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Master Thesis

Value Creation within Internship Programs

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Abstract

The aim of the project is to shed the light in the subject of value creation and internship program. In regards of this, authors of this project provide an insight into how different stakeholders perceive value creation process from participating in the internship and to identify factors that have strong impact on the overall value, either in positive or negative matter. In order for this research to be effective, complex outline of the relevant literature has been developed. Based on the literature review, authors have created their own understanding in the form of conceptual co-creation framework, which includes all stakeholders involved in the process of value creation in the context of internship program. Furthermore, primary source of data collection is used, more specifically twelve qualitative individual interviews with three stakeholders including students, firms and educational institution. Based on the evaluation of data collection, authors have aimed to understand different perceptions, opinions and understandings on the subject matter of value creation as well as to compare our results with together with existing literature.

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Introduction

Internships are increasingly popular features of the educational institution in Denmark and provide many possible benefits for different parties involved in this process. By having internship experience, it can definitely help students to make connections between their academic background and the professional environment. Internship programs are usually part of universities curriculum especially in Denmark and it is interesting to actually get the understanding of the main motives, determinants that drive the overall value creation.

As Master students of Aalborg University, which is using problem-based learning, we have found importance to highlight the aspect of the internship program in connection to academic knowledge. Based on our observations, different actors perceive this opportunity in various ways. Nevertheless, internship program integrates two types of knowledge, theoretical that is created in the university, through books, journals and theories and experiential knowledge that comes from business community. By integration of these two types of knowledge, students receive better preparation for their future careers after graduation, in the form of different benefits.

Therefore, we believe that this topic is important subject to be studied as it has a significant impact on all actors participating in the process. Furthermore, authors of this research will combine the literature on the concept of the value creation together with the internship literature to identify the different factors that has influence on it. Authors will look at three actors such as students, firms and educational institution and their different roles in this process. Internship involves complex relationship between these three actors, most research on this topic has focused only on a small part of the overall process. Therefore, we will summarize already existing theories on the concept of the value creation and integrate these findings into the context of the internship literature to develop conceptual framework.

This paper identifies core stakeholders affecting the internship program. By collecting literature review and analyzing collected data, we have investigated and concluded different perceptions of value creation among different stakeholders. Furthermore, in this research paper we discuss factors that determinate creation and co-creation processes and their level of

importance. In addition, we also take into consideration the aspects of social context and its related topics in order to bring fundamental overview of the value creation in internship program.

This research paper consists of six main chapters. First chapter starts with the literature review, which includes the critical analyses of the already existing theories, studies and collection of relevant articles in order to get an understanding of the concept of the value creation in the context of the internship programs. The aspects of the concept of the value include value creation, value appropriation and value co- creation and the connection to the internship context. The second chapter describes the conceptual framework, which is based on the previous chapter. Authors of this research project build up their own understanding of the research topic by creating conceptual co-creation framework regarding the studied topic. Continuing with another chapter, it looks at the methodology chosen for this research paper, data collection techniques and the overall research design. The following fourth chapter includes the analyses of the data collection method and exploring of the findings. The next chapter brings the analysis of the data collection to the theory and to find the main connections and major conclusion. The last chapter of this research project focuses on the limitations of the project.

Problem Formulation

The Scope of the Project

The scope of this project is mainly to get an understanding in the field of value creation in regards to internship programs and the factors, which affect different stakeholders interacting in these processes. Authors of the project will try to identify the main key determinants, which are affecting the concept of the value specifically in the internship program and to what degree may social context and relational aspect influence it. In addition to that, authors will assess how is co-creation developed within these processes and whether knowledge transfer, learning and social aspect are interconnected with value. Authors will develop framework that would reflect literature conceptualization and social and relational aspects.

Regarding the scope of the project, authors have formulated the main research question, in order to gain a good understanding and insight into the concept of the value putting it into the context of the internship program. The main research problem is as follow: "***What is the relationship between the value creation and the internship program?***"

Research Objective

The main objective of this research project is to understand the perception of the value creation in the context of the internship programs from both students and companies' point of view and how different stakeholders affect the value creation process. Authors have identified three main sub questions, which need the attention and understanding for being able to answer the main research question.

Research Questions

- **How is value creation perceived among different stakeholders?**

We can look at it as a system with different actors, processes and factors, which has an effect on the overall value perception. For answering this question, we will have a look at different output from the internship program and to see the perception of the value creation among students and the company, which offers the internship. Therefore, we can analyze different perceptions and compare it to each other to get the understanding of the value creation in the internship program.

- **What are the factors that influence value creation and co- creation?**

When finding the answer to this question, authors will define different determinants that have effect on the value creation and co-creation processes and will try to get the overall picture on how social context affect the learning in internship program.

- **How do social interactions between different stakeholders affect the value creation process?**

In this question we will analyze to what level different aspects of social interaction matter in internship processes. Authors will try to find out if social interactions among various stakeholders are interconnected with value creation processes. Furthermore, to what degree do they positively or negatively influence value (benefits) that are individually perceived by core stakeholders involved in the internship process.

I. Chapter - Literature Review

In this chapter, we are going to present the way we collected the relevant articles for our literature review. With regards to the purpose of the project, the chapter represents the review of the existing literature, findings from other researchers, in order to get a clear understanding of the chosen field of the study and furthermore to be able to develop a conceptual framework.

The literature review helps to provide a critical overview of the already existing literature on the research phenomenon (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The main focus in this project is concerning with the topic of the value in the internship program. By analyzing the extant literature, the authors will get an understanding and overview of the research topic, including different themes and concepts that many authors have been studying.

There are two different types of literature reviews, which include the traditional review and systematic review, however the reviews can also come in other forms as well. Each of the previous mentioned literature review has its own characteristics and methods that are used during the process. (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

By looking at the thematic review, the purpose of this review is to analyze and review the literature in order to provide the broader understanding of the chosen field of study. It concentrates on the particular topic and gathers the research, which has already been published by scholars. It can also help the researchers with developing the theoretical and conceptual understanding. (Coughlan, 2007)

In this project, the literature review is based mainly on this type of approach because the purpose is to create a holistic perspective on the themes and concepts, which are connected with the research topic of value. Another reason for choosing the thematic literature approach is the fact that it also informs the authors about the current concepts, it allows to choose the sources in regards of the themes and furthermore it establishes, which kind of topics are essential for the research. It helps authors to picture a map and analyze the already existing literature in the field of value and the internship, by identifying the relevant theories, their foundations and to define the latest developments and concepts. (Coughlan, 2007)

This approach was selected in order to define and shape the research problem and to gather relevant and specific knowledge about the research topic. The literature review forms the basis for creating the conceptual framework and finding the gap in the previous research.

Selection of publication

This part of the project will assess the articles used in this literature review in order to ensure the quality, validity and the credibility of this project. Authors have screened the relevant literature by including scientific papers, which were found in database such as Jstor, Scopus, ScienceDirect. Scopus is one of the largest databases of peer-review literature and furthermore Jstor database also includes books and journals. We have also reviewed ScienceDirect database due to the fact that it also includes peer-review articles from different study field.

Authors have also taken into consideration the number of citations of various papers, since it is an element, which helps to screen the articles relevant for the studied topic. Although, the number of citations matters, authors have also included papers in terms of smaller number of citations due to the fact that they want to get the understanding of the topic in depth.

I.I. Concept of Value

I.I.I. What is Actually the Value?

Value is one of the main concepts, which has an effect on the human life. It points out the degree of the importance of some subjects, actions and therefore human beings are able to determinate what kind of actions or subjects are the best to do. It also describes the usefulness and the significance of different actions, which may hold us back. In order to get the understanding of the concept of the value, authors need to assess and get the overall picture of the term “value” itself.

I.I.II. What Does the term “Value” Mean?

When it comes to the term value, literature talks about the value in different connections. As mentioned by Svetla Marinova, Jorma Larimo and Niina Nummela (2017), when the term is used in different contexts and together with different actors, there is possibility to find more results, because they are based on different interpretations of the value that the actors have. Researchers have already studied this term and have developed special and diverse perceptions of the meaning of the value.

Moreover, another literature talks about the term value in regards to the business point of view and it explains how the meaning of the value has been evolved over the time. Authors such as Schlenker and Matchman explain that over the years, experts have offered consistent views on the value. Value is seen as a *“product of labor and it is captured in the price of goods and services that is set by the balance of the supply and demand”* (Schlenker and Matchman, 2005). They are also mentioning that with the development and progress in the business, the view of the value has been shifted. It has started to be understood and defined in the organization’s identity and play the significance role in the organization. Moreover, when company identifies its value, it has raised the reason to think why the customers, business partners or other stakeholders are interested in collaborating with the particular firm. Furthermore, business value has been viewed with direct link to the industrial innovation, specifically the ability of the management to create and sustain a competitive differentiation. Additionally, authors state that the development of the globalization of the markets, new technologies and organizations have progressively impacted

the managers with providing the opportunity to be more innovative in the ways how the business value strategies are shaped, rather than focusing specifically on a new product. (Schlenker and Matchman, 2005).

Nevertheless, authors Schlenker and Matchman, in their research have come to the conclusion that the companies who invest in the product or the service are hoping of receiving the bigger return on investment. If the firms are successful, then they have created the business value. The financial aspect drives the meaning of the value. (Schlenker and Matchman, 2005).

Authors Schlenker and Matchman, pointed out that the business value does not come straightly from the product, service or the company. However, it is determined by the relationship, which is created with the customers. There are two different types of stakeholders that the company has. They have internal stakeholders such as managers, stockholders, and employees of the company and on the other side they also have external including customers, distributors, suppliers and agencies. (Schlenker and Matchman, 2005) The company needs to be aware of the fact that each of these stakeholders have their own perception of the company's business value based on their interest and expectations. Following Schlenker and Matchman research, the client's perception of the business value has strong impact on the company and therefore it is crucial for the firm to revise their business strategies in order to maintain the competitive advantage.

Moreover, for getting a clear picture of the term "*value*", authors need to look at other researchers' understandings and their definitions. Value can be identified from the different perspectives. Researchers identified value, which does not solely focus on the financial aspect but look at the customer experiences. From the marketing point of view, customer value has become fundamental building blocks for business-to-business marketing. The literature on the value has evolved from focusing on the resource exchange and value exchange to highlighting the importance on the value in use and resource integration. The term "*value*" has at least two different meanings according to the Smith (1776) who has firstly introduced the concept of value in use and the value in exchange. Firstly, he stated that each individual is a certain of knowing what is best for him or her in the particular situation. Therefore, he believes that value is something that individuals define by themselves not by other actors for example government. He has stressed the fact that individuals define their own value and therefore they do not let different

actors choose it instead of them. In his other view of the value, he possesses the opinion that healthy markets provide a free will for the customers, in terms of choosing what they want, then under which circumstances and as well as from whom to choose.

In order to get the understanding of the concept of the value, authors of this research will define and assess the value from different points of views including the philosophical and psychological perspectives.

I.I.III. Philosophical Perspective

Due to the different perspectives of the value; philosophers have started to distinguish the meaning, which has raised the opportunity for them to ask questions. To start with the philosophical perspective, it was found out that when talking about the value, it is often connected with the term of what is good for example when we talk about the justice and knowledge. Moreover, it can be related to the ideals that influence one's actions. (Brosh and Sanders, 2016) Things that are considered to be good are important topics in the philosophy and ethics, but the main focus in the philosophy of the value is more abstractive. They have distinguished between evaluative facts, concepts, judgments and sentences. For each of these mentioned themes, there is a space for asking questions regarding their nature, but there is no ground for expecting that the answers to this question should be the same. (Brosh and Sanders, 2016) This brings the fact that concepts, facts, judgments and sentences are different kind of things, and therefore even though the questions are the same, the answers are going to be slightly different. In order to get the understanding of the value, authors will also consider evaluative concepts.

Firstly, there are concepts, which are on the positive side such as concept of good, generous, kind and on the other hand, there are concepts, which are on the negative side including concepts of disgusting, bad and disgraceful. In general, concepts and propositions shape what we as human beings have in mind, when we think. The main interesting objects for the philosophers to consider are actually the concepts. Philosophers have raised many questions when it comes to the evaluative concepts and their relationship towards other concepts. The central question, which has been considered, is the relation between the evaluative concepts and the natural concepts. When defining natural concepts, we can say that they are the ones in which

natural sciences relate to the human and social science including also psychology. The concepts such as desire, admiration is identified as natural concepts, but philosophers have raised the question of the naturalism, which is asking the way how the term value fits into this natural world. (Brosh and Sanders, 2016)

Another sets of questions that philosophers have raised are concerning with judgments. People judge whether something is good or not, for example knowledge is good. Every judgment that we make calls immediately for the evaluative concepts. Authors have researched that these judgments are reflected as mental actions of the human brain. Judgements are connected to the concept of the truth. (Brosh and Sanders, 2016) When looking at the philosophical perspective it is kind of difficult to find one answer to the question of what value actually is. It can be said that evaluative concepts assess the significance of some things and that evaluative judgments express the assessments, which we make. (Brosh and Sanders, 2016)

I.I.IV. Psychological Perspectives

Looking at the psychological perspective on the value, authors will firstly start with defining the discipline of psychology. The main subject of the psychology is to understand the human beings. Putting these two concepts together, it raises first set of questions. For many years, psychologists have been trying to get an understanding of people in regards of what they do, what they feel and why they feel in the certain way. Furthermore, they are mainly trying to understand what matters to people. The main concept, which assesses the term mattering, is in fact the value. From this perspective, value can reveal what is actually important to us, human beings.

In regards of our own personal perception of the value, psychologists usually ask main questions such as: "*What influence the fact that the object or the activity has its value? Where does the value come from?*" According to these two questions, psychologists have tried to develop certain psychological mechanism that can explain how human beings perceive value.

When we look at the historical roots of the psychological perception of the value, it originally comes from Greek literature and it is known as "*hedonic principle*". It relates to the meaning of pleasure. This principle debates that human beings want to maximize the pleasure and, on the other hand, minimize the pain. Only pleasure is supposed to bring the result of what

it sees as value, not the pain. (Brosh and Sanders, 2015) Significant thinker Jeremy Bentham (1988) has believed that the value could be measured by combining measurements of pleasure and pain. According to his opinion, pleasure and pain could be assessed across all human beings. This hedonic principle of value has dominated as a main understanding of people's motivation and it was the basis for creating theories in the area of psychology. (Kahneman et, 1999)

In order to really understand what people wants, it is important to go beyond the concept of pleasure and pain. The need of the control is the value, which do not belong to the hedonic concept but needs to be considered. In this case, we can consider for example sport athletes who are involved in activities under extreme suffering. Athletes argue that the main value is the ability to master and overcome these difficulties (Brosh and Sanders, 2015) Psychologists have also put emphasis on similar examples, where people suffer in order to see the truth.

While looking at the hedonic principle, the ability to actually show where the value comes form is very limited and therefore, the viewpoint has shifted. People do not feel restricted by the experience of the pleasure or pain. Individual can also feel good or bad, thus value of something could be developed in contrasting direction. Currently, psychologists argue that we should think of value as the experience of the power of attraction towards something. (Brosh and Sanders, 2015)

To sum up, the term "*value*" can be defined from diverse point of views. Some scholars argue that it is the financial exchange, direct monetary exchange but on the other hand it can be seen as something beyond that, which is connected to the overall experience of the human being. Researchers suppose that their reader knows what the term value means, however the value can be understood in distinctive ways, depending on the context and individual, personal experience. Therefore, due to these discrepancies, understanding of author's written text may vary from the main author's initial idea. The definition of the value as being mainly financial, allowed scholars to measure it through mathematical modeling. This in fact, may cause false results, because it does not include all relevant factors that are difficult to structure into mathematical numbers.

I.II. Value Creation

The phenomenon called value creation has been studied for several decades. This topic carries many relative themes and aspects. Numbers of scholars have been focusing their minds in the topic of value creation, i.e. Teece (1987), Schumpeter (1934) etc. However, according to Moran and Ghoshal (1999), the topic of value creation has been still understudied due to the size of the subject. The size is affected by the fact that the value creation has been also researched with regards to different disciplines, such as: finance, strategy, and management. Therefore, it is not surprising that scholars such as North (1990) and Schumpeter (1934) believe that concept of value creation is fundamental aspect in the economic development.

I.II.I. How is Value Created?

The understanding of term value differs among the scholars. Therefore, various researchers with regards to different context have understood value creation differently. According to Vargo (2010), term value mainly revolves around the resource-based view. Vargo (2010) argues that value has to be seen in relation to the value Porter's value chain (Porter, 1985). Thus, the value creation process refers to the view that value is part of a process, from the start to the end of the chain and resources, which are formed or consumed with regards to company's objective with value. Furthermore, Marinova (2017) argues that value can be examined in two diverse ways. First position is described above as resource-based view.

Secondly, being part of the company's inner basis, such as business model specifically value proposition, where various department of firm are connected to bring the value proposition to the customer in order to create value. Osterwalder, Pigneur, Bernarda, Smith (2015) believe, that the value proposition approach is fundamental aspect of the firm in order to survive in market, as the value proposition is the key element, which firm offers to its customers. Therefore, the value proposition is part of the firm itself.

When we look at the firm's level only, the value creation process of the firm that is located with all departments and functions at the same place, it may bring a lot of discrepancies in internal value creation processes. This is in fact the cruel reality. Even though the firm is

supposed to have same overall goal, the individuals in different department may need to fulfill and achieve their individual needs and goals (Chatain, Zemsky, 2011).

In order to explain aspect of value, many scholars have tried to follow up on the work of Porter to develop models explaining value creation process. Bowman and Ambrosini (2000) argue that value creation is a process, when the firm produces the product or service that is lately introduced to customer as perceived value. Perceived value is then transferred through appropriation processes into the exchange value. According Bowman and Ambrosini (2000), value is consisted of tangible and intangible resources. Tangible can be understood as a physical material that is transferred through production processes within the firm. Description of tangible resources also follows up on Porter's well-know (1985) value chain. Each part of chain adds value. Not only primary parts of the chain bring value, but also the secondary supporting parts play essential role in these processes (Porter, 1985). On the other hand, Bowman and Ambrosini (2000) see intangible resources in the example of the branding itself.

Furthermore, Bowman and Ambrosini (2000) have tried to illustrate the whole ongoing process of value creation in particular organization. They argue that value in use created in a certain organization is being presented to another organization, creating an exchange value. The exchange value is then perceived as a last step in the value creation process. In this step, the created value is offered to the customer. Thus, customer may perceive the exchange value that is created in this last step, as a perceived value based on the customer's point of view. Therefore, the perceived value refers to the value that is determined by the customer personal preferences (Bowman and Ambrosini, 2000).

It is important to mention that the concept of value is not necessary referred just to the value the firm brings to customers. The value can be created in order to affect only the firm. This principle may be seen in regards to usage of new production technologies, or other way to improve efficiency or cutting down the costs (Mizik and Jacobsen, 2003). According Mizik and Jacobsen (2003), innovation in relation to value creation process may generate the surplus value and social benefit to other actors, such as customers and other stakeholders that may extract. As an example of this social benefit, Mansfield (1977) states that it can be the cost cutting innovation that competitors might be interested in.

Hallberg (2017) brings different views how to see value creation. He argues that value creation needs to be seen as a result of the social cognitive processes, where the company interacts with other stakeholders that are part of the information processing or commercial decision etc.

Scholars Kammerlander, Sieger, Voordeckers and Zellweger (2015) have tried to find out main things that are needed in the firm in order to create the value. They have concluded in their research that to create the value, firm needs to possit: goals, resources and governance structure.

I.II.II. Drivers of Value Creation

Scholars like Firk, Schrapp and Wolff (2016) have raised the question of what drivers affect value creation process. In their work, authors refer to the concept of value-based management (VBA) that may affect the firm and its performance. VBM is managerial approach in business, where the goal is to set up the aim in the firm or departments with regards to their available resources. Value based management refers to the general tools that help firms to coordinate their actions and the concept of value creation.

Firk, Schrapp and Wolff (2016) have conducted research to find out whether VBM helps to higher performance and whether external institutions cause any change on firm performance. They positively concluded that value-based management has positively effect on the financial aspect, and it also increases the value creation within the firm. Additionally, with regards to the external institutions, they argue that financial-oriented ownership at the firm level and national-oriented view at the national level, may positively affect the degree of VBM on firm performance.

On the contrary to this view, as Mizik and Jacobsen (2003) have noted, the motivation for the process of value creation differs with regards to the person that the value is for. Firm can generate value for customers, different stakeholders and the firm itself.

Nevertheless, as it is stated in the above mention paragraph, firms may generate value for different stakeholders and the firms itself. The process of value creation is designed also by other actors not necessarily only just by the firm. These various stakeholders enter into the value creation processes and add their own part to the overall output. Thus, currently scholars look at

the value creation processes as a co-created output from different stakeholders, when diverse actors bring their part and benefits into the final outcome that is represented by the cumulated value.

I.III. Value Co-creation

I.III.I. Goods Dominant Logic

According to Vargo and Lusch (2004), there are two different views on value creation. The oldest and traditional view was named as good dominant (G-D) logic. In addition to G-D logic, Vargo and Lusch (2004) have introduced the new perspective how to look at the value creation. The new framework was named Service dominant (S-D) logic.

The perspective behind G-D logic is built on the belief that goods, as the unit of output, are the cores of the exchange between stakeholders (Wieland et al., 2012). The background of the perspective is mainly based on the exchange of goods for money. Therefore, G-D logic argues that the exchange of value is fundamental. Everything connected with "services" is seen as an add-on to goods or a different kind of products that are deemed as inferior thanks to intangible aspect (Wieland et al., 2012).

This traditional view on value-in-exchange is sometimes attributed to Adam Smith (1776). According to Adam Smith's (1776) view value-in exchange can be seen as a synonym for real value ("value in use"). This principle allows bringing standardized way how to measure wealth (Vargo and Lusch, 2012). However, it is important to mention the context of Adam Smith's era when the flow of information and travel were highly restricted due to many factors in comparison with current time (Wieland et al., 2012).

In G-D logic perspective, market is understood as venue or group of customers where exchange happens. This traditional view sees the status of customers and firms diverse. While firms only resolve around production, customers are seen as resource of final consumptions. Moreover, in this traditional view firms behave freely without any other interactions with stakeholders. Thus, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) argue that in this view, value creation appears inside of the firm's production without any input from customer or the market. Then the value created by firm is consumed only by customers. According G-D logic, the separation of the customer and firms helps to increase and maximize the efficiency of production (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

I.III.II. Service Dominant Logic

The core of the service dominant (S-D) logic is the belief that service, e.g. *"application of resources for the benefit of others"* is the foundation of exchange (Archpru Akata, Vargo and Lusch, 2012). According to Wieland et. Al (2012) service dominant logic offers the more solid theoretical background for social and economic exchange than good dominant logic. S-D logic refers to *"service"* that is seen through the usage of the operant resources in order to create welfare for other actors (Wieland et al., 2012). The term *"service"* indicates the development in understanding of the value creation from output to a process or an outcome (Wieland et al., 2012). Moreover, the service dominant logic also refers to the shift in the type of resources from operand to operant resources (Wieland et al., 2012).

According to Vargo and Lusch (2012), value is linked to having specific benefits for certain actors. Under S-D logic, the value co-creation happens through creation of new resources from old ones that are supported by a number of various sources and utilized by services. In addition, the value may be only identified and assessed by the beneficiary within the circumstances of his or her available resources. Therefore, an actor may only offer value to another actor, as opposed to creating and subsequently delivering it (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

In addition to Service Dominant logic scholars proposed another framework that is named *"Service centered thinking"*. This view helps to show more holistic picture, both in terms of showing the whole process of production and consumptions, but as well as *"zooming out"* in order to bring more stakeholders, such as institutions, which may play certain role in the value co-creation process (Vargo and Lusch, 2012). With regards to this perception, value creation goes on beyond company's borders, while the value is identified by the customer at the end of the process specifically in the consumption (Archpru Akata, Vargo and Lusch, 2012). According to Vargo and Lusch (2012), *"the creation of value does not begin or end with either firm activity or firm-customer interaction, including manufacturing and distribution, if any, rather, these are intermediary processes"*. Goods act as an instrument that provides services for receivers within the context of her/his life along with their own resources. The delivery of the services is dependent on the receivers being able to use and adapt resources to their own *"unique needs, usage situations and behaviors"* (Vargo and Lusch, 2012). Vargo and Lusch (2012) argue, *"value*

creation is an ongoing, iterative and continuous process extending well beyond individual transaction" (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

I.III.III. Service Logic

According to the Service Dominant Logic, customers determine value thanks to the interaction with resources supplied by a service offering. S-D logic sees the value as a something that is co-created at the multiple stages of process and at all times. On the contrary to this perception, service logic argues that value from co-creation is derived only at one of the stages of the value creation (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). Grönroos and Gummerus (2014) argue that initial stage starts with facilitation of value by the firm/company, the second stage involves different interactions through co-creation between receiver and provider, and last and final stage contains actual value creation. This perception basically comprises two different processes. Firstly, provider offers resources and then receiver may use and consume those resources. This logic includes receiver's own part in value creation. In other words, receiver engagement plays fundamental role in the value creation (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Dean, Griffin and Kulczynski, 2016).

To support this framework, Dean, Griffin and Kulczynski (2016) have prepared the survey that was supposed to investigate customers experience in the context of education, evaluating the links between the experience from co-creation and how students understand the ongoing independent value creation. The survey discovered a connection between the co-creation experience and ongoing value in use, which appears through the independent value creation (Dean, Griffin and Kulczynski, 2016). Moreover, Dean, Griffin and Kulczynski (2016) argue that experience that arise from value co-creation might be itself source of additional value. Dean, Griffin and Kulczynski (2016) sum it up, that service logic of value and value in use refers to the one and the same thing. The receiver value is accumulated through co-creation and independent value creation processes (Dean, Griffin and Kulczynski, 2016).

Not only firms and customers, but also various stakeholders who enter into these actions, may determine the co-creation processes. In this stage, Stakeholders theory might be taken into consideration because it can bring understanding in possible discrepancies of value co-creation. Freeman (1984) has shifted his attention at the firm's level. According to Freeman (1984), firms

have stakeholders and should pay attention to them. Stakeholders refer to all possible actors who may join co-creation processes, such as: institutions, associations, students, competitors, partners, governments and so on. Therefore, the above mentioned stakeholders can become the receivers of value from co-creation processes. The scale of the value then depends on number of factors that occur and stakeholder 's activities in these processes. Moreover, Harrison & Wicks (2009) add to this concept that firms seek to serve the interests broad group of stakeholders will create more value over time.

I.III.IV. Unique Value

The traditional frameworks refer to exchange of units of production and value derivation as to an outcome of interaction. With regards to this view, all parts of interaction may lead to value creation and appropriation. It is important to emphasize that each of all interactions may play crucial role in value creation (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004).

Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) argue that value creation happens within personalized interaction of receiver and firm depending on the level of customer who will interact with the firm (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Moreover, Vargo and Lusch, (2012) believe that every point of service exchange may create variant experience and its value must be assessed with receptors or by receiver, due to the fact that each point of exchange happens in different context (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

In addition to this, same point of service exchange tends to be assessed differently by different stakeholders. It is inclined to bring various instances of value thanks to the fact that various stakeholders differ in assessment of value, depending on the individual view of different stakeholders (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

I.III.V. Value Proposition

Value added makes references to the process, in which firm production matters. This transformation is consisted of efforts and costs, that are named as "*value added*" and consequently seen as a source of value. According to Vargo and Lusch (2012), neither value or utility is embedded in offerings, but value derives when the offering is utilized, as well as when it is linked to other resources (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

According to Good Dominant logic, value is embedded in the goods within production and distribution. Any interaction with the receiver of the offering is not needed. On the other hand, Service Dominant logic argues, the value is not embedded in goods. Furthermore, value creation, may only happen through the interaction of actors and integration of offerings in context, when the offering actually adds value to the consumer in her/or her life (Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

Therefore, the value proposition can be seen as an *"invitation"* to get into interaction with the firm in order to receive benefit. Under Service Dominant logic, the value proposition is co-created *"not only with customer, but also with other stakeholders, such as its brand community"* (Merz, He, and Vargo, 2009; Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

I.III.VI. Operand and Operant Resources

According to Service Dominant logic, value creation happens through the combination of two kinds of resources. Operant resources may create value by using different action upon other resources. On the other hand, operand resources must be included in some actions to create value. Operant resources usually refer to intangible resources, which consist of knowledge and skills. On the contrary, operand resources are mainly tangible, such as goods. Vargo and Lusch (2012) argue that Service Dominant logic emphasizes the importance of operant resources with regards to value creation. Furthermore, knowledge and skills are considered as a fundamental point for gaining competitive advantage. (Archpru Akata, Vargo and Lusch, 2012; Ng and Smith, 2012)

I.III.VII. Role of the Customer and Supplier in Co-Creation

In order to broaden co-creation perspective, Agarwal and Rahman (2015) conducted the study that focus on the customer's perspective on the value creation. On the contrary to existing literature, which mainly focus on the firm's perspective, they tried to explore and describe the various roles that the customer may play in the value co-creation processes. Agarwal and Rahman (2015) argue that customers might be seen as: co-producer, co-distributor, co-promoter, co-manufacturer, co-consumer, co-innovator, co-ideator, co-evaluator, co-designer and co-tester. Agarwal and Rahman (2015) also note that customer, as part co-creation, needs to use both

operand and operant resources. Furthermore, Kohtamaki and Rajala (2016) state that customer may play many roles, as per Agarwal and Rahman (2015) work; they added that all of these roles may lead to knowledge sharing and joint organization learning (Kohtamaki and Rajala, 2016).

I.III.VIII. Value in Context

The term of "*value in use*" propose that customers affect and extract value "*through the application of a firm's offering*". (Archpru Akata, Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

According to Vargo and Lusch (2012), the concept of "*value in use*" is not that simple. They argue, that "*value in use*" concept does not take into consideration the usage behavior of the customers and it does not accurately show the conceptual character of the network the receivers are embedded in. Therefore, Vargo and Lusch (2012) rather propose to use the term "*value in context*". The concept of "*value in context*" refers to the fact that value does not necessary have to be always co-created. The value is derived by the integration of additional resources and its accessibility, thus it is "*contextually specific*" (Vargo and Lusch, 2012). This concept correlates with the S-D logic. "*Value in context*" means that the value is created, when a value proposition is applied within a specific context (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Archpru Akata, Vargo and Lusch, 2012).

I.III.IX. Systems view/Service Ecosystem

Wieland et al. (2012) argue that S-D see all stakeholders (companies, customers, etc.) involved in exchange objects that may provide service and create value (Wieland et al, 2012). Therefore, authors argue that this actor-to-actor configuration connotes the view that social and economic exchange is dynamic and systematic in its character (Wieland et al, 2012).

According the Edvardsson (2011), co-creation processes are determined by social structures. Moreover, Edvardsson (2011) argues, co-creation that is then created, diverse for all parties involved. With regards to these processes, Vargo and Lusch (2011) have come with new service ecosystems perspective, where they claim that value co-creation happens via dynamic interconnected networks of interlayered interaction. Thus, this ecosystem perspective goes beyond the service dominant logic where just firm and customer take part. They highlight that

social context play more important role than ever before. Focus now aims on social context that determine co-creation processes.

According to the service ecosystem view, the context in which the value is determined is especially important. (Vargo and Lusch, 2011; Archpru Akaka, Vargo and Lusch, 2012) Under this view, the value is co- created by the factor of resource integration, that is regulated by mutual exchanges (interactions).

I.IV. Value Appropriation

Considering the concepts of value creation and co-creation, it is necessary to also shed a light on the concept of value appropriation. As the previous topics, value appropriation has been researched by various scholars, who have tried to address the issues that have raised from this topic.

Peteraf and Barney (2003) argue, that value appropriation should take into consideration mainly pricing of products and social cognitive challenges. In their work, they look on the value appropriation process from the resource-based view. Therefore, they stress importance of resources as a key determinant. However, they add that it is necessary to take into consideration other factors as well. With regards to this view, resource-based view (RBV) refers to allocating various resources on the level of perceived benefit and the costs of output. The difference between the benefit and the costs is seen as a new created value (Peteraf and Barney, 2003).

Thus, Peteraf and Barney (2003) believe, that the deviation between firms in value creation processes affects value appropriation by lowering the incurred costs in production, throughout the ownership of unique resources, which are owned only by particular firm not by their competitors. This form is called "*a protective cushion*". The ownership of unique resources is assumed to help fighting against the market price, which the product company produces, as well as to strengthen the competitive advantage (Peteraf and Barney, 2003).

Whilst the resource-based view stressed only one view how to understand the process of value appropriation, strategy scholars focus on the more complex understanding of this phenomenon of value appropriation. Dyer and Singh (1998) argue, relational aspect and value chain of relationships play primary roles in appropriation processes. Thus, they argue, this is the main source of competitive advantage (Dyer and Singh, 1998; Hamel, 1991).

Moreover, the strategy scholars assume that the interaction processes between firms is fundamental key to find out, which firm appropriates what value and to what degree. Created value is then determined according to marginal product, or the difference between the total created value within the firm and the value that would be generated without the firm. (Brandenburger and Stuard, 1996; MacDonald and Ryall, 2004). In case that the marginal

product of the focal firm is equaled to zero, the firm is to be supplanted. Although, it is important to emphasize, that firms cannot appropriate more value than it is actually created by interaction with various stakeholders. Then, the other stakeholders would not stay as a part of this relationship (Hallberg, 2017).

Scholars have also raised different issues concerning value appropriation. By whom and how is value appropriated in transfer alliances. Contractor and Woodley (2015) assume that, partners who take a higher risk in investing or other management decision than other members of alliance may accomplish higher returns and appropriate higher value.

Furthermore, according to Contractor and Woodley (2015), the risk sharing in the alliance is determined by bargaining power of partners at the time of setting up contract.

Contractor and Woodley (2015) have conducted the empirical research in order to find out how firms try to protect their interest and how they appropriate value in alliances. In their work, they asked American companies that supply or transfer manufacturing technology with their foreign partners, how they create alliances. Contractor and Woodley (2015) proposed three types of alliances:

- Licensing deals
- Supply chain relationship
- Equity join ventures

Also, various hypotheses were tested by Contractor and Woodley (2015).

Contractor and Woodley (2015) have found out a positive correlation between the bargaining power and share in return. They argue, the higher bargaining power of one partner possess over other, the higher gains partner gets from share of return in alliance. However, the proportion of bargaining power refers to the moment, when the deal is actually negotiated between the partners.

To sum it up, the role of partners in alliances and bargaining power of each partner is interconnected and determine the final value appropriation process. Therefore, the fundamental aspect while formatting technology transfer alliances is bargaining power and risk, which are confronted with the expected returns of partners (Contractor and Woodle, 2015).

The concept of value appropriation might be assessed from different perspectives. In this research project authors would like to stress the importance of the relational aspect of value appropriation. This view is fundamental in understanding how the value is created and then appropriated by interns and firms vice versa. Moreover, the relational and conceptual aspects in these relationships may bring the firm and student competitive advantage at the market or at student's carrier.

In addition, various stakeholders can see internships from different perspective. Diverse stakeholders or institutions may support participating in different activities, in this case in internship programs. Moreover, stakeholders are also involved in supporting national economic development regarding young people in order to help them to become more capable in finding the desired job and being able to further develop their skills both personally and professionally. Furthermore, in order to completely understand the concept of the value and internship program, authors need to consider the stakeholder theory, which may bring a better understanding of value from different stakeholder's perspectives and also to build a connection between these two themes.

I.V. Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory has infiltrated the academic discussion regarding the management and wide array of disciplines, such as health care, law, and public policy (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar & Colle, 2010). However, much attention has been paid to the themes related to the firms. Freeman (1984) has started proactively looking at the firm's level. He has stated that firms have stakeholders and should pay attention to them. Moreover, according to Phillips (2003), stakeholder theory provides tool for connecting ethics and strategy. Harrison & Wicks (2009) adds to this concept that firms seek to serve the interests of broad group of stakeholders, who will create more value over time. Although, over the time there have been so many various interpretation of stakeholder theory, that the development of these ideas may be difficult (Scherer & Patzer, 2011).

With regards to concept of value, stakeholder theory has been focused to answer the question: *"what it means to create the value for stakeholders and furthermore, how we can measure it"*. As it has been already discussed before, the absence of discussion in this field may be referred to the fact that scholars assume, that they know what value means. However, value may be seen from different point of views (Freeman, 1994; Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Nevertheless, the core of the stakeholder theory revolves around the notion, that captured value should be appropriate to the spoils of the firm. In other words, justified stakeholders should presumably receive a larger share. This is related to the inherent assumption in recent literature that concept of value is seen only from the economical point of view (Agle, Mitchell & Sonnenfeld, 1999). In the case that the only relevant value created by company is economic, then the arguments among stakeholders may feed animosity. Furthermore, all stakeholders are focused to gain a biggest piece of the economic pie and to get a larger share. However, this type of animosity is in opposite direction to the fundament of the philosophy that has characterized stakeholder theory. Theory stresses the "joint-ness" of stakeholder interest and the necessity for all parties to benefit over time through their cooperation (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Harrison & Wicks, 2007).

Another major stream of literature stresses the important of size-of-pie issue by attempting to link good stakeholder treatment with the creation of value (Choi & Wang, 2009;

Hillman & Keim, 2001). The fundament behind this stream is that economic measures do show the value, which is created through the good treatment of stakeholders. On the other hand, the sidestepping notion argues, that much of the value stakeholders receive from co-operation with shareholder-friendly firms may have not been measured in economic measures. Economic returns are main aim of firm's core stakeholders, while most stakeholders want other things as well (Bosse, Phillips & Harison, 2009). Therefore, the focus on these aspects may bring the overall understating why some companies may succeed over time.

These two concepts in the stakeholder's literature point out the importance in understanding concept of value. This is even emphasized in managerial perspective, because managers tend to focus attention on things that leads to higher performance based on what actually is possible to capture, rather than looking only on economic scale of performance. (Sachs & Ruhli, 2011) Stakeholder-based performance scale may push managers to look into this value of their firms more broadly. At its core, this view is about creating a higher level of well being for all stakeholders involved in the process of value creation, which are led by the particular company.

I.V.I. Stakeholders and Their Roles

In order to create higher level of well- being for stakeholders, managers need to identify and distinguish stakeholders. According to Mitchell et al. (1997) stakeholders opens doors to identify and distingue different stakeholders from the non- stakeholders. Moreover, it assists to identify to whom managers have to pay attention to (Mitchell et al., 1997). Mitchel et al. (1997) have identified some attributes that can be used to distingue stakeholders into classes. In their work, Mitchel et al. (1997) have classified stakeholders according to three fundamental attributes:

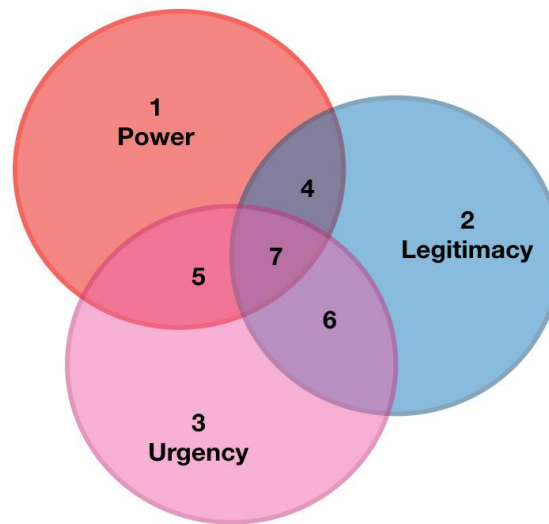
- Power of stakeholders to influence,
- Legitimacy of stakeholders,
- Urgency to claim,

Based on these three factors, Mitchell et al. (1997) have created comprehensive stakeholder's typology that is supposed to show how they should prioritize their managerial relationship with various stakeholders. Moreover, this typology also helps to predict possible

behavior of stakeholders with regards to their classification of typology. Nevertheless, managers should not only pay attention to specific stakeholders, but also take into consideration specific types of stakeholders in order to fully satisfy them, to achieve better outputs for both sides. (Mitchell et al., 1997)

In following sections, authors will consequently describe stakeholders' attributes and accordingly their typologies.

Figure 2.: Stakeholders Attributes



Source: Mitchell et al. (1997)

I.V.II. Stakeholders' Three Attributes

1. Power: According to Pfeffer (1981) the stakeholder's power to influence other stakeholders could be seen as "*a relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not otherwise have done*". However, Mitchell et al. (1997) have argued that "*power*" can be delicate but it is not hard to find it, thanks to the fact that notion "*power*" refers to the "*ability of those who possess power to bring about the outcomes they desire*" (Mitchell et al., 1997). Moreover, power is about the opportunity to come to the results that the particular stakeholder wants in an active approach by using different methods such as rules, physical force or the money.

Based on the researcher Etzioni (1964), who has proposed logic for a power categorization, we can identify the power more precisely. His suggestion was based on the different types of resources that are being used in the organizational surroundings in order to practice the power. He has identified three types of power. Firstly, the normative power, which is based on the resources that are being symbolic. Secondly, the violence power, which focuses on the material or financial resources. Thirdly, coercive power, that is established on the physical resources/force. Furthermore, stakeholder possesses a power in order to get an access to these three mentioned means when influencing its own will in the particular relationship. As a result, power can be gained or lost and therefore it is transitory. (Mitchell et al., 1997)

2. Legitimacy: It indicates, " *Socially accepted and expected structures, behaviors.*" (Mitchell et al., 1997) It can often get connected to one of these three attributes that is the power, when people try to assess the nature of the relationship. Many researchers make an assumption that stakeholders who possess legitimacy are unsurprisingly more powerful while based on the Mitchell et al., (1997) it is not always like this. This is due to the fact that a low number of stakeholders in the firm can also be seeing as powerful from the current managers' point of view. Furthermore, the same situation can also occur in the eyes of the new managers.

According to Weber (1947), two attributes such as power and legitimacy are separate and independent to each other, but they can be combined together in order to build up authority. It means to use the power by legitimate stakeholder. Legitimacy and power can also create the authority independently. Nevertheless, one of the entities may possess a legitimate proposition, but legitimacy cannot be always seen as a valid, unless there is either a power influencing its own will in the relationships or understanding of urgent claim. Only in this case, there is going to be a chance to attract the attention of the managers in the organization. (Mitchell et al., 1997)

3. Urgency: It actually captures the dynamics of two actors more precisely stakeholder and manager interactions, because as mentioned before power and legitimacy do not assist in capturing it. According to the Webster's online dictionary, urgency can be defined as " *calling or pressing for immediate attention*" (Merriam- Webster's Online Dictionary, 2000). When looking at the Mitchell et al. (1997), they believe that the urgency, which follows the synonyms such as "driving", "compelling" and "imperative" can only occurs when two circumstances are met. Firstly, when a relationship is a time sensitive nature, and secondly, when the relationship is

essential or serious to the particular stakeholder. Based on this notion, urgency of the stakeholder's claim on the firm indicates the degree to which this claim appeals for immediate action or urgent attention. It is main on two attributes which includes the claim is important to the stakeholder and it is time sensitive (Quezada, 2012).

I.V.III. Stakeholders Classes

The analysis of stakeholder classes has been created from various combinations of the three attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997) as it is shown in Figure 1. The analysis helps to identify entities that need to be taken into consideration as s stakeholders. In addition, Mitchell et al. (1997) have argued that the entities without power, legitimacy and urgency in relation to organizations' processes cannot be referred as stakeholders.

1. Latent stakeholders refer to the areas 1, 2, and 3 that are defined as classes with low importance and therefore, they are called *latent stakeholders*. These stakeholders are characterized in situation, where managers have limited energy, time or resources in order to be fully involved in managing relationships with other stakeholders. According the theory, these managers have only one of the three attributes. Thus, *latent stakeholders* do not often participate in interactions with other stakeholders, or if so then only with limited time. Due to limited time, they also may not even recognize involved stakeholders. Therefore, these three areas have been described as "*low stakeholder salience where only one of the stakeholders' attributes of power legitimacy and urgency is perceived by managers to be present*". (Mitchell et al., 1997)

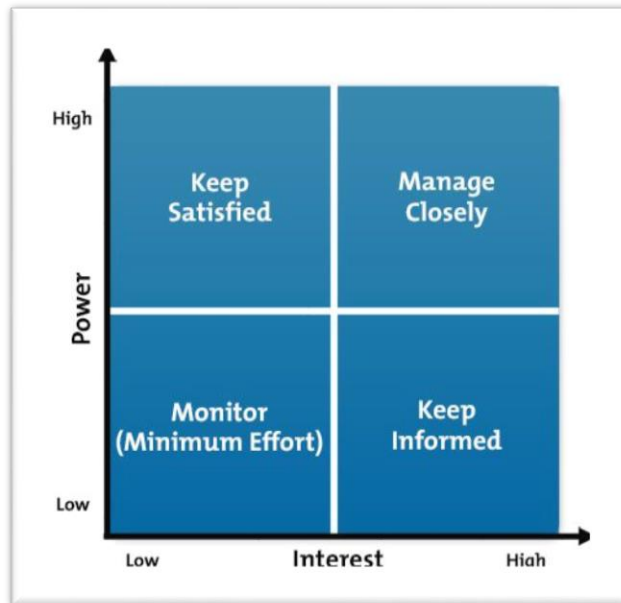
2. Expectant stakeholders refer to stakeholders that possess combination of two attributes, such as: power and legitimacy, legitimacy and urgency, or urgency and power. Mitchell et al. (1997) state, "*Stakeholder salience will be moderate where two of the stakeholders' attributes are perceived by managers to be present*". Thus, the areas 4, 5, and 6 are the classes of moderate-salience stakeholders that appears as expecting something, due to the fact that the combination of the two attributes cause a situation when stakeholders are pushed to assess their attitude (passive versus active) as well as a changing demand for responsiveness to the interest of various stakeholders. Consequently, the amount of engagement is supposed to be higher among the involved managers and *expectant stakeholders*. (Mitchell et al., 1997)

3. Definitive Stakeholders refer to area 7 that shows highly salient stakeholders. These stakeholders possess the combinations of all three stakeholders' attributes - power, legitimacy and urgency that dynamically relate to each other, Thus, they are called: *Definitive stakeholders*. Stakeholders showing both legitimacy and power might be already members of dominant coalition as the claim of such stakeholders is urgent. Thus, these stakeholders will possess immediate and definite authorization to attend and give priority to the proposition of stakeholders. Furthermore, it is not uncommon that the dominant stakeholders are shifted into the definitive category. (Mitchell et al., 1997)

I.V.IV. Stakeholders Mapping

Stakeholder mapping is identified as "*a process of identifying, analyzing and prioritizing the needs of the core stakeholders.*" (Grant & Jordan, 2012) In this process, the company can easily find out how different stakeholders can participate in the company's strategy formulation, as well as discovering how to manage specific relationship with various stakeholders. According to Ackermann and Eden (2011), they suggest to implement " the Power and Interest matrix" in order to analyze and map different stakeholders. It also categories stakeholders in regards to the power they possess and the extent to which they are expected to show the interest in the firm's strategy.

Figure 3: Power/ Interest Matrix Map Grid



Source: Grant and Jordan, (2012)

This matrix includes two dimensions such as power and interest. The first dimension is based on the stakeholder interest, which also refers to *"a specific stakeholder's political interest in the firm or dispute, rather than simply the degree of the curiosity."* (Grant and Jordan, 2012) The second dimension is based on the stakeholder power and it refers to *"the stakeholder's capability to have an effect on the organization's future."* (Grant and Jordan, 2012)

In addition to this, the power/interest grid also classifies four main types of stakeholders.

1. Manage closely: This refers to the stakeholders who have high power and high interest. They are the most important stakeholders, because they are called as a key player who is not afraid to use their power to influence the firm's processes. They are also highly powerful and interested in the strategies of the organization. (Leung & Olomolaiye, 2010)

2. Keep informed: These are the stakeholders who possess low power and high interest. It is recommended to keep relationship with these stakeholders, but it is not essential to involve. They should be informed, as they can be important to influence the more powerful stakeholders. (Leung & Olomolaiye, 2010)

3. Monitor: It refers to the stakeholders who have low interest and low power. They have less influence on the company as the other stakeholders. There is minimum effort and monitoring of these stakeholders. It is good for the company to monitor them, but there is no necessity for extreme communication. (Leung & Olomolaiye, 2010)

4. Keep satisfied: There are the stakeholders who have high power but low interest. Even though they demonstrate low interest, they can still use their power to impact the organization. They are generally rather passive but may suddenly appear as a result of particular events. (Leung & Olomolaiye, 2010)

I.V.V. Economic Foundation for Understating Value with regards to Stakeholder Theory

Through the history, economic thinkers and philosophers have developed different and useful insight for the notion "*value*". Adam Smith (1776) provides at least two important perspectives on value. In his famous book *The Wealth of Nations* he states that individuals know what is best for them. Thus, value is something what individuals define by them and not allow governments or different actors to choose in their stead (Smith, 1776). In second view, Smith (1776) stresses that healthy markets give the customers a free will to choose what they want, from whom, and under what terms. It is known from basic of the markets what customers will tend to make their decision that provide them the highest value for what value they give up. In case they can find better deal, they easily switch up for it.

On the other hand, with the evolution of economic has also come evolution in understanding of "*value*". Significant thinker of his time and father of utilitarianisms Jeremy Bentham (1770) sees and measure the value by combined measurements of pleasure and pain. According to his view, pleasure and pain could be assessed and systematized across all persons (Bentham, 1770). In the contrary to Betham's view, another famous economic thinker J.S. Mill (1861) argues, there are crucial differences across types of pleasure and pain. He has believed that these differences have to be taken into consideration in any attempt to define or measure utility or value. As an example, he states that value is more than simple pain or pleasure. To emphasize this, he puts into account innovation.

In modern economic, value has been tied to a variety of factors; value as determined by price, value as determined by labor; value as determined by exchange; and value as determined by production (Hausmann & McPherson, 2006). According to Sen (1998), these aspects, beyond the utility, are important dimension of value not only for individuals but as well for society. Nevertheless, simplification of the concept of value allows many scholars to research though complex mathematical modeling. However, it also tends to obscure additional factors of utility relevant to a discussion of value, especially to these aspects that go beyond profitability and economic returns (Sen, 1998).

I.V.VI. Stakeholders Theory with regards to Value Creation

As is stated by Smith (1776), healthy markets allow individuals to choose. These statements are similar to Freeman's (1984) view that all stakeholders are "*customers*". All "*customers*" have opportunity to make decision in terms of whether the utility a company offers them is higher than what they may give up from different options. Stakeholders themselves determine their own utility functions with regards to their own preferences. However, transactions, relationships and interactions play important role in perception of utility what they receive. All these factors influence preferences.

Nevertheless, the main premise of literature on stakeholder theory refers to stakeholders. Especially treating them well and taking care of their interests, helps and supports a firm create value thought various stages of process and is thus beneficial for company's performance (Freeman, Harrison and Wicks, 2007; Bosse & Phillips, 2010).

Although, financial performance is fundamental for many of firm's stakeholders, but it is not the only factor of value that is taken into consideration by stakeholders (Phillips, 2003). This is in consistence with already mentioned Freeman's (1984) perception that company shall treat multiple stakeholders in good manners. Phillips (2003) adds, that company's performance can be assessed as the total value created "*by the firm through its activities, which is the sum of the utility created for each of a firm's legitimate stakeholders*".

Consequently, stakeholder theory emphasizes the underlying overlap of stakeholder's interests in creating value and characterizes processes within the firm as a mechanism for all stakeholders to become better off over time (Freeman, Harrison & Wicks, 2007). This view is

supported by other scholars including Sachs & Rühli (2011), who argue that stakeholder interests are inseparably connected in a system of value creation, in which every stakeholder offers resources or play a role in exchange of some tangible or intangible goods. The quality of contribution in these exchanges determines the final created value in the system (Susniene & Vanagas, 2006). What holds this exchange system is the presence of shared norms that are beyond strict self-interest.

Utility that stakeholders look for is complex and carries more than just economic value. Therefore, stakeholders depend not only on itself but also on other stakeholders to satisfy their own desires. Although, stakeholders do not always cooperate, they may create various conflicts. Furthermore, there may arise potential conflict between the stakeholders and firms vs what society may value (Harrison & Wicks, 2013).

As managers pay attention to creating utility for their stakeholders, both from tangible and intangible factors, more value is created. Neglect of any of stakeholders may cause downward spiral in the system of value creation as the all stakeholders respond to what they see (Harrison & Wicks, 2013).

Within the internship programs diverse type of value may arise. Based on the already described literature above, value created though internships may appear in various dimensions, such as economic, social, educational etc. Unfortunately, many of them are unresearched due to the fact that measures are difficult to be set up. Therefore, many researches have been based on economic measures, because they are easier to assess.

In order to find the relationship between the value creation and the internship, authors need to understand the whole concept of the internship program, which is designed by the particular company in order to benefit firms as well as students. The value that is created within co-operation between company and student may also touch different stakeholders. Students, thanks to the internship experience, may amplify the gained experiences (appropriated values) to universities or additional institutions. Therefore, different third parties may benefit from this initial co-operation between students and firms. In following chapters, authors will describe the themes related to internship in order to see the whole picture of value emerging from internship program.

I.VI. What is an Internship?

According to the Sweitzer and King (2004), the internship is a form of an experiential learning. This kind of learning has its roots back to the medieval times through the Industrial Revolution. One of the earliest indications of the term internship was found from the ancient Babylon and it was defined as *“if an artisan takes a son for an adoption and teach him his handicraft, one may not bring claim for him”* (Woodard, 2015). Towards the end of the 19th century, professional colleges required practical and direct experiences as one of the components in their academic curriculum. (Chickering, 1977) Continuing further towards the beginning of the 20th century, internship started to become a successful process of transferring a particular set of skills in terms of knowledge and job.

The word *“intern”* was firstly used in the United States where they describe it in the medical school more specifically the medical physician who has already completed certain degree but did not have the practical experiences. Since that, the concept of the internship has continued to growth further and progress not only in the medical environment. As the internship is defined as a form of experiential learning, it is important to get the understanding of this concept. Therefore, experiential learning according to the National society of Experiential Education is described as *“learning activities that involve the learner in the process of active engagement with critical reflection.”* (NSEE, 2006).

As mentioned by one of the philosopher who studied experiential learning John Dewey (1916), *“an ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory”*. He has strongly believed that real education comes through the experience, but not all experiences are educative. He was convinced that it is important for educational environment to actively encourage and stimulate intern’s development throughout this experience. In order to do so, it needs to provide situations for resolving certain issues, problems that the intern can face. By thinking actively, students can grow and learn through this experience. In order to have experiential education, students are required to be active participants for this learning to happen. When there is active learning in process, students are in the center of the energy, attention and they act actively on different activities. However, when the learning is passive, teachers are in the center and they tell students what they think they should know.

Reflection is another key component to experiential learning. As mentioned by the author Giles (1990) who studied learning through the internships, reflection is something that connects and integrates the work environment to the learning. In other words, the theory that is being studied can be emphasized in the class, but not automatically integrated in the practical experience. Due to this fact, the reflection is a connection and powerful tool for the growth, learning and development. (Eyler& Giles, 1999)

There are also other definitions of the internship, National Association of Colleges and Employers have acknowledged that it is *“a form of experiential learning that integrates theory and knowledge gained in the classroom with the practical application and skills development in a professional environment.”* (NACE, 2010) Looking at other point of views when it comes to the concept of the internship, authors Mueller and Overmann (2014) have defined it as learning blocks, which shape the career for many students. In many cases, internships have become a necessary tool to have for an entry- level position. They are convinced that it is a source of practical and professional experience. Students will also get an internal experience with the certain company. This is mainly what the company or in other words employer is looking for because they want to make sure that the potential candidate for the job has a good understanding of the requirements of the workplace. Moreover, to be confident that the potential hires do not mistaken the career responsibilities with the student lives which comes with more freedom. (Mueller & Overmann, 2014)

Research has identified varieties of the internship forms. Across all of these different approaches, there is a consistency that internship involves a length period placement of the joined student in an organization. Sometimes it is possible to find the internship, which is provided with pay, but also without salary. Internship can include a company supervisor, university supervisor, and some academic credit can be earned from the internship. (Fuller & Schoenberger, 1991)

I.VI.I. Benefits of the internship

As mentioned before, internships serve as a powerful strategy for the employers as they provide companies with a means of recruiting and selecting potential hires. In this case the company have the opportunity to screen, monitor and evaluate potential candidate in advance

and prior to make the permanent offer and commitment. It leads to the situation where the company can make some savings when it comes to the finances (Sweitzer & King, 2013).

