

The Paradox of Hiring Newly Graduates: Employer Branding Upside-Down

- a case study of smaller Danish organizations' attraction of newly
graduates

MA Culture, Communication, and Globalisation

Aalborg University

MASTER THESIS

2018



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

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20162703

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Subjects: (tick box)	Project:	Synopsis:	Portfolio:	Thesis: X	Written Assignment:
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Study program:	MA Culture, Communication and Globalization – Market Communication & Consumption	
Semester:	10	
Exam Title:	Master's Thesis	
Name and date of birth/ Names and dates of birth of group members:	Name(s)	Date(s) of birth
	Camilla Ravn Overby Nielsen (Student Number: 20162703)	15-01-1991
Hand in date:	15-09-2018	
Project Title /Synopsis Title/Thesis Title:	The Paradox of Hiring Newly Graduates: Employer Branding Upside-Down	
According to the study regulations, the maximum number of keystrokes of the paper is:	192.000	
Number of keystrokes: (one standard page = 2400 keystrokes, including spaces) (table of contents, bibliography and appendix do not count)*	174.476	
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Abstract

Purpose: The overall aim of this thesis is to generate an understanding of how the utilization of employer branding can benefit smaller Danish organizations in the (previously anticipated) intensified global competition for newly graduates. Furthermore, it aims to give a trustworthy picture of the (actual) competition for newly graduates, and their work value preferences.

Problem Formulation: This thesis is focusing on newly graduates' work value preferences, if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization, as well as how smaller Danish organizations are handling the intensified global competition for new talents, and if they can benefit from using employer branding to attract newly graduates. The core theoretical concept utilized for this research has been Employer Branding, which in recent years has been experiencing more importance, particularly with the 'war for talent'.

Research Design: To answer the research question a predominating qualitative research design, composed by a case study approach, utilizing a mixed-methods research design carried out by two different methods, an online social web survey along with semi-structured interviews.

Findings: The initial focus of this research was to identify external employer branding value proposition framework for newly graduates, in order for smaller Danish organizations to use it as a branding strategy in the global competition for new talents. However, a paradox was found, since the smaller organizations only want experienced employees – leading towards employer branding upside-down.

Research limitations/implications: The results of this research start a new set of questions, which need further research. Even though this thesis offers new insights on smaller Danish organizations and the newly graduates anno 2018, it does meet some limitations. However, for similar, smaller Danish organizations, this research can be used as an inspiration or foundation for a new framework related to new employer branding strategies.

Keywords: *Employer branding, organizational awareness, talent attraction, recruitment, newly graduates, work value preferences, graduate programs, 'war for talent'*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

Through the past couple of years the 'war for talent' has become more critical, and the constant search for the best new talents has become commonplace in the corporate world (Lønstrup, 2016; Kolesnikov, 2018). According to a survey, made by the news media Berlingske about how 175 large and medium-sized organizations experience the competition for talented employees has evolved during the last decade, 61% answered that the competition has increased, while 15% answered that the competition has increased significantly (Lønstrup, 2016). This makes the 'war for talent' critical, since the next generation to enter the labor force (the generation born between 1979 and 1994 – also called Millennials (Hewlett, Sherbin, & Sumberg, 2009)) are few in numbers (CompanYoung ApS, 2015), and since the Danish labor force from 2008 already has decreased by 74,000 people of working age (aged between 18 and 64 years), which only increase the competition for the talented employees (Seerup, 2015). Even though the Danish labor force presently is experiencing the lowest unemployment rate in years and the market is experiencing an economic upturn (Danmarks Statistik, 2018), the demographic change has and will further result in a significant challenge for organizations to replace retiring experienced employees with younger and significantly different employees in form of Millennials (Napoli & Ewing, 2000; Krahna & Galambos, 2014; Queiri, Yusoff, & Dwaikat, 2014; ManpowerGroup, 2016), who are argued to make up for more than half of the labor force within the next 10 years (MacDermott & Ortiz, 2017). In order to overcome this intensifying global talent shortage, organizations have initiated the development of extensive recruitment strategies to be able to attract and retain both current and potential qualified employees (ManpowerGroup, 2016; Theurer, Tumasjan, Welpe, & Lievens, 2018).

Not only business executives but also scholarly research articles, and business publications have all been talking about this ongoing global challenge of finding the best and talented employees, which in particular involve the newly graduates (university students who are either still studying or have finished their Master's degree within the last two years) (MacDermott & Ortiz, 2017). Previously, a number of studies have been made on the career experiences of graduates in their immediate years of employment after the graduation, which generally illustrate that the newly graduates' experiences on a job do not live up to their actual expectations of particularly training and development, which they expect to receive when

they start working (Keenan & Newton, 1986; Dean, Ferris, & Konstans, 1988; Graham & McKenzie, 1995; Wickramasinghe & Perera, 2010), and that the intermediate stage of work along with the adjustments from student to a full-time employee often are stressful experiences for these new talents (Graham & McKenzie, 1995; Holden & Jameson, 1999). Consequently, it is argued that newly graduates might be too accustomed to academic methods and performance feedback, which can make them unprepared for the less structured feedback at the workplace (Holton, 1992). This induces a higher demand for developing graduate programs among newly graduates, and places these newly educated in a strong competition for such graduate positions with an abundance of applications for the positions available (Holst, 2018). Graduate programs are defined as a tailored two year career development program within an organization that gives up to 4 different department rotations with possibilities for rotations abroad, for newly finished postgraduates (i.e. graduates), who have finished their Master's degree within the last two years prior to application (Jobindex, 2012; Aarhus Universitet, 2017; Djøf, 2018). The developing graduate program resembles an internship but it targets specifically newly finished Master's degree graduates, and differs from the internship in terms of offering the graduate an entry point to a long career instead of only offering a short-term and often unpaid work experience (Clarke, 2017). The entry into such graduate position is seen as a 'fast track' route to for instance management, thus the selection process is often much tougher than normal job positions, as the organizations want to ensure great potential (Hayman & Lorman, 2004).

Employers are increasingly looking inside the organization to train and develop their own employees in order to fill in talent gaps (ManpowerGroup, 2016), which also induce the organizations' establishment of own graduate programs that add contribution to growth and development of the newly graduates to fit into the specific organization. Hence, graduate programs today appear to be growing in attractiveness particularly within large, multinational organizations such as for example Nestle' and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), who both assess the attraction of newly graduates as being of great importance (Hayman & Lorman, 2004). However, these developing graduate programs have also become extremely attractive among the newly graduates themselves. As an example Ørsted A/S (previously named DONG Energy A/S), a large Danish organization and one of the leading north European energy concerns (Ørsted A/S), received 3,200 applications for only one graduate position (Holst, 2018).

1.1. Research purpose

It is argued that well-known organizations are more likely to be associated with more positive features, hence being seen as an attractive employer and a good place to work. However, this truth also counts for negative features (Brooks, Highhouse, Russell, & Mohr, 2003). Subsequently, the media today has an increasing role, as it presents organizations to the public and influences the public's opinion of the organizations, whether it is positive or negative (Brooks et al., 2003). However, as the relations between recruitment strategies and the application intentions and –decisions are moderated by brand awareness (Collins, 2007), larger organizations might have an advantage when it comes to employer branding and the attraction of new talents, as they often are represented by a well-known brand. Hence, they might have a stronger brand awareness among newly graduates, which consequently makes them more attractive employers. This might not be the case for smaller Danish organizations with lower brand awareness among the newly graduates, which makes it significantly important with employer knowledge and –reputation in order to attract newly graduates (Collins, 2007). Therefore, this master thesis' objective is to explore how smaller Danish organizations are handling the intensified global competition for new talents, what are newly graduates' work value preferences, if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization, and how smaller Danish organizations can benefit from using employer branding to attract these newly graduates.

1.1.1. Problem Formulation

The research objective is addressed by three research questions (RQ), which will provide a frame for this master thesis:

RQ1: What are newly graduates' work value preferences, and are graduate programs affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization?

RQ2: How are smaller Danish Organizations handling the intensified global competition for new talents?

RQ3: How is the concept of employer branding of benefit to smaller Danish organizations in the global competition for newly graduates?

The research will be composed by a case study using mixed methods in order to give indications for the newly graduates' work value preferences, if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization, as well as how smaller Danish organizations are handling the intensified global competition for new talents, and if they can benefit from using employer branding to attract newly graduates.

CHAPTER 2

PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AND METHODOLOGY

2. PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AND METHODOLOGY

The following chapter will present this research's methodological process. First and foremost this section will outline the research paradigm in form of the ontological and epistemological stance of the research, followed by a discussion of reflexive methodology. Subsequently, the research design along with the data collection and –processing will be outlined in order to give a better understanding of how this research has been made. Finally, the chapter will give a reflection on trustworthiness of the research.

2.1. Research Paradigm

The following paragraph outlines the ontological and epistemological stances of the research, which have been selected according to the researcher's perception of reality, as well as to the relevance to the problem area. These stances will be a consistent thought throughout this research, which aim is to generate an understanding of how employer branding can benefit or aid smaller Danish organizations in the competition for newly graduates. In order to generate such understanding, the ontological stance of constructionism is particularly relevant for this research, along with the epistemological stance of interpretivism.

Hence this research follows the ontological position constructivism. Within this paradigm a social object or phenomena is to be constructed by the actors surrounding it (Bryman, 2016, p. 29-31). By this notion it is implied that all social phenomena depend on the surrounding context and hence are in constant state of development (Bryman, 2016, p. 29-31). Since a phenomena within the this paradigm are shaped and influenced by current context surroundings, it can encompass different meanings, all depending on the setting, time and place in which it is contextualized, implying no single objective reality (Bryman, 2016, p. 29-31). By following this ontological stance of constructionism, it will only be possible for the researcher to obtain a present knowledge and understanding of how employer branding can benefit smaller Danish organizations in the competition for newly graduates due to the constant state of development by context surroundings (Gibbs, 2007, p. 1-9).

Looking at the epistemological question of research, it concerns what knowledge that is considered acceptable within a discipline of research. When choosing the epistemological stance, there will be differentiated between research of natural and social sciences (Bryman,

2016, p. 26-28). This research follows the epistemological position interpretivism. With the epistemology interpretivism, one of the main points is that study of social sciences is fundamentally different from studying natural sciences (Bryman, 2016, p. 26-28). This stance of interpretivism takes the human aspect into consideration, and allows the researcher to understand phenomena without attempting to explain it, but to understand the researched topic it requires engagement in the context in order to get the full perspective (Bryman, 2016, p. 26-28). When talking about interpretivism it is often concerning the understanding and interpretation of social actions by going back and forth between data and theory (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 148-149; Bryman, 2016, p. 26-28). This indicates an abductive approach, where the researcher acknowledges some basic assumptions and goes back and forth between the data collection and theory in order to draw more attention to the interpretation in the research and hence leading to the necessity of reflection (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 1-18). This leads to the claim of Alvesson and Sköldberg (2018) that the social reality is not completely external and unknown to the consciousness of the researcher, as the researcher and other people in general are all members of such society (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 3-4).

Considering this research, it intends to illustrate different meanings and implications among people (newly graduates) that are constructed within social actions. Thus, the researcher examines the social phenomena from different viewpoints to build an understanding and potentially connections (Gibbs, 2007, p. 1-9). Based on the abovementioned ontology and epistemology the research design will emerge, which makes it essential that the researched phenomenon of employer branding is investigated within a social context where there is no definite truth, as it is in constant development. This is coherent with the nature of the thesis but also with the constraint for founding the results on a survey and two semi-structured interviews (see Section 2.2.), which makes it particularly important to emphasize that this research is representing one version of a social constructed reality based on individual interpretation. Due to the epistemology interpretivism the research process has been abductive, and the researcher has studied different theories of employer branding before starting the collection of primary data in order to get a better picture of how to construct the research. This is primarily explained as the stance of interpretivism with focus on interpretation and creation of understanding, leads the researcher to see organizational communication, thus also the concept of employer branding, as social interactions and creation of relations (Kolstrup,

Agger, Jauert, & Schrøder, 2014, p. 611-613). Meaning that there is less focus on what communicational channels to choose and more focus on the communicational contribution to 'sense-making' and creation of understanding (Kolstrup et al., 2014, p. 611-613). Hence, this research is part of knowledge creation, and the researcher has functioned as a medium between theoretical concepts and a social phenomenon. Additionally, the research presents a particular version of the investigated context of employer branding, which might reflect the researcher's social reality.

Contrary to the epistemological stance of positivism, this research will not necessarily be seen as one reality but rather as a social construction, which according to Bryman (2016) will lead to a continually state of development (Bryman, 2016, p. 29-31). This signifies that the newly graduates' work value preferences will meet continually (re)development by the graduates themselves, as it is closely connected to their social reality, and thus it will influence the impact of employer branding and how it can be beneficial to smaller Danish organizations in the global competition for new talents. Hence, the newly graduates' values and motivations for their actions comprise adequate knowledge for this research. However, the interpretative nature of this research makes it crucial for the researcher to be continuously reflective (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 1-18).

Therefore, the research will be conducted as a case study using mixed methods in order to achieve an understanding of the phenomenon (Bryman, 2016, p. 637). Such approach allows the researcher to make sense of the academic concept of employer branding in connection to newly graduates and how smaller Danish organizations can benefit from it, as it will be investigated in a real life situation (Creswell, 2013, p. 97; Bryman, 2016, p. 66). The research collects its data from newly graduates themselves via an online survey, along with semi-structured interviews of two smaller Danish organizations in order to achieve a broader perspective of how employer branding can benefit or aid smaller Danish organizations in the competition for new talents in form of newly graduates.

The research design, data collection and data processing, along with a reflection on trustworthiness will be elaborated in the following sections.

2.1.1. Reflexive Methodology

In order for the researcher to be continuously reflective, thus ensuring more attention to the interpretation and hence leading to a deeper research, the thesis will follow Alvesson and Sköldberg's (2018) definition and suggestion for reflexive methodology. Accordingly, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2018) see reflexive research as a concept of thoughtful attention to different elements of language, political, social and theoretical aspects that are all weaved together in order to develop knowledge, and thereby throughout the process the empirical material is both constructed, interpreted and written (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 10-11). Furthermore, they argue that such research *"[...] starts from a skeptical approach to what appear at a superficial glance as unproblematic replicas of the way reality functions, while at the same time maintaining the belief that the study of suitable (well-thought-out) excerpts from this reality can provide an important basis for a generation of knowledge that opens up rather than closes, and furnishes opportunities for understanding rather than establishes 'truths'"* (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 11). Consequently, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2018) define reflexive research as containing of *"two basic characteristics: careful interpretation and reflection"* (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 11).

The interpretation has an essential role, as all references to empirical material that is collected for a specific research is seen as results of the researcher's own interpretation, including preconceptions, cultural background, and theoretical assumptions (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 11). Therefore, to be able to carefully interpreting the material, it involves the researcher's acknowledgement that *"there are no self-evident, simple or unambiguous rules or procedures, and that crucial ingredients are the researcher's judgment, intuition and ability to 'see and point something out', as well as the consideration of a more or less explicit dialogue"* between both the research subject, the researcher, and the reader (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 329).

By reflection it is meant *"thinking about the conditions for what one is doing, investigating the way in which the theoretical, cultural and political context of individual and intellectual involvement affects interaction with whatever is being researched [...]"* (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 326). In this research context, reflexivity means to pay attention to these features without one dominating the others. Therefore, it is described as interpreting own interpretation, by confronting prospective problems during the research in order to ensure

different levels of interpretation getting "*played off against each other*" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018, p. 330).

Consequently, reflexive interpretation needs to be applied throughout the research by the avoidance of focusing on solely one specific theme or level, thus generating multiple interpretations that are evaluated against each other. Hence, the application of reflexive methodology is considered to be rather challenging, requiring the researcher to have an exhaustive overview of both the empirical and theoretical material, and simultaneously generate multi-layered interpretations, remaining sensitive to feedback, and staying self-aware of weaknesses (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018). Accordingly, they argue that a successful reflective research, is expected to be filled with problems, however, this should not keep one from doing the research, as it is strongly perceived that a reflexive–interpretive approach will improve the research outcome, and make it possible to make qualified, original comments (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018, p. 394-395). Thus, research focused on minimizing the risks is often seen to be meaningless. However, this research did not go for minimizing the risks, and it took some unexpected turns along the way, making it difficult to keep overview as a researcher acting alone.

Alvesson and Skoldberg (2018) further explain, "*[...] the decisive quality in qualitative research is not the way its different components are managed. Rather, what primarily determines its value is an awareness of the various interpretive dimensions at several different levels, and the ability to handle these reflexively*" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018, p. 396).

Further explanations on how reflexivity has been implemented throughout this research will be outlined in the following sections.

2.2. Research Design

The research design is according to Teddlie & Tashakkori (2010) naturally constructed by the research questions and thereby the research's overall objective (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010), which in this case is to examine the work value preferences of newly graduates, if or how graduate programs are affecting their preferences, and how smaller Danish organizations can benefit from using employer branding to attract these newly graduates. Therefore, in alignment with the research paradigm and the objective of the research, this research de-

sign is set as a predominately qualitative research. However, due to complexity of the researched topic, as well as the identified knowledge gap of newly graduates' expectations and work value preferences, along with the smaller Danish organizations' ability to attract these newly graduates, and whether or not these smaller Danish organizations can benefit from a stronger focus on employer branding, the researcher decided to conduct a case study (further explained in Section 2.2.1.) using mixed methods research (further explained in Section 2.2.2).

This study has been made by an abductive approach, where the researcher acknowledges some basic assumptions and goes back and forth between the data collection and theory (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 143-148). It can seem like a combination of both the inductive and the deductive approach, however, abduction is not seen as a 'mix' of the two methods (i.e. the inductive and deductive approach), as it is argued to have a deeper focus on underlying patterns and thereby adding new elements to the research during the process, hence it incorporates the understanding and thus it enables both the empirical and theoretical area to be adjusted and refined (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 4-8). While the inductive approach takes its point of departure in the empirical data set, and the deductive approach in the theory, the abductive approach takes its point of departure on an empirical basis (i.e. like the inductive approach), but contrary to induction it acknowledges the theoretical preconceptions, which in that respect makes it closer to the deductive approach (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 4-8). This means that the research process will be alternating between both empirical realities that can be seen as clues, and theory that also include previous theory, which will entail a deeper research as they both will gradually reinterpret in the view of each other (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 4-8). Hence, this research design is perceived as a systematic, repetitive, and recursive process, which is contributing to flexibility in the analysis of data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 147-148). This design fits very well to researched topic, as there is a wealth of information on employer branding in other contexts but less in the context this research takes place, and thus it aligns with the overall exploratory aim of this research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 148-149). Most exploratory research are seen as rather broad, only narrow down with the data collection, which allows the researcher more flexibility in order to adapt to regularly changes, indicated by insights and new results (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 148-149; Gibbs, 2015, p. 3-6). This aligns with this research, as it initially began with a broad interest in newly graduates' value criteria and work preferences as part of employer branding and how in consequence smaller Danish organiza-

tions can benefit in the competition for new talents, which has been narrowed down on an ongoing basis as new empirical and theoretical material have appeared.

2.2.1. Case Study

The purpose of this research is to give indications for the newly graduates' work value preferences, and how smaller Danish organizations can benefit from using employer branding to attract these newly graduates, which make this case study about newly graduates and smaller Danish organizations. By using case studies, this way of exploring the phenomenon gives rise to more detailed insights and understandings of the newly graduates' values and work preferences along with the smaller Danish organizations' view on their position in the competition for new talents (Bryman, 2016, p. 66).

Meaning, by following a case study approach it becomes possible for the researcher to investigate and understand a phenomenon in the context in which it is present, which goes in line with the ontological stance of this research, as a case study focus on relationships between a contemporary phenomenon and its real life context (Yin, 1981). By making a case study the researcher can conduct a detailed and intensive research (Bryman, 2016, p. 66), examining a unique case in combination with limited previous conducted studies within that specific context, making it possible to capture the phenomenon under investigation in a more detailed way (Yin, 2003, p. 13; Creswell, 2013, p. 97; Gibbs, 2015, p. 5-6). Consequently, the findings are often seen as smaller snapshots of the reality, and thus cannot be generalized (Flyvbjerg, 2003; Bryman, 2016, p. 64), as there within the constructivist position is no simple or absolute reality/truth, but rather multiple interpretations (Gibbs, 2015, p. 91). Though, it is argued that the suggestion presented is limited due to restricted external validity, it was never the purpose of this research design to generalize beyond this specific case (Flyvbjerg, 2003). However, in order to conduct a trustworthy case study, it is argued by Creswell (2013) to be essential to present an in-depth understanding of the specific case (Creswell, 2013, p. 98). Therefore, the researcher has utilized both online sources, interviews and a social survey, which have made the researcher gain knowledge about the case from multiple perspectives. On a general level, the case studies have been criticized for the problem of generalization (Gibbs, 2015, p. 91), which according to Creswell (2013) have led more researchers to conduct multiple case studies in order to increase the possibilities of generalizability of the re-

search (Creswell, 2013, p. 101; Bryman, 2016, p. 67). Additionally, it is argued by Flyvbjerg (2006) that the strategic choice of the selected case will increase the possibilities of generalizability (Flyvbjerg B., 2006). Flyvbjerg (2006) further suggest that such choice of case can be seen as a critical case, as it will have a strategic position related to the research of a certain problem/phenomenon (Flyvbjerg B., 2006). Thus, Flyvbjerg (2006) argue that such strategically selected cases entail the possibility of generalizing in form of *"If it is valid for this case, it is valid for all (or many) cases."* and in a more negative form *"If it is not valid for this case, then it is not valid for any (or only few) cases."* (Flyvbjerg B., 2006, p. 230).

This research can be seen as conducting an exemplifying case (or typical case), as the goal is to investigate circumstances and conditions for a typical situation, and as it allows the researcher to investigate key social processes (Bryman, 2016, p. 62). In this case, the researcher seeks to give rise to more detailed insights and understandings of the newly graduates' values and work preferences, as well as the researcher seeks access to two different types of smaller Danish organizations in form of respectively an older (and in some terms a more traditional and well established) organization (i.e. Bangs A/S) and a newer (and in some terms a more innovative) organization (i.e. Konsolidator A/S) in order to make understandings of how smaller Danish organizations are acting regarding the competition of new talents and how they can benefit from using employer branding to attract these newly graduates. The strategically selected cases for this research are representing a broader type of smaller (i.e. 1-50 employees), private, Danish organizations, operating on the B2B market. Hence, it can be argued that this research conducts a multiple case study, which is referring to a comparative design as an extension of a case study design that allows distinguishing characteristics of two (or more) cases to give theoretical reflections of the findings, which according to Creswell (2013) increases the possibilities of generalizability (Creswell, 2013, p. 101; Bryman, 2016, p. 68). The selected cases are argued to represent other similar organizations on the Danish B2B market. Therefore, this research is considered to follow Flyvbjerg's (2006) suggestion of generalization in form of *"If it is valid for this case, it is valid for all (or many) cases."* (Flyvbjerg B., 2006, p. 230).

The case study design is often associated with an abductive approach but it does not necessarily have to be (Bryman, 2016, p. 64), just as it according to Yin (2006) is possible to use not only qualitative and quantitative methods in a single research but also in different

typologies (Yin, 2006), which he further argues to be particularly likely to improve the validity of a case study (Yin, 2013).

2.2.2. Mixed Methods

Often when studying meaning it is associated with qualitative research and the ability to study the world through the eyes of the people who are studied (Bryman, 2016, p. 624). However, this has been questioned and evaluated to be at odds due to widespread studies of attitude in social surveys based on both interviews and questionnaires (Platt, 1981, p. 87). Consequently, quantitative research frequently address meanings, and by designing attitudinal questions the research might strengthen its ability to obtain access to meaning, which indicate that the gap between quantitative and qualitative research is not as large as sometimes assumed, and that the two methods often are employed together, called mixed methods (Bryman, 2016, p. 624). Combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a mixed methods research makes it possible for the researcher to obtain greater prominence to strengthen the data collection and analysis (Bryman, 2016, p. 637).

Mixed methods research in a single project, have previously been the target of criticism, but have now evolved to become more used and respected within the ontological stance of constructionism (Bryman, 2016, p. 636-637). One of the arguments advocating the mixed methods approach is the triangulation (diversification of perceptions) that is the combination of quantitative and qualitative data, which can lead to higher credibility and transferability of the findings (Bryman, 2016, p. 643-646), and thus providing increased confidence in these (Yin, 2013). According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) the complexity of triangulation and the diversification of perceptions have lead some to the suggestion of need for prespecified designs, however it is claimed that such designs are impossible to frame due to the abductive nature of mixed methods research, as new elements might be added during the research process (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Thus, the use of mixed methods leads the researcher to be continuously reflective and makes it possible with alterations to the design and data collection process accordingly (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010), which is coherent with Alvesson and Sköldbberg's thoughts about reflexive methodology (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018).

Consequently, this thesis uses a mixed methods research consisting of an online social web survey, including attitudinal questions, thus providing a broader perspective to the prob-

lem area, along with qualitative semi-structured interviews of two smaller Danish organizations. The semi-structured interviews have an underlying focus on the concept of employer branding from the organizations' perspective, whereas the online social survey is providing a context for the concept of employer branding from the newly graduates' perspective, in terms of what their work value preferences are and how these preferences can be accommodate in the best possible way. The two methods contribute to a more holistic overview of the employer branding concept – however, focused on the organizational perspective in form of how smaller Danish organization can benefit from the concept of employer branding in the competition for new talents. Nevertheless, the researcher considers that this approach will help to improve the understanding and meaning of the phenomena, and hence the aim by using mixed methods is to obtain more credibility and a more trustworthy picture of the competition for newly graduates, and how employer branding can benefit smaller Danish organizations, than if the research were solely based on qualitative research. By combining semi-structured interviews of two smaller Danish organizations with an online social web survey of the newly graduates' expectations and work value preferences, it will be possible to obtain a broader reach of respondents, which will strengthen the ability to obtain access to meaning and understanding (Bryman, 2016, p. 624).

2.3. Data Collection and Processing

As previously mentioned, this thesis is predominated by a qualitative research (see Section 2.2.), which traditionally utilizes a series of different methods that allow comparisons across different empirical materials in order to decide what can be seen as true (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018). However, this research is not focusing on any verification, but rather the exploration and understanding of how individuals portray the same phenomena in different ways. As the research underpins that this thesis is conducted utilizing a mixed-methods research design consisting of both quantitative and qualitative data, this research's empirical material has been carried out by two different methods, namely the online social web survey along with the semi-structured interviews. Both methods will be further explained in the following sections.

2.3.1. Online Social Web Survey

For this thesis the researcher decided to conduct an online social web survey, which according to Bryman (2016) is understood to be similar to a self-completed questionnaire, as it is the respondents who complete the survey themselves, however in this setting the survey is administered online (Bryman, 2016, p. 229-232). This means that the respondents get access to the survey via an online link, which then will direct them to a website where they are able to answer the questions of the survey themselves. Today, there are a large number of software applications available, such as for example Survey Monkey, GoogleDocs and SurveyXact, which can be utilized in order to develop the survey, administering and collecting data, and to construct limited data analysis in form of reporting with both frequency tables and diagrams (Faarup & Hansen, 2010, p. 59-60). Regarding this thesis the researcher has chosen to use the software application SurveyXact, which is an application designed by Ramboll Management Consulting A/S, and furthermore an application that is provided access by Aalborg University (AAU). According to Manfreda et al. (2008) some of the advantages of this method involve that it does not require an interviewer to ask the interviewee the questions, nor does the interview need to be administered face-to-face, which otherwise would be both time and cost consuming (Manfreda, Berzelak, Vehovar, Bosnjak, & Haas, 2008). Contrarily, some disadvantages of the method are argued to contain for instance a six to fifteen percent lower response rate than other survey types, such as for example email surveys, as it might be easier to complete a survey requested via email compared to the process of switching from email to the Internet (Manfreda et al., 2008).

When it comes to surveys, the sampling can generally be categorized into two broad groups, the probability-based sampling (also called 'random sampling') and the non-probability sampling (also called 'convenience sampling') (Fricker, 2017). With probability sampling the chances of each case getting selected from the population is known and thereby usually equal for all cases, which means that it will be possible to achieve objectives that require statistically characteristics of the sampled population (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 261-262). Therefore, surveys are often associated with probability samples. On the contrary, the chances of each case getting selected from the population with non-probability sampling is not known, and it will be difficult to address objectives requiring statistically characteristics of the sampled population (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 261-262). However, it is argued that by a non-probability sample it will still be possible to make generalizations about the population,

just not on statistical grounds (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 261-262). As the main purpose of using this method is to explore and make understandings of the newly graduates' work value preferences, and if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization, and since this research has a constructivist viewpoint with an interpretational stance there are no need for statistical inferences made from the sample (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 262-272). However, when working with smaller samples as in this research with a case study, the researcher needs to select the respondents that are particularly informative for this specific research, thus the respondents need to be of a specific category in order to use them for answering the research questions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 287-289). Therefore, it has been chosen to use a non-probability-based sampling in form of a purposive sample that allow the researcher to 'judge' relevant interest groups based on decisions made by the researcher, hence this type of sampling is commonly known as 'judgmental sampling' (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 287). Accordingly, the population selected for this research is consisting of newly graduates, closer defined as: *"Danish and international university students (both men and women), living or intending to live and work in Denmark, who are either still studying or have finished a Master's degree within the last two years (finished in 2016 at the latest)"*.

