MSc International Business Economics

Type of project: Master’s Thesis

Investigation of job opportunities for international graduates in Northern Jutland

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Executive summary

The present thesis discusses the possibility of job opportunities for international graduates who finish a bachelor or a master's degree in the Northern region of Denmark and want to remain here. However, finding a job as an international may not be that easy, because of the language and the openness of companies to other people coming from other countries. A few years ago there were more international companies in Denmark and also Northern Jutland, however due to the crisis and the high costs of doing business they left the region, as well as the country. This made people lose their jobs and the unemployment rate increase.

The reason for choosing this subject lies behind the fact that yearly there is quite a significant number of internationals who finish their education and want to find a job in Northern Jutland but are not successful. Therefore, by exploring the expectations the companies have from international graduates, could give them a few recommendations on how to search for jobs, how to apply and what skills they should possess or learn. Hopefully, this thesis is successful in providing ideas about how to approach companies and help readers understand why companies employ certain people.

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Introduction

Problem statement

Every year, students from all over the world are coming to study in Denmark, either studying for one semester[1] or taking a full degree. What makes it easier for students to come and study in Denmark is that studies are free for every student and English is spoken by most of the people. Therefore it is quite easy to get acquainted and adapt in the country.

After graduating, international students decide to find a job in their home countries or stay in Denmark and look for a job. It is well-known that Denmark is a country with a high standard of life. Salaries are high which makes it attractive for students who come from countries with low salaries to remain in Denmark after finishing their studies and work in a Danish/international company.

Years ago the job market in Denmark was thriving, many international companies being present on the Danish market. However due to the high cost of doing business in Denmark, the companies have started leaving the market and as a result there were job losses, which made the unemployment rate increase (Am Cham, 2012). The table below shows the fluctuations from the available workplaces during the years 2006-2010.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Workplaces	296 379	300 327	292 011	283 445	282 484

Table 1 : Workplaces in Denmark *Source: www.statbank.dk*

The unemployment rate is presented in the table below as a per cent of the labor force from 2007 until the end of 2012. The indicators are quite stable; however there is a considerable increase in the unemployment rate from 2008 to 2009. After this period the indicators show stability again.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Unemployment (%)	2.9	2.9	5.7	6.1	5.9	5.9

Table 2: Unemployment rate in Denmark *Source: www.statbank.dk*

[1] ERASMUS

Problem formulation

There are a few big universities that attract students every year in Denmark. These are: Aarhus University, Aalborg University and Copenhagen University, but they have campuses in other cities around Denmark as well; however they are irrelevant for the current topic.

Aalborg University is located in Northern Jutland and is the biggest university here. There are more than 14.000 students enrolled at the university, 10% being international students coming from all over the world (Aalborg University, n.d.). University College of Northern Jutland[2] is also a university in the same area which accepts international students and has programs in English; however this university is not as big as Aalborg University. Many of these international students hope to find a job after graduation either in Denmark or in another country.

When looking for work the language plays an important role, especially now that there aren't so many international companies as before. Therefore, in a lot of companies the English language is not enough, as many of the companies require Danish, either at a basic or at a professional level. While studying, knowing Danish was not of much importance since many of the programs at Aalborg University and UCN are conducted in English. For some companies, experience also plays an important role, as some of the employers expect some experience for example: internship experience, work experience etc. It is also important that companies look for people, who would fit in their organization and have almost no problem integrating in the company. Therefore, the demands of the company should match the supplies of the future employee.

The numbers of enterprises in Nothern Jutland from 2006 until 2010 are presented in the table below:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Enterprises	32 968	33 331	33 487	31 714	31 739

Table 3: Number of enterprises in Northern Jutland *Source: www.statbank.dk*

The aim of this project is to investigate the job opportunities for graduated international students in Northern Jutland. It is assumed that students who finish their studies in this area and want to

[2] UCN

find a job in Denmark are not that eager to move elsewhere since this is where they have adapted and became acquainted. However, some of them decide to move to bigger cities where there are more opportunities, but for the sake of this project the focus will remain on Northern Jutland.

Therefore, the problem statement translates into the following problem formulation: "What are the determinants of the attractiveness of non-danish students to internationally oriented companies in Northern Jutland?" The problem formulation is answered through the research questions:

- "Are the companies in Northern Jutland willing to employ international students?"

- "What expectations do the companies have from their future employees in terms of experience, language etc.?

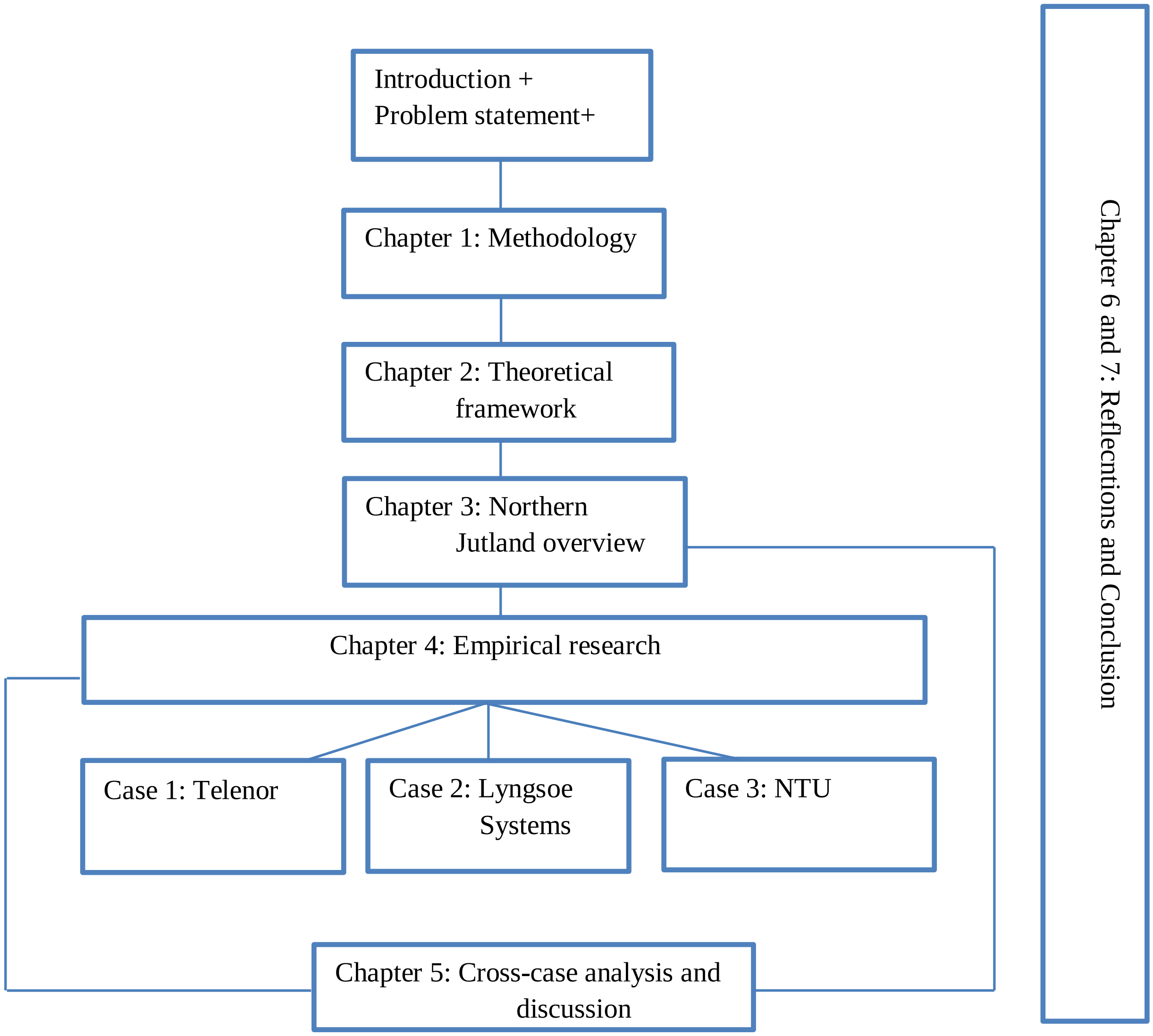
- "How do companies recruit future employees?"

- "How can new graduates prepare themselves for prospective vacancies in these companies?"

The research questions are answered within the empirical research presented in this thesis. The data is presented as three separate cases; each case is given to one of the companies interviewed. Next the data is analyzed based on the theory chosen for this thesis and compared between the three companies. The results will reveal the answers to each of the research questions.

Project Outline

1. Introduction + Problem formulation
2. Chapter 1: Methodology – choice of paradigm, methodology approach, data research, data collection, limitations
3. Chapter 2: Theoretical framework – choice of theories and presentation of these theories
4. Chapter 3: The Research Context - short description of the North Jutland Region in terms of economic performance, types of companies, growth expectations in coming years etc.
5. Chapter 4: Empirical Research – data presentation and results
6. Chapter 5: Cross-case analysis and discussion - how consistent are the findings with the views presented in the theoretical chapter. Chapter 6: Reflections - discuss own evaluation of the research that has been done
7. Conclusion



Source: Own creation

Chapter 1: Methodology

This chapter aims to present the chosen paradigm, methodological approach, and type of data collection. It also presents the validity of the data collected as well as the limitations.

1.1 Paradigm

According to Collis and Hussey (2009) "a research paradigm is a philosophical framework that guides how scientific research should be conducted, based on people's philosophies and their assumptions about the world and the nature of knowledge." However, the term *paradigm* was first captured by Kuhn (1962) who stated that a paradigm is a "cluster of beliefs, which guides researcher to decide what should be studied and how results should be interpreted"

The development of paradigms has been influenced by the way people view reality, which is objective or subjective (Kuada, 2011). Objective reality means that the researcher sees reality as independent and not influenced by the actions of individuals, while the subjective view of reality sees it as dependent of the individuals' actions. People's perception about reality changes over time and therefore many paradigms have been formulated (Hussey, 2009).

One of the first paradigms was the positivistic paradigm which originated from natural sciences, because in the late nineteenth century the main points of research were inanimate objects in the physical world, such as physics[3]. Therefore, the basic assumption behind this paradigm is that social reality is independent and the investigation of this reality will not affect it. The goal is to discover theories, based on the empirical research conducted through experiments and observations. Researchers that conduct their studies under this paradigm are using theories to explain or predict phenomena happening in the reality. Therefore, researchers are using logical reasoning and facts to explain the phenomena that are being studied (Hussey, 2009).

Positivist paradigm is associated with quantitative methods of analysis, because this paradigm assumes that the phenomena under study can be measured. There are a few criticisms in regards to this paradigm. These criticisms are presented in the table below:

[3] Studying matter, energy and the interaction between them

Main criticisms of positivism
● It is impossible to separate people from the social contexts in which they exist ● People cannot be understood without examining the perceptions they have of their own activities ● A highly structured research design imposes constraints on the results and may ignore other relevant findings ● Researchers are not objective, but part of what they observe. They bring their own interests and values to the research ● Capturing complex phenomena in a single measure is misleading (for example it is not possible to capture a person's intelligence by assigning numerical values)

Table 4: Criticisms to the positivist paradigm *Source: Collis & Hussey (2009)*

Another paradigm, which derived from the lack of the positivist paradigm to satisfy social scientists, was the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm was developed in response to the criticisms brought to the positivist paradigm. Interpretivism presumes that reality is socially constructed by the individuals acting in it. The researcher cannot separate himself from the reality and therefore interacts with what is being researched. Interpretivism focuses on explaining phenomena, not measuring it as it is in the positivist case. Hence, qualitative methods of analysis are being used, such as interviews, focus groups and so on, where the researcher is involved (Hussey, 2009).

The table below sums up the main characteristics of the paradigms presented.

Positivism	**Interpretivism**
Quantitative	Qualitative
Objective	Subjective
Scientific	Humanist

Table 5: Characteristics of positivism and interpretivism

Source: Collis & Hussey (2009)

Creswell (1994) compares the paradigms based on ontological assumption, epistemological assumption, axiological assumption, rhetorical assumption and methodological assumption. These assumptions will be explained shortly, only so that the reader can understand what they are about.

Ontological assumption is about the nature of reality. Positivists accept only one reality, because it is external and objective to the researcher. On the other hand, interpretivists argue that there are multiple realities because each person has their own perception. Therefore, reality according to interpretivists is subjective (Hussey, 2009).

Epistemological assumption deals with what is approved as valid knowledge. Positivists think that only phenomena that can be measured and observed are counted as knowledge. Interpretivists believe that the researcher should interact with what is being researched and his own beliefs should be considered as knowledge (Hussey, 2009).

The axiological assumption has to do with values. Positivists believe that the process of research is free of values, because they consider themselves as independent of the study. They are interested in the interrelationship between the objects they are studying and they believe that their research would not affect these objects in any way. On the other side, interpretivists believe that the researcher has values that help him determine what is considered to be facts and help him interpret them (Hussey, 2009).

