUND

For several decades there has been a major shift in retail business, moving away from the traditional city-center shopping, towards the out-of-town shopping malls (Wahlberg, 2016). The city-center is of great importance in maintaining the attractiveness of a city. Recent studies have shown that there is a shift in the allocation of business towards external shopping malls in out-of-town locations (Balsas, 2004; Ward, 2007; Weltevreden & Rietbergen, 2007). At the same time, the global economic and social landscape has transformed rapidly with the evolution of the Internet-based business (Ho, Kauffman, & Liang, 2007). Despite the growth of e-commerce, most sales still occur in physical stores. However, companies need to take e-commerce in consideration when developing their business model for the future (Jonsson, Egels-Zandén, Hagberg, Lamngård, & Sundström, 2017). With the introduction of e-commerce, companies have seen a rise in terms of supply, comfort for the consumers and lower prices. E-commerce has also led to increased growth opportunities for businesses, including both new and already established trading companies (Jonsson et al., 2017).

The physical stores are still very much involved in the fast-paced development of e-commerce (Jonsson et al., 2017). On the other hand, companies add new channels to their marketing mix, so called multi-channeling (Avery, Thomas, Steenburgh, Deighton & Caravella, 2012). The concept multi-channel retailing has expanded to also consider the issues of managing consumers and how to integrate the retail mix across different channels (Neslin, Grewal, Leghorn, Shankar, Teerling, Thomas & Verhoef, 2006). Together with the introduction of tablets, mobile channels and social media, multi-channel retailing is also moving into a new phase where physical stores and offline retailing are integrated with these new channels (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). According to Rigby (2011), the popular press proposes that we are moving from a multi-channel model towards

a retailing model with omni-channels. This involves the concepts of showrooming (i.e. searching for information in the store and searching on mobile phones to find better prices) and webrooming (i.e. when consumers shop offline after online research) (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman, 2015). The omni-channel model includes more channels than the multi-channel model and the border between different channels is becoming more and more blurred. Brynolfsson, Hu and Rahman (2013) argue that the development of omni-channels affects companies' competitive strategies, forcing retailers and their partners to rethink their strategies when old barriers such as geography and consumer ignorance breaks down. It is important for businesses to adapt to these changes in order to compete in the market. According to Rice, Ostrander and Tawari (2016), businesses can achieve competitive advantages by expanding their business and create economies of scale. This is also discussed by Wood and Reynolds (2011), who say that firms need to prepare for future challenges and be able to facilitate the growth and change necessary. This way, retail firms will have a better opportunity to manage the performance of existing stores and supply-chains where the expansion and management are of great concern (Wood, Lowe, Wrigley, 2010). Öner (2014) further points out that in order to achieve long-term success, the location of a store is the most decisive decision a retailer must make. In addition, both Sandberg (2013) and Rice et. al (2016) also argue that the geographical positioning of the store is vital in the store establishment process.

The city of Kristianstad in the county of Skåne is one of these cities that face the challenge of keeping its city center attractive. As mentioned earlier, city centers suffer because of competition from other shopping possibilities, such as neighboring municipalities, out-of-town shopping malls and e-commerce (Wahlberg, 2016; Weltevreden & Rietbergen, 2007; Hart, Stackow, & Cadogan, 2013). In Kristianstad, the most recent reason for this challenge is the newly established shopping mall C4 Shopping in the outskirts of the city. According to an article in the local press (Klinthage, 2016), retailers in Kristianstad city center expressed great concern for the establishment of C4 Shopping and thought that it would harm the trade in the city center. A recent article from Kristianstadsbladet (Ernryd, 2019) also indicate that several retailers in the city have decided to move their business to C4 Shopping. There are also retailers that have decided to expand their business and open another store at C4 Shopping, in addition to their store in the city center (Welin, 2018; Rosén, 2017). Still, there are retailers that decided not to move their stores to C4 Shopping

(Isberg, 2018), which means that retailers in Kristianstad reason differently when it comes to the location of their stores. According to Fox, Postrel, and McLaughlin (2007) “location, location, location” is an important mantra for long-term retail success. There are several methods that retailers can use to support their locational decision making (Hernandez & Bennison, 2000). Hernandez and Bennison (2000) state that the techniques for locational analysis have been available for over fifty years, but that retailers have rather used “common sense” and personal intuition than established research. However, during the last fifteen years, the emphasis towards localization strategies have become more holistic for retailers deciding where their store should be located. Although, retailers that locate their store in order to get proximity to customers will also get proximity to other stores (Fox et al., 2007).

C4 Shopping and the surrounding area is a created retail agglomeration and is something that retailers at C4 Shopping may benefit from. According to Teller and Schnedlitz (2012, p.1): “a set of stores that offer goods and services to consumers and that are located and operated in proximity to each other are denoted as retail agglomerations”. The Shopping Mall is one type of retail agglomeration and the main factor for the success of shopping malls is the synergetic effects. Because of centralized control between tenants and the shopping center management, both planning and operations can be coordinated (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). In the early twentieth century, Alfred Marshall (1920) wrote that retailers cluster together in the same areas benefit from different factors such as information spill over, economies of scale, and skilled labor force. This was later confirmed by Nelson (1958), who referred to cumulative attraction, which means that store clusters take advantage of spatial retail networks, meaning large spaces of area where retailers are located (Cliquet & Guillo, 2013). As an implication of this, Teller and Schnedlitz (2012) pointed out that regional shopping streets and city center clusters (i.e. evolved agglomeration formats) are instead losing market shares because of competition between tenants, and because there is no management to handle the agglomeration effects. This contrasts with created retail agglomerations where the center management control the planning and design process (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012; Teller & Elms, 2012). With this said, there are different benefits with different types of agglomerations, which leads to the notion that the localization of a retailer’s store is of great importance, and something that retailers need to consider when planning their strategy.

Although the importance of store location has been highlighted, there are several factors that make a specific place attractive (Teller & Elms, 2010; Weltevreden & Rietbergen, 2007; Öner, 2017; Wahlberg, 2016; Hart, Stackow & Cadogan, 2013). These factors are of great importance for retailers when they decide their store location (Teller & Elms, 2010; Hart et al., 2013). Teller and Schnedlitz (2012) mention four sets of drivers that increase the attractiveness of a place for retailers: location related drivers (e.g. geographical position, accessibility, parking conditions), tenants related drivers (e.g. the mix of stores, entertainment, services), marketing related drivers (joint marketing activities such as improving the atmosphere, image, events and communication) and lastly management related drivers (meaning a centralized management that coordinate, execute and control measures in order to increase attractiveness). Öner (2017) goes on by stating that accessibility to shops is one key to increase attractiveness, but also the factors of infrastructure, architecture and public service are important. Weltevreden and Rietbergen (2007) also distinguish four factors that contribute to attractiveness. They highlight characteristic environment, large variety of functions a place can provide, varieties of shops and finally degree of patronage at a place. All these factors mentioned above contribute to place attractiveness, and retailers consider these factors into what extent they locate their store at that specific place (Kunc, Krizan, Bilková & Barlík, 2016).

In an article by Teller, Kotzab and Grant (2012), the relevance of shopper logistics for consumers are discussed. Shopper logistics imply that shoppers consider multiple factors when deciding where to shop. The shopper logistics then leads to Cost of Shopping, which includes factors such as time, money and physical effort. This thought was originally evoked by Ingene (1984) when he developed a method to measure shopper logistics while discussing the productivity of workers in everyday life. This was later elaborated by Bell, Ho, and Tang (1998) when they modelled the cost of shopping as a factor of consumers' choice. The aim for their study was to determine the fixed and variable cost of shopping, more particularly the variable costs occurring when consumers solved their logistic problems. Teller and Kotzab (2004) have previously argued that transportation cost has a significant role for consumers when it comes to willingness to pay for home delivery. In a more recent article together with Grant (Teller, Kotzab, & Grant, 2012), they prove that cost of shopping, in terms of time, money, and physical effort (i.e. convenience) is a decisive factor when it comes to consumers rating a shopping experience. Furthermore,

convenience in terms of shopping experience is often defined as accessible from a nearby car parking, so that car borne shoppers easily can park, walk, pay, and pack in the least challenging way possible (Reimers, 2013).

1.2 PROBLEMATIZATION

Given that the retail setting of Kristianstad is changing, retailers in the area must accommodate their strategy to a new reality. With the emerging online-market, together with the concept of omni-channels and the integration of the physical store with the digital (e.g. showrooms, virtual dressing), retailers need to make sure they keep up with the shifting trends in the business. The opening of C4 Shopping is in line with changing shopping behavior (Balsas, 2004; Ward, 2007; Weltevreden & Rietbergen, 2007), and according to Wahlberg (2016), city center shopping in Sweden is threatened by out-of-town shopping malls. Existing literature provide with several possible reasons for shopping malls competitive supremacy over city centers, still there are not much research whether firms decide to move from a city center to a shopping mall or not. The opening of C4 Shopping provides the opportunity to go in-depth how retailers' reasons when they open a store or move to a different place. As written in the background, there are several factors retailers can benefit from given their location, for example from cluster effects like tenant mix and accessibility (Teller, 2008; Fox, Postrel, & McLaughlin, 2007). An example of this is that C4 Shopping is highly accessible with car given its closeness to the highway and large parking lot, whilst the city center of Kristianstad has been criticized for its poor parking conditions (Kristianstads Kommun, 2018).

There is no clear answer to why retailers prefer one place over another, nevertheless some retailers decided to move their stores to C4 Shopping while some retailers did not. Because of this, it is interesting to see the underlying causes behind retailers' decisions and how they reason when they choose their store location. To our knowledge, there are no extensive research on why companies decides to stay, move or open another store when an out-of-town shopping mall opens. The establishment of C4 Shopping gives us the opportunity to explore this due to that the decisions taken are recent and relevant, which can be connected to developed theories and global trends.

This research will describe and elucidate how retailers in Kristianstad reason when new opportunities arise, their view on different locations and what perception they have of the shifting retail environment. The research will be based on existing and relevant research in the context of place attractiveness, retail agglomerations and attributes that makes locations more attractive for retailers. These theories will lead to a conceptual model that will help us understand how retailers' reason when making strategic decisions considering new opportunities or threats, specifically looking at the case of Kristianstad and C4 Shopping. The discussion above has resulted in the following purpose and research question.

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose with this thesis is to explore how retailers relate to city center locations in comparison to out-of-town locations, and why retailers prefer one of these places over the other. The thesis will also explore what factors retailers consider when they decide where to locate their store. The research will be based on a case study of four different retailers with stores in Kristianstad and C4 Shopping. Specifically, the case will look into one retailer with a new established store at C4 Shopping, one retailer with stores at both C4 Shopping and in the city center, one retailer with a store only in the city center, and one retailer that decided to move their business from the city center to C4 Shopping. In order to be able to explore how different retailers reason, these four different case studies have been chosen.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

How do retailers decide where to locate their stores?

What factors do they consider most important when they decide?

Why do some retailers prefer out-of-town shopping malls respectively the city center?

1.5 DISPOSITION

This thesis consists of eight chapters:

- The first chapter is an introduction in which in the background, problematization, purpose and the research questions, are presented.
- The second chapter is about the research methodology in this study, which includes the research philosophy, research approach and choice of theory.

- The third chapter is the literature review and describe the concepts of Place Attractiveness, Retail Agglomerations, Cluster Effects, Tenant Mix, Management & Coordination, Accessibility, Atmosphere and Place Attachment. The chapter ends with a conceptual model that is called *What builds Retail Attractiveness?*
- The fourth chapter presents the case in question and the case retailers, which is done in order to provide the reader with necessary background information about the study's context.
- The fifth chapter presents the empirical method, which includes the research strategy, research design, collection of empirical material, selection of participants, data analysis and trustworthiness.
- The sixth chapter is where the findings from the four cases are presented and analyzed with the help of earlier research and the conceptual model.
- The seventh chapter is the discussion of the Findings & Analysis, which also includes a comparison between the four cases. The chapter ends with a revised conceptual model and a conclusion of the analysis.
- The eighth and final chapter concludes the thesis. It begins with a summary of the thesis followed by conclusions of the discussion, limitations, and suggestions for further research.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the theoretical methodology for the chosen research method will be explained with the origin of research philosophy. This will be followed by our research approach and sampling of theories. The idea of this chapter is to describe how we, the authors, relate to research and argue for why the chosen research method is relevant in describing, discussing and exploring our research purpose.

2.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

In social science, there are several philosophies that is used to seek understanding and make assumptions of the reality, the *ontological* – the understanding of what reality is, *epistemological* – how we can know what reality is, and *methodology* – how to best research reality (Bell & Bryman, 2019). There are three main research philosophies that describe three different ways on to view the world and research. The three philosophies are *positivism*, *realism*, and *interpretivism*, there is also *pragmatism* which is the notion that two or all of the previously mentioned philosophies should be considered in order to explain the reality accurately. The positivist perspective is based on realism, meaning that reality exists objectively and externally no matter if we know of it or not (Bell & Bryman 2019). Therefore, advocate for positivist research philosophy argue that data should be collected by observing things and phenomenon directly in order to research things we did not know before, but possibly always existed.

In a positivistic research, it is important to have large samples in order to create validity, legitimacy, and transferability (Denscombe, 2016, p.378). An idealistic research philosophy in contrast, aims to describe the perceptual reality of humans, meaning that an idealistic perspective seeks to investigate with subjectivity, the things humans percept. Idealism suggest that our perception of reality is the interesting perspective, and the only thing we can truly know (Åsberg, 2001). Interpretivism is built on idealism, which developed as a critique against positivism in social science. Because of the complexity in social environment, given that the social is constructed by interpersonal relations, and the *chicken and the egg-connection* between if it is the society that forms behavior, or the behavior that forms society, it is impossible to view something as true just because large samples confirm a thesis. Given this problem with positivism, interpretivism offers a more relevant interpretation of reality. Interpretivist research is not meant to generalize, but

rather to understand reality from its participants perspective (Bell et. al., 2019). The reason for this view is that generalized results in research leads to that research only create a vague explanation for similar cases in other places. With an interpretivistic approach, we can understand things in-depth and explore them for how people perceive reality, meaning that we can describe behavior and thereby describe reality (Bell et. al., 2019).

This mean that we agree with the critique against positivism that interpretivism implicate, and therefore this study used a qualitative method, collecting data through interviews and observations together with secondary sources, in order to capture the perspective of people related to our research question. This is due to that this study aims to explore what a couple of hand-picked people think, what kinds of problem they face, and how they deal with them. This means that our interpretivistic view leads to that this study is an investigation of the socially constructed reality of our research question.

2.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

There are three different research approaches, *deduction*, *induction*, and *abduction* (Denscombe, 2016). With deduction, the goal is to falsify or verify theories by testing hypothesis or propositions generated by existing theories. An inductive research approach means that the purpose is to generate theories from a specific case study in a way that makes the findings transferable and applicable to similar cases. With an abductive research approach, the goal is to develop or modify new theories from existing ones, studying both specific and general cases (Denscombe, 2016).

In this study, an abductive research approach was used. The abductive research approach suited this study due to the aim to collect data in order to investigate decision-making and identify themes and patterns. Given that we implement an abductive research method, the goal is not simply to test the theoretical framework presented, but also to explore new factors not included in existing literature. We also created a conceptual framework which was used to generate an interview guide and to analyze the results. By doing so, the research purpose, to explore how retailers relate to city center locations in comparison to shopping center locations, and why retailers prefer one of these places over the other, can be answered.

2.3 THEORIES

The theories of this study are theories discussed within *Place Attractiveness* research. Factors like *Accessibility*, *Atmosphere*, *Place Attachment*, and *Cluster Effects* are discussed as components that build *Retail Attractiveness*. The theories used in this study will be further developed in the Literature Review. The choice of theories is a result of a review of existing knowledge. The collection of knowledge and theories has been done through databases using the search engines Summon (at Kristianstad University) and Google Scholar. The search terms have varied depending on the subject, although the starting point of the search included the terms *retail*, *location*, *decision-making*, *establishment*, *shopping mall*, *city center*, and *attractiveness*. Furthermore, an article by Teller and Elms (2012) presented a conceptual framework including factors like *Accessibility*, *Tenant Mix*, *Atmosphere etc.*, which we used as search term inspiration for further literature review in this study.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter the literature review will be presented. This is the foundation of our thesis, and the section where different aspects will be presented in order to reach our conceptual model. The chapter is divided into five different parts, with the first one being Place Attractiveness, followed by Retail Agglomerations, Cluster Effects, Accessibility, Atmosphere, and Place attachment. This chapter is finally constricted to Retail Attractiveness, that will be used to answer the research purpose.

3.1 PLACE ATTRACTIVENESS

The definition of a physical place is something that has been given meaning by groups, people or cultural processes (Florek & Inch, 2008). The place itself offers a lot of different services and functions, and is generally very complex (Page & Hardyman, 1996). These services and function can be classified in general categories and consist of different elements, which can then be further divided into intangible and tangible elements (Zenker, 2011). The intangible elements of place relate to perceived personality, emotional aspects or the values of a brand connected to that place. The tangible elements of a place consist of a city's nightlife, shopping, infrastructure or culture (Zenker, 2011). In order to understand what a *place* is, it can be referred to in terms of a *mega product*, which consist of tangible and intangible sub-products (Florek, Inch & Gnoth, 2006). These sub-products are what define a place and consist of the functions that a place perform and by the markets that a place targets, such as tourist-products, investment-products, social, trade, and services products, but also educational and cultural products including sports, fairs and exhibitions (Florek, Inch & Gnoth, 2006).

The attractiveness of a place can be interpreted as the consumers' attitudes, perceptions and patronage behavior which in turn draw or pull them towards a specific place (Teller & Elms, 2012). The place as such is also considered as valuable urban offerings, which means that the place is designed as a variety of products and services (Hankinson, 2010). In addition, the definition of a place can also be based on geography, because of the specific geographical area. However, the activities within a geographical area and the conditions of the geographical area (access to water, nature) are usually of greater importance than the geographical are per se (Källström, 2016). A place also attracts several different

stakeholders, such as residents, visitors, consumers and retailers (Braun, 2008). These stakeholders affect the development and enhancement of the place, which stresses the importance of developing and creating a place that addresses all stakeholders. Because of the number of different stakeholders and their separate needs, the development of a place that suits all stakeholders perfectly is impossible to create (Zenker & Beckman, 2013).

How are retailers relevant when discussing how to make a place more attractive? With the increased mobility of consumers there has been an increase in the demand from consumers when it comes to amenities and quality-of-life attributes at a place (Clark, 2003). According to Bitner (1992), the perception of a physical environment, as well as the value that comes from shopping at a specific place, is connected to consumers' willingness to patronize a retail destination. This means that the degree of patronage intention (i.e. the support or encouragement for a place) is what makes consumers come back to that specific place, depending on how attractive they found that place to be (Whyatt, 2004).