In order to obtain respondents from different study programs and universities, as well as those who have finished their studies from 2016 onwards, the survey was distributed primarily on social media via a link posted in different groups associated with whole universities, groups of specific study programs, groups for international students, and groups for job seekers on Facebook and LinkedIn respectively. The social media sites Facebook and LinkedIn were chosen as the researcher deem these social media sites as an easy access to the interest group, as the interest group are considered to belong to the generation of Millennials, who are particularly attending social media sites (Knight-McCord, et al., 2016; Monalisa & Salamah, 2018). The researchers also used own network to share the link, as she also is part of the specific group of interest herself. Additionally, the researcher got in contact with various Danish job centers, as well as different unemployment funds, and lastly the researcher contacted the Secretariat of Culture, Communication and Global Studies at Aalborg University, who sent out a request for participation in the survey to all enrolled students. These job centers and unemployment funds were selected, as they provides access to a large amount of both newly graduated master students and jobseekers of several backgrounds, while the Secretariat at Aalborg University provides access to a large pool of present students of different backgrounds. How-

ever, some job centers and unemployment funds returned with an answer that they were not legally able to help out and share the link with their clients, while others responded that they would highly encourage their clients to participate, and some even shared the link on their individual company profiles on social media (i.e. Facebook).

The survey consists of 13 questions (see Appendix A.1.), of which 6 are attitudinal questions in order to explore and make understandings of the newly graduates' work value preferences, and if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization. As Bryman (2016) argue that a web survey has to be particularly easy to follow, and likewise the questions need to be especially easy to answer because respondents are completing the survey themselves (Bryman, 2016, p. 221-232), the researcher has chosen to make the questions as closed-ended and easy to answer as possible (Bryman, 2016, p. 246-250). However, the researcher still need some opinions from the respondents in order to explore and make understandings, of which the researcher cannot predict or anticipate, hence the researcher need some open-ended questions as well (Bryman, 2016, p. 244-246). Therefore, the researcher is aware of adding an 'other'-option when making closed-ended questions, as the researcher acknowledges that the respondents might have different opinions than the researcher self, hence being consistent with the constructivist stance of this research. Also, the researcher has made an 'anything you want to add'-option available two times, during the survey, in the middle and in the end respectively. This was made in form of a free text-box, making it possible for the respondents to add anything on their mind when going through the survey and answering the questions. Furthermore, when making open-ended questions the researcher empower various realities, which will help in the search for exploration and understandings of the phenomena. Hence, the researcher attempts to provide a survey that can contribute to what Alvesson and Sköldberg (2018) explain as "*richness in points*" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 372), by developing insights that can challenge established ways of thinking, and thus "*provide inspiration and arguments for interpretations*" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 372). They further argue that such interpretations (i.e. 'rich in points') will appear sound and well founded in connection with the empirical material, but do not need much support (i.e. proof) from it (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 372).

When doing research on attitudes, one of the most frequently applied types of questions is the likert-scale, where a battery of questions can to be asked (Bryman, 2016, p. 250-251), which has been used in this research as well. One of the advantages of this kind of questioning

is that the questions can be pre-coded, as for example with this question '*How important are the following factors for you in relation to a future work place?*' where the respondents are asked to indicate how important a series of different factors are for them on a scale of 1-5, of which 1=Very unimportant, 2=partly unimportant, 3=neither unimportant nor important, 4=partly important, 5=Very important, which is argued to ease the processing of data for computer analysis (Bryman, 2016, p. 227-228). With these types of questions it is often argued that such a middle alternative as 'neither unimportant nor important' might give the respondents an option that does not require them to give any thoughts to the specific question or their answer to it (Bryman, 2016, p. 256-258). However, the researcher chose to add such middle alternative, as Bryman (2016) also argue that a question without such middle alternative might in fact lead some respondents to select a response that they do not agree with, or even result in a larger non-response rate and lead to missing data (Bryman, 2016, p. 256-258).

In the first section (see Appendix A.1.) the respondents are asked for socio-demographic details and whether or not they are studying a Master's degree or have completed a Master's degree within the last 2 years (completed in 2016 at the latest), in order to set the scene and identify who the respondents are. Subsequently, the following questions include attitudinal questions on the respondents' work value preferences and the importance of an organization's image. The last set of questions are about graduate programs and include attitudinal questions on how attractive the respondents find such program. The survey is finished, by asking the respondents if the researcher could have their email address and contact them for further information on their answers if needed. Out of the 124 respondents 36 answered yes, which enabled the researcher to collect additional data if needed, which generally is not very common when conducting a survey (Bryman, 2016, p. 224).

The survey was only made in English (see Appendix A.1.), as the researcher deemed that it would be sensible, since the research is appointed both Danish and international graduates at an academic level, who thereby should be able to understand English to a great extent. The survey was open for response in 42 days, from the 10th of July 2018 until the 20th of August 2018, and was accessed 185 times, of which 52 defected, thus there were 133 completed responses. Additionally, those respondents without a finished Master's degree (from 2016 at the latest) and those that are not presently studying at a Master degree program were excluded, hence there were in total 124 usable, completed responses, which resulted in a response rate

of 67 percent. As illustrated below in Table 1, the respondents were primarily consisting of North European, females with a response rate on 82,3 and 67,7 percent respectively. They are mainly coming from an educational background in Humanities, while the predominant age is 24-27 years, counting for 58 percent.

Sample Characteristics	Newly Graduates	
Total Sample	N 124	% 67
<u>Gender</u>		
Female	84	67,7
Male	40	32,3
<u>Age</u>		
20-23	12	9,7
24-27	72	58
28-31	30	24,2
32+	10	8,1
<u>Country</u>		
Northern Europe	102	82,3
Southern Europe	1	0,8
Eastern Europe	6	4,8
Western Europe	11	8,9
Other	4	3,2
<u>Educational course (faculty)</u>		
Humanities	64	51,6
Engineering and Natural Science	10	8,1
Health and Medical Sciences	4	3,2
Business	15	12,1
Social Sciences	23	18,5
Law	1	0,8
IT and Design	4	3,2
Other	3	2,4

Table 1: Sample Characteristics - Survey.

In order to administering and analyze on the respondents answers, the researcher has been using SurveyXact as reporting application with both frequency tables and diagrams, and the raw data have been transferred to an excel document (see Appendix A.2.), as well. However, it is most likely only readable by zooming in on the document in this thesis. Consequently, the researcher made it possible to access the raw data online via a link: <http://www.surveyxact.dk/report/shared/5ea02396-a588-47b6-9bce-c0906f5c3460>.

As this method (i.e. survey) generally leans towards the positivistic stance, which is characterized by the collection of data in regards to evident reality, and a search for regularity and causal relations in order to make 'law-like' generalizations (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 134),

the researcher has been particularly careful in the configuration of the survey, and acknowledge that by such configuration the researcher is part of a creation of a social construction, hence the researcher is aware that there is no unambiguous or precise accomplished facts about the newly graduates' opinions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 131-135). However, based on the 124 accomplished respondents, the researcher will be able to obtain some indications of the newly graduates' opinions, which will be used in the interpretation to make understandings of the newly graduates' work value preferences, and if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization.

2.3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

The researcher chose to apply a semi-structured interview approach that is characterized as focusing on a specific topic with some prepared questions, which allow the researcher to shift between the prepared questions (i.e. an interview guide) and possible topics of interest expressed by the interviewee, of which the researcher did not expect beforehand (Bryman, 2016, p. 201). Hence, this method is selected in order for the research to achieve more insight into the smaller Danish organizations and thus the interviewee's frame of understanding (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). The selected interviewees' perception and conceptualization of a respective organization as an employer in global competition for new talents, is accredited as essential in order to understand the dynamics of the competition for newly graduates and the possible achievements of using employer branding. Thus, these semi-structured interviews are seen to be aligned with this thesis's constructivist stance, as they seek to emphasize the CEO's of two smaller Danish organization's socially constructed conceptualization of the respective organizations as an employer in global competition for newly graduates and their utilization of employer branding.

As with the previous method, these interview participants were sampled by the usage of a non-probability-based sampling in form of a purposive sample as well. This is chosen as this type of sampling allow the researcher to deem relevant participants based on decisions made by the researcher, and thereby the researcher can select participants that will facilitate the answering of relevant RQs (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 287). Initially, the researcher identified seven smaller (i.e. 1-50 employees), private, Danish organizations, operating on the B2B market via an intensive online search achieve primarily on LinkedIn. These seven organizations

were contacted via email regarding participation in an interview for this thesis. Consequently, three of those did not reply, one was directly uninterested in participating, and one found the project interesting but defined the specific organization as unable to participate as most of their employees were employed in their subsidiary company in Sarajevo (the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina), implying that they do not need newly graduates in Denmark. However, out of these seven organizations, two responded with a positive answer of participating in the interview.

The first of the two positive responds came from Carl Gustav Lehmann, CEO at Bangs A/S, who was interested in the project and wanted a further explanation over the phone. The researcher called Carl Gustav Lehmann, explaining the project in detail after which they scheduled a meeting where the researcher was able visit the organization and the interview could be accomplish. The second of the two positive responds came from Claus Finderup Grove, CEO at Konsolidator A/S, who was very interested in the project as well and would like to participate in the interview, but at the present he was on vacation, which he would be back from in the middle of August. Therefore, it was agreed-upon that the researcher would contact Claus Finderup Grove again after his vacation and they could schedule a meeting. Hence, a meeting was scheduled in late august and the researcher went to visit the organization where the interview was accomplish. Consequently, the strategically selected cases for this research represent a broader type of smaller (i.e. 1-50 employees), private, Danish organizations, operating on the B2B market, of which the researcher obtained access to two different types of smaller Danish organizations in form of respectively an older (and in some terms a more traditional and well established) organization (i.e. Bangs A/S) and a newer (and in some terms a more innovative) organization (i.e. Konsolidator A/S). In order to give an overview of the two selected organizations, they have been exemplified below in Table 2.

Sample Characteristics	Organization	
	<u>Bangs A/S</u>	<u>Konsolidator A/S</u>
Location	Vedbæk (Copenhagen, DK)	Kongens Lyngby (Copenhagen, DK)
Year founded	1878	2014
Company size	2-10 Employees	2-10 Employees
Business area	Business-to-Business	Business-to-Business
Specialties	Food & Beverages	Computer Software
Interviewee	Carl Gustav Lehmann, CEO	Claus Finderup Grove, CEO

Table 2: Sample Characteristics – Interviews.

The interview questions (i.e. the interview guide as well) were determined by the exploratory RQs in order to emphasize the two CEOs' perceptions and perspectives (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). Consequently, the interview guide was prepared (see Appendix B.1.) as going from a broader spectrum of questions to narrower questions, separated in three sections. The first section includes more general questions about the organizations and their employment of newly graduates if any. The second section is about the 'increased competition for talents', and how the organizations see the employment of newly graduates. The third and final section is about the awareness of the organization, how the organizations differentiate themselves from larger organizations, and how they possibly use employer branding.

As previously mentioned, the interviews were conducted at face-to-face meetings at the respective organizations, which proceeded for around 30-40 minutes each. During the interviews, the researcher acted as the interviewer with a role as moderator and observer, however without interruptions, influence, corrections, or any opinion giving. Only if the interviewees needed it and thus where it was appropriate, the interviewer could clarify or give any additional information to the interviewees. Since the interviewees were both Danes and as it is assumed to generate a deeper insight when talking in mother tongue, the interviews were accomplished in Danish, but the interview guide (i.e. the prepared questions) have been translated into an English version in order to clarify the interview process (see Appendix B.2.). In order to facilitate the transcriptions and analysis of the material, the interviews were both audio recorded with permission from both participants. Subsequently, the researcher transcribed the two interviews (see Appendix C.1. – C.2.) in a simple form, as the primary focus was on the content of the two interviews, rather than the discourse. Thus, interruptions, overlap in talk etc. are not comprised in the transcriptions. However, sometimes what was said in the recordings was unclear to understand for the researcher, hence it has been marked as [inaudible] in the transcriptions. Additionally, an editor note has been added in inserted brackets where it might not be obviously what the interviewee is referring to. Furthermore, all names except of the interviewee and the particular organization have been anonymized.

After the two interviews were carried out, the outcome was discussed with the researcher's supervisor as Alvesson and Skoldberg (2018) argue that feedback enhances the reflexivity. In order for the researcher to process the obtained dataset from the two inter-

views, a thematic analysis was utilized, which will be further explained in the following subsection.

Thematic Analysis

This research utilizes a thematic analysis in order to analyze the gathered empirical data from the semi-structured interviews. Such analysis is referring to *“forms of qualitative data analysis that principally focus on identifying, organising and interpreting themes in textual data”* (King & Brooks, 2018, p. 220). King and Brooks (2018) argue that a theme recurs as characteristic or something distinctive in for example an interview transcript, however they further suggest a theme to be as follows; *“A one-off comment could not constitute a theme, but we have no problem in principle in identifying a theme that is unique to a single case – in other words, themes do not necessarily have to be identified across cases”* (King & Brooks, 2018, p. 220). Generally, thematic analysis is used to identify, highlight and make sense of key themes in qualitative data, in order to understand the researched phenomena, however there are many different ways it can be carried out. This research utilizes the generic form of thematic analysis, in form of a template analysis style.

According to King & Brooks (2018) the template analysis style is centered between the inductive grounded theory on the one side and deductive content analysis on the other side, thus it can be useful to various methodologies, and consequently they suggest that *“Rather than insisting on coding using either a ‘bottom up’ approach (in which themes are derived inductively from the data) or a ‘top down’ approach (in which themes are informed by previously determined concerns – either theoretical or practical), Template Analysis allows the use of either or both”* (King & Brooks, 2018, p. 225). Thus, template analysis can be seen as a technique that implies developing a coding template on a subset of the gathered dataset, subsequently applied to a larger part of the dataset, then revised, and lastly applied to the entire dataset, hence encouraging a continually abductive process in order to summarize and organize important themes (King & Brooks, 2018, p. 225). In order to do so, King and Brooks (2018) suggest dividing the template analysis in six steps: 1) becoming familiar with the gathered data that needs to be analyzed – in this research achieved by transcriptions of the two interviews; 2) doing preliminary coding by highlighting relevant data and possible priori themes (i.e. themes defined in advance that correspond with the RQs); 3) cluster the preliminary codes

and priori themes in meaningful groups; 4) developing the initial template by establishing hierarchical relations between the themes; 5) applying the initial template to further data, continually modifying and revising the template; 6) applying the template to the full dataset, once the researcher agrees with a final constructed template version (King & Brooks, 2018, p. 224-227).

Regarding this thesis and the implementation of the template analysis, the researcher has been utilizing parallel coding (i.e. coding certain parts of text under more than one code) and hierarchical coding (i.e. clustering similar and related codes in meaningful groups, nesting narrower themes under broader themes), in order to enhance the opportunity of multiple interpretations (King & Brooks, 2018, p. 224-227). Consequently, this style of thematic analysis is seen as an approach in alignment with the overall abductive approach of this research.

Practically speaking, after the researcher made the transcriptions of the two interviews, the one transcription was gone over to identify and highlight relevant data, developing codes based on the interview guide, as it takes its point of departure in the RQs (i.e. referring to priori themes). Subsequently, these codes were clustered by related codes and nested under broader themes, developing the initial coding template (see Appendix D.1.). This initial coding template was then applied to one interview transcription, where it underwent modifications if new codes were necessary or if current codes were unnecessary, leading to a second version that was applied to the same transcription again. Since there are 'just' two interviews, this process of modifications was adapted to the second interview as well (see Appendix D.2.), before the final template was achieved, by ensuring that the relevant RQs were addressed, and thus be applied to the full dataset.

The thematic analysis approaches can be utilized with varying datasets in size and research interest, however it is most often associated with large, detailed datasets (King & Brooks, 2018), which might question the use of it in this thesis, as the research is conducting 'just' two interviews. Nevertheless, this analysis was made in order to contribute to the "*richness in points*" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018, p. 372), as previously described (see Section 2.3.1.), by developing insights and thereby "*provide inspiration and arguments for interpretations*" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018, p. 372). Likewise, as they further argue that such interpretations (i.e. 'rich in points') will appear sound and well founded in connection with the empirical dataset, but do not need much support (i.e. proof) from it (Alvesson & Skoldberg,

2018, p. 372), thus it is assessed as relevant for this research. However, in order to achieve this 'richness in points', this thesis will contain a section for discussion (see Section 5) with the purposes of discussing interpretations of the analyzed empirical dataset with the insights from the theoretical framework, and thus achieving deeper interpretation and understanding of the data and phenomenon respectively.

2.4. Trustworthiness

Besides the application of reflexive methodology, this research additionally employ parts of Guba and Lincoln's (1985) four criteria for trustworthiness in a research, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 2016, p. 384). This was decided based on the differences between a research of naturalistic objects and a research of social actors, which is commonly acknowledged within research of social science, and also an essential part to the interpretative nature of a research (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 131-135). Hence, applications of the positivistic notions of validity, reliability and generalizability have been criticized.

The criteria of credibility primarily relates to the quality of the gathered data (Guba & Lincoln, 2016, p. 384) Here it is essential to note that the researcher designed an interview guide to be semi-structured, allowing the interviewees to present any perceptions of the topics discussed. Furthermore, the researcher interviewed two CEO's of two different smaller organizations at face-to-face meetings at the respective organizations, with an aim to create a more accustomed setting where the interviewees could express their opinions more confidently. Consequently, this was also the reason for conducting the interviews in Danish, as both interviewees were Danes, and thus it was assumed possible to generate a deeper insight when talking in mother tongue. As previously mentioned the use of mixed methods have evolved to become more used and respected within the ontological stance of constructionism (Bryman, 2016, p. 636-637), as it by a triangulation adds diversification of perceptions, thus utilization of the survey is seen as contributing to higher credibility and transferability of the findings (Guba & Lincoln, 2016, p. 384), and hence providing increased confidence in these (Yin, 2013). It is possible that a similar research will lead to other constructions of knowledge and understanding, as the results from the semi-structured interviews with the two organizations are conditional to the relations made between the organizations and the researcher.

However, this is not considered as problematic, since the purpose of the thesis is to gain an understanding, and thus this research is not seen as one unambiguous reality but rather as a social construction that is under a continually state of development (Bryman, 2016, p. 29-31). Consequently, this thesis' use of mixed methods are seen as an asset, as the quantitative method more frequently sees to address meanings by designing attitudinal questions, strengthen the research's ability to obtain access to meaning by a wider range of respondents (Bryman, 2016, p. 624).

The criteria of transferability primarily focus on a more in-depth investigation and is thereby often more oriented towards the particular context of a research (Guba & Lincoln, 2016, p. 384). The researcher have accommodate this by conducting a case study, which allow the researcher to gather more rich data and hence increase the researcher's ability to understand the context of the competition and attraction of newly graduates to smaller Danish organizations. As the research was conducted with a relatively small sample, it limits the generalizability. However, as for many qualitative researches, this thesis's main objective is not to generalize, but rather to produce implications that can be transferred to other, similar, social contexts. Therefore, despite the findings not being directly generalizable, the researcher will be able to obtain some indications of the newly graduates' opinions, which will be used in the interpretation to make understandings of the newly graduates' work value preferences, and if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization, based on the 124 accomplished respondents. Furthermore, the selected organizations for the two interviews are argued to represent other, similar organizations on the Danish B2B market, which are further discussed in section about case study (see Section 2.2.1). The criteria of dependability and confirmability primarily relates to accountability and critical reflection of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 2016, p. 384-386). Here it is essential to note the Appendixes, which make it possible for the reader to obtain an overview and a clearer understanding of the research process and how possible conclusions were achieved, adding transparency to the thesis. Furthermore, the transcription of the interviews and the related template analysis also allows the researcher to be more familiar with the gathered material, improving the ability to develop multiple interpretations (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018).

Regarding any ethical considerations, both the interviewees were informed about the recording of the interview before the starting, as well as their right to objection during the interview. Furthermore, the researcher made the transcriptions as close to the original phras-

ing as possible, however ensuring anonymity to names and places presented by the interviewees except from the name of the organization and the interviewees own names.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following chapter will propound a theoretical framework of employer branding, along with the employer branding value proposition in order to understand the concept and how it can benefit or aid smaller Danish organizations in the global competition for newly graduates. The aim of this theoretical framework is to synthesize areas of conceptual knowledge about employer branding and organizational commitment, which will provide a better and overall perspective of how to attract potential employees and especially newly graduates. Hence, lastly the framework will contribute to this study by examining factors that determine newly graduates' (Generation Y's) initial attraction and commitment to the labor market, as they by being the newest entering the labor force have a 'reputation' among theoreticians to be somewhat different from earlier generations.

3.1. Employer Branding

In order to create conceptual knowledge and a more holistic understanding of employer branding, this section will look at the definition of employer branding, as well as how it has been used and developed.

3.1.1. Definition

Talents and the organization's corporate brand are crucial for the earning of a competitive advantage, which led Ambler and Barrow (1996) to create the term 'employer branding' by integrating the two concepts (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Since the turn of the millennium the concept of corporate branding has evolved from a 'first wave' where it was considered as a marketing-dominated discipline that was campaign-driven and often focused on visual identity, to a 'second wave' where it was considered to be a strategic and continuous organizational adaptation process that required integration across disciplines (Schultz, Antorini, & Csaba, 2005, p. 220-231). Today, as the boundaries between internal and external communication have degraded, corporate communication and the development of employer branding is seen as a newer and broader perspective, where all communication that takes place from an organization to its external stakeholders also gets received by its internal stakeholders, and vice versa (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Eiberg et al., 2013, p. 11-25; Kolstrup et al., 2014, p. 611-

613). Thus, according to Hatch & Schultz (2009), the field of corporate branding and the evolvement of employer branding is heading for its 'third wave', which incorporate network relations with all the organization's stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2009, p. 249-280). Therefore, it has evolved to be understood as a more strategic and holistic approach where the occurrence of an organization's communication happens with all its internal and external stakeholders (Kolstrup, Agger, Jauert, & Schrøder, 2014, p. 83-85).

Ambler and Barrow (1996) argued that the organization (i.e. the employer) can be seen as a brand, which can lead the employees to develop a closer relationship with the organization, as the employee performance is influenced by awareness, positive attitudes towards the brand, as well as loyalty and the trust that the brand is there for the employee (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Equally, they argued that marketing is moving towards greater recognition of people orientation and less focus on the short-term transactional economics, which makes it both easier, cheaper and more profitable in order to keep existing customers than recruiting new customers (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Fundamentally, marketing has the function to achieve the corporate objectives, such as profit by meeting the customers' objectives – by substituting the 'customers' with 'employees', we get the first thoughts about employer branding (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Ambler and Barrow (1996) define the concept of employer branding as: *"The package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company"* (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).

Meaning that the ongoing relationship to the organization will provide exchanges of mutual benefit, and is seen as an integral part of the organization's network, which will offer employees the benefits that are parallel to what the conventional (product) brand offers consumers; functional benefits (such as developmental and useful activities), economic benefits (such as material or financial rewards), and psychological benefits (such as feelings, like belonging, direction and purpose) (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). This highlights employer branding as a way to recruit the right employees in order to ensure a delivery of the brand promise to the external stakeholders. Additionally, the value of the employer brand depends on the importance the employees are assigning to the benefits that the organization is able to deliver and differentiate from competitors (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).

3.1.2. Research Developments of the Concept

In the wake of globalization, organizations are increasingly encouraged to focus more on ethical and social responsibility, as well as contributing to a sustainable development, which means that organizations increasingly are integrating these matters as part of their branding as it has highly influential implications for the employer-employee relationship, meaning the relationship between the organization and its current and potential employees (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Carroll & Shabana, 2010). Consequently, organizations today are more depending on employee commitment to their brand, for example in order to 'live the brand', acting some kind of 'organizational ambassador' and attracting new employees, but they also expect higher employee commitment as a result of the 'moral brand', because ethical and social responsibility have become of higher interest to the employees (Morsing, 2006). Additionally, it is committing for the employees, as it is about selecting between 'good' or 'bad', which ties the employees' personal moral to the organization and make them identifying with their job (Gossett & Kilker, 2006). Hence, organizations have increasingly recognized that the strengthening of an employer-employee relationship, the organization's attractiveness to new employees, as well as the organization's future profitability are depending on the organization's own willingness and ability to recognize the employees and also potential employees as important stakeholders that can contribute to the corporate brand (Preuss, Haunschild, & Matten, 2009).

Therefore, Aggerholm et al. (2011) argue that the concept of employer branding has expanded from Ambler and Barrow's (1996) conceptualization of applying brand management to the human resource management (HRM) function, to a more dynamic approach that now include a wider range of strategic HRM and corporate social responsibility (CSR) aspects, as it needs to apply more stakeholder and relationship thinking (Aggerholm, Andersen, & Thomsen, 2011). This expansion of the concept supports the more pragmatic understanding of employer branding, with a more constructivist approach, as it is shifting from a more functionalistic reasoning towards the paradigmatic understanding where more social interactions as dialogue and co-creation are seen to be both produced and limited by discursive surroundings (Gibbs, 2007, p. 6-7). Aggerholm et al. (2011) argue that this wider understanding of employer branding manifests itself within areas such as for example; the work life balance, as it is no longer limited to the physical presence in the organization and the amount of work hours, but is rather seen as a resource to construction of individuals' identity; organizations

are no longer seen as static corporate entities, but are rather seen as dynamic and evolving co-constructions developed by all the organization's stakeholders; the employees that are no longer recognized as raw material, but are rather seen as a resource to meaning-making and corporate citizens; and communication that is no longer purely seen as a tool to solve problems, but is increasingly recognized as fundamental and sustainable to the organization in terms of interpretations of meaning among stakeholders and ongoing dialogical processes (Aggerholm et al., 2011).

The expansion and new evolved understanding of the concept of employer branding made Aggerholm et al. (2011) re-conceptualize employer branding as: *"Strategic branding processes which creates, negotiates and enacts sustainable relationships between an organization and its potential and existing employees under the influence of the varying corporate contexts with the purpose of co-creating sustainable values for the individual, the organization and society as a whole"* (Aggerholm et al., 2011, p. 113). Meaning that Aggerholm et al. (2001) have transformed and evolved the concept of employer branding to a more co-creative approach, including a sustainable and value-creating processes, with an increased focus on the stakeholder relationship (Aggerholm, Andersen, & Thomsen, 2011), which goes in line with the 'third wave' and the more holistic approach suggested by Hatch and Schultz (2009) (Hatch & Schultz, 2009, p. 249-280).

It is argued that there are three aspects of the sustainable part, which include economic (i.e. a required part), legal (i.e. a required part), and ethical (i.e. an expected part), and that fulfillment of these responsibilities at the same time will lead to a desired philanthropic position where the organization will be seen as 'the good corporate citizen' (Schwartz & Carroll, 2003). Hence, the integration of sustainability is not mandatory, but since it has become of increasing interest to all stakeholders, it pressures the norm and expectations of today's organizations, and by integrating sustainability it will create value not only to the organization but also to its stakeholders including its employees (Haugh & Talwar, 2010; Aggerholm et al., 2011). According to Aggerholm et al. (2011) the redefined concept of employer branding highlights three distinctive features (Aggerholm et al., 2011, p. 114-115):

- It is a strategic branding discipline, as it is anchored in and supporting the overall corporate strategy;

- It is a process of continuous co-creation of values with the organization's stakeholders dependent on their stakes and expectations; and
- It is an establishment of sustainable relations between the organization and its employees, revolved around a continuous reflection on their mutual needs and expectations.

Grounded in the notion of corporate branding and its integration of vision, culture and image (Hatch & Schultz, 2003), Aggerholm et al. (2011) argue that the employer branding processes will become a more holistic and integrated part of the organization, which will ensure a continuous attention towards the organizational departments and their primary stakeholders (Aggerholm et al., 2011). As linked to the overall organizational vision, mission and its strategic goals, which articulate expectations of the organization's stakeholders, and which is translated into the organization's corporate brand values, the employer branding processes will continuously be negotiated in stakeholder dialogues (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Morsing, 2006). By following this approach, the employer branding will no longer purely be a one-way tool for recruitment and retention of employees, it will also facilitate the strategic, communicative processes for supporting a sustainable development and an organizational value creation, by inviting its employees to partake in corporate branding and co-creating communicative processes (Edwards, 2010; Aggerholm et al., 2011). This also means that organizations today need to continuously address contextual challenges, as factors that might seem valuable in times of prosperity, such as for example higher salaries, might seem less important in times of a crisis, where for example job security will be more relevant. Furthermore, in a context that is characterized by prosperity, low unemployment, and increased competition for talented employees, one of the main reasons of an employer branding strategy will be to attract and retain highly qualified employees to the organization. In a short-term perspective, employer branding initiatives can be seen as a cost, but by seeing it in a long-term perspective, it can be an essential investment that builds stable reputations and mutually beneficial relationships with the employees (Kuchеров & Zamulin, 2016). Consequently, strategic employer branding in varying contexts emphasizes the importance of continuous stakeholder negotiation and co-construction of the employer brand (Edwards, 2010; Aggerholm et al., 2011), and thus indicate the importance of staying updated on the employees' values (Glazer, Daniel, & Short, 2004).

3.1.3. Employer Branding Value Propositions

This section will look further into how employer branding can be utilized as a strategic tool in the competition for and attraction of new potential employees, which can enhance the understanding of the concept's value to an organization, and later be related to if it can benefit in the competition for the newly graduates.

According to Sengupta et al. (2015) employer branding can be seen as a strategic tool that makes it possible for organizations to market their unique employment offerings or value propositions to both their current and potential employees (Sengupta, Bamel, & Singh, 2015). Closely related to the concept 'employer branding' is the notion of 'employer attractiveness'. In order to both retain the good employees and attract new talents, it is argued that an organization needs to establish their external perceived image and reputation as 'a great place to work' or as 'an employer of choice', by creating both convincing and distinctive employee value propositions (EVPs) (Jiang & Iles, 2011). Here it will be essential to distinguish between internal (i.e. current employees) and external (potential employees) employer branding, as it is argued to have two different perspectives, respectively the retention of current employees via internal employer branding (IEB) and the attraction of potential new talents via external employer branding (EEB) (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). This research will be focusing on external employer branding (EEB), as the aim is to understand how smaller Danish organizations can benefit from the concept of employer branding in order to participate in the global competition for newly graduates.