Rhetorical assumption has to do with the language of research. For positivists, the style is normally formal and in passive voice. This is done so it creates the impression that the research is objective from what is being researched. The language of research for interpretivists is less explicit; normally it would be appropriate to write in first person reflecting that the researcher was involved in what was being researched. However, it depends on the persons writing the research paper (Hussey, 2009).

The methodological approach deals with the process of research. In a positivist oriented research, the concepts should be explained in a way that they can be measured. They use large samples, focus on objective facts and phrase hypotheses. The interpretivist oriented research is done through examining a small sample, maybe during a period of time. The analysis conducted should be able to understand what is happening in a situation and find patterns that are present in other situations (Hussey, 2009).

A summary of both paradigms compared through these assumptions is presented in the table below.

Philosophical assumption	Positivism	Interpretivism
Ontological assumption (the nature of reality)	Reality is objective and singular, separate from the researcher	Reality is subjective and multiple, as seen by the participants
Epistemological assumption (what constitutes valid knowledge)	Researcher is independent from what is being researched	Researcher interacts with what is being researched
Axiological assumption (the role of values)	Research is value free and un-biased	Researcher acknowledges that research is value-leaden and biases are present
Rhetorical assumption (the language of research)	Researcher writes in a formal style and uses the passive voice, accepted quantitative words and set definitions	Researcher writes in an informal style and uses the personal voice, accepted qualitative terms and limited definitions
Methodological assumption (the process of research)	Process is deductive Study of cause and effect with a static design (categories are isolated beforehand) Research is context free Generalizations lead to prediction, explanation and understanding Results are accurate and reliable through validity and reliability	Process is inductive Study of mutual simultaneous shaping of factors with an emerging design (categories are identified during the process) Research is context bound Patterns and/or theories are developed for understanding Findings are accurate and reliable through verification

Table 6: Assumptions of the main paradigms

Source: Adapted from Creswell (1994 p 5 and 1998 p 75), Collis and Hussey (2009)

1.2 Choice of paradigm

Based on the definition and characteristics presented for each paradigm, the appropriate one will be now chosen for the present thesis. As the theme of this thesis is the investigation of job opportunities for international students after graduating, the writer of this project cannot consider herself as being independent of the reality studied, since she is a student about to graduate. Therefore, it is rather difficult for the writer to separate herself from the research given her background.

The aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of what companies expect from the international candidates that apply for a job. Also, the thesis is trying to help future readers know how they should be prepared to meet the companies’ requirements for a future job in terms of experience, skills and so on. Therefore, it would be problematic to try and measure the phenomena studied in this thesis, as would be required by a positivist point of view. Also, it is quite hard for the writer to remain completely objective given the reason mentioned earlier.

In this type of paradigm, the writers’ own beliefs and values are taken into consideration. Hence, the writer is allowed to share her opinion or values about the subject discussed in the current thesis, for example: as an international student about to graduate, what does she think about the current job market in Northern Jutland or maybe share her own experiences, which will be provided in the reflection section of the thesis. From a positivist point of view this would not have been allowed because it would affect the objectivity of the research conducted.

Even though, from an interpretive point of view, the writing style should be informal and have a personal voice, because of the type of project, which is a master thesis, the writing style will be objective and formal, using a passive voice. However, it doesn’t mean that it deviates from the interpretive view; the theory suggested that the writing style of a research conducted within this paradigm depends on the writer and the type of research paper.

For the research process of the thesis, it is done using small samples and qualitative analysis. Hence, in order to understand the phenomena studied, a few interviews with a few companies will be conducted. Based on these interviews, patterns and differences will be found and described. Also, the interviews will help in the usefulness of the theory presented in the thesis, if the theory applies in reality completely or just parts of the theory are consistent with the reality. More about the qualitative analysis will be presented in the following section of this chapter.

1.3 Methodological approach

Paradigms help researchers on the way their research should be conducted. After identifying the suitable paradigm, there has to be a strategy on how researchers should conduct their research. This involves choosing a suitable methodology approach that reflects the selected paradigm (Hussey, 2009).

There are several methodological approaches that reflect the interpretive paradigm. These will be presented shortly, while the one suitable for this thesis will be described more thoroughly. According to the interpretive paradigm there are seven methodological approaches.

1. Hermeneutics "is a methodology that focuses on the interpretation and understanding the text in the context of underlying historical and social forces" (Hussey, 2009).
2. Ethnography "is a methodology derived from anthropology in which the researcher uses socially acquired and shared knowledge to understand the observed patterns of human activity" (Hussey, 2009).
3. Participative inquiry "is a methodology that involves the participants as fully as possible in the study, which is conducted in their own group or organization" (Hussey, 2009).
4. Action research "is a methodology used in applied research to find an effective way of bringing about a conscious change in a partly controlled environment" (Hussey, 2009).
5. Case study "is a methodology that is used to explore a single phenomenon (the case) in a natural setting using a variety of methods to obtain in-depth knowledge" (Hussey, 2009).
6. Grounded theory "is a methodology in which a systematic set of procedures is used to develop an inductively derived theory about phenomena" (Hussey, 2009).
7. Feminist, gender and ethnicity studies. "Feminist studies are used to investigate and seek understanding of phenomena from a feminist perspective. Gender studies are concerned with the experiences of both men and women, while ethnicity studies focus on the experiences of different ethnic groups in society" (Hussey, 2009).

The methodology approach used in this thesis is the case study. A case can be a business, event, group of persons, a person or any other phenomenon of interest to the researcher. The data collected is very detailed and taken over a long period of time (Hussey, 2009). The phenomenon studied in this thesis is about the job opportunities for international students in Danish companies. Unfortunately, the data collected was not over a long period of time and only one method of data collection was used, due to the timeframe of this thesis. However, the data will be presented as separate cases at first, while after the patterns and differences are to be found.

A few characteristics of the case study methodology are being described by Yin (2003):

- "The research aims not only to explore certain phenomena, but also to understand them in a particular context"
- "The research does not commence with a set of questions and notions about the limits within which the study will take place"
- "The research uses multiple methods for collecting data, which may be both qualitative and quantitative" (Yin, 2009)

There are also, different types of case studies, which will be shortly defined below:

- Exploratory case studies: there are a few theories or a poor body of knowledge
- Descriptive case studies: the goal is to describe the phenomena studied
- Illustrative case studies: the research is trying to emphasize new and innovative practices adopted by companies
- Experimental case studies: the research identifies the problems in applying new procedures and techniques, as well as evaluating their benefits
- Explanatory case studies: where theory is used to explain and understand the phenomena under research
- Opportunist case studies: the research has the occasion to study a certain phenomenon, by having access to a certain business or person or other scenario (Hussey, 2009)

The type of case study used in this thesis is the exploratory case study and the explanatory case study. Only one theory is used in this thesis, which is person-organization fit. The other models presented are in connection to the theory, as it is easier to understand and find out the different ways of explaining[4] and measuring it. Also, the cases are structured based on the research questions in order for the answers to be seen more easily by the reader. Person-organization fit theory is used to explain the phenomena under study; however there is the risk that the whole or parts of the theory do not apply in reality. The theory is explained thoroughly in the next chapter of the thesis.

[4] Through other models, for example: attraction-selection-attrition model

1.4 Data collection

The knowledge gained in the thesis about the phenomena studied is created through the collection of data. In this thesis, both primary and secondary data is used, as it could give a more complex explanation about the phenomenon.

The primary data is collected through interviews. Interviews are "a method for collecting primary data in which a sample of interviewees are asked questions to find out what they think, do or feel" (Hussey, 2009). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with employees from three different companies. The reason for choosing this type of data collection stands behind the need of gaining a certain understanding about how is it for international students to get a job in a Danish company. Also finding out what are the companies' opinions in regards to the chances that are for international students to get a job in Denmark can be a reason as well. The fact that the data has been collected from three different companies can help find certain patterns that exist in their expectations of future international employees, as well as differences in these. Interviews also help gain information about related experiences the companies or the employees interviewed have been through, which could also help understanding the phenomena. The interview was a semi-structured interview, meaning that a number of questions were prepared beforehand, while some of them were asked along the way. Qualitative analysis is the better choice when talking about understanding and explaining a certain phenomenon, which is why this method for data collection has been chosen.

The secondary data collected in this thesis comes from different sources such as articles, books, studies conducted on the related subject and also official online websites. Because in some parts of the thesis, the primary data cannot cover everything that is being studied, such as the overall job market in Northern Jutland, the need to obtain secondary data was quite necessary. However, the secondary data obtained is not always reliable; the same data from different sources was compared, if there was a possibility for finding different sources. After the data is collected, it is filtered and simplified in order to make it relevant in answering the problem formulation. The secondary data selected is put in words, graphics, and tables in order to make it relevant for the problem formulation.

Both primary and secondary data create the knowledge necessary to answer the research questions and in the end solve the problem formulation.

1.5 Data collection methods

As mentioned earlier, there were in total three interviews conducted with one employee from each company. The reason for choosing these companies stands behind the fact that all of these companies are internationalized which means that there is a higher chance that they would employ international graduates. The cases presented in the thesis are meant to be exploratory, because there are only a few research questions and the cases are built based on them; explanatory, because part of the theory is used to explain and understand the phenomena under study; and descriptive, because the cases describe the phenomena under study, which are the job opportunities for international graduates.

In each of the companies there was one interview taken. The persons were selected based on the contacts had in the companies. It has to be mentioned that the contacts had in this company were also having a busy time therefore the time awarded for these interviews was not long. A single interview lasted around 30-40 min. There was no specific guide used to conduct the interviews, only with the help of the research questions formulated in the problem formulation and the theory used in this project.

As mentioned earlier the interviews were unstructured. Therefore the questions for each of the three interviews are not all the same. In some parts of the interview, it was more like a discussion, hence there are a few questions asked in regards to the discussion. Still there were a few difficulties in transforming what is stated in the theory into questions. There were a few questions added and sent to the contacts through e-mail.

1.6 Data validity and reliability

Data validity means the degree to which the data can reflect the phenomenon under study. Qualitative data has a high degree of validity, because of the small sample that it is used to collect the data and the way to collect the data is done accurately (Hussey, 2009). Interviews were used to collect data in this thesis as they offer a precise insight on what is being studied. Three interviews were conducted in total, as they can give different perspectives, in the end being able to compare these perspectives and find out what is common and what is not. Even though those three interviews maybe are not enough, it is still better than having only one view, because objectivity is not a big requirement when writing the thesis within the interpretive view.

Reliability “refers to the absence of differences in the results if the research was repeated” (Hussey, 2009). Qualitative data has a lower degree of reliability because of the difficulty in repeating the same research. For example, if the interviews were to be made one year after the current research has been done, because subject of the research, the results would probably not be the same.

1.7 Limitations

The primary data collected in this thesis might at some point not be sufficient in explaining and understanding the phenomena under study. One reason for the statement above could be that in Northern Jutland there are more than three companies; therefore the perspectives presented are from a really small part on the companies’ side. In total, four companies were contacted; however the last person who was supposed to be interviewed did not have the time necessary to cooperate. Also, the time frame awarded to this thesis does not allow very much primary data research. It could have helped if the research could have been done on a longer period, for example a year or two, in order to see the changes on the job market for international students in Denmark. In addition to this, changes in the companies opinions in regards to employ international students could have been followed thoroughly. Still, the primary data gathered can offer some insights into the possibilities of employment for international students after graduation.

Another limitation that could be added to the writing of this thesis could be that it does not focus on a certain education the students have taken. For example, the thesis studies the possibilities for all international students, regardless if they studied business, engineering and so on.

As secondary data is also used in the thesis, it may not always be reliable. Even though the writer was trying to find different sources for the secondary data, these sources could not be found every time. However, only official websites were used in order to make the data as reliable as possible. Also some of the studies collected and presented in the thesis come from reliable sources, however the results of the studies can sometimes be presented in such a way that they reflect what the researcher wants them to reflect. Hopefully, it was not the case in the studies gathered. Moreover, the secondary data had to be selected in accordance to the relevance it has in solving the problem formulation. Therefore it took quite some time in order to select only the relevant information.

The thesis is being written by one person, which means that there are no other opinions about the structure and content of the thesis. Furthermore, there are no other discussions or approaches to the problem formulation; therefore the knowledge is being transcribed in the writers' approach.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter aims to present the base theories that will be used in the thesis. The main theory used is person-organization fit, while the other models and instruments are presented in connection to the theory.

2.1 Person-Organization Fit

In recent years, the topic regarding person-organization fit has been attracting both researchers and managers who are interested in the compatibility between people and the organizations they work in. There have been studies conducted in regard to person-organization fit. It has been revealed that person-organization fit has significant importance to selection practices of organizations, as well as job satisfaction, performance or organizational commitment.