In the context of contributing to the attractiveness of a place, retail stores are to be seen as public good along with parks and historical monuments (Öner, 2017). The presence of clustered retail stores is seen as a tangible asset for a place, leading to increased interaction between individuals and a more vibrant environment in that place. Öner (2017) also points out that the concentration of shops at a place attracts both local consumers and tourists, which works as multiplier effect on the overall economy of that place. Moreover, retailers and other consumer services are highly related to economic performances of a city, and therefore, it makes a city more attractive because of the retail effect (Glaeser, Kolko, Saiz, 2001). For this reason, how to make a place more attractive have become an important topic for city planners and policymakers in order to increase competitiveness through an adaptable, flexible and more diversified structure of the local economy (Ezmaile & Litavniece, 2011). In order to do this, the public authorities and the private sector have shifted their focus to increase the attractiveness of their location in order to attract tourists, residents, retailers and consumers (Florek, Insch, Gnoth, 2006). To be able to make this happen, the creation of attractive places that are preferable and favorable for potential consumers are of great importance (Teller & Reutterer, 2008).

3.2 RETAIL AGGLOMERATIONS

In today's urban environment the attractiveness of a place is affected by many factors, where retailers are one of these factors. According to Teller and Reutterer (2008), in order for a place to be successful there needs to be agglomerations that attract a wide range of consumers. When discussing retail as a part of attractiveness, the concept of *retail agglomerations* is seen as a widespread feature as much as an important function of the urban place product (Teller & Elms, 2011). According to several examined dictionaries, the word *agglomerate* means to form a mass or a collection of things and to be collected and formed into a mass (Teller & Elms, 2011). The definition means that there is an illustration of both an active and passive character of the related noun “agglomeration”, which shows that an agglomeration or cluster of objects can be constructed deliberately or be randomly developed (Teller, 2008). In the context of retailing, these objects can be seen as retail stores or outlets that are clustered together in proximity. This is called a *retail agglomeration* (Teller, 2008).

There are several different store-based formats of retail agglomerations. These agglomeration formats are based upon how the agglomerations are constructed and planned from the beginning but also the extent of how marketed and managed they are as integrated entities (Teller, 2008). Depending on what characteristics that distinguish the agglomeration formats, there is a strong impact on the retail mix of agglomerations, such as Atmosphere, Tenant Mix, and Accessibility. In other words, the agglomeration format will influence the possibility to adapt agglomeration characteristics to meet consumer demands, and to be preferable over competing agglomeration formats (Teller & Reutterer, 2008; Teller & Elms, 2012; Teller, 2008).

There are two main types of retail agglomeration, *created retail agglomerations* and *evolved retail agglomerations* (Teller, 2008; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012; Teller & Elms, 2010; Berman & Evans, 2009). The former, *created retail agglomerations*, is considered as the product of a thorough process of design and planning, but also the central oriented management and marketing of the created agglomeration. Examples are shopping centers and other centers such as lifestyle or theme centers (Teller, 2008; Levy & Weitz, 2006). In contrast, *evolved retail agglomerations* are formed unconsciously over time and consist of regional shopping streets, inner-city clusters and main streets (Teller, 2008; Levy & Weitz,

2006). The real estate owners residing in an evolved retail agglomeration are fragmented among numbers of different companies and owners, which makes the cooperation between the different retailers voluntarily and there is no structured plan to manage or market the evolved agglomeration format (Teller, 2008). Evolved retail agglomerations are considered to be the more traditional agglomeration format, although in recent decades there has been a major shift in the trend to created agglomeration formats. According to Teller (2008), the evolved agglomerations as shopping destinations have lost its attractiveness for consumers. Moreover, retailers do not view the evolved agglomeration as an optimal location for their outlets (Teller, 2008; Guy, 1995; Whysall, 1995). The reason is the lack of agglomeration management to realize agglomeration effects, but also the lack of cooperation between tenants when it comes to marketing (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012; Warnaby, Bennison, Davies & Hughes, 2002; Warnaby, Bennison & Davies, 2005).

3.3 CLUSTER EFFECTS

The concept of retail agglomerations, or *store clusters*, have been discussed by many authors (Nelson, 1958; Ghosh, 1986; Oppewal & Holyoake, 2004; Howard, 1997; Teller et al., 2008), in the fields of retailing, marketing, and geography in order to understand the concept of both created and evolved agglomerations (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). One of the first authors to discuss agglomerations was Alfred Marshall (1920) who referred to the concept of *cumulative attraction* between stores close to each other. Richard L. Nelson (1958) explain cumulative attraction as:

a given number of stores dealing in the same merchandise will do more business if they are located adjacent or in proximity to each other than if they are widely scattered.

This view of cumulative attraction is supported by Teller and Schnedlitz (2012), who also point out that the understanding of how stores interplay within different business networks is of crucial importance for both tenants and agglomeration management in retail, in order to understand how to manage the cluster effects. Teller and Reutterer (2008) added that management need to prioritize the most important aspects of the agglomeration that have the most impact on consumers and tenants. The effects of the agglomerations can be seen as a way to gain Comparative Advantages, and thereby success for the tenants within the agglomeration (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012).

In order to realize the effects that comes with having a store inside an agglomeration, there needs to be *co-opetition*, meaning that retailers cooperate and compete at the same time (Howard, 1997; Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1996). Retailers cooperate with each other to attract consumers *to* the location and compete over the same consumers *at* the location (Howard, 1997). From a consumer point of view, visiting a retail agglomeration could also be seen as a *multipurpose* trip (Teller & Elms, 2012), which means that the trip is not only about satisfying consumers wants and needs, but also about spending their time at that place, meeting other people, or just using services and other non-retail business (Teller & Elms, 2012). The previously mentioned attributes is an effective driver to attract consumers to a retail agglomeration (Teller & Elms, 2012). However, in order to identify the overall attributes and factors that make retail agglomerations attractive, there is a need to understand the several layers that underpin the meaning of attractiveness associated with agglomerations.

In the context of retail attractiveness, the attractiveness of the agglomeration can be perceived on different dimensions, and according to Teller and Reutterer (2008), there are three latent factors that describe the multi-faceted construct of attractiveness, namely: *satisfaction, retention proneness, and patronage intention*. The first one, satisfaction with the agglomeration is characterized by the overall satisfaction of the agglomeration from the perspective of the consumer (Ruiz, Chebat & Hansen, 2004). The second dimension, retention proneness, refer to the amount of time the agglomeration is visited. This has to do with how much consumers enjoy their visit at the agglomeration, planned things to do there and how long they intended to stay there (Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, Voss, 2002; Wakefield & Baker, 1998). The final and last dimension is patronage intention and accounts for how willing consumers are to revisit the agglomeration, recommend it to other consumers and spend money there in the future (Whyatt, 2004). These three dimensions are strongly interlinked and can be seen as an overall aim for retail and agglomeration managers to meet consumers' needs (i.e. satisfaction), to make them stay longer (i.e. retention proneness) and to return in the future (i.e. patronage intention) (Teller & Elms, 2012).

To summarize, there are many different factors that make a retail agglomeration attractive, regardless of what type of agglomeration, and this is something retailers need to consider when deciding where to open their store.

3.3.1 Tenant Mix

The term tenant mix refer to the upmaking of tenants (i.e. stores) in a specific area (Yim Yiu & Xu, 2012). It includes the mix of retailers as well as the mix of non-retailers, such as restaurants, movie theatres and entertainment facilities (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). To our knowledge, there has been little to none research of tenant mix in other agglomerations than shopping malls. This is simply because tenant mix must be controlled if research is going to have any relevance. However, in the article by Yim Yiu and Xu (2012), the authors build a Tenant Mix Model based on Christaller's Central Place Theory developed in the middle of the twentieth century. The Central Place Theory seek to describe how central places develop dependent on the demand of the area and emanated that there is a threshold limit on how the range of goods and services in the central place affected the attraction of consumers (Yim Yiu & Xu, 2012).

This was later proved in Dennis et. al (2002) where the authors tested the threshold limits in the city of Cardiff, UK, found that the central place theory could be validated in with the implication that agglomeration did attract more customers. Furthermore, Teller and Reutterer (2008) concluded that tenant mix is an important factor when it comes to making central places more attractive. This was also stated by Yim Yiu & Xu (2012), and they added that if agglomerations, in their case specifically shopping centers, live up to consumers' threshold limits to carry out their shopping, the shopping centers would attract more consumers, or patrons as they call it. Teller and Schnedlitz (2012) also talk about *accumulation* and *enrichment* effects, which comes from the different drivers of tenant mix. The former effect addresses those consumers that benefit from multi-purpose trips because of the combination of offers at the agglomeration. The latter provides with benefits that are generated by the increase of shopping trips from consumers that are looking for the non-retail offerings of a agglomeration, which include entertainment, recreation, and interaction with people (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012).

The idea of tenant mix is to create synergetic effects in the makeup of stores, so that individual stores become more attractive to visit (Yim Yiu & Xu, 2012; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). By creating an attractive tenant mix, agglomerations can attract more customers due to the established term retail gravitation that were introduced by Riley (1931), as the *Law of Retail Gravitation*. Retail gravitation is a term that describes retail agglomerations, or retail centers, as a mass with a certain amount of gravitation. The bigger the mass, the higher gravitation and attraction force, meaning that larger shopping centers attract consumers from further away due to the mass of retailers (Riley 1931). The idea of an optimized tenant mix is to increase the perceptual mass of the retail agglomeration in order to attract more consumers (Yim Yiu & Xu, 2012; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012).

3.3.2 Management & Coordination

The Management & Coordination of an agglomeration are usually done by a centralized organization unit (Teller & Elms, 2010). According to Teller and Schnedlitz (2012), there are a number of drivers that the agglomeration management can relate to in order to influence the attributes that makes the agglomeration attractive for consumers, respectively tenants (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012; Teller & Elms, 2010). However, it is worth mentioning that these drivers differ into what extent they are used, especially between created agglomeration formats and evolved agglomeration formats (Teller & Elms, 2010). Created agglomeration formats are managed, usually by the property owner, constructed and planned in order to meet the demands from tenants and retailers at the site. The centralized management form contractual relationships with preferred tenants, which gives them the power to control and execute measures that attract consumers and, in the long run, enable success for both tenants and the agglomerations as such (Teller & Elms, 2010; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). There are a number of different drivers that is operated by the centralized management in order to make consumers feel that the created agglomeration format is attractive, and to help tenants succeed. These drivers are such as public toilets (Baker et al., 2002), information counters (Reimer & Clulow, 2004), orientation system (Teller & Reutterer, 2008), consistent opening hours (Baker, 2002), consistent appearance of stores (Howard, 1997), the arrangement of stores within the agglomeration (Wakefield & Baker, 1998) and the ways of marketing and promoting the agglomeration as a shopping destination (Teller & Elms, 2010). The last factor, marketing and promotion, can be seen as a way to enhance the attractiveness of the agglomeration, which enables the centralized

management to “force” the mix of tenants to engage in coordinated efforts of marketing (Kang & Kim, 1999). This means that retailers within the created agglomeration formats cooperate in order to attract consumers at the same time as they compete over the same consumers (Howard, 1997).

Evolved agglomeration formats are not operated in the same way as the created agglomeration formats when it comes to managing and controlling the agglomeration. Teller and Elms (2010) point out that the evolved agglomeration formats have a lack of centralized management in contrast to the created agglomeration formats, and that they are not originally constructed for commercial intentions nor the fulfilment that inhabitants of the agglomerations require (Berman & Evans, 2009). The main point is that evolved agglomeration formats lack the contract relationship with tenants within the agglomeration, which mean that the evolved agglomeration formats management relies on the cooperation between tenants (Howard, 1997). However, because of the increased competition between shopping malls and city centers, marketing and management initiatives in European countries have tried to duplicate the management practices in shopping malls (Warnaby & Medway, 2004; Warnaby et al., 2005). This is what is called Town Centre Management (TCM), whose main purpose is to develop the overall attractiveness of a city center (Warnaby & Medway, 2004). According to McAteer and Stephens (2011), TCM is primarily a tool to oppose the threat from other urban areas where the retail environment has been managed. The TCM initiatives could include economic development and strategic contributions of a city center, but also more common tasks such as day-to-day maintenance. With this in consideration, these factors are important for future success of a city center to be competitive towards the likes of created agglomeration formats (McAteer & Stephens, 2011).

Regardless of which agglomeration format that is discussed, the management of both created agglomeration formats and evolved agglomeration need to focus on attractiveness drivers for the managed place as well as their competitors. This leads to the discovery of the most important areas that needs to get the most attention when it comes to management and marketing in order to increase attractiveness and loyalty for both tenants and consumers (Teller & Elms, 2010).

3.4 ACCESSIBILITY

Because of the competitive conditions, good accessibility has become extremely important for retailers. Accessibility is the factor that characterizes how a place can be reached. It consists of three different dimensions: the obstacles on the way (roadblocks, traffic jams, etc.), the speed of access, and the convenience of getting there (Wakefield & Baker, 1998; Teller & Elms, 2012), this can also be summarized as *infrastructure*. The spatial and temporal distance between the shopping center or the city center, and the starting point (the home or workplace) are also something that need to be handled in order to satisfy the consumers (Teller & Reutterer, 2008). According to the notions of Reimer and Clulow (2004; 2009) about accessibility, Teller and Elms (2012) propose that Accessibility is an antecedent to attractiveness. Therefore, Accessibility is an important factor to make a shopping mall or a city center cluster attractive (Alzubaidi, Vignali, Davies, Schmidt, 1997).

Considering the rising mobility in Western countries, cars have become one of the most important means of transportation for the consumers (Baker, 2002). Therefore, *parking conditions* is an important characteristic for a shopping mall or a city center cluster and can be seen as a sub-factor to Accessibility (Van der Waerden, Borgers & Timmermans, 1998). This attribute can be described by the variety of different parking facilities, number of parking lots available, and to which degree the shopping mall or city center cluster are accessible from the parking lot (i.e. quickly, convenient and without any obstacles) (Van der Waerden et al., 1998; Ruiz et al., 2004). In the discussion of shopping malls and the city center cluster, both accessibility and parking conditions is a disadvantage for the evolved agglomeration formats compared to the created agglomeration formats, because accessibility and parking conditions are considered and planned for in the layout of a shopping mall. Car-borne consumers that visit an evolved agglomeration usually must pay parking fees and the parking lots may not always be nearby the store (Teller & Elms, 2012; Teller, 2008). However, consumers that do not have a car or cannot afford one, may prefer the evolved agglomerations over the created agglomerations (Reimers & Clulow, 2004; Gilbert, 2003).

3.5 ATMOSPHERE

Atmosphere is regarded as an important factor both when it comes to in-store perception and branding (Ailawadi and Keller, 2004; Rayburn and Voss, 2013). In an article written

by Mehrabian and Russell (1973) they discover that consumers response to an atmosphere in a store is divided in three dimensions; *pleasantness*, *arousal* and *dominance*. Conditional to the dimension of atmosphere perception, consumers change behavior which can lead to greater likelihood of purchase. There are several elements that make-up the atmospheric trait of a store, for example color, music, and crowding, which all contributes to influence consumers (Mehriban & Russel, 1973). There have been many studies where other researchers tested the atmospheric impact of shopping behavior (Bellizzi, Crowley, & Hasty 1983; Eroglu & Machleit 1990; Grewal, Barker, Levy, & Voss 2003), which concluded that certain *layouts* and *settings* improved the likeliness of purchase, the time spent in the store, and whether or not they re-visit the store. In the article written by Grewal et. al (2003) they also found that there is a significant difference between the level of impact of atmosphere between the genders, where women tend to be more affected than men. Schlosser (1998) argues that stores has a social identity appeal which means that store atmosphere affects consumers likeliness of buying products with more social risk to it, meaning that stores that are selling products with higher social risk should focus more on creating a pleasant store atmosphere. Furthermore, Rayburn and Voss (2013) argue that there is a significant difference in the importance of store atmosphere between utilitarian and hedonic shoppers, meaning that hedonic shoppers pay more attention to store atmosphere than utilitarian shoppers.

In De Nisco and Warnaby's (2014) article in the *Journal of Business Research* they present the previous research within the atmospheric element of shopping behavior. However, in contrast to previous research they choose to focus on external atmosphere instead of in-store atmosphere, hence their hypothesis was that external atmosphere is significant as well. As presented in the previous paragraph, De Nisco and Warnaby (2014) describes that atmosphere is a multilayer treat which can evoke emotions on a wide range of platforms, and that the physical layout can create a harmonic atmosphere. They also mention the possible consumption increase that comes with a good atmosphere. De Nisco and Warnaby (2014) contributes with new knowledge concerning retail atmosphere by widening the atmospheric treat to also contain the surroundings of the store. Their study shows that a wide assortment of stores, food and entertainment have a positive effect on both pleasure and arousal for consumers, while esthetic design of urban facilities, *Architecture*, only affects pleasure (De Nisco and Warnaby, 2014).

The effects of external atmosphere argued by De Nisco and Warnaby (2014) affects consumers concerning both pleasure and arousal. This can be connected to the impact atmosphere have on shopping behavior, where a positive atmosphere increase revenue for stores (Bellizzi, Crowley, & Hasty 1983; Eroglu & Machleit 1990; Grewal, Barker, Levy, & Voss 2003). Furthermore, Rayburn and Voss (2013) proved that hedonic shoppers were more impacted by atmosphere than utilitarian shoppers. According to Shukla and Babin (2013), *ambiance* is an important factor when it comes to increasing consumers' spending and overall shopping value perception. For shopping clusters, existing research suggest that atmospheric factors such as physical layout, architecture, smell, lighting, music, crowding and *ambiance* affects shopping behavior, both at an external and an in-store level.

3.6 PLACE ATTACHMENT

Research from marketers have found that certain places evokes meaning through shared experience among the habitants at that place. This interpretation of a physical place is referred to as a sense of place (Brocat, Baker, Voorhees, 2015), and the more experience people have with a place over time creates more sense of place (Manzo, 2001). Place Attachment is associated with this and can be described as people having a strong Emotional Bond with a certain place (Brocat et al., 2015). The connection between an individual and a specific environmental setting, both physical and social elements, are what characterize place attachment. The main characteristic is how the individual are keen to maintain closeness to that specific environment, and experience anxiety when being kept away from it (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Manzo, 2008). Furthermore, Inch and Florek (2008) state that there is a strong correlation between attachment and satisfaction, which means that the satisfaction of a certain place could potentially lead to attachment. Also, Rubenstein and Parmelee (1992) points out that the combination between personal experience and social interaction are what makes an individual attach to a place.