Borrowed from the field of marketing, the concept of value proposition is described, as the promise a seller makes, which by value-in-exchange is linked to value-in-use. Meaning, when a customer exchanges money with a seller, the customer implicitly assumes that the value-in-exchange will result in value-in-use that meets or exceeds the value-in-exchange (Lusch, Vargo, & O'Brien, 2007). Similarly, exchange-relationship exists between employer and employees as suggested by the theory of psychological contract (Millward & Brewerton, 1999). Additionally, it is argued that the psychological contract and its influence on the employee-employer relationship provides the concept of employer branding with another foundation, since; in the traditional notion of the psychological contract between the employee and the employer, the employee promised loyalty to the organization in exchange for job security; whereas the latest organizational trends regarding downsizing, outsourcing, and more

flexibility have imposed a new notion of the psychological contract, in which the employer now provide the employee with skills through training and development in exchange for work effort and flexibility (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

According to Glazer et al. (2004) the right value proposition are argued to attract the right talents to an organization, by matching employee values with organizational offerings (promises), which also might lead to greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Glazer et al., 2004). Consequently, the more the individuals can associate their values with the offered organizational values, the more attracted they will feel to the organization (Sengupta et al., 2015). Therefore, the employer brand is referring to an organization's reputation as an employer and the organization's value proposition to its employees (Barrow & Mosley, 2011). Over time the value proposition framework has been regarded interchangeably as factors of organizational- or employer attractiveness, and Berthon et al. (2005) have identified five factors of employer attractiveness; interest value, social value, economic value, and application value (Berthon, Ewing, & Lian Hah, 2005).

The first factor (1) 'Interest value', appraises the extent to which the individual is attracted to an organization that provides innovative work practices, have an exciting work environment, and makes use of the employee's creativity in order to produce innovative, high-quality products and services (Berthon et al., 2005). The second factor (2) 'Social value', appraises the extent to which the individual is attracted to an organization that offers a working environment that is both fun, cheerful, and provides good collegial relations, as well as a team spirit atmosphere (Berthon et al., 2005). The third factor (3) 'Economic value', appraises the extent to which the individual is attracted to an organization that offers promotional opportunities, job security, and an above-average salary compensation package (Berthon et al., 2005). The fourth factor (4) 'Development value', appraises the extent to which the individual is attracted to an organization that is able to provide recognition, confidence and self-esteem, along with career-enhancing experiences that can be used as a springboard to future employment (Berthon et al., 2005). The fifth and final factor (5) 'Application value', appraises the extent to which the individual is attracted to an organization that can offer its employees an opportunity to apply what they have learned as well as teaching others, in a humanitarian and customer oriented environment (Berthon et al., 2005). These five factors of Berthon et al. (2005) are primarily a modification and extension of the three dimensions, the functional, economic and psychological benefits, suggested by Ambler and Barrow (1996). Accordingly,

the first two factors, the 'Interest value' and 'Social value' respectively by Berthon et al. (2005), are capturing the 'psychological benefits' by Ambler and Barrow (1996). The fourth and fifth factors, the 'Development value' and 'Application value' respectively by Berthon et al. (2005), are expanding the 'functional benefits' by Ambler and Barrow (1996). Since both the conceptualizations have an economic dimension, Berthon et al. (2005) developed their third factor 'Economic value' (Berthon et al. 2005).

As the term implies, an organization will benefit from the employer branding processes when it is perceived as 'a great place to work' (Minchington, 2010). Today, employees get encouraged to commit themselves to an organization with goals that often are accomplished by healthy work communities, meaningful work tasks, inspiring encouragement and rewards, which make these factors essential in order to get the employees to 'live the brand' and thereby create a reputation in their everyday interactions along with a social influence on stakeholders (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). When contemplating whether a specific organization is 'a great place to work' or not, the five factors of Berthon et al. (2005) have been further researched and re-conceptualized, and it is now argued that employees usually consider seven employer branding value propositions (Berthon, Ewing, & Lian Hah, 2005), as showed in figure 1 (Dabirian, Kietzmann, & Diba, 2017).







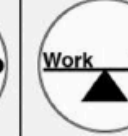
SEVEN EMPLOYER BRANDING VALUE PROPOSITIONS						
SOCIAL VALUE	INTEREST VALUE	APPLICATION VALUE	DEVELOPMENT VALUE	ECONOMIC VALUE	MANAGEMENT VALUE	WORK/LIFE BALANCE
						
Is this a fun place to work with talented people and a great organizational culture?	Is this an interesting place to work, with challenging but achievable goals?	Is the work meaningful and does it invite the application of knowledge and skills?	Are there opportunities for employees to grow and advance professionally?	Is work rewarded appropriately through salaries, benefits and perks?	Are managers good, honest leaders who inspire, trust, protect, enable and respect employees?	Are work arrangements flexible enough to achieve success on and off the job?

Figure 1: Seven Employer Branding Value Propositions (Dabirian, et. al., 2017).

These value propositions illustrate what people usually care about when it comes to evaluating different organizations as a workplace, and will be further elaborated in the following seven steps. The social value proposition (1) is highly emotional. In this value proposition

people do care about the achieved enjoyment from a positive work atmosphere; the friendly and fun colleagues, the people who share same values; the problem solving team spirit; and the organizational culture with a focus on its people. This value proposition is often seen as the proposition that attracts new people and makes them loyal employees (Dabirian, et. al., 2017). The interest value proposition (2) is about people who find it important to have a job where the work they do needs to be interesting. In order to have an interesting job today, the work needs to be based on a level where there is required novel work practice and an innovative mind, which are making the tasks challenging but still achievable (Dabirian, et. al., 2017). The application value proposition (3) is about people, who find it desirable and inspirational to put their know-how and skills into meaningful use. As an example, this could include teaching opportunities or the opportunity to provide benefits to customers (Dabirian, et. al., 2017). The development value proposition (4) is about the employees, who find it important that the employer is able to see and recognize the employees' efforts, which often gets favored by providing the employee with new opportunities, like professional development and further career advancement (Dabirian, et. al., 2017). The economic value proposition (5) is mostly about allowances and the employees' salaries. It does not only cover the specific payment but also benefits, like job security, healthcare and pension, which the employees find particularly important (Dabirian, et. al., 2017). The management value proposition (6) is about the organization's management and how it is affecting the employees to either leave or stay at the workplace, as the influence of an executive is enormous, and it is argued to have an effect on the employees' spare time, as it affects their relationship with both family and friends. Are this management value proposition not meeting the employees' expectations, it is often a main reason for employees to leave an organization (Dabirian, et. al., 2017). The work/life balance value proposition (7) is about people, who not only have a desire to identify with the organization they work for, but also have a desire to be identified as more than just an employee. It is argued that a proper work/life balance will allow the employees to have more harmonious lives, which will be more suitable to all their identities, such as for example to be a parent, friend or employee, as it will lead to less conflicts (Dabirian, et. al., 2017).

3.2. Attraction and Commitment

In order for today's organizations to attract potential employees, it is argued that organizations need to understand the work value preferences of the employees, which often are varying across time and culture (Sengupta, et al., 2015). Therefore, this section will examine the concept of work value preferences, as well as it will be looking deeper into the newly graduates as part of Generation Y, and determine their initial attraction and commitment to the labor market, as it will be helpful in order to understand their behavior and how to attract them towards smaller Danish organizations.

3.2.1. Work Value Preferences

Researchers have argued that work values are seen as a perception of employees' preferences (Dose, 1997), which influence their behavior, attitude and eventually their commitment to the work place according to their orientation, which can be seen as either intrinsic or extrinsic (Vansteenkiste, Neyrinck, Niemiec, Soenens, De Witte, & Van den Broeck, 2007). Based on the self-determination theory (SDT), which is seen as a solid theory of motivation that has been well used to investigate how a specific human behavior is induced (Deci E. L., 1972; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999), it is argued that individuals can be motivated to a specific behavior by both extrinsic (also called externally) induced incentives (i.e. controlled motivation) and intrinsic (also called internally) induced incentives (i.e. autonomous motivation) (Wang & Hou, 2015).

To be internally (i.e. intrinsically) motivated, it is argued that a person will perform an activity or behavior for no obvious reward except the specific activity or behavior itself, whereas the externally (i.e. extrinsically) motivation are referring to an activity or behavior that is performed because it is leading to an external reward (e.g. approval, or status) (Deci E. L., 1972). According to Deci (1972) there are two facets of an external reward; 1) the controlling part, and 2) the informative part. The controlling part is argued to make a decrease in the intrinsic motivation, meaning that a person will become less likely to perform an activity/behavior for no obvious reward, whereas the informative part is argued to make an increase in the intrinsic motivation, leading to an increase the individual's self-determination, which makes the informative part of an external reward more desirable (Deci E. L., 1972).

Additionally, Wang and Hou (2015) argue that behaviors encouraged by controlled motivation (i.e. external incentives) are considered to be of lower quality, if the receivers experience it as an attempt to control their behavior, and thus behaviors encouraged by autonomy-oriented motivation (i.e. internal incentives) are valued to be of higher quality (Wang & Hou, 2015). Furthermore, Wang and Hou (2015) argue that the autonomy-oriented motivation is referring to internal incentives where the individual behavior do not contribute to self needs and benefits, giving the individual a feeling of independence, which is often achieved when the individual perceive self-determination in selecting own objectives based on values of interests, curiosity, or care (Wang & Hou, 2015). Hence, Vansteenkiste et al. (2007) argue that intrinsic-oriented individuals are preferring values such as for example self-actualization, development and growth, harmonious relationships, and challenging tasks, whereas the extrinsic-oriented individuals are preferring values such as for example status, payment and facilities, power and a hierarchical position, along with rewards and motivations (Vansteenkiste et al., 2007).

According to Sullivan et al. (2001) younger generations are more concerned about fulfilling their individual values as they are looking for potential employers, while older generations have stronger ethical values and commitment (Sullivan, Sullivan, & Buffton, 2001), which is supported by Sengupta et al. (2015), who argue that there exists a generational impact on the job outcome as well as on the personal values of the individuals (Sengupta et al., 2015). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) argue that once potential employees have been attracted towards an organization, they will develop a set of assumptions about the employment in that specific organization, which they will take with them into the organization and thereby support the organization's values and enhance their own commitment to the organization, that is if these assumptions are met by the organization (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). According to Davies (2008), who explored the role of employer branding and how it is influencing the employees' perceived differentiation, loyalty, satisfaction and affinity to an organization, *"people associate with brands that allow them to sustain or develop their own self-image"* (Davies, 2008, p. 678). This goes in line with Collins's (2007) suggestion that job seekers view upon and opinions about an organization as a potential employer (i.e. the 'employer knowledge'), which include the familiarity and reputation of the organization, are strongly affecting the interest in applying for a job at a specific organization (Collins, 2007). Consequently, effective relationships between the employees and the organization will exist if the employer branding value

propositions are aligned with the employees' needs for work values, hence leading to talent attraction (and retention as well) (Sengupta et al., 2015). Therefore, it is indicated that organizations need to continuously develop their values, but in order to keep a linkage to the society, Sengupta et al. (2015) further argue that the organizations need to understand the employees' expectations and personal values, which then will influence the employees' attitudes and behaviors towards the organization, as the employees looking for jobs are highly aware of the values offered by the organization (Sengupta et al., 2015).

3.2.2. Generation Y – Millennials

It is suggested by Johnson (2002) that an individual's work values are influenced by the associated generation (Johnson, 2002), which in this case make it important to understand the generation of newly graduates, thus understanding Generation Y. Since this research is focusing on young talents, in form of newly graduates (i.e. university students who are either still studying or have finished their Master's degree within the last two years), they will be categorized and analyzed by the theory of Generation Y (also called Millennials). This is decided, as Generation Y is the latest generation entering the labour force, thus most newly graduates are considered to belong within this generation (Krahna & Galambosb, 2014; Queiri et al., 2014), and since this generation is estimated to count for more than half of the labour force within the next ten years, it is a particularly important generation (Tulgan, 2011; MacDermott & Ortiz, 2017).

According to Egri and Ralston (2004), a generation is defined by subcultures that reflect the prevailing values of a historical period, which is determined by cultural, economic, and political developments, and thereby affecting the individual's worldview (Egri & Ralston, 2004). Previously, several researches and definitions on Generation Y have been made, however this research follows the newer definition offered by Hewlett et al. (2009), where Generation Y is perceived to be born between 1979 and 1994 (Hewlett et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the researcher acknowledge the term 'Net Generation', introduced by Tapscott (1998), which is argued to exist of people born between 1977 and 1997, and perceived as technologically sophisticated people, who readily adapt new innovations into their daily environment (Tapscott, 1998). Additionally, Hansen (2013) define the 'Digital Generation', as the generation born from 1994, as it is the first generation that has been digital all life (Hansen, 2013, p.

6-27). Consequently, this thesis perceives the Millennials (i.e. Generation Y) as a digital savvy generation born between 1979 and 1994, thus aged between 24 years and 39 years at the moment of this study (Hewlett et al., 2009), which is consistent with the predominating age of the respondents of the survey with 82,3 percent of them being aged between 24 years and 31 years (see Appendix A.2.)

Millennials are argued to be most affected by awareness of the organization as an employer, the perceptions of how fellow students and friends perceive the organization's reputation and their opinions regarding aspects of the specific job, such as for example payment, development, and the interest in the work tasks itself (Jiang & Iles, 2011). This means that career opportunities, including challenging and meaningful tasks are crucial to the Millennials (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008), and that organizations need to foster the skill development of this generation in order to keep them satisfied (Özcelik, 2015). Hence it is argued that the applicant behavior of newly graduates is both influenced by the job attributes as well as the organizational characteristics (Jiang & Iles, 2011). In order to build relationships with the Millennials and encourage to loyalty, Napoli and Ewing (2000) suggest that organizations need to use the digital media, and attach their brands to the generation's values, which will require the organizations to obtain a thorough understanding of the Millennials psychographic characteristics (Napoli & Ewing, 2000).

Today's interactive media have provided the generation with tools to readily access information, which enable them to be critical thinkers and provide them with a sense of independence and autonomy (Tapscott, 1998). Thus the generation is perceived as intellectually expressive, innovative, assertive and self-reliant (Tapscott, 1998; Hansen, 2013). Furthermore, the Millennials' are perceived as collaborative individuals, who are less hierarchical and more unselfish, as well as honest in their communications (Crutsinger, et al., 2009), which make them more attracted to an organization with a mission and values that provide them with a meaning for the actual work (Queiri et al., 2014). They are primarily well-educated, creative, visual thinkers that emphasize fun and excitement, and who want instant gratification, which they are not shy to tell others about (Crutsinger, et al., 2009). Generally, they are seen to have an aggressive approach to payment, and high expectations of a balanced work/family life, while they at the same time are quick to rise up the corporate ladder, which make them less employer-loyal (Crutsinger, et al., 2009). Generally, they have high ambitions as well as expectations towards an enjoyable job with fairness and opportunities, which make

them confident and unafraid to move for the job and spread their knowledge (Kuchеров & Zamulin, 2016). Millennials are seen as globalists, as they know a lot about what is going on in the world, and they actually seem to care about it (Kuchеров & Zamulin, 2016).

According to Johnson and Mortimer (2011) Millennials' career choices and outcomes are shaped by their work values and the perceived importance of the specific job characteristics (Johnson & Mortimer, 2011), but these work values are claimed to change considerably as the Millennials complete educations (Johnson & Elder JR., 2002) and experience the labour market (Johnson & Monserud, 2010), which according to Jin and Rounds (2012) will induce them to take on new 'roles' (Jin & Rounds, 2012). According to Johnson & Mortimer (2011), this means that the intrinsic and extrinsic work values, such as the preferences for interesting work or for rewards like payment, can have different origins and outcomes (Johnson & Mortimer, 2011). An emphasis on the extrinsic work values (i.e. externally induced motivation) can be explained by the individualistic and more narcissistic features developed by Millennials, which can be expressed in the eligibility at the workplace with connection between performance and rewards (Queiri et al., 2014). However, Hajdu and Sik (2018) suggest that the probability of choosing an interesting job with a good payment solution and good working hours as the important factors decreases with age; the job security is perceived as equally important in all ages; whereas the probability of choosing a useful job as the important factor will increase with age (Hajdu & Sik, 2018). Consequently, it is argued that the individualistic and more narcissistic work values will become less important, and the more holistic and altruistic work values will become more important with age (Hajdu & Sik, 2018).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4. Findings

This section will present and analyze the findings of the collected empirical data for this research. To ensure answers to the propounded RQs, the analysis has been divided into three overall sections, containing relevant subparts in order to focus on today's newly graduates' work value preferences and the influence of graduate programs, the smaller Danish organizations' handling of the intensified global competition for new talents, and how these organizations can benefit from using the concept of employer branding.

4.1. Who are the Newly Graduates and what's in their Telescope?

The first part of this analysis focuses more generally on the newly graduates' work value preferences, and will further contain a subsection focusing on the influence of a graduate program in relation to the newly graduates' work value preferences.

As previously mentioned, the respondents of the survey are primarily consisting of North European, females in the age of 24 to 31 years, with a predominating educational background in Humanities, followed by educational backgrounds in Social Sciences, Business, and Engineering and Natural Science. Common to almost all respondents, by 97,6 percent is that they chose their specific Master's degree based on an interest in the chosen field, however for nearly 5 percent it did have an influence whether you were well paid after graduating.

When asking the newly graduates about 4 specific factors and how important they are in relation to a future work place, they were all rated in the higher end of importance. When asking about the importance of an organization working within an industry of the newly graduates' interest and offering them innovative work practices, around 90 percent of the respondents find this of interest, which is shown in figure 2. However, by taking a closer look it is illustrated that around 5 percent of the newly graduates find it unimportant, of whom mostly respondents are 28+ years. Additionally, two respondents state in the free textbox, *"It means a lot to me to work in an exciting industry"* and *"There is high unemployment among biologists, so I do not feel that I can be too picky about the workplace I'm going to work for. The most important thing for me is that I'm going to work in an area I'm interested in"* (see Appendix A.2.). Another respondent states, *"It is preferable that the work I do or the company values are in some way aligned with my own personal values or aspirations. The job needs to be meaningful"*

(see Appendix A.2.), indicating that the 'right' organization is of high importance to the newly graduates.

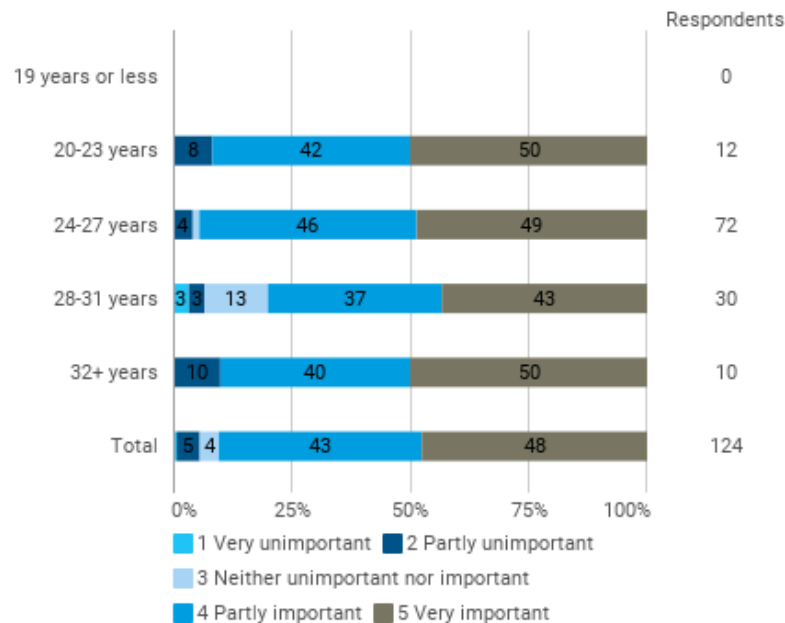


Figure 2: Importance of an organization offering an industry of interest.

When asking about the importance of an organization offering social settings, such as fun working environment or good collegial relations, around 87 percent of the respondents find this of interest, as illustrated in figure 3. Again, by a taking closer look it is illustrated that around 3 percent of the older newly graduates find it unimportant, as most of these are 32+ years, and most of these come with an educational background in business.

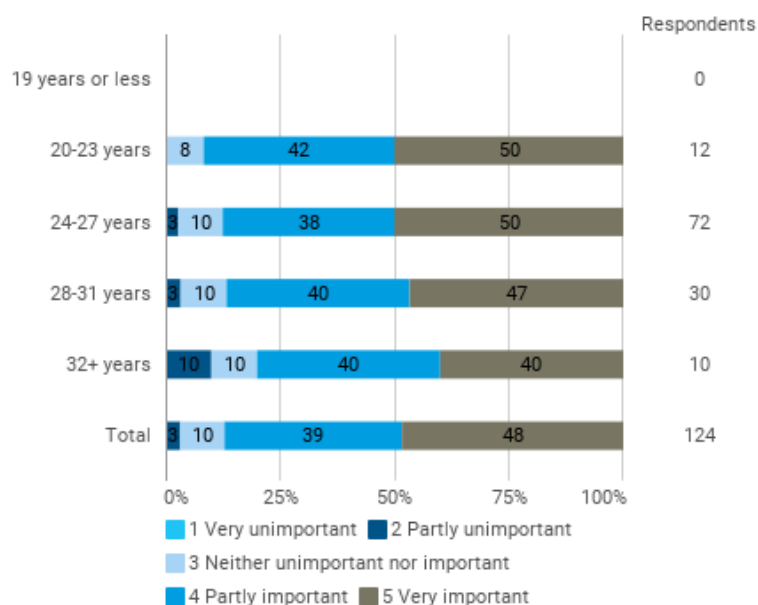


Figure 3: Importance of an organization offering social settings.

When asking about the importance of an organization offering economic value in terms of job security, promotional opportunities, and above average salary, the newly graduates are more separated in their answers as illustrated in figure 4, with around 69 percent of the respondents finding it important, while 23 percent of the respondents are being indifferent on the importance. However, only 7 percent of the respondents indicate that this factor is unimportant, of whom mostly come with an educational background in Business, which can seem kind of odd, hence it is evaluated that it do have some influence on the newly graduates but it might be a factor that is seen poorly upon as it characterizes the person with a specific image.

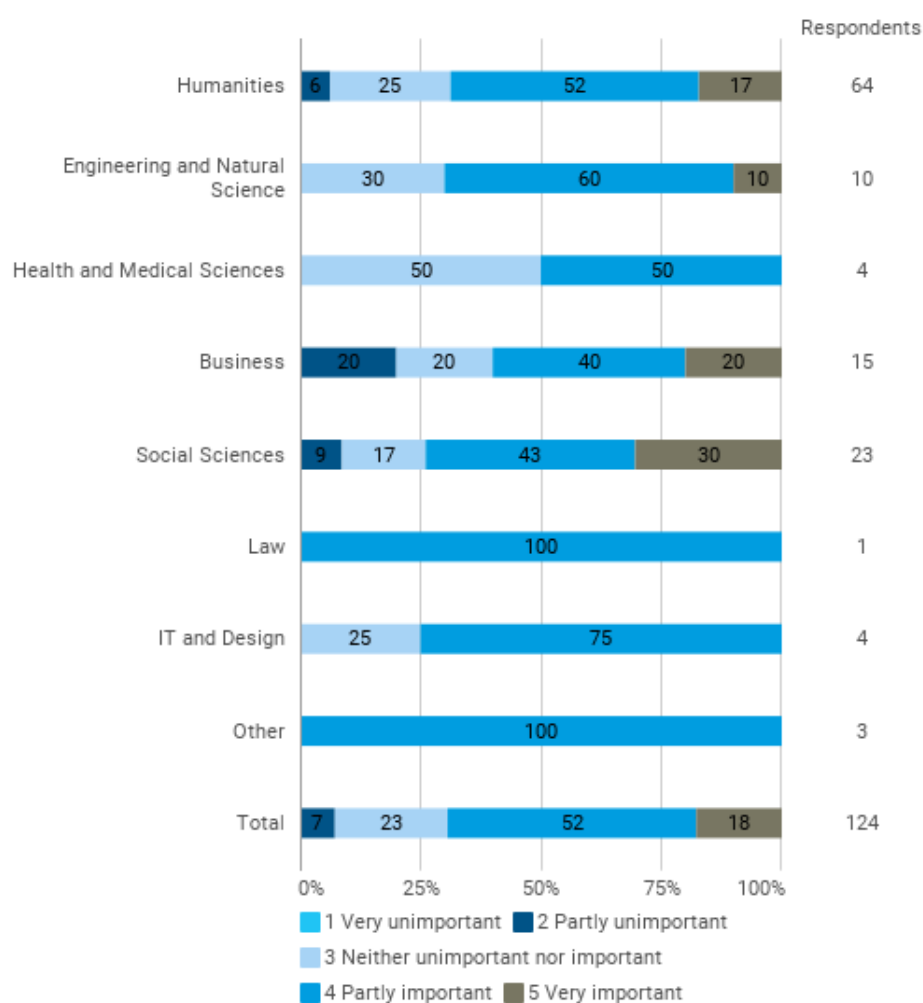


Figure 4: Importance of an organization offering economic value.

When asking about the importance of an organization offering training and development, providing the newly graduates with more confidence and enhance their experience, which can be used as a springboard to future job positions, around 86 percent of the respond-

ents find this of interest, as shown in figure 5. Though, there are a partial number, with nearly 13 percent of respondents feeling unsure about the importance of this factor, or even find it partly unimportant, of whom most respondents are females being 32+ years.

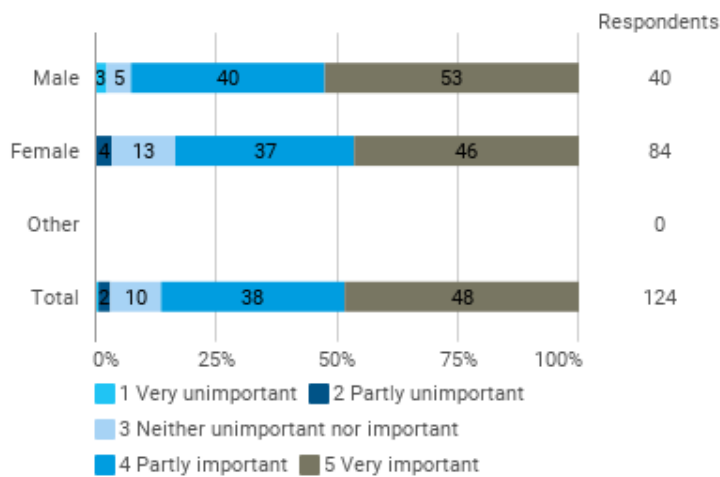


Figure 5: Importance of an organization offering training and development.

Nevertheless, when asking the newly graduates on more direct, single, isolated values, and how important they are, there seem to be a little more diversity in the answers. The values evaluated of most importance to the newly graduates, are the ones rated as 'very important' and 'partly important' by most respondents, which is illustrated in figure 6 and shows that 'Development', 'Challenging tasks', 'Responsibility of own tasks' and 'Social work environment' are the values evaluated as most important values, of those presented in this research, when related to newly graduates.

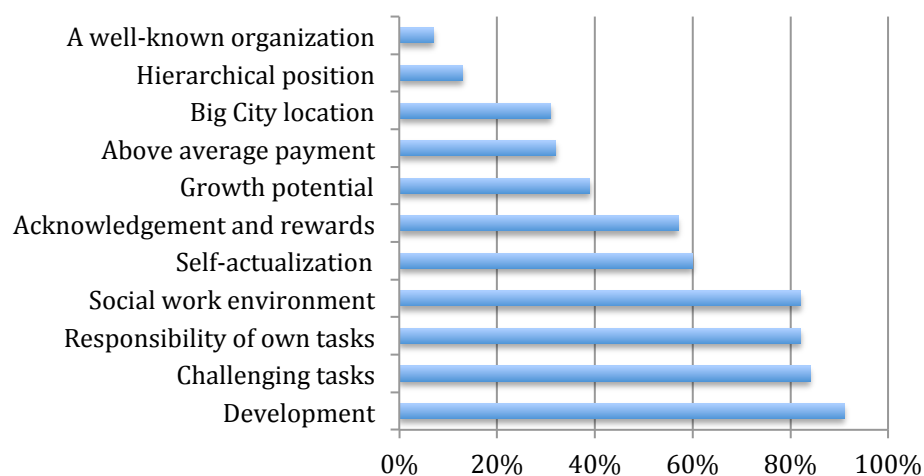


Figure 6: Values of most importance to newly graduates.

On the contrary the four values of less importance to the newly graduated, the ones rated as 'very unimportant' and 'partly unimportant' by most respondents, are illustrated in figure 7 and shows that 'A well-known organization', 'Hierarchical position', 'Big City location' and 'Growth potential', are evaluated as the least important values, of those presented in this research, when related to newly graduates. However, it is evaluated that the communication to potential employees and the awareness of an organization are of importance to the newly graduates, as it impacts the newly graduates job preferences to some extent, which is illustrated in figure 10 later in this section. Therefore, the value 'A well-know organization' should not be seen as completely unimportant.

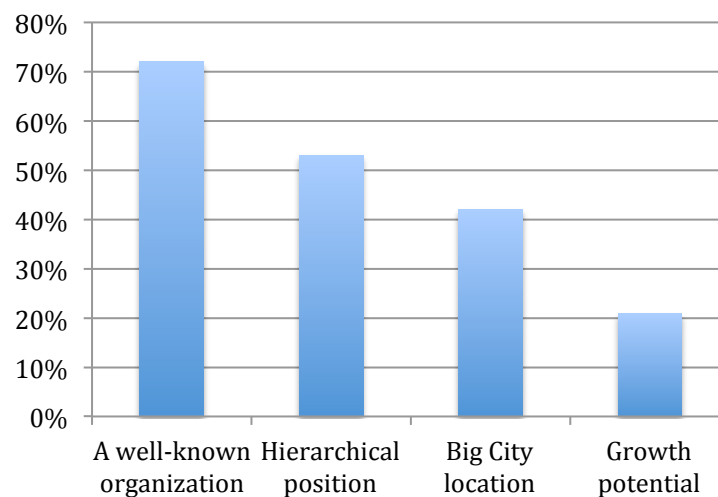


Figure 7: Values of least importance to newly graduates.