2.1.1 Definition

A general definition of person-organization fit, accepted by most researchers would be that person-organization fit is concerned with the compatibility between individuals and organizations. However, there are multiple conceptualizations and operationalizations regarding person-organization fit, because compatibility can be conceptualized in different ways. Therefore, to clarify these conceptualizations two distinctions have been made. One of these distinctions is between complementary and supplementary fit. According to Muchinsky and Monahan, “supplementary fit occurs when a person supplements, embellishes or possesses characteristics which are similar to other individuals in an environment”, while “complementary fit occurs when a person’s characteristic make whole the environment or add to it what is missing”.

The second distinction made is needs-supplies and demands-abilities. As said by Kristoff, from the needs-supplies perspective, person-organization fit occurs when the individuals’ needs, desires or preferences are satisfied by the organizations’ supplies. On the other hand, in the demands-abilities perspective, fit occurs when the individual has the abilities to face the organizations’ demands.

The figure below is presented to gain a better understanding of the conceptualizations regarding person-organization fit.

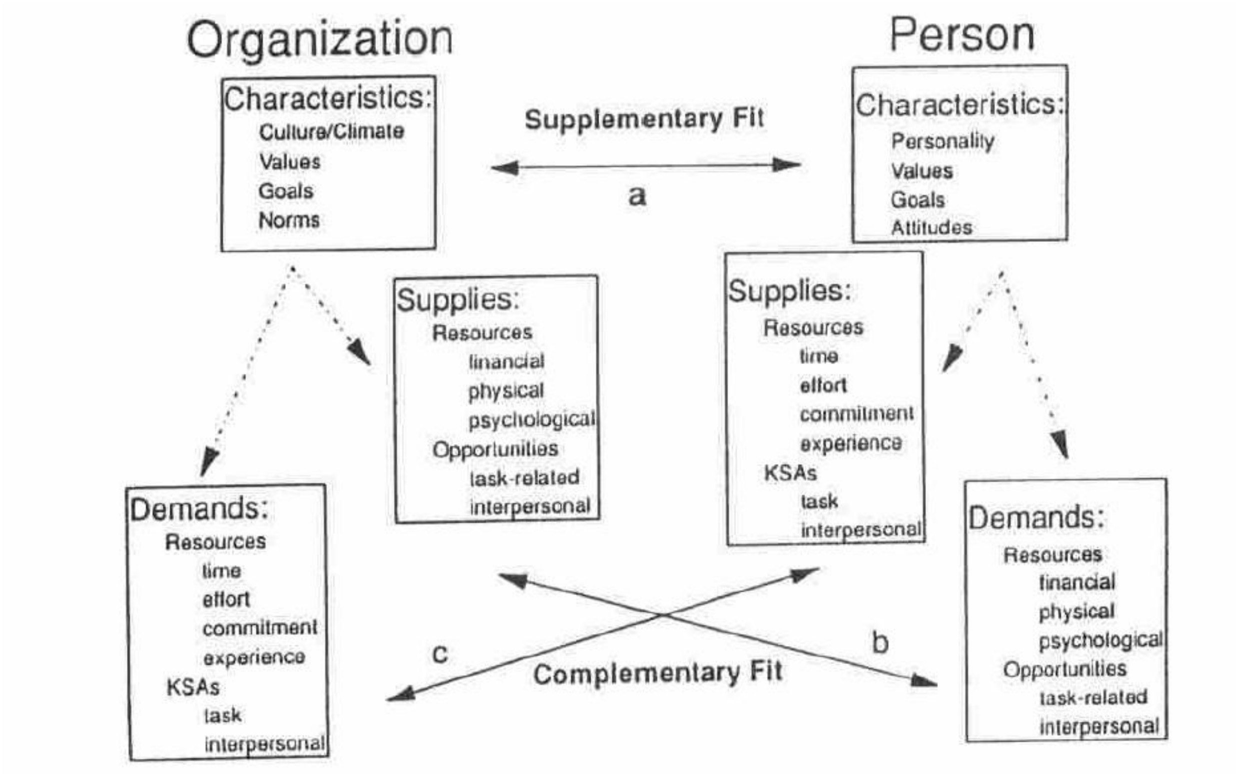


Figure 1: Various conceptualizations of person-organization fit

Source: Kristof (1996)

Supplementary fit which is represented by arrow "a" represents the relationship between the underlying characteristics of the individual and the organization. From the organizations' point of view these characteristics consist of culture, climate, values, goals and norms. On the other side, the individuals', these characteristics include values, goals, personality and attitudes. Therefore, supplementary fit occurs when there is similarity between the individuals' and organizations' characteristics.

These characteristics influence the supply and demand of both entities as shown by the dotted arrows. Organizations supply financial, physical and psychological resources, as well as task-related and interpersonal opportunities requested by individuals. When the organizational supplies are similar with the demands of individuals, the needs-supplies fit is accomplished. Correspondingly, organizations demand time, effort, commitment and experience resources from individuals. When individuals are able to supply the organization with the mentioned resources, then demands-abilities fit is achieved.

In the existing literature, there have been developed four operationalizations of person-organization fit. Two of them are in relation to the supplementary fit, the third one originating from the needs-supplies view, while the last one can be interpreted by both perspectives (Kristof, 1996).

The first type of operationalization in relation to supplementary fit is the congruence between organizational and individual values. In this type of operationalization, person-organization fit is equivalent to person-culture fit. According to O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991) "congruency between an individual's values and those of an organization may be at the crux of person-culture fit". Person-culture fit essence lies from the fact that the "organizations have cultures that are more or less attractive to individuals" (O'Reilly, 1991). This operationalization assumes that values are imperative, as they guide the individuals' behavior. (R., 1994) (Tisak J, 1994) (Nisbett R, 1980)

The second operationalization is goal congruence with organizational leader or peers (Tomoki, 2004). It is measured by the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework developed by Schneider (1987). The main idea behind the model is the organizations' goals expressed directly or indirectly by the leader. Therefore, the organization selects individuals who share the same goal and the individuals are attracted to organizations that have the same goal (Schneider, 1995).

The third operationalization mirrors the needs-supplies fit perspective. According to this, the match is between individual preferences or needs and organizational systems or structures (Tomoki, 2004). This type of operationalization originated from the need-press theory which presumes that an individual will be contended with work if the environment fulfills his or her needs (Kristof, 1996).

The fourth and last operationalization matches the characteristic of individual personality and organizational culture or climate (Tomoki, 2004). This operationalization can be viewed from both perspectives: supplementary and needs-supplies. Supplementary fit, because it describes congruence between organizations' and individuals' personality. From the needs-supplies perspective, it can be said that the environment is determined by organizational supplies[5] and the individuals' personality is determined by the needs of the individuals (Kristof, 1996).

In connection with the relationships described and presented above, person-organization fit can be defined as "the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other need, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both" (Kristof, 1996). Therefore, the definition suggests that the desired person-organization fit is achieved when each entity's needs are met by the other and they share similar fundamental characteristics (Kristof, 1996).

2.1.2 Measurement of person-organization fit

The process for finding the optimal person-organization fit is done through a function of research questions asked. There are different forms of measuring person-organization fit. These forms include a direct measurement of perceived fit and two forms of indirect measurement of actual fit (Kristof, 1996). Each of these forms will be presented in the section below.

Before knowing what questions are to be asked, a commensurate measurement has to be made. This means that both organizations and individuals have to be described using the same content dimensions, because the characteristics under investigation are mutually relevant. However there are researchers[6] who suggest that these dimensions are not necessary because the degree of fit in the organization can be predicted through a hypothesis.

2.1.2.1 Direct and indirect measures of fit

Direct fit can be defined as the judgment that an individual fits well into an organization. According to this statement it is thought that good fit exists as long as it is believed that the fit exists, despite the fact that they don't share the same characteristics or complete each other's needs-supplies. This judgment of fit is also called "perceived fit" (Cable, 1995).

There have been criticisms regarding direct measures of fit. Kristof (1996), points out that the value characteristics that are to be compared must be explicit, otherwise there is no certainty that commensurate dimensions are compared. Also, there is the problem that a consistency bias can affect predicting employee attitudes, such as "I think I fit well, so I must be satisfied with my

[5] For example: reward systems or communication patterns
[6] Patsfall and Feimer

job". This problem can influence the results which is why some researchers use indirect measures of fit (Kristof, 1996).

Indirect fit measure the degree of actual fit within an organization. Therefore, it involves a comparison between separately rated individual and organizational characteristics using interactions, difference scores, or polynomial regressions (Kristof, 1996). There are two techniques used for measuring indirect fit: indirect cross-levels measurement and indirect individual-level measurement. These techniques are described in the following paragraphs.

Indirect cross-levels measurement is used to measure both supplementary and complementary fit. This technique determines the compatibility of individuals with verifiable organizational characteristics. As a result there are two variables that have to be measured: the individual level and the organizational level.

In person-organization fit theory, it is hypothesized that individuals have varying levels of compatibility with organizational characteristics. The characteristics of individuals such as values, goals, personality or needs are assumed to be independent of the characteristics of the organization (Kristof, 1996).

The individual data collected is aggregated to create an organizational level variable. At this level however, some of the variables are more difficult to measure since they are not perceptible, such as: organizational ownership or structure. For that it is necessary to study organizational charts or records. The perceptual variables include values, goals, climate or culture as they can be measured by perceptions (Kristof, 1996).

In short, there are two types of questions asked: at individual level and at organizational level, for example: "What do you value" and "What does your organization value?" Individuals are not required to give a similar answer to the individual-level question, just because they agree with the values the organization has as a whole. Organizational values are "a group of organization product; even though all members of the group would not have the same values, a majority of active members would agree on them and members of the group would be aware of the group's support for a given value" (Chatman, 1989).

2.1.2.2 Indirect individual-level measurement

The individual-level measurement focuses on the link between the individual's preferred organizational characteristics and his perception of the organization. This is measured by asking the employee to give parallel answers to the questions "What do you value" and "What does your company value?" The similarity between these answers is calculated (Kristof, 1996).

Nisbett and Ross (1980) believe that individual-level measurement should be used because the "people's perceptions of reality drive their cognitive appraisals of and reactions to specific situations" This means that the individual's perceptions organizational characteristics have a bigger influence on individual outcome variables such as stress, satisfaction or commitment than the aggregate organizational characteristics (Kristof, 1996).

2.1.3 Indices of actual fit

There are three types of calculating person-organization fit: difference scores, correlations between individual and organizational value items and polynomial regression.

2.1.3.1 Difference scores

In this method the arithmetic difference between the perceived and preferred value ratings are calculated for each value items. Afterwards, the total of differences is calculated through one of these ways: "summing the differences, by which positive and negative differences are distinguished but positive and negative values are offset when summed, summing the absolute values of differences, by which equal weight is assigned to differences regardless of the direction so that the sum is more meaningful or by summing the squared differences, by which the difference is non-directional and also larger differences have greater weight" (Kristof, 1996).

There have been several criticisms regarding this method based on four reasons. The first one has to do with conceptual ambiguity resulting from the sum of differences which hides the individual contribution of each element that is part of the overall score. Discarded information is the second reason because the absolute level of the person and environment variables is lost. A third reason which doesn't support the use of this method is the fact that the same individual shape both person and organizational profiles meaning that the relationship between these two is unnaturally inflated and the reliability of the difference scores is reduces. The last reason is that difference scores fail to explain the component measures individually (Kristof, 1996).

2.1.3.2 Correlations

Correlation is also known as Q-score and it has often been used in person-organization studies[7]. This method implies the comparison between perceived and preferred scores for the same values by calculating the correlation between the double responses. Cable and Judge (1996) sustain the correlation represents similarity between profiles and therefore it is a more reliable and suitable method because the person and organization profiles are not inflated.

However there are criticisms to this method. These criticisms are brought by Edwards (1994) who states the same reasons why this method is inappropriate in calculating person-organization fit which are as follows: low reliability, inability to explain how individual values contribute to the overall score and inability to explain other differences.

2.1.3.3 Polynomial regression

This method is an alternative to the other two mentioned above and was proposed by Edwards (1994). The basic assumptions behind this method are: “a) the relationships between two entities and an outcome should be considered in three dimensions, b) the analyses should use three-dimensional response surfaces to depict the joint relationship of the two entities (person and organization) with the outcome, c) the constraints implied by traditional fit indices should be considered as hypotheses that can be tested and supported to lend credibility to the proposed model”

This method measures P (person), O (organization) and P x O (fit). It involves regressing the outcome variable on P and O, and the interaction between them. A functional form of the conceptual model is selected by the researcher. This form should underlie the data and identify the corresponding constrained and unconstrained regression equation. The model is then tested with each of the equations and by comparing results the functional form that corresponds to the conceptual model is directly tested (Kristof, 1996).