Place attachment as a concept has mostly been studied in the context of recreation or in the perspective of tourists, which means that major literature lack insight regarding places in the context of retail environments (Johnson, Kim, Mee Mun & Lee, 2015). However, the importance of connecting a place to a retail site was highlighted by Johnstone and Conroy (2008), and they observed that there had not been much research on the social context of

the retail environment. They highlighted that individuals create emotional bonds with a retail site and how that bond could affect consumers decision making (Johnstone & Conroy, 2008). Furthermore, Johnstone and Conroy (2008) claimed that individuals may link themselves to a location in the same way that they link themselves with products. This could be the place attachment relative to a store (such as a flagship store) or the location of a store (e.g. a shopping mall or a shopping street), and that this connection may have an impact on the individual's behavior (Johnstone & Conroy, 2008). This results in consumers neglecting their relationship towards a product, and instead choose a specific retail location because of their attachment and relationship towards that particular location (Johnson et al., 2015). Together with this, in an article by Vlachos, Theotokis, Pramataris and Vrechopoulos (2010), the authors argue that emotional attachment by consumers toward a retailing store or brand enhance trust. Emotional attachment can be built in several different ways, and more than one factor is important when determining what builds emotional attachment. In Vlachos et al. (2010) place identity, place dependence, likeliness of customer service employees and co-shoppers are among the factors that builds emotional attachment.

In addition to what has been said earlier about place attachment, Johnstone and Conroy (2008) also explain that place attachment deals with the exchange of several attributes, such as emotions, practice (e.g. action and behavior) and cognition (e.g. belief, thought and knowledge). Also, place attachment can be divided into two separate dimensions that provides with an understanding for the sense of place connected to place attachment (Johnstone & Conroy, 2008). These two dimensions are *place dependence* and *place identity*. The former is considered as an important function of a place that shall provide conditions and features that supports desired activities and specific goals. The latter is defined as the emotional attachment and symbolic importance towards a place that gives purpose and meaning to life (Johnson et al., 2015; Johnstone & Conroy, 2008; Williams & Vaske, 2003). Johnson et al. (2015) says that memories, interpretations and related feelings connected to a physical place may form place identity. For example, an individual that got married at a particular place may feel connected to that place and form place identity. The positive effects from an experience with a place can lead to emotional bonds tied to that place. This is confirmed by Moore and Graefel (1994), who says that this emotional bond can arise and be fulfilled after just one single visit to that place.

3.7. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

One part of the aim of this thesis was to develop a conceptual model which is presented below. It is called *What builds Retail Attractiveness?* (See Figure1). The model is based on the literature review and the concepts within the fields of Retail, Agglomeration theory, Accessibility, Atmosphere and Place Attachment. The model contains four factors that are likely to affect retail attractiveness. The sub-factors of each separate factor are also derived from the literature review and will be further explained. The conceptual model also served as a connection between previous research and this study’s method and results, but also as a framework for the discussion.

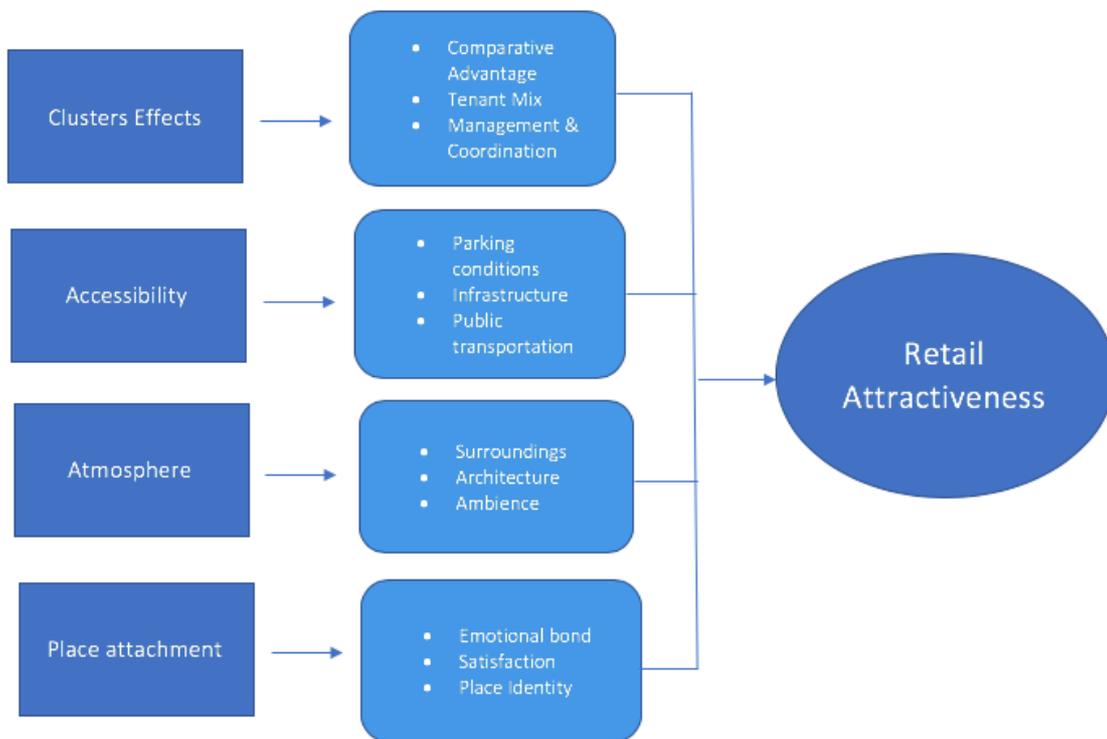


Figure 1. What builds Retail Attractiveness?

Since the aim of this thesis is to explore how retailers reason when they decide where to open their store, this conceptual model explore different attributes that retailers may consider when deciding. The idea is that the sub-factors in this model will lead to what is called *Retail Attractiveness* to the right in the model. Retail Attractiveness describes what makes a place attractive for retailers. The assumption is that retailers consider the factors mentioned in the model, and then rationally decide where to locate their store. The arrows show how the factors and sub-factors lead to Retail Attractiveness.

The first factor in the model is Cluster Effects because of its relevance for retail attractiveness, as the opening of a store within an agglomeration leads to cluster effects for the retailer (Nelson, 1958; Ghosh, 1986; Teller, 2008; Teller & Elms, 2012, Teller et al., 2012). In order to realize the effects, there needs to be co-opetition between retailers, which means that they co-operate and compete at the same time (Howard, 1997; Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1996). This leads to a *Comparative Advantages* within the retail cluster, and a competitive advantage over retailers that do not realize these cluster effects. According to Teller and Reutterer (2008), *Tenant Mix* is an important factor when it comes to making a place more attractive, while Yim Yiu & Xu (2012) mention that the idea of tenant mix is to create synergetic effects in the makeup of several stores, so that each individual store becomes more attractive. The *Management & Coordination* of any agglomeration are of great importance in order to increase the attractiveness of the agglomeration (Teller & Elms, 2010), and to enable the success for tenants and the agglomerations as such (Howard, 1997; Teller & Elms, 2010).

The second factor, Accessibility, is another factor that retailers consider when they decide where to open their stores (Reimer & Clulow, 2004, 2009; Teller & Elms, 2012), but is also something that affects the way consumers find a place attractive to visit (Teller & Reutterer, 2008). *Parking Conditions* are important for a place attractiveness (Wakefield & Baker, 1998). Additionally, it is also important that there is good infrastructure in proximity to the retail cluster (Van der Waerden et al., 1998). Other means of *Transportation* is also an important aspect for retailers, considering that their store should be accessible to as many consumers as possible. People who use public transportation, bikers, and pedestrians also need to be considered for a place to be attractive (Teller & Elms, 2010; Reimers & Clulow, 2004).

The third factor is Atmosphere, and it is considered as a multilayer treat that evoke emotions and feelings connected to a place and is an important factor for Retail Attractiveness (De Nisco & Warnaby, 2014). Bellizzi et al. (1983) stress that the *Surrounding* and layout of a store are of great importance for the likeliness for consumers to visit and revisit a store. It is connected to the overall attractiveness of the store (Grewal et al., 2003; Eroglu & Machleit, 1990). De Nisco and Warnaby (2014) also say that the degree of pleasure affects consumers, where pleasure is connected to the aesthetic design of the *Architecture* or store.

Ambiance (Shukla & Babin, 2013) is another important factor for retail attractiveness and how the consumers perceive their overall shopping experience in terms of physical layout, architecture, lightning and crowding.

Finally, the fourth factor is place attachment, which is the close connection between individuals and a specific environmental setting. Place Attachment is an important factor for Retail Attractiveness (Brocat et al., 2015). Johnson et al. (2015) talk about the *Emotional Bonds* that individuals create with a retail site, and that these bonds can affect the consumers' decision making. Inch and Florek (2008) also mention that there is a strong correlation between place attachment and *Satisfaction*, which means that the satisfaction of a place could lead to place attachment, which is important for Retail Attractiveness (Vlachos et al., 2010). Another important factor is the *Place Identity* individuals can associate with a place (Johnson et al., 2015; Johnstone & Conroy, 2008), which means that individuals feel emotional attachment and symbolic importance towards a place that gives meaning to life (Johnson et al., 2015; William & Vaske, 2003).

To summarize, all of these factors are a part of the conceptual model that was used to understand what creates retail attractiveness, and also served as a guide in the completion of this paper.

4. CASE PRESENTATION

In this chapter the case will be presented. Due to the establishment of C4 Shopping in Kristianstad the structure of shopping in Kristianstad have and will change. Both retailers and customers must relate to a new reality with an out-of-town shopping mall in proximity to the city center. The purpose with this chapter is to illustrate both how the establishment of C4 Shopping have been debated by the locals, and what type of companies our case retailers are. The reason for this is to create a context for the reader, for them to understand the complexity of the situation.

4.1 RETAILING IN KRISTIANSTAD

Kristianstad is a municipality with approximately 85 000 residents located in southern Sweden (Kristianstad Kommun, 2019). Kristianstad city center had a turnover of 2 236 000 000 SEK, divided on 310 businesses and over 1400 employees in 2018 (Handelsstaden, 2019). According to Handelsstaden Kristianstad (Handelsstaden, 2019), which is an organization that consists of representatives from the municipality, the city center trade organization, and city center property owners, Kristianstad is one of the best city centers in Sweden, being ranked third in 2018. It is “Swedish city centers” that award the best city center in Sweden, and although there are no specified factors considered, the organization writes that the award is meant to praise development, growth, and cooperation (Svenska Stads kärnor, 2019). This can be used as proof that Kristianstad have been successful in coordinating the city center through collaboration and support between important stakeholders. According to an interview with one of our interviewees that have insights in Handelsstaden Kristianstad, the city center works on several betterments in order to increase the competitiveness of the city center¹. For example, Handelsstaden Kristianstad would like to also involve several non-retailers in the city center, in order to create unity and collaboration between all city center tenants.

In 2006, the municipality of Kristianstad decided to sell land at a site called Hammar, located north east of Kristianstad City to a local entrepreneur with the intention to build a shopping mall (Alfredsson, 2019). This led to the launch of the project C4 Shopping, which took several years to develop and build. According to the entrepreneur, the property owners

¹ Store owner of Ekberg's (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

and retailers in the city center, together with neighbors in Hammar tried to delay the construction of C4 Shopping². In the meantime, the city council shifted focus to finish the project of the inner-city lot where Galleria Boulevard is located today. Galleria Boulevard opened in 2013 with the intention to complement and develop the eastern part of the city center by reducing perceived distance to the cultural blocks of the city (Steen & Ström, 2019). With the new Galleria Boulevard in the city center, many sceptics deemed C4 Shopping to be excessive when the detailed development plan of Hammar was approved in 2014 (Sveriges Radio, 2019). The detailed development plan included a new street, a shopping center, a big-box shopping area, several apartments, and a large parking lot (Stadsbyggnadskontoret Kristianstad, 2019). The construction began in winter of 2016 and was completed in the fall of 2018. Today, C4 Shopping is a modern and environment certified shopping mall with over 60 tenants and a target to attract 5 million visitors every year (Nordell, 2018).

The decision to build C4 Shopping has been debated ever since, but in an interview with the entrepreneur he says that the decision taken was widely anchored in the city council, where both the governing coalition, as well as the opposition were positive to the affair². However, several critics argue that the new shopping mall is a serious threat to the city center, and that the city center will die out, as it has in similar cases in other Swedish cities (Nilsson & Welander, 2019). Furthermore, critics argue that Kristianstad do not need this much retail premises and refer to the establishment of Galleria Boulevard in the city center (Steen & Ström, 2019). Together with Galleria Boulevard, C4 Shopping means that 150 new stores can open in the area of Kristianstad (Nilsson & Welander, 2019). According to the critics and several interviewees in this study, there is a fear that an over-establishment will make it harder for retailers and traders in the region to be profitable.

According to the entrepreneur who bought the land and started the project, the intention was to improve Kristianstad as a city and complete the city in comparison to similar or slightly bigger cities². In a presentation of the project held exclusively for us, he explains that he has worked to improve Kristianstad during a long time, and that the establishment of C4 Shopping and the development of Hammar is a necessary improvement of

² Owner of Sandelin's (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

² Owner of Sandelin's (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

² Owner of Sandelin's (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

Kristianstad municipality. From his point of view, Kristianstad needed to complete their trade structure with a shopping center, in order to compete with cities in the eastern part of Skåne. The entrepreneur stressed that Kristianstad have a lovely city center, and referred to it as the “jewel”, but that the lack of *volume shopping, grocery- and food retailing, and family-friendly shopping* caused decreased attraction for Kristianstad as a shopping destination. According to the entrepreneur, the completion of the shopping structure in Kristianstad, in combination with existing capacities like Kristianstad University, Kristianstad Arena (i.e. entertainment venue), Kristianstad Airport, and CSK (i.e. the regional hospital), mean that Kristianstad now has the requirements for growth and development.

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, there are divided opinions concerning whether the establishment of C4 Shopping is positive for Kristianstad. Nevertheless, C4 Shopping is built, and the structure of retail has changed. Although no one knows how retail and non-retail allocation will look like in the future, this study therefore also contributes to explain why the retail sector develops in a certain way, and how it affects retailing in Kristianstad.

4.2 CASE RETAILERS

In order to understand the context of the answers found from the interviews the following paragraphs describe the case retailers. The four case retailers are Ekberg’s, Café Hannott’s, Sandelin’s, and Gerda’s Tea and Coffee. The descriptions have been done using secondary sources and the interviewees own descriptions of their company. In the interview guide (See Appendix 1), a couple of questions were directly linked with case presentation in order to use it as empirical material for this part.

Ekberg’s is a retail store located at Lilla Torg (i.e. a square in the city center) in the city of Kristianstad. It started out as a family business in 1957, and its focus was to sell men’s clothing (Svensen, 2019). In 2006 the current owner bought Ekberg’s. It was his second store in Kristianstad at the time. Ekberg’s main concept is to offer a mix of Swedish and International premium brands, such as Polo Ralph Lauren, Gant, Oscar Jacobson and Hugo Boss. The store currently has eight employees, all distributed over the three branches within Ekberg’s: Man, Woman and Home. In 2018, the three separate Ekberg’s stores were

merged into one complete store under the same roof¹. Considering the case of C4 Shopping, Ekberg's declined the opportunity to move there to instead focus their business in the city center.

Café Hannott's is a newly opened, small café at C4 Shopping. The café started its business in the Fall of 2018 when C4 Shopping opened its doors³. Café Hannott's were started by three sisters who runs the business on a day to day basis. The idea of the café is to create cozy and inviting atmosphere, where you can eat, take a cup of coffee, or just take a pause from the shopping. The main offerings are sandwiches, known as Maltes mackor, salads, wraps, baked potatoes and pastries, together with beverages like the Fogarolli coffee. According to the owners, the café personnel invests a lot of time to provide quality food, service, and atmosphere. Furthermore, in the interviews held with two of the sisters, it is obvious that they take great pride in the spontaneous and genuine feedback they receive at their Facebook page³ (C4 Shopping, 2019). The café currently has four employees, where the three sisters work at the cafe together with one extra employee hired on hours. Considering the case of C4 Shopping, the three owners of Café Hannott's decided that they wanted to have their business there instead of in the city center in Kristianstad. In an interview with one of the owners, she said that they looked for different alternatives, the city center included, but could not resist the possibility to be located at C4 Shopping. Therefore, they applied for a place at C4 Shopping, and now reside just outside the north entrance of the shopping mall.

In 1895, Sandelin's, a clothing and accessories retailer, were founded in the city of Kristianstad by Ellen and Theodor Sandelin. The company have two physical stores, both in Kristianstad, and a web shop managed by the personnel (Sandelins, 2019). At Sandelin's Facebook page, we can read that the store first opened as a combined tobacco and draper's shop that specialized on men's clothes and apparel. Over the years the store was a family business, switching owners from Ellen and Theodor, to Erik, to Carl-Erik who later sold the store to the current owner. Being the oldest store in Kristianstad, the owner takes great pride in having the same value proposition then as now, namely, to offer great quality, service, and assortment for customers. In Kristianstad, the building that they rent is widely

¹ Owner of Ekberg's (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

³ Store owners of Café Hannott's (Interview, 22nd of April 2019)

³ Store owners of Café Hannott's (Interview, 22nd of April 2019)

associated with the Sandelin's brand. In fact, Sandelins logotype is a drawing of the building. When C4 Shopping was established, Sandelin's were one of the first stores that decided to open a store. Although, this was not a surprise considering that the owner of Sandelin's is also involved with the development of C4 Shopping. Interestingly, for this study, Sandelin's decided to double up and locate a store both in the city center and at C4 Shopping. In an interview with us, the owner argued that double establishment is logical, given that there are different customers that shop at C4 Shopping compared to the city center. However, he admits that there is, or has been, a slight downturn on sales at the city center store. Although, he stresses that sales between the stores have raised considerably.

Gerda's Tea & Coffee (FNO. Gerda's) is a franchise concept store that originate from Gerda Karlsson, a saleswoman in Kalmar. The franchise can be found in four cities in the southern part of Sweden, Växjö, Halmstad, Kristianstad, and two stores in Kalmar. Apart from the original store in Kalmar, the franchise stores are exclusively located at shopping malls. The concept circuits the idea of late nineteenth century mercantile tradition with over-the-counter sales and a large focus on personal service and guidance. Accordingly, the staff is dressed in old-fashioned clothes and the interior is contemporary. The assortment consists of a wide range of premium products such as tea, coffee, and confectionaries. In an interview with the store manager in Kristianstad, she explains that the store managers collaborate with product purchases, marketing, web shop, and other parts of the business. Otherwise, the store managers are allowed to diversify the assortment in order to endorse local goods and preferences⁴. Gerda's is relevant for this study because the management choose to move from Galleria Boulevard in the city center, to C4 Shopping, and that the decision-making process were relatively close to the store manager. However, in the interview with the store manager, she said that the intention was to open the store at C4 Shopping from the beginning, and that the store was only located at Galleria Boulevard during the time C4 Shopping was built.