Additionally, the 4 values that are most rated as 'Neither unimportant nor important', include the values: 'Above average payment', 'Company growth potential', 'Hierarchical position', and 'Self-actualization', which are illustrated in figure 8, indicating that either these values actually are indifferent to the newly graduates, or it is possible that the respondents did not understand what was meant by the specific values. However, the value related to payment might indicate that newly graduates actually find this value of less importance, since this question received a higher percentage of 'Neither unimportant nor important' than the first question related to payment. Nevertheless, as one respondent state in the free textbox, "*I would only take these graduate positions if the salary would be as high as my normal position*"

(see Appendix A.2.), indicating that the payment still do have some influence on the newly graduates' job preferences.

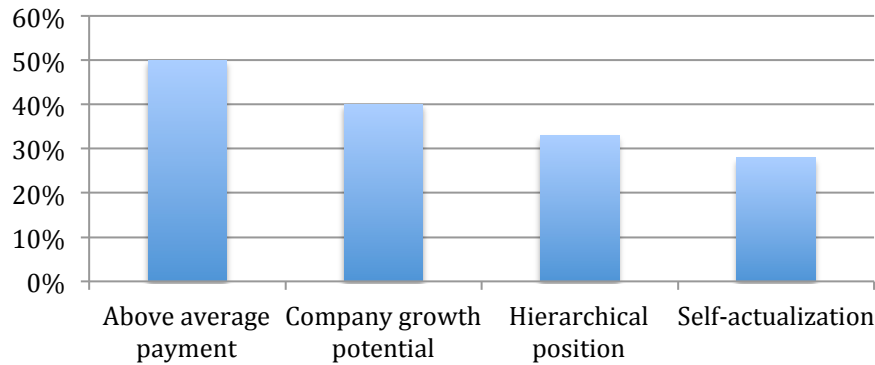


Figure 8: Values indifferent to newly graduates.

When asking the respondents what size of organization that is most preferable to them, the answers vary, as illustrated in figure 9 nearly 6 percent say that the larger organizations are most preferable, of whom most respondents are 32+ years of age. Around 21 percent say that the medium-sized organizations are most preferable, while around 19 percent say it is the smaller organizations that are most preferable, and whole 53 percent of the respondents said that it does not matter with the size of the organization.

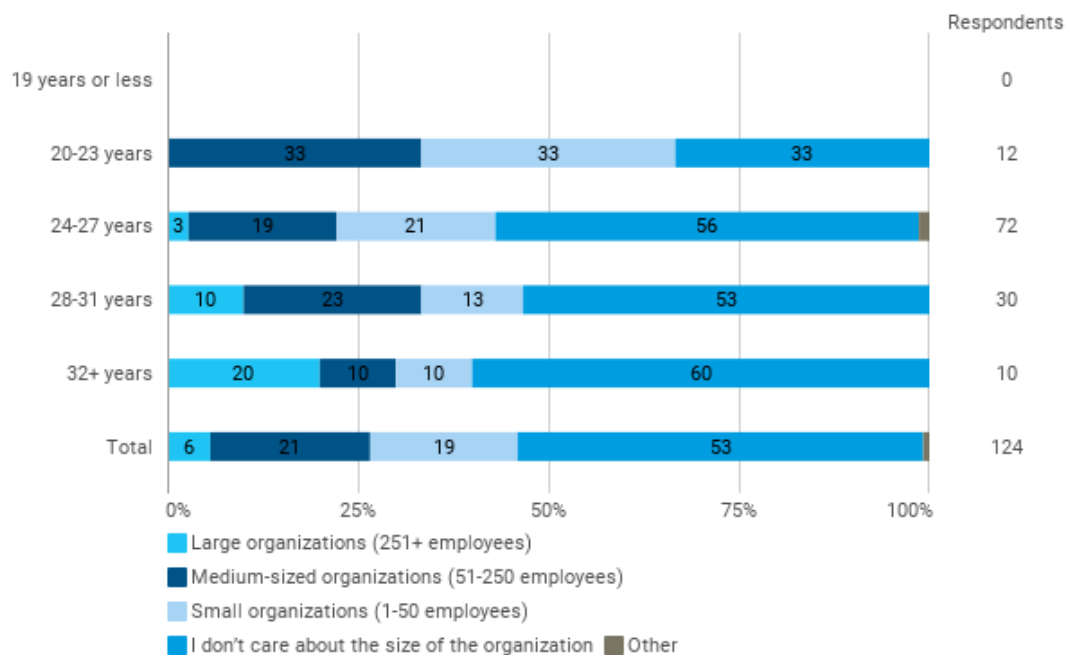


Figure 9: Most preferable size of organization by age.

Additionally, the newly graduates were asked how an organizations ability to promote it, affects their job preferences. Here most of the respondent's answers are centered to 'Neither low nor high degree' with 45 percent, and nearly 26 percent of the respondent's answer that it affects their job preferences to a lower degree. However 29 percent, of whom are mostly aged between 24-31 years, do feel that the organizations' ability to promote themselves are affecting their job preferences to a higher degree, as shown in figure 10, which indicate that the communication to potential employees, in this case newly graduates, and the awareness of an organization are of importance.

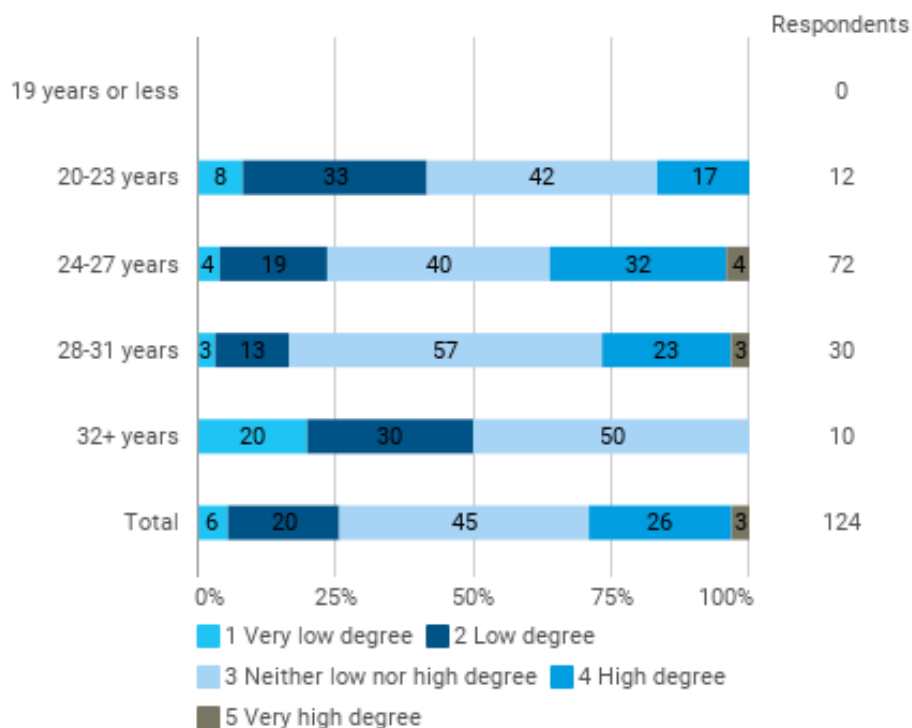


Figure 10: Job preferences affected by awareness.

Therefore, generally when looking at what work value preferences the newly graduates have and whether they are affected by the size or image of an organization, it can be said that the most important values to newly graduates, according to this case, are 'Development', 'Challenging tasks', 'Responsibility of own tasks' and 'Social work environment', whereas the values of less importance, and thereby values that should not be paid as much attention to by the organizations, are 'Hierarchical position', 'Big City location' and 'Growth potential'. According to these finding, most newly graduates do not really care about the size of the organization, however 19 percent of them do find smaller organizations, like the ones in this thesis of high-

er preference. Lastly, when it comes to how an organizations ability to promote it affects the newly graduates job preferences, most of the newly graduates in this research state that it does not really have an influence on their job preferences. However, 29 percent still think that their job preferences are influenced to a higher degree by the organizations' awareness. Additionally, as one respondent stated in the free textbox, *"How do small companies show themselves and the job positions they have available. I have primarily found job suggestions through jobnet.dk as an example"* (see Appendix A.2.), indicating that the newly graduates are looking for the smaller organizations, however since they are not aware of who they are, the newly graduates do not know where to look for them other than via online jobsites. Hence, it became clear that the newly graduates were mostly getting aware of new job positions via the internet in terms of for example online jobsites, which makes the internet a central part of the attraction of newly graduates.

4.1.1. The Influence of Graduate Programs

Based on the survey it became clear that most newly graduates, by 92 percent of the respondents in this research, were aware of graduate programs, however, nearly 47 percent of those respondents were not completely sure about what it actually is, and about 8 percent of the newly graduates in this research have never heard of the concept before now, as shown in figure 11. Those 45 percent of the respondents, of whom the concept is well known, are primarily belonging to the age group between 24 and 31 years and predominated by following three educational backgrounds: Business, IT & Design, and Engineering and Natural Science. Those who have never heard of the concept of graduate programs before, are primarily belong to the age group 32+ years and do mostly come with an educational background in Health and Medical Sciences.

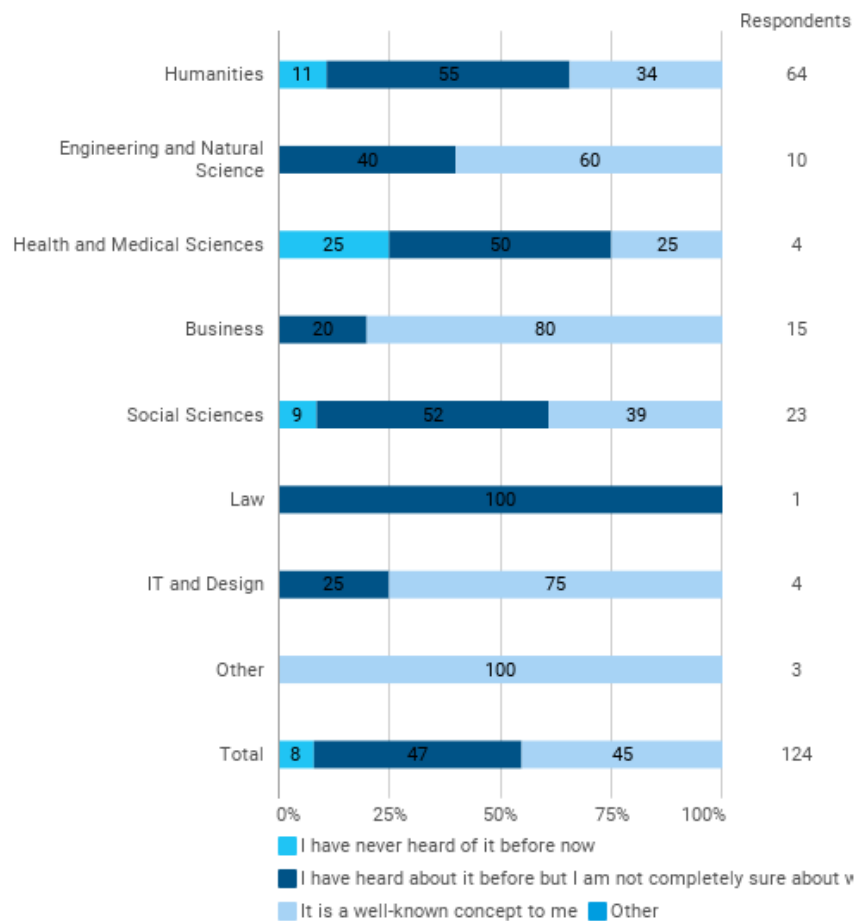


Figure 11: Awareness of Graduate Programs.

The respondents were given this short description of what graduate programs are; “A new way in which companies today try to attract new graduates, is by offering graduate programs, which is a kind of trainee position with a mentor system for graduates who have completed a Master’s degree. It is defined as a tailored 1 to 4-years career development program within an organization that gives up to 4 different department rotations (often abroad) for newly graduates, who have finished their Master’s degree within the last two years prior to application” (see Appendix A.1.), in order for all of them to understand the concept and be able to answer the questions of how attractive they find eight specific elements of such programs.

So, when asking the newly graduates about the attractiveness of these eight elements: 1) not much work experience is needed; 2) rotating in the company and try out different tasks/departments; 3) getting a support system by having a mentor; 4) possibilities to go abroad; 5) most commonly offered in larger and well-known companies; 6) chances for a permanent position afterwards; 7) most commonly a competitive field; and 8) looks good to

have on the resume, the elements evaluated to be the three most attractive, was as illustrated in figure 12: chances for a permanent position afterwards, getting a support system by having a mentor, and rotating in the company and try out different tasks/departments.

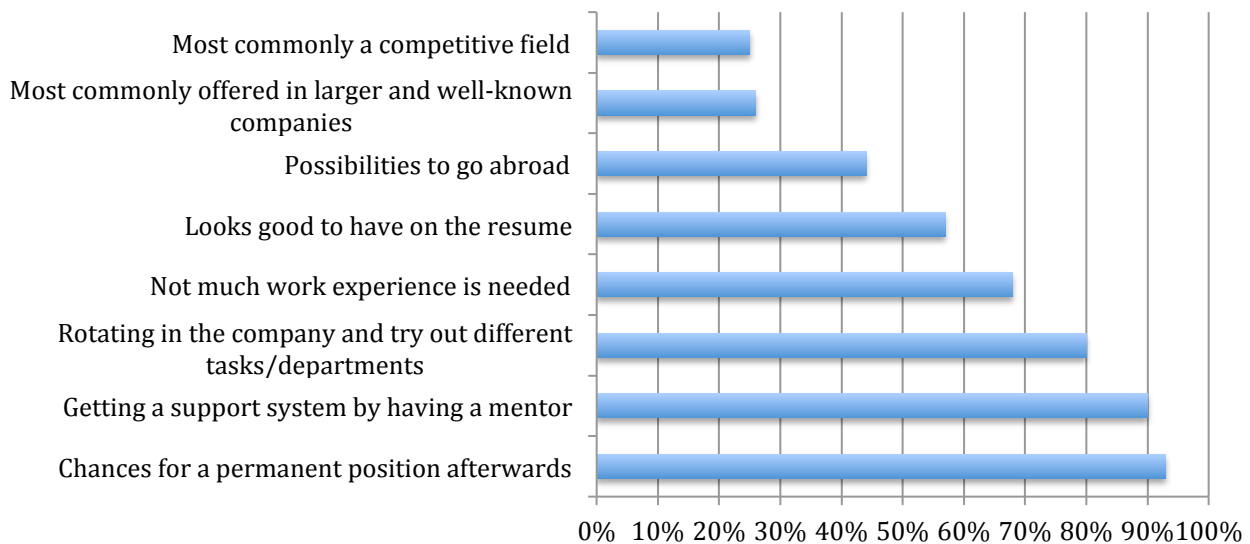


Figure 12: Most Attractive Elements of Graduate Programs.

This illustrates that the newly graduates in this case, are most attracted to the element that a graduate program enhances their chances of a permanent position in an organization after finishing a potential program, as 93 percent of all the respondents in this research find this element attractive. Furthermore, it indicates that newly graduates are highly focused on their possibilities for permanent positions. The second most attractive element of a graduate program that newly graduates of this research find attractive, by 90 percent of the respondents is that a graduate program provides a support system by having a mentor. This indicates that the newly graduates are valuing the support and guidance of having a mentor. The third most attractive element that the newly graduates find attractive, by 80 percent of the respondents, is the rotation within an organization, which allow them to try for different departments and tasks. Thus, it can be said that newly graduates are highly attracted to training and development, which also was evaluated to be the value of most importance to the newly graduates as illustrated previously in figure 6.

Additionally, three elements of a graduate program that has been most often rated as 'Very unattractive' and 'Partly unattractive', include the elements: Most commonly a competi-

tive field, Possibilities to go abroad, and Most commonly offered in larger and well known companies, as shown in figure 13.

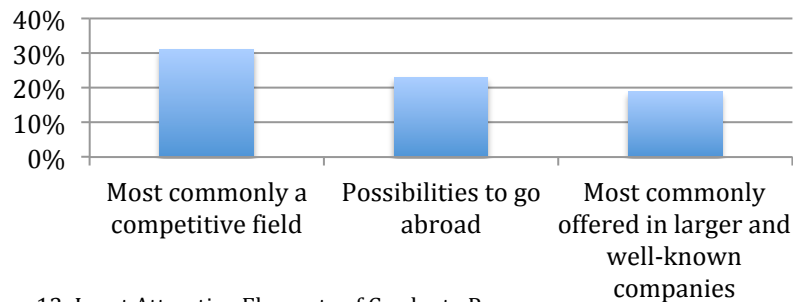


Figure 13: Least Attractive Elements of Graduate Programs.

This illustrates, not surprisingly, that the newly graduates, by around 31 percent, evaluate the highly competitive field of applicants applying for graduate programs as the least attractive element of a graduate program, indicating that most newly graduates of this research do not find such competitive environment attractive. As one respondent states in the free textbox, *"In this period there are not so many graduate programs"* (see Appendix A.2.), indicating that by not having enough graduate programs offered it leads to strong competition. However, as illustrated in figure 14 around 20 percent of the respondents, who have an educational background in Engineering and Natural Science find this competitive environment very attractive.

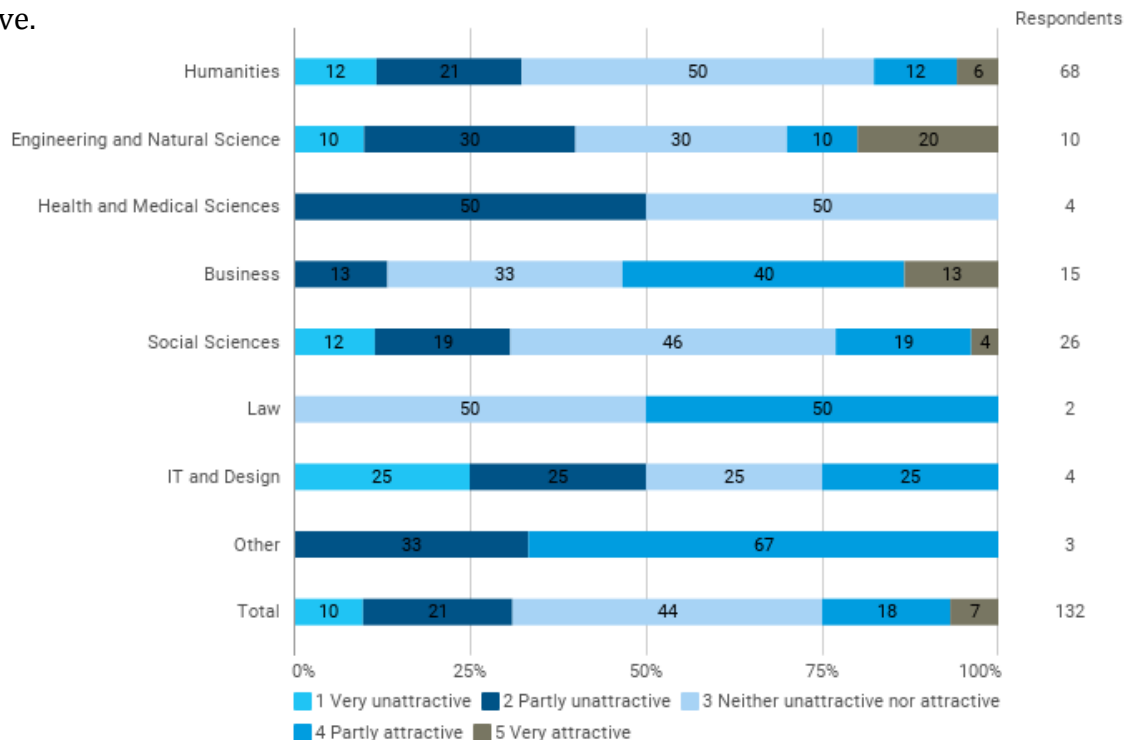


Figure 14: Attractiveness of the competitive field element of a graduate program.

The second least attractive element of a graduate program that newly graduates evaluated by 23 percent is the element of the possibilities of going abroad, which as illustrated in figure 15 indicates that the attractiveness for newly graduates of going abroad decreases with age. As one respondent states, *"I don't know much about the programs. But if they were possible to do while staying home, it would be very attractive. With a family it is not an option to travel"* (see Appendix A.2.). Thus, the older the newly graduates get, the less attractive it is for them to go abroad.

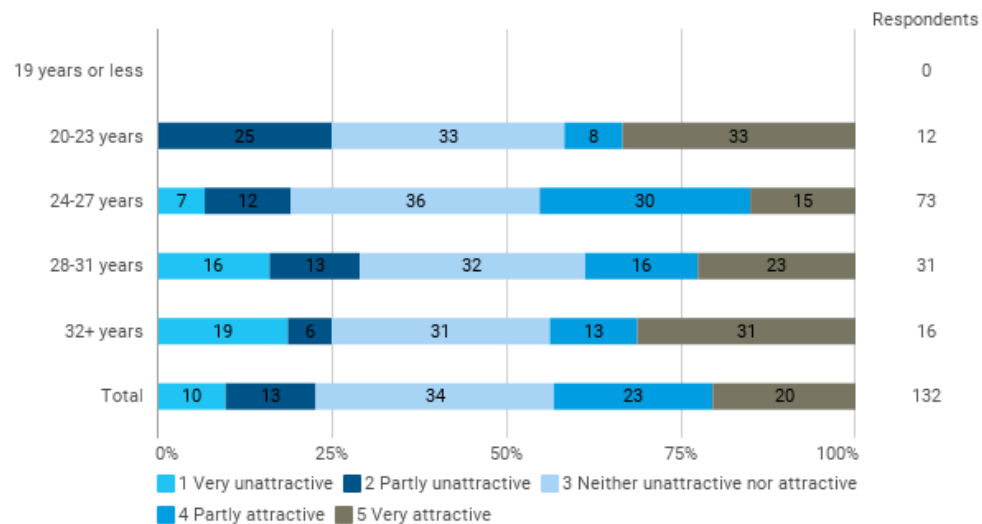


Figure 15: Attractiveness of the going abroad element of a graduate program.

The third least attractive element of a graduate program is the element that graduate programs most commonly are offered by larger and well-known organizations, with 19 percent of the respondents finding this element unattractive. However, as illustrated in the figure 16, most respondents center on an agreement of this element being more or less unimportant.

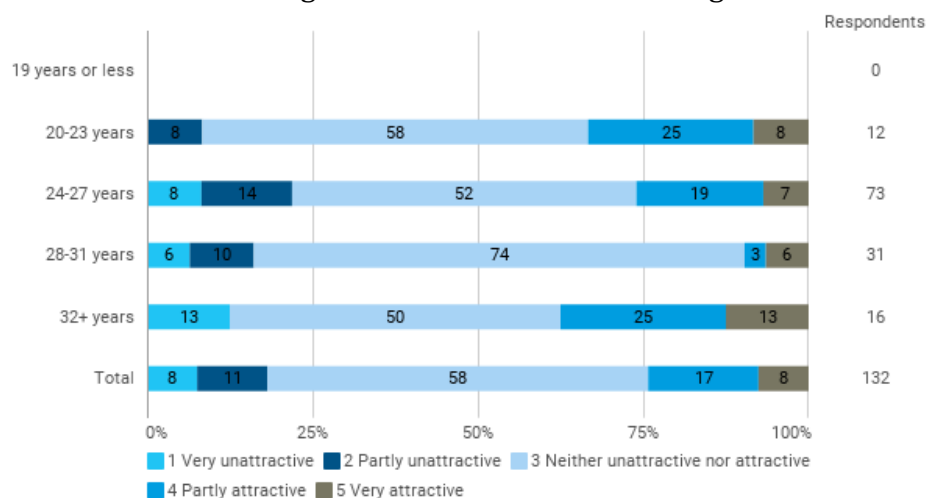


Figure 16: Attractiveness of the larger companies element of a graduate program.

Consequently, as illustrated in figure 17 when asking the newly graduates if they would be interested in applying for such position in a graduate program, most of the respondents, by nearly 77 percent answer that they would be interested, while around 12 percent of the respondents would be uninterested, and around 11 percent have not made up their mind, thus answering 'neither uninterested nor interested'.

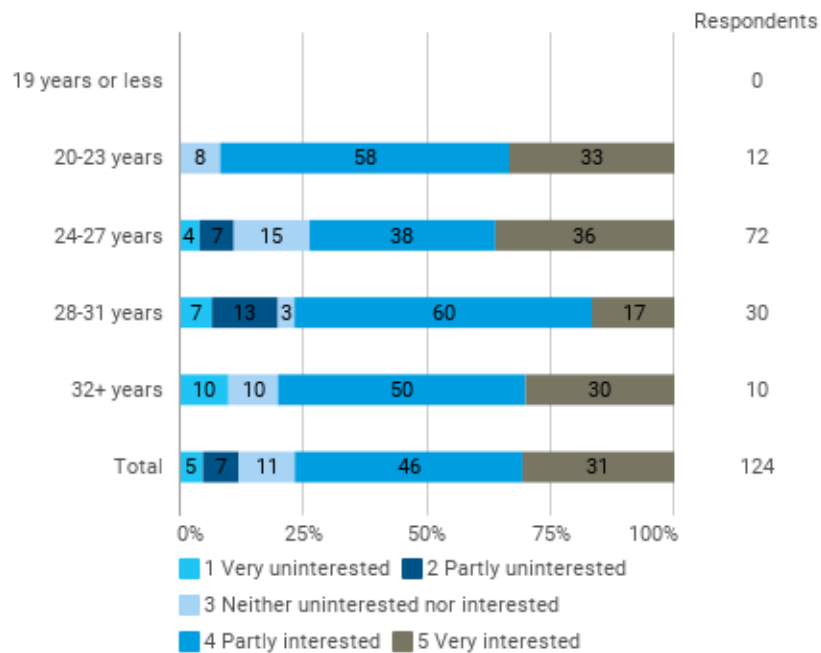


Figure 17: Interest in applying for a Graduate Program.

Since such a large number of the respondents find these graduate programs of interest, it indicates that the perceived value of the elements: chances for a permanent position afterwards, getting a support system by having a mentor, and rotating in the company and try out different tasks/departments, are of high importance to the newly graduates, and count for more than the value of the unattractiveness of the least attractive elements, such as: most commonly a competitive field, possibilities to go abroad, and most commonly offered in larger and well known companies. Furthermore, two respondents state in the free textbox, "Graduate programs are very uncommon in my academic field (psychology), although I do think that they are a good idea" and "Graduate programs and positions should not only be offered by large companies. I'm sure smaller businesses could arrange their own graduate programs without having large budgets or whatever it seems to take. It's a great opportunity for companies, large or small, to really shape and train their employees to fit their business and needs" (see Appendix

A.2.), advocating the element of training and development is highly attractive, not only to all the newly graduates but also for the organizations, large or small. However, the large number of respondents finding these programs of interest might also indicate that a lot of newly graduates just want to 'get out there' and get started on their career path, as another respondent states, *"I am ambivalent with graduate programs - I just want to enter the labor market and work hard to toil myself forward, not into a new half-education course"* (see Appendix A.2.).

Consequently, one respondent states in the free textbox, *"I don't think graduates are unemployed because they don't want the jobs available. We've just been through a long period of high unemployment, and the companies have had their choice of the litter, because so many well or over qualified people have been out of work. Now that the times have changed, and less people are out of work, it seems that the companies haven't really followed the times. They still think they can find the same over qualified candidates and so they won't settle for anything less. In my area of work it's nearly impossible to find any job opening that doesn't DEMAND 3+ years of experience. THAT is why graduates can't find work. Companies are arrogant and don't think they should be the ones paying back society by opening up for "lesser" qualified candidates. Graduates are awesome and companies should give us a chance to get started. I've gotten tired of the demands after two years and two jobs where they thought I'd be much better and much faster at everything, not giving me a chance to adjust and learn (got fired both times after 2-3 months). In short; more companies should hire graduates and give them the support and time they need to get started"* (see Appendix A.2.). Another respondent states, *"I wish my University (Aarhus) took more interest in our job possibilities"* (see Appendix A.2.). These statements highly indicate that the newly graduates are having a hard time when it comes to job search, and almost sound desperate in order to get a job, which might leave them with falling demands and work value preferences for a future employer.

4.2. Organizational Focus of Smaller Danish Organizations

This second part of the analysis will have its focus on the smaller Danish organizations' handling of the competition for new talent by looking at their attitudes and expectations towards new employees.

Based on the two conducted interviews, it became clear that even though the two organizations were thought to be different, in terms of one organization being an old family owned organization (Bangs A/S) that was imagined to be more traditional and old fashioned, and another organization (Konsolidator A/S) being a newly established tech organization that was imagined to be more bold and innovative, they were surprisingly not that different from one another. Both organizations have between five and eight employees and consist of a team predominated by people with a Master's degree behind them, as they state, *"My big brother is a candidate, I am a candidate my father is a candidate, [anonymized] is a candidate, [...] [anonymized] who is our export manager he also has a candidate"* (see Appendix C.1. line 61-65) and *"[...] so it's cand.merc.aud's as accountants and I'm a cand.polit. and comes from the University of Copenhagen"* (see Appendix C.2. line. 22-23). However, the background of the two organizations' employees varies a bit, since Bangs A/S is a family owned business and the majority of the employees are family members, as illustrated in the first statement, whereas the majority of employees in Konsolidator A/S consist of only highly experienced employees and additionally student workers, as stated *"[...] fully fledged, some are with many years of professional experience, where the youngest is in the early 40's. So it's all some with at least 20 years of experience"* (see Appendix C.2. line 9-11). Furthermore, the two organizations vary from each other as Bangs A/S has plenty of years behind it and Konsolidator A/S is a newly establish organization.

A general thing both organizations have in common though, is that they are highly focused on the customer perspective, in terms of getting more customers, which can be illustrated in these statements, *"[...] we spend a lot of money on it, but we do not do that because we want to attract new employees, because we want to attract new consumers"* (see Appendix C.1. line 231-234) and *"[...] we would very much like to have a very high brand recognition within our target group [...]"* (see Appendix C.2. line 264-265). More specifically, Bangs A/S has been focusing a lot on reorganizing the company's structure, including resource savings and outsourcing of for example sales staff (see Appendix C.1. line 3-4 and 14). While Konsolidator A/S has started to look at global expansion plans (see Appendix C.2. line 296). Therefore it can be evaluated that both organizations pay more attention to their customers, than to the attraction of new potential employees.