There are several limitations regarding this model as well. Kristoff (1996) states the problem of multicollinearity[8]. This problem appears when extending the regression from its constrained to its unconstrained form. For instance, when the algebraic difference $(P - O)^2$ is extended to five

[7] Cable and Judge (1996), O’Reilly et al (1991), Vandenberghe (1999)
[8] a case of multiple regression in which the predictor variables are themselves highly correlated (wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)

factors P, O, P^2, O^2 and $P \times O$ in the unconstrained equation there is a risk that the independent variables P and O depend on each other, hence multicollinearity. Another problem is in regard with the sample size and power, because of the amount of independent variables. Other researchers have stated that the difference scores may have a distinctive meaning from their components (Tisak J, 1994).

Kristoff (1996) states that in the future, research should be done using all methods. This way, one method will compensate the weakness of the other, in the end making the research more reliable and accurate.

2.1.4 Consequences of person-organization fit

Even though the degree of fit between an organization and an individual is high, it can have certain disadvantages. For example it can create homogeneity in the company. As a result of homogeneity there is a risk of strategic myopia and inability to change (Kristof, 1996). Therefore the company would not be innovative enough to survive.

B. Schneider et al offer a series of recommendations in order to avoid these problems. It has been suggested that a high degree of person-organization fit should be pursued at the lower levels in the company, while at the upper management levels diversity of perspectives and competencies should be promoted. Adding to this, value similarity at the higher level would be beneficial for the future, however diversity in strategies should also be encouraged. Moreover, high levels of fit are recommended for the earlier stages of a company's life cycle, because cohesiveness and cooperation are important. When a company gains success and has an identity innovation should be encouraged, so that it would not remain behind on the market. Changes can be made in the recruitment strategy or creativity training, making the employees broaden their ideas.

These suggestions are trying to help managers reduce homogeneity within the company. But also, heterogeneity can also have negative effects on the company if the employees have difficulties communicating and supporting organizational values. Hence, the challenge for managers is to find to optimal level of person-organization fit (Kristof, 1996).

There are certain things that have to be considered when determining the optimal level of person-organization fit. For example, it depends on the type of fit and organizational outcome that is being pursued. Therefore, if the objective is to reduce high levels employee turnover, then a high level of supplementary fit on values and goals is suggested. On the other hand, if an adaptation to the environment is pursued, then a low degree of supplementary fit is recommended (Kristof, 1996).

Another disadvantage added to this theory is that even of the individual and organizational characteristics show fit, they also have to be relevant. The relevance of fit on any characteristic shows how important is that characteristics to the individual but also the organization. For example, if an individual has compatible values with the organization, but they are irrelevant to the job he is asked for, then a high degree of fit on values is not necessary because it cannot assure that the individual will do his job accordingly. As a result, high levels of person-organization fit are most influential if the characteristics are relevant for both entities (Kristof, 1996).

It is also suggested by Sheridan (1992) that even if there is a high degree of fit between the individual and organization, this fact does not predict individual outcomes in certain situations. Therefore, individuals may have unexpected reactions in certain situations. For example, Sheridan studied the employee turnover and the study showed that organizations focused with interpersonal orientations contrary to organizations with work task cultures, have a lower turnover rate for all employees.

Also, these organizational differences can influence the strength of the relationship between person-organization fit and individual outcomes. Managers are able to influence this relationship. Through emphasizing certain values and goals with memos from top management, monthly newsletters and value-based reward systems, managers have a higher chance of promoting these values to their employees. On the other hand, by maintaining a strong organizational culture, managers will promote the attrition of the employees who do not fit well in the organization (Kristof, 1996).

2.2 The Organizational Culture Profile

The Organizational Culture Profile is an instrument for evaluating person-organization fit. This method of testing person-organization fit was developed by O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell in 1991. It started out as an instrument for measuring person-culture fit, later being used to measure person-organization fit as well.

There are 54 value statements that catch general organizational and individual values which have to be sorted in nine categories from most to least desirable or characteristic, while having a certain number of value statements in each category. While sorting the values, the respondents had to bear in mind a certain question depending on what the researchers would like to study, for example how would they describe their own preferences or the culture or value system of a certain organization. In order to create an organizational profile, the respondents had to sort the 54 values based on how characteristic are they for the company, while when investigating for individual preferences the respondents were asked to sort the values based on what values should their ideal organization possess (O'Reilly, 1991).

The researchers have used different respondent groups to determine an organizations’ culture and rate their preferences. Below, a more complete description of the OCP will be provided as it will help the reader understand its development.

2.2.1 Step 1

The first set of values the researchers have chosen were based on reviews of academic and writings about organizational values and cultures, in order to determine common values that characterize both organizations and individuals. There were a total of 110 values. In order to filter these values four criteria have been used: “(1) generality- an item should be relevant to any type of organization, regardless of industry, size and composition; (2) discriminability- no item should reside in the same category for all organizations; (3) readability- the items should be easily understandable to facilitate their having commonly shared meanings; (4) non-redundancy- the items should have distinct enough meanings that they could not substitute one another consistently” (O'Reilly, 1991).

38 undergraduates majoring in business administration were asked to filter the 110 items according to the criteria mentioned above. They were also asked to include items not mentioned but that could be important in describing an organizations’ culture. In the end, the 54 values were selected (O'Reilly, 1991).

2.2.2 Step 2

This step was to determine the characteristics of organizations. The instrument was used on eight accounting firms, 16 accountants with an average of 8 years in the firm. They were asked to arrange the 54 values by how the value was a characteristic of the respondents' organizational culture. Instructions were as followed: "Important values may be expressed in the form of norms or shared expectations about what's important, how to behave or what attitudes are appropriate. Please sort the 54 values into a row of nine categories, placing at the end of the row those cards that you consider to be the most characteristic aspects of the culture of your organization, and at the other end those cards that you believe to be the least characteristic…"(O'Reilly, 1991). The profiles were constructed by averaging the responses given by each accountant in the firm.

2.2.3 Step 3

In this step, the individual preferences were assessed. Respondents were asked to sort the 54 values based "how important is this characteristic to be a part of the organization you work for?" The values had to be arranged from most desirable to least desirable. In order to determine the test-retest reliability of these preferences the test was carried out by 16 MBA students in their first year of study and again after 12 months. The instructions were the same as for the previous groups (O'Reilly, 1991).

The results showed a high stability of preferences. Also, the researchers have investigated possible social desirability bias[9], by giving 8 doctoral students from the same university a definition and description of what a social desirability bias is. The students were asked to sort the 54 values in the most social desirable way. If the bias exists, but is undetected it can limit the variability of the profiles. Therefore, the items are structured in a socially neutral or positive terms (O'Reilly, 1991).

The social desirability profile was then compared to the organizational profiles from the 8 firms investigated, in the end showing the there was no social desirability bias; the respondents did not sort the values in order to make their organizations look like a good place to work in (O'Reilly, 1991).

2.2.4 Step 4

In this step, the results of the research conducted were calculated. An important question that needed an answer was if person-organization fit has an influence on job satisfaction, commitment and turnover. The results of the research showed a high degree of person-

[9] The tendency of respondents to answer in a way seen as positively as possible by others

organization fit when respondents have just become a part of the organization. Along with the high degree of fit, results showed a low intent to leave. 24 months after assessing person-organization fit, researchers have collected data regarding employment status. Again, results showed that person-organization fit has an influence on whether an individual decides to leave the organization or not. Therefore, if there is a high degree of fit the individual is more likely to stay longer in the organization rather than an individual with a low degree of fit (O'Reilly, 1991).

The reason why this study is presented in detail is to show that person-organization fit is influencing the employees' job satisfaction, intent to leave and commitment. Although the purpose of this thesis is to show the job opportunities for newly graduated international students and what they should expect when looking for a job, the study is showed mainly as an example on how to assess person-organization fit after entering in a firm.

2.3 Attraction-Selection-Attrition model

This model was developed by B. Schneider in 1987. The basic idea behind the model is that organizations are defined by the collective characteristics of people. In the model, the attraction-selection-attrition[10] cycle is introduced. A short description about this will be provided.

The model presumes that the outcome of the three processes attraction-selection-attrition decides the types of people in organizations. These processes also define the nature of the organization, its culture, structure and processes, in order to understand organizational behavior (Schneider B, 1995).

When the model was first presented in 1987, several things have been vague, being cleared out in the later review of the model in 1995. The model presumes that people are more attracted to an organization that shares the same characteristics, however what "characteristics" actually mean, were not specified in the early stage of the model development. If the people do not fit in the organization then they will leave, which will increase the organization's homogeneity. Again, how to measure fit and homogeneity is not specified (Schneider B, 1995). In the later review of the model, these vague presumptions become clearer, as researchers have tried not to elaborate the model but to make it easier to use it.

[10] ASA

According to the ASA theory, organizations behave as they do because of the aggregate characteristics of individuals within them, mainly people in the high management or "the founders" of the organization. In the reviewed paper the term "personality" is used to refer to these characteristics. Personality constitutes, in this theory, of values and goals. Therefore at the base of the theory are the goals communicated explicitly or implicitly by the founders. Around these goals, the organizational structure, processes and culture are created as they reflect the founder's personality. The types of people that are attracted, selected and that stay in the organization are determined by the organizational structure, processes and culture over time (Schneider B, 1995).

The first process, attraction presumes the fact that individuals are attracted to organizations that have the same characteristics as them. It is based on the individuals' judgment of the congruence between their own personality and the organizations'[11] (Schneider B, 1995) .

The second process of the ASA cycle is the selection. Selection procedures for the recruitment and hiring of new employees differ from organization to organization based on the organizations' personality (Schneider B, 1995).

The last process refers to attrition, which means that if people do not fit in an organization they will leave it (Schneider B, 1995).

2.3.1 Studies of person-organization fit that test the model

After Schneider's ASA model, a few person-organization fit studies have been conducted based on the selection phase of the model (Billsberry, 2004). This phase presumes that organization employ people that fit their "personality" which is constituted by structure, goals, processes and culture. It is also presumed that selection processes differ from organization to organization.

The reason why the focus is put on the selection process is that the paper talks about students who are trying to look for employment and therefore is trying to help them understand more how and why organizations recruit certain people.

Billsberry (2004) has identified two studies that investigated the selection proposition mentioned earlier. One of the studies has been conducted by Adkins, Russel and Werbel in 1994, while the

[11] with its structure, processes, culture as a reflection of its goals

other study has been conducted by Cable and Judge in 1997 (Billsberry, 2004). The two studies will be shortly described in the following section.

The purpose of the first study conducted by Atkins et al was to examine work value congruence between candidates and organizations, and if whether this exists, how does it contribute to the recruiters' judgment of person-organization fit. Studies have been made on the interview decisions of corporate recruiters using the Comparative Emphasis Scale[12]. Therefore recruiters had to complete the scale twice: one for their own work values and another for their perception of the company's work values and after each interview they would rate each candidate based on person-organization fit and general employability. The results suggested that the fit of applicants is more connected to the recruiters' work values, although showing no strong connection. Results also showed that the judgment of the interviewer in relation to congruence between candidates and organizations does not influence the organizations' selection decisions (Billsberry, 2004).

These results do not fit the proposition given by Schneider, however the scale used to measure fit has limitations as it only catches a compact form of fit. Second, the study was more focused on the recruiters' perceptions of the candidates' fit in the organization and did not measure if the candidates actually fit with the organization or not (Billsberry, 2004).

A more comprehensive study of person-organization fit during the selection process was conducted by Cable and Judge in 1997. The researchers tested four hypotheses based on the work of Schneider (1987), Rynes and Gerhart (1990), Bowen et al (1991) and Adkins et al (1994): "(1) interviewers' perceptions of the P–O fit of their interviewees would be associated with their actual P–O fit, (2) these perceptions would positively affect their subjective assessments of P–O fit, (3) these perceptions would also positively affect their hiring recommendations, and (4) these hiring recommendations would influence their organizations' hiring decisions". Using these four hypotheses, Cable and Judge created a model and tested it based on 38 decisions of interviewers that were recruiting from an American university. In order to test the model, they used the Organizational Culture Profile, explained earlier in this chapter. However, Cable and Judge reduced the number of values from 54 to 40, as they removed values that seemed "too similar" Interviewers were asked to rank 40 items in order of "most

[12] See appendix with brief description

characteristic of my organization" to "least characteristic of my organization". Also, the interviewers were asked to evaluate the interviewees through answering "to what degree is this a characteristic of the applicant I interviewed?" while the interviewees had to evaluate the organization with a changed question such as "how characteristic is this attribute of me?" (Cable, 1995).