⁴ Store owner of Gerda's Tea & Coffee (Interview, 25th of April 2019)

5. EMPIRICAL METHOD

In this chapter the research process of this study will be presented. Here we argue for why our chosen research method is suitable in order to answer the research question and fulfil the research purpose. This chapter show how the empirical material was collected through semi-structured interviews and secondary sources. Furthermore, we explain how the content analysis was done in order to analyze the collected data.

5.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The definition of research strategy is the general orientation needed to conduct a business research. It derives from the methodological considerations of the authors (Bell et al., 2019). The two main approaches are quantitative or qualitative research, where one distinction is that quantitative researchers apply measurements, while qualitative researchers do not. Qualitative research is more concerned with words than numbers, and place emphasis on how individuals understand their social reality (Bell et al., 2019). Since we have an interpretivistic philosophy, qualitative research stresses the importance of understanding the social world by examining how the participants interpret the world. Moreover, qualitative research share traits of naturalism, meaning that people are active creators of their social world and provide meaning to their behavior, instead of being passive objects (Bell et al., 2019). Since we want to explore how retailers reason concerning their localization decision, a qualitative method is ideal to use because it gives the possibility to explore the thoughts behind the reasoning and the decisions taken.

Qualitative research is predominantly associated with an inductive approach to research. The inductive approach is also linked with abductive research approach, which build theories from observed phenomenon (Bell et al., 2019). However, abductive research originates from a deductive research approach where the study begin with a previously developed theory. In the case of abductive research, researchers later abandon the initial theory in order explore new findings and explanations which revise or elaborate existing theories. This study has an abductive research approach, where empirical material has been gathered in order to explore a phenomenon, or as in this case, study why retailers choose to locate their store in the city center or at an out-of-town shopping mall. The abductive approach is a good fit to this study due to the research purpose of finding factors involved in the reasoning in the decision-making process. It is unlikely that existing theories and

concept will involve all factors mentioned by the interviewees which indicate that this study should be open for new findings, which imply an abductive approach. In order to answer our research purpose, we seek to explore through a qualitative approach instead of quantitative, because our research purpose is associated with individuals' subjective understanding of their actions and surroundings (Bell et al., 2019).

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a framework for the collection and analysis of data, where the choice of the design is important in the continuing research process (Bell et al., 2019). There are five prominent research designs; experimental designs, cross-sectional or social survey design, longitudinal design, case study design, and comparative design. A case study design is the intensive and specific analysis of single or multiple cases. According to Stake (1995), a researcher that study a case is interested in the complexity and special nature of the case in question. Furthermore, Bell et al. (2019) say that there are four different objects that can be studied in a case, a *single organization*, a *single location*, a *single event*, or a *person*. This thesis concerns the two commerces of C4 Shopping and the city center in Kristianstad. As the research purpose is to explore how retailers reason in their decision-making, an investigation of four different cases has been done. Therefore, this is a multiple-case study of several organizations. A multiple case study focuses on the unique context of the cases, which can be seen as an extension of the case study approach (Bell et al., 2019). In this thesis there are not much consideration for the unique context of in each separate case. Instead, emphasis is to produce general findings and spot differences between the four cases.

The research design of this thesis has a *cross-sectional* design, which refers to the collection of data in more than one case (Bell et al., 2019). Researchers that persuade a cross-sectional research design are interested in variation, which can only be achieved by examination of more than one case. The main point is that researchers choose more than one or two cases because of the opportunity to encounter variation between variables and to find clear distinctions between cases (Bell et al., 2019).

Generally, cross-sectional design is associated with quantitative methods such as questionnaires or structured interviews. Though, Bell et al. (2019) argue that cross-sectional design has wider relevance than only using quantitative methods as tool for

collection of empirical data. Bell et al. (2019) mention that qualitative research often involves a form of cross-sectional design. This is usually conducted by unstructured or semi-structured interviews with few people (Bell et al., 2019). The main research method used in this thesis is semi-structured interviews with people from the four retail companies, which will be further elaborated below. A semi-structured approach imply that the interview process become flexible and that the focus is on the interviewee's own perception of events, issues, and behaviors (Bell et al., 2019). In this study, the semi-structured interviews are complemented with secondary sources that strengthens our findings. The secondary sources consist of local newspapers, the case retailers' web- and Facebook-pages, and different publications from websites with interest in Kristianstad's retailers (e.g. Handelsstaden). The secondary sources were used to build the case presentation.

5.3 COLLECTION OF EMPIRICAL MATERIAL

This thesis adopts a qualitative research approach. According to Bell et al. (2019), a qualitative approach is a good fit for studies that investigate how people think and feel about certain things. In this thesis, the primary method of collecting empirical material is through semi-structured interviews, where the focus is on the interviewees' point of view and their own perspectives (Bell et al., 2019). In addition to the semi-structured interviews, there has been a collection of secondary data that consist of news-articles and background information connected to the four different retailers.

5.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

To investigate different perspectives and opinions from retailers in Kristianstad, this cross-sectional study consists of four retailers that reasoned differently concerning the establishment of C4 Shopping. According to Denscombe (2016), the selection of participants should be in line with the research purpose. In this case, the purpose is to explore how retailers reason and think about store location. Therefore, we have used a subjective selection of participants, meaning that we have selected a relatively small number of interviewees in order to collect the most valuable insights with the least number of interviews. By doing this, it is possible to explore the perspective of people with knowledge and experience in the subject, which leads to a better understanding than interviewing hundreds of non-relevant people in the street (Denscombe, 2016).

The first approach to the retailers were done by email with information about the purpose of the thesis, what was expected from them, and how they could contact us if they were interested. The emails were sent the 15th of April. By the end of the day the 17th of April, there were still no answers to the emails. This led us to our next move, which was to contact the retailers directly and visit their stores. This was done the 18th of April, where all four retailers were visited. The direct contact was successful, and five interviews were scheduled the next week. The success in pursuing participants lead to that the case-study consist of four different retailers in Kristianstad city center and C4 Shopping. The cases are: Ekberg's, Café Hannott's, Gerda's and Sandelin's. Our ambition was to speak with individuals that had the most relevant insights and information about the location decisions, such as the store manager or the owner of the company.

The first company, Ekberg's, is a retailer that remained in the city center. Ekberg's sells clothes and other wearables with focus on premium brands and good service. The company was chosen because it is a company that has been located at the same place since it opened in the 1950's, and also because it was a large retailer that decided not to open another store at C4 Shopping. The interviewee was the owner of the store, and he was chosen because we thought he would have most the valuable information and reflections about their decision to stay in the city center.

The second company, Café Hannott's, is a newly founded cafeteria which decided to establish at C4 Shopping. Café Hannott's was founded by three sisters and it was chosen because it is a smaller company that has C4 Shopping as its first location. Compared to many large companies that are located at C4 Shopping, Café Hannott's founders are more personally attached and dependent on the decision of where to locate their cafe. The interviews were conducted with two of the co-founders in order to get two different perspectives on why they started their business at C4 Shopping.

The third company, Gerda's, is a retailer that decided to leave the city center to move to C4 shopping. Gerda's is active in the retailing industry and sells tea, coffee and confectionery. The interview was with the franchisee of Gerda's in Kristianstad. Gerda's is a company that consist of five different stores in Kalmar, Växjö, Halmstad and Kristianstad. Therefore, we found the franchisee in Kristianstad as the most appropriate person to interview. We found

that Gerda's was an appropriate retailer to include because it is a small retail chain compared with other companies that moved to C4 Shopping from the city center, which imply that the decision-makers were reachable.

The fourth company, Sandelin's, is a retailer that choose to open another store in Kristianstad at C4 Shopping beside their store in the city center. Sandelin's sells clothing and accessories and have a strong bond with Kristianstad due to that it was founded in the same building that it is located at today. Sandelin's were chosen because it is one of few local retailers that also, along with a couple of large retail chains, doubled up with a store at C4 Shopping. Sandelin's is a small retail chain, and we believed that the decision-makers would be reachable and would provide with more purposeful answers than one of the bigger retail chains where the decisions are taken far up in the company-hierarchy. The interviewee was the majority owner of the company, who also is the chairman of the board of C4 Shopping. Therefore, we found it interesting to conduct an interview with him in order to get his perspective on the retail situation in Kristianstad and how he reasons considering Sandelin's.

5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

In order to reach the purpose of this thesis and answer the research question, five semi-structured interviews were conducted with four retailers in Kristianstad and at C4 Shopping. This was done in order to see how different retailers reasoned in their decision-making. Before the interviews were conducted, an interview guide was generated (See Appendix 1) with questions on specific topics connected to the conceptual model (See Figure 1) and the research purpose. The questions are open ended, meaning that the interviewees are allowed to shift focus away from the original question (Bell et al., 2019). In the interview guide there are factors from the conceptual model in parenthesis to mark what the purpose of the question is. Questions concerning no specific factor will not have any parenthesis, instead those questions are more concerned with the interviewees' own perceptions of current trends in retail and their own business.

The questions touched upon five main areas. The first questions are open and with introductory character to make the interviewee feel comfortable and to get a dialog going. Secondly, questions about the historical background of the company was asked and how it

relates back to today's decisions and future of the company. Thirdly, questions were asked about the decisions and strategies concerning the shifting trends in retail and the establishment of C4 Shopping. In this part, the questions were more specific regarding the decisions that the retailers made when C4 Shopping opened. For example, were they offered a place at C4 Shopping, how did they reason in their decision-making, and how they think it would affect the trade in Kristianstad. The fourth area included questions regarding the development of retail and how the interviewees perceived the differences between shopping malls versus city center shopping. The fifth, and final area, included questions of complementary character that were used if we felt that the interviewees did not touch upon all factors in our conceptual model that could lead to Retail Attractiveness. These questions highlighted aspects such as parking conditions and public transportations (Accessibility), if there is a strong solidarity between the store and its current location (Place Attachment), and if it is important to have movement and activity around the store (Atmosphere). All questions were not necessary in all interviews.

To be able to capture what the interviewee sees as most important, an interviewer should allow, or even encourage the interviewee, to ramble on about things while answering the questions. This means that the interviews could depart significantly from what the interviewer had in mind but means that the interviewees could exhort knowledge and perspective that otherwise would not be considered (Bell et. al 2019). With this said, it is logical to have semi-structured interviews that contribute with both valuable insights from the interviewee's perspective and answers the research question. The fact that it was semi-structured interviews also allowed us interviewers flexibility, meaning that we could ask follow-up questions depending on the answers from the interviewees (Ahrne & Svensson, 2015). The questions in the interview guide were adjusted depending on which retailer we interviewed. Some questions did not fit all interviews, which led to that some questions were either adjusted or removed.

The interviews took place on several dates depending on when the interviewees were available (for an overview, see Table 1). The two interviews with Café Hannott's took place on the 22th of April 2019. The interviews were conducted with two of the co-founders and lasted approximately for 25 minutes each. The interviews took place at Café Hannott's. Even if we did not sit in an office or a more private section, the interviews were completed

in a comfortable environment. The third interview took place on the 24th of April 2019, with Gerda's. The interview was conducted with the store manager and lasted approximately for 25 minutes. The interview took place in the coffee room in the back of the store. The fourth and fifth interview took place on the 25th of April 2019, with Ekberg's and Sandelin's. The interview with Ekberg's was with the store owner and took place in the coffee room at Ekberg's. The interview was conducted in the morning and lasted for approximately 40 minutes.

The interview with the owner of Sandelin's took place in the afternoon the same day and was conducted with the main owner. The interview took place in the conference room at a residence called Hammarshus, close to C4 Shopping, which belong to the owner of Sandelin's. Before the interview started, the owner held a presentation about the development of C4 Shopping, which was not recorded. This was due to the fact that there was information in that presentation that the owner did not want to get published. Instead, we listened to his presentation and took notes for parts that we thought were relevant for our research. The presentation lasted for approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. After this, an interview with the owner was conducted, and it lasted for approximately 15 minutes. The reason for the interview lasting only 15 minutes is because we adjusted the interview guide and did not asks all questions. The interviewee had already touched some questions in the presentation, which made it unnecessary to ask questions concerning those parts again.

Table 1. The date, length of the interviews and the interviewees

	Date	Length (interview)	Interviewee
Ekberg's	April 26 th	40 minutes	Store owner
Café Hannott's	April 22 nd	24 and 26 minutes	Two store owners
Gerda's	April 25 th	23 minutes	Franchisee/Store owner
Sandelin's	April 26 th	15 minutes	Store owner

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The first step in our data analysis was to transcribe the collected empirical material from the semi-structured interviews. The transcripts were then analyzed through a qualitative

content analysis, which comprise of a systematic transformation of large amounts of text into developed and organized summary of decisive results. According to Bell et al. (2019), qualitative content analysis main strategy is the search for themes and takes off in different coding approaches that are associated with the analysis of qualitative data. The analysis had its starting point in the transcriptions to find statements associated to Retail Attractiveness. We conducted our first content analysis to get familiar with the material. The transcriptions from the five interviews were printed and read thoroughly. When the interviewees mentioned something related to Retail Attractiveness, we highlighted that statement. Full phrases and fragments were found using the interviewees' own expressions, which was followed by a discussion of all found statements in order to decide if all were relevant. The next step was to move on from the transcriptions and only use our found statements. This is what is called reduction and means that the text is reduced to what is relevant, removing irrelevant text, and highlighting key phrases and words (Ahrne & Svensson, 2015). The first reduction resulted in the discovery of 166 statements that were associated with Retail Attractiveness. Since this study explore four different cases and how retailers reason concerning where to locate their store, the content analysis was applied to each of the cases separately. In the transcription of the interview with the store manager of Ekberg's, 53 statements were found, in the transcription of the two interviews with owners of Café Hannott's, 65 statements were found, in the transcription of the interview with the store manager of Gerda's, 25 statements were found, and in the interview with the owner of Sandelin's, 23 statements were found.

The next step was to categorize the statements into codes. This was done through a deductive approach in the content analysis, which build upon the use of a structured and predetermined framework (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008). It means that the researcher uses theories and concepts from the literature review to analyze the empirical material and transcriptions (Burnard et al., 2008). In this thesis, our conceptual model consisted of four different factors (Cluster Effects, Accessibility, Atmosphere and Place Attachment) that leads to Retail Attractiveness. In the deductive coding of the 189 statements, these four factors are considered as codes, and the statements were categorized under the code that matched.

Table 2. Overview of the categorization of statements

	Cluster Effects	Accessibility	Atmosphere	Place Attachment	Total
Ekberg's	19	9	11	4	43
Café Hannott's (2 interviews)	17	10	13	6	46
Gerda's	6	7	5	2	20
Sandelin's	3	6	4	1	14
Total	45	32	33	13	123

In this content analysis, we were open-minded about the possibility to find factors that did not match our predetermined codes. When categorizing the statements, there were a number of statements in every case that did not match with the codes from our conceptual model. Instead, these statements were denoted as Other in our first approach to the content. We also found statements that we denoted as Other because they related to two or more codes from the conceptual model. However, they were not sufficiently specific to be categorized under only one single code (e.g. “comfort” and “different types of trade”). Consequently, as the next step in our analysis, an inductive analysis was done with the remaining statements. According to Burnard et al. (2008), an inductive approach means that the analysis is not guided by structured and predetermined frameworks, or a conceptual model, instead, the empirical material should guide the analysis. According to Thomas (2006), the inductive analysis starts in the detailed reading of raw material that should lead to a generation of themes or concepts by the researcher. Because of this, we created new codes that went beyond our conceptual model, but still were associated with Retail Attractiveness. We created three new codes, which was Rent, Safety and Proximity to Workplaces. In the inductive analysis, we also found statements that we could not categorize or associate to our three new codes. Instead, these statements were seen as general statements connected to Retail Attractiveness but did not have any resemblances with the factors that retailers consider when they decide where to locate their store.

Table 3. Overview of quotes with the new factors

	Rent	Safety	Proximity to Workplaces	General	Total
Ekberg's	2	2	3	3	10
Café Hannott's	4	0	4	11	19
Gerda's	0	0	2	3	5

Sandelin's	2	4	0	3	9
Total	8	6	9	20	43

In the next step, we tried to identify what statements that belonged to the sub-factors of our codes. For example, the code “Accessibility” had three sub-factors that lead to Retail Attractiveness, “Atmosphere” had three sub-factors that led to Retail Attractiveness, etc. By doing this step, we could further explore the relationship between the interviewee’s statements and the sub-factors that lead to Retail Attractiveness, which made it possible to further develop our analysis. This is further presented in chapter seven with an overview over the different sub-factors connected to the four case companies.

Since we had categorized our material into four different codes from our conceptual model, and generated three new codes from our material, which was Rent, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces, we now had seven different codes for each case. After the completion of these steps, we had an overall view of our empirical results and could start to look for findings with and between the four different cases.

5.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there needs to be other alternatives to reliability and validity when checking and assessing the quality of qualitative research. There are two other criteria, where trustworthiness is one of them. According to Bell et al., (2019), the trustworthiness of a qualitative study constitutes of four different criteria. These are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. *Credibility* concerns the focus of the research and how well the collected data and analysis processes undertake the intended focus (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). To make sure that our findings have credibility and are relevant, people with experience and who works within retail have been interviewed. It is the answers and explanations from the participants’ that determine if the factors in our model are relevant or not. The fact that we have open-ended questions that allows the participants to shift focus during the interview, enables us to generate new factors related to Retail Attractiveness.

The next criteria, *transferability*, refers to what extent the findings might be relevant in other contexts or groups (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). According to Bell et al. (2019), the researchers of a qualitative study should be inspired to produce *thick descriptions*,

which is a culture's rich amounts of details. These rich amounts of details are considered as a database to the reader, who decide whether the findings are transferable or not (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). In this study, the main purpose is to explore how retailers reason when they decide where to locate their store, and what factors they consider important. In order to increase the transferability of the study, the focus has been to provide with clear and distinct descriptions of the parts which otherwise would be hard to make credible. It is valuable to give extensive descriptions of selection of participants, the collection of empirical material, and how the material was analyzed. Giving a clear and concise presentation of the findings together with correct and appropriate quotes also strengthens the study's transferability (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Dependability explain to which degree the data is consistent with the study, how data change over time and how the researcher's decisions adapt during the analysis process (Miles, Huberman, Saldaña, 2014; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). When the collection of empirical material extends over a longer period of time and the empirical material are extensive, there is a risk of inconsistency during the research process (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). In this study, there has been open-ended questions in our interview guide, which means that it is important to question the same areas for all the participants. Another problem might be that there are two researchers who conducts the interviews and read the collected material. To eliminate the threat of misinterpretation between the researchers, the transcriptions of the interviews and the coding of the material are being done separately. This is then discussed between the two researchers in order to not miss important answers from the interviews. Dependability is also connected to transparent and dependable record keeping of transcripts, interviews and other important data connected to the research, so that peers would be able to review the material if needed (Bell et al., 2019). The interview transcriptions, codes from the interviews, audio recording from the interviews and all drafts are saved are stored on multiple devices.