4.2.1. Hiring Newly Graduates – Are they sugar-coating it?

When it comes to the newly graduates, both organizations in this research talk well about these new talents, who are perceived to be a 'breath of fresh air' and generally seen to be innovative, open-minded and eager to get started on their career. This is expressed by the CEO of Bangs A/S in following two statements, "[...] *often newly educated are very hooked to get out and work and try it because they have been in school for so long and it's like [...] they have been waiting for the moment when they can enter the labor market*" (see Appendix C.1. line 84-87) and "*It's a big redemption for them. So they would very much like to learn, they are very open and they are not so afraid of new tasks and something like that. So, they have the antennas out and that's really positive*" (see Appendix C.1. line 89-91). When asking the CEO of Konsolidator A/S, he express it as following, "*I like working with young people. Definitely. I like the young people; they come with another one can say 'freshness', as they have fewer barriers. They come a lot more with 'that's how I've always done, that's how it's like being young', so there's another energy and another way of see things*" (see Appendix C.2. line 76-79). The CEO of Konsolidator A/S further explain that the newly graduates are technologically savvy compared to the older generations like him self, as he say, "[...] *we aren't better ourselves*" (see Appendix C.2. line 136-137) and, "*If you are a bit older like me, you simply have to recognize that there are much we do not know and then you simply have to 'walk out on the thin ice' and try some things, and see what the hell is happening*" (see Appendix C.2. line 142-144). Subsequently, the CEO of Konsolidator A/S continues by explaining how they give their student workers a lot of responsibility by giving them more or less free rein to do what they think is best for the organization, as there are no one else in the organization with experience within their field of study, to which he states, "*When a student comes and says, 'I think we should do this'. Firstly, I have no argument, not to do that*" (see Appendix C.2. line 129-130) and "*They do not even have to argue their case. They just have to come up with an idea and they will try it out*" (see Appendix C.2. line 133-134). Consequently, he argues, "even if it turned out not to be a good idea, then we have learned from it, you can say" (see Appendix C.2. line 136-137).

Another thing to point out about the smaller organizations' view on newly graduates, is the potential of 'shaping' these new talents to fit into the organization and also that these newly graduates are seen to be less expensive in salary compared to 'normal', more experienced employees. This can be seen as the CEO of Bangs A/S states the following, "One who is experienced, has his routines and that means that you cannot shape him the same way you

can with a new graduate" (see Appendix C.1. line 91-92) and *"I think the interesting thing about newly graduates is, firstly, they are cheaper. It's a big factor for a small company like us [...]. So it is a major factor that one should not override. And that you can shape them, that sounds so brutal, but [...] they do not come with any preconceptions about how things are to be done. [...] you can tell them what fits in your way, or the structure that already exists in the company. They adapt more than people who may have been in the industry for a long time"* (see Appendix C.1. line 142-148). Alternatively, the hiring of newly graduates can also lead to, as the CEO of Konsolidator A/S explains, diversity at the workplace where the majority of employees are middle-aged. Hence, he argues, *"There is no doubt that the next we will employ will be younger, if they want to be with us. It's always hard to get the first younger, because we're all over 40, they need to agree with that. [...] we want the young people, in order to get this wide [...] and this diversity"* (see Appendix C.2. line 80-91).

Even though the two organizations talk so well about the newly graduates, one theme seem to remain crucial, namely the level of experience of the newly graduates, and thus the elements of the newly graduates being resource- and time-consuming in terms of training. The CEO of Bangs A/S argues that those who have finished a Master's degree might be more in control and thereby *"dare to try a little. So, they are independent enough"* (see Appendix 178-179). However, regarding students and trainees, he also states, *"It is a lot more time consuming yes. They are not so self-propelled, right? The younger they are, the more you need to be over them, the more they come with questions, they don't dare so much"* (see Appendix C.1. 176-178). Hence, it makes it difficult to get a clear picture of what Bangs A/S actually mean when talking about hiring newly graduates, however, when asking who they hire the most, experienced employees or newly graduates, the answer is clear, and the CEO says, *"If we are to look back in our case, we have been going more after people with experience"* (see Appendix C.1. line 126). The CEO further argues that the reason for this is because they are a small organization and do not have the resources, as he states, *"we are a small company so we have a lot under the wings, the people have, they have many tasks under the wings, and therefore it is important that you can land continuously, and that we do not have the resources for someone to look over your neck"* (see Appendix C.1. line 128-131).

This 'thing' with experience and resources seems to recur several times in the interviews with both organizations. When talking with the CEO of Konsolidator A/S, he explains the importance of resources related to hiring newly graduates as following; *"For smaller com-*

panies, training positions [i.e. trainee or graduate positions] do not work because you get assigned a very large responsibility. There are none of us, who have the time or the ability to be a mentor for a trainee, or to serve, so if you want something like that then you need to work in a big company. So, in small businesses you get out and then you might get a quarter's introduction, and then you just get started" (see Appendix C.2. line 156-160). Hence, there seem to be some kind of 'agreement' among the smaller Danish organizations on this matter, and that newly graduates rather should be employed by larger organizations. Likewise the CEO of Bangs A/S states the following, *"we just don't have the resources and the structure to support it. It needs to be a somewhat larger company"* (see Appendix C.1. line 165-166). In this relation, the CEO of Konsolidator A/S advocates that newly graduates should start their career in a larger organization, as he states, *"I mean, and that's what I say to our students as well. The perfect career path, whether you want the big or the small, that is, start in a big company. It's hard to go the other way around. Start in a big company, because you get some tools in addition to your master's degree [...]"* (see Appendix C.2. line 180-184), and going further the CEO almost undermines the smaller organizations, by stating, *"It's just hard when you start small, you don't get these tools, you will not get on this fast exchange course, you don't get the English course and all these different courses. This is just not how it works in these small companies [...]"* (see Appendix C.2. line 190-193).

The same situation or 'agreement' seems to be applying when talking more specifically about graduate programs or the opening of a graduate position. In general there are not enough resources, however, when the researcher asked the CEO of Bangs A/S more specifically, he stated the following, *"well, we have not actually dived more into it, if it can be done or not, but there are some physical frames to hinder it. It does mean that you need some more employees, right. [...]. So I do not think I'm alone about this"* (see Appendix C.1. line 170-174). However, both organizations from this research have or have had employed student workers with a lot of responsibility, and as stated by the CEO of Konsolidator A/S, *"I think our students have been very happy to be here, because they as students have been given very much responsibility, because we are a small company. So, those cand.ling.merc's that we've been employed while they are still students; they've actually been acting marketing managers"* (see Appendix C.2. line 97-100). Considered with one of the CEO's previous statements, *"If you are a bit older like me, you simply have to recognize that there are much we do not know and then you simply have to 'walk out on the thin ice' and try some things, and see what the hell is happening"* (see Appendix C.2.

line 142-144), this indicate that the organizations need or at least want some of the knowledge from the Master's degree students or graduated, but however, as student workers, as the newly graduates are in lack of experience, and thus the newly graduates are being too resource- and time-consuming in terms of training and guiding for a first job position.

4.2.2. Personality WITH experiences, please!

According to both CEO's in this research, the smaller organizations can offer a job with plenty of different work tasks, and a lot of responsibility in terms of more leading roles, in a fun and dynamic environment, however, for the 'right' employee with experience. The CEO of Bangs A/S indicates this, as he states, *"It was like a requirement to get into the position that you could work in this program"* (see Appendix C.1. line 119-121). Whereas the CEO of Konsolidator A/S states it as following, *"[...] for the completely newly educated, I would recommend most to search in the larger companies, as you get some pretty good tools at the larger companies. [...] but otherwise then here again three to five years of experience, which is what I'm looking for right now. Well, we can offer something completely different and a significantly more interesting job to the right profile"* (see Appendix C.2. line 382-286).

When asking more about where they find these 'right' candidates, it becomes clear that many of these smaller organizations' recruitment is happening through own network, for instance the CEO of Bangs A/S states the following, *"often, well, I have recruited through my own network"* (see Appendix C.1. line 138) and *"[...] initially we talk to network, and then we post it on Jobnet and LinkedIn. It's step two, because there usually comes a lot"* (see Appendix C.1. line 207-208). Further he argues that a lot of smaller organizations use their network in the recruitment of new employees, as he says, *"[...] many of the smaller companies employ through networks. And I think they do that for two reasons: that's one, to save money; and two, because you feel like you can trust more on your network, well, then the reference is already taken"* (see Appendix C.1. line 218-220). This indicates that much recruitment in smaller organizations is happening in somewhat 'closed' circles within their own network, making it difficult to know about the organization and its possible job positions. However, it is possible to get through the eye of the needle, which can be illustrated by an example of Bangs A/S, as they hired a newly graduate, straight out of school, based on network (see Appendix C.1. line 132-134).

More focus and attention have been given to social media and online jobsites as well. The different options are used in different ways, just as the CEO of Bangs A/S indicated by using own network as first priority and then followed by LinkedIn and online jobsites, he further argues, *“LinkedIn it is more heavier profiles, Jobindex it is, well, a little more average”* (see Appendix C.1. line 254). Nevertheless, in some sense it might open up the more ‘closed’ circle of recruitment in the smaller organizations.

4.3. Is Employer Branding Necessary?

This third, and final part of the analysis will have its focus on the smaller Danish organizations and how identified areas from the conducted interviews, can benefit more generally from using the concept of employer branding.

Both organizations in this research seem to have good job offers, however, only available for the ‘right’ candidate, as stated by the CEO of Konsolidator A/S, *“Well, we can offer something completely different and a significantly more interesting job to the right profile”* (see Appendix C.2. line 382-286). This makes it crucial to be able to attract these ‘right’ candidates. Especially, as a smaller organization with less awareness, as indicated by the CEO of Bangs A/S, *“[...] most certainly a challenge there, that they don’t know us to the same extent. [...] some studies have been made showing that students prefer to enter into the companies they know, and well, that’s what you suffer under as a smaller company, and something one just must recognize and then ‘run faster’ to get the right employees”* (see Appendix C.1. line 194-198). However, for some smaller organizations it can seem to be a difficult ‘mission’ to find these ‘right’ candidates, which is why they appreciate honesty and value their employees, as the CEO of Konsolidator A/S argue, *“What I can’t use for anything is if people say they can do something that they really can’t. And if you don’t say, ‘I don’t really know anything about [...], but I’m good at [...], I have not worked with [...] before, so that I don’t know anything about’. This can be relied on, and then we must just find out of it. [...] if we should use an external agency to help you [...], and then calmly you’ll learn something from it. That’s fine”* (see Appendix C.2. line 397-402).

Nevertheless, as both organizations in this research have indicated that they have a somewhat low general awareness, especially as an employer among new potential employees, and as the CEO of Konsolidator A/S states, *“we would very much like to have a very high brand*

recognition [...]" (see Appendix C.2. line 264-265), it would be essential to look at the organizational awareness via the concept of Employer Branding, as it can be used as a strategic tool in order to attract the 'right' employees and be perceived as 'a great place to work', regardless if its newly graduates or more experienced employees (Minchington, 2010).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5. DISCUSSION

This section will discuss the findings previously presented with the theoretical framework of the research, in order to reflect different interpretations critically, and thereby be able to answer the propound RQs of this thesis. Consequently, the discussion will be divided into three overall parts, covering the aspects of: firstly, the newly graduates' work value preferences, and if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization; secondly, how smaller Danish organizations can benefit from using employer branding to attract newly graduates; and lastly, how smaller Danish organizations are handling the intensified global competition for new talents.

5.1. The Generation of Newly Graduates

One aspect of this thesis seeks to examine newly graduates' work value preferences when looking for an employer, and how or if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization. As previously mentioned in the theoretical framework (see Section 3), work values are seen as a perception of employees' preferences (Dose, 1997), influencing their behavior, attitude and eventually their commitment to an organization based on either intrinsic or extrinsic values (Vansteenkiste, Neyrinck, Niemiec, Soenens, De Witte, & Van den Broeck, 2007). Based on the theory of motivation (i.e. self-determination theory) that has been well used to investigate how behavior is induced, it is argued that newly graduates can be motivated to a specific behavior, such as attracting them to a specific organization and applying for a job, by both externally induced values (i.e. controlled motivation) and internally induced values (i.e. autonomous motivation) (Deci E. L., 1972; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999; Wang & Hou, 2015), which makes it important to know these newly graduates' work value preferences in order to attract them as new potential employees.

As mentioned in the findings (see Section 4) the four most important values of the newly graduates' related to their choice of employer are: Development, Challenging tasks, Responsibility of own tasks, and a Social work environment. According to the findings of the survey it was further evaluated that two basic values, such as 'interest' and 'meaning', were highly important, which was seen in several statements. This signifies that the 'right' organization is of

high importance to the newly graduates, even though some of them might have a hard time finding a job. These findings support the claims of Sullivan et al. (2001) and Sengupta et al. (2015), arguing that younger generations are concerned about fulfilling their individual values when looking for potential employers. Therefore, as claimed by Shaw and Fairhurst (2008) and Özcelik (2015), the findings of the survey made for this research also support that career opportunities, which include challenging and meaningful tasks are crucial to the newly graduates, and that organizations need to foster skill development in order to keep them satisfied. Accordingly, these findings go in line with Jiang and Iles (2011), as the applicant behavior of newly graduates is both influenced by job attributes as well as the organizational characteristics.

The newly graduates are seen as intrinsic-oriented individuals, who have a high focus on internally induced values, thus they are evaluated to be most motivated by autonomous incentives where they do not feel 'controlled'. Therefore, this research follows Vansteenkiste et al.'s (2007) suggestion that the newly graduates prefer values, such as development and growth, challenging tasks, and harmonious relationships. Based on Deci's (1972) claim, this means that the newly graduates will perform an activity or behavior, such as applying for a job in a specific organization, for no obvious reward except the specific activity or behavior itself. Accordingly, if an organization rewards newly graduates it should be done by 'informative rewards', as is argued to make an increase in the intrinsic motivation, leading to an increase in the individual's self-determination. On the contrary, if an organization makes 'controlling rewards' it is argued to make a decrease in the intrinsic motivation of the newly graduates, which means that they will become less likely to for example apply for a job in that specific organization. Therefore, this research supports the claims of Wang and Hou (2015) that behaviors encouraged by autonomy-oriented motivation are evaluated to be of higher quality, and that such behavior does not contribute to self needs and benefits, which gives the individual a feeling of independence, and thus often achieved when the individual perceives self-determination in selecting own objectives based on values of interests, curiosity, or care. As previously mentioned in the theoretical framework, the Millennials' career choices and outcomes, are argued to be shaped by work values and the perceived importance of the specific job characteristics, which are claimed to change considerably with age, which this thesis supports, as it was found that newly graduates became less interested in the graduate program element of going abroad as they turn older. Consequently, the theoretical framework suggests

that any individualistic and more narcissistic work values will become less important, and the more holistic and altruistic work values will become more important with age (Hajdu & Sik, 2018).

5.1.1. Importance of Graduate Programs

As previously mentioned in the findings (see Section 4), a large number of the newly graduates in this research, nearly 77 percent find graduate programs of interest, with highest attraction towards the elements: chances for a permanent position afterwards, getting a support system by having a mentor, and rotating in the company and try out different tasks/departments. This can be seen as an effect of most newly graduates generally being highly attracted to the training and development, which is perceived to be part of their most important values as explained above in section 5.1. This is evaluated to go in line with the theoretical assumptions, as explained above in section 5.1., since these elements can be perceived as values related to development and growth, challenging tasks, and harmonious relationships, which again support the claims by Vansteenkiste et al.'s (2007). Hence, the newly graduates are evaluated to perform an activity or behavior, such as applying for a graduate position, for no obvious reward except the specific activity or behavior itself.

The high attraction towards values, such as training and development, might also be the reason why some newly graduates advocates these graduate programs as highly attractive, not only to themselves but also to the organizations, as they get to 'shape and form' the newly graduates to fit right into the specific organization. However, the large number of newly graduates interested in the programs might also indicate that many newly graduates are having a hard time finding a job, and just want to get started on their career path.

Consequently, as several newly graduates point out that they wish for more trust and guidance from the organizations, and almost sound desperate in order to get a job, it might leave them with falling demands and work value preferences for a future employer. Therefore, it can be evaluated that a graduate program or at least some elements of one, such as: chances for a permanent position afterwards, getting a support system by having a mentor, and rotating in the company and try out different tasks/departments, will have a positive influence on the newly graduates in terms of attraction. On the contrary, element such as: most

commonly a competitive field, possibilities to go abroad, and most commonly offered in larger and well known companies, are evaluated not to be influencing the newly graduates.

5.2. Why Smaller Organizations need Employer Branding

Another aspect of this thesis seeks to examine how the concept of employer branding can be of benefit to smaller Danish organizations in the competition for newly graduates. As previously mentioned in the findings (see Section 4), it is evaluated that the communication to potential employees and the awareness of an organization are important to the newly graduates, as it impacts the newly graduates job preferences, thus the value of 'A well-know organization' should not be seen as unimportant. This have also been indicated by 29 percent of the newly graduates, feeling that the organizations' ability to promote themselves are affecting their job preferences to a *higher* degree. However, it seems like the newly graduates are having trouble finding the smaller organizations, since they are not aware of their existents nor where to find them, other than via online jobsites.

This can seem kind of odd, as the smaller organizations in this research argue that they are facing low awareness challenges of being a small organization due to graduates preferring larger well-known organizations, as indicated by the CEO of Bangs A/S, "*[...] most certainly a challenge there, that they don't know us to the same extent. [...] some studies have been made showing that students prefer to enter into the companies they know, and well, that's what you suffer under as a smaller company*" (see Appendix C.1. line 194-198). Nevertheless, the two smaller organizations in this research both indicate that they do not have the recourses to hire newly educated, and thus they advocate that the newly graduates should start their career in a larger organization, where they can get the training and guidance they need. Furthermore, according to the findings (see Section 4), both organizations in this research seem to have good job offers, however, only available for the 'right' candidates, which in this case do not include newly graduates as they need more experience, and in addition the candidates will be recruited by the somewhat 'closed' circle within their own network at first, making it difficult for newly graduates to know about the organizations and any possible job positions. Then, if it becomes necessary social media and online jobsites will be used as a second option in order to attract new employees of more 'normal' character, as it is not as trusted as when

using network. However, even if the smaller organizations are not actually interested in employing newly graduates, it will still be crucial to be able to attract these ‘right’ candidates.

As previously mentioned in the theoretical framework (see Section 3), in order to earn a competitive advantage the concept of employer branding can be utilized, seeing the organization as a brand that leads employees to develop a closer relationship with it, influenced by awareness, positive attitudes, as well as loyalty and trust. This highlights employer branding as a way to recruit the ‘right’ employees, by ensuring a delivery of the brand promise to the external stakeholders (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Additionally, the perceived value of the employer brand will depend on the importance the employees are assigning to the specific benefits that the organization is able to deliver and differentiate from competitors (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). However, today it is not as ‘black and white’, as it has evolved to include a more holistic view, meaning that an organization’s attractiveness to new employees, as well as the organization’s future profitability are to a higher degree depending on the organization’s own willingness and ability to recognize the employees and potential employees as important stakeholders (Preuss, Haunschild, & Matten, 2009). The evolved concept of employer branding thus include a more co-creative approach, including a sustainable and value-creating processes, with an increased focus on stakeholder relationship, hence the concept cannot solely be seen as a one-way tool for recruitment, and retention of employees, as strategic and holistic communication has become fundamental (Edwards, 2010; Aggerholm et al., 2011). This thesis supports these suggestions, and suggests that the smaller Danish organizations should be utilizing the concept of employer branding in order to attract and retain the ‘right’ and highly qualified employees, which in times of prosperity, low unemployment, and increased competition for talents are seen to be even more crucial, making it important to stay updated on the employees’ values (Glazer, Daniel, & Short, 2004).

Another finding, as mentioned previously (see Section 4), is that the two organizations in this research want to increase their awareness in terms of getting more customers, which indicate that both organizations pay more attention to their customers, than to the attraction of new potential employees. However, since the concept cannot solely be seen as a one-way tool for recruitment, and retention of employees, as strategic and holistic communication has become a fundamental part, it is important for sustainable development as well. Moreover, it has become especially important with employees of newly graduates or Millennials in general, as they are argued to make up for more than half of the labor force within the next 10 years

(Napoli & Ewing, 2000; Krahna & Galambosb, 2014; Queiri, Yusoff, & Dwaikat, 2014; ManpowerGroup, 2016). Hence, it is important to build a position as ‘an employer of choice’ for today’s organizations, whether it is large or small, in order to get the employees to ‘live the brand’, thus creating a reputation in their everyday interactions as well as a social influence on stakeholders.

5.2.1. Raising Awareness with Employer Branding Value Propositions

Based on the above discussion about why smaller organizations need employer branding, it was indicated that the concept can be seen as a strategic tool, making it possible for organizations to market their unique value propositions to both their current and potential employees (Sengupta et al., 2015). Therefore, this thesis supports Glazer et al. (2004) and Sengupta et al.’s (2015), suggestions that the right value proposition are argued to attract the right talents, by matching the employee values with the organizational offerings, and consequently, the more the individuals can associate with the offered values, the more attracted to the organization they will feel. This, however, makes it crucial to stay updated on the ‘right’ employees’ values, in this case newly graduates.

In order for the smaller Danish organizations to obtain this status as ‘an employer of choice’, seven employer branding value propositions have been (re-)conceptualized by Dabirian, Kietzmann, & Diba (2017), illustrating what people usually care about when evaluating organizations. However, this thesis’ finding do not support all of these value propositions. As mentioned previously in the theoretical framework (see Section 3), these seven propositions include: 1) the social value; 2) the interest value; 3) The application value; 4) The development value, 5) The economic value; 6) The management value; and 7) The work/life balance value. When it comes to extrinsic work values (i.e. externally induced motivation, such as status, payment etc.), it is likely that newly graduates would not consider an organization as ‘an employer of choice’, if their preferences for extrinsic rewards are not adequately provided (Queiri et al., 2014). Meaning, if newly graduates do not see a fit between their performance and the received rewards, their intention to apply for a job might be weakened. However, according to the finding (see Section 4) in this research the newly graduates are perceived to be striving towards the achievement of a meaningful job, which is interesting, challenging and developing. Hence, these values are seen as intrinsic rewards that are more desirable features than extrinsic rewards for the newly graduates. Based on the theoretical

framework of newly graduates as part of the Millennials, it is suggested that these preferences for intrinsic rewards have led to a rise of positive self-view of the Millennials, which have attributed to a perception of self-actualization that contribute to the generations' desire for a more challenging and developing job, which this thesis supports. Consequently, newly graduates have evolved a low tolerance for less challenging and developing jobs, which make them look for jobs with higher impact, making intrinsic rewards of more influence in order to make newly graduates perceive an organization as 'an employer of choice'. Based on the theoretical framework of newly graduates, it can be evaluated that the Millennials are looking for a more balanced work/family life, which is argued to increase their demand for more flexibility and 'freedom' in terms of for example working hours and empowerment in order to make responsible decisions (Hewlett et al., 2009; Queiri et al., 2014). However, the finding of this research did not support this. Nevertheless, as the newly graduates seek and appreciate training and guidance as well as mentoring, it can be evaluated that the newly graduates preferences for social rewards will be leading towards higher expectations for a thoughtful and supportive supervisor. As the theoretical framework of newly graduates suggest, another emphasis on social rewards can be indicated by the newly graduates' wish for a job that is perceived as a fun and essential workplace, which will have a substantial influence on their level of satisfaction and the organizational citizenship (Queiri et al., 2014). However, this is only partly supported by the findings.

As suggested by the theoretical framework, this generation are argued to have more altruistic work values, including being helpful to the society, along with a more moral and ethical consideration, it is likely that newly graduates will have higher expectations to the organizations in form of for instance social responsibility and ethical behavior (Ng., Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). This is supported by this research, as findings suggest newly graduates are seeking a job of meaning. Consequently, the newly graduates can be seen as sensitive to impartial and unfair practices of an organization, which will affect their perceptions of an organization as an 'employer of choice' (Aggerholm et al, 2011; Queiri et al., 2014). As an example it is argued that CSR initiatives might be seen as an attractive motivation that potentially could increase the employee-organization identification, and in turn be influencing the relationship and the employees' commitment to the specific organization, as it is speaking to the intrinsic work values (i.e. internally induced motivation), which is the values argued to drive the newly graduates.

5.3. Do they have a Societal Responsibility?

The last aspect to be addressed in this discussion is how the smaller Danish organizations are handling the intensified global competition for new talents.

As mentioned previously in the findings (see Section 4) it was found that even though the Danish labor force at present is experiencing the lowest unemployment rate in years and the market is experiencing an economic upturn (Danmarks Statistik, 2018), as well as both practitioners and academia literature have been underlining an intensified global competition for talents, often addressed as ‘war for talent’ (Seerup, 2015; ManpowerGroup, 2016; Lønstrup, 2016; Kolesnikov, 2018; Theurer et al., 2018; Holst, 2018), this research has found a paradox, namely that newly graduates are *not* in high demand, rather they are facing a hard time, having trouble related to job search. As suggested by Collins (2007) and as first anticipated, the relations between recruitment strategies and the application intentions and –decisions are moderated by brand awareness (Collins, 2007), arguing that larger organizations would have an advantage when talking about employer branding and the attraction of new talents, since they would be represented by a well-known brand. Thus, they were perceived to have stronger brand awareness among newly graduates that consequently would make them more attractive employers, which were perceived not to be the case for smaller Danish organizations with lower brand awareness among newly graduates, and thereby it was seen to be significantly important with employer knowledge and –reputation in order to attract newly graduates to the smaller Danish organizations (Collins, 2007). Consequently, this *is* supported by this research, as it found the smaller Danish organizations to be experiencing lower awareness and, that the larger organizations seem to be the ones that run off with the new talents. However, what is interesting here is that the smaller organizations do not seem to mind. As previously mentioned in the findings (see Section 4), this research found indications for the smaller Danish organizations *not* wanting to hire the newly graduates, and rather advocating them to start their career in the larger organizations.

By looking at the unemployment rate in Denmark, it is currently at its lowest in many years since before the financial crisis, but if we take a further look at it, the percentage of unemployment seem to be highest among the age group, of which newly graduate belong to (Danmarks Statistik, 2018). Looking at figure 18 the number of Danish organizations with

employees, illustrates that it is the larger organizations, which employ the most people, with 62 percent of all full-time employed persons (Danmarks Statistik, 2016).

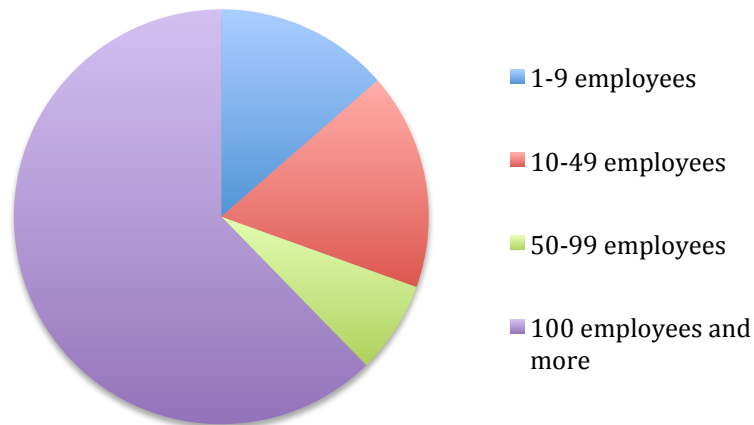


Figure 18: Number of full-time employees by enterprise size (in percent) (Danmarks Statistik, 2016).

However, it is the smaller organizations that account for the largest number of Danish enterprises, by 96 percent, as shown in figure 19, of which 80 percent are organizations with 1-9 employees, like the two organizations in this research (Danmarks Statistik, 2016).

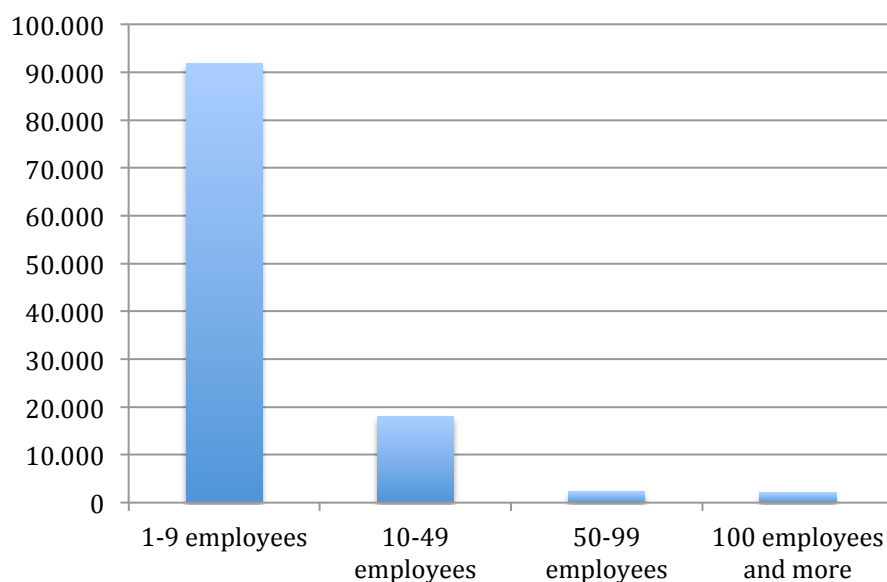


Figure 19: Number of Danish enterprises with employees by size (in number) (Danmarks Statistik, 2016).