In addition, the researchers have asked the interviewers to evaluate the interviewees based on their personal judgment using a single item "to what degree does this applicant match or fit your organization and the current employees in your organization?" Added to that, the researchers had items for the interviewers to state their impressions on the physical attractiveness of the interviewees. In the end, the researchers found that interviewees who were liked by the interviewers had a bigger chance to be recommended for hire than others (Billsberry, 2004). The end results of the research suggest that the interviewers base their assessment of person-organization fit by their perception of the candidates' values and the organizations' values. Nevertheless, the research also shows that person-organization fit evaluations are related to the interviewers' selection decisions as well as the organizations', even though that the interviewers personal evaluations are more influential than the value compatibility between the candidates and the organization (Billsberry, 2004).

Although the research supports Schneiders' selection proposition, it is not tested directly based on it. As Schneiders' proposition says that organizations select people that have similar values, in the Cable and Judge research the organizational values are the interviewers. These values are not agreed by other organization members, therefore they are more subjective. As a general rule, organizational values have to be agreed by all members of the organization, rather than being based on individual views (Billsberry, 2004).

The research conducted by Cable and Judge cannot be directly linked to Schneiders' selection proposition because the research conducted considers one variable in the selection decision. In this study the interviewers are the only variable. Other variables might include the decisions of other interviewers, selection tests, other people conduction job analyses, as well as the impacts of trade unions or other parties. These variables can influence the kind of candidates the organizations choose. The research could have been considered to test Schneiders' selection proposition if it would have measured the compatibility between the candidates and organizational values without the interviewers' personal values (Billsberry, 2004).

2.4 Relevance of the theories to the project

The theory presented in this chapter assumes quantitative analysis when trying to assess person-organization fit. In theory, the data is collected through various methods, one of them being OCP or other questionnaires. Then, the data is being calculated in order to see the level of fit between the company and the individual. This method suggests a different paradigm from the one chosen in this thesis. If this thesis's objective would have been the measurement of person-organization fit between an individual and the company he is working for, then the positivist view would have been appropriate. Therefore, the writer acknowledges the difference in approaches, because the chosen approach in this thesis is from an interpretive view since the writer seeks understanding of how companies employ people. Person-organization fit is therefore not measured, but used to explain why companies chose the employees they have. The four operationalizations that the theory is based on are used as possible reasons behind the companies' choices. Therefore, they have been used as a base on formulating the questions for the interviews along with the research questions, in order to see if the companies emphasize what it is stated within the four operationalizations of person-organization fit.

Chapter 3: Northern Jutland Overview

In this part of the thesis, a short description of Northern Jutland will be provided with the relevant information to the chosen subject.

Northern Jutland is one of the smallest regions in Denmark in terms of population. There are around 600.000 people in this region. It is situated in the North of Denmark with an area of approximately 8000km2. The largest city in the area is Aalborg, with a population of 127.000 people. Northern Jutland accounts for 10% of the total Danish GDP. (Commission, 2013).

In 2010, the average annual GDP per capita was 290.000 kr in the region and it was positioned in the middle among the Danish regions, lower than the capital, at the same level with the Middle and South region and above the Zealand region. However, there is a difference between the GDP in the areas of the region. Aalborg has a GDP of 346.000 kr yearly per capita, while in Vendsyssel, a city situated more in the north, has 254.000 kr per capita.

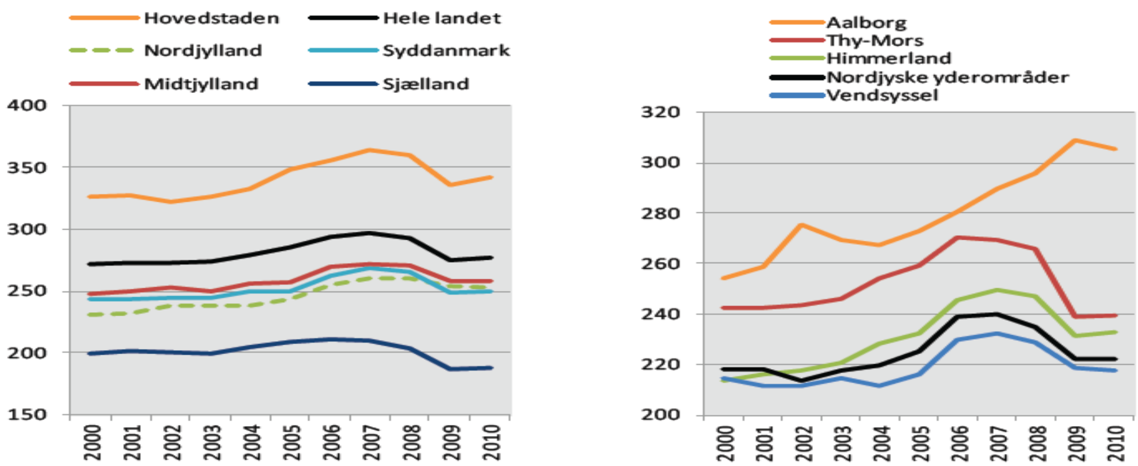
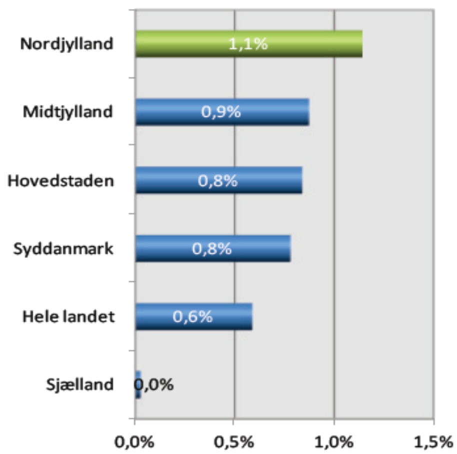


Figure 2: GDP per capita at constant prices (1000 kr) from 2000 to 2010 **Source: Region Nordjylland**

Because of the growth in GDP happened in parallel with a small growth in employment, there was a significant growth in productivity in the past 10 years. Northern Jutland has an average productivity growth of 1.1%, which is the country's highest productivity growth between 2000 and 2010. Only the capital had a higher growth than Northern Jutland (Nordjylland, 2012).



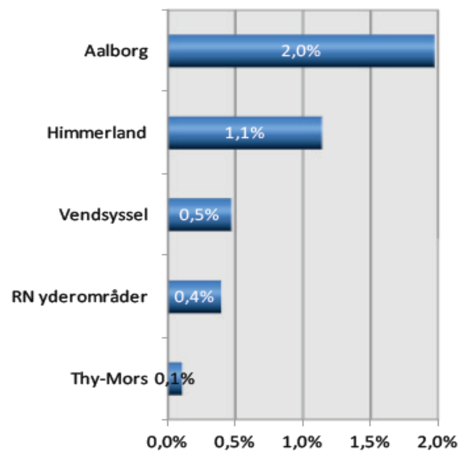


Figure 3: Average annual growth in labor productivity, from 2000 to 2010 **Source: Region Nordjylland**

Within the region, productivity has shown the highest growth in Aalborg. This happened despite the growth in unemployment that rose in the city during the period and the GDP, hence the productivity was helped to a certain extent by the "hands" in several companies. Growth can be strengthened by 4 sources, as stated by OECD which are important for regional competitiveness. These sources are human resources, entrepreneurship, innovation and globalization (Nordjylland, 2012).

Unfortunately, the unemployment rate also experienced growth, which in 2012 was 7.2% (Commission, 2013). The table below shows the fluctuations of the unemployment rate in Northern Jutland.

Region North Jutland	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Unemployment rate (%)	3.6	7.7	7	7.6	7.2

Table 7: Unemployment rate in Northern Jutland *Source: www.statbank.dk*

As it can be observed, the unemployment rate kept increasing since 2008. It had a radical increase between 2008 and 2009 with a growth of 4.1%. A possible explanation for this growth could be the financial crisis, which made a lot of companies go bankrupt even in Denmark.

The highest employment is in sectors such as "public and private services" with a rate of 35.2%, followed by "commerce, hotel and transportation" with 18.3% and in the industry sector with 16.4%. There is a focus in developing clusters within traditional and high-tech industries. Traditional industries incorporate food, construction and maritime clusters, while high-tech industries incorporate health and information and communication technologies (Commission, 2013).

The employment rate is showed in the graphic below, along with the unemployment rate.

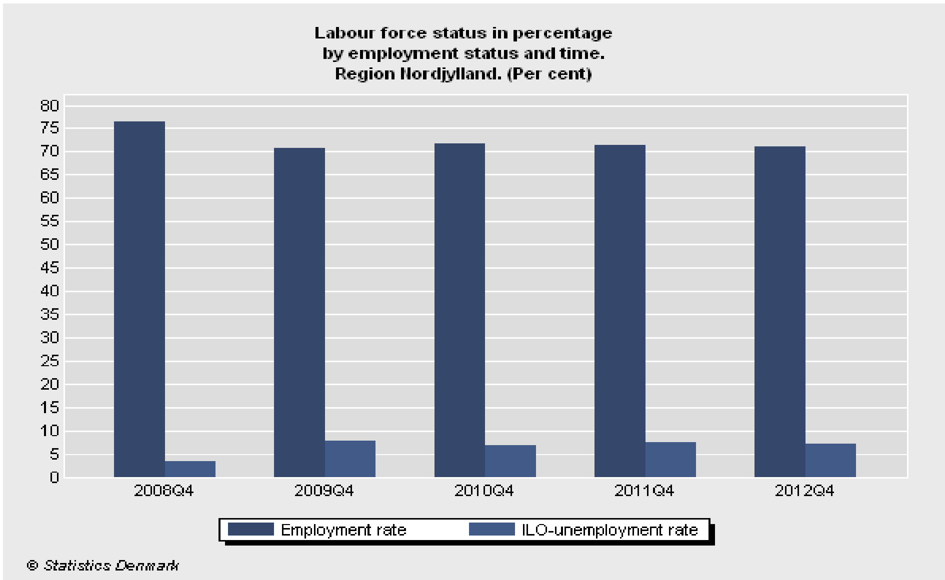


Figure 4: Labor force in Northern Jutland *Source: www.statbank.dk*

The employment rate in 2008 was 76.3%, after that showing decrease in 2009 being 70.9%, which is a 5.4% decrease; in 2010 the rate was 71.8%, with a 0.9% increase; in 2011, 71.3% of the people in the region were employed, a slight 0.5% decrease from the previous year; in 2012 the rate was 71.1%, which was another decrease of 0.2% **(Jensen, 2013)**.

The level of education in Northern Jutland is 4.6% of the 15-69 year olds of the population in the region that have completed a long tertiary education[13]. This level of education is below average in the country, which is 7.3%. However, the region outruns the region of Southern Denmark which has 4.2% and the region of Zealand where the level is 4.4% of the population that completed a long tertiary education **(Commission, 2013)**.

Yearly, there are a lot of international students that come to Denmark to take a higher education such as bachelor, masters and even PhD. In 2010-2011 the total number of international students that came to study in Denmark was 28,892. This number has increased since 2009-2010 when there were 24,485 international students studying in Danish universities **(Internationalisation,**

[13] Master's degree

2012). It can be said that the number of international students that come to study in Denmark increases every year.

In Northern Jutland there are two universities: Aalborg University and UCN. There are more than 14,000 students enrolled at this university, 10% of them being international students, in numbers meaning there are around 1400 international students **(University, 2013)**. In 2011, the total number of students at UCN was about 10.005, around 10% of them being international which means a number of 1005 students studied undergraduate programs. This university does not offer master's degrees **(Pedersen, 2012)**.

Below, the figure shows the number of international students that graduate yearly in Denmark.

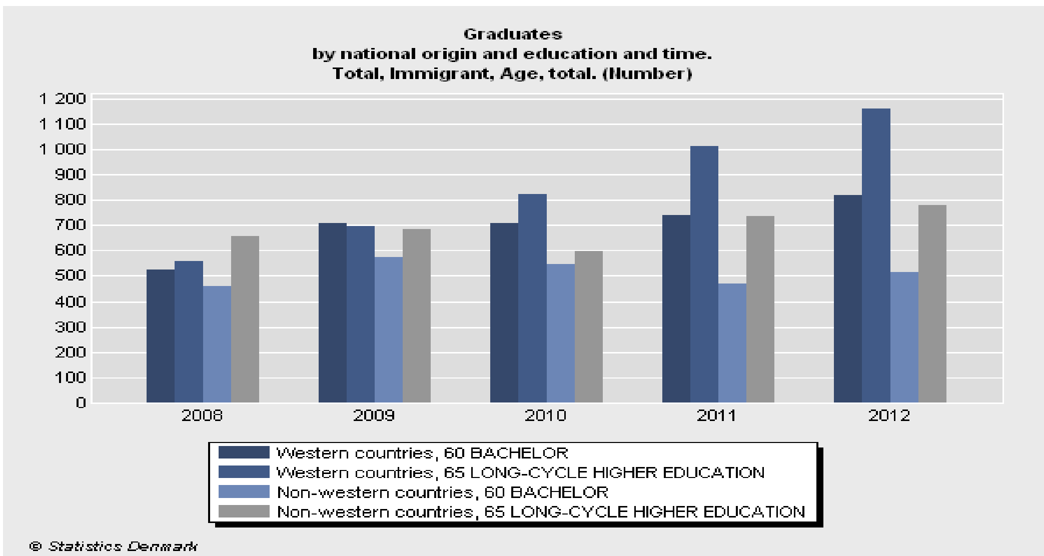


Figure 5: International graduates in Denmark *Source: www.statbank.dk*

The total number of graduates is increasing every year, in 2008 being 2197; in 2009 the number increased with 465, the total being 2662; in 2010 another increase of 9 students and a total of 2671; in 2011 a total of 2949 international students graduated and last in 2012 there was another significant increase with 324, the total being 3273 students (Krogsfeldt, 2012).