Confirmability is concerned with the presumption that the researcher has conducted the study in good faith, and not allowed his or her personal values or own agenda influence the research process or findings (Bell et al., 2019). In this study, the researchers have tried to leave out their personal values and be as objective as possible during the collection and in the analysis of empirical material.

6. FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

As the purpose of this study is to explore how retailers reason when they decide where to locate their store and what factors they consider important, the findings from the interviews with the four different cases are presented to lay the foundation for a discussion. Since we have explored how four different retailers reason, the findings will be presented one case at the time.

6.1 OUTLINE

In the previous chapter it was mentioned that the data analysis was done through a deductive and inductive approach to the empirical material. In this chapter, the findings for each company are presented separately with the statements related to the codes that was generated in the data analysis. The structure of this chapter is the following: First and foremost, the findings associated with the codes from our conceptual model *What builds Retail Attractiveness?* (See Figure 1) are presented, in the same order as the model. The conceptual model consists of four different factors, which are Cluster Effects, Accessibility, Atmosphere and Place Attachment. The first factor is Cluster Effects and the sub-factors include: Comparative Advantages, Tenant mix, and Management & Coordination. The second factor is Accessibility, and the sub-factors include: Parking conditions, Infrastructure, and Transportation. The third factor is Atmosphere and the sub-factors include: Surroundings, Architecture and Ambiance. The fourth and last factor is Place Attachment and the sub-factors include: Emotional Bond, Satisfaction, and Place Identity. Secondly, the generated codes from the inductive analysis are presented together with the statements from the interviews and how the statements and codes are connected. The new factors are Rent, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces.

6.2 EKBERG'S

Ekberg's was the company in this cross-sectional study that decided to stay in the city center and not move or open a new store at C4 Shopping. In the interview with the store owner of Ekberg's, he mentioned that he did not see C4 Shopping as a threat against his own company, and that the real threat was the risk of double establishment of stores in the city center and at C4 Shopping. During our interview with Ekberg's store manager, he said 55 phrases associated to Retail Attractiveness. Out of these 53 statements, 43 of them that

were coded deductive, which means that we used our conceptual model as a base in the analysis. The other 10 phrases were sorted as Other and categorized as inductive codes.

In the interview with the store owner, he mentioned that the city center of Kristianstad needs to maintain its attractiveness, and for that to happen “both the non-retail and retail-mix needs to be more complete”. Also, the fact that, quote “the city center is shrinking and becoming more centralized towards Lilla Torg in Kristianstad”, is something that he deems positive for retailers in the city center. These statements can be connected to what Teller (2008) and Teller and Elms (2012) write about cluster effects and the concept of co-opetition. By having a mix of stores, non-retail and retail, that work with each other lead to cluster effects within an agglomeration, and Comparative Advantages for retailers in the agglomeration (Nelson, 1958; Ghosh, 1986; Teller, 2008; Teller & Elms, 2012, Teller et al., 2012). The store owner mentioned that Ekberg’s and several other stores in an association called “Handelsföreningen”, together with the municipality and other real estate owners, “deposit money in something called Handelsstaden”. According to the store owner, Handelsstaden contribute to strengthen and develop the attractiveness of the city center, which means that stores that compete over consumers also work together to increase the attractiveness of the city center. This co-opetition between retailers leads to Comparative Advantages towards other retailers that is not located in the city center (Howard, 1997; Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1996).

Ekberg’s store owner also mentions that “in some ways events are needed”, and that “small arrangements is probably the best, that there are some activities in every corner”. Furthermore, he adds that, Handelsstaden and the city center retailers do arrange activities and events at times. This can be connected to the Management & Coordination factor in the conceptual model in terms of how an evolved agglomeration can be coordinated by Town Centre Management (e.g. Handelsföreningen) to develop the overall attractiveness and provide with strategic contributions of a city center (Warnaby & Medway, 2004; McAteer & Stephens, 2011).

When asking the store owner of Ekberg’s about what he preferred with having his store located in the city center, he mentioned *opening hours* several times. This can also be connected to Management & Coordination. If Ekberg’s would have been located at C4

Shopping, they would be controlled by C4 Shopping's opening hours from 10am to 8pm. Baker (2002) says that consistent opening hours is a driver that centralized management implement in a created agglomeration (e.g. C4 Shopping) in order to attract consumers. The store owner said that "the opening hours to 8 in the evening is not sustainable", which made it clear that independence in terms of opening hours was of great importance.

Ekberg's owner also said that "you are extremely controlled by their activities and things like that", referring to the management of C4 Shopping. He thinks that activities are something store owners should be able to decide when, what and how they arrange, and independence was key in his reasoning. This is connected to the Management & Coordination factor, because according to Teller and Elms (2010) evolved agglomerations (e.g. city center) are not operated in the same way as created agglomeration (e.g. C4 Shopping). The centralized management in a created agglomeration form contractual relationships with tenants, which gives them the power to control and execute measures that attract consumers and, in the long run, enable success for both tenants and the agglomeration (Teller & Elms 2010; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). This supports what Ekberg's owner says about C4 Shopping, and you are controlled and not free to decide on your own. Throughout the interview, it became clear that not being in control of certain things were a major factor of the decision to stay, being pronounced several times. In our model, Management & Coordination is regarded as something that enhance Retail Attractiveness. However, in this case it is obvious that it may not be the case for all retailers.

The second factor in our conceptual model was Accessibility, which also have three sub-factors: *Parking-conditions*, *Infrastructure* and *Transportation*. When discussing the city center versus C4 Shopping, Ekberg's owner mentioned several times that their store in the city needs to be easily accessible in order to attract customers. He says that "a prerequisite for staying in the city center is to organize the inflow of cars and the parking conditions", which indicates that he thinks there is room for improvement in that area, which can be linked to what Teller (2008) says about accessibility and evolved agglomerations. Teller (2008), mention that accessibility and parking conditions is a disadvantage for the evolved agglomeration because it is not considered and planned for in the same way as in the created agglomeration. He also mentions that the public transportations of getting to Kristianstad is not working, and that "[the car] as a mean of transport will be very important". This is

also mentioned by Baker (2002), who says that cars have become one of the most important means of transportation for consumers.

The store owner stresses that the transportation by car in combination with a city center that is easily accessible and has good parking conditions is very important for his store. However, when talking about accessibility during the interview he mentions C4 Shopping and that they have free parking and wide parking lots and comments this with “Well, yes that is your strength” in a sarcastic way. As mentioned earlier, one strength of a created agglomeration is that the accessibility and parking conditions are considered and planned for, in contrast to the evolved agglomeration (Teller & Elms, 2012; Teller, 2008; Van der Waerden et al., 1998). It becomes contradictory by sarcastically saying that free parking and wide parking lots are a strength for C4 Shopping, and at the same time mention that a prerequisite for staying in the city center is that the parking conditions need to be improved.

The third factor in our conceptual model was Atmosphere, which also has three sub-factors: *Surroundings*, *Architecture*, and *Ambiance*. When asking questions about what he thinks are the benefits with a city center, the store owner of Ekberg’s touches the concept of atmosphere. He says that “the city center has this cozy ambiance, the after-work and this thing”. This is associated with the factor *Surroundings* in our conceptual model, which means that the surroundings of a store have a positive effect on pleasure and arousal for consumers (De Nisco & Warnaby, 2014). Moreover, the store owner also talked about “the environment and to be here in a city”, which also can be connected to the surroundings of the store. Together with this, he also mentioned that the city and the city center have “the culture around us. We have Naturum, the church, the house of culture and there are activities in the evenings”. According to De Nisco and Warnaby (2014), the esthetic design of urban facilities, architecture, affects pleasure for consumers which is the effects of the external atmosphere that has an impact on shopping behavior. All these factors that the store owner of Ekberg’s mentions contribute to the effects of the external atmosphere that in the end affects consumer behavior.

The store owner of Ekberg’s also said that “there is no culture at C4 Shopping” and “there is nothing that attracts besides the products”, referring to C4 Shopping. This indicates that he thinks that atmosphere, with the architecture and culture of the city center, is important

for the attractiveness of the city center, and something that C4 Shopping lacks. The last sub-factor in our conceptual model was *Ambiance* which was the one factor that Ekberg's store owner did not touch upon. *Ambiance* concerns the atmosphere of the store as such, such as the physical layout and architecture (Shukla & Babin, 2013), but this is something that the store owner did not mention during the interview.

The fourth factor in our conceptual model was *Place Attachment*, which is the close connection between individuals and a specific environmental setting, and it is an important factor for *Retail Attractiveness*. *Place Attachment* also has three sub-factors: *Emotional Bond*, *Satisfaction* and *Place Identity*. In the interview with the store owner of Ekberg's, he says that "Our competitive advantage... And that we are located at the very best location in town." Associated with this is the *Emotional Bond* an individual can have with a certain place, and in this case the store owner of Ekberg's has an *Emotional Bond* with the city center in Kristianstad and his own store. However, the store owner of Ekberg's did not mention the two last sub-factors.

The next factor was not from our conceptual model, instead it was a factor that we created from our empirical material. The factor, or code, is *Rent* and is something that the retailers consider when deciding where to locate their store. In the interview, the store owner talks about why city centers are shrinking, and where he means that the reason is because a lot of areas are being put together in order to save money. He says that, concerning Ekberg's, "Our two biggest costs that we can affect ourselves are the personnel and the rents". He goes on by saying that "advantage towards C4 Shopping is that we can negotiate about the rent in the city center". This indicates that *Rent* is an important factor for the store owner of Ekberg's. He also mentions that bigger retail chains, such as H&M, have "turnover-based rent... 6 percent of their turnover in rent" and that "They need to be there. If H&M does not come to a shopping mall, then no one else will either". Considering this, we can assume that *Rent* is something that Ekberg's can affect while being in the city center, but not at C4 Shopping.

Another factor that we created from our empirical material was *Safety*, which means that there are differences between the city center and C4 Shopping in terms of how safe the environment is. The store owner of Ekberg's mentions this during the interview, where he

says that “I believe that mother and daughter together with younger children are most frequent at the shopping malls. That is something that we have noticed in the city center, that it is the families that departs”. The store owner of Ekberg’s argues for this by saying “It is easy to walk with children at a shopping mall. There is no risk with cars or cyclists at a shopping mall.”, which means that he thinks C4 Shopping attracts families because it has a safer environment than in the city center.

The last factor that we created from our empirical material was *Proximity to Workplaces*, which means that the location of the store is in proximity to banks, the municipality, (i.e. there are a lot of people in motion where the store is located). The store owner of Ekberg’s stress that one advantage of being in the city center versus C4 Shopping is because “there is always a certain mass of people that works here”. For him this is an advantage, because he goes on by saying that they “have it naturally and walk around in the city center shopping spontaneously”. There are several different businesses in the Kristianstad city center, and by having people that work in proximity to retailers is an advantage and something the store owner of Ekberg’s values. He also adds that “a lot of people have an errand to get into the city”, which also means that there are a lot of people in motion that could possibly visit Ekberg’s as well.

6.3 CAFÉ HANNOTT’S

Café Hannott’s is one of the companies that was newly opened when C4 Shopping was established, and the company in this cross-sectional study that decided to open at C4 Shopping instead of the city center. In order to understand how the decision was taken, two interviews were held with two of the store owners. From these two interviews, 65 statements were found that was associated with Retail Attractiveness. 46 of these statements were coded deductive, which means that we used our conceptual model as a base in our analysis. The other 19 codes were coded as Other.

In the interviews, both owners mentioned that they are not located inside C4 Shopping, but outside the north entrance. Because of this, they mentioned that “We have the opportunity to keep open at evening hours”, which means that they are not controlled by the opening hours of C4 Shopping. This can be connected to the Management & Coordination factor in our conceptual model, where Teller and Elms (2010) mention that the centralized

organization unit in an agglomeration coordinates the tenants within the agglomeration, where Café Hannott's is a tenant. Although, consistent opening hours (Baker, 2002) which also is associated with how an agglomeration is managed and coordinated, is something that Café Hannott's is not affected by. Even if Café Hannott's is located at C4 Shopping, they are not controlled by C4 Shopping in the same way as other tenants because of their location just outside. According to the owners of Café Hannott's, they "see this as an advantage (for us)" and something that they value. However, the owners of Café Hannott's also say that "It is a major threat for us" because it is harder for consumers to find their store.

When answering the question why they think retailers choose the shopping mall over the city center, they mention that "When they make a shopping trip, they want everything at one place. It should take as little time as possible", which is in line with what Nelson (1958) says about cumulative attraction and that stores close to each other will do more business. The owners of Café Hannott's say that "Here you have everything, grocery store, movie-rental and some fast coffee", which is supported by Teller and Schnedlitz (2012) who say that the effects from the cluster (C4 Shopping) lead to Comparative Advantages for the tenants within the agglomeration. Also, the fact that the tenant mix of an agglomeration is an important factor when it comes to making central places more attractive (Teller & Reutterer, 2008) seems to be of importance for the owners of Café Hannott's. The owners mentioned that "I do not know if it works with a café in the city center. There is already a lot of cafés as it is.". This indicates that they chose C4 Shopping over the city center because the owners felt that they would not be redundant at C4 Shopping. By being located at C4 Shopping, Café Hannott's benefits from nearby retail and non-retail stores. The effects that comes with being located there and close to other retail and non-retail stores is one of the reasons why they chose C4 Shopping.

The store owners of Café Hannott's also talk about the benefits of being located at C4 Shopping in terms of activities and lectures produced by the management of C4 Shopping. They mention that "There is a strong solidarity at C4" and "They have these meetings with store managers and lectures, and there are educations you can attend ". This is also a part of what the Management & Coordination of a created agglomeration do in order to help tenants succeed (Teller & Elms, 2010; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). The store owners say

that it is a factor that “it is very useful to receive that type of help.”, even if the store owners of Café Hannott’s also say that they “do our own thing instead.”. In this case the help from the management of C4 Shopping is available, but something that the store owners of Café Hannott’s did not consider when they decided where to locate their store.

When asked about accessibility and parking conditions and if the two store owners considered that when they chose where to locate their store, they said that “Yes, we did, absolutely. The buses arrive here outside, to our advantage every 5-10 mins, so absolutely”, which indicate that they considered it in their decision-making process. Teller and Elms (2010) argues for this as well, saying that other means of transportation, such as public transportation, is also an important aspect for retailers in order to make the store accessible to as many consumers as possible. They also mentioned that “parking conditions and accessibility are important”, which are relevant factors that retailers take in consideration when deciding where to open their stores (Reimer & Clulow, 2004, 2009; Teller & Elms, 2012). However, the store owners of Café Hannott’s also mention that “We are located at some distance from the parking lot and we discussed if it would be an disadvantage for us, and we have noticed that it have been.”, which means that the location of their store affects them in terms of accessibility. According to Teller and Elms (2012), Accessibility is the factor that characterize how a place can be reached, where Infrastructure is a part of this. Because of their location at the north entrance of C4 Shopping, the owners of Café Hannott’s feel that “we maybe lose those that are only here for a day to shop, because they cannot find us”, which could be seen as an obstacle for consumers in their way to locate the store. It seems that Café Hannott’s see their location outside of C4 Shopping as both an advantage and a disadvantage.

According to the owners of Café Hannott’s, they care a lot about the layout of their store and “especially the open-air café, there we have invested in some new furniture” when discussing what their strength was. They also mentioned “and we invest a lot in the atmosphere and the decor”, which can be connected to how they want their surroundings to be attractive for the consumers. This is also stated by Bellizzi et al. (1983) who says that the surroundings and layout of a store are of great importance for the consumers likeliness to visit and revisit a store. The store owners also say that “environment also, it is a bit different than the cafes inside C4, a bit calmer... and found our own little niche”, which

means that they have had their focus on being a bit different to attract consumers. This can be connected what Shukla and Babin (2013) say about ambiance. Shukla and Babin (2013) say that atmospheric factors such as physical layout, architecture, smell, lightning and music affects the shopping behavior of consumers. Even if the store owners of Café Hannott's might not see ambiance as a decisive factor for choosing their store location, they put a lot of effort into making their store and the surrounding atmosphere attractive.

During the interviews, none of the two store owners of Café Hannott's mentioned something that had to do with place attachment concerning the decision to locate their store at C4 Shopping. Although, in the interview with one of the store owners, she mentions that "the city center has changed in an unfortunate way" and that "Kristianstad has been called for Little Paris and that suited it perfectly". She continues with saying that "since I love Kristianstad, I would like to open one more in the city center". It seems like one of the store owners at Café Hannott's has an Emotional Bond to the city of Kristianstad, and that she is sad over the fact that it has changed so much over the years. Place Attachment can be described as people having a strong emotional bond with a certain place (Brocat et al., 2015), and this fits well with how the store owner feels about Kristianstad. However, the store owners chose to open their store at C4 Shopping and not in the city center. The other two sub-factors under place attachment in our conceptual model, Satisfaction and Place Identity, were not mentioned during the interviews.

There was one factor that the store owners of Café Hannott's mentioned that was of great importance in their decision making of where to locate their store, which was Rent. The store owners say that "and I did not dare to be in the city center because of the high rents" and "So I think that it is basically too expensive to be in the city center". This indicates that one of the main reasons for choosing C4 Shopping over the city center was because of the rents, and that was something that the store owners of Café Hannott's considered when they decided where to locate their store. They also said that "shopping malls are not cheaper but there are more people", meaning that the rent may not be lower at C4 Shopping but that there are more consumers, which weighs up the costs of rent.

Another factor the store owners of Café Hannott's touched upon was Proximity to workplaces. When talking about the negative aspects of being located at C4 Shopping, they

mentioned that “it is mostly the spontaneous shoppers that we lose”, which is a negative factor of their current location. Because, according to the store owners “people only go there to shop” when talking about C4 Shopping, which entails that spontaneous shopping does not exist in the same. The proximity to workplaces in the city center lead to more spontaneous shopping, which also one of the store owners state with “not this spontaneous customer that passes by”. They also mention that “I think that there are always people in the city center, I get that feeling, you have the students in another way, here it is more weekend shopping”. The answers from the store owners of Café Hannott’s indicate that they see proximity to workplaces as an important factor and something that they lack at their current location. The owners of Café Hannott’s did not mention the factor Safety during the interviews.

6.4 GERDA’S

When C4 Shopping established, Gerda’s decided to move from the city center to become a tenant at the shopping mall. In order to understand how the decision was taken an interview was held with the franchisee of the store. As explained in the Data Analysis, phrases and words from the interview related to Retail Attractiveness was coded into four categories from the conceptual model. In this interview, 25 phrases were considered as things that build Retail Attractiveness. Of these 25 phrases, 20 could be coded in a deductive way, the other 5 were coded as Other.