As published by NACE (2004) the results of the survey found out that 58% of student interns are offered with a full -time position from their internship company. Employees, who have previous work experience as for example internships, get paid higher salaries and the companies are likely to see higher employee retention rates when they hire their intern. (NACE, 2004,2005) As researched in the article by Woodard (2015), if interns get offer and are hired in the full- time position, they adjust faster to the new role and therefore have a shorter learning period than someone who comes externally. The company itself benefits from having interns, as they can provide and assist with the knowledge of the latest trends, techniques and strategies that they have learned in the classroom environment. They have the ability to perceive things differently than the regular employees and therefore come up with new ideas, solutions and recommendations for the particular situation that the company might not even be aware of. By providing the internship, the company can increase their brand awareness among potential hires. It can serve as a great way to promote the business. (Sweitzer & Kings, 2013)

According to the survey made by U.S. Department of labor, employers noticed a decrease in the soft skills amongst new potential hires. This is the ability to work together and get along with other colleagues in the same organization. (Woodard, 2015) As internship helps the students to cultivate soft skills, authors Eyler & Giles (1999) mostly mean leadership skills, interpersonal skills and empathy. They are convinced that people already have these sets of skills before the internship placement, but work environment is a significant place to activate and exercise them.

The recruitment of the potential candidates who possess these soft skills have become quite difficult. Furthermore, it is difficult to gain these soft skills in the class environment thus school have put into their attention the concept of the internship into their curriculum. It is a way in which school interacts and transfers the knowledge between the academia and practice. This creates the platform for the students to seek out useful internship in which they can achieve desired goals. Such experience can boost the education and increase the possibility for the employment. (Mueller & Overmann, 2014)

I.VI.II. Four Phases of Experiential Learning

This cycle represents four phases that people go through in order to get benefits from the internship. The cycle was originally devised by a researcher David Kolb (1984), and this theory is concerned with the internal cognitive processes of the person who aims to learn something. Researcher sees this learning process in which each stage is connected to other. All of these four phases are mutually supportive. People can enter this cycle at different stages and do not necessary have to start from the beginning. Furthermore, they can follow it according to its logical sequence. In order to have the experiential learning cycle as an effective tool, learner needs to fulfill and complete all four phases of this model. None of the stage is effective on its own thus, connected to each other. (Kolb, 2015)

Starting with the first phase, which is concrete experience (CE); students have specific types of experiences that they gained in the classroom, at home, or in the work placement. Then they tend to reflect on this specific experience from multiple points of views. This is called reflective observation (RO). The next stage requires that they try to form a generalization or some kind of principles based on their concrete experience and reflection. The process of generalization is included in the stage called abstract conceptualization (AC). Finally, it is a time to test the theory in the new surrounding or situation, which stands for active experimentation (AE). After this time, the cycle begins again due to the fact that this is already a new concrete experience. (Kolb, 2015)

Researchers agrees with the Kolb's experiential learning cycle, and for example as James Zull's research on the relationship between the learning, brain and education suggests that education can have an effect on the brain maximally, when the student or inter has a concrete experience in the field, reflects on it and connects it to what is already known and then creates own hypothesis to actively experiment it in the new situations. This in turn will create another concrete experience. (Zull, 2002)

I.VI.III. Developments from the Internship

Studies found out that the useful and powerful internship program provides the challenging tasks, projects and assignments that are in balance with the academic and career

objectives. One of the significant values for the students is the fact that they can create their professional network, and therefore it increases the chances of future career possibilities. (Kolb, 2015) Powerful internship program enables to grow in three main aspects, which includes personal, professional and civic development. It is important to state that each intern enters into the particular internship program in different stages of the development and therefore some of them can already possess different skill. However, with concentration, attention and motivation, they can grow in all of these three above-mentioned developments.

I.VI.III.I. Personal development

Internship creates the opportunity for intellectual and emotional developments, which are important in the internship process but intern can also use it in the life in general depending on the way she/he chooses. (Sweitzer & King, 2013) It provides the ability for the intern to learn how to look at the information critically, then to have a look at the issues from the different perspectives, as well as to think creatively and “outside of the box”. In order to grow in the personal development, it is necessary to develop the ability to communicate clearly orally and in writing. Other abilities such as solving issues and working in teams will help the intern not only at work but also at home, and in everyday life situations. Many of these abilities come from the educational background but they play critical role in any profession. (Kolb, 2015) Internship can be a powerful tool for personal growth and providing the possibilities for recognizing the student’s own potential through different activities, tasks and work that should be under professional and qualified supervisor.

I.VI.III.II. Professional Development

There are many reasons why students are motivated to enter into the internship, but it was found out that it is primarily for the career exploration. They are maybe just curious about the field that they are studying and want to explore and see it from the practical point of view. Then, there are also students who want to participate in the internship, because they see it as a culminating academic experience in very structured set of experiences. In this case they can pull their strength and apply most of the models, techniques and theories, which they acquired in the classroom environment. (Sweitzer & King, 2013) The most important value for everyone is to

get a chance to take next step further, to gain new knowledge, to acquire new set of skills, develop certain values and attitudes toward the career path.

While developing professionally, intern will get the opportunity to understand and see the work environment in more complex way than just by education. For someone who already had a permanent full-time position, this might not be that relevant, but the internship will also show them the unknown things where they have just a little or no experience. (Sweitzer & King, 2013) It is the primary purpose that the internship should highlight the academic learning, but even though if the main aim is to only get the professional experience, it is always educational component in the process of learning.

I.VI.III.III. Civic Development

Civic development includes growth in both personal and professional skills, knowledge and values for participation in the community. (Colby et al., 2003) The internship can be a tool for civic development in two ways. Firstly, it can help the intern to develop skills, knowledge and values that will make the person to become a more responsible among the community, despite of what they choose to do for the life work; and the internship can assist to grow into the “civic professional”. (Sweitzer & King, 2013) Civic development includes two aspects such as Civic learning and civic professionalism. (Colby et al., 2003)

- **Civic Learning**

To start with the civic learning, based on the book by Sweitzer and King (2013), the internship is a chance for people to learn some new knowledge, gain new set of skills that will help them to actively participate in the social community. This topic has been researched by many authors such as Battistoni (2006), Howards (2011) and therefore authors of this project will analyze them into detail. Civic knowledge is defined as a learning process not just about the challenges that the intern faces within the organization but about historical and social strengths that cause these issues. (Sweitzer & King, 2013) There is a great example of this concept by Godfrey who stated that it means the learning that people are poor or unemployed, does not necessarily shows that they are lazy or not smart. He found out that their conditions result from the social surroundings that they do not have control over. (Godfrey, 2000)

- **Civic Professionalism**

According to Sweitzer and King (2013), they suggest that firstly it is necessary to get a clear and deep understanding of the word professional in order to have an overall picture of the civic professionalism. They found out that students perceive the internship as a great chance to get knowledge and learn how to actually do something regarding their academic background or career interest. Internship can help student to master, for example the course where they have already explored and developed certain skills in the real work environment. The concept of the civic professionalism emerges with the connection of the education of civic -minded students who can understand the particular responsibilities that come to their decisions and actions in the work place. (Godfrey, 2000)

I.VI.IV. Defining the Characteristics of Internship Program

I.VI.IV.I. Learning

As mentioned previously, internship is an experiential learning. Most of the interns expect to broaden their career skills and learn from practical experiences, which they cannot learn in a classroom. (Gault et al., 2000) By participating and working in a real organization, interns develop different types of skills as mentioned before. Interns come to know about the work industry, work environment, other employees, as well as their strength and weaknesses as potential future hires. Job characteristics have a strong influence on the job satisfaction. (Gault et al., 2000) Learning does not only necessarily represents immediate rewards in the form of better performance and compensation, but on the other hand long-term benefits. There are various types of learning that occur in the internship process are source of intrinsic rewards, which has influence towards the job satisfaction. (Hackman & Oldham, 1980)

The way in which the interns learn depends highly on the internship company who provides the opportunities to discover various aspects of the work, tasks, and assignments and to allow the intern to provide their input. Furthermore, it is important for the intern to make a list of the learning goals together with the supervisor, more precisely at the beginning of the internship. The concept of identifying the learning goals serves as a professional roadmap for the intern's progress during the internship period. It helps to identify the objectives that the intern wants to

achieve and the certain techniques on how to accomplish it. When creating these goals on advance, intern can discuss together with supervisor what kind of assignments, projects and tasks should get. (Gault et al., 2000)

I.VI.IV.II. Mentoring from Supervisor

According to the Dreher and Ash (1990), mentoring is described as the degree to which the mentor assigns certain tasks to the intern, and then provides regular assistance in order to accomplish these tasks, and to help the intern build up a positive impression of the company by creating both horizontal and vertical networks. The role of the mentor is to a valuable resource during the whole internship period. Mentor will influence the development of the intern's experience and his/her motivation to work hard and get the most out of this professional experience. It has been shown that supervising has influence on the job performance and career success. Mentoring from the assigned supervisor is probably the most essential source of learning during the internship. (Dreher & Ash, 1990)

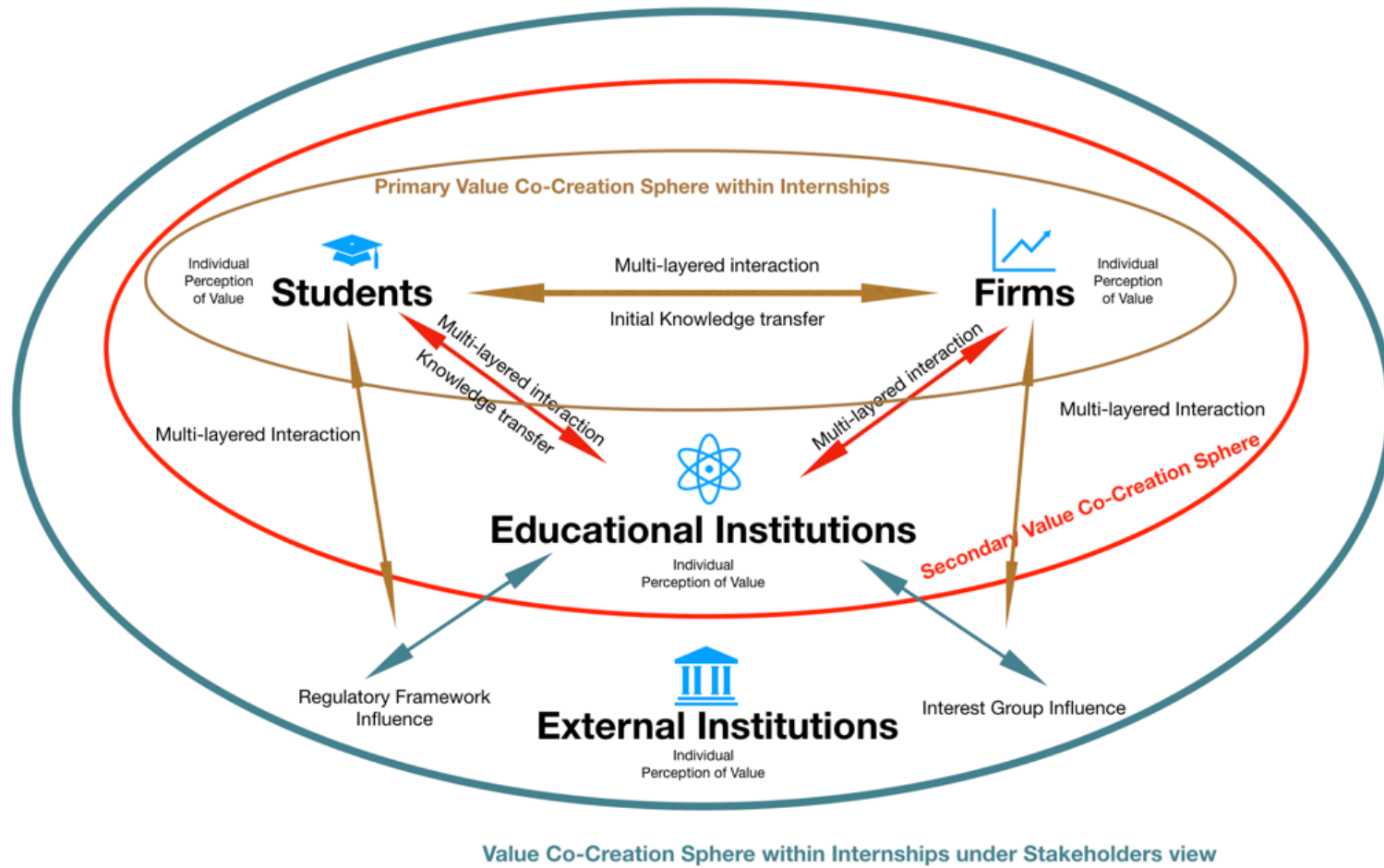
The position serves as an excellent reference when the company is deciding whether the intern is a good candidate for the future hire after graduation. (Cooper et al., 2003) The company needs to make sure that the mentor has enough time, which is necessary for providing mentoring for the intern. They should find interest in assisting in both personal and professional development. The company needs to be aware that this role as a mentor is important and it requires preparation and training, as one would hire a new person in the work. They act as a teacher because they help the intern regarding the learning about the business; they explain certain tasks, projects that the intern will be working on during the internship period. They can also be called as supporters because they help the intern to make effective and calm transition to the work environment. (Cooper et al., 2003) One of the advantages of having a supervisor is the fact that intern can receive constructive feedback and therefore to move towards the desired goal. In order for the internship to be successful and effective, two- way communication is a must and the company needs to make sure that they have well-qualified and professional mentors. (Cooper et al., 2003)

II. Chapter - Conceptualization

Based on the themes extracted from literature review, authors will develop a conceptualization of the value with regards to the concept of the internship programs. The framework aims to draw the overall picture of the concept of the value and illustrate different actors that have influence on the value creation through the internship. It also connects different aspects of the value creation and many of the sub-themes that have been defined in the literature review, with regards to the knowledge acquisition, learning and information exchange.

The main aim of the framework is to visualize the social context that is, according to theories, one of the fundamental determinants influencing value creation. The framework takes into consideration four important stakeholders such as: educational institutions, external institutions, students and the firms. This proposed framework has been designed to assess the relationship among different stakeholders in terms of the value creation and the factors, which have influence on the perception of the value from having the internship program. Authors of this research paper are aware of different types of stakeholders and their roles in the value co-creation processes, however this research will focus on the core stakeholders such as students, firms and the educational institution and their attributes that might change over time.

Figure 4: Framework - Co-Creation within Internships



Source: Own creation

II.I.I. Primary Value Co-Creation Sphere within Internships

The first phase was named as *"Primary Value Co-Creation Sphere within Internships"* because it is the place where interaction between the internship company and the student starts to occur. Based on the literature review, interaction between these two actors may have the most impact on the value creation and co-creation processes and their perception. This primary value creation sphere is created by multiple interactions of these actors, which are organized within social context that has influence on the certain interactions. These interactions primarily aim to set up a way of knowledge transfer between two parties. Nevertheless, students' and firms' interaction and participation in processes might change over the time with regards to their stage of their attributes where they actually stay on the certain time, but these two actors are core of these processes, therefore they will determine all value co-creation and final outputs in various processes. However, students' main focus is shed on the personal and professional development in order to succeed on the labor markets.

Consequently, firms aim to find suitable candidates for internal jobs offering within the company as well as the gain new knowledge flowing from the graduate students. The final value that is created by those actors differs with regards to students and firm perception of value. Both sides may see the value from different point of view. Therefore, the assessing the amount of created value may face difficulties. However, interaction between these two actors is not only one. Educational institutions may also enter into processes and may play role in the value creation processes. Students share the already gained knowledge from universities with the internship firm. The knowledge is already imprinted in the student brain and therefore it can be implemented in different work situations. According to this fact, students can transfer the certain knowledge to the firm, which can have positive impact on the overall company's performance. When firm interacts with the student, it also provides the student with the new knowledge regarding the intern tasks at the particular company. Therefore, knowledge sharing is part of these two stakeholder's multiple layer interaction.

II.I.I.I. Students

In order to succeed on current labor markets, students have the possibility to gain professional experience throughout their studies. Internship program is often part of their

studying plan based on their educational field. In most cases, it is up to students to seek an appropriate internship program that will benefit them in choosing the right path for their future career.

As it is stated in literature review regarding internships, students seek their internship in order to gain benefits rising from this experience. The perception of the value of students may appear in different way than is firm's perception of value that can be often measured by financial indicators. This even emphasizes by the fact, that students do not always receive financial benefits from the company and therefore it is interesting to see what value they seek and how they perceive it from having an internship. Furthermore, student's perception of the value can be difficult to measure, because it is created within the specific context (value in context) and it is highly individual.

II.I.I.II. Firms

According to the literature review, firms offer the internship program to students because it serves as a powerful strategy as it provides the possibility for recruiting and selecting potential hires. Therefore, firm has the opportunity to screen, monitor and evaluate potential candidate in advance and prior to make the permanent offer. With regards to value, the most of managers see value from financial point of view. Therefore, it may create discrepancies in value perception between these two actors. While firms see value in increasing their profits or lowering their costs, students on other hand seek for less measurable utility. Firms, by the possibility of internship for student may offer "value proposition" in value co-creation processes and it is up to student to individual "consume" it and personalize the value for their personal needs. Moreover, internship program does not necessarily need to be paid, but in some cases direct monetary exchange happens between the firm and student.

II.I.II. Secondary Value Co-Creation Sphere

In comparison to Primary Value Co-creation Sphere, Secondary Value Co-Creation Sphere brings another stakeholder into the value co-creation processes. Educational institutions, as representatives from academic field, create a basis for student's entrance into labor market. They interact with students on daily basis and provide them the opportunity to obtain certain

knowledge, which can be further used and implemented in the work environment. By providing students the particular education, universities unconsciously imprint knowledge on students that is afterwards used by students and firms in their multiple interactions in order to benefit both sides. After the internship program, educational institutions receive experiential value from the students.

Firms also interact with the educational institutions not only when looking for intern to their program. Firms get in touch with educational institutions when cooperating on research projects or supporting educational system with valuable insight information. This multi-layered interaction between both sides helps education system to bring additional benefits into educational processes. Moreover, firms may financially support diverse projects within Universities or cover additional costs in order to better educational system for students.

Firms cooperate with universities in order to attract students to different internship programs. As stated in Stakeholder theory, cooperation between stakeholders may increase overall value. However, every stakeholder needs to benefit from this cooperation and none of them cannot neglect it. In order to keep up a long-term success, stakeholders need to treat their partners (in this case students, firms and educational institutions) well and also take care of their interest. This helps and supports all actors to create value through various stages of process, no matter how they perceive the value.

II.I.III. Value Co-Creation Sphere in Internships under Stakeholders view

In order to show overall picture, authors have to also consider additional stakeholders that enter into co-creation processes and may influence them. External institutions play part in the value co-creation processes. External institutions can include different interest groups, governmental institutions and associations for example agencies, students' groups, industry associations, voluntary organizations etc. They are supporting parties, especially government, who are involved in the maintaining the national economic development of the young people. Although this group includes many different types of institutions, government has the most influence on the whole process. This happens because of the fact that the government has strong impact on the creation and development of the regulatory frameworks for the firms and

educational institutions, as well student or other external institutions. Moreover, government has a power to set up fundamental framework that determinates internships programs and all actors involved in it.

Furthermore, firms that aim to serve the interest of stakeholders will create more value over time. Nevertheless, the question, what does it mean to create value for stakeholders and how can it be measured, has been crucial point for many researchers. However, even without exact knowledge of value, stakeholder theory stress that collaboration of stakeholders causes the benefits overtime though their cooperation in many stages. This notion can be applied not only for firms but also for all involved stakeholders. Simplification of value as being financial point of view allows scholars to research through mathematical modeling. But, as it is already mentioned, it may cause false results due to excluding relevant factors that are difficult to simplify into mathematical numbers.

Every stakeholder of value co-creation processes offers resources or has a role in exchange of tangible or intangible outputs. The quality of their communication and multiple layer interaction determine the overall value in the system. Within the internship programs different types of value may arise. Value created through internship may appear in various dimensions, such as economic, social, educational etc. Therefore, it is challenging for scholars to measure final value or create suitable model to describe all processes and determinants influencing them.

III. Chapter - Methodology

The project is focused on the topic of the value creation in the context of the internship program and the authors are aiming to get a good understanding and exploring the value perceptions (creation). In order to get the understanding of the value perception, the goal of this project is to analyze perspectives from the core stakeholders.

In order for the authors to get a good understanding of the research topic, the research design needs to be identified. Based on the Bryman and Bell (2011), they have identified five different research designs including experimental, cross- sectional, case study, comparative and longitudinal design. For this project, the authors have decided to choose the case study design. In this case, authors have the opportunity to use different qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group, surveys, reports and therefore not being depended on only one. It can be used for obtaining a deeper knowledge of a specific research phenomenon, by focusing on settings and by creating a concentrated analysis and examination. On the contrary, there are some challenges when it comes to this type of research design, which are credibility and generalizability. However, according to Yin (2014), case studies can achieve strong credibility by creating the trustworthiness.

III.I. Reasoning Method

When defining the research design, the next step is to identify the reasoning approaches, namely deductive and inductive approach. In order to state the decision, it is necessary to demonstrate the main differences between these two reasoning methods. To start with the deduction, it is closely linked to testing hypothesis and it focuses on looking at casual relationships between different variables. This approach requires a concrete ground to ensure reliability and objectivity from the researchers' point of view. (Saunders et al., 2009) In this case the most common way of collecting primary data is by using questionnaire, which will help to get the results in order to test developed hypothesis.

On the other hand, induction approach looks more at the nature of the issue and its reasons. Based on the data that are collected, researcher would end up with a theory that would help with the researched topic. Generally, inductive approach is often used in a social science,

because it takes into consideration the fact, that the social world is created and influenced by its actors, thus paying attention to the context of the research. (Saunders et al., 2009) According to the data collection and findings, this approach can result in creating own understanding that will have the impact on the research phenomenon.

After a short discussion, authors have concluded that this research uses neither deduction nor induction as reasoning methods. When looking closer at a social construction side, the research project is using abductive approach, thus following elements of both methods. The main goal is to answer the research question by using qualitative data collection, namely semi-structured interviews. Then following with analyzing them by using specific knowledge, created from literature review chapter, which assist with the interpretation of the primary data.

III.II. Data Collection Method

There are two main types of data including primary and secondary data. (Kuada, 2012) In order to answer the research question, primary data are going to be used.

- **Primary data**

In regards of the primary data collection, authors have decided to choose it, due to the fact that they are "tailor made" only for this research topic, and therefore the validity increases for the research problem. Primary data offers the motives, reasons and explanations and it is especially a good way to learn about people' opinions, perspectives, attitudes and even their behavior. We are going to use the qualitative research method, which includes qualitative interviews conducted with companies who provide internship programs for the students within the business area. Furthermore, when collecting the primary data, authors are using qualitative interviews with students who have already had their internship in order to see their value perception of the whole program itself and to understand their perspectives of the factors that influence it. Furthermore, individual interviews are going to be conducted with the educational institutions as well.

When talking about the advantages of the primary data, they are new and gather only for the main aim of this research project. On the other hand, authors also need to consider disadvantages of using the primary data collection. One of the disadvantages of collecting

primary data can be that it is time consuming and quite hard to generalize. (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011)

- **Qualitative Interviews**

As mentioned before, authors have decided to use qualitative method for data collection, including individual interviews. They serve as a primary source of data for answering the research question. For this research project, multiple interviews are going to be conducted with companies, students and employees of educational institution in order to get the more accurate and fresh results. To be more specific, six interviews are going to be conducted with students, who have already had their internship in different companies. Furthermore, three companies that provide internship program for students are going to be included for the interviews as well. Then two employees of the Aalborg University are also going to participate in individual interviews to get their perception of the value creation. Interviews are explicitly designed to get new perspectives and findings in regards of the research topic. When creating precise interviews for the purpose of this research, it will allow us to have different questions and discussion according to suggested conceptual framework.

It is necessary to mention some of the advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative interviews. Starting with the advantages, the interviewer is not only limited to one specific question, but there is possibility to acquire deep and detail results. When conducting qualitative interviews, authors can give interviewee space and the chance to share their insights, opinions, and perceptions and mainly to share their experience on the research topic. (Kuada, 2012) By being present in the interview, author can be certain that the interviewee is not off the topic. There is also possibility for redirecting certain questions if required. (Andrson, 1994)

On the other hand, the main challenge when using qualitative interviews is the fact that it can be really time- consuming to gather data and in this case the research cannot be as big as having for example quantitative method. Transcribing data can also take a long time and therefore it is very important to be prepared and focused. (Andrson, 1994)

- **The Structure of the Interviews**

When taking into consideration the structure of the interview, there are identified three different types. According to Kvale (2007) interviews can be *structured*, *semi-structured* and

unstructured. Structured interview follows a set of standardized questions and there is no possibility to have a dialog between the participant and researcher. This type of interview does not provide a space for the interviewee to express and explore the answers. Unstructured interview does not have prepared questions, and it mostly looks like an everyday dialog. When conducting unstructured interviews, there is a chance to miss out on some of the essential topics due to the fact that interview does not have a certain agenda. Therefore, a big amount of information that is received during the interview can be sometimes hard to process. As defined by Kvale (2007), semi-structured interview is a professional interaction, where interviewer carefully asks questions and listen the answers with the aim of achieving a valuable knowledge in regards of the studied topic in mind. In addition, it feels like a conversation for the interviewee, which means that the atmosphere is relaxed and comfortable.

- **Justification of Semi-structured Interviews**

Authors have decided to use semi-structured interviews for this research project due to the fact that the participant can have impact and influence on the topic, thus there is possibility to discover unexpected issues, that can be noticed from the interview. This type of interview also helps us to explore studied phenomenon in depth. As mentioned before, overall atmosphere between the participant and interviewer is relaxed. Moreover, this can result in a high reliability.

It is also necessary to have in mind certain disadvantages that come with using semi-structured interviews. The process of analyzing interviews is time-consuming and therefore it can further have an effect on the validity of findings, thus having hard time to understand data in depth. The overall interview depends on the skills of the interviewer, when asking questions, in order to create nice atmosphere and get certain opinions of the topic. (Klenke, 2008)

As found out, there are no certain strict rules for doing interviews, however according to Kvale (2007), he suggests to use and follow seven steps, which will help to keep our initial vision for the investigation during the whole interview process.

Figure 1: Seven stages of the interview inquiry



Source: Kvale (2013)

He has divided the model into three stages including pre-interview stages, interviewing and post-interview stages. The pre-interview stage includes Themazing and Designing steps. These two steps are the most important, because when having very well prepared themazing and designing steps, it is most likely that it will lead them to gaining quality information from the interviewing stage itself and therefore post-interview stage will produce a valuable knowledge.

Themazing involves the main purpose of the whole investigation and the goal of the research. The purpose of having interviews is to find out how different stakeholders perceive the value creation process through the internship program. Designing step includes the method of doing the interviews, which in this research project it is semi-structured interviews.

Moreover, the quality of the interview depends also on other factors such as how much time is going to be used, how many financial resources, how many subjects are needed. Only qualitative method will be used, partly because of the limited time and limited financial resources provided. We try to get sufficient understanding of the answers of respondents in a specific context, and this cannot be obtained through quantitative data collection.

- **Sampling for Interviews**

As sampling unit for this research project, authors are going to conduct six interviews with students, three interviews with companies and two interviews with employees of the Aalborg University to see their perception, insights, and opinions with the internship program. In this case, there will be a chance to compare different perceptions and to get the overview of the whole value creation process through having the internship program. When it comes to the interviews with students, the goal is to get understanding of their experience, their understanding of the benefits they have received and their insights of the overall program. First two students come from the same company, another two as well and the last two had their internship in different firms. To be more specific, authors have decided to interview five students, who had their internship in Denmark and one student who finished their internship abroad to see the impact and the influence of different contexts. By having different views from students, it is a good way of seeing different experiences from the internship program.