It can be said that there is international workforce in Denmark, ready to get started on a new journey by beginning their carriers. However, companies also have to be ready for the entire new workforce that is entering the job market. The graphic below shows the number of companies that are in Northern Jutland.

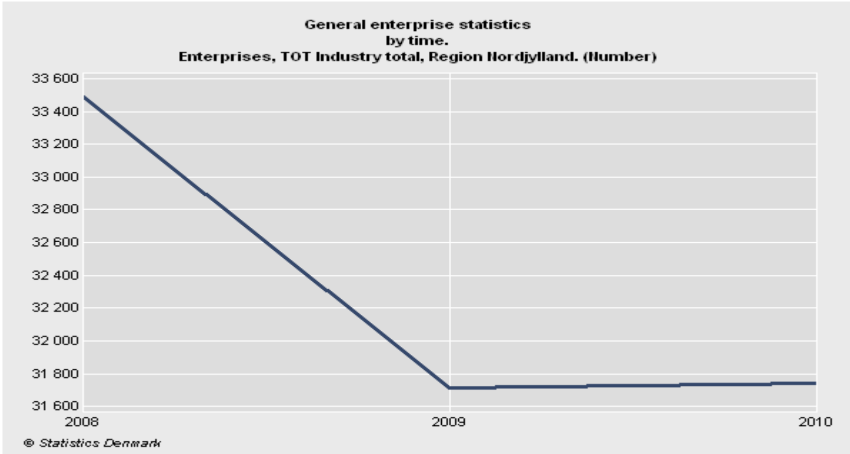


Figure 6: Number of companies in Northern Jutland *Source: www.statbank.dk*

It can be seen that there is a significant number of companies in the area, however this number has decreased after 2008 since the crisis started. It is assumed that companies either went bankrupt or they were bought by bigger companies. In 2009, 459 companies went bankrupt, this number lowering in 2010 at 419 bankruptcies, while in 2011 the number was lowered again at 414 and finally in 2012, 376 companies went bankrupt. In the end, the total number of bankruptcies during 4 years was 1667 (Dalbro, 2013).

Industry	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	764	930	753	695
Manufacturing, mining, quarrying and utility services	245	263	244	236
Construction	273	417	451	426
Trade and transport etc.	806	886	769	780
Information and communication	90	120	114	112
Financial and insurance	30	140	45	78
Real estate	259	558	328	292
Other business services	366	566	490	427
Public administration, education and health	155	208	114	294
Arts, entertainment and recreation services	155	211	170	202
Activity not stated	134	97	12	8
TOTAL	**3277**	**4396**	**3490**	**3550**

Table 8: Number of terminated enterprises in Northern Jutland *Source: www.statbank.dk*

The table above presents companies in Northern Jutland that have been terminated between the years 2007 and 2010. Unfortunately, the reasons for the terminations are unknown. However, this table shows what changes have happened on the business market in Northern Jutland. Still, there is a considerable amount of companies on the market.

With quite a significant number of companies, the job vacancies available are not that many. Therefore, if we assume that all the international students in Northern Jutland graduate and decide to remain in the area, there wouldn't be enough jobs for the freshly graduated students. The statistics are shown in the table below:

Northern Jutland	2010	2011	2012
Job vacancies	1241	1001	1205

Table 9: Job vacancies in Northern Jutland *Source: www.statbank.dk*

3.1 Predictions about Northern Jutland

When talking about the population, there have been predictions that in the region of Northern Jutland the population would remain quite stable, around 600.000 inhabitants. However, there will be a concentration of inhabitants around Aalborg, where the population will increase with around 12.000 people, while in the surrounding areas the population would decrease by 7800 people until 2020 (Nordjylland, 2012).

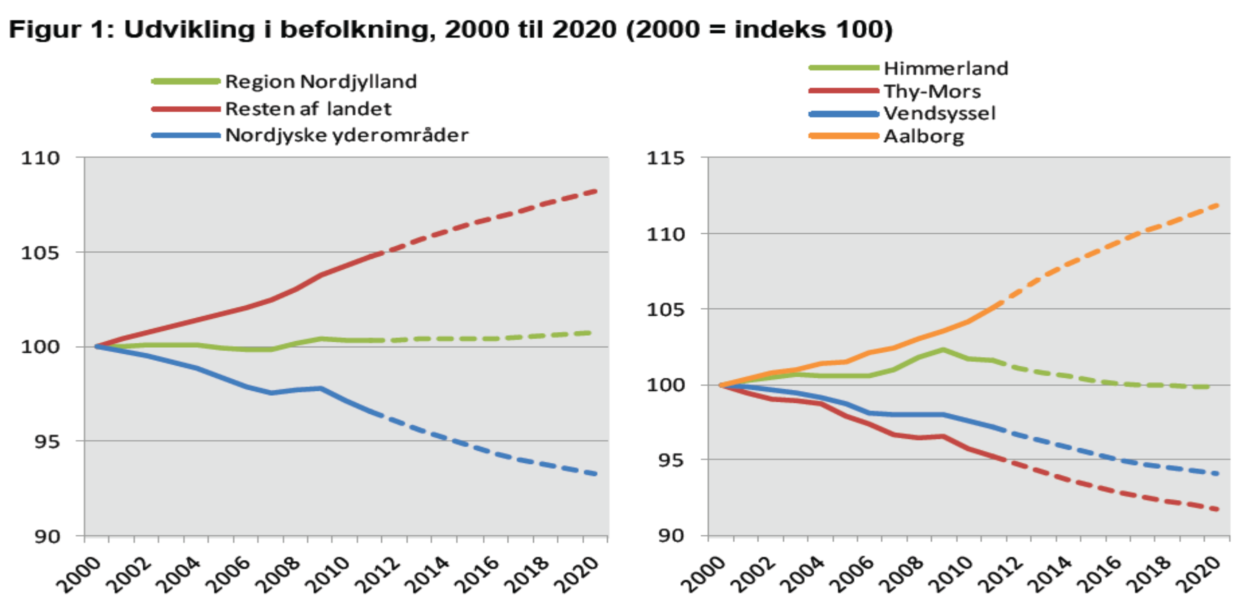


Figure 7: Demographic trend from 2000 to 2020 Source: Region Nordjylland

There is a tendency of migration between the regions in Denmark. For example, there were 1400 people more that move out of the region, than moved in the region. This tendency is more common in the younger population between the ages of 20 to 25, because of education or work. Also, the binding to a certain place is not so important for younger people. They tend to move to cities like Aarhus or Copenhagen, in order to begin or continue their studies, or for work. Overall, there are about 700 people that move from Northern Jutland to Aarhus, rather than the other way around. Around 650 people that move from Northern Jutland to Copenhagen, while the rest move to other cities in Jutland such as Viborg, Randers, Skive and Holstebro (Nordjylland, 2012).

Opposed to the people that decide to move out of the region, there are around of 2300 immigrants coming to Northern Jutland. Most of these people are between the ages 18 and 23 and they come from Romania or Poland. These countries are followed by Greenland and Norway (Nordjylland, 2012).

3.1.1 Labor market

When talking about labor, a 0.9% rise in workforce is expected in Northern Jutland towards 2020. This growth will still be below the one in other parts of the country and unevenly distributed along the areas in the region. However, Aalborg will have a rise of 7.9% until 2020, while the other areas will experience a sort of recession because of the migration (Nordjylland, 2012).

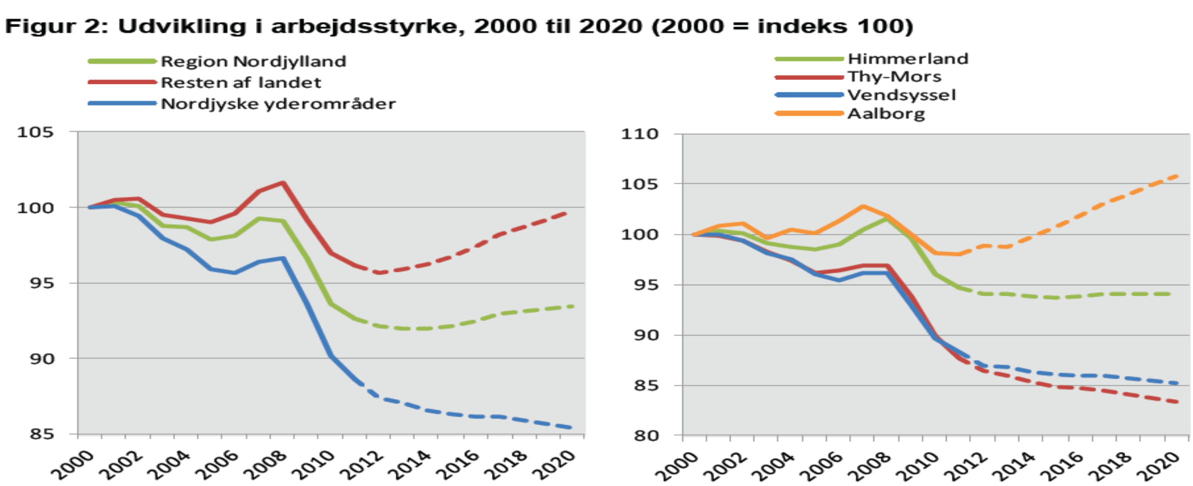


Figure 8: Development in workforce from 2000 to 2020 Source: Region Nordjylland

The figure above shows the trends regarding the workforce, first comparing North Jutland it to the rest of Denmark, and then comparing different areas in Northern Jutland.

3.1.2 Employment

Predictions about the employment level in the region show an increase from 2014 to 2020 with a rate close to the one experienced around the country. There seems to be more improvement in the eastern part of the region rather than in the western part.

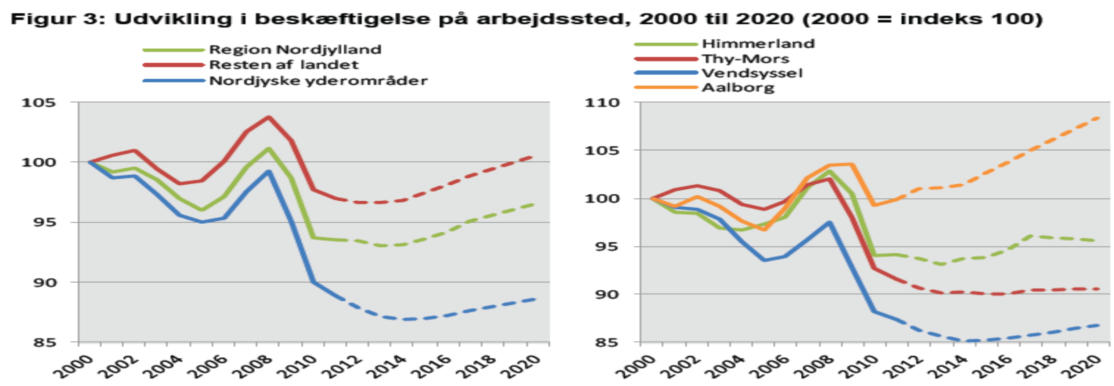


Figure 9: Development of employment at workplace, from 2000 to 2020 Source: Region Nordjylland

Combined with the growing rate of employment, there will be a slight drop in the rate of unemployment in the region, however in Aalborg there will be a small increase until 2020.