During the first part of the interview, focus was on the unique concept of Gerda’s and how the brand was managed in terms of coordination between the stores, and the independence of the franchisee. Although this was interesting in order to understand how the decisions were taken, it did not touch upon our subject due to the lack of connection to Retail Attractiveness. Unfortunately, we did not realize this until after the interview which lead to that approximately ten minutes could not be used to answer our research question.

However, the first phrase that could be connected to the research question was in an answer to whether C4 Shopping would affect the city center negatively. “a lot of people are of the opinion that *commerce brings more commerce*. And if we build this (C4 Shopping) it will attract more people to Kristianstad.” Even though this is not treated as a decisive factor of where to locate the store, cluster effects are considered by the management of Gerda’s.

Based on the Conceptual model, cluster effects should be a decisive factor due to that *commerce brings more commerce*, or so at least is argued by several researchers (Yim Yiu & Xu, 2012; Dennis et al., 2008; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). However, in this specific example, cluster effects were referred to as to the entire city of Kristianstad, meaning that several retail clusters that is in proximity could take advantage of cluster effects. This is supported by Riley's *Law of Retail Gravitation* (1931), and it is interesting that Gerda's franchisee mentioned it as a positive effect of the C4 Shopping establishment. Nevertheless, this do not connect directly to the research question of why retailers prefer out-of-town shopping malls rather than city centers, or vice versa. Though, it does answer what factors retailers consider important when deciding where to locate their store. In this case, cluster effects such as that large retail clusters attract more people, is important for Gerda's.

On the question of whether the interviewee prefer to shop in the city center or at a shopping center, she states that "it is two different types of shopping. In the city center you stroll around and find the unique stores". This led to an amplification about how tenant mix generally were "stereotypical" in many shopping centers, which was expressed as something boring. This can be connected to tenant mix, and researchers argue that a good tenant mix increase consumers perception of how big a retail cluster is (Teller & Reutterer, 2008; Yim Yiu & Xu, 2012). According to Yim Yiu and Xu (2012), a retail agglomeration must live up to the consumers' threshold limits, which imply that consumers weight the distance to the retail clusters against the value that cluster brings them. In this case, the franchisee of Gerda's thought that a *stereotypical* tenant mix was not as attractive as a tenant mix that involve unique stores. The franchisee of Gerda's spoke about *Cluster Effects* in several ways, both in terms of *Cluster Effects* (commerce brings more commerce), and *Tenant Mix*. However, she did not touch upon the sub-factor *Management & Coordination*, at least she did not express it directly.

Furthermore, the interviewee of Gerda's mentioned a couple of other phrases concerning perks with retail clusters. The first reason was the cause of going to a shopping agglomeration, where many people stroll in the city center and therefore may not shop, which contrasts with a shopping mall where people go to shop. Additionally, she said that people prefer "everything under the same roof", because of changed shopping behavior. The franchisee explained changed shopping behavior as that people are more stressed today

and that they therefore appreciate when shopping takes minimal time. This can be connected both to Cluster Effects and Accessibility in terms of just having to park once, and to easily find a parking spot in close range of the stores.

Speaking of Accessibility, the interviewee expressed the importance of accessibility several times. Although, apart from when speaking of the lack of accessibility in the city center, most of the collected codes were expressed on the direct question of whether Accessibility was an important factor in their location decision. On the answer to that question the interviewee argued that the accessibility at C4 Shopping was significantly better than the accessibility in the city center. According to her, a lot of people were discontent of the parking situation in the city center, where the multistory car park in connection to Galleria Boulevard have been criticized for bad structure and too tight parking spots. Furthermore, construction and reconstruction work have been ever present in the city center the last couple of years, hindering consumers and deteriorating the environment. The interviewee added that C4 Shopping have created “wide parking lots, which I believe was brilliant.” and by having public transportation in close range of the shopping center, which have deleted the negative thoughts of the place. This is also supported as an important factor by several researchers (Van der Waerden et al., 1998; Ruiz et al., 2004). To summarize Accessibility, the interviewee mentioned all sub-factors in the conceptual model; *Parking Conditions*, *Infrastructure*, and *Transportation*.

Another factor from our conceptual model that the interviewee spoke about was atmosphere. Even though the word “atmosphere” was not expressed, the interviewee often flared out and described atmospheric traits such as *people in motion*, *walk and relax*, and *the charm*. According to the franchisee, it is important that there are people in motion, and it is also important that the retail cluster that Gerda’s is located at attract more people than only the customers of the shop. This can be proved through the interviewee’s quotes about events. “It [Events] is very important”, “It is important to have events, and not only to have them on the weekends, but to have them on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays when there are not much people here”. She also said that “then of course it cannot look like a dump outside, because that would remove all the charm”, which indicates that she considers the surroundings of the store. These quotes, together with what was mentioned earlier, show that the interviewee of Gerda’s puts significance in the atmosphere to be vibrant, and that

there is a lot of people outside the store. Additionally, our perception of the interviewee's answers related to Atmosphere, is that it can be treated as a decisive factor in the decision to move to C4 Shopping. In terms of sub-factors, the interviewee touched upon Surroundings and Architecture, but were most concerned with the Ambiance of the place.

In terms of Place Attachment, the franchisees of Gerda's has lived in the municipality since 2001 and argued that the city center has changed a lot since she first came. Even though she expressed the reconstruction of the city in a negative way, she did not elaborate on the Emotional Bond with the former structure of the city center. Instead, she proceeded to explain that the establishment of C4 Shopping is a possibility for Kristianstad to develop in a positive way. However, as interviewers, we interpret a disappointment of the way the interviewee talks about the development in the Kristianstad city center. Therefore, we interpret place attachment in terms of *Emotional Bond* to a place. Also, the lack of *Satisfaction* might have been involved in the decision to move to C4 Shopping. This can be connected to Inch and Florek (2008), who state that there is a strong correlation between attachment and satisfaction, and that the satisfaction of a certain place could potentially lead to attachment.

Another thing the interview said was that some people boycott C4 Shopping because they are scared that it will hurt the city center. The franchisee of Gerda's said that she partly understands their reaction, but that she does not agree that it is a reasonable reaction. To summarize Place Attachment, the interviewee spoke about the Emotional Bond to a place. We interpret that the satisfaction also was a decisive sub-factor of Place Attachment. Furthermore, the interviewee's observation of people that boycott C4 Shopping display that she understands Place Identity. However, Place Identity seems to be a marginalized factor in the store location decision.

The three inductive codes that we formed in Structure in this chapter were *Rent*, *Safety*, and *Proximity to Workplaces*. Out of these factors the franchisee of Gerda's did not speak about neither Rent nor Safety. However, she did touch upon Proximity to Workplaces, quote "a lot of people that work in the city center shops in the city center". Furthermore, as this quote is a contradiction to Gerda's store location, Proximity to Workplaces was probably treated as minor factor in the store location decision.

6.5 SANDELIN'S

When C4 Shopping was built in Kristianstad, Sandelin's choose to double up and open another store beside their store in the city center. To understand how the management of Sandelin's reasoned, an interview with the owner was done. In the interview 23 phrases were coded into the deductive factors, whereas 9 were coded as Other. As written in Empirical Method, the empirical material consisted of 15 minutes of interview, and approximately 80 minutes of presentation. The interviewee mentioned something about every main factor in the conceptual framework in the interview. However, several sub-factors were discussed in the presentation, and in this chapter the presentation will be referred to with footnotes.

As the store owner of Sandelin's also is the chairman of the board at C4 Shopping, the discussion of retail attractiveness was held on a rather general level. Nevertheless, the store owner discussed factors of retail attractiveness at times. In terms of cluster effects, the codes collected had to do with *Comparative Advantages* and *Management & Coordination*. On the question on what pros and cons there are to be located at a shopping center or in the city center, the interviewee said that "the pros with being at a shopping mall is that you are protected from the weather and that *everything is gathered* in a good way. You have the safety of the guards, *the same opening hours and joint marketing*". Due to time pressure in the interview, the interviewee did not elaborate more on cluster effects. As interviewers, we interpret that the interviewee considered these factors as of great importance to retail attractiveness. Cluster Effects are widely recognized as important attract consumers (Nelson, 1958; Ghosh, 1986; Oppewal & Holyoake, 2004; Howard, 1997; Teller et al., 2008). "Everything is gathered..." can be connected to *Comparative Advantages*, and "in a good way" can potentially be connected to *Tenant Mix* and will be further discussed below.

In terms of *Management & Coordination*, the interviewee's position as chairman of C4 Shopping might have played a part. Nevertheless, results of Management & Coordination were, as displayed in the previous paragraph, expressed as something that is important for retail attractiveness. This is also supported in existing literature, where Teller and Elms (2010) argue that centralized coordination increase retail attractiveness with drivers as consistent opening hours (Baker, 2002), and the ways of marketing and promotion (Teller & Elms, 2010). In terms of tenant mix, the owner of Sandelin's discussed the matter in his

presentation about the C4 Shopping². It was obvious that he had knowledge of the subject, and he explained how C4 Shopping, with him involved worked in order to create an attractive tenant mix, and a layout that was optimized to suit shopping behavior. For example, he mentioned that the supermarket was located closest to the parking lot, and that clothes stores were located in proximity to each other. To summarize cluster effects, the owner of Sandelin's considered all sub-factors despite a rather short interview.

The second factor in the conceptual model, Accessibility, was also discussed by the interviewee. However, most of his focus were on the parking situation in the city center, where the Parking Conditions have worsened significantly during the last couple of decades. He continues with arguing that the intention to reduce the number of cars in the city center were reasonable from an environmental perspective, although it did not match with the ambition to increase the city center shopping. Even though he does not speak of Accessibility as a positive factor of C4 Shopping, we interpret that the large parking lot with extra wide parking spaces at C4 Shopping was the foundation of the criticism towards the city center. In the presentation the interviewee explained that the location of C4 Shopping was ideal due to the proximity of the highway. Proximity to the highway can be connected to the sub-factor Architecture in the conceptual framework, due to that several millions have been invested to create good infrastructure around C4 Shopping. We do not recall the owner of Sandelin's speak about transportation such as buses and roads for pedestrians and cyclists. This might have to do with that transportation like that is present both in the city center and at C4 Shopping. The fact that C4 Shopping have frequent correspondence of buses and roads for pedestrians and cyclist further proves that this type of accessibility was thought of by the management of C4 Shopping.

Atmosphere is the third factor of the conceptual framework and includes the subfactors of *Surroundings*, *Architecture*, and *Ambiance*. During the interview, not much time were spent to discuss this factor, which had to do with the time restraint. However, the interviewee expressed that the atmosphere at a shopping mall and in the city center both had its strengths and weaknesses. Quote, "Then we have the city center, it is our jewel, it is emotional, cozy, and very nice". Even though he regards the city center as very nice, he adds that the Galleria Boulevard deteriorates the environment due to that the *Architecture* is inappropriate in

² Store owner of Sandelin's (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

comparison to the rest of the city center, “it [the Galleria Boulevard building] does not add any good feelings”. Furthermore, he argues that the city center is not built for shopping, whereas C4 Shopping is. According to the interviewee, the atmosphere at C4 Shopping is made for shopping with everything under the same roof, which imply that customers do not have to care about weather conditions. To summarize Atmosphere, the interviewee partly confirmed the conceptual framework and spoke of the Surroundings, Architecture, and Ambiance in the same way as De Nisco and Warnaby (2014). However, he did not consider the atmospheric perks of the city center as something that enhanced consumers’ shopping behavior. Instead he said that the atmosphere should be created in a way that enhance shopping, like protection from the weather, and store layouts that match the retail chains’ requirements².

The fourth and final deductive factor, Place Attachment, was discussed on a general level. The quote about the city center from the previous paragraph, “Then we have the city center, it is our jewel, it is *emotional*, cozy, and very nice”, is applicable on place attachment too. Even though referring to a place as emotional do not necessary mean that the person has an *Emotional Bond* to that place, it is obvious that the interviewee does have an Emotional Bond to the city center. As he explained in the presentation, he has worked as a retailer in Kristianstad for many years, owns a couple of properties, and has been active in Handelsstaden Kristianstad (i.e. the coordination organization of the city center)². This can be proved through the when he expressed his concern with that “visitors in the city center are going down, and down, and down”. However, the catch is that it does not seem as the store owner view C4 Shopping as something that is going to destroy, or kill, the city center. This imply that even though he has an Emotional Bond and place identity with the Kristianstad city center, place attachment did not affect the decision to open another store at C4 Shopping.

The store owner mentioned two of the new factors; Rent and Safety. Interestingly, the interviewee spoke a lot about these factors, probably more than about any of the original factors. In terms of Safety, the interviewee expressed that the situation in the city center was strained for the retailers. Quote, “this insecurity, the fact that you are a bit scared and

² Store owner of Sandelin’s (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

² Store owner of Sandelin’s (Interview, 26th of April 2019)

that it is uncomfortable with gangs being around, and drug dealing takes place openly in the street corners and nobody dares to say anything”. In another part of the interview, he praises that the guards at C4 Shopping is something that build retail attractiveness.

The store owner of Sandelin’s, who also owns some property, spoke about rents in general.

He said that:

when I speak with property owners, there are not a lot of them that understand where the rent come from. They think that it is stores that pay the rent and decide it. But wait, that is not true, it is the customers that do.

This quote insinuates that the rents in the city center are not fair, and that the rents could be lower. The third new code, proximity to workplaces, was not discussed in the interview.

7. DISCUSSION

The findings from the different cases are used to answer the research questions. The findings are compared by discussing one factor at a time and will be presented together with a table of the retailers' quotes concerning each sub-factor. In the final part of this chapter, our conceptual model is revised with the new factors of Retail Attractiveness

7.1 OUTLINE

In the previous chapter, the findings from our interviews were analyzed in each separate case with the help of our conceptual model *What builds Retail Attractiveness?* (See Figure 1). The three new factors that is generated from the empirical material were also discussed as inductive factors. In this chapter we will compare the answers from the different retailers in order to spot differences and similarities in their reasoning of where to locate their store. This is done in order to create a nuanced picture of how each factor affect retail attractiveness, and the comparison will lead to a development of the conceptual model. The comparison between the findings will be presented one factor at a time together with the sub-factors. In the end of each factor, a table is presented that contains relevant quotes from the interviewees.

7.2 CLUSTER EFFECTS

Cluster effects were discussed by all the participants in this study and should be considered as a decisive factor for what builds Retail Attractiveness (See Table 4) The store owner of Ekberg's mentioned that the city center of Kristianstad is becoming more centralized towards Lilla Torg, which he considers as positive for retailers located there. In contrast, the store owners of Café Hannott's say that "here you have everything" when talking about C4 Shopping and that "people want everything at one place". This is also stated by Gerda's, who says that "people prefer to have everything under the same roof" and argues that people go to shopping centers to do only one thing, which is to shop. The store owner of Sandelin's agree with Gerda's, and claims that "the pros with being at a shopping mall is that you are protected from the weather and that everything is gathered in a good way".

Table 4. Summary of findings related to Cluster Effects

Cluster Effects			
Sub-factor	Retailers	No. of quotes	Quote
Comparative Advantages	Ekberg's	10	<i>There will be a redistribution. The city center is shrinking. The north and the south parts are drifting further and further away. You need to have the whole mix.</i>
	Café Hannott's	5	<i>When they go and shop they want all in one. We are located a bit outside of C4</i>
	Gerda's	3	<i>You have everything under the same roof. I am of that opinion, and I know many are, that commerce brings more commerce.</i>
	Sandelin's	1	<i>You have everything gathered in a good way</i>
Tenant Mix	Ekberg's	0	-
	Café Hannott's	1	<i>The winter months in the city center is uncertain if it works with a café. There is already a lot of cafés there</i>
	Gerda's	2	<i>Unfortunately, in the shopping malls you have these stereotypical stores</i>
	Sandelin's	0	-
Management & Coordination	Ekberg's	8	<i>You are extremely controlled by their activities and things and their opening hours. Opening hours are until 8 in the evenings, it is not sustainable</i>
	Café Hannott's	11	<i>We are able to keep open in the evenings. They have these meetings with store managers and lectures, and there are educations you can attend.</i>
	Gerda's	1	<i>It is important to have events, and not only to have them on the weekends, but to have them on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays when there is not much people here.</i>
	Sandelin's	2	<i>Mutual opening hours Joint marketing</i>

7.2.1 Comparative Advantages

In the interview with the owner of Ekberg's, he stressed that the mix of retail and non-retail needs to be more complete, and that the city center is shrinking. He argued that this will benefit retailers in the city center, which results in comparative/competitive advantages for

the retailers in the city center towards others. Café Hannott's **agree** with this, but in the context of C4 Shopping. The owners say that "here you have everything" about C4 Shopping, including both retail and non-retail mix, and that consumers "want everything under the same roof". According to the owners of Café Hannott's this is an important factor and reason for why they chose C4 Shopping. Gerda's owner also mentioned the advantages of having a lot of retailers in proximity to each other. She said "people prefer everything under the same roof" which is one reason for the success of shopping malls. Even if Gerda's owner did not consider the Comparative Advantages that **comes** with being located at C4 Shopping, she still sees it as an advantage for Gerda's as a company. Sandelin's owner said something similar as the other retailers which was "everything is gathered in a good way" when he talked about C4 Shopping and the advantages of being located there. To summarize this sub-factor, it seems like all retailers in this study consider proximity to other stores as a great advantage for their store. The Comparative Advantages that **comes with** being located close to stores that you both compete and cooperate with **is** beneficial for the retailers, and a factor they, at least indirectly for Gerda's and Sandelin's owner, considered when they decided where to locate their store.

7.2.2 Tenant Mix

Besides the quote "the mix of retail and non-retail needs to be more complete", the store owner of Ekberg's did not mention anything particular associated with the advantages of tenant mix. However, it is obvious that he believes that a complete mix of different stores in the city center will benefit retailers in close proximity. The owners of Café Hannott's also mentioned that being located at C4 Shopping and close to other retailers is a great advantage for them. They said that there were already so many cafés in the city center, which indicate that they supplemented the mix of retailers at C4 Shopping better. In contrast to this, Gerda's talked about tenant mix as something stereotypical in shopping centers. She said that it is easier to find "unique stores" in the city center than at a shopping center. With this said, we concluded that the owner of Gerda's did not regard tenant mix as a decisive factor in the decision of where to locate the store at C4 Shopping. The owner of Sandelin's did not either mention tenant mix as something important for the decision to locate another store at C4 Shopping. However, he did mention in his presentation (as a person involved in the development of C4 Shopping) that the management focused on to create a tenant mix and layout of stores that made C4 Shopping attractive for consumers. Considering this, tenant mix seemed to be an important factor when deciding that another Sandelin's store

should open at C4 Shopping. To summarize, the owners of Café Hannott's, Ekberg's and Sandelin's considered tenant mix as an important part in the decision of the store's location.