Moreover, three (two) interviews with the employees of the firms are going to be included for the research project in order to see the company's perception of the value and the reasons for creating internship program. Companies that are going to participate in interviews are Mekoprint, NTU and Dr. Max. They are all multinational firms and two of them are located in Aalborg, Denmark and the third one is in Czech Republic.

Furthermore, educational institution is also going to be involved in this project. We have decided to conduct two interviews with employees of the Aalborg University to understand their perceptions of the value of the internship program and reasons why they provide this opportunity for students.

- **Interview Questions**

As mentioned before it is necessary to create relaxed and comfortable conversation during the interview and according to Kvale (2007), there are two types of dimensions that need to be followed. Firstly, there is thematic dimension that refers to the purpose of the interview. It means that the interview questions should lead to new knowledge about the studied topic, while other dimension such as dynamical is connected to the questions themselves. Questions need to be created in an understandable way and should be asked in non-academic language.

Interviews are designed with open questions because the purpose is to find out their perception of the studied topic. In this case, it is important to let them talk and tell their experience regarding the internship program. The purpose of the interview is to get detail information, insights, find relationships, perceptions and benefits of having internship program. Furthermore, questions were created with several themes based on the literature review and conceptual framework created by us. (Kvale, 2007) Questions for interviews can be found in the appendix 1.

- **Interviewing stage**

In the interview stage, all interviews start with welcoming the respondent, then interviewer present herself/himself and introduce the purpose of the interview. All interviews are going to be recorded, because this is the best way to concentrate on answers and discussions of the participant. Moreover, this tool makes it easier for authors with transcribing stage. Kvale (2007) described it as *briefing*. During the interview, we will carefully follow prepared questions but if the respondent starts divert from the main topic, interviewee will let them finish the answer following with changing direction back to the track.

III.III. Post Interview Stages

Kvale (2007) follows his post-interview stage as a process, which comes after interviewing stage. This stage includes steps such as transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting. Authors of this research project will continue with transcribing all interviews into the written text. In this way, we have more time to be focusing on the content and the quality of the interview. It is important that the tape recording should not be neglected after transcription due to the fact that the information for example tone of the voice is lost in the transcription phase. (Kvale, 2007) All transcription can be found in Appendix chapter.

In regards of the stages after the transcription is done, authors will continue with:

- Reading carefully all transcripts in order to understand the answers of respondents
- Analyzing by applying coding method
- Finding the most important phrases, quotes that need authors attention
- Identifying major themes, which are linked to the research question

- Clarification of findings and focusing on the “meaning interpretation”

After reading and going through the transcripts, authors will apply content analysis, which is the coding method in this case. According to Kvale (2007), coding method is in fact the process of examining, comparing, grouping data and then narrowing it down into details. During the coding method, authors will label sections and choose the most essential phrases, quotes from the transcript. Furthermore, another method is going to be used as a next step. The method called “*meaning interpretation*” will be also employed in this post-interview stage. This method gives authors the possibility to go beyond what is directly said by respondents, thus they can create meanings that are not noticeable from the start.

The analysis part is going to be structured based on the themes, which are found through interviews. The analysis of the interviews will set the main themes in which the respondents have discussed topics within the studied content. Moreover, the analysis part will be following with the further discussions and analysis of the particular themes and it will be considered from the perspectives of student, university and the company.

III.IV. Evaluation of Data Collection

Due to the fact that the authors are using qualitative research, many researchers argue that qualitative research should be evaluated according to different criteria than quantitative studies. Therefore, Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggested that qualitative research should be evaluated by trustworthiness. In addition, they have established criteria that create trustworthiness.

- **Credibility:** It can be compared to the internal validity, which says that the researcher should send the transcript of the interview to the respondent, in order to get the feedback if the researcher understood it correctly. (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Unfortunately, this hasn’t been done in this project, because there is no transfer of the interview between parties.
- **Transferability:** It also means external validity in the quantitative research design. The overall process of writing this research project has been described in the detail regarding the literature review, as well as with the consideration of the qualitative research method.

The whole process of interviewing has been identified in advance, in order to structure and increase the transferability of this research. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994)

- **Conformability:** It is connected with the objectivity but considering that the complete and full objectivity is not possible in the research. Authors are focusing on the interpretation of the data from the subjective view. (Guba & Lincoln, 1994)
- **Dependability:** It is related to the reliability, which stands for the fact that papers, material used in the project should be accessible to the reader. Due to the fact that we use multiple respondents in data collection method, therefore it reduces measurement error. (Brink, 1993) When increasing the reliability of this research project, it is important to use multiple sources for data collection. Moreover, multiple interviews have significant impact on the reliability, as they make sure that authors can receive information up to date and discuss all aspects. (Yin, 2013)

IV. Chapter - Analyses and Discussions

This chapter of the project includes analysis of primary data collection, which has been collected through twelve qualitative interviews with the core stakeholders. Moreover, discussion on specific findings, themes is also part of this chapter.

IV.I.I. Key Actors

As identified in our conceptual framework, the primary value co-creation sphere includes core stakeholders such as firm and student. As our finding shows, firms mainly interact with the student who is participating in the internship. There is minimum interaction when it comes to the firm and the educational institution. According to the results from the interviews, university employees see that the main value creation happens between the firm and the student. There are other stakeholders that might also have influence on this process, but it is mainly between these two core stakeholders. In terms of the stakeholder theory, in order to identify and distinguish stakeholders and test our framework, we need to find out whether various actors can be classified as a stakeholder according three fundamental attributes (Mitchel et al, 1997). Thanks to the classification with help of stakeholder theory we may also partially predict their behavior. Firms and students comply with all three attributes (power of stakeholders to influence, legitimacy and urgency to claim) defined as definitive stakeholders. On the other hand, universities and external stakeholders lack at least one of these attributes, especially power to force firms or students to change their behaviors to outcomes they desire.

But there are different perceptions when talking about the role of the university in this process. Some of the university employees believe that each of three stakeholders have equal role in this process, because if we didn't have the university then there would not be internship program etc.

"No, I think that there are three equal partners in the value creation process and I actually think of course that educational institution creates this opportunity and if we didn't do it of course it wouldn't work." (University B, Appendix 3)

It is important to say that findings show different opinions from employees when it comes to university role in this process. As previously stated, some believe that it is equal role other not. On the other hand, some of them believe that the university is a critical factor in value creation process, because it provides academic supervision, which is very important and significant factor in the process of value creation. It is not only the supervision that is critical but also the administrative process from the university, which is associated within internship. University also plays a role in a society and it is a way to create knowledge, which can be use further in the process. Therefore, we may consider universities, based on our framework and stakeholder theory, as expectant stakeholders that possess combination of two attributes – urgency and legitimacy.

"Aalborg University, from these two aspects academic supervision and administrative support are very critical in facilitating the process of value creation." (University A, Appendix 2)

"But in relation to a specific internship I don't know.; But I believe that Aalborg University does play significant role in the process, but not necessarily under universities. " (University C, Appendix 4)

From the perspective of the firm, they believe that the university plays a relevant role in this process in regards of the knowledge that they provide for the students. University facilitates the process of finding the internship in the first place, but not necessarily being involved during the internship where the value is created. There is minimum communication between university and the firm, however there is communication between student and their academic supervision on regular basis.

In regards of the external institutions, there are different perceptions from the students and firms. Some of the firms have mentioned that the government plays a role when designing the internship program, because it creates the legal framework, guidelines and regulations on the certain aspects. Therefore, we can classify them as latent stakeholders that posset only one attribute because they do not often participate in interaction with other stakeholders or if so only with limited time. Due to this lower engagement they might not be even recognized by other stakeholders.

"Definitely government, in our field, we are highly restricted by the national laws; The legal framework narrows our possibilities in either educating our employees and interns but also setting up condition for internships in general." (Firm C, Appendix 7)

From the students' perspective, they have the same opinion as companies, that one of the external institutions that has influence on the internship program is government. Furthermore, they also see other external institution for example student agencies that help them with finding the right internship. Therefore, they play a relevant role in facilitating the internship.

Findings from the interviews support our conceptual framework that is based on the literature review, which pays the attention to the main stakeholders that are identified as students and a company due to the fact that there is multiple layered interactions between them. As found out this interaction has the most significant impact on the value creation and co-creation processes. Other stakeholders such as educational institution and external institution (government, agencies, supporting organizations) play a minor role in a value creation process as they facilitate mainly the process of finding the internship or setting legal framework for business in general. Therefore, as stated in the conceptual framework, they are stakeholders with less influence on processes than core actors. These findings are in line with the value co-creation theory about involved stakeholders. Wieland et al. (2012) argue all stakeholders, under *system view*, involved in exchange (interactions) may provide some services and create some value. The amount of value is determined as we described before, but it depends on the level of engagement.

With regards to concept of value, we have identified and described the actors surrounding the value creation processes. With regards to stakeholder theory, it is important to define and find out what it really means to create the value for stakeholders and furthermore, how we can measure it (Freeman, 1994).

In table below, you will find brief overview of the findings that were gathered from the interviewees regarding the critical junctures of value creation processes and their final outputs of value creation process – values/benefits.

Table 1: Overview of Gathered Data

| Themes | Sub-themes | Interns | | | | | | Firms | | | University | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | No. 1 | No. 2 | No. 3 | No. 4 | No. 5 | No. 6 | A | B | C | A | B | C |
| Critical Junctures | Key driver of Value Creation | Attention, amount of time | Involvement and responsibility | Interaction | Environment, flexibility | Engagement | Interaction between practical and theoretical knowledge | Harmony and smooth flow | Environment | Human factor, interest to cooperate | Interaction | Common interest of actors | Responsibility under guidance, open eyes, mentorship |
| | Factors of value creation | Structured internship, cultural differences | Structured internship, proactiveness, relationship, environment | Flexibility, communication, relationship, standardized procedures, awareness | Attention, money, possibility to speak your mind, communication | Attention, responsibility, structured agenda | Level of engagement, money aspect, willingness, structured framework | Personal differences, communication | Willingness, money, environment, well designed structure | Attention, willingness, mutual relation, environment, personality | Individual factors (involvement, relations), structural factors (conditions for students) | Interest from all sides | Closed mind, mutual interest, structure of internship |
| | Does relationship aspect matter? | Yes, it creates better environment | It is then easier to cooperate with colleges | Good relationship and attitude reflect on your work | Beneficial for intern and firm, performance is better | More attention lead to more value creation | Knowledge transfer is higher | It does matter, it is aspect to consider | It matters, it is part of good working environment, easier communication | Yes, it affects final outputs | It is critical | Plays a role between student and firm | Very important, chemistry can motivate |
| | Does organizational culture matter? | It helps, employees may work better | Flat structured organization is more efficient | It affects co-creation in company | Results are higher when diversity is empowered | With good atmosphere is increasing value creation | Significant role, better learning | It has effect on interactions between employees | Influence all employees and also business chain | Yes, open minded organization is a need | Critical, stimulate and facilitate process of internship | Supporting role of learning situation | Very important to manage interface |
| | Does national culture matter? | It matters, but it is not good to be too much patriotic | Influences communication | If helps to understand business abroad a | Multi-cultural factor helps to get competitive advantages or create problems | It matter, especially language aspect when you cannot interact | It is part of organizational culture, it affect business abroad | | Part of organizational culture, | Does not matter so much | Serious importance, factor influencing co-creation | Plays role but chemistry between persons go beyond national | As long you feel foreign, you cannot be effective |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | <i>culture</i> | |
| Benefits/Values | Benefits that are created for: | Interns | <i>Practical knowledge, enlarge network, better picture of business</i> | <i>Experience and knowledge with connection to real work, improve carrier option</i> | <i>Interaction of knowledge from school with reality, experience, networking</i> | <i>Better knowledge and understanding and possibility to grow, empower yourself, financial benefit</i> | <i>Interact with stakeholders, to find out future options, experiences</i> | <i>Practical knowledge, experience, learn from better</i> | <i>Practical knowledge and experience</i> | <i>Change for students to develop knowledge and get experience, to be paid</i> | <i>Know-how, experience</i> | <i>Insights to real business</i> | <i>Opportunity to build network, real life experience</i> | <i>Application of knowledge from university in real life</i> |
| | | Firms | <i>Getting new comer view, cheap labor</i> | <i>Proactive work and attitude, low labor costs, fresh mind</i> | <i>Free labor, different perspective from younger generation</i> | <i>Underpaid full-time employee</i> | <i>Future employee, cheaper work labor,</i> | <i>Utilization of newest knowledge from universities,</i> | <i>Getting a new perspectives and also free labor</i> | <i>Get new talents to become future employee, cheap labor</i> | <i>New future employee, newest knowledge from university</i> | <i>Fresh, theoretical knowledge</i> | <i>Access to good students who may spark development</i> | <i>Future employee or knowledge from young generation</i> |
| | | University | <i>Advertising themselves, better students</i> | <i>New contacts with company, feedback</i> | <i>Interaction between university and company</i> | <i>Universities are connected with firm and might get also investment from firms</i> | | <i>Reflection and new contacts</i> | <i>Practical knowledge and experience</i> | <i>Good relation with company in relevant sectors</i> | | <i>Closer and better future cooperation with private sector</i> | <i>University provides better students, contact with companies</i> | <i>Internships push university to stay updated, not becoming ivory tower</i> |

Source: Interviews (2018) - Appendix 2 - 13, own creation

IV.I.II. Critical Junctures

Critical junctures refer to the interphase, where multi-layered interaction happens. This area where diverse actors meet and interact with each other may bring unexpected results. However, multiple scholars have already researched exchanges between actors in value creation processes. In this analysis we will try to use a few findings and put them in the context of internship programs. Wieland et al. (2012) note, with help of S-D logic we may more understand background for social and economic exchange than by using good dominant logic. Moreover, it highlights the usage of the operant resources (in case of internships it is knowledge transferred from the company to intern and vice versa) in order to create welfare for other actors.

IV.I.II.I. Key Driver of Value Creation

As it is stated in conceptual co-creation framework, internship programs are under influence of diverse actors that perceive the reality in different ways. As Freeman (1984) states, firms have stakeholders and should pay attention to them. Stakeholders' perception is determined through their life experiences and their individual preferences. Nevertheless, we try to find out whether stakeholders share same, similar perceptions of the key driver of value creation. In other words, what is the most influential factor in knowledge transfer or factor affecting other benefits arising from internship. Therefore, we seek to understand the fundament that determinates perceived benefits.

The internship value is always co-created by two or more actors that interact with each other at the same time. Thus, the value cannot be created without engagement of stakeholders. This argument is supported by Mizik and Jacobsen (2003) who have argued, that the motivation for the process of value creation differs with regards to the person that the value is for. Firm can generate value for customers, different stakeholders and the firm itself. This aspect has been highlighted in more interviews. Additionally, stakeholders take also into consideration the aspect that surrounds them during these interactions and help them to increase their personal benefits. As often-mentioned example is factor of working environment where all exchanges take place. This was mentioned from interns as well as from the firm, which was stated as harmony.

"The key driver, what I think, is a flexibility that firm can offer to interns. I would say, important to have very nice environment, social place because then company can really try to involve trainee in everything they do." (Intern 4, Appendix 11)

"Harmony and smooth flow is really important, but also it is difficult to achieve in the first week." (Firm A, Appendix 5)

Additionally, interviewees have also highlighted the significant of human characteristics that are involved in social processes. This confirms already stated theory that in terms of experiential education, students are required to be active participants for learning to occur. When there is active learning in process, students are in the center of the energy, attention and they act actively on different activities. (Dewey, 1916) Interviewees identified them as open mind, responsibility, proactivity and willingness to engage and mutually cooperate in these processes.

"So definitely the responsibility and I think maybe the key thing I think is an open mind on the part of the student. (University C, Appendix 4)

"I think that human factor plays a fundamental role in internships. As I mentioned before, if the intern is not interested in collaborating with us, then he or she cannot get any of the experience what we offer." (Firm C, Appendix 7)

"I think that the alignment with diverse interaction and just culture in general is also very valuable for the company. But level of the engagement from the students a really important." (Intern 6, Appendix 13)

IV.I.II.II. Factors Increasing and Decreasing Value Creation

Social context matters, diverse interactions may influence the process of value creation either positively or negatively as we have proposed in our co-creation framework. Moreover, factors influencing value co-creation might be directly connected with the social factors or they may be associated with the overall framework that surrounds the specific internship program. Nevertheless, firms often perceive the created value as a part of gained part of profit. Although friendly co-operation with shareholders may have not been measured in economic measures. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence value creation processes may bring understanding why some companies succeed over time. (Bosse, Phillips & Harison, 2009)

The factors influencing value co-creation are highly interconnected with the notion of the *key driver of value creation*. Therefore, the findings may appear in some way similar. The distinction between them may be understood as a different level of importance thus influencing the value co-creation processes.

Since the factors determining value creation in internships are similar with key drivers, we will point out those that may not be mentioned yet. Especially firms emphasize aspect of engagement in mutual processes, in terms of positive attitude and willingness to cooperate. With regards to Vargo and Lusch (2011) opinion, the value is co- created by the factor of resource integration, which is regulated by mutual exchanges (interactions). Therefore, knowledge transfer, in terms of experience or real business knowledge, cannot be imprinted into students without students' engagement.

“Decreases when there is a close mind that they are not listening and looking. Another thing that is decreasing is that they don't take advantage of the supervisor.” (University C, Appendix 4)

“Without positive attitude towards the interns and not even interns but the employee in general, we would not be able to run business in longer run.” (Firm C, Appendix 7)

“Good working environment where interns are not excluded from employees and are integrated in the tasks and also physically and psychically integrated in the real work.” (Firm B, Appendix 6)

“I have already mentioned it, interaction, awareness, structured processes. But I think the interaction is may key aspect. Teambuilding or communication is very significant in my point.” (Intern 3, Appendix 10)

Additionally, with regards to previous citation of Intern 3 above, all parties have also highlighted the importance of having structured internships. Through the well-designed internship all involved parties may benefit. Social interaction matters but without initially designed internship programs and processes there is limited space for knowledge transfer or creation of value. Thus, badly structured or unstructured programs may cause decrease in value co-creation processes or end up as a waste of time for all parties involved.

“To have some sort of structure from the company side to what is expected from the student, so the student has some kind of framework, to have a clear picture of responsibilities.” (University C, Appendix 4)

“Having good structure for the allocation of intern and structure of their work is essential. This structure needs to be designed very from the beginning and everything would be clear and there is no time wasted in thinking about.” (Firm B, Appendix 6)

“I think to be more structured from beginning. Internship should have a bit more structured character.” (Intern 2, Appendix 9)

IV.I.II.III. Relationships Aspects

In order to show whole picture of the social context surrounding interactions we also need to look closely on the relationships aspect that is inseparable from the social interactions. As Freeman (1984) states, transactions, relationships and interactions play important role in perception of benefits what they receive.

Furthermore, according to theory, treating other stakeholders (in case of internship mostly interns) well and paying attention to their interests, this helps a firm to create value through different stages in the process. This is also beneficial for company's performance (Freeman, Harrison and Wicks, 2007; Bosse & Phillips, 2010).

"Particular the relationship and the understanding on the part of the company towards what the student has to do- issue one and then the relationship between the students and the supervisor in terms of harmonious processes of exchanging the information is very critical part." (University A, Appendix 2)

“Interpersonal communication and relationship with your bosses may play also important role.” (Intern 2, Appendix 9)

As it is defined in the stakeholder theory by Grant and Jordan, (2012), the power and interest of actors is connected with relationship aspect. By changing the level of these two factors we may also influence the mutual relationships between the supervisors in companies and interns.

“I mean relationship between firm and the student, it is important to give a proper attention to the intern.” (Intern 5, Appendix 12)

With regards to already mentioned theory, interviewees are fully in line with these statements. The most of them have agreed that by having good or positive relationships with their supervisors or their colleagues, they may derive higher amount of offered knowledge that is provided by other parties. Moreover, Dyer and Singh (1998) argue that relational aspect and value chain of relationships play primary roles in appropriation process. Therefore, we may suspect that good relationships may then influence the decision of keeping an intern as a regular employee in the firm in order to appropriate their incurred values.

IV.I.II.IV. Organizational and National Culture

Another aspect of social interaction in the context of the internship program that has impact on the overall value is recognized as a culture. Furthermore, we can identify two different types of culture such organizational and national culture. Interviewees perceive culture as an element, which is part of these exchanges and might matter either in positive and negative way.

“Organizational culture pretty much defines value and co-creation of value when speaking about value in the company. National culture, I would not see as a such straight forward connection, but it might affect to some extent “(Intern 3, Appendix 10)

“I think you heard this quote before, “as long as you feel foreign, you cannot be effective”, and I think that’s a big true both in relation with national and organizational culture.” (University C, Appendix 4)

As our findings show, all actors are aware of this element, but they assign different level of importance to these elements. Some of them perceive both cultures as essential element within interactions, however, there are some who do not see any impact arising from culture.

IV.I.III. Benefits/Values

Based on the interviews, there are different perceptions of the value creation from the perspective of the student, university and the company. Nevertheless, these finding are in line with the academic perception of the value. As stated by Marinova, Larimo, Nummela (2017),

perception of value is dependent on different interpretation of value in different context. According the theory, all interactions between stakeholders effect the perception of value. Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) state, interactions play a crucial role. Perceived value of stakeholders become through interaction highly personalized - *unique value*. Then we can talk about *unique value* for each of the stakeholders that we will describe below. Based on the quality and quantity of interactions and the context, we may notice some differences – *value in context*.

The reasons and context why these stakeholders participate in the internship programs vary and therefore we will analyze and discuss perceptions from each of them. However, there is one common reason for all stakeholders, as it is stated by Archpru Akata, Vargo and Lusch (2012), knowledge and skills are considered as a fundamental point for gaining competitive advantage, and also involved actors to be aware of this. In other words, companies would like to gain competitive advantage in terms of having new and fresh perspectives from students. In addition to students, they get competitive advantage regarding skills and experience on labor market. Regarding universities, they gain better social image, employees' engagement with businesses for possible research or feedback from private sector.

IV.I.III.I. University Perception

To start, university employees see the reason behind having the internship as a fact that students get the opportunity to apply the theoretical background, which they have gained from academia to the real and practical experience.

“To prepare students to be ready when they go and start practicing whatever they want as a career.” (University A, Appendix 2)

“So, in order for students to get the opportunity, to experience real life before they go out to work after their thesis, there is the possibility to have an internship.” (University B, Appendix 3).

"It's so easy for the university to become that ivory tower, because there are so many requirements for publishing. By having students working on internships and having academic

supervisors, then we get insight into what we should start working on. Internships keep us on our toes." (University C, Appendix 4)

All of the employees from the university that they have been interviewed mentioned that they really want the students to get a chance and possibility to experience the real work environment before they actually go and look for their first job after graduation. It is some kind of preparation for student to build up network and to get the idea of what they want to do in the future.

- **Benefits that They Create for Themselves**

The main benefit that the university sees by sending students for the internship is the fact that they get the possibility to be in contact with a lot of companies, which can further lead to the opportunity for employees of the university to conduct their research with a specific company that the students had been on the internship. In addition to that, they also get the insight into the certain issues, concepts that they can start working on as their study area. Furthermore, another benefit that the employees see is that they hatch better students in a way that they are much better prepare to get the job in the real-life situations. Moreover, by sending students for internship in different companies, university receives experiential value from the student.

"For people employed in the university to have possibility to go to this particular company and conduct the activities they want to research. "(University A, Appendix 2)

"By having students working on internships and having academic supervisors, then we get insight into what we should start working on. Internships keep us on our toes. "(University C, Appendix 4)

"One very good motivator from the perspective of the university is the fact to reinforce the relationship between the academia and business community. Also, I would say that there is strong motivation of the part of the company as well, because what I have seen the companies are also showing interest through." (University A, Appendix 2)

- **Benefits University Offers to Other Stakeholders**

Employees of the university believe that they also offer benefits to other stakeholders in this process. First of all, when we take the company, university offers them new insights,

perspectives from the students, because they are fresh and have a good theoretical knowledge gained from the education and generally, managers in the company start to lose the contact with things that they have learnt. Students bring a knowledge to the company which was built up at the university and furthermore, it transfers this knowledge to the company. Therefore, students can refresh their approaches and suggest possible new solutions to certain aspects. In this way, companies get the access to good students, which can lead to future employment.

On the other hand, by providing the internship for the students, they get to see how the real life is, compared to the classroom environment. It also gives them the opportunity to deal with different situations when it comes to solving problems, issues that the company is facing. Due to the internship program, students get the chance to build their own network as well.

“So, the university offers that opportunity in the protected environment of a supervised project, to investigate or to apply what they have learnt also to investigate what is actually going on in the world.” (University C, Appendix 4)

“They get to try the theoretical knowledge in the practical real-life situations.” (University B, Appendix 3)

IV.I.III.II. Company Perception

When we take the perspective of the company, findings show that the reason that they provide internship opportunity for the students is basically from the financial aspects. It is the fact that they can get kind of free, cheap labor, however they have also mentioned that it is not only about the money that they can save but also students offer them a look on new perspective regarding their own ways of doing things. In this way students get the opportunity to develop their skills, which can be further use in their professional career.

“If you can say free or almost free labor while at the same time getting new perspective on some of our own ways of doing things. And I think it is a win- win situation for both students and the company. “(Firm A, Appendix 5)

As we have seen in the literature review that companies mainly see the value from the financial perspective, this was also the case with the companies, which we have interviewed. Of course, they see other benefits than just the money, but financial aspect was significant. Thus, we

can assume that interns become part of the value chain defined by Porter (1985). Company invests particular resources into engagement with interns in order to benefit from them in long run.

- **Benefits that They Create for Themselves**

When looking at the company perception of the value, which they gain by providing the internship, it is the fact that they get new perspective, new knowledge on the things that they have done probably in the same way for longer period. They get fresh talents and different views on their business and processes, and therefore they get the opportunity to also receive new knowledge from the students who have different approaches certain tasks. Furthermore, they get the opportunity to employ these fresh talents after the internship period and therefore they can train them in their own way. This leads to the fact that when they become employee of the certain company, they are already familiar with the working environment and they know how the company operates. Company's behavior such as hiring the best intern after internship, may be perceived as a value appropriation mechanism in order to keep or increase the investment for interns. The costs (time, money and development) that have been incurred on the basis of interaction between student and firm are not wasted in the case of letting the intern go. Consequently, according to Peteraf and Batney (2003), the difference between the benefit and the costs is seen as a new created value. It is necessary to mention that they do not only get fresh talents but they also get cheap labor. Therefore, they see the financial value from having an intern in the company.

"I think that the most interesting thing of the internship is to target those skilled students who are at the moment at the university and they can become future employees for the company. Therefore, we are constantly recruiting new people and then we can pick up the best one." (Firm B, Appendix 6)

"We may get new the new employees that may carry the newest knowledge from the universities. Moreover, they may also bring the freshman view third party view in our business and processes. Interns usually spend from one to six months as interns in our company, after this period of time it is much easier for us to hire the person who is already familiar with our internal processes and tasks what we require from our employees." (Firm C, Appendix 7)

- **Benefits Company Offers to Other Stakeholders**

Companies offer different benefits to students and university. Firstly, it is important to mention that some companies offer financial compensation for the students but not necessarily.

"We also pay student some reimbursement or allowance. " (Firm B, Appendix 6)

"We also pay the interns some allowance to help them with their student life." (Firm C, Appendix 7)

"We are giving a chance to students to develop their skills and the beginning of their professional carrier with us." (Firm, B, Appendix 6)

"I think first of all it is extremely rewarding for both students and the university to have students with practical knowledge, experience how the workplace function and how to interact in this kind of institution". (Firm A, Appendix 5)

Therefore, in some cases there is a direct monetary exchange between the company and the students. On the other hand, students receive practical knowledge and experience from the workplace, which cannot be found in the classroom environment. They get insights into different processes of the firm and can perform various tasks, which come with the certain responsibilities. Company offers the opportunity for students to use the knowledge they have created at the university in the real workplace. Furthermore, students can also improve and develop hard and soft skills, which are not possible through the classroom setting. University also benefits from the internship program by receiving feedback from various businesses and as stated before to gain social image among other universities.