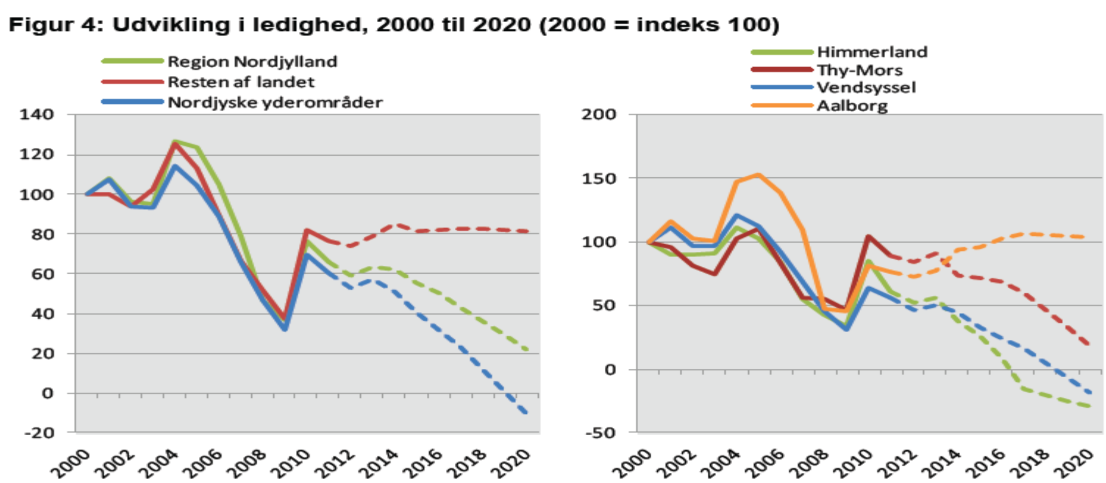


Figure 10: Changes in unemployment, from 2000 to 2020 Source: Region Nordjylland

The other areas in the region seem to have the same unemployment rate, minus Aalborg, where the unemployment rate has a small increase near 2020.

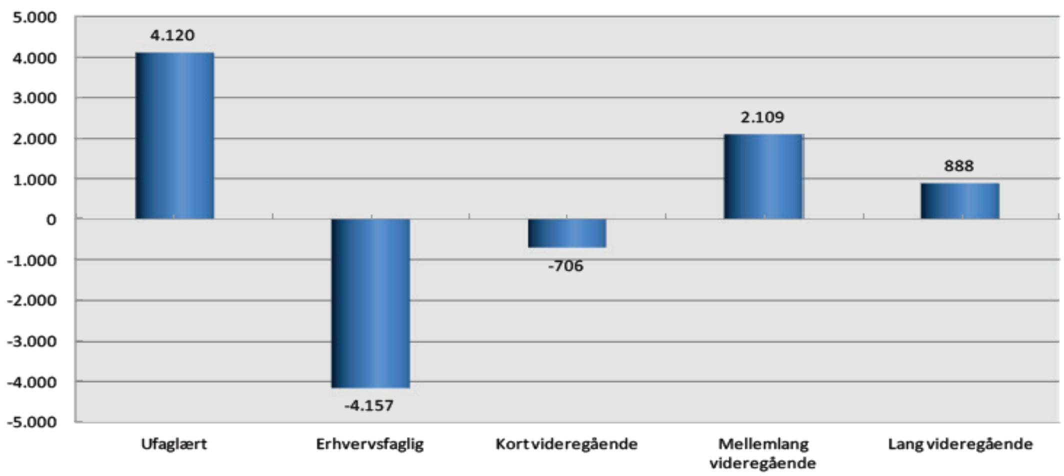


Figure 11: Calculated number of unemployed in 2020 by education **Source: Region Nordjylland**

The figure above shows the number of unemployed labor in 2020. The first number represents the unskilled labor, which shows a surplus; the second one represents vocational education, which shows a lack of labor; the third one is academic short education, with a lack of labor as well; the fourth number represents medium higher, which is bachelor degree, the number showing a surplus; the last number includes the unemployed with a master's degree.

Vocational education in business, office and ferrous metals will be in deficit; while there will be balance in construction, health and social. There will also be shortage in other vocational educations and trainings such as cooks, waiters, photographers, paramedics etc. Medium and long higher education in health will also be in shortage, as well as special technical sciences such as engineers, technicians etc. (Nordjylland, 2012).

3.2 Summary

The data presented in this chapter aims to describe the region of Northern Jutland, in terms of facts that are relevant to the project, including the analysis. A few of these facts include the number of internationally graduated students, who have a bachelor or a master's degree, as well as the number of companies in Denmark and the number of job vacancies in Northern Jutland. By presenting some facts about the Northern Jutland region, it will give the reader an overall idea about it.

Chapter 4: Empirical research

This chapter aims to present the information gained from the interviews had with the employees of the companies. The data will be presented as separate cases; each case is presented with the title of the company and it is structured based on the research questions formulated in the problem formulation. In this chapter, the aim is to provide the answers searched for in the research questions stated. The cases focus on the requirements the companies have from future candidates, along with the recruitment process such as: filtering CV's and application letters, interviews or different other assessments the companies use. Also, what kind of opportunities can be found within the company and what recommendations are given to people, mainly graduates who are looking for jobs in the case companies.

4.1 Telenor

This chapter presents the findings from the interview with Houman Zafarnejad, who is a former human resources trainee and currently a quality assurance specialist at Telenor.

4.1.2 Company overview

Telenor Group is a telecommunication company that comes from Norway. The headquarters is located in Fornebu, close to Oslo. Telenor Denmark is a part of this group. The company was established in Denmark due to the merge of the mobile company Sonofon and the internet provider Cybercity (Telenor, 2009).

Sonofon was the first telecommunication company that was established after the Danish Parliament decided to liberalize the market by making bids for new mobile licenses. This was done as a result of the European Union's decision to deregulate the telephone market in Europe. Sonofon was established in 1991 by two big shareholders, GN Great Nordic from Denmark and BellSouth from USA, and two other smaller shareholders. Their headquarters was in Aalborg, because of the high standard engineering at Aalborg University. Near the 2000's, Sonofon moved its headquarters to Frederikskaj in Copenhagen and had operations around 20 locations in Denmark. In the summer of 2000, GN Great Nordic's shares in Sonofon were bought by the Norwegian Telenor for 13.1 billion kr. In December 2003, Telenor bought BellSouth's shares in Sonofon, thus making Telenor the sole owner of the company. CBB, Canal Digital and Cyber city also became part of the Telenor Group (Telenor, 2009).

Cybercity was established in 1995 as a small dial-up internet provider with focus on Sjælland. In 2000, the company was sold to Advent International, a small private equity firm. Throughout the years, Cybercity was successful on the market, being quite profitable, even in tough times for the IT industry as in 2001. In May 2005, Cybercity was bought by the Norwegian Telenor Group. In 2009, Sonofon and Cybercity merged in one company under the Telenor brand (Telenor, 2009).

The vision of the company is to help customers get the best communication services available. All the employees at Telenor, are the best advisers for their customers. Telenor sets the working standards, "in order to create sustainable value for shareholders, customers, employees and partners" (Telenor, 2009).

4.1.2 Company's requirements

This section will present what requirements the company has from their future candidates. First, we will start with the education. Depending on the job, a future candidate should have a bachelor degree or master's. However, there are people in the company that have only finished high-school, but they start a job at the lower level, which would be a normal service consultant. Normally, if the person who studied engineering has only a bachelor's degree, that would be not enough in this case; a master's degree would be required. On the other hand, for a person who studied business, a bachelor may be enough or an AP degree[14]. But, for a person who studied business, he or she should have some experience in the area. Experience is not required for a person who studied engineering. The reason for that, is because the company hires engineers for their knowledge gained through their education, while for graduated business students, it is more about what they can.

In terms of other skills, for students who want to get a job in this company, they should know that communication is important. This means that they should have knowledge of Danish. In the company, everybody knows and speaks Danish. That is why most of the company's employees are Danes, or at least persons who have a decent level of Danish and are able to communicate.

4.1.3 Recruitment process

Even though the company has a central Human Resources Department, the recruitment is done by another specialized company. They are choosing the candidates based on the CV, first

[14] Academy Profession degree is a two year education that combines theoretical studies with practical-oriented approach

interview and the writing test. However, it is different depending on the type of job. The people are recruited based on a priority list, priorities which are set by the specific job position or by a specific leader. Telenor does not have a direct strategy on what type of people they should employ. It depends on the job they are employing for. Now, they have one strategy. All positions should be approved by the director, but it has a disadvantage because the director may not know the exact details of the position.

After the right candidates for the job are selected, they have to go through a personality test. This test is called Aenegram. Within this test, there are 9 types of personalities. However, these personalities can be combined, which means that one person does not have a fixed personality. Depending on the situation, the personality type can be changed within this test. This offers a better indication of an individuals' personality. The personality tests are used only for the bottom job levels and not for the upper jobs. There is also a second interview the candidates have to go through. This is done by the team leaders who will finally choose the right candidate for the job.

Future employees are expected to share overall values of the company, which fit to every job. Telenor is not looking for a fixed personality; they are more looking at people that would fit the job. But, the candidates should share the same goals as the job they apply for and show motivation for it.

4.1.4 Opportunities for international graduates

Within the company, there is the possibility to be a trainee, if there are students who studied business but have no experience. However, Danish is a must because to company addresses mostly to Danish customers, so English is not very important. Even if there are a few customers that speak only English, every employee in Telenor knows English as well. Telenor is an international company, operating in many markets around the world, however they do not cooperate as much, especially at the lower levels, only at the director levels. There is no corporation network, or joint venture projects between Telenor from different markets. They do have, sometimes experience exchange, where people don't have to know Danish.

There is also the possibility to become a full-time employee after the traineeship is finished. The candidate has to show that he is willing to get the job. So he should solve more tasks than required and be ambitious. If the candidate has no work experience (when talking about students with a business education) then he will probably start a job at the lower level in the company and then move to the upper levels.

4.1.5 Recommendations

A first recommendation for people, who would like to work in Denmark after graduating, is to start learning Danish while doing their education. It will be easier for them to get a relevant job with their education after graduating, because there are a lot of full time jobs in English but they are not relevant to the education taken (such as bartender, waitress etc.).

Another recommendation for students, who studied or are to take an education in business, is to gain experience that is relevant to their education. As stated above, Telenor expects experience, especially from business students. However, for engineers, they only need a master's degree, because their knowledge gained through education is more important.

An overall recommendation for people who want to work in Denmark after finishing their education, regardless of what this is, is to develop networks. In Denmark, networking is very important, especially for people who are looking for a job. 60-70% of the jobs seen on jobbanks or other online sources may already have their perfect candidate, because the law requires the companies to post certain job on the internet. Therefore, a good network may make it easier for possible candidates to be aware of all the jobs available on the market.

4.1.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the information gained through the interview with an employee of Telenor. Telenor is a big company, and therefore has several requirements from their future employees. First, for a person who is studying business, it is advised to gain a certain level of experience, through internships. On the other hand, for people who have studied engineering, experience is not required, since they are hired in the company for their knowledge. However, they should have a master's degree, while for business, a bachelor could suffice.

Knowing Danish is very important, since the company addresses to Danish customers and all the employees in the company speak Danish. Therefore, it would be smart to start learning Danish as soon as they start their education.

By meeting all the requirements set by the company, opportunities will be offered within it.

4.2 Lyngsoe Systems

This chapter presents the information gained from the interview with Keld Arenholt Christensen, working in the postal department at Lyngsoe Systems.

4.2.1 Company overview

Lyngsoe Systems was established as a division of Søren T. Lyngsø AS in 1952, in Copenhagen. The company developed automation solutions in energy, environment, marine and industry areas. They also produced computer electronics. In September 1994, Lyngsoe Systems was sold in a buy-out management to the management group in charge today. Lyngsoe Systems have their headquarters with research and development facilities, sales, project, as well as service facilities in Aars, Denmark since 1998. They have several subsidiaries around the world. One of them is located in North America where they have a sales, project and service office in Maryland. In Toronto, Canada, they have sales, project, test centers and a production facility. And last, Romania where they have project management, software development and technical services. (Systems, 2009). Now, the company has been looking at Africa. To be more specific, they are looking at Ghana, because of the increasing growth rate and the increasing of the middle class. Therefore, they see it as an opportunity.

Their mission is to provide logistic solutions to improve their customers' service quality and competitiveness on the global market. Lyngsoe Systems develops software and system integrators for logistic solutions (Systems, 2009).

Lyngsoe Systems operates in several business areas. They implement postal solutions in order to support the posts in monitoring, analyzing, optimizing and managing postal processes. Another area is airports. The company offers to improve airport logistics by optimizing baggage operations, increasing the flow visibility, capacity and reducing the amount of mishandled baggages, while improving customer services. Supply chain solutions aim to optimize logistic processes by increasing productivity and saving cost, and provide efficient flow overview and traceability in form of efficient warehouse management, asset tracking and management and food traceability solutions. Lyngose Systems provides a large variety of control systems, by offering new control solutions or upgrades for control systems that become outdated. Lyngsoe also provides solutions for libraries. Whether it is self-service lending, returns and sorting systems or simplifying the staff work by developing automatic material handling tasks such as sorting or shelving, these systems aim to improve customer service and making the work much easier (Systems, 2009). Recently, the company has been looking at the hospital area. There are about 5 hospitals that will be built in Denmark, so they will have a need for track and tray solutions, meaning that they will have a need for fast logistics.

4.2.2 Company's requirements

Lyngsoe Systems is looking for high educated people. In this case, they don't need to have experience, no matter the study. However, the degree of education they should have depends on the job. An example was that in marketing, a bachelor degree would be enough, but for engineers, a master's degree is required.