7.2.3 Management & Coordination

In the interviews with the retailers, they all mentioned factors that are associated with Management & Coordination. Ekberg's, Café Hannott's and Sandelin's mentioned that opening hours are of great importance and one main reason to why they are located where they are today. Ekberg's stressed that the independence of being able to control and coordinate their business on their own in the city center was an important factor, which is not in accordance with what Teller and Elms (2010) say about retailers being controlled by the Management & Coordination of an agglomeration. In the same way as Ekberg's, Café Hannott's are satisfied with their location at C4 Shopping because they can have longer opening hours than the shopping center itself. In this way they are not controlled in the same manner as other retailers at C4 Shopping. Different from Café Hannott's and Ekberg's, the owner of Sandelin's mentions that having mutual opening hours at C4 Shopping is an advantage compared to the city center. Gerda's did not mention opening hours at all, which could be because the store has already been located at another shopping mall, Galleria Boulevard, which also has mutual opening hours. Ekberg's and Café Hannott's also mentioned that events and activities are important for their business. Ekberg's owner said that "Handelsstaden", the organization in the city center, usually organize events and activities in the city, which positively affects the retailers. Café Hannott's mention that the solidarity at C4 Shopping is great, and that the management offers a wide range of activities for the retailers located there, such as lectures and educations for the store managers. To summarize, Management & Coordination are not touched upon by all the retailers but seems to be very important for Ekberg's and Café Hannott's and was considered in the localization process.

7.3 ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility was discussed by all retailers in one way or another (See Table 5). Regarding the empirical material collected, Accessibility should be considered as a decisive factor when it comes to retail attractiveness. Most of the discussions were about parking conditions, and all retailers argued that the parking situation in the city center is not good. Nevertheless, infrastructure and transportation were also discussed by most of the interviewees.

Table 5. Summary of findings related to Accessibility

Accessibility			
Sub-factors	Retailers	No. of quotes	Quote
Parking Conditions	Ekberg's	3	<i>a prerequisite for staying in the city center is to organize the the parking conditions.</i>
	Café Hannott's	3	<i>Here are plenty of parking lots. Sure, parking conditions and accessibility are important.</i>
	Gerda's	2	<i>You now have extra wide parking lots, which I think was brilliant, incredibly well thought out.</i>
	Sandelin's	2	<i>The capacity has become much lower. The changing conditions of parking in the city center especially considering Galleria Boulevard, has led to the removal of 700 parking lots that was intended for sidewalks.</i>
Infrastructure	Ekberg's	1	<i>A prerequisite for staying in the city center is to organize the inflow and structure, the parking conditions and such things.</i>
	Café Hannott's	5	<i>That the consumers do not find us, that has been a problem. People cannot really find us. It is a major threat for us.</i>
	Gerda's	1	<i>Because in some periods, you have not even been able to walk in the city center.</i>
	Sandelin's	4	<i>There has been a big structural change</i>
Transportation	Ekberg's	5	<i>Unfortunately, the communications (public transportation) does not work. Partly because it is by train and it is easy.</i>
	Café Hannott's	2	<i>Yes, we did absolutely, the buses arrive just outside, to our advantage every fifth to tenth minute, so absolutely. (if they considered Accessibility)</i>

Gerda's	4	<i>It is really good communications here, I think it leaves every fourth or seventh minute, the bus goes all the way to the entrance so that is really good. Not everyone has the opportunity to get here by car.</i>
Sandelin's	0	-

7.3.1 Parking Conditions

All retailers considered parking conditions as a factor of retail attractiveness. Parking conditions can be confirmed as a relevant factor when it comes to where retailers decide to locate their store and why some retailers choose to be located at an out-of-town shopping mall instead of the city center. The store owner of Ekberg's spoke ironically about that C4 Shopping's value proposition is that they have extra wide parking lots. However, the extra wide parking lots was mentioned by the interviewee at Gerda's as something that shifted focus from parking problems, to the other things. Parking conditions were also discussed by both the interviewees at Café Hannott's, who noted that the long distance to the parking lot was a negative factor for them, and that they saw it as a threat not being in proximity to the parking lot. The owner of Sandelin's also discussed parking conditions and focused to describe the problems in the city center. To summarize, the retailers located at C4 Shopping put great importance to the parking conditions. Furthermore, the owner of Ekberg's said that parking conditions in the city center were important; however, he did not speak about parking conditions as much as accessibility in general. With this said, parking conditions are widely considered by retailers.

7.3.2 Infrastructure

Infrastructure may be a vague term and difficult to connect to a specific phrase or standpoint expressed by the interviewee. However, many of the retailers discussed accessibility and more specified: that the store should be easily accessible. In the Literature review, infrastructure was discussed as roadblocks and traffic jams. In the conceptual framework this was expressed as it is important that there are no obstacles to get to the retail cluster. The owner of Ekberg's did mention that "a prerequisite for staying in the city center is to organize the inflow of cars and the parking conditions". This is the only phrase that directly can be connected to infrastructure, except one argument from Gerda's, where the interviewee argued that people could not move in the city center at times due to

reconstruction. A reason for this can be that Kristianstad is a rather small city and that traffic jams and roadblocks are uncommon. To summarize, Infrastructure was not discussed as a real factor of Retail Attractiveness by any of the retailers. However, several terms can be connected to general accessibility.

7.3.3 Transportation

The sub-factor of transportation includes public transportation, bikers, and pedestrians. Public transportation was mentioned by Ekberg's, Café Hannott's, and Gerda's, whereas the owner of Sandelin's did not mention it. However, as discussed in Findings & Analysis, public transportation together with roads for bikers and pedestrians was considered when C4 Shopping established, which the owner of Sandelin's was involved in. The owner of Ekberg's argued that Emporia (a shopping mall in Malmö) has a great advantage due to proximity to a train station. This can be connected to that the train station in Kristianstad is in proximity to the city center, where Ekberg's is located. Furthermore, both Gerda's and one of the interviewees at Café Hannott's mentioned that the frequent bus service to C4 Shopping was a great advantage. The interviewee from Gerda's also added that other means of transportation is important to attract consumers who do not have the possibility to travel by car. The likes of bikers and pedestrians was not discussed to any notable extension. This might be due to that retailers at C4 Shopping do not consider bikers and pedestrians as plausible means of transportation given that C4 Shopping is located a couple of kilometers from the city center. Likewise, the owner of Ekberg's neither mentioned bikers nor pedestrians. This might infer that he takes it for granted as Ekberg's is located in the city center where many walks or ride a bike to move around. To summarize, transportation was mostly discussed in terms of public transportation like train and bus.

7.4 ATMOSPHERE

Atmosphere was discussed by all retailers in one way or another (See Table 6). In the interviews with the retailers it became clear that Atmosphere is a decisive factor when it comes to Retail Attractiveness. Ekberg's mentioned that the atmosphere was an advantage of being in the city center, while Café Hannott's said that they are satisfied with their location just outside of C4 Shopping because the environment is a bit calmer. Gerda's argued that the environment surrounding her store was of great importance, meaning that C4 Shopping needed to be attractive in order to attract consumers to her shop. The owner

of Sandelin's said that the atmosphere in the city center and at C4 Shopping had both its strength and weaknesses.

Table 6. Summary of findings related to Atmosphere

Atmosphere			
Sub-factor	Retailers	No. of quotes	Quote
Surroundings	Ekberg's	5	<i>The city center has this cozy, the after-work and this thing. The environment and to be here in a city.</i>
	Café Hannott's	4	<i>And we invest a lot in the atmosphere and the décor. Especially the open-air café, there we have invested in some new furniture.</i>
	Gerda's	3	<i>Then of course it cannot look like a dump outside, because that would remove all the charm.</i>
	Sandelin's	3	<i>Then we have the city center, it is our jewel, it is emotional, cozy, and very nice.</i>
Architecture	Ekberg's	4	<i>We have Naturum, a church, house of culture, there are events in the evenings.</i>
	Café Hannott's	0	-
	Gerda's	0	-
	Sandelin's	1	<i>[about Galleria Boulevard] it becomes counterproductive for the city center, because it does not add any good feelings.</i>
Ambiance	Ekberg's	2	<i>Some stores at a shopping mall does not even see daylight.</i>
	Café Hannott's	9	<i>The environment as well, it is a bit different than the cafés inside C4, a bit calmer and we have decorated ourselves and found our own niche.</i>
	Gerda's	2	<i>And by having a lot of people that moves around here, and that there are events here at C4.</i>
	Sandelin's	0	-

7.4.1 Surroundings

Ekberg's mentioned that the benefits with the city center is this cozy feeling with the after-work, but also the environment with being in a city. Café Hannott's store owners said that they have "invested a lot in the atmosphere and decor" and considered their new open-air café as their strength. This indicates that the surroundings of their store matter a lot to them, especially since they are located just outside C4 Shopping and have other conditions than the retailers located inside C4 Shopping. On the contrary, Gerda's did not mention a lot about the surroundings of the store but mentioned that C4 Shopping needs to be attractive in order to attract people to her store. Considering that the store is located inside C4 Shopping, she cannot affect the atmosphere surrounding the store in the same way as Café Hannott's or Ekberg's. In addition to what Ekberg's said, the owner of Sandelin's said that the city center is a "jewel", it is emotional, cozy and very nice, in opposite to C4 Shopping which is made for shopping with everything under the same roof. This indicated that he regards the atmosphere in the city center to be an advantage while C4 Shopping is in fact a shopping center. To conclude, the surroundings of the store are considered by the store owners of Ekberg's and Café Hannott's, while Gerda's and Sandelin's mentions the subject but do not go into detail whether it would be decisive factor for the location of their store.

7.4.2 Architecture

The architecture in the city center was something that the store owner of Ekberg's saw as an advantage by being located in the city center. By having a church, Naturum (Water-kingdom Kristianstad), and a house of culture, he says that Ekberg's has the culture around them and that is an indication that the Architecture is important to heighten the attractiveness of the city center. In contrast to Ekberg's, Café Hannott's owners do not mention the Architecture as an important factor for their location. This might be because of the fact that they are located at a shopping center and that C4 Shopping is the only building that is associated with Hannott's. Neither did Gerda's store owner mention the Architecture as an important factor for the location of the store, perhaps because of the same reasons as the owners of Café Hannott's. Sandelin's owner did mention that the city center was very nice and cozy but points out that the construction of Galleria Boulevard deteriorates the environment and does not add any good feelings, where he argues that the attractiveness of the remaining city center is affected negative as well. Moreover, he says that the city center is not built for shopping, but C4 Shopping is. This leads to assumption that he considers the Architecture as an important factor to maintain the attractiveness of

the city center, just like the store owner of Ekberg's. To summarize, Ekberg's and Sandelin's owners find Architecture as an important factor for retail attractiveness.

7.4.3 Ambiance

Café Hannott's have invested a lot in becoming different from the other cafés at C4 Shopping. They say that the environment is a bit different and calmer than inside C4 Shopping, and that they have found their own little niche at the location of their store. According to the owner, they have put a lot of effort in the layout of their store in order to attract consumers, which is what Shukla and Babin (2013) say about the ambiance with a store. In contrast to this, Ekberg's store owner did not mention anything about ambiance in the interview. Gerda's mentioned that a vibrant atmosphere with a lot of people in motion at C4 Shopping is important in order to attract consumers to her store. However, she did not mention anything which indicate that ambiance is a factor of decisive importance. Sandelin's owner only mentioned that the layout of a store should match with the requirements that the retailers want, which could create the atmosphere around the store that the retailers strive for. But in the same way as Gerda's owner, the owner of Sandelin's did not mention ambiance as a decisive factor for retail attractiveness nor a factor that is important in decision of where to locate the store. Ambiance is only considered by Café Hannott's as an important factor for their location, and that is something they have created themselves.

7.5 PLACE ATTACHMENT

Place Attachment is the fourth and final factor coded deductively from existing literature. Place Attachment is widely researched as a factor in several social sciences. However, this study is the first to recognize Place Attachment as a possible factor of Retail Attractiveness. The interviews show that Place Attachment was discussed by the case retailers several times (See Table 7). Nevertheless, Place Attachment does not seem to be a decisive factor in the case of C4 Shopping and the Kristianstad city center. To nuance, the retailers located at C4 Shopping viewed the shopping mall as something that increased the attractiveness of the city, while the retailer located in the city center did not.

Table 7. Summary of findings related to Place Attachment

Place Attachment			
Sub-factor	Retailers	No. of quotes	Quote
Emotional Bond	Ekberg's	3	<i>That you experience the coziness and that the city center is alive</i>
	Café Hannott's	6	<i>Since I love Kristianstad, I would like to open one more café in the city center. Kristianstad has been nicked little Paris, and that was a great expression</i>
	Gerda's	2	<i>The reason was that the city center was on its way down, they have rebuilt so much, the customers have failed, and that is understandable</i>
	Sandelin's	0	-
Satisfaction	Ekberg's	1	<i>we have the best location in the city</i>
	Café Hannott's	0	-
	Gerda's	0	-
	Sandelin's	1	<i>since 2010, the number of visitors in the city center have decreased</i>
Place Identity	Ekberg's	0	-
	Café Hannott's	0	-
	Gerda's	0	-
	Sandelin's	0	-

7.5.1 Emotional Bond

In terms of Emotional bond, research show that individuals can create a bond with a place, and that the bond may inflict the individual's decision-making (Johnson et. al., 2015). One of the interviewees at Café Hannott's said that "I have not lived up here in 15 years, and it have changed drastically since then", and continued with describing the Kristianstad she grew up in, that the city was nicked Little Paris with the canal and flourishing city center. The owner of Sandelin's also praised the good times in the past, when the city center flourished. The same kind of statement can be found in the interview with Gerda's, where the interviewee, who moved here in 2001, said that the city center have changed so much. The store owner of Ekberg's said that the city center is important, and that you want it to

flourish so people can experience the joviality of it. However, it is hard to see a correlation between memories and beautifying of the city center and the decision. To summarize, Emotional Bond does not seem to be a decisive factor when it comes to retailers choosing where to locate in Kristianstad due to that there were no major differences between researchers that choose differently. Although, retailers do think in the area of Emotional Bonds to a place, which imply that it might be a factor in other cases.

7.5.2 Satisfaction

In the conceptual framework, satisfaction is a sub-factor of place attachment. However, satisfaction is a prerequisite for place attachment. According to Inch and Florek (2008), satisfaction of a place leads to place attachment. With this said, it is important for retailers to be satisfied with the place they are located at. A good example of when this was not the case was when Gerda's were located in Galleria Boulevard in the city center. The interviewee of Gerda's said that people did not even know the shop existed, and that she felt that the city were losing its attractiveness. The owner of Sandelin's went on with the same reasoning saying that "since 2010 the number of visitors has decreased..." and explained that it was because the city center is not adapted for modern shopping. Café Hannott's have never been located in the city center, therefore they are not relevant in this discussion. In contrast to Gerda's and Sandelin's, Ekberg's choose not to open a store at C4 Shopping, and it seems as the owner of Ekberg's is satisfied with the city center. He says that "we have the best location in the city". To summarize, satisfaction seems to be a decisive factor when it comes to locational decisions of retailers. Obviously, satisfaction could also be connected to satisfaction as of retail attractiveness in general, but that is not what is insinuated here.

7.5.3 Place Identity

Place identity is strongly linked with Emotional Bond and it have been hard to separate the two when coding the material from the interviews. This has made us realize that it might not be suitable to have the both Place Identity and Emotional Bond as sub-factors to Place attachment. Nevertheless, Place Identity means that people feel an emotional attachment and identify with a specific place. This was found in some cases: Ekberg's for example spoke about "we in the city center", which indicate that he identifies as some sort of spokesperson for the city center retailers. However, the expression might have been said as of his role in Handelsföreningen, and not as the store owner of Ekberg's. On the other hand,

Sandelin's is a company that uses the building they rent as the logotype of the company. This indicates that Sandelin's identify strongly with the place and their building, but they still choose to open a store at C4 Shopping. In conclusion, place identity is hard to differentiate from Emotional Bond. The outcome from the sub-factor is the same as for Emotional Bond, that there is no clear correlation about place identity and decision-making in terms of localization.

7.6 NEW FACTORS

Beside our conceptual model *What builds Retail Attractiveness?* (See Figure 1) new factors were discovered from the collected empirical material (See Table 8). These factors were Rent, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces. The four case retailers regarded the three new factors differently, which is discussed further below.

Table 8. Summary of findings related to new factors

Factor	Retailers	No. of quotes	Quote
Rent	Ekberg's	2	<i>And today, the advantage towards C4 Shopping is that we can negotiate about the rent in the city center.</i>
	Café Hannott's	4	<i>I did not dare to be located in the city center because partly there are high rents. I know that the rents are expensive, that controls a lot.</i>
	Gerda's	0	-
	Sandelin's	2	<i>when I speak with property owners, there are not a lot of them that understand where the rent come from. They think that it is stores that pay the rent and decide it. But wait, that is not true, it is the customers that do.</i>
Safety	Ekberg's	2	<i>There is no risk with cars or cyclists in a shopping mall.</i>
	Café Hannott's	0	-
	Gerda's	0	-
	Sandelin's	4	<i>The security with guards.</i>
Proximity to Workplaces	Ekberg's	3	<i>That has it naturally and walks around in the city</i>

		<i>center shopping spontaneously.</i>
Café Hannott's	4	<i>Sometimes there is not so many consumers here. We do not have that spontaneous customer that walks past our store, like you have in the city center, I believe we lose some customers there.</i>
Gerda's	2	<i>In the city center you can stroll around, and maybe find some stores you cannot find elsewhere. A lot of people that works in the city center walks around in the city center.</i>
Sandelin's	0	-

7.6.1 Rent

Rent is one of the factors that was created from the empirical material. The store owners of Ekberg's, Café Hannott's, and Sandelin's mentioned that rent is a decisive factor in the decision-making of where to locate their store. The store owner of Ekberg's said that they can negotiate about the rent in the city center, which would not be the case at C4 Shopping. On the other hand, the store owners of Café Hannott's claimed that they did not dare to locate their store in the city center because of the rents because it would be too expensive. Sandelin's store owner talked about rents in more general terms. He argued that the rents in the city center are not in line with what retailers can sell, and that the property owners were out of touch with reality. To summarize, rents are widely considered when retailers decide where to locate their store. However, there are different opinions on how rents should be structured. This show that rents are a decisive factor, but that every retailer must consider their options. With this said, the extent to which retailers consider rents do not necessarily decide their store location.