IV.I.III.III. Student Perception

Most of the students that were interviewed stated that the reason of their participation in the internship program is based on the fact that they want to gain a practical knowledge outside of the theoretical subjects in university. For many of them, university provides them with this opportunity to have the internship program as a part of their curriculum. They have the possibility to get real life experience by having the internship or to study abroad. By participating in the internship, they get a chance to talk with CEO of the companies; experienced managers and therefore they can enlarge their network, which can further help them with the future career.

Furthermore, students believe that the internship can improve their employment ability but mainly to get working experience before even graduating. On the other hand, company might only propose particular value to interns – *value proposition* through the firms' offering. Then it is up to interns whether to use this value by engagement via different interactions. Vargo and Lusch (2012) have come with term *value in context*. With little help of this term we may understand why the value differs. The *value in context* takes even into consideration the behavior of students resp. interns. Therefore, the final value is always dependent on co-creation. In other words, value is created when value proposition is applied within a specific context (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). Interviews showed that level of mutual engagement, involvement, willingness, and specific characteristics have effect on value co-creation specifically knowledge transfer.

"So definitely the responsibility and I think maybe the key thing I think is an open mind on the part of the student. Open ears and open eyes, you know sense of what's going on there."
(University C, Appendix 4)

"I think it also depends on this engagement. As much as I gave to the company they also have to put the effort to give to me back." (Intern 6, Appendix 12)

"Well-designed structure of internship, open minded environment, financial compensation and also attitude of involved people to fulfill the reason for the internship that is to gain experience."
(Firm B, Appendix 6)

- **Benefits that They Create for Themselves**

Students see the benefits of having internship from the experiential point of view. When looking at the students' perception, they did not identify specific learning goals at the beginning of their internship, they mainly come to the internship with the vision of gaining experience in the field that they have interest for the future career. All of them stated, that they wanted to gain practical experience and to be part of the company where they get in contact with real situations, issues that the company has. By being able to watch how leaders, managers interact in everyday situations, how they deal with certain issues was big advantages for them. In this way they get the experience to learn how people behave in certain situation and how they handle it. In addition to that they see this opportunity as a chance to build up network in the professional environment, which they be very beneficial in the future after graduating from the university.

“Logic behind it simple, to learn from the better, how you should manage a company, how you should behave as a leader. I think it is quite good to have this experience early to figure out what you would like to do in the future.” (Intern 4, Appendix 11)

“It is definitely the experience but also the networking. Starting to know people. Gaining contacts, and as professionally same as personally.” (Intern 3, Appendix 10)

Furthermore, they perceive the internship as a place where they can implement theoretical knowledge with the practice thus, to use the value (knowledge), which they gained, at school in the practical experience. This is the *"primary value co-creation sphere"* as we identified in our conceptual co-creation framework, where the initial knowledge transfer between two core stakeholders occurs. Students bring imprinted knowledge from university to the firm and consequently, firms imprint new work-related knowledge to interns. In addition to that, they can get the possibility to see if this is actually what they want to do in the future and decide the right path of their interest.

“I think it is quite good to have this experience early to figure out what you would like to do in the future. But also, it is important how you feel.” (Intern 6, Appendix 13)

“Also getting inside into corporation, into routines it is very valuable and it will sharp your opinion about your future if you want to stick with that or if you want try something else.” (Intern 5, Appendix 12)

It was important for them to develop both personally and professionally when participating in the internship. They have learnt from different aspects, developing communication skills, learning how to actually listen, working with colleagues and working in a multinational environment.

“Value that you get, the benefit that you get from an internship, is that you develop some skills, you develop yourselves. You develop some additional attributes.” (Intern 4, Appendix 11)

It is necessary to mention that for some of them financial value was a thing to consider when choosing the right internship. However, they don't see it as the main motive.

“Of course, the money is one of the reasons why you may go for paid internship instead of unpaid internship but I would say it is more about development you get.” (Intern 4, Appendix 11)

“But in general, the value that I was looking at when I was searching for internship was the experience and it was not definitely financial aspect.” (Intern 5, Appendix 12)

“That case I guess money is not the main driver, but it can definitely improve motivation for the intern.” (Intern 3, Appendix 10)

Our findings are in line with the literature regarding the internships. According to Kolb (2015), one of the significant values for the students is the possibility to create their professional network, and therefore it increases the chances of future career opportunities. As it is confirmed in the findings above, successful internship program enables to grow in three main features, which includes personal, professional and civic development.

- **Benefits Students Offer to Other Stakeholders**

From their point of view, findings show that one of the benefits they offer to the company is the cheap labor, because they do not get paid as normal employees, in some cases they do not get paid at all. This is the fact that leads to saving money for the firm, but on the other side they still need to invest time for interns’ development.

“But the benefit that firm gets is, for sure, underpaid employees and then some other firms are interested in developing some employees. (Intern 4, Appendix 10)

“For the company it is very financially convenient to have labor that is not being paid.” (Intern 3, Appendix 9)

"Not only the talent is beneficial for us but they are also offering us a cheap labor. Maybe it is not very nice but to be honest it is job that is not very well paid as with comparison to other jobs." (Firm B, Appendix 6)

Another benefit that it was mentioned during the interviews is that company can get newest knowledge, new perspective on different aspects, which can utilize their business and maybe to give them the possibility to see things from different angle. They get fresh students who are willing to learn, listen and be proactive in order to learn as much as possible.

On the other hand, the company has a possibility to train and develop their future talents. It opens up the chance to employ fresh talents, who are already familiar with their working environment and therefore they can choose the intern which best fits their requirements.

It is interesting to see that none of the students have mentioned the benefits that they offer to the university.

To conclude our findings, as it is stated in the literature review, our conceptual framework and throughout the text above, the perception of value among stakeholders differs with regards to individual actors and various contexts in which they interact. All stakeholders, under service *ecosystem*, are engaged in exchanges (interactions), where they can provide some services and therefore create some value. As stated by Edvardsson (2011), co-creation processes are determined by social structures. Involved actors facilitate different types of values during internship programs. Therefore, we may consider these exchanges within internship as service ecosystem, where dynamic multi-layered interactions create interconnected networks. Moreover, due to this interconnected network, social context plays important role than ever before. As Freeman (1984) stress in terms of Stakeholder theory, the "joint-ness" of stakeholder interest and the necessity for all parties to benefit over time through their cooperation. Thus, under this ecosystem view and stakeholder theory, co-creation is influenced by resource integration that is derived by mutual interactions.

V. Chapter - Further Discussion

Based on our conceptual framework, analyses and discussions of data collection, we can conclude that there are two core actors in the process of value creation in the internship programs. These two main stakeholders are students and firms, which are participating in the internships. As mentioned in our conceptual framework, there is a multiple-layered interaction between them on daily basis. With regards to our findings, we are now able to extend our framework in order to include factors that can also have significant effect on value creation processes according to our respondents. Furthermore, since we have defined different perceptions of value, which are created through internship process, we can therefore make some suggestions and their implications that might push current understanding and theory on internship programs. It can bring new knowledge to these processes in order to increase value creation in internship programs for all parties involved.

By differentiating the perception of value, we are able to focus and zoom on the specific aspects for certain actors. Nevertheless, two core actors (student, firm) posit mostly similar factors influencing their interaction. By addressing specified needs of actors, we may increase the overall created value, no matter how it is perceived. In our conceptual framework, we have defined that students and firms interact through “*multi-layered interaction*”. However, this notion is not that simple and needs to be further described. In our analysis we have connected the notion “*multi-layered interaction*” with different notions “*critical junctures*” that might have described the fact that all interactions posit critical spots. By identifying these “*critical spots*”, or “*key factors*”, or “*critical junctures*” we can split the overall context into smaller pieces of the puzzle and critically describe them.

Firstly, it is important to state that adaptation process plays a significant role in the process of value creation. To be more specific, students shall focus on and pay attention to adapt to the new working environment and firm's requirements, which differ from the educational institutions. In order to gain as much as possible from the internship experience, they need to get familiar with their tasks, responsibilities, and organizational culture and to know what is actually expected from them. Therefore, students should come to the internship with an opened mind, opened ears and be ready to listen. Furthermore, they need to show commitment and engagement

in the company and act as regular employees with a help of firm's supervisor. In order to adapt faster to this environment, they should be proactive and not to be afraid to ask questions if necessary. After the initial stage of the internship, they should show the company that they can work independently on their own tasks and that they are also able to come with their own input. All of these aspects aim to increase knowledge transfer and other benefits for both parties.

On the other hand, it is not only students who need to adapt to this new working environment, but also the company needs to make some adjustments when it comes to new intern in the firm. As found out from the interviews, when taking the intern in the company, it is more or less as hiring new employee, because the firm does not exactly know what kind of person they are going to work with in terms of personality and individual characteristics. For both parties to have beneficial internship, firm needs to develop a clear structure and framework for the intern, so students know what exactly they are going to do in the particular firm. As mentioned previously in the paper, firm should provide a person who is going to be responsible for the intern. In this way, if there are some questions, new tasks and new learning goals, students can discuss and receive a feedback from that particular employee (supervisor). It is important for the company that they provide trainings for interns, because they need to take into consideration that they do not have as much experience as normal employees. For some of the interns, this is the first experience of real life business environment. Furthermore, trustworthiness between these two core stakeholders is significant determinant, which can have either a positive or a negative impact on the value creation. Students need to be able to trust their supervisor and vice versa.

“Secondary value co-creation sphere”

“Why do universities support internships and should they continue” is fundamental question related to the third core actor closely involved in internship activities. According to our conceptual co-creation framework, third actor, who comes to the process of value creation in the secondary phase, is the educational institution. Aalborg University provides academic supervision for students throughout the whole internship period. Aalborg University is aware of the benefits that come from having students in the companies. Mutual cooperation between intern, supervisor and company helps to not only develop two core stakeholders’ skills and benefits, but it also indirectly influence universities’ future work. Thanks to the cooperation with business sectors, university might not shift its focus far from the real world. This factor is even

more emphasized with the development of non-existing technologies, new business fields and globalization. These all factors need to be reconsidered with regards to new theories. Although, this cannot be done without the reflections and connections to the real business.

With regards to the question, “why should universities continue to support internships”, as already mentioned in this paper, interns get the possibility to have a look into real business still under the protected frame that is created by the university. The benefits arising from internships have been already stated for all stakeholders, but there is still something further that needs to be taken into consideration. In order to have the internship to be beneficial and safeguarded for students, interns also need to show commitment to the university as well as to give their feedback, since they need to develop certain internship project and might help to develop future internship possibilities for the upcoming students. In other words, there needs to be a positive relationship between students and academic supervisor in order to have a positive value creation. When it comes to supervision, there should be regular meetings scheduled in order to keep up with the workload and tasks both for company and the university. This aspect would help both sides to stick with the objectives that are different either for student and university.

Implication for Further Research and Possibilities

As we have claimed in our limitation part, the Danish context might influence the results that have been presented and interpreted from our research. The level of engagement of additional stakeholders, except of a student and the firm may differ across different geopolitical areas. In terms of various education systems and types of internship programs we would further recommend comparing various systems and their stakeholders, because diverse internship systems and their frameworks, either legal or structural, may positively or negatively influence value creation processes. By collecting all of the data from diverse countries, we would be able to define factors that actually matter from overall point of view. Moreover, we would be able to clarify whether our findings could be applied in different countries. Whether social context at least between a student and a firm is similar to the same situation abroad. By doing this, we would be able to mark systems and create recommendations for the legal authorities, which may actually try to change and increase possibilities for the students to be further implemented in the current business world.

VI. Chapter - Conclusion

The project has aimed to explore and to investigate the concept of the value creation in the context of the internship program. Firstly, authors have collected relevant literature in the studied field for getting a clear understanding and knowledge from the previous researchers. By collecting specific literature on this topic, we were able to develop our own understanding by creating conceptual framework. The framework is based on the literature review and it provides the brief explanation of the value creation process in the internship program. According to our framework, the most significant stakeholders are students and firms, because there is main interaction between them when it comes to value creation process. Based on the knowledge gained from the literature review, there are also other stakeholders involved in this process. Therefore, our framework includes educational institutions and external institutions as actors that have impact on the value creation.

In terms of data collection, authors have decided to use primary source, specifically qualitative individual interviews. Interviews were conducted with three stakeholders, namely students, firms and educational institution. The reason for including all three actors for this research is to make sure that authors get the overall picture of their perceptions regarding the value, which they have created through the internship program. Therefore, it offers the possibility to compare different perspectives and to get their opinions on different factors, which have influence on value creation process.

We have developed three main research sub questions and after analyzing data collected for this research, we are able to answer them as following.

- *How is value creation perceived among different stakeholders?*

The notion of value is difficult to fully capture and understand due to many reasons that have been precisely described in the literature review. As it is stated through the theory, the perception of created value differs among all stakeholders. But to understand what kind of value is created and to what level, it is needed to get a clear understanding on stakeholders who are interacting in the internship program and how they influence value creation processes. By

understanding these stakeholders, we may investigate what kind of value is created and also how to measure it with regards to characteristics of individual stakeholder.

More stakeholders who enter into these processes directly or indirectly influence value created within the internship programs. Perception of value is dependent on different interpretations based on contexts. Thus, based on their level of engagement and their characteristics they derive different kind of benefits at the different levels. With regards to quality and quantity of interactions in specific context, value becomes highly personalized- *value in context* and also *unique value*.

As it is expected, the core value created in internship programs resolves around the knowledge transfer and experiences that is derived for all actors by multi-layered interactions. Students experience the combination of their theoretical knowledge with the real business under the protected environment of university supervision. Nevertheless, the knowledge transfer and experiences are not only derived by the intern. Firms also perceive created benefits in form of fresh knowledge transfer or the newest academic perspectives that might help them with their business. However, firms see another benefit of having intern as cheap labor possibility, which may develop into future hire without the need of spending extra resources on initial integration into the company. At the same time, interns and firms are not the only stakeholders in this process that benefit from the internship program. By providing the opportunity for participating in internship, educational institutions strengthen the links between academia and business community and also getting feedback to stay updated on current issues in order to comply with current business environment.

Due to the fact that internship programs are centered on interaction of various actors, many diverse factors determine the final output. In following question, we have tried to answer how co-creation processes are affected by multiple determinants.

- *What are the factors that influence value creation and co- creation?*

As we show in our framework, co-creation process is dependent on the interactions between stakeholders. Therefore, various factors influence benefits that are created and they have also impact on stakeholders' perceptions in positive or negative way. Factors revolve not only

around social context and interactions within it, but also around design and framework of internship programs in general.

In order for these interactions to be effective, mutual engagement of all stakeholders plays crucial role in the process. Mutual engagements can be understood as attention to each other, willingness or interest in participation in internship processes. Findings also show that factors such as open mind, responsibility, proactive approach from the perspective of students as well as firms, which also provide working environment, can increase or decrease the overall value from this experiential learning. Nevertheless, knowledge transfer in terms of experience cannot be imprinted on students without engagement.

Furthermore, the structure of internship has to be also taken into consideration. In our analysis we have found out that without well-designed frame of internship, there is limited or lower possibility for value creation at all. Although social interaction matters in internships, unstructured processes do not allow stakeholders to derive any benefits, which would be otherwise possible to get.

As it is already included in question regarding factors influencing value creation, social interaction affects value creation processes. Since we have described the part of social factors, we will look at the remaining ones.

- *How do social interactions between different stakeholders affect the value creation process?*

In order to bring understanding in social context, it is also necessary to include both relational and cultural aspects that play essential role in the process of mutual interactions. Since the relationship aspect is inseparable from the social interaction, all stakeholders take it into consideration in value creation processes. Moreover, when it comes to relational aspect, all stakeholders perceive this element as critical, especially in regards to value appropriation, which is associated with already created value and incurred resources by firm, when interns are lately hired as regular employees.

Last but not least, as found out from our data analyses, interviewees also recognize cultural characteristics. They perceive both organizational and national culture as an element that

influences social interactions in positive or negative matter. Our findings show that interviewee do not share same opinions in terms of the level that culture determines value creation processes.

To conclude, the main research question and supporting sub-questions have been answered through data analysis with the help of literature review. We are aware that social context surrounding internship program is narrowed in our research to main location Denmark. Therefore, we would suggest to broader overall context to other locations and also to increase the number of interviewees in order to derive more data. This further step would help to identify specifics of internship programs across diverse locations. Furthermore, it would allow us to compare different approaches towards internship program in different countries and help us to evaluate possibilities for suggestions in order to make internship programs more effective.

VII. Chapter - Limitations of the Research

This chapter will include several limitations associated with the overall project findings and methodology. Limitations might have influence on the validity and the reliability of the project and due to this fact; it is essential to consider various factors connected to the research itself.

1. Limited Timeframe and Financial Resources

This research project is part of the Master program at the department of Economics and Business Administration, International Business Economics at the Aalborg university. Therefore, it is limited with determined timeframe. The whole duration of five months has been determined for the purpose of this project, which has limited the research regarding the possibility to access more relevant information and it also narrows variety of methods that can be applied, for example the sample size of the interviews, quality of interview. In addition to that, we were not provided with financial resources that could possibly help with gaining the access to the higher quality of the work.

2. Language Barrier of Target Groups

Authors, employees of the companies and university and interns are not native English speakers and, therefore, it may restrict the research project in a way that there can be possible misunderstanding in interview questions, which can further lead to answering the questions differently as if the native speaker would answer. Moreover, it may lead to mislead evaluation of the findings.

3. Opinions of the Respondents

Target groups that have participated in the interview process gave their own standpoints, opinions and suggestions to the questions that they have been asked, however, their meanings are only subjective views, perceptions and feelings. Their opinions can be influenced by various factors including current mood, atmosphere of the interview etc. Due to this fact, the project is limited in the way, since their opinions are not necessarily according to some specific facts.

4. Country Location Specific

The research is also influenced by the specifics of the country location where the interviews were conducted. In Denmark, government has been constantly supporting the higher education either by huge financial assistance or also by legal support to universities to collaborate with the Danish companies. Moreover, the specific of Aalborg University has to be taken into consideration. Aalborg University allows and also supports students as a part of their curriculum to spend the whole semester in internship programs in various companies either located in Denmark or abroad in order to gain certain ECTS points. This fact may lead to show a distorted view on the internship programs in other countries than in Denmark.

5. Specific of the Diverse Business Fields of Firms

The findings regarding the firms' perception of internship programs might be determined by specifics of business area where the firms operate. Nevertheless, we have tried to reduce this influence by choosing firms in three diverse areas of business e.g., consultancy, electronics and pharmacy.

VIII. Chapter - Philosophical Reflection

This chapter of the project includes authors' choice of the scientific methods and chosen approach view in order for the reader to be able to understand our the point of views, which have strong influence on the overall studied topic.

Firstly, research philosophy relates to the development of specific knowledge and the nature of this knowledge. (Saunders et al., 2009) It is essential to understand the way in which authors acquire and develop the knowledge also when trying to get the answer for the research question, because it is in fact still creation of the new knowledge. Furthermore, when authors decide what kind of research philosophy to apply in the process, it requires considering and identifying the way we perceive the world.

Ontology

Ontology explains how we perceive the world around them. It also pays the attention to the ways in which authors see the relationship between human beings and the environment that surrounds them. There are two types of ontological choice according to Kuada (2012), which are subjective and objective choices. Firstly, starting with the objective ontological choice, researcher views the world as being real and external to the human. Secondly, in ontological subjectivism view, scholar sees that every individual creates his/her own reality and the world around him or her. Furthermore, it means that human beings and the social surrounding are connected to each other. As mentioned before, individuals create their own reality but it is essential to understand that it is based on their own experience. In this way the world is mainly the product of human being. (Kuada, 2012)

In this research project, authors believe that each individual creates his/her own world, which means that they hold on the subjective ontological view during the whole process of writing. Therefore, authors recognize the world as being socially constructed and created by diverse meanings. Human beings and the interactions between them create the reality. Each individual is therefore part of the social world thus having an influence and impact on the human's perception. (Newman, 2013) Due to the fact that authors understand the world as being socially constructed, they cannot only observe the reality externally but they need to interact with

actors when understanding their social world. Actors' feelings, assumptions and perceptions have influence on the way they perceive the reality around them. In general, companies, universities are created from social actors, which mean that their perceptions need to be understood when answering the problem question.

Epistemology, Methodological Approach

When we talk about the epistemology, it signifies the nature of the knowledge and how the research thinks decide whether the knowledge is acceptable or not in the specific studies. There is possibility can follow different views in regards of the nature of the knowledge. There are those who believe that there is possibility to do research by using external observing as a method and therefore they can envision the social world. (Saunders et al., 2009) On the other hand, researchers can hold opposite view that is subjective view on the knowledge and further following antipositivism. Antipositivism emphasizes on the fact that social world of actors can be understood only by one way, which is by direct interaction with the individuals who are participate in the activities that are under investigation. (Kuada, 2012) According to our perception, subjective view is implemented throughout the whole research and therefore we believe that it is very critical to understand the meaning of the social actors and the reality, which they are surrounded by. Therefore, ideographic approach is chosen for this research project.

This approach sees the reality with the main focus on symbols and ideas. Thanks to this, we have an opportunity to get inside into the particular situation by being close involved with the social actors in order to achieve a clear understanding of them. By using ideographic approach, we have also a possibility to see social actors' opinions, perceptions and further being able to listen and hear their own experiences. (Saunders et al., 2009) While using this type of methodological view, qualitative research has been chosen for data collection due to the fact that the world is social construction. In order to get to know the social actors, we need to interact with them for creating the knowledge and therefore authors have decided to use individual interviews for this research. We, as human beings, are not able to only observe, but we need to create interactions between individuals for understanding their views and perceptions. (Kuada, 2012)

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Appendix

Appendix 1

Interview Questions - Interns and Firms

Introduction question:

1. Why did you participate in internships?
2. What is the benefit from you either gaining an internship or providing an internship?
 - a. Any other benefits you can think of
3. What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?
 - a. Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are getting?
 - b. What were the reasons for you to get or not to get benefits you expected to get?

Value creation aspect

4. What is a key driver of value creation (*how benefits are created*) within internship?
5. What helped you to achieve the benefits you got?
6. What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?
7. What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Stakeholders in the value aspect:

8. Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?
 - a. If so, how do they influence internships?

Relationship aspect

9. Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

10. Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

External institutions

11. What external institution do you know influencing internship programs?

12. Do the external institutions have an effect on the value creation?

- a. If so, what role do you think external institutions play internships? Passive, or active

End

13. How has the internship helped you with your future?

14. Would you recommend internship programs?

15. What would you suggest to change in internships if you would have force to do it?

Interview Questions - University

Introduction question:

1. Why does the university create this opportunity for students?
2. What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved (student, firm)?
3. What kind of benefits do you receive from stakeholders?
 - a. What do you expect from student to get through the internship?
 - b. What do you expect from the company to get?

Value creation aspect

4. What is a key driver of value creation (*how benefits are created*) within internship?
5. What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?
6. What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Stakeholders in the value aspect:

7. Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?
 - a. If so, how do they influence internships?
8. How do you help students with finding the internship?
9. How often do you communicate with stakeholders (student, firm)?

Relationship aspect

10. Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?
11. Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

External institutions

12. What external institution do you know influencing internship programs?
13. Do the external institutions have an effect on the value creation?
14. Do you coordinate with external institutions?
 - a. If so, what role do you think external institutions play internships? Passive, or active

End

15. What would you suggest to change in internships if you would have force to do it

Appendix 2

Interview with Employee A, Aalborg University

21st May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview)

Interviewer: Why does the university create this opportunity as the internship for students?

University A: Okay, so what I think it is a reason behind?

Interviewer: Yes, please

University A: Okay, I think the reason is to create some kind of good relationship between academia and businesses. And also, to prepare students to be ready when they go and start practicing whatever they want as a career, because I have been in situations where for example in other countries not in Denmark, this kind of education, even though is business education are very much separated from businesses. This is bad, so it is good that Aalborg University they create this opportunity for internship because it is good preparation for students when they are done with the education. So, I think it is with a good intention and I find it appropriate.

Interviewer: Okay perfect and what, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved (student, firm)?

University A: Okay, I think that the university in general not only for the internship, also for other kind of collaboration. It offers quite a lot of insights from the perspective of the students, because they are fresh, and have theoretical knowledge that comes from the education and practicing managers they start to lose contact with everything that they have learnt before, because there are some managers that never have business education before. But for those who had, they have forgotten about it, or they do not acquire it in decision-making process. Now when students go there, they just refresh approach and they are quite good in systematizing and have academic approach towards analytical process, decision-making processes. So, this is quite good for business when students go to them for internship especially those students who are well prepared and are eager to participate for the process. From the perspective of the student it is also good because they see how the real life is and there is a need for certain kind of compromises. It is not exactly as in the classroom when someone to deliver the lecture or you look at particular case or any kind of analytical processes being conducted. It is actually a real life, when they go to company and start solving their issues, problems, and they have defined them. It is good for both sides, from the perspective of the company and students.

Interviewer: perfect, so they both benefits from that. And what kind of benefits does the university get?

University A: Actually, I think, if we take the internship project. I don't see straight benefit for the university itself, but probably in the long run, when students start practicing, maybe some of them can go and be employed in the companies they do this kind of internship. I had several students that during their internship they got offered a job. Afterwards they got employed within

the company and the link between the university and particular company becomes stronger and this is substantial benefit because than it becomes easier to work with this. If we look retrospectively many years ago, different companies in Northern Jytland , for example Roblon and several others, had students that have been educated in the university and when new internships are negotiated or research is done with companies, then it is much easier for the university to have this process and for people employed in the university to have possibility to go to this particular company and conduct the activities they want to research.

Interviewer: So, you see also benefits for the university itself not only for firm and students.

University A: Yes, exactly, for the university as institutions, because different generations come, for example you are now one particular generation, then you graduate and newcomers get involved into the educational process and it becomes easier with certain companies where previous internships had been established. So, this is beneficial for the institution Aalborg University, because it becomes easier to establish the processes in the future.

Interviewer: Okay, thank you and what do you think is a key driver of value creation within internship?

University A: The key driver, well it depends on the perspective because if we take the perspective of the university, the key driver has always been the fact that the university or for example this particular faculty, they want to have closer relationship with businesses. So, they are motivated to search for this and this is not only because obviously all of the academic staff that are employed on various level of the university they go and conduct the research and they have certain relationships but now on the student level through internship this is reinforcement. It becomes stronger and stronger. So, one very good motivator from the perspective of the university is the fact to reinforce the relationship between the academia and business community. Also, I would say that there is strong motivation of the part of the company as well, because what I have seen the companies are also showing interest through... for example we need someone to deliver a guest lecture and they come from some of the companies where we send our students for internship and the company know more less what is going on in the educational process through the communication with students. They get prepared and then our relationship with these people reinforce. Whenever we need people to come and help us with the educational process, it becomes easier. So this is kind of a reinforcement of the relationship that is driving force in the process of sustaining internship program developed overtime and I have seen initially, now I am speaking of the cases of students going to Danish companies, but also it is a case when they go for international company, because there are some firms which we have established initial relationship, and this has been good because afterwards they have been targeted from the university to become partners of various research projects. So, this is driving force not only for Danish company but also everywhere in the world to establish good relationships and further on research project to have reliable partner.

Interviewer: What is your role in value creation process according your point of view as institution?

University A: As institution I am not very sure, I think you better ask the question to Reimer, because he is in the process. I can give you the role of the supervisor in this process.

Interviewer: Yes, that would be great.

University A: We for sure try to readjust the process of how theoretical interpretation for example defining the problem, problem statement. Well in the number of cases especially 5,6 years ago, some students were struggling with finding the problem definition. They try to find it they had meeting with manager of the firm, but still they were not sure how to do it. Then this kind of link between what they observe and see (students), and how they interpret the process from the theoretical perspective because it is continuous movement from abstraction to something concrete and then back to abstraction because the abstract thinking is little bit more challenging because you do not see directly and what you see directly is sometimes hard to relate to some kind of abstraction. So, from that perspective I think that all supervisors have very important role to play in this movement, because internship projects are good preparation for the master thesis. The role of the supervisor is critical.