As previously mentioned in the theoretical framework (see Section 3), the organizations today are more depending on employee commitment to their brand, in order to for example 'live the brand', and acting as a an 'organizational ambassador', attracting new employees,. This also makes the organizations expect a higher employee commitment, as a result of the 'moral brand', since ethical and social responsibility have become of higher interest to the employees (Morsing, 2006). Additionally, as the theoretical framework suggest, this is committing for the employees, as it is about selecting between 'good' or 'bad', which ties the employees' personal moral to the organization and make them identifying with their job (Gossett & Kilker, 2006). This is supported by the findings, as the newly graduates perceive values, such as organizational meaning and interest of high influence. Therefore, the organization's attractiveness to new employees, as well as the its future profitability, are depending on the organization's own willingness and ability to recognize the employees and also potential employees as important stakeholders that contribute to the corporate brand in a more holistic way (Preuss, Haunschild, & Matten, 2009). Hence, employer branding and good employee-employer relations are crucial. Nevertheless, it becomes particularly important to the newly graduates, as the demographic change has and will further result in a significant challenge, in terms of organizations replacing retiring experienced employees with younger and significantly different employees in form of Millennials among others (Napoli & Ewing, 2000; Krahna & Galambosb, 2014; Queiri, Yusoff, & Dwaikat, 2014; ManpowerGroup, 2016), who are argued to make up for more than half of the labor force within the next 10 years (MacDermott & Ortiz, 2017). But also, as suggested by the theoretical framework, because Millennials are argued to be most affected by awareness of the organization as an employer, the perceptions of how fellow students and friends perceive the organization's reputation and their opinions regarding aspects of the specific job, such as for example payment, development, and the interest in the work tasks itself (Jiang & Iles, 2011), which indicate the effect of the holistic view.

Furthermore, as mentioned previously in the theoretical framework, it is suggested by Aggerholm et al., 2011 that the holistic expansion of the concept supports the more pragmatic understanding of employer branding, where the organization can be seen as a resource to construction of individuals' identity; organizations are no longer seen as static corporate entities, but are rather seen as dynamic and evolving co-constructions developed by all the organization's stakeholders; the employees are no longer recognized as raw material, but are rather seen as a resource to meaning-making and corporate citizens; and communication that is no

longer purely seen as a tool to solve problems, but is increasingly recognized as fundamental and sustainable to the organization (Aggerholm et al., 2011). Following this suggestion, it is argued that there are three aspects of the sustainable part, including economic (i.e. a required part), legal (i.e. a required part), and ethical (i.e. an expected part). By fulfillment of these responsibilities, an organization will lead to a desired philanthropic position where it will be seen as 'the good corporate citizen' (Schwartz & Carroll, 2003). However, as there seem to be some kind of 'agreement' among the smaller Danish organizations on the matter of hiring newly graduates, and that they in some way advocate the newly graduates to start their career in larger organizations instead of smaller, while the smaller organizations, as the two in this research (i.e. 1-9 employees), are the ones accounting for 80 percent of the Danish enterprises, and while at the same time, the unemployment rate among the age group of which the newly graduates belong to are the highest among all in Denmark (Danmarks Statistik, 2018), it seems difficult for the organizations to achieve the ethical aspect of the sustainable communication. Hence, these organizations might be perceived at *not* taking part of the societal responsibility. Accordingly, as previously mentioned in the findings (see Section 4) it is argued by some of the newly graduates, and also the Danish socio-economic market research institute, Arbejderbevægelsens Erhvervsråd, that the smaller Danish organizations should take responsibility and start hiring some of the newly educated (Bjørsted, 2018).

5.3.1. Employer Branding Upside Down

The paradoxical finding made the researcher think in more creative ways, thus the idea of turning the concept of employer branding upside down appeared.

It is seen as a possibility that the smaller organizations do not know what they need help for, or what they are missing out on, in terms of what the newly graduates can offer them. For the benefit of the smaller organizations, as mentioned previously in the findings (see Section 4) both organizations of this research have tried employing student workers, who were given much responsibility and 'acting' in a leading role, thus the organizations should be aware of the skills of the newly graduates, however, as one of the CEO's argued, he did not know anything about marketing, for example. Thus, his student workers were given 'free rein' and he nearly did not know what they were doing. This indicates that the younger and more tech-savvy generation of newly graduates do have an advantage in form of a highly valued skill-set,

which can be seen as an inherent ability, however, it can also be seen as a disadvantage, as the employers (mostly of older age) might not know what they actually want or need help to, which make them unable to define it and thus, unable to search for the right help.

Therefore, it might be an opportunity to turn the concept of employer branding upside down. Instead of employer branding, as we know it, it should be seen as employee branding, where it will be possible to 'turn the view' and see the concept from the employee's perspective, in terms of how they can make themselves attractive to the smaller Danish organizations. A concrete example could potentially be a reversed job fair, where the newly graduates invite companies to attend a fair, where the graduates for example will present skills, research, or making other presentations. However, this of course is practical ideas, which need more research before one could know if it would have any effect on the unemployment rate among the newly graduates or among the smaller Danish organizations and their 'resource demanding view' on newly graduates.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6. CONCLUSION

The theoretical framework (see Section 3), suggests work values to be seen as a perception of employees' preferences (Dose, 1997), influencing both behavior, attitude and eventually their commitment to an organization based on either intrinsic or extrinsic values (Vansteenkiste, Neyrinck, Niemiec, Soenens, De Witte, & Van den Broeck, 2007)

By looking at the newly graduates and their work value preferences regarding organizations as future employers, it can be said that the four most important values of the newly graduates' related to their choice of employer are: development, challenging tasks, responsibility of own tasks, and a social work environment. However, based on the free text box in the survey, two other values, such as 'interest' and 'meaning', were evaluated to be highly important as well, and signifies that the 'right' organization is of high importance to the newly graduates. Hence, it is argued that newly graduates are seen as intrinsic-oriented individuals, with a high focus on internally induced values, thus they are evaluated to be most motivated by autonomous incentives where they do not feel 'controlled'. The newly graduates are argued to perform an activity or behavior, such as applying for a job in a specific organization, for no obvious reward except the specific activity or behavior itself. Accordingly, if an organization rewards newly graduates it should be done by 'informative rewards', as it is argued to make an increase in the intrinsic motivation, leading to an increase the individual's self-determination. On the contrary, if an organization makes 'controlling rewards' it is argued to make a decrease in the intrinsic motivation of the newly graduates, which means that they will become less likely to for example apply for a job in that specific organization. Furthermore, it is worth noticing that the newly graduates' career choices and outcomes, are argued to be shaped by their work values and the perceived importance of the specific job characteristics, however, this will change considerably with age.

When looking at the graduate programs, it is argued that most newly graduates find such programs highly interesting, with particularly high attraction towards the three elements: chances for a permanent position afterwards, getting a support system by having a mentor, and rotating in the company and try out different tasks/departments. This is seen as an effect of most newly graduates generally being highly attracted to training and development values, as it is perceived to be part of their most important values. Hence, most newly graduates find these graduate programs very attractive, however this element of attraction is

argued not to be based on the particular graduate program itself, but rather as the newly graduates seek to obtain their most preferred work value preferences, no matter if it is in a graduate program or not, thus seeking: development, challenging tasks, responsibility of own tasks, and a social work environment.

When talking about employer branding, it is in this research argued that the communication to potential employees and the awareness of an organization, are highly important to the newly graduates, as it impacts their job preferences, which is why organizations should not see this characteristic of 'A well-know organization' as unimportant. Furthermore, the concept of employer branding are argued to help earn a competitive advantage, perceiving the organization as a brand that leads employees to develop a closer relationship with it. Thus, it will be influenced by awareness, positive attitudes, as well as loyalty and trust. This highlights employer branding as a way to recruit the 'right' employees, by ensuring a delivery of the brand promise to the external stakeholders (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Additionally, the perceived value of the employer brand will depend on the importance the employees assign to the specific benefits that the organization is able to deliver and differentiate from competitors. Since the newly graduates today are focusing more on development, challenging tasks, responsibility of own tasks, as well as the social environment, an organization should pay more attention to these values when it comes to attraction and recruitment of newly graduates. However, the organizations in this research seem to have some kind of 'hidden agenda' by not really wanting to hire these newly graduates, at least not before they get some experience. As, the concept of employer branding has evolved to a more holistic approach, being more or less a fundamental part of sustainable communication, it is argued that an organization's attractiveness has become highly dependable on the organizations own willingness and ability to recognize the employees and potential employees as important stakeholders (Preuss, Haunschild, & Matten, 2009). This also includes the increased focus on stakeholder relationship, and thus the concept cannot solely be seen as a one-way tool for recruitment. Therefore, it is suggested that the smaller Danish organizations should be utilizing the concept of employer branding in order to attract and retain the 'right' and highly qualified employees (Glazer, Daniel, & Short, 2004).

However, the smaller Danish organizations seem to have forgotten their 'societal responsibility', since they only want to hire newly graduates as student workers. Once a position is open, they need an experienced employee, and not some newly graduates. Even though the

newly graduates have been working there in an acting leader role. This is seen as a paradox, since the newly graduates belong to the largest group of unemployment, and the smaller organizations (i.e. 1-9 employees) belong to the largest group of enterprises in Denmark by 80 percent. Hence, it seems difficult for the organizations to achieve the ethical aspect of the sustainable communication, which might leave the organizations to be perceived as *not* taking their part of the societal responsibility.

This implies that the younger and more tech-savvy generation of newly graduates have an advantage in form of a highly valued skill-set that is perceived as an inherent ability, and a disadvantage, as the employers (mostly of older age) might not know what they actually want of need help to, which make them unable to search for the right help. Therefore, lastly, the researcher suggests turning the concept of employer branding upside down, making the employees, in this case the newly graduates, attractive to the employers. More concrete, this could be potentially be via a reversed job fair, giving newly graduates the chance to present skills, research, or making other presentations in order to show their worth and destroy the paradox.

6.1. Limitations and Future Research

The results of this research start a new set of questions, which will need further research. Even though this thesis offers new insights on smaller Danish organizations and the newly graduates anno 2018, it does meet some limitations.

One limitation is seen to be related to the relatively small samples, regarding both the survey and interview, since this research has been focusing on the smaller Danish organizations and since the main respondents to the online survey come from the northern part of Europe, it needs to be borne in mind that it is not possible to take these results and widen them to other countries without any further research. Therefore, it limits the generalizability of the findings. However, in order to gain more insights, a larger sample size could be made.

Another limitation is related to the fact that this research does not take any specific company industry into account. Therefore, being more industry specific, might give some other answers, differing from the ones in this thesis, which might make new insight.

Thirdly, it would be interesting to compare this research on newly graduates having a master's degree with other people from Generation Y, in order to make understanding about if it is different to be a newly graduate having a master's degree seeking for a job, compared to a non-academic.

CHAPTER 7

REFERENCE LIST

7. REFERENCE LIST

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

A. Survey

Practicalities:

The survey was conducted in order to help answering the research questions of this thesis.

The main purpose of utilizing a questionnaire is to explore and make understandings of the newly graduates' work value preferences, and if graduate programs are affecting their preferences towards a specific size of organization.

In relation to this survey it was chosen to use a non-probability-based sampling in form of a purposive sample that allow the researcher to select the interest group on decisions made by the researcher (for detailed information see Section 2.3.1.).

The survey was only made in English (see Appendix A.1.) as the research is appointed both Danish and international graduates at an academic level, who thereby should be able to understand English to a great extent.

In order to analyze on the respondents answers in the survey, the raw data have been transferred to an excel document (see Appendix A.2.). However, it can only be read by zooming in on the document in this thesis. Consequently, the researcher made it possible to access the raw data online via a link: <http://www.survey-xact.dk/report/shared/5ea02396-a588-47b6-9bce-c0906f5c3460>

A.1. Survey Sections and Questions

The right job positions for newly graduates.

Today, there is an increased competition for talented employees, which forces organizations to be on the forefront with their recruitment strategies. I am researching (for my master thesis) how smaller Danish organizations can participate in the global competition for newly graduates, as I want to help these smaller Danish organizations getting better at offering the right opportunities/job positions for newly graduates.

Therefore, I need replies from master degree students or people who have finished a Master's degree within the last two years (completed in 2016 at the latest).

The survey will take between 3-5 minutes to answer, and your answers will be highly appreciated.

Gender?

- (1) ☐ Male
- (2) ☐ Female
- (3) ☐ Other ____

Age?

- (1) ☐ 19 years or less
- (2) ☐ 20-23 years
- (3) ☐ 24-27 years
- (4) ☐ 28-31 years
- (5) ☐ 32+ years

Country?

- (1) ☐ Northern Europe (such as Channel Islands, Denmark, Estonia, Faeroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, UK, Åland Islands)
- (2) ☐ Southern Europe (such as Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Gibraltar, Greece, Holy See, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain)
- (3) ☐ Eastern Europe (such as Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine)
- (4) ☐ Western Europe (such as Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Switzerland)
- (5) ☐ Outside of Europe _____

Are you studying a Master's degree/completed a Master's degree within the last 2 years (completed in 2016 at the latest)?

- (1) ☐ Yes
- (2) ☐ No

Your educational course (faculty)

- (1) ☐ Humanities
- (2) ☐ Engineering and Natural Science
- (3) ☐ Health and Medical Sciences
- (4) ☐ Business
- (5) ☐ Social Sciences
- (6) ☐ Law
- (7) ☐ IT and Design
- (8) ☐ Other _____

Why did you choose that specific Master's degree?**Select all relevant answers.**

- (1) ☐ I had an interest in the chosen field of study

- (2) ☐ There was a labor shortage within the chosen field of study
- (3) ☐ It runs in the family to study within the chosen field of study
- (4) ☐ It was a popular study choice among my circle of acquaintances (friends) when I chose the field of study
- (5) ☐ You are well paid after you graduate a Master's degree within in the chosen field of study
- (6) ☐ Other _____

Companies are always interested in information about how they in the best possible way can attract graduates, which is why the next couple of questions are about what kind of factors that are important to you in relation to a future work place.

How important are the following factors for you in relation to a future work place?

Please indicate how important the following factors are for you on a scale of 1-5, of which 1=Very unimportant, 2=partly unimportant, 3=neither unimportant nor important, 4=partly important, 5=Very important.

	1 Very unimportant	2 Partly unimportant	3 Neither unimportant nor important	4 Partly important	5 Very important
The company works within an industry of my interest and it offers innovative work practices where I get to use my creativity	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
The company offers good social settings within a fun working environment and good collegial relations	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
The company offers good economic value in terms of job security, promotional opportunities, and an above-average salary compensation	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
The company offers training and development that can provide me with confidence and enhance my experiences, which can be used as a springboard to future job positions	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>

How important are the following values to you?

Please indicate how important the following values are for you on a scale of 1-5, of which 1=Very unimportant, 2=partly unimportant, 3=neither unimportant nor important, 4=partly important, 5=Very important.

	1 Very unimportant	2 Partly unimportant	3 Neither unimportant nor important	4 Partly important	5 Very important
Development opportunities	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Company growth potential	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Challenging tasks	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Big city location	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Responsibility for own tasks	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Above average payment	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Self-actualization	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
A well-known company	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Social work environment	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Hierarchical position	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
Acknowledgement and rewards	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>

What size of company is most preferable for you?

- (1) ☐ Large organizations (251+ employees)
- (2) ☐ Medium-sized organizations (51-250 employees)
- (3) ☐ Small organizations (1-50 employees)
- (4) ☐ I don't care about the size of the organization
- (5) ☐ Other ____

To what degree does the company's ability to promote itself well affect you in your job preferences?

- (1) ☐ 1 Very low degree
- (2) ☐ 2 Low degree
- (3) ☐ 3 Neither low nor high degree

- (4) ☐ 4 High degree
- (5) ☐ 5 Very high degree

Anything you want to add?

A new way in which companies today try to attract new graduates is by offering graduate programs, which is a kind of trainee position with a mentor system for graduates who have completed a Master's degree. It is defined as a tailored 1 to 4-years career development program within an organization that gives up to 4 different department rotations (often abroad) for newly graduates, who have finished their Master's degree within the last two years prior to application.

How aware are you of graduate programs?

- (1) ☐ I have never heard of it before now
- (3) ☐ I have heard about it before but I am not completely sure about what it is
- (2) ☐ It is a well-known concept to me
- (4) ☐ Other _____

How attractive do you find these graduate program elements?

1= very unattractive, 2=partly unattractive, 3= neither unattractive nor attractive, 4=partly attractive, 5=very attractive.

	1 Very unattractive	2 Partly unattractive	3 Neither unattractive nor attractive	4 Partly attractive	5 Very attractive
I can get this type of position without much work experience	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
I can rotate in the company and get the opportunity to try out different tasks/departments	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
I get a support system by having a mentor	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>

	1 Very unattractive	2 Partly unattractive	3 Neither unattractive nor attractive	4 Partly attractive	5 Very attractive
It gives me the opportunity to go abroad	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
It is most commonly offered in relatively large and well-known companies	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
There is a good chance that I get a permanent position in the company afterwards	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
It is a competitive field	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>
It looks good to have on my resume	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>	(5) <input type="checkbox"/>

Would you be interested in applying for a graduate position?

- (1) ☐ 1 Very uninterested
 (2) ☐ 2 Partly uninterested
 (3) ☐ 3 Neither uninterested nor interested
 (4) ☐ 4 Partly interested
 (5) ☐ 5 Very interested

Anything you want to add?

Thank you very much for participating.

May I contact you for further information on your answers?

- (1) ☐ No
 (2) ☐ Yes, my email is: _____

A.2. Raw Data

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

B. Interview Guide

Practicalities:

The two interviews were conducted in order to help answering the research questions of this thesis. The interviews with the different CEO's of the two smaller Danish organizations are conducted via face-to-face meeting at the respective organizations, and proceed for around 30-40 minutes each. During these interviews, the researcher acted as the interviewer with a role as moderator and observer, but without interruptions, influence, corrections, or any opinion giving. Only where it is appropriate, the interviewer is able to clarify or give any additional information to the interviewees. As the interviewees are both Danes, the interviews are accomplished in Danish, but the interview guide (i.e. the particular questions) have been translated into an English version in order to clarify the interview process (see Appendix B.2.).

Below a list of the interviewees, their title or function and their organizational background is given. The interviewees were chosen based on their organizational background, as representatives for smaller Danish organizations (for detailed information see Section 2.3.2.).

Interviewee	Title/ Function	Organization
Carl Gustav Lehmann	CEO	Bangs A/S Location: Vedbæk (Copenhagen, DK) Year founded: 1878 Company size: 2-10 employees Area of business: Business-to-Business Specialties: Food & Beverages
Claus Finderup Grove	CEO	Konsolidator A/S Location: Kongens Lyngby (Copenhagen, DK) Year founded: 2014 Company size: 2-10 employees Area of business: Business-to-Business Specialties: Computer Software

B.1. Interview Questions – Danish Version

1. Hvor mange medarbejdere er I i organisationen?
2. Har I en bred vifte af medarbejdere, fra forskellige uddannelsesmæssige baggrunde?
 - Ved du, hvilke baggrunde medarbejderne kommer fra?
3. Har I i øjeblikket ansatte, der har afsluttet en kandidatgrad?
 - Hvordan begyndte de i virksomheden? (Startede de f.eks. som elev/trainee eller i en normal stilling, etc.?)

I dag hører vi ofte om en øget konkurrence omkring ansættelse af nyuddannede talenter / kandidater.

4. Ser du en fordel / ulempe i ansættelse nyuddannede kandidater?
 - Hvorfor?
5. Hvor ofte ansætter I nyuddannede kandidatstuderende?
 - Har I / har I tidligere haft problemer med rekruttering af nyuddannede kandidater?
6. Hvad kan nyuddannede tilbyde jeres virksomhed, for at blive mere interessante og attraktive for jer?
 - Ville nyuddannede være mere interessante, hvis de startede i en oplærende trainee / graduate stilling, frem for en normal stilling?
 - Har I / har I tidligere haft trainee / graduate stillinger i virksomheden?
 - Har I tænkt på at starte et trainee / graduate forløb?
 - Hvorfor tilbyder I ikke længere den form for stilling?
 - hvilken betydning har det for virksomheden at I tilbyder den form for stilling?

Det siges ofte, at større virksomheder har det lettere i forbindelse med rekruttering af nye medarbejdere, fordi de ofte har en højere awareness (bevidsthed) end for eksempel mindre virksomheder.

7. Hvordan er jeres awareness (bevidsthed) generelt?
 - Hvordan promoverer (fremmer) I jeres virksomhed?

- Har I arbejdet med begrebet 'employer branding' (promovering af virksomheden som arbejdsgiver og –plads overfor medarbejdere og nye potentielle medarbejdere) før?

8. Hvordan promoverer (fremmer) I nye jobstillinger?

- Anvender I sociale medier, som f.eks. LinkedIn eller Facebook, og hvis ja hvorfor?

9. Hvordan vil du differentiere jer fra større virksomheder?

- Er der noget, I kan tilbyde jeres medarbejdere, som større virksomheder ikke kan?
- Hvad er jeres største styrke som en mindre virksomhed?

B.2. Interview Questions – English Version

1. How many employees are you in the organization?
2. Do you have a wide range of employees, from different educational backgrounds?
 - Do you know what backgrounds the employees are from?
3. Do you currently have employees, who have completed a master's degree?
 - How did they start in the company? (Did they start for example as a student / trainee or in a normal position, etc.?)

Today, we often hear about an increased competition in the recruitment of newly educated talents / graduates.

4. Do you see an advantage / disadvantage in recruiting newly educated graduates?
 - Why?
5. How often do you recruit graduate students?
 - Do you / have you previously had problems recruiting new graduates?
6. What can newly educated graduates offer your organization, in order to become more interesting and attractive to you?
 - Would newly educated be of more interest to you if they started in a trainee / graduate position, rather than a normal position?
 - Do you / have you previously had a trainee / graduate position in the organization?
 - Have you thought about starting a trainee / graduate program?
 - Why do you no longer offer such position?
 - What importance has it for the organization that you offer such position?

It is often said that larger organizations have it easier regarding recruitment of new employees, because they often have a higher awareness, than for example smaller organizations.

7. How do you see your awareness in general?
 - How do you promote the organization?
 - Have you previously worked with the concept of 'employer branding' (promoting the organization as an employer and work place for current employees and / or new potential employees)?

8. How do you promote new jobs?

- Do you use social media, such as LinkedIn or Facebook, if yes why?

9. How would you differentiate your organization from larger organizations?

- Is there something you can offer your employees that larger organizations can not?
- What is your biggest strength as a smaller organization?

C. Transcription of Interviews

Practicalities:

The two interviews were transcribed using a simple form, as the primary focus was on the content of the two interviews, rather than the discourse. Therefore, interruptions, overlap in talk etc. are not comprised in the transcriptions. However, if what was said in the recordings was unclear for the researcher, it has been marked as [inaudible] in the transcriptions. Additionally, an editor note has been added in inserted brackets if it is not obviously what the interviewee is referring to. In the transcriptions all names except of the interviewee and the particular organization have been anonymized, also in brackets.

In the transcriptions, the names of the interviewee and the Interviewer have been abbreviated to 'I' for interviewee and 'C' for Camilla (i.e. interviewer).

C.1. Bangs A/S

- 1 C: Det aller første spørgsmål jeg har det er for lige at få bekræftet at i er en mindre virksomhed,
2 så sådan hvor mange ansatte er i rent faktisk?
- 3 I: Vi er lige nu er vi seks ansatte. Vi har sat virksomheden op sådan så vi outsourcer hvor vi kan,
4 sådan så alt tilbage i værdikæden fra ledelse og salg det produktion det har vi outsourcet.
- 5 C: Det har i outsourcet
- 6 I: Ja, vi kører alt vores produktion igennem løntapperi og det vil sige at vi komme op med
7 opskriften ideen til produktet og så kontakter vi så de leverandører vi har samarbejde
8 med hører om kan i lave det her produkt for os.
- 9 C: Okay
- 10 I: Så de sourcer på emballage og råvarer og laver produktet for os. Og så bestiller vi det så hjem
11 det omfang vi skal bruge det. Og så er det så har vi et lager hotel hvor vi også lejer os ind
12 og der bestiller vi så varer hjem til. Og derfra distribuerer vi så ud til kunderne.
- 13 C: Okay. Og i outsourcer til?
- 14 I: Vi outsourcer produktion, lagerløsninger og egentlig også salg. Altså vores sælgere det er så
15 et bureau der specialiserer sig i at være ude og sælge for virksomheder. Og så er de
16 sælgerne ansatte af et bureau hvor vi så lejer de her sælgere her. På basis altså på
17 månedsvis ikke. Så vi betaler og hyrer hver måned ikke. Men så slipper vi for selvfølgelig
18 at sørger for at få de rigtige mennesker rekrutteret og alt sådan noget der ikke. Plus vi
19 skal ikke have biler og computer og telefoner og sådan noget. Og så kan vi altid opjustere
20 eller nedjustere alt efter om hvornår vi har brug for det. For eksempel
21 sommerferieperioden her, der er det sådan lidt stille ikke. Så justerer vi så ned ikke. Det
22 kan du ikke rigtigt gøre med nogle ansatte hvor man ligesom kan sige op og så.... Det er
23 en løsning for os. Omvendt så koster det også det mere kan man sige ikke. Men vi så er
24 der så meget andet hovedpine vi ikke skal døje med.
- 25 C: Ja det er selvfølgelig rigtigt. Så i bund og grund er i hvor mange ansatte?
- 26 I: Ja for at svare på spørgsmålet så er vi nu må jeg se vi er mig, min far, min mor, min storebror
27 eh og så er vi fire og så er vi [anonymized], [anonymized], [anonymized]... Vi er seks, syv
28 stykker, min mor kommer sådan af og til. [inaudible] de er sådan ved at gå på pension
29 ikke.
- 30 C: Er det dem der har startet det?
- 31 I: Min far han købte virksomheden tilbage i år 2000 da han drev sådan en enkelt mands
32 virksomhed og jeg startede så som den første ansatte i september 2014. Og så er det
33 ellers taget fart derfra. Ja. Og nu er min storebror startet her for det var tilbage i marts at
34 han startede. Så
- 35 C: Så det er gået ret stærkt
- 36 I: Ja det er gået ret stærkt. Det er det ja
- 37 C: Men jeg havde fået det indtryk at det var sådan en virksomhed der havde eksisteret i lang tid

- 38 I: Det har det også, altså Bangs har eksisteret siden 1878 med skiftende succes ikke. Det
39 startede inde på Nørrebro med familien [anonymized] og det er så kørt igennem
40 generationer med skiftende succes. Og da min far købte det der var det et lille varelager
41 og to [inaudible] i Køge ikke. Ehm hvor min mor og far pendlede frem og tilbage for at stå
42 og producere marmelade og sælge. Og der gik det ligesom op for min far at han ikke
43 kunne drive den virksomhed hvis han også skulle producere alt marmeladen. Der var
44 simpelthen ikke nok timer i døgnet til det. Så var man jo nødt til at prioritere og der
45 prioriterede han så at være ude at sælge, det synes han var sjovest, og så sørge for at
46 finde en partner der kunne producere til den kvalitet han gerne ville.
- 47 C: Men det er så ændret i dag siden i har sælgere ude i bureauer?
- 48 I: Ja, men det er jo fordi vi er kommet ud og fået flere kunder og er blevet større og der skal
49 flere ressourcer til. Vi sælger jo måde til Tyskland og til Polen og til Island og. Så kan man
50 se det er måske mere en grossist virksomhed, hvor det er os der ejer produkterne ikke.
51 Og brandet. Ja.
- 52 C: Okay, men cirka syv ansatte
- 53 I: Ja cirka syv ja
- 54 C: Og så kunne jeg høre det er også meget familie
- 55 I: Vi er er meget familie virksomhed med stort F ikke. Så det er også både på godt og ondt ikke.
- 56 C: Og det er ikke så mange forskellige uddannelsessteder vi er henne med ansatte?
- 57 I: Jo det er vi. Altså vores marketing manager hun har en uddannelse fra KEA, og fra
58 Københavns universitet, så hun er marketingsuddannet ikke. Ikke så CBS. Jeg er fra CBS,
59 min storebror han er også CBSer men han har en Cand.merc.dat
- 60 C: Så I har også en kandidat.
- 61 I: Min storebror er kandidat, jeg er kandidat min far er kandidat, [anonymized] er kandidat, Line
62 som sidder med modtagelse af ordre og fakturering og bogholderi jeg er i tvivl om hvad
63 hun har af uddannelse faktisk det kan jeg ikke huske. [anonymized] som er vores eksport
64 manager han har også en kandidat er jeg ret sikker på. Jeg må indrømme jeg kan faktisk
65 ikke huske det.
- 66 C: Men der er ihvertfald et par stykker
- 67 I: Der er en overvejende af, majoriteten har kandidatgrader ja, hvis ikke dem alle sammen
- 68 C: Ja, men det er ikke sådan alt når I er startet i virksomheden så er i ikke startet som elever
69 eller trainees, eller sådan graduates i er bare startet hårdt på
- 70 I: Ja
- 71 C: okay
- 72 I: altså det vi... Vi starter ikke med elever nej. Altså vi havde to piccoliner for noget tid siden,
73 men så skulle den ene i mili og den anden skulle ud at rejse og sådan noget ikke, og så
74 lavede vi nogle strukturændringer og så var der simpelthen ikke behov for det. Så
75 prioriterede vi anderledes.
- 76 C: Ja okay. Men så har jeg skrevet her med fordele og ulemper i forbindelse med nyuddannede,
77 men nu siger du at hende i har i marketing at hun er direkte fra skolen.
- 78 I: Korrekt
- 79 C: Hvad er der af fordele og ulemper?