7.6.2 Safety

The concept of safety was only mentioned by the store owner of Ekberg's and Sandelin's (See Table 8). The store owner of Ekberg's mentioned that the families are the ones that departs from the city center, arguing that it is much safer and easier to walk with children at a Shopping center. He says that there is no risk for cars or bicyclists as in the city center. Sandelin's store owner continues with the argument that the insecurity people feel when

walking in the city center is very bad for the retailers. He says that many people feel scared and uncomfortable in the city center. On the contrary, he mentions safety by having guards is a big advantage for C4 Shopping. The store owners of Café Hannott's and Gerda's did not mention the concepts of safety at all, which may be due to the fact that they do not consider it. Since both Café Hannott's and Gerda's are located at C4 Shopping, we can assume that they have a safe environment and are not affected in the same way as retailers in the city center. However, the store owner of Ekberg's only mentioned the safe environment for families at C4 Shopping compared to the city center, but nothing about the insecurity and fear that other retailers express as said by the store owner of Sandelin's. To summarize, we suppose that the store owner of Sandelin's consider Safety as a factor for Retail Attractiveness and points out that C4 Shopping is a better alternative than the city center.

7.6.3 Proximity to Workplaces

Proximity to workplaces was mentioned in several different contexts, but where the main thought was that the stores were in proximity to a lot of people in motion. Ekberg's owner said that being in the city center and close to workplaces was very important, because there was a greater chance that spontaneous shopper would visit Ekberg's. This advantage for Ekberg's was something that the store owners of Café Hannott's and Gerda's expressed that they lacked at C4 Shopping. They both said that the city center always has people in motion that strolls around and spontaneously shop. This indicates that Proximity to Workplaces is an important factor, but not something that the owners of Café Hannott's and Gerda's considered when they chose location. Although, it was mentioned several times in the interviews that they desired more people at C4 Shopping in the weekdays and not only in the weekends, which is not a problem for the city center. The store owner of Sandelin's did not mention the factor at all, which may be because he owns a store in both the city center and at C4 Shopping which means that he does not see the effects of being in proximity to workplaces. To summarize, Proximity to Workplaces are deemed to be an important factor for Retail Attractiveness, and something that benefits Ekberg's who is in the city center. Nonetheless, it was still not considered in the decision-making of the store location for the owners of Café Hannott's, Gerda's or Sandelin's.

7.7 REVISION OF CONCEPTUAL MODEL

As a conclusion of the analyzed findings and comparison between the four retailers, the conceptual model needs to be revised. The retailers from the four cases mentioned all four factors that leads to Retail Attractiveness. Cluster effects, Accessibility, Atmosphere and Place Attachment were all important in the decision of where to locate their store. Although, some sub-factors in the conceptual model were not considered as decisive but were discussed as factors that potentially enhance the Retail Attractiveness of a location. Nevertheless, the findings of factors important to Retail Attractiveness resulted in four modifications to the model.

The analysis of the empirical material resulted in three new factors that were important to some of the case retailers. The findings were: Rent, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces. Rents are one of the biggest costs of retailers. Naturally, to have a profitable business, retailers will decide their store location based on where the rent is the lowest compared to the other advantages of the place. Rent was considered by three of four case retailers. Safety is an important factor for retailers because without safety neither retailers nor consumers want to trade. In this study, safety was considered by two of four retailers. The last new factor found is Proximity to Workplaces. Proximity to Workplaces was mentioned by three of four retailers and is seen as an important factor because retailers want to be located where there are a lot of people. The final modification is to delete the factor Place Identity from the conceptual model. This is due to that Place Identity and Emotional Bond is hard to differentiate, and that it more or less means the same thing. Furthermore, Emotional Bond is a wider category where Place Identity can be a part of, while everything under the category of Emotional Bond is not a part of Place Identity.

As a result, a revised model that contain the modifications explained above has been made to demonstrate the findings of this study. We choose to name the new model *What builds Retail Attractiveness!* (See Figure 2). The model is presented below. To understand the structure of the model, see Figure 1.

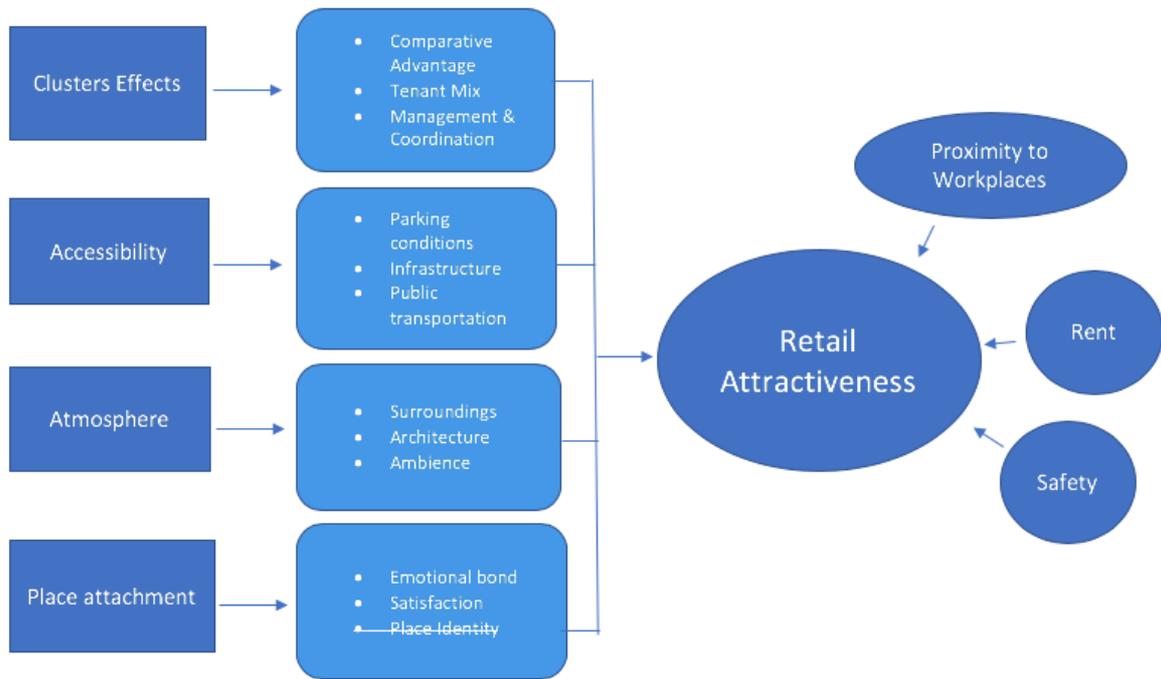


Figure 2. What builds Retail Attractiveness!

8. THESIS CONCLUSION

The last chapter in this thesis conclude the research and answer the research questions. The chapter starts with a short summary of the chapters. Thereafter, Findings, Analysis, Discussion, and the new model will be discussed in order to fulfill the research purpose and answer the research questions. Furthermore, practical implications of the research are presented and in the end of the chapter, suggestions for further research are presented.

8.1 SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The purpose of the thesis was to explore how retailers relate to be located in the city center compared to at an out-of-town shopping mall, and to explore what factors retailers considered when they decided where to be located. Based on this purpose, three research questions were formed in order to direct the focus of the study. The research questions were: How do retailers decide where to locate their stores? What factors do they consider important when they decide? and Why do some retailers prefer out-of-town shopping malls respectively the city center? The reason this thesis was made is that the structure of retail in Kristianstad recently changed due to the establishment of an out-of-town shopping mall, C4 Shopping. Due to that the retail structure changed drastically in the recent years, retailers in the city have been forced to re-evaluate their location. Consequently, the establishment of C4 Shopping has provided with a unique opportunity to accomplish this study.

In the second chapter our research philosophy and approach were presented in order to explain why this study is structured the way it is. Accordingly, a conceptual model was developed based on previous research, which were used to connect previous research to this study's Findings & Analysis. In order to put this study in a context, a case presentation was done, both concerning the overall retail structure and the individual cases. In the following chapter, empirical method, the strategy and design of the study was presented. In order to form a relevant interview guide for the semi-structured interviews, the factors in the conceptual model were used. The interview guide was formed so that new factors could be found as well, leading us on to our data analysis.

In order to sort out relevant information from the interviews, the data analysis was done through coding phrases connected to Retail Attractiveness. As the research approach is to explore, the phrases that could not be connected to the factors in the conceptual model

created new factors. The new factors, together with the factors from the conceptual model that could be fortified created a new model presented in the end of chapter 7.

8.2 CONCLUSIONS

In the analysis of the empirical material, all four main factors that builds Retail Attractiveness proved to be considered by retailers when deciding where to locate their store. However, some of the sub-factors were not widely considered by the retailers, and other were only touched upon. Moreover, new factors that retailers consider when they decide where to locate their store were also discovered. This led to the model *What builds Retail Attractiveness!* presented in chapter 7. The model can be used to answer the first research question of how retailers decide where to locate the store. The term Retail Attractiveness was created in order to summarize the pros and cons of being located at a place. The assumption is that retailers choose the most attractive place to locate their store, and they discuss attractiveness through the factors in the model (See Figure 2).

The model is not as successful in answering what factors retailers consider as most important. Rather, this must be done through an interpretation of what the interviewees actually said. This was done in Findings & Results and demonstrated in Discussion. The discussion led to the conclusion that the most important factors varied depending on the case. Subsequently, it is not possible to determine some factors as the most important on a general level.

To be in proximity to other stores, both to cooperate and compete, lead to Comparative Advantages for the involved retailers. This was interpreted as one of the most important factors for all case retailers. Considering Management & Coordination, it is a factor that retailers located at C4 Shopping considered as important, while Ekberg's, located in the city center, preferred independence. Accessibility is also a decisive factor for all case retailers; specifically, Parking Conditions and public transportation are important to create Retail Attractiveness. Rent was a factor that the conceptual model did not include but was still considered by three of the case retailers. Café Hannott's mentioned that the expensive rents in the city center was the reason for choosing C4 Shopping, while Ekberg's talked about the opposite, which was that the advantage of being located in the city center was the ability to negotiate. The interpretation is that these factors were important for more case

retailers than the factors Atmosphere, Place Attachment, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces. However, Safety and Place Attachment may be the most important for one or two of the case retailers.

Atmosphere is not considered as the most important factor by any of the retailers, even though it was considered and discussed by all case retailers. The reason for this is that opinions part of what a good atmosphere is, were some of the retailers highlighted Atmosphere as nice buildings and for it to be cozy (i.e. the city center), while other argued that Atmosphere could be to be protected from weather and smooth transitions to other stores (i.e. C4 Shopping). However, no retailer talked about Atmosphere as a decisive factor. Rather, our interpretation is that retailers argued from the position that their location have the best atmosphere, as if they had to convince themselves. Concerning Place Attachment, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces, it is very important for some of the retailers, while others did not mention it.

To answer the second research question of what factors retailers consider the most important, it is not possible to determine that some factors are more important than others on a general level. Therefore, the answer to the question is that the decision of where retailers choose to locate their store is highly individual and involves the factors in *What builds Retail Attractiveness!*, were some factors are considered more important.

The third and final research question, why some retailers prefer out-of-town shopping malls respectively the city center, is complex. As stated above, retailers consider the factors of the revised conceptual model and rate the importance of the factors differently. However, the importance of the factors can not entirely explain why some retailers choose an out-of-town shopping mall, respectively the city center. Even though Parking Conditions is much better at C4 Shopping, many of the other factors are up for debate. What is the best Atmosphere? How do you express your Place Attachment? What is the safest place? These are just examples of questions where retailers will answer differently. The cases of Sandelin's and Ekberg's view of Place Attachment is an example of this. Even though both store owners rate Place Attachment as an important factor, they made different decisions when C4 Shopping established. The owner of Sandelin's argue that Kristianstad need C4

Shopping in order to be attractive, while the owner of Ekberg's argue that the city center must remain attractive for the city to be attractive.

With this said, the answer on why some retailers prefer out-of-town shopping malls rather than the city center, or vice versa, should not be generalized. This is due to the lack of nuance generalization implies when it comes to the specific cases. Nevertheless, in the problematization we mentioned that several researchers acknowledge that city centers suffer because of competition from other shopping possibilities, such as neighboring municipalities, out-of-town shopping malls, and e-commerce (Wahlberg, 2016; Weltevreden & Rietbergen, 2007; Hart, Stackow, & Cadogan, 2013). This study can be used to explain the phenomena of dying city centers, where the conceptual model (see Figure 2) can be used to evaluate different shopping possibilities. In this study of how retailers reason between C4 Shopping and Kristianstad city center, the reason why some retailers prefer out-of-town shopping malls rather than city centers are that they value Accessibility such as parking conditions and infrastructure, cluster effects like Management & Coordination, Atmosphere like Ambiance, Safety, and expressed Place Attachment as that they thought they did what is best for Kristianstad. Meanwhile Ekberg's, located in the city center, valued Cluster Effects like independence from Management & Coordination, Atmosphere like Ambiance and conviviality, and Place Attachment as to remain and serve for a lively city center.

8.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This study contributes field of Retail Attractiveness by developing a conceptual model that include factors of Cluster Effects, Accessibility, Atmosphere, and Place Attachment. The including of Place Attachment was an aim to explore Retail Attractiveness from a different perspective than what have been done before. After conducting the research method new factors could be found, which were included in the revised model. Rent, Safety, and Proximity to Workplaces are considered by retailers when they decide where to locate their store.

Furthermore, another contribution is that this study issues the store owner's perception of Retail Attractiveness, in contrast to previous research. Previous research has primarily focused on the consumers' perspective. This is probably because of the assumption that

retailers choose to locate their store at what is the most attractive place for consumers to shop. However, this study shows that retailers make decisions that opposes this assumption.

8.4 LIMITATIONS

The main limitation in this study is that only four different retailers in the city of Kristianstad is explored. If the study would have consisted of more retailers, it is plausible to assume that new factors would be found and further develop the conceptual model. This study is not meant to generalize since it is difficult to put the findings in other contexts, for example in another city, country, or culture. Furthermore, the conceptual model *What builds Retail Attractiveness!* is not a complete framework.

Another limitation is that the study consisted of two stores in the city center, and three stores at C4 Shopping, where one of the stores at each place where the same. Unfortunately, the focus of the interview with the retailer with stores at both places were on C4 Shopping. With this said, there were still valuable insights about the retailer's store in the city center. However, for this study to be more balanced, it would have been good to interview another retailer in the city center.

8.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

One suggestion for further research is to apply the conceptual model *What builds Retail Attractiveness!* to other Swedish cities where there also is a shopping mall located. Retailers in other cities might have different perceptions of what factors that are important. Also, other cities might have different attributes that are considered positive or negative for the overall Retail Attractiveness.

A second suggestion is to use the revised conceptual model (see Figure 2) in a quantitative study in order to see if some factors are considered by more retailers than other factors. By doing the study with a quantitative methodology, there is a possibility to measure the how important a specific factor is (Bell et al., 2019). With the result of the study, further conclusions about how and why retail is changing.

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APPENDIX 1 – INTERVIEW GUIDE

Part 1 - Opening questions.

1. Can you give us a brief summary of your business in terms of what products you sell, how your business is managed, and what your competitive strength is?

Kan ni ge oss en kort summering hur ert företag är styrt, vilka produkter ni säljer samt vilka era komparativa styrkor är?

2. What is your role in the company, what responsibilities do you have, and what decisions do you make?

Vad är er roll i företaget, vilka ansvarsområden har ni, och tar ni några beslut?

3. What opportunities and threats do you identify?

Vilka möjligheter samt hot kan ni identifiera?

Part 2 - Historical Background

4. When, where, and by who was your company founded? (*Place Attachment, Surroundings*)

När, var och av vem är företaget grundat av?

5. How do your company's legacy affect the decision-making of today? (*Place Attachment*)

Hur påverkar ert företags historia ert beslutsfattande idag?

6. How have your consumer stock developed since the store was founded in terms of size, loyalty, and age?

Hur har er kundbas utvecklats sedan ert grundande, när det gäller storlek, lojalitet och ålder?

Part 3 - Retail Structure

7. How do you view the establishment of C4 Shopping, and how do you think it affects the trade in Kristianstad?

Hur ser ni på etableringen av C4 Shopping och hur tror ni att det påverkar handeln i Kristianstad?

8. What do you think will be the long-term effect on the city center in Kristianstad, given the establishment of C4 Shopping. (*Place Attachment, Atmosphere*)

Vad tror ni kommer vara den långvariga effekten på stadskärnan i Kristianstad om vi talar om etableringen av C4 Shopping?

9. Do you view out-of-town shopping malls as a positive development of physical retailing, and do you think shopping malls have a greater chance surviving against the rising e-commerce? (*Cluster Effects, Accessibility*)

Anser ni att shoppingcenter utanför stadskärnan är en positiv utveckling för den fysiska detaljhandeln och tror ni shoppingcenter har en större chans att överleva den stigande ökningen av e-handel?

10. Several researches are talking about “dead city centers” meaning that stores, restaurants etc. are moving away from the city centers. Why do you think the trend is that stores are moving out of the city centers?

Ett flertal forskare pratar om “döda stadskärnor”, vilket menas att butiker, restauranger etc. flyttar sin verksamhet från stadskärnan. Varför tror ni att trenden är att butiker flyttar ifrån stadskärnan?

Part 4 - Decisions and Strategy

11. Did you apply for, or were you offered, a place at C4 Shopping?

Ansökte ni om en plats på C4 Shopping, eller blev ni erbjudna en plats?

12. How did you reason concerning the possibility to move there?

Hur resonerade ni gällande möjligheten att flytta verksamheten dit?

13. How was the decision-making process concerning C4 shopping structured in terms of meetings, time horizon, etc.?

Hur såg beslutsprocessen ut när det gäller C4 Shopping om vi pratar om planerade möten, tidshorisont, etc.

14. What advantages do you see with being located where you are right now?

Vilka fördelar ser ni med att vara lokaliserad där ni är nu?

15. Was it a difficult decision to make? and did you feel like you had enough information to make a rational and informed decision?

Var det ett svårt beslut att ta? Och ansåg ni att ni hade tillräckligt med information till att göra ett rationellt och informativt beslut?

Part 5 - Completing Questions

16. In terms of Accessibility, did you consider parking spots or public transportation when deciding where to locate your store? (*Accessibility*)

Om vi pratar tillgänglighet, övervägde ni parkeringsplatser eller kollektivtrafik när ni bestämde er för placeringen av er butik?

17. Is it important for you that there is a vibrant ambiance where your store is located? Considering motion and events for example. (*Atmosphere*)

Är det viktigt för er att det är en vibrerande atmosfär där er butik är placerad?

18. Do you feel that your store has a historical or emotional bond to your current location? (*Place Attachment*)

Känner du att er butik har ett historiskt eller emotionellt band till er nuvarande plats?

19. Do you think that your store has a higher attraction force if it's located at C4 Shopping or in the city center, concerning the consumer's shopping experience and proximity to other offerings? (*Cluster Effects*)

Tror ni att er butik har en större attraktionsnivå om den är lokaliserad på C4 Shopping eller i stadskärnan, rörande konsumenterna shoppingupplevelse och anslutning till andra erbjudanden?