Interviewer: Okay, perfect and what are the factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

University A: Well, if we were to focus on this, I think these factors need to be subdivided into some categories. For example, that can be factors that are associated with individuals. Sometimes, let's take the perspective of the student, supervisor, and firms. First think is the how the student is actually involved in the process in the internship. How she/he sees it, and what kind of involvement has the person towards the work that is being done and how the student is seeing the relationship between the student and the supervisor. So, there have been a number of very good cases, in which we didn't have a lot of problems but in some cases, we had some problems, because some students believe (especially those who had very good grades in the educational processes) they did not keep constant the relationship between them and supervisor. Whenever this has been disrupted, it has been very serious factor that did not help the value creation and value creation has been not achieved in the best possible way. Then we can take the perspective of the relationship between the student and the manager who are responsible for the activities of the student in the firm. In number of cases, these people they believe that they should get from the student best possible outcome from the perspective of the firm, but the student is there in order to develop the internship project. And there is a tension that is gathered in the process of development the internship project. This is again something that is not beneficial towards the value creation process. Then there are probably one or two other issues. This is only from my observation, I didn't have this into my practice but certain supervisor with certain students and this is mainly due to first of all individual characteristics, but probably culture related specifics which is associated with national culture that to not have get very good relationship and synchronization. Then the new supervisor was allocated to this specific student, which was really bad for the whole process of value creation in internship for this student. Good factors, we can say that first of all in certain companies, I will not specify, but they created very good conditions for students in terms of giving them tasks exactly aligned in with the problem they identified for their particular internship project. Then the project was going very smoothly and we didn't have the need to conduct very frequent meetings. Probably two- three meetings throughout the whole process and it was fantastic. So, the good understanding in the process in the relationship between the managers in the company and the student, we had cases where 2,3 students were working on the same problem and in many cases, it was even better because when one individual was working on one particular internship project, it was not always very smooth. So, in particular the relationship and the understanding on the part of the company towards what the student has to do- issue one and then the relationship between the students and the supervisor

in terms of harmonious processes of exchanging the information is very critical part, which can be either positive or negative towards the value creation process. This is what I can say.

Interviewer: Perfect, thank you and do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?

University A: In general, yes, and I believe that this should be subdivided into this academic supervision which comes from supervisor which is extremely important and I think it is critical and significant factor in the process of value creation but also the administrative part of the harmonious relationship because we had number of cases, we needed to have the help of people that are administrating the process inside or outside the center in the department. And this has been kind of critical in order to make the process go smoothly and also facilitate the process of value creation. I think the educational institution; Aalborg University, from these two aspects academic supervision and administrative support are very critical in facilitating the process of value creation.

Interviewer: Thank you and how does the university you help students with finding the internship?

University A: Well it is different in various cases. Some students are very proactive and they are looking for the internship on their own, they may ask for some help on the university side to help with administrative or with this specification of where they should go and how they should approach it. But in general, this part of students doesn't need much help. Oh, then there is another group that is proactive but not capable of finding the right way. And so, they need only an advice and guidance and then they take everything into their hands and they are students who are quite passive and for them in a number of cases administratively the internships for them were found. They were secure with that. Or also some of the supervisors that have been allocated for students that didn't have companies for internship, and then they help them to find suitable company for that. I have to say that there were not many recently but, in the past, probably about 12, 15 up to 20% of students that didn't have internship. But now this number has decrease drastically, I am not sure, but probably this year hasn't been any. So, in the process the university gradually step as more and more into the process and did quite good job in that end.

Interviewer: Okay and how often do you communicate with stakeholders (student, firm)?

University A: In most of the cases I only talk to students, but there had been cases in which students were unsure or they were pressurized by managers by the people from the company to have this kind of relationship with the supervisor of the student and then we had these meetings by face to face or via Skype with the participation of the manager as well. This has not been very often, let's say not more than five, six percent of internships in one particular period. The regularity or frequency of the meetings on average I should say throughout one internship project for relatively good students, but they are committed to develop this internship project probably six, seven meetings throughout the whole period. In some cases, there were 2,3 meetings because student simply did not think as I gave you one example at the beginning. Student didn't think it was necessary and they were simply not asking for this. Although on the part of the supervisors there was constant communication to make them to present part of their work.

Interviewer: Yeah, I understand and do you think that interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

University A: Yes, I think it is critical. Interpersonal relationship is of critical importance and it can be interpreted on the basis of supervisor, student, and manager, absolutely critical.

Interviewer: And does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

University A: Well, I think it does and if we take the organizational culture of Aalborg University, it has been the attitude and the approach and the organizational culture in the center always stimulated and facilitated the process of internships, finding companies for internships, the process off students developing work in the companies. On the part of the university the organizational culture was very much critical for the successful process of value creation in the internships. Definitely this has been a constant process of improvement. Since this program expanded in the variation of international business economics and international marketing now with more and more student with the tasks becoming more challenging but it was all right. On the part of the companies, organizational culture also was very important as I said. Most of the companies they were very helpful and they provided students with the conditions necessary for it. But we had especially three years ago several groups of students that were allocated to some companies that they found themselves and they were not Danish, they were international students from continent and they had very big problems because the company was not very helpful and it did not provide them with sufficient amount of information to work on their project so this is due to lack of understanding on the part of the organization. So, organizational culture absolutely critical in the process of value creation.

Interviewer: And also national culture as you said before right?

University A: Yes, national culture is also very important and you can see it for example Danish students that are going to Danish companies, they are doing much better than international students not Danes going to Danish firms in terms of understanding how to approach it. Maybe the attitude was all right but somehow this lack of understanding from national culture perspective also very important. We had also examples with several students; these were brilliant students, very open minded, good communicators, very good in terms of dealing with various situations. For them the national culture was minor importance. Probably it was challenging them but it did not impact their performance, grades and value creation in the process of developing of their internship project. But on the whole if we say that what is valid for the majority of the students, national culture is of serious importance.

Interviewer: And what external institutions do you know that are influencing internship program? Does the university coordinate with external institutions?

University A: Yes, I think there is one institution; I am not sure how it is called. It is for SME in the Northern Jytland and we have good relationship with this institution. They help the process mostly internationalization of SME in Northern Denmark, so they are very good in providing the opportunity for students to go to variety of companies also through you know our link between the international business center and the business community Keld.

Interviewer: No, I am not familiar with this name.

University A: Well, he is employed by the University in order to create links with businesses. He communicates through the variety of institutions. Try to ask about him from Reimer and he will maybe get you in contact with him. I believe that external institutions have effect on the value creation process and my experience is that the process effecting value creation of students,

and co creation with companies and co creation between the supervisor and student, the whole process of value co creation with all the actors involved in it, it is very much facilitated by this particular external institution. This is positive element, because every time the university tries to create relationship with certain institutions to facilities the internship, they have particular a goal with it and the goals is to finding the companies, the process of value creation in internship.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internships if you would have force to do it?

University A: Let me think a little bit. Probably there are some certain aspects. I think so far in terms of developing this practice, the university and particularly international business center. They have achieved quite a lot. For the future I am not sure, but one of the reason that some of the companies do not want to have more students after a period of time, because they are small companies and therefore do not have so many issues that need to be resolved. There is a need to expand the number of links with companies. I would suggest that maybe more companies could be on the list where the students can go for the internship. Maybe this is something that needs to be addressed. In terms of the process, I don't think that there are many issues that can be improved, because you don't have the control on these factors that can facilitate the process of starting of this the internship process or value creation throughout it. Mostly maybe to expand the number of companies where in the future students can go.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate the time you spent on this interview and to help me with my master thesis.

Appendix 3

Interview with Employee B, Aalborg University

24st May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview)

Interviewer: Why does the university provide the internship for students? What is the reason behind it?

University B: Aalborg university is a problem-based learning university. Problem based learning is in our DNA and that means that we do not teach the theory for the matter of theory and we also do not believe in memorizing text and so on in the traditional old way. So, we also do not believe that theory is better than the reality but we also do not believe that the reality is better than theory. We just believe that theory and reality co-exist and that there needs to be synergy between them. So, in order for students to get the opportunity, to experience real life before they go out to work after their thesis, there is the possibility to have an internship and this has been with the university since the birth of these Master programs, so there has been this possibility.

Interviewer: Okay and what about in your opinion, what are the benefits that you as the university offer to other stakeholders? students and the firm

University B: There are a lot of opportunities, you know..., in order to make something successful everybody needs to benefit from it. And this is actually the situation with this. Companies get the access to good students, which they have the possibility to recruit afterwards. Students also ask very interesting questions in the companies and from that they make spark development or innovation programs and so on and so on, because fresh students come out and ask questions about different things and students they get the opportunity to build a network. They get to try the theoretical knowledge in the practical real-life situations. Most of the students they experience that they have learnt a lot and build up competences. And from the university part, it gives us the possibility to be in contact with a lot of companies that are our study area. So, we get direct interaction with these companies and we also get interaction with our students, very good students if there is something missing in our curriculum.

Interviewer: Maybe you have already answer this question but what is the benefits that you as a university receive?

University B: Mainly it is the fact that we hatch better students, because they are better prepared to get the job in real-life situations.

Interviewer: And what do you think is the key driver or motivator for the value creation process within the internship?

University B: They key driver is the common interest from the company and student, so they have a common interest. So, student of course wants to get some experience and the company they are interested in recruiting, but of course they are interested in having people to focus on jobs, tasks that they do not normally focus on.

Interviewer: What is your role in the value creation process?

University B: So, the university needs to prepare students well for this. We need to both on practical and theoretical level prepare for different situations.

Interviewer: okay and what do you think, what are the factors that decrease or increase value creation?

University B: if the interest from the student and the company is very different than the value can decrease and probably also if we educate students towards the job market that does not exist so in theoretical situation if we educate students to have competences, which was not something that the company wants to have.

Interviewer: okay then do you consider educational institution as a significant factor in value creation process?

University B: No, I think that there are three equal partners in the value creation process and I actually think of course that educational institution creates this opportunity and if we didn't do it of course it wouldn't work. It is the same if the company didn't want any interns then it wouldn't work. If the students didn't apply for the internship that it wouldn't work. So i believe that we have equal part in the value creation process.

Interviewer: and how does the university help students with finding the internship?

University B: We do help, we have list of previous companies that have had internships, we have also international office that can help, but 80,90% of getting the internship is something that relays on the students. it's like searching for the first job right, if you succeed in finding the internship, then there is probability that you also find the first job.

Interviewer: And for example, how does the university communicate with the firm and the students during the internship?

University B: No, there is no interaction but they can be some interaction with students and university in regards of the supervision. There is rarely communication between the supervisor and the company. 98% of all cases, we don't have contact with the company. It is up to students to handle it on their own.

Interviewer: yes, and does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value creation process?

University B: Of course, the interpersonal attraction between the firm and the students have the role. I believe it is mainly between the firm and the student not as much with the supervisor and the student.

Interviewer: okay and Does organizational culture or national culture influence value co creation?

University B: Yes, I definitely think that there is organizational culture that are more ready to take interns and create situation where they can succeed and learn something. We must stress that interns are still in the learning process and they need to learn, they are not slave labor and there is different organizational culture that support this learning situation.

Interviewer: What about the national culture?

University B: Of course, culture influence it, but I cannot say that there are cultures that are more successful, but I believe it is not much about the national culture it's much more about the chemistry between persons and that chemistry can go beyond national culture.

Interviewer: What external institution you know that have influence on the value creation process?

University B: Sometimes, students use agencies to find the internship, but it's not that often. Normally, it is something that go between the student and the company or student and the university. of course, you have student organizations that sometimes provides internship for students.

Interviewer: Do external institution have an effect on the value creation process?

University B: No, because I believe it is mainly between the student and the firm.

Interviewer: and how did the internship help the university so far?

University B: Internship helps that the university has the contact with a lot of companies.

Interviewer: And Can you think of something that you would change something in regards of the internship?

University B: I would like that more students use the internship possibility, because we have growing number of students that go to study abroad instead of having internship in the company. I actually think it is a pity.

Interviewer: What about from the university perspective to improve something?

University B: No, I cannot think of anything. I think that the internship possibility helps a lot of students, but we could also come with this initiative and help students with finding internship but I actually don't think so, because it is part of maturing to find your own internship. If you cannot find your internship, you can't find your first job and by helping students we actually take away situations where they can learn. So, I actually think it is okay that we put that responsibility on students, because it is the responsibility they are going to live with for the rest of the life.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate the time you spent on this interview and to help me with my master thesis.

Appendix 4

Interview with Employee C, Aalborg University

24st May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview)

Interviewer: Why does the university create this opportunity as the internship for students?

University C: Aalborg was created in 70's to work with local community, different stakeholders, so the reason being that they were considered with the ivory tower, which definitely includes all universities here, it was not exactly what was needed, **they needed to ensure that the knowledge created here can be used for local community.** Local community involved businesses, public institutions, or cultural institutions etc, so **definitely to ensure that the knowledge transfer and drive knowledge creation.**

Interviewer: Okay perfect and what, in your view, are the benefits you as a university offer to the other parties involved (student, firm)?

University C: **what the university offers to students is the opportunity to apply in daily work that kind of knowledge that they have acquired.** Usually students and this is my personal experience You have the academic education and then you have to go through the door to this workplace which may be your future for the next 40 years. And then waaaa what I am going to do. So, we're trying to pull back that portal, the door to early in the studies so that they already have insight into one of the conditions and the circumstances and the challenges and issues. In this case, the businesses. **So, the university offers that opportunity in the protected environment of a supervised project, to investigate or to apply what they have learnt also to investigate what is actually going on in the world.** It's important to emphasize that it is a sort of protected environment because students, they have fallback, supervisor, other people in department should there be problems in the internship but also how to deal with the topic that they're interested in. Because when you finish you are on your own. To give an example I had a student last year. There was a girl not Danish who decided to take the internship in India. She applied for the company and the company had an office in Paris and that's what she applied for and what it ended up was that she went to India. I worked a lot in India in my life. So I'm very familiar. She needed someone you know on the phone and to help her to get through very troublesome period. But I think she had she probably had the biggest learning from her internship even though she thought it was disaster.

Interviewer: Okay and What does the university offer to this firm or to the companies that they provide internship?

University C: **I think it's a big difference if it's a large company or small company.** Companies, Danish companies, anyway here are keen on understanding how your people think they like that contact and they see the perspective in terms of perhaps a **future employee or at least they get knowledge about what is this generation.** They obviously have something they want us to work on and I think that larger companies have better backup structure to help mentoring and all that is

advisable for the internship rather than the small company. On the other hand, smaller companies' students have opportunity to work on it, I mean the broader tasks than in the large company. It is not that narrow. I know that you probably want to hear the words knowledge that they gain knowledge from university. I don't know if they see it that way. I think they see it more in terms of new angle on something that they're stuck with them, that they don't know how to deal with and then student can come in and be innovative.

Interviewer: Okay, perfect, and what kind of benefits does the university receive?

University C: It's so easy for the university to become that ivory tower, because there are so many requirements for publishing. By having students working on internships and having academic supervisors, then we get insight into what we should start working on. Internships keep us on our toes.

Interviewer: And what do you think is this key motivator or main driver for value creation within these internship programs?

University C: Are you thinking of the value creation from students or the joint value creation?

Interviewer: I think you can also say for both students and the firm, but I mean in general within these internship program. It could be for example the relationship with the student and the firm manager or the supervisor, just to give you an idea what I mean.

University C: So, do you mean how the internship should be organized for the student can get some benefits from it?

Interviewer: Yes, exactly so what do you think it keeps them motivated to achieve their goals.

University C: Okay, hm... responsibility hm.. and under guidance. You know how much you should be on the top of the students, how much freedom you give them to explore particular topic and that depends very much on the context of the company. So definitely the responsibility and I think maybe the key thing I think is an open mind on the part of the student. Open ears and open eyes, you know sense of what's going on there. If they are too focus on what exactly they want to do, then they do not observe. I think it is necessary to get that feel. The whole point of the internship is to jump in muddy water and learn to swim. I know you thinking perhaps mentorship and yes, there has to be some sort of person in the company who's responsible for the students so, they know whom they can go to get information.

Interviewer: And what do you think is your role now we can talk as supervisor for the value creation process according to your point of view?

University C: I think the first one is to help the students see some sort of pattern in what they are experiencing and to see some sense. And usually students, you know they're all over. So. So, it's a supervisor role to figure out what motives student. You know are you keen on marketing? Where you see yourself in the future? So, this gives me the idea or the angle of what the student is interested in. I think that's I think that's the first rule. And another rule is to be when student has an issue. Then throughout the process to help them link up the theoretical part and figure out how to formulate the problem question.

Interviewer: Okay, perfect and what are the factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

University C: Decreases when there is a close mind that they are not listening and looking. Another thing that is decreasing is that they don't take advantage of the supervisor or come too late into the process instead of just initiating conversation early on. So that's the big issue. Mutual interests between the supervisor and the student.

Interviewer: And what about when they are in the company what can decrease the value creation when they are already there?

University C: yeah, so that there is some sort of structure from the company side to what is expected from the student, so the student has some kind of framework, to have a clear picture of responsibilities for this and this area. But as a newcomer into any organization, you have no idea what the norms are or what the degree of freedom you have or you know whom I can talk to. Danish organizations are very flat and it's very hard for people who come from hierarchical to figure that out.

So, the fact that it makes the internship not so fruitful is for the student to figure that out how to play the game etc. And another factor that increases the value is when the company articulates for the students this framework of that is allowed, what is not allowed.

Interviewer: Perfect, thank you and do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?

University C: I think universities see the internships as a clamp, as a way to play a role in society and it's a way to co create the knowledge. But in relation to a specific internship I don't know. In northern Jutland we have a lot of small companies and it could be that for example UCN that their role is more appropriate for the need to match that need of the company than the universities. We have also a range of bigger companies who need that university knowledge, so it's a different level. But I believe that Aalborg University does play significant role in the process, but not necessarily under universities.

Interviewer: Thank you and how does the university you help students with finding the internship?

University C: So, I don't know the details but I know that international office helps this helps with international context, and there is a list of companies where there were previously interns, and we have also reports that are accessible for students. So, they can get an idea if this is a good place to work for me etc. I am not sure if what I am doing with linking up is something that others do, because I have a lot of contact around the businesses. And I am also following other students who are already in the position to make a decision for example for the internship. A lot of people that we have sent for the internship are now in the position where they have a say so it is easier now to have possibility to have internship but issue is that the university has not been good enough in following these students and to have alumni. So, they are working on it, building a group of alumni, so they can get in contact with them.

Interviewer: Okay and how often do you communicate with stakeholders (student, firm)?

University C: Normally I do not communicate with the firm, unless they want it. I have example of a one student that was involved in one project and I was there on the meeting with the company. So, I actually follow up her process. So, this is the example that it does happen but it is rare. It is not our responsibility.

Interviewer: and how often do you then communicate with students?

University C: I think it is up to students. I know what the regulations say but we prefer that the student contact the supervisor even before the internship starts. It is very few students who do that. Early in the internship, I asked them to develop their own plan so they can keep the deadline so they can have their own energy and resources but then I also know when they want to meet up with me.

Interviewer: Yeah, I understand and do you think that interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

University C: It is very important, you have to click and the choice of the company that the intern goes to is very significant. And then people skills are huge important. I don't even know if I know internships that were complete failure. I know project that wasn't that good, but not that internship. The more chemistry you have also the supervisor and the student, you can really motivate each other.

Interviewer: And does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

University C: If you are not able to manage the interface where you come from and the organization then you got a problem, but that's one of the thing that you need to work on as a supervisor and that's why it is important to have a conversation before they leave for the internship. So, if you cannot decode what's going on, it's difficult to be effective. I think you heard this quote before, "as long as you feel foreign, you cannot be effective", and I think that's a big true both in relation with national and organizational culture.

Interviewer: And what external institutions do you know that are influencing internship program? Does the university coordinate with external institutions?

University C: I don't know if there is any international organization, I think there are only local ones. The way the industry is organized in Denmark, you have the company, and you have in the municipality level commune. You have business office, I come from Rebild business center and there is staff about 6 people that have a close contact with companies in our municipality and they help them with various issues. If they are looking for funding, or they want to be a part of some EU projects etc. That's what they kind of offer. So, they have all of these contacts. Aalborg University can for example have a relationship to those offices. So, in that case this is exactly what this department does. Whether that leads to the internship programs, is another issue. The purpose is not to focus on internship, but it is an opportunity. Once the contact is established between the company and the student, I don't think that they have a role (external institutions), but they have a role of informing the company about these possibilities. Initial value creation of the internship comes later, and then they do not have the role in it. They only facilitate the process.

Interviewer: And how do you think that the internship helped the university so far?

University C: Foundation, that's really what it is. The university itself is organized three ways, one is teaching, then it is research and the third one is innovation. Through the internship there are a lot of connections and relationships with the business community.

Interviewer: I guess you have already answered this question, would you suggest changing something in internships if you would have force to do it?

University C: Yeah, following up with previous students as mentioned before. It should be coordinated so that becomes corporate knowledge that this individual is there and there and work for this and this company.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate the time you spent on this interview and to help me with my master thesis.

Appendix 5

Interview with Firm A, (Danish company) Aalborg, Denmark

24st May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview)

Interviewer: Why do you participate in internships?

Firm A: Well, the reason we participate is actually of course we like to interact with Aalborg community and we had case competitions and things like this before, and now we have decided to take the step further and offer internship for students and it is of course both in our own interest to get some if you can say free or almost free labor while at the same time getting new perspective on some of our own ways of doing things. And I think it is a win- win situation for both students and the company.

Interviewer: And how many interns do you usually have and when did u start with internship programs?

Firm A: Well, we have three interns that have started last summer and I think we have one more these past months and we have another group of students that are working with us on their project.

Interviewer: Maybe you have already kind of answer this question what is the benefit for you providing an internship, and as you said the free labor and new perspective from the students on the certain activities that you as a firm have been doing. Right?

Firm A: Yeah, I think a lot of companies that are a lot of tasks that you keep postponing because of the lack of resources and it can be different tasks for example analytical tasks, strategic background data for competitor analysis, macro analysis. And this takes a lot of time and for some of the sale resources who utilize the data, they need to spend more time with customers then sitting behind the desk and doing research. So, in this way it gives them more opportunity to make more informed choices and more focused choices but there are so many benefits when having new perspectives on things and Yeah How we can reconsider things that we have done in similar way for long time and to get new perspective on that.

Interviewer: Okay, thank you and what, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved? (Students and university)

Firm A: Yeah, I think first of all it is extremely rewarding for both students and the university to have students with practical knowledge, experience how the workplace function and how to interact in this kind of institution and I think it gives something you cannot read in the text book. You get some hands on experience and I think from our point, we have been very open for everything from our complete data that we have on our customers and our strategy. We have been sharing all these things so hopefully they also get some other perspective how to put some of their model, theories into the practice and to see how we do things without necessarily following text book. But I think there are significant benefits on both sides.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are getting?

Firm A : Yeah, I would say this is the first time I have been involved with interns, so I am not sure but we had interns before. I will talk about three that we had since last summer; they actually took over former employee position (two of the interns and this worked out very well). I don't think that we had any expectation aside from the previously mention such as research work but this is unexpected and always development.

Interviewer: What is a key driver of value creation (*how benefits are created*) within internship?

Firm A: Ahh,,... I think that where it really adds up is when interns get into the whole process and the flow of what it is, what are these people. After initial introduction period, when all people internally interns see the value they create then they. It all adds up to something bigger, so when we all work together , it creates positive result.

Interviewer: So, you mean when there is a harmony and smooth flow between all tasks... right?

Firm A : Yeah.. Exactly, but of course it is difficult to achieve it in first week, but it takes few months to get to the flow.

Interviewer: Do you also see the value from the financial perspective from your point of view as a company?

Firm A: Yeah of course, because of all the resources that we would use in terms of getting market data or doing some system you know... it is just if you need to hire a consultant you know it will quickly be kind of a.. You need to prioritize and use your budget on it, but of course what you invest if your time and experience more than financial.

Interviewer: What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?

Firm A: I guess, everybody does it differently, but I tried to tell them. Of course give them concrete tasks straight away so they can get to work immediately, and to see the value of their work pretty fast and kind of make them, invite them to think of new ways and kind of support the whole business. But I tried to make them interact with other departments, we are fours departments, and direct them, so not everything needs to go through me. Also that has been very good that they have they are on own things going on. My role was sparring partner than supervisor.

Interviewer: What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Firm A : hm... Well, you never who you are working with before they are here, so of course there can be some personal differences or cultural differences or you know.. Professional if you give them a lot of independency they fail to live up to your expectation. But again maybe you had too high expectations, you know. It has to be balance with your and their expectations. The communication needs to be clear.

Interviewer: Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?

Firm A: Yeah, because of course you get the expectation when you get someone from Master program, it is higher than someone from high school you know, so of course it means a lot and specific master that you are taking. Of course, your expectations in regards of the educational institution, mainly the knowledge they bring. We try to give them a chance to utilize the knowledge from university in our company.

Interviewer: okay, Thank you... Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation? But I think you have already answered this question previously.

Firm A: Yeah I think it does, and I think we had one meeting before they started the internship, but I guess you still don't know, until you start to work with that person for a period of time. Right, and it is the same with hiring anybody, doesn't matter if it is intern or not. It is always this aspect to consider.

Interviewer: Yes, and Can you tell me how often do you have meetings with your interns?

Firm A: well , with interns we had one every week, in the introduction period it was little more often, but then it was kind of on more..hm.. Yeah once in a while, when I just wanted to catch up.

Interviewer: We have talked about the culture before but what do you think how does the organizational culture affect the value co creation?

Firm A: hmm, I think for our business and our company, we have a lot of employees who has been there for many years, you know, maybe 10,20,30 even 40 years and of course when you get some fresh energy and useful map for doing things done, it is also affecting organizational culture. Definitely and it is nice to see that kind of interaction between the old employees and new students.

Interviewer: Do you know some kind of external institutions that have an effect on the value creation?

Firm A: Well, we had interns who were doing project here and they also get a chance to sit down and talk with our customers in a more separate matter then when they were internal. Yeah, I cannot think of any others. We primarily have communication with students and minimally with the university. We have a contract with the university and that's pretty much it.

Interviewer: How has the internship helped you with company future?

Firm A: We definitely got a lot of work done, that we couldn't have done without them. We got new perspective on some of our strategic and more everyday work. And yes, we definitely continue to have internship.

Interviewer: and would you recommend internship programs for other companies?

Firm A: Yes, definitely.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internships if you would have force to do it?

Firm A: hm. Yeah, I think actually it would be pretty cool if we had the meeting with the university as well to kind of discuss the project that they are doing, because there is a little bit of different interest, because company wants the project to be as practical as possible and the

university of course want to have academic background, more theoretical. Well it is also a balance. But that's the thing that would be nice to have a say in what students are working with.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate the time you spent on this interview and to help me with my master thesis.

Appendix 6

Interview with Firm B (Danish company), Aalborg, Denmark

17th May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why do you provide internships?

Firm B: I think that having internships for NTU is beneficial. NTU has a benefit **out of new talents who come from the university**. Because NTU have been collaborating a lot with universities. On the other hand, we are **giving a chance to students to develop their skills** and the beginning of their professional carrier with us.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you providing an internship?

Firm B: As per my personal experience when I started as well as an intern at the company. I gave a chance to learn about specific job. It is some kind of training that you do not get at the university and getting to the real work especially. But from the company point of view, the **benefit is that we can use those talents**, we can train them our way to even become our employee and also to engage with other companies.

Interviewer: Do you see any other benefit for your company?

Firm B: Not only the talent **is beneficial for us but they are also offering us a cheap labor**. Maybe it is not very nice but to be honest it is job that is not very well paid as with comparison to other jobs. Therefore, company is also benefiting from that factor. But if this would be just because of money, I think it would be so beneficial for the company. I think that the most interesting thing of the internship is to target those skilled students who are at the moment at the university and they can become future employees for the company. Therefore, we are constantly recruiting new people and then we can pick up the best one. This choice is good to do it through internship because once you hire the student, he or she **knows exactly what the company does and what are the tasks to do**. Then you do not have to train **your new employees because they have already spent in the company more that 6 months before**.

Interviewer: What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to other parties?