- 80 I: Eh ved at tage en nyuddannet i forhold til en der har været i faget i noget tid? Jamen det er jo
81 at de ikke kan lande løbende. Altså de skal jo have noget oplæring, ikke. De skal først
82 sætte sig ind i arbejdslivet ikke, det er nogle andre rutiner når du kommer fra skolen og
83 ind i en hverdag hvor du skal gå på arbejde ikke. Ehm så der er lidt tilvænning der. Men
84 det føler jeg egentlig ikke er en udfordring i særlig høj grad fordi ofte så er nyuddannede
85 meget hooked på at komme ud og arbejde og prøve det fordi de har jo været på studiet i
86 så lang tid og det er ligesom, alt er hele studieforløbet her har de gået og ventet på det
87 øjeblik hvor de kan komme ud på arbejdsmarkedet
- 88 C: Så det er en forløsning
- 89 I: Det er en stor forløsning for dem ikke. Så de vil meget gerne lære, det er meget åbne og de er
90 ikke så ræd for nye opgaver og sådan noget. Så altså de har antennerne ude ikke og det er
91 jo rigtig positivt ikke. Hvorimod en der er erfaren, har sine rutiner og det vil sige at ham
92 kan du ikke forme på samme måde som du kan med en nyuddannet.
- 93 C: Nej det er klart
- 94 I: Så der er sådan lidt plusser og minusser ved begge to ikke, men til gengæld så skal du så der
95 er mange flere spørgsmål, du skal være meget mere inde over en nyuddannet person
96 fordi de selvsagt skal læres op i det de skal sidde og lave ikke.
- 97 C: Så muligvis de kender teorierne og sådan noget fra alt muligt fancy men sådan rent praktisk
98 så skal de lære hvad det egentlig er at de skal sidde og lave.
- 99 I: I meget høj grad, måske er det nok mere min egen opfattelse, men i meget høj grad der
100 bruger man måske ikke så meget det er nok mere for mig selv men jeg brugte ikke mit
101 studie altså det jeg lærte og det der stod i bøgerne det brugte jeg ikke særlig meget, hvis
102 overhovedet i mit arbejdsliv. Det jeg har lært og det jeg bruger rigtig meget fra mit studie
103 det er den struktur jeg har fået ved at studere og gå den måde jeg går til værks på
104 opgaverne. Det er det jeg måske har fået mest ud af i min studietid, at jeg arbejder mere
105 struktureret. At jeg så i forvejen ikke er en ret struktureret person, det er så noget helt
106 andet. Men jeg går mere struktureret til værks når jeg bliver stillet overfor en opgave
107 ikke.
- 108 C: Okay
- 109 I: Så det er måske ikke i samme grad for [anonymized], for hun har lært at arbejde med nogle
110 værktøjer i form af illustrator og altså forskellige programmer på computeren. Så hun har
111 nogle kundskaber der som jeg ikke har som hun bruger i sin hverdag.
- 112 C: Er det fordi i er mere sådan jeg det ved jeg ikke altså er hendes en kandidatuddannelse?
- 113 I: Ja, altså lige [anonymized] altså den marketings ansvarlige?
- 114 C: Ja fordi nu snakker du om programmer og sådan om det er noget hun har lært på
115 universitetet eller om det er noget hun har lært
- 116 I: Det er noget hun har lært på universitetet simpelthen. Ja, der har hun lært at bruge de her
117 programmer her ikke
- 118 C: Okay. Så det giver en god fordel
- 119 I: Ja det gør det jo men du kan så sige at hvis du finder en ude ved der har erfaringen så kan de
120 også det jo ikke. Det var ligesom et krav for at komme ind i positionen der var at du kunne
121 sidde og arbejde i det her programmer og det. Altså hun sidder jo og er med til at sætte
122 etiketter op og tegne og altså det skal hun jo kunne ikke. Det kan en CBS'er eller en
123 cand.merc.sol altså en der har siddet med strategi jo ikke for eksempel. Ehm så det var et
124 krav.

- 125 C: Okay. Så når i står og skal ansætte er det så oftest dem med erfaring eller de nyuddannede?
126 I: Jamen hvis vi skal kigge tilbage i vores tilfælde, så er vi gået mere efter folk med erfaring.
127 C: Ja
128 I: Og det var nok det som jeg også sagde over telefonen fordi vi er en lille virksomhed så vi har
129 meget under vingerne, det har personer, de har mange arbejdsopgaver under vingerne
130 og derfor er det vigtigt både at man kan lande løbende, og at vi ikke har ressourcerne til
131 at der er en der står og kigger dig over nakken. Så man kan arbejde mere selvstændigt.
132 C: Okay. Så den eneste du lige sådan nu kan nævne det er [anonymized] som sidder med
133 marketing som kommer direkte fra skolen.
134 I: Ja det er den eneste vi har der kommer direkte fra skolen
135 C: Okay så i har ikke sådan tidligere haft problemer med at rekruttere nyuddannede
136 I: Nej det har vi ikke.
137 C: Okay.
138 I: Det har vi ikke. Og vi har ofte altså jeg har ansat gennem mit eget netværk.
139 C: Er der nogen forskel på når det er nyuddannede om de har noget ekstra de kan tilbyde jer?
140 I: Eh
141 C: Eller er der noget ekstra de kunne gøre for at være mere interessante overfor jer?
142 I: Jamen det er som sagt jeg synes det interessante ved nyuddannede er for det første at de er
143 billigere, det er en stor factor for en lille virksomhed som os det er hvad kan vi budgettere
144 med til en ny ansat ikke. Ehm, så det er en stor factor som man ikke skal underkende. Og
145 at du kan forme dem altså, det lyder så brutalt ikke men at du kan, altså de kommer ikke
146 ind med nogle forudantagede måder hvorpå tingene skal gøres. Ehm her kan du fortælle
147 dem hvad der passer ind i din måde eller den struktur der allerede er i virksomheden. De
148 tilpasser sig i højere grad end personer der måske har været i branchen i lang tid.
149 C: Okay, men det giver også god mening
150 I: ehm og ellers hvad der er af fordele, de har måske, de er mere, altså det er lidt det samme
151 med altså de kommer ikke med nogen altså hvis man sidder og snakker om en opskrift
152 eller om hvordan en plakat skal designes så hendes plade den er ren ikke, så hun kommer
153 måske med nogle inputs i både øst og vest ikke og nord og syd. Og det er jo en god måde
154 at gøre det på, så er der måske mere skal kasseres ikke men til gengæld så bliver der også
155 noget mere ind på bordet
156 C: Så nye øjne
157 I: Nye øjne ja. Hvorimod en der har siddet med udvikling af etiketter i lang tid hun har måske
158 dannet sig en stil ikke hvad hun godt kan lide Det er bare et eksempel i forhold til
159 udvikling af etiketter ikke men der er jo alt muligt andet også ikke. Så det måske den
160 største værdi i en nyuddannet er at hun kommer med en clean plate altså.
161 C: Ja, okay
162 I: Det synes jeg og det er
163 C: Ville det være mere interessant for jer med en nyuddannet hvis de ligesom startede i en
164 oplærende trainee stilling eller i den stil?
165 I: Ja, vi har bare ikke ressourcerne og strukturen til at understøtte det. Det skal være en lidt
166 større virksomhed
167 C: Okay. Og i har heller ikke tidligere haft det?
168 I: Nej
169 C: Okay. Og det er rent ressourcemæssigt at det simpelthen ikke kan lade sig gøre.

170 I: Jamen vi har jo ikke sådan dykket mere ned i om det kan lade sig gøre eller ej, men altså der
171 er altså også nogle fysiske rammer der er til hinder for det. Det gør jo at du skal have
172 nogle flere ansatte ikke altså. Som sagt havde vi de her to nye kollegaer og det fungerede
173 egentlig ret fint ikke, men det er helt der er faktisk mange spørgsmål ikke. Så jeg tror ikke
174 at jeg er ene om det her

175 C: Det er sådan lidt for tidskrævende

176 I: Det er en hel del mere tidskrævende ja (elev eller piccoline). De er ikke så selvkørende vel? Jo
177 yngre de er, jo mere skal man være over dem, jo mere kommer de med spørgsmål, de tør
178 ikke så meget hvorimod en nyuddannet (færdiguddannet) de har sådan nok styr på det til
179 at de godt tør prøve lidt af ikke. Altså de er selvstændige nok. Hvorimod en elev eller en
180 piccoline, de er ikke ret selvstændige vel. Det er ikke ment på en ond måde, men det er
181 de bare ikke.

182 C: Det er de ikke nej. Okay nå men et lidt andet spring så, ehm det tror jeg også at jeg nævnte i
183 telefonen da vi snakkede sammen faktisk men det her med at oftere så ses det også lidt
184 lettere for større virksomheder og med rekruttering og sådan fordi de måske har et større
185 brand og kendskaben er lidt højere og sådan, men hvordan oplever i det og hvordan med
186 jeres awareness og sådan

187 I: Jeg tror lige sådan lige med vores vores tilfælde der har vi jo nogle produkter ude på hylderne
188 på supermarkederne så der er i kraft af det er der jo et brand awareness ikke, for det ikke
189 i lige så høj grad som Coca cola eller kraftfood eller Heinz ketchup og sådan nogle brands
190 vel men vi har nogle brands eller nogle produkter som står ude på nogle hylder som
191 forbrugere ser ikke så der er noget brand awareness der så vi lider ikke under det der i
192 samme grad som måske en eller anden teknologi virksomhed som har nogle
193 komponenter i et eller andet telefon et eller andet sted som forbrugeren ikke ser noget til
194 vel. Ehm når det så er sagt så er der helt sikkert en udfordring der, ehm at de ikke kender
195 os i samme grad. Der er jo lavet det kender du jo sikkert der er lavet en del studier om at
196 studerende hellere vil ind i de virksomheder de kender ehm og det er jo lidt det man lider
197 under som lille virksomhed og det må man jo også bare anerkende og så løbere for at få
198 de rigtige medarbejdere. Men det er helt klart et dilemma altså for det er også et
199 spørgsmål om penge man vil bruge på at gå ud og finde de nye ikke altså. En headhunter
200 de kræver jo en [inaudible] eller tre gange en månedsløn eller hvad det nu er alt efter
201 hvem du snakker med ikke. Men det er helt klart et dilemma det der men vi er så heldige
202 at være i den branche hvor at vores brand det er derude ikke eller vores produkter er
203 derude.

204 C: Okay. Men nu før der snakkede vi for eksempel om at da i ansatte [anonymized] der var det
205 igennem netværk. Så generelt sådan hvis når i har en ny stillingen hvordan kommer i ud
206 med den hvordan promovere i ligesom at den er der

207 I: Ja altså vi snakker i første omgang med netværk og så slår vi den egentlig op på jobnet og
208 linkedin. Det er så step to ikke. For der plejer at komme rimelig meget.

209 C: Ja det kunne jeg forestille mig

210 I: Ja.

211 C: Men det vil sige i er også inde over med sociale medier og sådan noget

212 I: Det er vi i høj grad ja.

- 213 C: Ja har lavet en undersøgelse blandt nyuddannede sådan med spørgeskema og der er rigtig
214 mange der sådan siger at de ved simpelthen ikke hvor de skal finde de mindre
215 virksomheder som måske også er lidt mindre kendte og de kigger nemlig på de her jobnet
216 og jobindex og hvad der ellers er. Men de synes ikke at der er mange af de sådan små
217 virksomheder
- 218 I: Nej. Men det er nok fordi mange af de små virksomheder de ansætter gennem netværk. Og
219 det tror jeg at de gør af to grunde, det er ét for at spare penge, og to fordi at man jo føler
220 man kan stole mere på sit netværk når man, altså så er referencen lidt allerede taget ikke.
221 Sådan at hvis jeg spørger efter mit netværk at vi har brug for den her profil her, kender du
222 nogen, ja det gør jeg. Så fremsender de jo ikke en som de ikke kan stå inde for.
- 223 C: Okay. Men før der snakkede du også om at nu havde i selvfølgelig produkterne ude og så der
224 fik i selvfølgelig noget awareness gennem det men eller var det også noget som sådan
225 ikke lige var der i ville bruge ressourcerne og kaste penge efter at hvad skal man sige øge
226 awareness
- 227 I: Altså omkring job opslaget eller?
- 228 C: nu tænker jeg bare sådan generelt på virksomheden også i forhold til at være mere kendt i
229 nye medarbejderes øjne hvis det er.
- 230 I: Ja men det er jo lidt to sider af samme sag fordi vi bruger rigtig mange ressourcer på ligesom
231 at øge kendskab til vores virksomhed. Men det gør vi jo primært fordi vi gerne vil have at
232 folk køber vores produkter men det ene det understøtter jo det andet. Ehm i vores
233 tilfælde ikke. Så jo man kan sige vi bruger mange penge på det men vi gør det ikke fordi vi
234 vil tiltrække nye medarbejdere vi gør det fordi vi gerne vil tiltrække nye forbrugere.
- 235 C: Så for eksempel begrebet employer branding det er ikke noget i som sådan har arbejdet med
- 236 I: Nej
- 237 C: Nej og det er ikke noget sådan i tænker fremadrettet kunne være interessant?
- 238 I: Jo det kunne det da godt men, ehm det kunne det da godt altså jeg tror at det altså du mener
239 i forhold til tiltrækning af nye ressourcer eller hvad?
- 240 C: Ja
- 241 I: Ja.
- 242 C: Nu står i så ikke og mangler nogle nye
- 243 I: Vi står ikke og mangler nogle nej men vi har egentlig ikke haft de store problemer med at
244 finde kandidater
- 245 C: Med reference tilbage til at det fungerer meget godt med netværk
- 246 I: Ja
- 247 C: Okay, fint. Så
- 248 I: de tilfælde hvor det ikke fungerer har vi så slået den op på jobindex og der er så kommet ret
249 mange ansøgere.
- 250 C: Okay. Og LinkedIn
- 251 I: Ja.
- 252 C: Kan i se forskel på når det er for eksempel jobnet, jobindex eller når det er sådan mere social
253 LinkedIn?
- 254 I: Ja altså LinkedIn det er mere tungere profiler jobindex det er sådan lidt mere almindeligt.
- 255 C: Okay. Ehm sådan helt generelt når vi snakker awareness er der sådan eller måske ikke så
256 meget awareness, men mere generelt for jeres virksomhed er der så et eller andet som
257 differencer jer basalt fra større virksomheder?

- 258 I: I forbindelse... prøv lige at uddybe
259 C: Hvis bare som sådan mindre virksomhed er der så noget i tænker at det er vi langt bedre til
260 fordi vi netop er lille end større virksomheder er?
261 I: Du tænker i forbindelse med tiltrækning af kandidater eller tænker du generelt?
262 C: Det kan godt være ja lad os bare sige for medarbejdere generel
263 I: Ja. Jamen det kan vi jo helt sikkert altså i kraft af at vi er en lille virksomhed så har du også en
264 meget større berøringsflade med andre områder nu normalt ikke vil arbejde med. Jo
265 større virksomheden bliver, jo mere bliver dine arbejdsopgaver sat i box eller bås eller
266 hvad du vil kalde det. Altså du arbejder mere struktureret det er måske et dårligt ord,
267 men hvis du arbejder i en stor virksomhed, så har du ikke så stor en berøringsflade med
268 hele processen. Lad os tage et eksempel hvis i produktudvikling der vil du i en virksomhed
269 som vores sidde med hele værdikæden fra idéfasen til når produktet står ude på hylden
270 og måske sågar også eller faktisk også med at arbejde med kampagne. I en virksomhed
271 som Orkla eller Unilever som er samme branche som vores som er meget meget større
272 virksomhed der arbejder du måske med produktudvikling ikke fra A til Z som du gør her
273 hos Bangs men måske fra A til F og det kan være at så skal du slippe produktet efter du
274 har udviklet etiketten for eksempel så er der en anden der tager processen over ikke og
275 skal finde ud af hvilket glas du skal have produktet skal være i. Og så skal den så
276 overlevere produktet når det kommer ud og skal stå på hylden. Så en medarbejder kan
277 godt, det er jo ikke alle, men de fleste kan godt lide at man følger sin baby hele vejen ud
278 til hylden og faktisk også arbejder med det på hylden fordi det er sjovt. Så de store
279 virksomheder de har den udfordring at du bliver sat mere i bås hvor de mindre
280 virksomheder der får du en bredere berøringsflade og du er meget tættere på
281 beslutningstagerne i de mindre virksomheder og du spiller en større rolle i kraft af at du
282 ikke er så mange medarbejdere så du får lov til at tage nogle beslutninger selv ikke
283 C: Så du får mere ansvar
284 I: Ja, med andre ord.
285 C: Og du har mindre hvad kan man kalde det samlebandsarbejde
286 I: Ja
287 C: Ja okay
288 I: Og det er en det er en vigtig factor når du skal ud og vælge arbejde hvad vil du sidde og lave
289 ikke altså. Så vi har ikke de store udfordringer når vi skal ud og rekruttere folk fordi vi kan
290 give dem en masse rent arbejdsmæssigt, men der hvor vi kommer til kort er at vi ikke kan
291 betale lige så store lønninger. Omvendt så de store virksomheder de tiltrækker
292 medarbejdere med en større løncheck hvilket er halvdelen af det arbejde det altså det
293 spiller cirka 50%
294 C: I forhold til arbejdsopgaver
295 I: I forhold til at vælge et job det er okay jamen hvor stor en rolle skal lønnen og hvor stor en
296 rolle spiller arbejdsopgaverne. For nogle kan det være 75 løn og 25 arbejdsopgaver, alt
297 efter hvor du sidder henne.
298 C: Okay, så hvis du skal sige jeres største styrke som en mindre virksomhed
299 I: Jamen vores største styrke er at vi kan tilbyde vores medarbejdere mere ansvar og
300 beslutnings ja altså at de kan tage beslutninger.
301 C: Okay. Så har jeg faktisk ikke så mange flere spørgsmål.
302 I: Jamen det var dejligt hurtigt så

- 303 C: Ja det var det
304 I: Det er jo perfekt
305 C: Du svarede nærmest på dem alle sammen løbende
306 I: Jamen det var da godt. Ellers kan du bare skrive, så skal jeg nok give lyd.
307 C: Er der noget du sådan tænker du gerne vil af med her på falderebet?
308 I: Nej altså det er der faktisk ikke. Det er der ikke, jeg har sagt det jeg skal sige.
309 C: Perfekt. Jamen så slukker jeg.

C.2. Konsolidator A/S

- 1 C: Altså lige for at komme helt godt fra start, så vil jeg gerne høre lige for at få afklaret at I er en
2 lille virksomhed, sådan hvor mange I rent faktisk er?
- 3 I: Vi er 5 ansatte og to, tre studerende.
- 4 C: Tre studerende?
- 5 I: Ja to tre stykker sådan cirka.
- 6 C: Okay, så I er sådan?
- 7 I: 5 fuldtidsansatte igen og to tre studerende som er der altid.
- 8 C: Så det er lidt en bred vifte både erfarende og ikke så erfarende?
- 9 I: Ja det vil jeg sige. De 5 ansatte de er fulderfarende, det er nogle med rigtig mange års
10 erhvervserfaring hvor den yngste er i starten af 40'erne. Så det er alt sammen nogle med
11 mindst 20 års erfaring af de 5, og de to tre stykker det svinger lidt med, lige i øjeblikket er
12 de faktisk to studerende og det er to CBS studerende.
- 13 C: Okay.
- 14 I: En fir. og en ling.merc.'er.
- 15 C: Ja okay. Så når I heller ikke er flere, så ved du helt præcis hvilken baggrund de kommer fra
16 kan jeg høre nu på dig med de nyuddannede, men dem især der er fastansatte, de fem,
17 hvor kommer I sådan fra?
- 18 I: Vi er en software virksomhed, så vi har to programmører, så det er programmører, hardcore
19 koder, så de kommer fra CBS eller IT på universitet.
- 20 C: Okay
- 21 I: Og vi tre andre er med økonomi og revisor baggrunde, så vi er CFO'er og revisorer, så hvis det
22 er revisorer, så er det cand.merc.aud'er som revisor og jeg selv er cand.polit. og kommer
23 fra Københavns Universitet.
- 24 C: Okay så en bred skare.
- 25 I: Med dem alle sammen. Kandidaten altså.
- 26 C: Det er alligevel meget interessant.
- 27 I: Nok ikke så overraskende når du er på DTU, vil jeg sige. Det er altså, det er relativt højt, ja.
28 Det er faktisk et krav for at bo her, at man skal have en teknisk baggrund.
- 29 C: Okay.
- 30 I: Det er en af kravene, for at komme ind her, ja.
- 31 C: Ja okay. Nå, spændende alligevel.
- 32 I: Som virksomhed ja.
- 33 C: Så nu hvor jeg har et spørgsmål om I har kandidat ansatte, så kan jeg jo roligt sige ja det har I.
- 34 I: Vi har ikke andet nej.
- 35 C: Nej.
- 36 I: Sådan må det også være i fremtiden. Lige nu søger vi den her til kommunikation og marketing
37 og der søger vi cand.ling.merc.'er og cand.com.'er, så også nogen med en kandidat. Og
38 jeg skal også til at søge nogen sælgere og det er også nogen der enten har en, der har en
39 kandidat baggrund, som enten har været revisorer eller også så har de været
40 økonomichefer eller regnskabschefer eller en eller anden med en relativ høj stilling efter
41 deres kandidatuddannelser. Så der går lang tid før vi får ikke-kandidatuddannede folk.
- 42 C: Så det er lidt nærmest et kriterie når I søger?

- 43 I: Ja ikke på grund af uddannelsen, men den erfaring. Når vi skal til at søge for eksempel
44 sælgere til at implementere vores software, så kræver vi at de har en, både en
45 uddannelse indenfor regnskab og så også at de har noget erhvervserfaring. Så man vil
46 ikke se ret mange under, altså under de der 2, 3, 4, 35 år, det er svært at forestille sig.
- 47 C: Nu hvor du siger når I skal til at implementere, hvor ny er virksomheden rent faktisk?
- 48 I: Det nok mere nye kunder.
- 49 C: Okay.
- 50 I: Altså, virksomheden er fra 2014, hvor vi var tre der gik i gang med at kode det her software
51 som vi sælger og det tog halvandet år, der havde vi også fuldtidsarbejde ved siden af, så
52 det tog godt halvandet år. Den 01.01.2016 havde vi vores produkt færdigt og gik i gang
53 med at sælge det. Så vi har solgt i knapt tre år 2016, 17 og 18 snart tre år har vi solgt
54 produktet og når jeg siger implementere, så er det når vi finder en ny kunde, så skal
55 softwaren implementeres hos kunden og for at kunne implementere. Der er ikke noget at
56 implementere, vi er software til service, så det er bare med at log på en webbrowser og
57 så er du i gang. For at tilpasset den software til din virksomhed så skal der være en
58 implementering. Og dem der skal foretage implementeringen fra os af skal have noget
59 regnskabsteknisk kunnen. Du skal ikke have IT-mæssig erfaring for at implementere det,
60 men du skal have regnskabsteknisk forståelse på et ret højt niveau og derfor er det ikke
61 realistisk at vi tager en helt ny uddannet. Men nu er det lige præcis indenfor
62 statsautoriseret revisorer det er jo en uddannelse samtidig med at man arbejder, så du
63 kan faktisk være fuldstændig. Hvis du er færdig uddannet som enten cand.merc.aud eller
64 statsautoriseret revisor så har du allerede 10 års erhvervserfaring, så på den måde kan du
65 godt tage en nyuddannet for så har de allerede relativ meget erfaring.
- 66 C: Okay. Men når I ligesom søger. Hvor søger I så henne?
- 67 I: Hvilket medie?
- 68 C: ja.
- 69 I: Jobindex.
- 70 C: Hovedsageligt jobindex?
- 71 I: Det bliver det i Danmark. Vi skal også til at søge i udlandet, så bliver det selvfølgelig nogle
72 andre. Men i Danmark er det i Jobindex.
- 73 C: Okay. Men altså i forhold til det her med nyuddannede så hører man bare tit nu her om at
74 der er en øget konkurrence at ligesom få fat i de gode talenter, men ser du fordele eller
75 ulemper i at det er nyuddannede?

- 76 I: Jeg kan godt lide at arbejde med unge mennesker. Helt klart. Jeg kan godt lide, at de unge, de
77 kommer med en anden man kan godt sige friskhed, men de har jo færre barrierer. De
78 kommer meget mere med sådan har jeg altid gjort, det ligger i at være ung, så der er en
79 anden energi og en anden måde at se tingene på. Så vi har ansat en på 62, ham er vi
80 super glade for, men jeg kan rigtig godt lide at få unge ind. Der er ingen tvivl om, at de
81 næste vi skal have ansat de bliver yngre, hvis de gider at være hos os. Det er altid svært at
82 få fat i den første unge, fordi vi er alle sammen over 40, det skal de jo gide. Vi har ingen
83 kvinder for eksempel, vi vil gerne have kvinder og vi vil gerne have unge, for at få den her
84 bredde i vores forhæng, det er jo klart når vi kun er fem mennesker, så er det begrænset
85 hvor bredde man kan være, der kan man ikke både have unge og gammel og international
86 og kvinder og mænd. Altså, det er jo selvfølgelig svært når vi kun er fem mennesker, men
87 der er ingen tvivl om i den her kommunikation, marketing og kommunikation der har vi
88 fået 53 ansøgere, ung og gammel, mænd og kvinder, der går jeg efter en ung kvinde. Jeg
89 har også både ældre og mænd til samtale, for selvfølgelig skal vi have den bedste
90 kandidat, men står der en, alt andet lige så vil jeg helst have en unge kvinde, og den her
91 diversitet. Det er helt klart. Og så ja, så tror jeg de næste ansættelser det bliver sådan
92 nogle relativt unge og med relativt mener jeg de er stadigvæk over 30.
- 93 C: Og så tror du det er en fordel, fordi de er open minded?
- 94 I: ja.
- 95 C: Okay. Men altså tidligere, har I der haft problemer med nyuddannede? Nu siger du, at det er
96 svært når I føler jer lidt gamle eller?
- 97 I: Overhovedet ikke. Jeg tror vores studerende har været super glad for at være her netop fordi
98 de som studerende har fået meget meget stort ansvar, fordi vi er en lille virksomhed. Så
99 de her cand.ling.merc'er som vi har haft ansat mens de har været studerende, de har jo
100 faktisk været marketingschefer. Selvom de stadigvæk er studerende fordi de ligesom de
101 kom. Ja, jeg tror det har været nogle sjove studenterjobs, fordi man får ret stort ansvar og
102 man får i hvert fald noget som man selv kan skrive på CV'et.
- 103 C: Ja. Nå, ej det ville jeg da også gerne have haft set.
- 104 I: Der bruger vi det her graduate land. Er det ikke det det hedder?
- 105 C: Jo, der er noget der hedder graduate land.
- 106 I: Det tror jeg. Igen, den her stillingsannonce som der er lagt op på jobindex. Det var studerende
107 der har lavet den.
- 108 C: Okay, jeg har kun set på LinkedIn at I havde gang i noget.
- 109 I: ja, der var den her jobstilling der var lagt op på Jobindex og så har vi smidt den op på linkedIn.
110 Det var en studerende der har lavet den. Så de studerende har haft ret meget fri plads til
111 at udfolde sig, fordi de ikke ved så meget om det, så når de foreslog noget så har de fået
112 lov. Så på den måde så tror jeg selv om vi gamle i forhold, så er de ret glade for vi er her,
113 jeg er her det virker sådan.
- 114 C: Men er der noget som de nyuddannede ligesom kan tilbyde jer som virksomhed?

- 115 I: Ja klart, specielt med kommunikation og marketing, og digitale værktøjer. Altså jeg kan ikke
116 mailchimp, jeg kan ikke facebook boost, jeg kan ikke alle de der ting, altså jeg kan lære
117 dem, men nu har jeg jo så en anden rolle i virksomheden. Jeg kan ikke alle de ting her og
118 problemet, når jeg overhovedet ikke kender dem, så kan jeg ikke en gang anbefale det og
119 sige I skal gøre sådan. For jeg ved at det eksisterede før de kommer og fortæller mig at de
120 eksisterer, at man kan også gøre sådan. Og jeg bruger ofte det ordssprog som siger: "Hvis
121 man ved, man ikke ved det, så lærer man det. Men hvis man ikke ved, at man ikke ved
122 det, kan du ikke gøre noget."
- 123 C: Nej. Det er rigtigt.
- 124 I: Og sådan er der rigtig meget for mig indenfor kommunikation og marketing. Jeg ved ikke hvad
125 der er af muligheder og derfor kan jeg også, så når der er nogen der fortæller mig om
126 google adwords og om SEO og vi skal SEO-optimere så kan jeg godt forstå det, men jeg
127 kan ikke sige hvad jeg skal gøre. Ja vi skal have noget bedre 'content', okay, men hvad er
128 bedre 'content', det ved jeg ikke engang, så jeg skal have nogen. Der skal jeg virkelig
129 hjælpes. Når der så kommer en studerende og siger, jeg syntes vi skal gøre sådan. 1, jeg
130 har ikke noget argument, for ikke at gøre sådan. Og det er også rigtig fint, så de har fået
131 relativt.
- 132 C: Så hvis de argumenterer godt for deres sag, så hvorfor?
- 133 I: De behøves ikke engang at argumentere. De skal bare komme med en ide og så skal de prøve
134 det af.
- 135 C: Så der er I også meget åbne?
- 136 I: Meget. Fordi vi kan ikke bedre selv, men selv hvis det så ikke er en god ide, så har vi så lært af
137 det, kan man sige.
- 138 C: Det er jo så også en stor fordel for de nyuddannede i forhold til at prøve hvad de lærer af. Nu
139 kan jeg så sammenligne det med den tidligere virksomhed jeg har været i. De turde ikke
140 så meget, så er det rigtig rigtig svært at komme ud og rampen dem. Så det er meget fedt
141 at I er åbne.
- 142 I: Det forstår jeg godt. Specielt hvis man er igen lidt ældre som mig, så er man simpelthen nødt
143 til at anerkende at der er meget vi ikke ved og så bliver man simpelthen nødt til at tage ud
144 på den der tynde is og prøve nogle ting af og se hvad pokker der sker. Altså, du kan ikke
145 bare sidde tilbage og sige, "det der det er utrykt for mig, og jeg kender det ikke, så jeg
146 bliver væk".
- 147 C: Og håbe på at dine medarbejdere også vil det bedste for virksomheden.
- 148 I: Ja. Det vil alle jo. Det syntes jeg ikke man behøves være så bange for, så ja.
- 149 C: Men i forhold til nyuddannede. Nu siger du det kræver alligevel at de har lidt erfaring eller at
150 de i hvert fald kan selv lærer i kontekst, hvis man kan sige det sådan. Vil de nyuddannede
151 være mere interessante for jer som lille virksomhed, hvis de startede i en form af praktik
152 eller trainee eller elev eller hvad man kalder det?
- 153 I: Nej. Det er bare ud ad.
- 154 C: Så hvis de har haft et studiejob eller noget praktik løbende, så er de mere værd end hvis de
155 starter i en oplærende stilling?