Firm B: Well, I think getting into a new professional market which is the international development without the need of the studying some specifics of that. I would say after having an internship of 6 months or whole year in NTU you have so much knowledge as you would have done master degree in international development and you have preparation for such work and you have insights into to the work and then you can perform different tasks that surrounds these processes. **This experience is huge value for the interns**. I think that experience is the most beneficial thing that student may get from any internship. Yeah, we also pay student some reimbursement or allowance.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get from intern and the ones you are actually getting from these students?

Firm B: From the point of view of the company and few years spending and experiencing new interns, normally I want to keep my expectations high, it is important part of my job agenda to be engaged with interns. I want new intern to be important part of the business process and to be familiar with our main tasks. So the person can go out of the internship with valuable experience but also we need to benefit from his or her good performance. Sometimes due to lack of willingness or lack of knowledge in the field you are required to know, or lack of interest, you do not get what you expect. On the contrary, it is the opposite, you start giving the person basic tasks which you have at the beginning and see if the person develop so much that you can delegate more tasks and further and give them more responsibility. Then you get more than you have expected from that person and the company is benefiting much more. So if you have interns, you will meet people of every kind.

Interviewer: What is a key driver of value creation within the internships?

Firm B: I would stick with my previous answer. The most interesting is the experience and training that intern gets. Of course, money is important, especially when you are student, something to keep on while you are student but any other student job will give you more money than this. Thus, the key driver would be working environment that keeps intern willing to come to the jobs every day and work with us.

Interviewer: What helped you achieve the benefit company got?

Firm B: I would say that the most important for keeping interest of the intern is to give interesting tasks. If you give an intern interesting stuff, he or she go the work more excited. On the other, mechanic tasks without responsibility lower always interest. The interest of this person will keep low. I think intern needs to perceive that he is getting good training out of his work. Otherwise, he will notice that he is getting useless training for his future carrier. Dynamic is, therefore, mutual from to company to intern and vice versa.

Interviewer: What is the role of the company in value creation process?

Firm B: Role of the company is most important. Having a good internship package is fundamental to facilitate things that could help to transfer a knowledge to the intern and also for the good transfer of the work. From the intern to the company. I think this well designed package will include economical allowance, of course, good working environment where interns are not excluded from employees and are integrated in the tasks and also physically and psychically integrated in the real work. Having good structure for the allocation of intern and structure of their work is essential. This structure needs to be designed very from the beginning and everything would be clear and there is no time wasted in thinking about.

Interviewer: You have already followed up on my following question. What are the factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Firm B: Well-designed structure of internship, open minded environment, financial compensation and also attitude of involved people to fulfill the reason for the internship that is to gain experience.

Interviewer: Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship program?

Firm B: Yes, I think that university has a relevant role in this internship system. Universities facilitate the things for the interns to find an internship and by having good relationship with the companies in relevant sectors. Also some universities even have already arrangement of this internship posts, that is also case of Aalborg University, but I think this is really helpful. On the other hand, it is also interesting when the intern has to search for internship by himself. In Denmark, it is compulsory to do one semester of internship within your master studies in company.

Interviewer: Does the degree of interpersonal attraction in relationships relate to value co-creation processes?

Firm B: I think it does. Personal relationships are also the part of the good working company environment what I have already mentioned before. It does not necessary have to be too personal or friendly but it is important aspect. Without personal links the job might be also done but in this way it is more effective and the communication is easier.

Interviewer: Does organizational culture and national culture influence co-creation?

Firm B: I think a working environment of the company is part of the national culture. From country to country it changes. In the case of our company that we are based in the Denmark, it is normal that companies have good working environment that is contributed by additional personal activities, as a having lunches together or organizing common thing and furthermore, some organization of social activities for the employees. In general, national or organizational culture highly influence not even internship within the company but also whole business chain and all activities in the company.

Interviewer: Ok, great. What external institution do you know influencing internship programs?

Firm B: It could be the government. The states provides services that make lives of the interns easier or harder. If student can get medical attention free of charge, it shows some influence on the people. It could also show some indicators to interns to even move to the place of the internship where the company is based. Then we can speak about student allowance. Other external factor how government help with your student life. I think also competitor or the companies in the same sector are somehow contributing to knowledge transfer to trainee because as a trainee, in our sector, we are engaging in the relation as well with fair companies who are associated to us in joint venture. It is quite interesting when you perceive that you are learning from other company during your internship.

Interviewer: How have the internship helped you with company future?

Firm B: I think all companies benefit from the internships. There are getting new people that may have new opinions, new knowledge, new way to do things, some experiences that we lack and they have. We are for example benefiting from the interns speaking different languages, like a Russian, Arabic, French, and that is an advantage for the company, thus, maybe it was more difficult to communicate in some cases without these languages.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internships programs?

Firm B: Yes, I would do it.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internship if you would have force to do it?

Firm B: I think, it extremely important to keep good organization and structure of the internship. That the mentor of the intern, who is in charge of his or her working tasks, have very specific clear understanding and work plan for the person. What the interns needs to carry out. This is something what I would like to highlight. From my experience, it happens in more cases, that this aspect is not so well designed. Then it requires lots of time from the company to decide what intern now needs to do.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time and help

Firm B: You are welcome, I hope it will help you.

Appendix 7

Interview with Firm C (Czech company), Brno, Czech Republic

24th May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why does your firm offer internships?

Firm C: The main purpose of providing internships is to gain possibility of gaining new future employees due to the fact that our business field is quite niche. It is important to mention that in our medical business it is hard to find suitable employees because of lack of labor. Therefore, we would like to get the best students into our company. By this experience that we offer to them, they can finally decide whether they would like to cooperate with us in the future. Also thanks to this possibility, students may find out what are the values of our company and internal environment. On the other hand, we also give them opportunity to gain additional knowledge that they cannot find in any university.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you providing internship?

Firm C: In our business it is pretty much simple. We may get new the new employees that may carry the newest knowledge from the universities. Moreover, they may also bring the freshman view third party view in our business and processes. So knowledge transfer is also important. Interns usually spend from one to six months as interns in our company, after this period of time it is much easier for us to hire the person who is already familiar with our internal processes and tasks what we require from our employees.

Interviewer: What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved? In your case to students?

Firm C: The most important thing, what I see, is that we offer them to get our know how and knowledge. During the internships they may improve their hard and soft skills. I believe no one can teach these soft skills at the university. In the contrary to our competitors, we also pay the interns some allowance to help them with their student life. I remember from my own experience, I have also struggled to find paid internship. Therefore, I see this factor as huge benefit. Moreover, our company also organizes diverse seminars in our business field for our employees and also interns where they can take a part in order to obtain more knowledge, of course free of charge.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are getting?

Firm C: Sometime it happens that some interns do not show enough attention towards the internships. Or they are not even willing to become part of knowledge transfers. It is not easy to deal with this people. Without their initiative it is impossible to teach them something new. Therefore, we usually say goodbye to them at the end of internships and wish them luck with their future carrier.

Interviewer: What is a key driver of value creation (how benefits are created) within internship?

Firm C: I think that human factor plays a fundamental role in internships. As I mentioned before, if the intern is not interested in collaborating with us, then he or she cannot get any of the experience what we offer. But this applies also for us vice versa. Without structured agenda it is not easy to transfer any knowledge and offer the experience.

Interviewer: What helped you to achieve the benefits you got?

Firm C: In my opinion, mutual relation with interns and environments help us to obtain the benefits what we mainly require. We try to pay attention to their needs from the first contact to the last one. I will repeat myself but, we offer interns the paid structured internships. Thus, I believe, they feel nice in our environment, then we can expect better results from them to our company. The attitude also changes. Especially if they are aware that they could be hired after the completing of internship.

Interviewer: Ok, great. What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?

Firm C: You know, our company facilitate students to enter the door into real business. We provide them possibility to better their skills and be maybe mentored by our more experienced employees. From students' point of view, they may utilize their knowledge that they have gained during the last years in the university and also find somehow confidence in themselves. I believe, this may help them in future personal development. Company may only open the door but it is mostly up to them if they want to fully participate in these options.

Interviewer: What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Firm C: In terms of the internal company's factors, I think, the organizational culture may increase any benefits arising from these interactions. On the other hand, we also have to take into consideration the personality of the students. If they even want to learn something or they come here just to get a little money or get some points into their CV without learning anything. And as we already mentioned structured agenda is a must.

Interviewer: Do you consider the educational instruction as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?

Firm C: Definitely, in this field, universities offer student to take a part in internship program in one whole semesters. I believe it may also be compulsory. Not sure now. I think that also universities have realized that not only academic knowledge is fundamental but also connection with the real business has to be included. But I would not see universities as much as important as the relation between the firm and students. It may facilitate some knowledge but again it is only one students to use them. Sometimes I see the problem right there, the young student expects other to solve everything for them. Unfortunately, this is not the way.

Interviewer: Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Firm C: Of course, the way how supervisors mentor the new interns affect the final output of internship. Without positive attitude towards the interns and not even interns but the employee in general, we would not be able to run business in longer run.

Interviewer: Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

Firm C: Sure, as I have mentioned before, the open minded organizational culture is a need. At the beginning of internship, we try inform interns about company values. Regarding the national culture I am not so sure, our company mostly collaborate with Czech nationalities, therefore, we do not really have to deal with multicultural differences. But I believe this may be some tasks for the future.

Interviewer: What external institution do you know influencing internship hprograms?

Firm C: Definitely government, in our field, we are highly restricted by the national laws. The legal framework narrows our possibilities in either educating our employees and interns but also setting up condition for internships in general. For example, in terms of internships, internships laws settle down that interns may not have to be necessary paid. In other countries this is not even possible. Although, we provide them allowances anyway as an additional benefit. Due to the fact that our business surround about pharmacy, rules are much more specific and restricted. Thus, the government settles down who can even supervise internships in this sector. Rules are really strict; therefore, we pay more importance to internships. Furthermore, also competitors affect our internships. We try to get the best possible interns. Therefore, we pay attention what other companies offer and try to do it better in order to offer them better conditions.

Interviewer: How has the internship helped your company with your future?

Firm C: Due to internship, we have hired many of new qualified employees and fill up the empty positions that is caused because of the long-term lack of qualified graduates.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internship programs?

Firm C: Yeah, especially from the point of view of student who needs to get experience and knowledge from the real business. From the company view, it may allow company to find suitable employees with lower cost incurred.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change internships if you would have force to do it?

Firm C: I would like to increase the connection between the universities and business sectors. Lot of universities lectors do not feel pleasant to cooperate with real business. They do not like to cooperate with industries. This seems for me little bit weird. I hope it will change. Maybe the government get into these processes and try to help and increase a possibility of internships. Not just by financial factor but also creating more suitable conditions and legal frameworks either for students but also companies and universities.

Interviewer: Thank you for your answers. I appreciate your help.

Firm C: You are welcome.

Appendix 8

Interview with Intern No. 1 (Danish company), Horsens, Denmark

20th May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why did you participate in internship?

Intern No. 1: Well, first of all it was compulsory, so we had to. But of course internship is something where you can gain a lot of practical knowledge outside of really theoretical subjects in university and also to get context within industry to enlarge my network.

Interviewer: I will follow up with my other question. What is the benefit from you gaining an internship?

Intern No. 1: Well, before the internship I did not have much idea how the business world is looking like. How the world outside of the university works. But after doing my internship I had much better picture how it works in the companies, what to expect when I will graduate. And it also helped me with my further studies like specialization and these sort of things and after my internship I also was more certain about what I would like to do. Actually my internship proof me wrong. After internship I realized it is not quite my field. I realized I would like to be more involved in business aspect as well. That's actually where I ended up in cross business as well. I think it worked out well. Therefore, the experiences from internship are always valuable in many ways. Regarding the other benefits. As a student, it is always about money, but it is not mostly about money, but it is as well about money. You know, at least at the beginning, after couple of months it was different story. On the other hand, from the company view, it is more about money. It is more about the investment of money to future employee possibly.

Interviewer: Ok, great. What, according your point of view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?

Intern No. 1: I was able to look at the business out of the box sort of. You know when you spend long time in the company, you are some kind of constraint within the business, but the newcomer who comes to the company can see it. Sometimes, you can point out the stuff people do not see.

Interviewer: Is there anything else what you can see as an additional benefit?

Intern No. 1: Yeah, there might be also this a cheap labor aspect. Stuff like doing excel spreadsheets, not learning much but that was not my story with comparison to my classmates. I actually gain a lot of knowledge. So this can be another benefit as well for the company – cheap labor.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are getting? And What were the reasons for you to get or not to get these benefits?

Intern No. 1: Yes, in certain way. I was expecting to gain knowledge on high level, misconception of the way the real world looks like. I was thinking in the company are lot of highly skilled engineers that have the latest knowledge within the field. But I realized the way how companies work is that they are very pragmatic and the task that they actually solve are really simple. You do not need to be a mathematician or physician to manage these tasks. I was expecting higher knowledge but within the education field. But I actually have learned more practical knowledge within the business.

Interviewer: Now we will go on to other part of interview focusing on value creation aspect. We have already mentioned many aspect of value creation within the internships. Therefore, I have to ask you again to look at it more closely. What is a key driver of value creation within the internship programs?

Intern No. 1: Well, that's a great question. I believe that not many companies are actually used to take interns. The internal rules of the company are not costumed to this. What I was facing is that I was assigned to department manager as a something extra to his daily duties. It was not on his work plan. It was not within his work hours. He was spending extra time on me. I believe if he was assigned some certain time of work hours to spend on me, maybe he would be more patient. He would basically past more information on me.

Interviewer: How would you name this aspect what you just mentioned?

Intern No. 1: Maybe attention. Maybe I would name it as a lack of time. He was busy with his own agenda, problems. If the company made me a part of his agenda, then this would not be problem I believe.

Interviewer: You already have told me that you got some benefits as an experience, or some money. But what helped you to achieve the benefits you got?

Intern No. 1: Mostly it way myself trying to figure out tasks that I could not before. So it was mostly a try and error where I learned much. Well, that's where people learn the most. I had to figure it out by my own most of the time and that's where I learned the most and I was solving practical, real tasks. It was big motivation.

Interviewer: Ok, what is your role in the value creation processes in the internship company?

Intern No. 1: Well, In company I believe I was perceived as a regular employee. That's how people treated me at least. I was working 8hours a day, 5 days per week. That's what I like the most probably. People did not treat me like a student but they treated me like an engineer. It was quite nice actually. You know some employees approached me with some questions how would you solve this. Can you look at it? How do you solve this? And I quit enjoyed actually.

Interviewer: Internship processes may bring many benefits for the both side of internship. You have already mentioned them. But what are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Intern No. 1: Well, it is hard to say. Actually I could name cultural difference. I believe if I were Danish intern I would gain much more, because especially Danes speak only Danish at the workplace which I totally understand. Since my Danish is quite poor I was not able to fully understand them. So, this language barriers definitely factor. I believe If a company doesn't treat you well, you do get much neither. You don't give your best.

Interviewer: Ok, let's move to other part of interview. We will have a look on another actors influencing internships. Firstly, I would like to speak about educational institution, in this case universities. Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs? Do they influence internships?

Intern No. 1: Yes, they do. Well, first of all, each student has a supervisor who is in the contact with the company. Most of the time, or very often, they are in the contact at the end of internship only. However, the university does its best to sort of attract companies, to invite companies over. They arrange these meeting where students can actually interact with the companies. They sort of advertise themselves. I believe that from this point of view they are quite helpful. So, yes basically, universities are trying find students internship. Provide companies students. So there is this mutual sort of thing. Mutually beneficial for the all sides, students, companies and Uni I would say.

Interviewer: Let's have a look on the social context and relationship aspect of internships. Does the degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Intern No. 1: Yes, I think so. I believe it is not related not only to your boss but also to your colleges. It definitely does create better working environment where you enjoy spending time. You are enjoying your work and gaining more knowledge this way. I think having a good environment is essential.

Interviewer: Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

Intern No. 1: Definitely, it does. It is also about the company culture like how you look at the company. As an employee you are proud to work for this company. Some employees are actually then work better. Maybe they share the same values as their company. Be eco-friendly, you know, environmentally responsible, and this sort of thinks people like.

Interviewer: What about national culture? How do you perceive it?

Intern No. 1: Well, I do not know, that is a tricky question. My company was pretty patriotic. I mean, most of the employees were Danish. Danes 90 percent of employees were Danes. I believe it might be beneficial for Danish employees. They might feel more accepted within the business but it is not good for foreign employee if the company is way too patriotic in terms of nationalism. It depends.

Interviewer: Following part bring additional stakeholder to internship processes. What external institutions do you know influencing internship programs? Is there something else except university influencing internships?

Intern No. 1: Definitely, there is the government that could influence internships. I believe there might be some kind of law, you know, saying, making it easier for the company actually to hire interns. As an intern you are not involved in processes with the government, but company is and this way you are actually influenced. I would say Denmark is good example of the collaboration between educational institutions, companies and government. There is this mutual cooperation.

Interviewer: Are you aware of some additional external stakeholders except government?

Intern No. 1: It is also about the other parties that involved in this business. Let say, it might be companies that cooperate with your company. They as well have to be able to accept you as an

employee and treat you equally. If they look at you as an intern, saying hey are we going to deal with student, are we going to trust him, give us real engineer. In Denmark everybody accepted me. People were actually happy to deal with me. It is not just about the company where you work but also about the external ones. It can be your customer, it can be your supplier. It can be anyone in the chain. Everyone you are in touch with.

Interviewer: We have now last three question. How has the internship helped you with your future?

Intern No. 1: As I said at the beginning I realized that the carrier I was going for might be not perfect for me. I changed my mind and decided to go for this cross-carrier where I can combine technical and business knowledge. And I believe this is what actually lot of people decided. When I talked to my classmates, lot of them told me that they did not expect the engineering job to be so boring and vice versa. It can really open your eyes in a way.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internship programs?

Intern No. 1: Yes, I would highly do so.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internships if you would have force to do it?

Intern No. 1: Well, that's a good question. Let me put it this way, one problem what I can see it that when you finish your internship, companies do not keep touch with you. Which was not my case, I was very happy to collaborate with my company on my thesis but that was not the case with all of the students. It sort of seemed that the companies lost touch with interns. It is really counterproductive in the way. Maybe they had a reason not to cooperate with them any longer but I believe we are back at the problem that companies do not have internal structure and rules how to deal with the interns. They are not encrusted for having an interns. But majority do not keep touch.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time and wish you best in your future carrier.

Intern No. 1: Thank you.

Appendix 9

Interview with Intern No. 2 (Danish company), Aalborg, Denmark

22nd May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why did you participate in internship?

Intern No. 2: So, for me the main reason to participate in internship was to gain valuable experience, all procedures the things related to working conditions and connected it with the theory that we learn at school. Furthermore, I wanted to improve my carrier option by gaining some knowledge and experience from the company.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you gaining an internship?

Intern No. 2: I believe as I mentioned it before it would be highly improving my future carrier options. Since if you look at job descriptions almost every company requires some sort of experience even during you studies. So by conducting this internship I feel that I have better changes in finding this a fulltime job and this has actually happed that the company that I am currently working in has offered me this full time position.

Interviewer: Are you aware of any additional benefits?

Intern No. 2: When you are applying for jobs, you have certain experience you can expect better kind of jobs that might be paid more or you can basically start from higher position or apply for more interesting position than just for basic ones.

Interviewer: What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?

Intern No. 2: First of all, when you are applying for internship particular position, they want you to contribute somehow. You are proactive, enthusiastic and this applies to me as well. I have tried to provide high quality of work and I have tried to proof that I am capable employee who might offer them more in the future and I believe that this enthusiasm and proactivity is very important for every company because in some cases they might not very care about this. Another story is low labor cost. For the company is also beneficial new fresh mind and proactive attitude but they do not have pay them as much as for normal employee. So the cost are significantly lower when comes to the wages. University may also get new contacts in company and some feedbacks.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are getting?

Intern No. 2: To be honest, yes, there are some differences. I assumed there would be more training that I would get from the company. This is what I am missing little bit. This is what I would like to highlight. More intense training.

Interviewer: As you already mentioned, you have missed some training. Therefore, I will follow up on this? What were the reasons for you to get or not to get benefits you expected to get?

Intern No. 2: I understand that at the company are lot of interns. They are constantly hiring and full-time employees do not have so much time to train the new interns because they have so much responsible tasks for themselves so maybe that is one of the reasons.

Interviewer: Next part of the interview is focusing on value creation aspect. So what is a key driver of value creation within internship?

Intern No. 2: Certainly, money was the motivating factor for everyone but I believe that little bit of involvement in project may affect results. For example if an intern has more in depth training, they would explain more to him about particular project what they are working on from beginning and now you will have certain responsibilities to involve this intern a little more not just give them a tasks that now needs to be done or this needs to be done. Because they do not have really overview about specific projects. They need to focus them on some specific in projects more.

Interviewer: How would you describe this problem?

Intern No. 2: I think to be more structured from beginning. Internship should have a bit more structured character.

Interviewer: Ok. What helped you to achieve the benefits you got?

Intern No. 2: From my part, I have tried to be engaged as much as possible and I also tried to get more responsibility when I had, let's say, not too much to do, I asked, how can I contribute, is there anything I can help out with, basically being more proactive and involved.

Interviewer: You have already touched my following question. What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?

Intern No. 2: I believe that being passive is not a way when you are an intern. You need to do the opposite because you need to show your interest. You need to participate at discussion, speak about improvements how to make the procedures even more efficient. From my part whenever I am given a tasks I try to do it by best of my knowledge, efficiently and providing a good quality of the work.

Interviewer: What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Intern No. 2: It is definitely that company has to structure the organization. It definitely influences value creation process. Because if there is, let's say, flat structure, where you can approach your superior or bosses, you can than share ideas easily than I would be other case. Interpersonal communication and relationship with you bosses may play also important role. If you are working in environment where you can, as I already said, approach everyone and work as a team, then it is also easier and value process is more affective.

Interviewer: In following question, we will add another key actors into these processes. So, do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of value creation process within internship programs? If so, how do they influence internships?

Intern No. 2: I would definitely say that they play a significant part because they first of all us to go for one semester for internship. If they would offer us this opportunity than we could not even go. But I would not say that they are the most important factor in this. It is definitely students because they are the ones who need to find themselves these internships in positions that suit

them most. From this point of view I would expect a bit more involvement. Yes, it is true that students have received some internship offers but I believe that this can be improved a lot. University might try offer student or make us aware of other opportunities as well, this would be mainly for the international students, because they are not as familiar in working environment or job opportunities as Danish ones. I believe they could give us more information or how we can be better involved.

Interviewer: How do Universities influence internship except job offering?

Intern No. 2: They are influencing it to certain degree. While student need to also provide internship report about what they are doing within this internship. So there is definitely also this academic point of view. I have also one comment to this. I believe that this internship report is too much focused on academia, it is too academic, this in my opinion should be more practical.

Interviewer: Now I would like to move little bit further to social aspect of internship. Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Intern No. 2: If you have good interpersonal relations with your colleges it is much more easy to cooperate. The whole workflow and all procedures are more smooth because you understand each other. And this always makes more efficient value creation and achieving goals is much more easy in this environment.

Interviewer: Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

Intern No. 2: I would say so, maybe definitely yes. Because let's say organization where the hierarchy is significant than you are afraid to approach to your superior, you are basically no one in the whole organizational process and you cannot very much do anything even though if you have good ideas related to specific tasks. You simply are not allowed to speak to your boss whoever you else. In flat structure organizational culture is more efficient. National culture also influence that. Especially language aspect.

Interviewer: What external institutions do you know influencing internship programs?

Intern No. 2: Well, I know some organization or social media that help you to find internships, but there are other various agencies supporting this. Some of them require you to pay some amount of money in order to get any offer.

Interviewer: Are you aware of other institutions affecting it?

Intern No. 2: I am pretty sure there are some initiatives by government but I have to admit I am not really familiar with any specific programs.

Interviewer: Now I have last three questions. How has the internship helped you with your future?

Intern No. 2: I think it has definitely helped me because even during the internship I was contacted by external organization if I would like to work for them. Plus the company where I am doing internship offered me full time position so it definitely had effect on the future.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internship programs?

Intern No. 2: I would highly recommend internship programs to everyone, it is great experience and you gain lot of knowledge. You get to meet new people. And from other point of view it is very good chance.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internship if you would have force to do it?

Intern No. 2: As I mentioned before, I would go for more structured internships. I believe that other companies have clearer structure for interns. What they would like to achieve with them during this internships. This is what I am missing in my internships

Interviewer: Thank you for your time. I wish you the best.

Intern No. 2: Thank you too.

Appendix 10

Interview with Intern No. 3 (Danish company), Aalborg, Denmark

19th May2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why did you participate in internship?

Intern No. 3: Well, one thing is for sure, that I simply had to, it is part of my master studies. So it was necessary either to take internship program or have extra subjects in University. In this case I thought that having a practical part of studies in the company and participating in **actual work would be much more beneficial besides of having theoretical classes**. This was a main reason that actual gain first hand on experience.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you gaining an internship

Intern No. 3: To participating in internship, as I mentioned, I guess, the first thing is experience, to **actually use the knowledge that we have gained from classes in the schools** and interact with people in the team from actual administration within the companies and start creating value and maybe start to be recognized as a member of the company. **It is definitely the experience but also the networking. Starting to know people. Gaining contacts, and as professionally same as personally.**

Interviewer: Are you aware of additional benefits from the internships?

Intern No. 3: I guess, it really depends on the overall situation. The money aspect plays some role. But it is also related to the situation if it is provided accommodation or maybe food at the company or any compensation for anything else whether travel expenses or similar factors. **That case I guess money is not the main driver, but it can definitely improve motivation for the intern.** I know for example here in Denmark, it is now allowed by law to pay intern but on the other hand in some countries it is necessary to pay interns. It is necessary in other countries by law to be given paycheck. So it depends on the individual country or company. But for me, of course, it would be benefit and definitely it is not number one priority

Interviewer: Ok, following question. What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?

Intern No. 3: As an intern, for the company it is very financially convenient to **have labor that is not being paid**. Just to say that straight. But that's not me personally. I am was hired as an intern together with my two of my classmates to create team of three students working in the company. I thought us as a team, something like consultancy working on our research, studying, working. But also doing research for the company. Something that they could use in the future, they pay attention on this side as well. **I would say it is not only money**. Students as a younger generation, as a generation that looks on the business many years may have **different perspective of understanding or seeing the problems**. I would see it maybe as a **different perception on value**

creation in the company. So external point of view, external entity. Being involved in the daily business operation in the company. Whether express their opinions or giving inputs.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the one you are actually getting?

Intern No. 3: There are, regarding my specific internship. I did not think I would be compensated for the travel expenses, which I am fully. I also get food compensation, meaning having breakfast and lunch. Every day at work complementary which is really really nice to have as a side bonus, as well as company phone and laptop to work on which do not have to use only at work but also to have with me at home for my personal use.

Interviewer: If you would look little bit from general view, is there something from differs?

Intern No. 3: I guess a team and the flexibility at work. Being able to work pretty much from anywhere and how available the team is. Or reliability of the members as a supervisor who are very patient. For me it is very different from the another two classmates of mine who are Danish. While I am not, so their attitude towards me is very friendly and very patient which I pretty much appreciate. They treat me as a one of them which being an intern is not always happens. Moreover, they really value your opinion. That's wonderful if you really actually work in the company and you are part of the team. The bad aspect might be, from the beginning, as I said, it is very flexible the work or the team, that sometimes I feel like it is quite lose and although everyone is doing what they supposed to, business according all the statistic, but sometimes I feel like entire hierarchy is somehow not there. At the beginning we did not really have introduction or any specific training. I was with my supervisor but he was doing his own things sitting next to me when I asked him, he showed me, this is what you are supposed to do, simply explained but there was not any standardized procedures, protocols.

Interviewer: Next part of the interview is about value creation aspect. What is a key driver of value creation within internships?

Intern No. 3: I think it is an interaction, it is an interaction between the individuals whether it is already team members in the work with the interns, it does not matter. Creation of the relationship, communication, first contact, maybe further on training. It is something that really connects the whole processes from very starting point. I would maybe even mentioned awareness. Being aware as intern. It should be students' priority. To connect them to speak with the people from company. On the other side, the should be one person in company aware to speak with students. I think it is important factors

Interviewer: What helped you to achieve the benefits you got?

Intern No. 3: I think some factors that helped me to achieve more benefits were some standardized procedures. Simply we would not be able to do our job without some of the items or the tools. But on the other hand, throughout the process we created some relationships, some path that we got into understanding. Ok, that is the way how to do it and we would not figure out how are things done. Definitely it is crucial to be also part of the team, to be involved, ask question, talk to people.

Interviewer: What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?

Intern No. 3: Speaking generally, **being proactive**. In my own case, because I have worked throughout the week in three different divisions. I believe each one of them is valuable, so I have created type or very primary value that will be later shaped. So my cooperation with my supervisors does definitely create some kind of the value.

Interviewer: Next question little bit follow up on the things that you already mention. What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Intern No. 3: I have **mentioned, interaction, awareness, structured processes**. But I think the **interaction is may key aspect**. Teambuilding or communication is very significant in my point. Being part of the team whether speaking just with your supervisor or being there as a member is really the way.

Interviewer: In following part we will also speak about additional stakeholders. Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?

Intern No. 3: In my opinion, it is case that was not directly influence by university because there was not direct interaction between university and the company. Although at the very first point I got to know company that I am doing my internship in trough the University. So the class I was having as a very first one in my master studies was connected with them. So there is **very significant correlation between universities and companies**, already in that very first point. But looking at the internship itself, I was the one who was contacting the company without any influence of the university. Further one as our research was continuing, we were working on the project, university got much more involved in the process. So there was this kind of the triangle between me as a student, university and firm. **So there was certainly some kind of relationship built and interaction again**. So I think the university as entity is different key player in this **process**. University is one of the main stakeholders.

Interviewer: We have already touched the social context and relation aspect. But let me come back to these question again. Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Intern No. 3: I think very much, because based on the attitude you have towards the company towards the employees, supervisors, your daily operation will reflect on it. **So if you have any relations or you don't, if they are positive or negative very much reflect on your work**. I think it can be really positive or very negative. Therefore, this cooperation and speaking to your boss, asking questions, and trying to be involved as a member of the company is very important to be accepted and welcomed. On the other hand, if you are not, if you are feeling left out, it is shown on your work, you do not like to go to your work, you are not motivated and final performance can be very low. There is definitely correlation.

Interviewer: Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

Intern No. 3: **Organizational culture pretty much defines value and co-creation of value when speaking about value in the company**. National culture, I would not see as a such straight forward connection, but it might affect to some extent but I do not see it significant as the organizational culture. As being Dane I have not experience any differences regarding the culture. But I believe that having multinational environment pretty much influence understanding in business in other

countries. For example, having Slovak intern here in Mektorprint may help us to understand some nationality of Poland subsidiary and then reflect on this.

Interviewer: What external institution do you know influencing internship programs?

Intern No. 3: Having internship depends on national laws, on the government. It is allowed to have internship on the first place. Whether they will be supported by government or will be purely interaction university-company or in case as financial aspect. That internship can be or cannot be paid. You know, these are all important decision made by government. It really influence whole circle.

Interviewer: Does government influence value creation and to what level?

Intern No. 3: I think, the role is quite passive. I do not think it is proactive. There are certain rules, boundaries set within this area you can exist, try to find internship. I do not think it is interactive as a company-student-university.

Interviewer: I have last three question. How has the internship helped you with your future?

Intern No. 3: The way I see how important certain things are and how would I consider them as an important, speaking of daily business actions. And talking about relate many different aspect. I was able to spend half year in the company and now I have been continuing next semester as a part time employee. Everything what happens reflect to myself, ok this is how this works, this is how it is done. I feel very much I have gained very much experience, not speaking only being able to work in specific computer programs or doing some kind of financial analysis but more about decision making. Being able to see things and problems from different perspectives. This is really what opened my mind. That real business can be managed really smoothly. Let's say in some way peacefully. That is the practical experience to interact with people like this who decide on huge decision that depends on multinational organizations. You do not get this opportunity every day and speak with them on daily basis it is really great opportunity to learn a lot.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internship programs?

Intern No. 3: Yes, definitely.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internship if you would have force to do it,

Intern No. 3: To put more significance on internship. I think it is great way to motivate students and also to help them to learn this practical knowledge, same as for company being more interactive with students and being involved in different way of creating value not only on their business. So more significant not necessarily

Interviewer: Thank you for your time. I wish you the best.

Intern No. 3: Thank you too.

Appendix 11

Interview with Intern No. 4 (Danish company), Aalborg, Denmark

15th May 2018

Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.

Interviewer: Why did you participate in internships?

Intern No. 4: First of all, I had to. As you know, it is one of the options from University. For instance, you can get possibility to have some working experience before graduating which is usually good for the employer that is going to hire you after the graduation. You can have different possibilities to get hired afterwards in your next job or something. And at the same time you get some development in professional terms. You usually get some training. I did it in first place because there was the possibility to basically get working experience for my next job.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you getting an internship?

Intern No. 4: The benefit is that you learn to do something. So in my case I have even spent some time in Brussels where I have had the possibility to learn how to draft methodology for our projects and get to know better the business of management consulting. So you don't only get like better knowledge, better understanding but you also get the possibility to grow within the company in general which could then decide to hire you afterwards like to offer you contract as employee. So the benefit is for sure that you empower yourself professionally and also I think that when you start to work you also grow in multiple terms. You develop some skills you did not have before. You learn how to listen. You know how to communicate in a multi-cultural environment. In my case, in this firm we have so many nationalities, you need to try to understand to approach people and you learn to do your job.

Interviewer: Would you think of something else what you perceive as a value?

Intern No. 4: Well, of course, interns also get financial assistance. I mean, I would not say that it is a first reason. If I was not paid, I would have taken it anyway. Because, in my opinion, value that you get, the benefit that you get from an internship, is that you develop some skills, you develop yourselves. You develop some additional attributes. The value for me in internship is the development you get because get trained. Of course the money is one of the reasons why you may go for paid internship instead of unpaid internship but I would say it is more about development you get.

Interviewer: What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?

Intern No. 4: Well, it is both beneficial. Of course, they do not pay that much, I mean, sometimes, they do not even pay you, but they need to invest their resources, like to supervisors, some money that follows you in the process of development. So I think that the value they can get is the person who can afterwards start working as a full time employee, but at the same time, this is something what happens little bit after you get actually hired. So when you actually learn how to do stuff. In my case, I have started in November 2016 and was not able to write any methodology till October 2017. So you know it is a long process also for the firm to invest

money or time on other employee that need to take time to train you in the sense. But the benefit that firm gets is, for sure, **underpaid employees** and then some other firms are interested in developing some employees. They tend to hire students, because it is basically they have plain ground depending what they need. So they train you in the way that you will eventually become their future employee.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are actually getting?

Intern No. 4: I would say on one side I am happy working as an intern for very long time. I am happy what I have got because you learn to do lot of things. You learn to deal with problems and everything, but at the same time, in money terms, I think you, they do not pay you enough. I have been there for so long that I could basically teach other interns how to do stuff. That's what happen also with other trainees. When you talk about newly hired trainee and development of person I would say that I have got what I expected. And I am really satisfied, but when we talk about money, when you have a system in which students train trainee. I think it works for the firm and it is very beneficial. They basically get an employee that does not need to pay as fully as a normal employee.

Interviewer: In following questions, I would like to have a look on value creation processes. What is a key driver of value creation within internship?

Intern No. 4: Well, I think for the both sides, what is really important is working environment for sure. Because, for example in NTU, I **would say it is a very flexible company**. Again of course the money is a driver but not always, it really depends on lot of other things that you get or do not get. The **key driver, what I think, is a flexibility that firm can offer to interns** or employees because, I do not know, if I am sick I can work from the home or I can take a day off and then work more in the week after. And this is something that really you know, helps you out. So the flexibility is very much a key driver for trainees and firm. And at the same time, it is very, I would say, important to **have very nice environment, social place** because then company can really try to involve trainee in everything they do. It could be summer party or Christmas party. While in my previous internship that I got in Italy, it was not like this, it was not even thing, intern there do not get even money, but they do not get collateral benefit. So you are **very feeling excluded in this sense**. Of course, when **you talk about money**, you cannot get some salary as a ordinal employee.

Interviewer: What helped you to achieve the benefits you got?

Intern No. 4: Well, I would say that something that helps you and firm can do is to keep you updated. For instance, in my company, the firm organize workshops on annual basics that help you to get more information. And **trainees are also involved if it is relevant for trainees to participate**. Trainees need to pay attention about many aspect then. In that case, trainees will know how to behave how to work etc. I would say it could be named as a carrying in the sense, or attention as well but **the carrying is next level because just paying attention to something or someone means that you just check that the person is doing their jobs in appropriate way**. Carrying is very much about development of the person, of course firm also have to benefit from it, they will not do anything for free, just because of charity or something, but I think it is next level.

Interviewer: What is your role in value creation process according your point of view?

Intern No. 4: Well again, the intern contributes of course to the growth of the company, to the profits of the company and I would even say that since the trainee has the development in a sense it contributes to the profits and to the value creation in a greater scale. The margin it is bigger compared to other. Once again you basically create same kind of profit for the firm but you cost less. **Interns cost to way less. Of course, the margin for the company is way bigger.** On the other hand, intern also bring something else, but it depends on how much the company care about trainee. It **depends on what the firm wants from the trainee, but you have other possibilities to speak up your ideas.** You have possibility to get involved in diverse processes or tasks and they actually listen to you. Of course when you are employee you get used to the procedures and everything, thus, **maybe the element of creativity is little bit more loose. But I think trainee can for sure bring new ideas** because they are highly motivated people who are trying to improve themselves. In that sense, company gets quite a lot, they get new ideas, they get a lot **of interest from the trainee.**

Interviewer: Another question follows up on the processes within the firm. What are factors that increase or decrease value co-creation processes?

Intern No. 4: As I just said, it is lot about what company sees in the trainee because I actually have a compare, an example between two internship that I took, this internship that I took in NTU in which you have **possibility to speak and share your ideas**, maybe we can do this thing in this way because it is faster or maybe we can implement this new process because you know there is **better communication whatever.** But when I was in Italy taking an internship for my bachelors studies I basically had no opportunity to say my opinion in whatever was done. Nobody cared about my ideas. I was not even asked to do something **that require any creativity** or something. So I think from the side of the firm what really is important is to attention they give to the trainees. Because of course, on the personal level this helps to company's growth.

Interviewer: In following question we will take into consideration another actor engaging in these processes. Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within internship programs?

Intern No. 4: Well, it depends on the **institution but it play a key role.** Aalborg University support the student to take internships when they give them opportunity in third semester to participate in firms. So on one side, students go to Aalborg University because they have this possibility, at the same time the institution gets students because of that and helps organizations as well to find highly qualified people who are searching for the job. So I think that university plays key role. When you are included in study program in university the possibility to take internship is bigger. It **plays a key role. Students get experience, they get a benefit and at the same time universities are connected with firm and may get also some investment from private sector** for research and firms then get highly qualified people for their available positions.

Interviewer: How do universities influence the internships?

Intern No. 4: Well, university in Italy has a database of firm participating in internships. They already have an agreement. In that sense university may contribute in positive way, and it is very fast because basically you can apply directly from home with your laptop through university portal. It takes a few minutes. You do not need to send any application letter whatever, because

firms know that you are from the particular university. So they already know what kind of degree you have. This database connect the firm and students. In that way, it is faster and beneficial. On the other side, what Aalborg has that in Italy does not have is for instance, and really helps this process of internship, is fact the fact that every project and every exam is the managed within the some company. You may get in contact with many companies and stay in touch to future internships.

Interviewer: We will move on to social context. Does a degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Intern No. 4: I think it is beneficial for both sides. In NTU there is a lot of trainees and a lot of them are classmates. They even know each other before starting an internship and even if you are not classmate with somebody it is really easy because you get to know other trainees really fast and this still applies even for these who are actually working as a regular employee because, for instance, my supervisor graduated a year before me, so even though she is a consultant. She is basically a peer of mine on a personal level. So of course this really helps a lot when you work with somebody that is basically like almost your age and beside the age has a similar background in the sense and there is a lot things in common it is a better. This multi-cultural factor also helps a lot. On one side, you are more you know, happier to go to work because you think, ok I am going to office I am going to meet these friends. On that side you are happier, of course, when you are in nice environment, in friendly situations when everybody get along then the performance and overall tasks that working on go better. Because it is better if you work on something with the people you actually like.

Interviewer: Do organizational culture and national culture affect value co-creation?

Intern No. 4: Yeah, it does. It is both the problem and solution. Of course, when you have a lot of people, lot of different people, you get Danes together with Italians, together with Czechs, French there is something like a melting pot. It is really nice in the sense because you all are in the same situation. Particularly here in NTU. You are in the Danish firm, but Danish people are minority. In a sense it is really nice to know very different situations, very different point of view, when you get to combine them, you actually can get very good skill for firm to get competitive advantages. Because you get a lot of different background together. On the other side, you need to pay attention, of course when you put different people together with completely different mentalities, the way to communicate is complicated. Being Italian, I am really extrovert, always gesturing. It is really different from the Danes. It is really sometime weird for them to understand my behavior. At the same, if the organization manages to have inclusive environment when the diversity is empowered instead of judged negatively the results are of course positive.

Interviewer: What external institution do you know influencing internship programs?

Intern No. 4: Well, of course the government. Also in Italy firm does not have to pay taxes on students taking internships. So they basically have not only underpaid person but also do not have to pay so much taxes. Then there is always that case of other organization that invest in scholarships or the Erasmus programs, so European commission. Of course, when you work in the firm, you also work on the networking. So when you have to talk with the partners or potential clients, you may get in touch with them. I would say government play some kind of the active role. If the firm know that they get tax benefits or they do not have to pay taxes on interns

salaries to work there. That in my opinion can be good and the bad thing. But then when you graduate the most of the time you get hired and you get contract with proper salary and everything.

Interviewer: We have last questions ahead. How has the internship helped you with your future?

Intern No. 4: Well, as I mentioned. I think internships are really useful for your next job because when you have possibility to work for free for six months or whatever. The more as you work and more as you are intern the better you CV may look like. So of course, when you search for job, they check your CV as a first think. And they see that you have one year of experience in consultancy, project management etc. It is really good. You might get better possibilities to get advantage compared to maybe students that has just studied university without any particular external experience.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internship programs.

Intern No. 4: Yeah, I would do it. But I really depends on the company. I am very lucky that I could work in the company that is flexible.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internships if you have force to change something?

Intern No. 4: In those counties where the system gives you possibility to be under an internship contract for a long time, I think what could be change is that you get an increase in the salary because from the certain point it can get frustrating.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time. I wish you the best.

Intern No. 4: Thank you.

Appendix 12

Interview with Intern No. 5 (Holland company), Maastricht, Netherlands

17th May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why did you participate in internships?

Intern No. 5 So, I think that internships in general can improve your employment ability. So that was my idea at the beginning but also I wanted to connect it with my master thesis, I wanted to write a thesis within the internship. In this case in the big corporation. I have not had any experience before with corporations. That's why I was interested in participating in internship there.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you gaining an internship?

Intern No. 5: I think the most important experience which I have gained there is actually talks with the colleges, even other stakeholders. I think it was really interesting because my main task was to do customer behavior service about new implemented platform for the customers. What they like, what they do not like, how would they like to change it. I was actually discussing it with the pretty interesting stakeholders like director of IT from UK or principal for the sales of EU. That was pretty interesting for me and I did not expect it from the beginning. I was expecting I would get just smaller tasks, but in that way I felt somehow more responsible. So I think this could be mentioned as main benefit that I got from there. Also getting inside into corporation, into routines it is very valuable and it will sharp you opinion about your future if you want to stick with that or if you want try something else. I think it is quite good to have this experience early to figure out what you would like to do in the future. But also it is important how you feel. You know, like money cannot give you always great mood. You have to be in environment that you like. Value does not necessary have to be financial. I think when you get to some kind of financial stability, value in the money is then not so important but there are some limits, of course. But in general, the value that I was looking at when I was searching for internship was the experience and it was not definitely financial aspect.

Interviewer: What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?

Intern No. 5: What I found out later, but I did not know it from the beginning, I feel that they are quite struggling with the employees. It is the chance for the firms to find employees for the future. If they will do well during the internship then they have chance to get full-time job. Person will be like somehow easier implementable into the internal processes of the firm or the hierarchy of the company. In that way it can be somehow valuable for the company that they can get an employee for the future. In Netherlands if you will come back to money matters, we can say that some of the internships you are just doing it for free but then you have the chance at least do internship. In others you can get some financial amount. But it is not so high. So it is definitely not big amount of the money for the company to give it a try to person. And then there

is a chance that the person will become full time employee. I feel that in that way company can see the value.

Interviewer: Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the ones you are getting?

Intern No. 5: Yeah, you know, my master that I am studying is for sure business but also quite IT. And it is including machine learning techniques. So what was stated in original advertisement for the internship that you will get valuable information to the data science team or something and that was not really true. So you did not work closely with the data sciences. I was working more closely to the managers because in the end it was more like to customer research, so I was giving some insights from the customers to the managers. This was little bit different but I would not say that was bad because as I mentioned at the beginning I had discussion with quite important people from that company. Therefore, it was different from my expectation in the beginning.

Interviewer: What is the key driver of value creation within internship?

Intern No. 5: I think, we can say that the value is those thoughts between the managers and interns that can give you some confidence for the future. You are then capable of doing more things that before you did not have that experience. For the managers I am not sure, maybe understanding of a younger generation because you know these people are experienced but times are changing, digitalization is here. Young people are way more experienced with this digitalization stuff. So they can offer managers their thoughts with different insight that can be valuable for the managers.

Interviewer: What helped you to achieve the benefits you got?

Intern No. 5: That's a quite hard question. I think some kind of my engagement. I have tried to engage in these customer researches as much as possible. Then I have been able to communicate with my bosses and then maybe to get more experience.

Interviewer: What are factors that increase and decrease value co-creation processes?

Intern No. 5: I think I would say if you have attention of the managers for example somebody who is responsible for you, you feel then more responsible for your tasks. Then you are mostly doing that tasks better. And in the case of our internship in the company, we had meeting with our director just one time in the week just 30 minutes and I did not have stated agenda so in that way it was definitely co-creation. In this case, I mean relationship between firm and the student, it is important to give a proper attention to the intern. Then he will actually do the tasks more properly because he feels more responsible for those tasks because there is the feeling that boss is relying on me. But when there is not enough of the attention, I think that I also lack responsibility. Thus, I think the attention is very important in this process, high attention can increase value and low attention can decrease it.

Interviewer: Now I would like to move on and add additional stakeholders into these processes. Do you consider the educational institution as a significant part of value creation process within internship programs?

Intern No. 5: I think in Netherland it is not that beneficial to have internship with regards to university. Because both part ask for much of the time and do not pay attention to each other.

Therefore, you may face time pressure because you need to do this for university or you need to be at work. This could be really annoying. In connection to successful finish of your studies it may be a barrier to get there. Academic world and business world are two different things. Therefore, **I do not see education institution as an important part.**

Interviewer: Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Intern No. 5: **Yeah, definitely.** I think it is quite connected with question which was about factors. Then I would mention attention more. **More attention can lead to the more value creation.**

Interviewer: Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

Intern No. 5: Yes, it definitely again does, because I am studying in the Netherlands. The company where I have had internship is based in Dublin but there are the US company. So the language in the company is English. If there is no official meeting, some people talk Dutch meanwhile. That's quite annoying for me but I cannot blame them. This is definitely aspect of the national culture influence. People are speaking with their mother tongue between. And regarding organization culture, I think in the beginning there was some kind of training that included company's values and in that phase I would say there are doing quite well that they are trying to really keep attitude at the work place, it works out. **It is important to keep good atmosphere at the work place, the values that are then stated there are definitely increasing co-creation aspect within the employees.**

Interviewer: What external institution do you know influencing internship programs?

Intern No. 5: The firm where I have taken internship makes a hospital devices. Therefore I would say definitely hospitals may influence as an external institutions. I guess that this varies. I think it really varies regarding different parts of the world. I think **also government because they set up some fundamental framework surrounding internships.** But the government does not influence it so much in Netherlands.

Interviewer: How has the internship helped you with your future?

Intern No. 5: I think that **it has influenced me in the way that it was my first hand on experience with the big corporation so it helped me to create some opinions about the business.** And what I would like to do, if I would like to stick with this kind of companies or to try something else. It made me think about it.

Interviewer: Would you recommend internship program?

Intern No. 5: Yes, I would definitely recommend it. It is really good experience.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time. I wish you the best.

Intern No. 5: Thank you.

Appendix 13

Interview with Intern No. 6 (Danish company), Aalborg, Denmark

23rd May 2018

(Interviewees are welcoming themselves and presenting the purpose of the topic of the interview.)

Interviewer: Why did you participate in the internship?

Intern No. 6: Well, I mean, basically universities try to encourage us to take an internship. Students in our university have possibility to choose between the semester with various subject within the university or to take an internship. I chose to take the internship. I thought it would be good idea if I get some real experience, whatever, in the first place than just to stay in the university and basically for myself it is quite naturally to take internship in the company. Therefore, I have got internship in the company Mekoprint and by doing so I think that it was quite great to get an opportunity to talk with the CEO or other experiences managers.

Interviewer: What is the benefit from you gaining an internship?

Intern No. 6: I think I have already mentioned this. The practical knowledge, just being in the company and with the real situations is great advantage. On the theoretical level, you can gain so much experience just by having an internship, just trying to take it seriously instead of just having a part time job where you have work just a few day a week but in the internship you are actually appreciated for the real work. Just trying to be in the real situations instead of being at the university all the time.

Interviewer: Is there something else what would you perceive as a benefit?

Intern No. 6: I think, in terms of ambitions, I have always aimed to be a manager in some point of my career. Therefore, I have benefited a lot just from being able to watch how managers just behave in general, just try to learn as much as possible. Logic behind it simple, to learn from the better, how you should manage a company, how you should behave as a leader, but the whole thing is about to just see a reality that is up there. Even though I was in the Danish company so it was quite similar to what I have expected because I as a Danish citizen it is not something new. I think, in general, in the internship you can just benefit to go and meet other cultures and see how different stuff are done and managed on the different levels.

Interviewer: What, in your view, are the benefits you offer to the other parties involved?

Intern No. 6: I think you really offer them as an intern is the newest knowledge from the market if I could this say. This they can utilize in their business, those theoretical competences, just to you know, may not improve, but just to give them maybe something to think about. You can just give them valuable input, making them thinking about and in the best case save them some money or extra time.

Interviewer: You have been in Mekoprint for longer time. Are there differences between the benefits you thought you would get and the one you are actually getting?

Intern No. 6: First of all, I have been working in the company for almost one and half year. But after this period I have just got to the point when I am starting managing the real issues. I have started to play some role in the processes now.

Interviewer: I know that you have already met with the concept of value creation. What is a key driver of value creation?

Intern No. 6: I mean both parties can really benefit and really get some creation of value just in term of learning from each other knowledge really. We come with brand new theoretical knowledge whereas company come with the more practical knowledge, and I think this exchange of knowledge, this interaction is very valuable for the company and for each of the student who are involved.

Interviewer: How is this exchange affected?

Intern No. 6: For me it was the experience coming into company where the culture was almost the same what I am used to. But another intern that came with me is from totally different culture. He is from Slovakia, I think that the alignment with diverse interaction and just culture in general is also very valuable for the company. As I mentioned the intern from Slovakia, this may also influence the company because they can get little of knowhow how to treat the markets in the area of Slovakia because this guy is there homebased. Thus, it is better to utilize this. It is better than just sitting in Denmark and trying to manage the subsidiary in Poland. I know it is not same country but I believe he could still to understand them more than Danish employee. I think all parties benefit from these interactions and from each student. But level of the engagement from the students a really important because as I mentioned, university is really encouraging student just go and be in the company but it is not necessary students who want to go and engage in the company. Some of them try just to get over the part of the semester and get ECTS points and then just move on.

Interviewer: What helped you to achieve benefits? As you mentioned for example the experience in the company.

Intern No. 6: I think it also depends on this engagement. As much as I gave to the company they also have to put the effort to give to me back. Because most employees see interns as temporary solution. They do not want to really put much effort into them. Because that means that you invest money or time into someone and it may not give anything, of course you should help to student, but it is still business, I think many companies look at the trainees and think we are supposed have a few students each year and give them some easy work instead of getting them real work and getting them opportunity to actually show what they can do it instead of pushing them back and giving them just the boring tasks of the day.

Interviewer: You have mentioned already many factors influencing these processes but what are the factors that increase and decrease value creation processes?

Intern No. 6: I mean, engagement from the students and also from the company to the students but the as we speak about co-creation it is about more than one side. It has to be from two sides. So if the company or student do not engage properly it is just waste of the time for both sides.

Interviewer: Do you consider educational institution as a significant part of the value creation process within the internship programs?

Intern No. 6: Supervisor, we had got, has really helped us a lot with writing of project and also with engagement into the company to really learn about company and see how our university work with cooperation with different companies. In general, by just offering job offers may university help student to even get internship at the first place. Thus, there is at least one effect. In Aalborg university student may take the internship for whole semester. It basically means that university also enter these processes by just allowing the students participate in this. University may reflect on their work and confirm theories and find better contacts. Moreover, the must for students is to write project that is related to their internship experience. Therefore, there is still connection between the academic field and the business, practical field. Internship supervisors may engage with different discussion with student about their internships. As I have mentioned before, it mostly depends on the engagement of the student if he or she is willing to take part of these processes. Therefore, I would claim that universities play role in internship processes. On the other hand, this may depend on the country's specific frameworks that surrounds the internships that are designed by universities and government.

Interviewer: Does degree of interpersonal attraction in relationship relate to the value co-creation?

Intern No. 6: From my experience definitely. I have already mentioned engagement of the student and the company is the critical point. Thanks to some kind of interpersonal attraction my be this factor even increased. Then you can learn much more from your bosses or colleagues. You are even excited to go to work and learn new stuff because you do not feel somehow restricted. This mutual knowledge transfer is then supported by just simple likeness between people. On the other, in hostile environment it is not pleasant to even sit. I believe this may increase or decrease your possibility of learning and transferring of new insight and experience. It is up to firm to properly design the company culture in order to create open minded environment. Then more sides may benefit from this.

Interviewer: Does organizational culture or national culture influence co-creation?

Intern No. 6: As I said, if the company set up proper values for its organization culture it may boost more factors. It may help company to get higher benefits not only in financial term. Moreover, employees or simple interns may benefit from this. In case of interns, they can also learn or get better personally thanks to company values that they may take into their own personal attributes. I believe the organizational culture play significant role. Regarding the national culture, I believe that this is even already included somehow in organizational culture. Therefore, it affects these processes but not as much as the organizational culture. In multinational company this may be more significant factors.

Interviewer: What external institution do you know influencing internships program?

Intern No. 6: Definitely government. I am also aware of some agencies that help to find students some internship. Then maybe national support programs.

Interviewer: Do the external institution have an effect on the value creation?

Intern No. 6: I believe they do, especially government that shape the background for students and the companies. Just by allowing companies to pay lower taxes on interns wages may government support somehow internship. Or by laws whether it is allowed to pay or not to pay interns as it case of the Denmark. Other stakeholders do not necessary play so much important

role in my opinion. They may enter different processes at the different timeline or stage. We would have to be more specific in regards to industry. Then we can maybe talk about some lobbying groups of people maybe.

Interviewer: How has the internship helped you with your future?

Intern No. 6: It **has definitely showed me the real world outside of the university.** Internship also helps you to better your soft skill by interacting with various people. Then you have to face various difficulties. It also showed where I would like to go in the future. What to do next. I have **also gain great experience and learnt a lot of from more experienced people.**

Interviewer: Would you recommend internships programs?

Intern No. 6: Yes, I would maybe even try to more support these programs in order to get more students in it.

Interviewer: What would you suggest to change in internships if you would have the force to do it?

Intern No. 6: You know, sometimes companies see interns as a low cost labor. Then the intern does not get proper work to gain experience. Companies often miss structured agenda for students who are there. Therefore, they are finding some additional job meanwhile. **I would definitely try to convince companies to hire young people and be prepared for them in order to be beneficial for both sides.**