- 156 I: Ja. Ved mindre virksomheder fungerer oplærende stillinger ikke, fordi du får et meget meget
157 stort ansvar. Der er jo ikke nogen af os der har tid til eller evner til at gå og være mentor
158 for en trainee, eller gå og opvarte, altså hvis man gerne vil sådan noget så må man i en
159 stor virksomhed. Altså, i små virksomheder der kommer du ud og så får du lige måske et
160 kvarters introduktion og så er det bare i gang. Og så finder du selv ud af hvor
161 kaffemaskinen står, og hvad for nogle abonnementer man skal bruge og hvordan man gør
162 tingene. Det finder man..., altså man spørger jo selvfølgelig. Det er egentlig også en ting
163 som jeg tror er meget vigtig, at tage med til jer unge der, det er personlighed meget
164 mere. Altså I skal have jeres værktøjskasse i orden det skal alle jo, sådan er det. Men
165 derudover personlighed og der tror jeg man skal gøre sig klart, fordi vi har jo alle sammen
166 forskellige personligheder. Det tror jeg man skal gøre sig klart, "har jeg en personlighed til
167 at være i små mindre virksomheder eller har jeg en personlighed som mere er rettet mod
168 de større virksomheder". Den helt helt... jeg kommer fra A.P. Møller, så jeg har været i en
169 af de store virksomheder, og den helt helt store forskel er hvordan man bliver taget i
170 armen, i hånden og guidet. I store virksomheder kommer du ind i deres corporate
171 programmer og bliver trænet og guidet, og ryger på engelsk kursus og på handelskursus
172 og derud af og bliver fuldstændig pakket ind og fuldstændig guidet. Og på den måde får
173 man jo selvfølgelig heller ikke den samme store selvstændighed, men bliver til gengæld
174 trænet og guidet. Hvor imod i de små virksomheder, der er det bare derud af, der går
175 man simpelthen bare igang og så starter man med at arbejde og så tager man den derfra.
- 176 C: Og så kan man sige, så lærer man også mere undervejs på en eller anden måde, fordi man
177 siger jo ofte det her med hvis man får lov at "fejle" eller falde eller lige mærke at man er
178 på dybt vand, så lærer man mere af det ikke?

- 179 I: Man lærer noget andet. Jeg vil hellere sige man lærer noget andet. Jeg vil være bleg for at
180 sige at, jeg vil mene, og det er også det jeg siger til vores studerende. Den perfekte
181 karrierevej uanset om man vil de store eller de små, det er, start i en stor virksomhed. Det
182 er svært at gå den anden vej rundt. Start i en stor virksomhed, fordi man får nogen
183 redskaber i forlængelse af sin kandidatgrad eller kandidatuddannelse, at man får nogen
184 værktøjer. Det jeg fik og lærte hos A.P. Møller det bruger jeg stadigvæk, selv om jeg er i
185 en iværksætter virksomhed eller opstartsvirksomhed. Så jeg syntes der er rigtig mange
186 fordele ved at starte i de store virksomheder, og så få nogle værktøjer der, og så kan man
187 så finde ud af hen ad vejen om man syntes det er for uselvstændigt og at det er for
188 bureaukratisk og det er for svært at komme igennem med sine ideer og man syntes de er
189 for konservative og de ting der, og hvis man føler man bliver begrænset for det, så kan
190 man hoppe ud i noget mindre. Det er bare svært når du starter i de små, du får ikke de
191 her værktøjer du kommer ikke på det her hurtige udvekslingskursus, du får ikke det
192 engelskkursus og al de her forskellige kurser. Sådan fungerer det bare ikke i de her små
193 virksomheder, her er det altså bare ud og få hænderne ned i dejen med det samme. Så
194 det er to meget forskellige typer måder at arbejde på - du bliver meget meget bred af at
195 arbejde i de små virksomheder. Fordi altså, tager du nu f.eks. vores kommunikation og
196 marketing. Det er jo hele palletten med nyhedsbreve og med LinkedIn og Facebook og
197 hjemmeside og samtidig også en international strategi for hvordan skal vi brande os selv i
198 hele verdenen og hvordan skal vi lave kampagne i Schweiz og måske ansætte nogen i et
199 bureau i London og altså, så det er jo hele paletten. Hvor hvis du er ansat i en stor
200 virksomhed, jamen så står du måske for et hjørne af en hjemmeside og så sidde med det
201 og ikke andet.
- 202 C: Men så kan man også sige der er det jo også netop fordi kommunikation og marketing er så
203 bredt, svært at finde en mere eller mindre generalist der kan være med på det hele, fordi
204 netop at der er nogen der er mere specialiseret i for eksempel den online del eller SEO
205 eller hvad det nu end måtte være, hvor der kan det igen være det her med strategien som
206 er en hel anden boldgade og branding, og image udad til og employer branding indad til
207 og hvad ved jeg. Jeg kan godt forstå når du siger I har brug for nogen med erfaring, fordi
208 de skal kunne det hele.
- 209 I: Ja. Det er der kan ingen.
- 210 C: Nej men sådan bredt sagt.

- 211 I: Jeg er fuldstændig enig med hvad du siger og det er også derfor jeg kommer lidt tilbage til
212 personlighed, fordi der er ikke nogen der kan favne det hele, og også selvom du har 25 års
213 erfaring. Det er der simpelthen ingen der kan. Så det handler også om det der med
214 personprofilen, om hvordan håndterer du det der med du ikke har ekspertise eller
215 erfaring i. Så det skal jo stadigvæk laves og så er det så hvor du hele tiden må gå på
216 kompromis, enten så laver jeg det selv med den begrænset erfaring jeg har, eller også lige
217 præcis på det område, søger vi så noget ekstern ekspertise. Man kan jo stadigvæk bruge,
218 enten studerende, eller man kan bruge nogle eksterne bureauer. For eksempel. Lige i
219 øjeblikket med denne kommunikations og marketings person jeg søger, der er jeg meget
220 fokuseret på det sproglige. Så kan de jo ikke det visuelle, det er jo typisk en modsætning.
221 Men det er fordi vi har et bureau eksternt, som ligesom har lavet vores visuelle identitet
222 og det bureau må rigtig gerne fortsætte, det viser personen skal ikke være ekspert på det
223 visuelle, men så skal man til gengæld have relationen til det her eksterne bureau. Så man
224 får stadigvæk ansvaret for en meget bred palette og så de områder man ikke selv kan
225 eller har erfaring i, der må man så hvad hedder det, bruge noget eksternt assistance.
- 226 C: Okay.
- 227 I: Der bliver man en form for koordinator. Hvor man skal koordinere så.
- 228 C: Meget interessant. Nå, men så i forhold til det her med større virksomheder de ofte har lidt
229 lettere med at rekruttering i form af de måske er mere kendte og især også når vi snakker
230 nyuddannede hvis små virksomheder ikke er så gode til at eller de måske ikke tænker så
231 meget over det og hvis awareness ikke er så høj, hvordan får man så fat i nogen som ikke
232 rigtig ved man eksisterer? Hvordan ser I jeres awareness i forhold til større virksomheder?
233 Ser i nogen udfordringer eller hvordan?
- 234 I: Ja, altså klart. Men hvad hedder det, det handler om kommunikation. Altså, jeg mener hvis du
235 er, altså hvis du kan komme, kan man sige, få budskabet ud, så kan vi jo tilbyde noget helt
236 helt andet end A.P. Møller eller Novo eller Carlsberg eller Pandora. Vi kan jo tilbyde noget
237 helt helt andet, fordi vi er en lille virksomhed. Så for den rette profil er vi jo markant mere
238 interessant end at arbejde hos Pandora. Fordi, hvis du godt kan lide det her med at være
239 meget selvstændig og have hele ansvaret og virkelig sidde tæt på ledelse og du virkelig, ”
240 det-du-siger-i-dag-det-gør-vi-i-morgen-agtigt”, du kan simpelthen få lov til at boldre dig
241 kan man sige, og prøve alle de her forskellige redskaber af, som du har lært på skolen
242 eller som du brænder for eller et eller andet, ikke. Så for den rette profil så er vi jo meget
243 meget sjovere. Men det skal vi selvfølgelig ud og fortælle, fordi der er ikke nogen der
244 kender Konsolidator, men alle kender Pandora. Altså, det siger selvfølgelig sig selv, så det
245 handler igen om kommunikation, og nu kan jeg jo se, nu fordi jeg fik den her annonce sat
246 op af en kommunikationsstuderende, gjorde jo at vi har fået 63 ansøgere. Sidste gang vi
247 lavede en ansøgning der fik vi jo 8 ansøgere eller sådan noget der.
- 248 C: Og hvor lagde i den op?
- 249 I: Også Jobindex. Så det siger jo lidt om, jeg ved ikke om det pga. den grønne farve eller, I dont
250 know.
- 251 C: Eller sproget, hvad der bliver skrevet i selve annoncen?

- 252 I: Ja. Så det handler meget om kommunikation. Der er nogen der er virkelig virkelig svære, og
253 det er klart når vi kommer til programmører, så kan det helt klart godt blive svært og det
254 må vi så, altså. Den type stillinger, fordi der er til gengæld meget meget begrænset
255 ressourcer og der kan det tit bare blive løn og så skal man ud og konkurrerer på løn og der
256 er Microsoft lønførende og sådan nogen ting, så det kan seriøst godt blive en udfordring,
257 men må vi jo tage det til den tid, så kan det godt være vi må have programmører til at
258 sidde i udlandet. Men på sådan nogle almindelige sælgere og marketing, kommunikation
259 og sådan nogen ting der, der bør være rigeligt at tage af i Danmark. Det mener jeg.
- 260 C: Okay. Med hensyn til jeres egen brand awareness, hvordan gør I opmærksom på jer selv?
- 261 I: For lidt, det ved jeg selv, så, men vi bruger LinkedIn, og vi bruger fagblade, hvor vi annoncerer
262 i fagblade.
- 263 C: Men det er også en lille niche I har gang i?
- 264 I: Ja det er det. Så det her brand recognition - vil vi meget meget gerne have en meget høj
265 brand recognition inden for vores målgruppe, og den målgruppe er meget meget snæver.
266 Der er faktisk fem til ti tusind personer i Danmark der behøver at kende os, så har vi en
267 brand recognition på 100. Mere er der sådan set ikke.
- 268 C: Men det er jo fedt.
- 269 I: Ja. Og de er navngivne, så vi kan bare sende en mail til dem, så det er relativt simpelt. Men
270 det ændrer ikke mere ved, at det skal gøres, og det bliver ikke gjort i dag. Men ellers så er
271 det rigtig meget direct, altså, et af vores helt store branding områder, det er fire store
272 revisionshuse: Deloitte, PwC, KPMG, Ernst&Young – og det er simpelthen kaffe-møder.
273 Jeg drikker rigtig meget kaffe. Så det er simpelthen at inviterer os selv på besøg og
274 spørger om du kan få en kop kaffe. Det er nok vores mest anvendte branding og dem vi
275 har størst success med. Den er egentligt rigtig god den metode, problemet ved den
276 metode, det er at den fungerer kun i Danmark, den fungerer ikke i Europa. Så skal man i
277 hvert drikke meget kaffe, så den fungerer kun her i Danmark, så vi skal på en eller anden
278 måde finde ud af hvordan vi får. Det er en af de ting, som bliver vigtigt her for den her
279 kommunikationsmedarbejder, det bliver at finde ud af hvordan vi skalerer vores branding
280 til Europa. Det bliver opgave nummer 1.
- 281 C: Så det vil sige, lige nu der har, altså føler I, at I har styr på det danske marked og gerne vil ud?
- 282 I: Ja. Der er rimelig mange der kender til Danmark og der er flere der kender til London tror jeg.
283 Så der er det en udfordring.
- 284 C: Og så tænker I Europa i første omgang?
- 285 I: Vi er i Danmark og vi er i Schweiz og vi er småt i England, men vi skal have meget mere tryk på
286 Schweiz. Og vi skal have også lidt mere tryk på England. Så det er sådan de første, det er
287 faktisk også derfor vi søger en der godt kan tysk. Men så England og Schweiz skal der
288 trykkes mere på og lige så snart vi har fået sat det i gang, så er det Sverige og Norge og
289 Benelux. Det er simpelthen fordi vi kigger hovedsagligt på de lande som vi føler er mest
290 IT- savvy, altså mest IT-modne. Det går vi efter, fordi at vores produkt, det er egentligt et
291 produkt der erstatter Excel [inaudible], som man allerede i dag laver i Excel. Det skal man
292 så lave inde i vores produkt. Og de lande der er mest IT modne, det er der hvor vi har
293 lettest med at komme igennem med vores budskaber. Så vi starter med de lande og når
294 de lande så er sat i gang, kan man sige, så går vi videre til Spanien, Frankrig og så
295 begynder vi så at kigge på enten USA, eller Mellemøsten og Asien. Så det er egentligt
296 global udspredelse, vi sådan satse mod, men sådan i rolig tempi.

- 297 C: Ja okay. Nå, men spændende alligevel. Men i forhold til det her med promovering af egen
298 virksomhed, har I lært, sådan nu ved jeg godt I ikke er så, I har ikke sådan mega mange år
299 på banen, men har I haft tænkt over eller kigget på eller endda arbejdet med det her
300 koncept med employer branding, i forhold til at få mere awareness og få folk til at blive
301 interesseret i virksomheden?
- 302 I: Jeg ved ikke engang hvad det er.
- 303 C: Okay.
- 304 I: Teach me.
- 305 C: Employer branding er det her med at du rent brandingmæssigt arbejder rigtig meget med
306 identitet og image i virksomheden. Hvor identitet det er at du går ind og kigger på
307 virksomheden, hvem er vi generelt, hvem vil vi gerne have vi selv associerer os med, som
308 virksomhed. Hvor at image det er sådan ud ad til, så når du rent faktisk kommunikerer det
309 ud, hvordan tager stakeholdere så imod det her, både med påvirkning fra medier og
310 andre stakeholdere til virksomheden, hvordan alt ligesom spiller ind udefra,
311 samfundsmæssigt og hvad ved jeg. Hvordan bliver det I gerne vil syne, hvordan bliver det
312 taget imod, i forhold til både at sprede awareness om hvem I er, men også at gøre jer
313 attraktive som employer. Giver det mening?
- 314 I: Ja. Det tror jeg nok egentlig vi har tænkt over alligevel, vi vidste bare ikke det hed det. Men
315 altså du kan jo sige, vi er tre foundere og to af os er ude hos kunder og vi har da snakket
316 om hvad er det for en, altså, hvad er det for en udstråling, hvad er det vi kommer med.
317 Men vi er jo bare som vi er, altså vi er jo ærlige, altså vi har ikke prøvet at omskole os selv,
318 vi kommer bare som de personer vi er. Og de kunder vi har fået, det har de godt kunnet
319 lide og de kunder vi så ikke har fået, det har de så ikke kunnet lide. Det er sådan meget, så
320 det bliver nok noget der sådan ligesom lidt mere skal sættes i nogen kasser, i nogen
321 rammer, måske defineres, når vi begynder at få medarbejdere. Så skal de jo ligesom finde
322 ud af, okay, hvis den anden founder som hedder [anonymized], så hvis og jeg, altså, og
323 hvis de andre på en eller anden måde skal være led, altså, hvis vi på en eller anden måde
324 skabe den identitet, så skal den identitet jo skabes lidt omkring den måde vi er på, kan
325 man sige ikke?
- 326 C: Det er jo det I vinder på og det her med når medarbejderne kan se hvad det egentlig er man
327 står for og det også er det der ligesom bliver afspejlet udad til, og det skal jo så også
328 gerne være det der tiltrækker nye medarbejdere, at man gerne vil arbejde i det miljø.
- 329 I: Så jeg kan jo godt se, at vi når vi begynder at få nogle flere folk på, så skal vi definere hvad vi
330 rent er. Det har vi jo ikke defineret ved bare at være os selv, og det er jo så definitionen
331 på os, kan man sige, fordi vi jo bare er os selv. Men når der kommer flere på, så skal vi jo
332 prøve at se om de [inaudible], men det er jo klart, altså, vi har jo en identitet, altså der er
333 jo ingen tvivl om at hvis vi går ud til alle vores kunder og revisorerne og spørger, "Hvad er
334 Konsolidator for en type virksomhed?" Jamen, så vil de så svare et eller andet, og jeg aner
335 ikke hvad de ville svare. Men så vil de jo svare et eller andet. Altså, både positivt og
336 negativt, og sådan er det jo. Og, det er så den måde vi er på.
- 337 C: Men det er ikke noget I som sådan reelt har arbejdet med endnu? I har selvfølgelig gjort jer
338 nogle tanker omkring det, men?

- 339 I: Det kan man sådan set sige, men der hvor der er gjort rigtig mange tanker omkring det, der er
340 at vi lever rigtig meget på troværdighed. Altså det er jo regnskabsting vi laver, så vi, for
341 eksempel har vi aldrig nogensinde promoveret os som iværksætter virksomhed, fordi
342 vores kunder det er sådan nogen relativt store virksomheder, og der klinger det bare ikke
343 så godt at sige... Det klinger ikke så godt, så vi har aldrig nogensinde udpenslet at vi er en
344 opstartsvirksomhed eller iværksættervirksomhed, det bliver altid nedtonet, og så prøver
345 vi at puste os lidt op indeni. Vi prøver at gøre os lidt større, altså når folk spørger hvor
346 mange ansatte vi er, ikke, så puha det vil vi helst ikke svare på, fordi vi er jo kun 5, ikke. Så
347 i starten bruger vi nogle kunder som referencer, men så, på den måde har vi gået op i
348 hvad er det for nogle signaler vi sender ud ikke?. Så vi har sådan prøvet at puste os lidt op
349 og gjort os lidt større end vi reelt har været, for ligesom at skabe troværdighed omkring
350 os. Fordi og jeg med vores CV og med vores baggrund, fremtræder relativt troværdigt. Vi
351 har selv prøvet at være CFO'er og vi har selv prøvet at være revisorer, så vi ved hvad det
352 er for nogle problemer de sidder med. Vi kommer ikke som software sælgere, f.eks. Vi
353 kommer med nogen, der har et stykke værktøj til nogle folk, som vi selv har været eller
354 er. Altså, vi selv har den baggrund. Så som personer har vi rimelig høj troværdighed, men
355 som virksomhed har vi sådan skullet puste os lidt op.
- 356 C: Ja. Men sjovt alligevel, fordi jeg synes jo det er mega spændende, men sjovt at I ikke rigtig
357 sådan tænker over det, men alligevel gør noget der hen af. Men det kan man sige, det
358 bliver man jo også nødt til.
- 359 I: Ja. Altså ja, man lærer jo hurtigt, når man ikke ved noget om kommunikation, som jeg ikke gør
360 på det faglige plan, så finder man jo hurtigt ud af, at man kan ikke, ikke-kommunikere.
361 Det kan ikke lade sig gøre.
- 362 C: Alt hvad du gør, bliver taget imod jo.
- 363 I: Præcis, ja. Så, når man finder ud af der her med at man kan ikke, ikke-kommunikere, så finder
364 man ud af, okay så kommunikerer jeg. Selvfølgelig, så bliver man jo nødt til på en anden
365 måde, at finde ud af hvad er det for nogen. Altså, hvordan, hvad er det for nogle signaler
366 man sender og hvordan modtager folk det som man er.
- 367 C: Og igen kan man sige I har, der er det jo også virkelig vigtigt når I så snakker for eksempel
368 sociale medier, fordi du kan, som du selv siger, du kan ikke, ikke-kommunikere. Så selvom
369 du personligt ikke er tilstede på sociale medier, når men hvis nogen så er utilfredse eller
370 et eller andet med virksomheden, jamen så skal de nok få kommunikeret ud, uanset om
371 man er tilstede eller ej. Så det er næsten, jeg ville sige, det er en fejl hvis nogen ikke er,
372 fordi så kan du heller ikke holde øje med hvis der er noget folk siger af negativt.
- 373 I: Nej.
- 374 C: Og det er jo ret nice at være på forkant med kan man sige.
- 375 I: Ja, helt sikkert.
- 376 C: Jeg er faktisk nået til et af mine sidste spørgsmål. I forhold til det her med større
377 virksomheder, hvordan vil I så differentiere jer selv fra dem? Du har været lidt inde på
378 noget.
- 379 I: Du tænker på ansættelse eller finde kunder?
- 380 C: Ansættelse.

- 381 I: Jamen det er med at slå på nogle af de fordele der er ved at være en lille virksomhed. For der
382 er helt klart nogle fordele. Men som jeg også sagde tidligere, så for helt nyuddannede, så
383 vil jeg anbefale de fleste at søge mod større virksomheder, idet man får nogle ret gode
384 redskaber hos de større virksomheder. Så, men ellers igen de her tre til fem års erfaring
385 som jeg søger lige nu, jamen altså vi kan tilbyde noget helt helt andet og et markant mere
386 interessant job får den rette profil. Og man skal selvfølgelig have den profil der hedder, at
387 man syntes det er fedt at være relativt alene og stå på egne ben og syntes det er sjovere
388 at spille på hele pladen og arbejde meget meget selvstændigt med det og ikke få ret
389 meget hjælp nogen steder fra, andet end den hjælp man selv henter eksternt eller fra
390 netværk eller selvfølgelig fra os.
- 391 C: Men hvordan er det så for eksempel, hvis nu, vi snakkede om før at det er alligevel en ret
392 bred palette, hvis så der kommer en nyuddannet inden for, lad os sige den, hvis vi deler
393 det op i højre og venstre og den kommer fra venstre side, og ved meget basalt om hvad
394 der sker på den højre side, men har ikke erfaring med det, men ved præcis hvordan man
395 for eksempel skal få mere info om det eller finde ud hvordan, og kaste sig ud i hvordan
396 man alligevel skal komme igennem det?
- 397 I: Det som jeg ikke kan bruge til noget, det er hvis folk siger de kan noget, som de så reelt ikke
398 kan. Og siger man ikke, "jeg ved ikke rigtigt noget om SEO, for jeg er dygtig til bare at
399 skrive, jeg ved ikke, jeg har ikke arbejdet med SEO før, det ved jeg ikke noget om". Det
400 kan man forholde sig til, og det må vi så finde ud af. Okay, hvad så hvis vi så bruger et
401 eksternt bureau til at hjælpe dig eller til at komme i gang, og så stille og roligt får du lært
402 noget af det. Det er jo helt fint.
- 403 C: Eller et hands-on kursus.
- 404 I: Et eller andet, ja. Så må vi jo finde ud af. Det er der ingen problem i. Jeg eller vi skriver også,
405 at vi gerne vil have nogen der har en tysk baggrund. Det betyder på ingen måder at vi
406 frasorterer folk der ikke kan tysk. Det eneste jeg ikke kan bruge, det er at der kommer
407 nogen der siger de kan tysk og så kan de ikke engang bestille en curry wurst eller sådan.
408 Så, det kan jeg ikke bruge til noget. Der bliver man simpelthen nødt til at, altså du er
409 meget afhængig af i små virksomheder, men selvfølgelig også de store, at du er relativ
410 ærlig, hvad kan man og hvad kan man ikke. Og det, altså, der er jo ikke nogen der kan det
411 hele, så folk der siger de kan det hele, så bliver de frasorteret, for det passer i hvert fald
412 ikke.
- 413 C: Ej det ville være svært.
- 414 I: Så er det meget bedre at sige, "jeg er dygtig til det kommunikative, jeg kan ikke det visuelle".
415 Eller "Jeg har aldrig nogensinde arbejdet med hjemmesider, jeg kan ikke noget som helst
416 inden på en hjemmeside". Okay, jamen så må vi jo enten finde ud af sammen om, er det
417 noget du kunne tænkte dig at lære, eller er det noget vi konstant skal outsource.
- 418 C: Så der ved i også godt, at paletten den er ret bred, og der er I ret åbne omkring det?

- 419 I: Ja, det er vi. Og ja, det er den, den er bred i små virksomheder, der er paletten bare bred. Og
420 der kommer vi også tilbage til, at det skal man syntes er sjovt. Det skal man virkelig syntes
421 er sjovt, fordi det er klart, du får ikke lov til at sidde og nørde ned i et lille bitte område,
422 som du gør i en stor virksomhed. Så igen, til den rette profil, der er vi sjove, altså, men for
423 den ikke rette profil, så skal man ikke være hos os eller i andre mindre virksomheder, det
424 skal man ikke. Så, og det er jo også med pensionsordning og kantineordninger og hvis
425 printeren går i stykker så ringer man ned til it-afdelingen og sådan nogle ting. Det
426 fungerer ikke, sådan er det bare ikke i de små virksomheder, du må selv finde ud af det.
427 Altså, og igen, det skal man, det handler meget mere om personen, personlighed. Hvad er
428 det for en personlighed man har?
- 429 C: Så hvis man for eksempel syntes eller havde en tanke om, at en eller anden gang kunne det
430 være nice at starte selvstændigt, så ville sådan et job som det I tilbyder nu være en fed
431 mulighed? Fordi det er lidt, det er faktisk næsten det samme jo. Du kommer jo til at stå
432 med det hele.
- 433 I: Ja, fuldstændigt. Det er det. Altså, hvis du har sådan en iværksætter drøm, så for det første så
434 har jeg altid sagt, hvis man skal være iværksætter, så skal man igen lige have en 5-10 års
435 erfaring så du har noget at tilbyde, kan man sige. Det er sådan meget godt, men så for at
436 prøve det, så er det godt at komme ind i sådan en type virksomhed som os, der får man
437 set, hvad det vil sige. Og når man kommer ind i vores virksomhed, selvom vi er tre år
438 gamle, så er vi jo stadigvæk nye, så man kommer med på den rejse, så man ser, hvad det
439 er for nogle udfordringer der er ved at starte selv. Fordi 9 ud af 10
440 iværksættervirksomheder det er et rigtig langt sejt træk. Altså, forstået på den måde at vi
441 startede for 3 år siden og vi fik to kunder i det første halve år og så fik vi 5 kunder mere.
442 Altså, det går virkelig langsomt og virkelig langsomt.
- 443 C: Og er I nødt til at have noget andet ved siden af?
- 444 I: Nej sådan set ikke, men for det første så skal du selvfølgelig have en kapital på en eller anden
445 måde. Du skal gøre det klart, kan du gå uden løn i et år eller to, eller skal der nogle penge
446 ind udefra, fra en investor eller, det skal man for det første finde ud af. Men derudover så
447 skal man simpelthen have en tålmodighed, det tager bare lang tid. Dem der, der laver de
448 der Apps, og tror at de et halvt år efter, så er de en milliard trilliard værd, altså ja, det er
449 ligesom at vinde i Lotto. Der er nogen meget få der gør det, men det er 1 ud af 100 eller
450 sådan noget. Og det behøver man heller ikke, altså. Altså man, det lange, det skal man jo
451 have tålmodigheden til og det har unge mennesker ikke altid.
- 452 C: Nej, der må jeg så bare sige for mit personlige synspunkt, der syntes jeg også det er en del af
453 det fede, at man se og følge med i rejsen. At du er, du er med til, du har sygt meget
454 ansvar og du har selvfølgelig også noget at leve op til, altså. Men når det så går godt, så er
455 det også bare en ekstra kado, så bliver man jo helt vildt.
- 456 I: Det er virkelig fedt. Når du først har fået det her under huden, altså så er der ikke nogen vej
457 tilbage igen. Altså, jeg kan aldrig nogensinde få et almindeligt job i en almindelig
458 virksomhed igen. Når man først har prøvet det her iværksætterliv her, og
459 opstartsvirksomhed, og den frihed det giver, hårdt arbejde, men den frihed det giver. Det
460 er fantastisk, virkelig fantastisk.
- 461 C: Det kan jeg godt forstå, det må være fedt.
- 462 I: Det er det også.
- 463 C: Nå men jeg slukker den her igen.

D. Initial Coding Templates for Interviews

D.1. First Version

- Smaller B2B organization vs. Larger organization
 - Smaller organization
 - Family owned organization
 - Employees
 - Overall organizational focus
 - Conditions for employees
 - Larger organization
 - Employees
 - Conditions for employees
- Recruitment
 - Own network
 - Social media
 - Online Jobsites
- Newly graduates vs. Experienced employees
 - Newly graduates
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Experienced employees
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
- Graduate Position
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Check of actual possibilities
- Importance of Employer branding
 - Low vs. High organizational awareness
 - Low awareness
 - High awareness

D.2. Second Version

- Smaller B2B organization vs. Larger organization
 - Smaller organization
 - Old family owned organization vs. Newly establish organization
 - Old family owned organization
 - Newly establish organization
 - Overall organizational focus
 - New customers vs. Potential employees
 - Resource saving
 - Development
 - Conditions for employees
 - More contact with different tasks and assignments
 - More responsibility
 - Closer to the decision-makers
 - Less training and introduction
 - Larger organization
 - Conditions for employees
 - More pigeonholed work tasks
 - Less contact with different tasks and assignments
 - Provides higher salaries
 - Provides training and introduction
- Global competition for new talents
 - Recruitment
 - Own network
 - Saves money
 - Increased credibility
 - Social media
 - LinkedIn
 - Heavy profiles
 - Online Jobsites
 - Jobnet / Jobindex
 - Normal profiles
 - Graduateland
 - Student workers

- Employment
 - Newly graduates vs. Experienced employees
 - Newly graduates
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Experienced employees
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Personality vs. Experience
- Graduate Position
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Checking for actual possibilities
- Importance of Employer branding
 - Low vs. High organizational awareness
 - Low awareness
 - Lower application rate from newly graduates
 - High awareness
 - Higher application rate from newly graduates