In terms of languages, Danish is not a requirement, because often the company has visitors from its branches in other countries. In this company, English is spoken a lot.

4.2.3 Recruitment process

What is interesting is that the company doesn't have a central human resources department. The responsibility for hiring new personnel comes to each department in the company, depending in which department the job is offered. However, each department has their own marketing manager.

When receiving CV's and application letters, the company expects that the future candidates have done a little research about the company. They should state what exactly they are able to offer the company. Also, taking a look at the industries they work in and the solutions they are creating. Maybe also come up with ideas might help in making their applications stand out.

After filtering the CV's and application letters, the candidate has to attend an interview. There are 2 or 3 people interviewing the candidate. The division manager attends the interview most of the times, and in some cases if the job is in the software area, a software developer will also attend in order to talk practical matters. The interview has no standard questions; it is more like a dialog. Therefore it is unstructured. The interviewers consult among themselves about the likeliness of hiring the candidate.

Depending on the job, the candidates are to take a personality test. It would be more common for sales people or engineers, but it is not taken every time. However, the personality test cannot determine the exact type of people the company is employing. It is more about the way the interview is going, if the interviewers feel that the person is right or not. Also, grades are not seen as an important characteristic for getting a job. A higher importance is given to the projects the candidate has done throughout his or hers education.

The right person for the company should share the same values which are building long lasting relationships with the customers, through knowledge, commitment, thoroughness and trustworthiness. However, it also depends on the job the person is hired for. Also, being able to work in the same direction with the leader is very important. This will help in reaching their goals. Therefore, an overall fit in the company would be preferred.

4.2.4 Opportunities for international graduates

The company doesn't offer graduate programs, but they do offer internships. Currently there are two interns working in the company. Also, after finishing the internship there is the possibility to get a full time job in the company.

Lynsoe Systems have a few events a year together with the university. The company invites students to come and visit the company as well as other companies in the area. It is done as a sort of promotion because for a company being placed more in the country side, people don't know about the opportunities that are there. Also the company is quite small, so there are more opportunities for graduated students to be employed. Especially since the company is present on international markets as well. On the other hand, the company doesn't offer advertisements in English.

4.2.5 Recommendations

In this case, a university degree is a must, whether it is a bachelor or master's. It can be said that in business a bachelor would be enough, however for engineers a master's is required. But for this company, experience is not a requirement, as candidates will gain experience by doing the job they are given.

Also, Danish is not a requirement either. Since the company is present on many markets and they often have visitors from all over the world, English is spoken and heard frequently. Therefore, a good level of English would suffice.

When applying for a job in this company, it is advised that the candidate does a little research about the company. Looking at the industries they work in and the solutions they have would show that the candidate is very interested in working in this company. Therefore, they should have a strong application letter, particularly made for the company. Overall, showing interest is the right way in approaching this company.

Last but not least, internationals should start making networks. Networks are very important in Denmark, especially if you are looking for a job. There might be jobs available or possible jobs but they are not posted on internet source yet. So networking is the key.

4.2.6 Summary

This chapter presented the information gained through interviewing an employee from Lyngsoe Systems. The company employs only highly educated people, who have a bachelor or a master’s, depending on what they study. For business education, a bachelor could suffice for getting a job or an internship in the company.

Being an internationalized company, English is spoken and heard a lot. Hence, Danish is not a requirement for getting a job in this company. Lynsoe Systems offers internships, internships that are available for international students as well. In fact, right now there are two international interns working at Lyngsoe Systems.

The downside is that the company doesn’t offer advertisements in English. Therefore, a good idea for people that are thinking of getting a job in this company would be to contact them directly through mail or phone. Adding to that, doing a small research about the company would also help. Showing interest is a good way to make a good impression.

4.3 NTU – Strategic development and consulting

This section presents the interview had with the managing director from NTU Strategic development and consulting.

4.3.1 Company overview

NTU is a Danish private consultancy company that was established in 1993 and has been working internationally with consulting and development since. The company works in many branches such as: architecture, economics, planning, technical assistance and management in several areas, where they offer their services (NTU, 2013).

NTU is working in 95 countries around the world. The company has offices in Denmark and they established a new office in Brussels, Belgium. They are focusing mostly on developing countries (NTU, 2013).

NTU has strong knowledge in European transportation and logistics solutions, as well as forming a strong organization with a large network. The company offers high-quality advisory and consulting solution for implementing projects in developing or transitioning countries. They have a broad area of expertise (NTU, 2013).

Over the years, NTU has worked with different organization and so far they have been able to be involved and take charge in short and long-term projects all over the world. For the company, their most important resource is their consultancy team. Therefore, they are investing in their employees and partners in order to offer the best services (NTU, 2013).

4.3.2 Company's requirements

In terms of education, the company is looking only for people who have a Master of Science, because of the complex area they are operating in. The company has tried to hire people without a strong academic background, however people need to have certain knowledge of theories. Also, grades are very important for the company because they are looking for perfection as they cannot afford to offer faulty reports. Therefore, the company is looking for candidates with high grades, as this shows they can do their work to perfection.

People, who are looking to work in this company, don't have to know Danish. The company is internationalized so there are a lot of languages spoken. Also, it is an advantage because it is easier to communicate with clients from all around the world. The company is very multicultural and multidisciplinary; therefore all cultures are welcomed here.

Experience is not a requirement, because mostly the company is looking for raw material to work with. It would be more difficult if the candidate has worked a few years in a company because he or she learned routines that in NTU don't apply. Experience is useful only if it's relevant working for NTU.

4.3.3 Recruitment process

First, the company analyzes the CV's and application letters based on their requirements. Also, if there is something in the CV or application that attracts their attention, these candidates would be selected for a first interview.

The company focuses a lot on assessing the candidates' personality. Psychological tests are not used because the answers are not convincing, since the candidate answers as he or she thinks its best. Therefore the personality is evaluated through internal assessment sheets. NTU is a very multicultural and multidisciplinary company. There are a lot of cultures in the company and a lot of languages are spoken. The company is not looking for a certain type of personality, but there are some personality traits that the company is looking for, such as perfectionism, desire to learn and the ability to cooperate with co-workers.

The personality is assessed during the interview. There are a few trick questions that are asked in order to make a better assessment, but the interview is more or less unstructured. Questions are formulated based in the evaluation of the CV's and application letters. Normally there at two people at the interview, who ask the questions. Sometimes, there can be three, if there is a possibility that the candidate fits in another department. Afterwards, these persons consult between themselves, as to whether the candidate is fit for the job or not.

However, the company has several rounds of interviews, the exact number is unknown. The reason is because often, there are doubts about the candidates, since the company puts a lot of effort into employing the right people.

4.3.4 Opportunities for international students

Luckily, the company is very international, as they are in 95 different markets around the world. Therefore, the company is very willing to employ highly educated internationals. NTU offers internships, with the possibility of employment afterwards. However, they only look for the best interns to employ. The company sees the interns as a possible recruitment after half of year. This means that in half a year the intern can be offered a job interview.

4.3.5 Recommendations

A first recommendation would be that, during their studies, the students should focus a lot on what grades they get. If this is a company they would very much like to work in, then having high grades is a very important requirement.

Also, future candidates should be aware of their capabilities. This means that they should think about what they can do, and what they cannot do. NTU is looking for people who are willing to learn, therefore the learning capacity and desire should be high and the candidates should show that. Being open to new ways of learning is very important, since the candidates will learn how to do things in the company. If the candidates have previous experience from other companies, if they have a certain procedures or routines that do not fit the company, they should be ready to give up on them. Within NTU, the candidates will learn everything they need to in order to do their job perfectly, so previous irrelevant experience would make things more difficult. Still, this doesn't mean that if somebody has previous experience, they will not get a job in NTU. It has to do a lot with the personality, and this is a very important aspect.

4.3.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the relevant information gained through an employee of NTU. NTU is a consultancy company that offers their services on 95 markets around the world. The company is focusing on hiring only people who have a Master of Science degree and high grades. Offering a perfect report and their best services to their clients are the main goals within the company, so for that reason there are looking only for the best people.

Also, the candidates' personality is very important in the company. That's why during the interview, they are trying to make the best assessment about the person and hire the appropriate one. The company is looking for people who are willing to learn and who are the best at what they do.

NTU is very open in employing international people because it is a very multicultural company. Therefore there are opportunities for individuals who have a Master of Science to get a job in the company, or start an internship with the possibility of employment afterwards.

Chapter 5: Cross-case analysis and discussion

This chapter compares the information gathered from the companies with the theory and also compares the companies between themselves based on what has been found. There were a total of 3 interviews conducted. The first interview was from Telenor, a telecommunication company placed in Aalborg; the second interview was from Lyngsoe Systems, a logistic systems company that is placed in Aars; the third interview came from NTU a consulting company also placed in Aalborg. Within this chapter, the reader will be able to understand on what assessments the companies make their decisions when hiring personnel. Therefore, in this part of the project the reader will be able to see if the assumptions in the theory apply in reality. Also, the similarities and differences between the companies' requirements, recruitments processes, opportunities and recommendations can be noted within this chapter. By recognizing the similarities, the reader will get an idea about how people should look for a job in a Danish company and how is the employment process. On the other hand, by identifying the differences, the reader will note that the companies emphasize different aspects regarding the people they want to employ.

In the theoretical chapter, it was mentioned that person-organization fit is measured through four operationalizations based upon two distinctions. The two distinctions that the operationalizations come from are complementary fit versus supplementary fit and needs-supplies versus abilities-demands. Complementary fit means that the characteristics of an individual adds something or completes the environment, while supplementary fit means that an individual has characteristics that are similar to the environment. Needs-supplies mean that there is fit when the organization satisfies the needs of an individual. On the other hand, abilities-demands mean that the individuals' abilities satisfy the organizations demands.

Based on these distinctions, there four operationalizations of person-organization fit have been identified. The first type of operationalization is in connection to supplementary fit and measures the congruence between organizational and individual values. The second type of operationalization is goal congruence between the individual and organizational leaders or peers. A third type of operationalization measures needs-supplies fit. And the last type of operationalization is the match between individual characteristics and organizational culture or climate.

However, this thesis’ goal is not to measure person-organization fit in a company. The theory is presented as it can help to gain a better understanding of how companies in Northern Jutland employ people and why do they employ them, mainly international graduated students. It is to see if the companies take into consideration the matters presented above when employing somebody new.

1. Organizational and individual values

Overall, all the companies take interviews and assess personalities. However, for two of the companies’, Telenor and Lyngsoe Systems personalities are assessed depending on the job. For NTU, the company assesses the personality at every job level, because for them an individuals’ personality is very important. Within the interviews and personality tests, for those who take them, the individuals’ values are identified. It is important that the individuals share the same values as the company, as it has been mentioned in the interviews conducted. But also, some values depend on the job the candidate is being hired for. In Lyngsoe Systems’ case the overall values that have to be shared are commitment, thoroughness and trustworthiness, however, other values that are fit for the job should be hold by the individual. For Telenor, offering the best services to their customers and helping the company being the best in business are values appropriate to every job in the company. Compatible values are important in NTU as well. The right person in the company should have values such as client focus, teamwork and integrity with NTU’s local knowledge and global experience. In theory, this operationalization states that values guide an individuals’ behavior, which could mean that if his values are identified then it could determine how the individual will do his job.

2. Goal congruence between individuals and organizational leaders or peers

It has been revealed through the interviews that goal congruence is important when companies hire new people. However, the individuals’ goals do not always have to match the companies’, but the job they are hired for. For Telenor, the individuals’ goals should match more the goals fit for the job description, however they should be motivated in achieving the company’s goals as well. In the case of Lyngsoe Systems, it is important to work in the same direction with the leader, because this way the goals would be reached. Therefore sharing the same goal is a must, in order do to a good job. For NTU, achieving their goals is very important, therefore the right candidate should have the same goals as the leader and co-workers in order to offer the best services to their clients. These statements go hand in hand with this type of operationalization described in the theory which states that organizations employ people who share the same goals as the leaders.

3. Needs-Supplies fit

In this type of operationalization, companies are looking for individuals who need what they have to offer. Or the other way around, individuals are looking for companies who supply what they need. In this thesis, the research has been done from the companies' point of view. However, it can be assumed that individuals look for companies who can offer what they need. So, if they show interest in the company they want to work for through the application letter and at the interview, there are high chances that the individual can get a job in the company he wishes for. It has been revealed that companies like that their candidates do a little research about what they do and in what industries they work for. Therefore, making an application letter specially written for the company and not for 10 other companies gives the candidate a high chance to get an interview. At the interview the need-supplies fit can be assessed more thoroughly. Companies take a close look at what a candidate has to offer based on their requirements and if what they offer suits them, then this candidate could be the perfect person for the job. The requirements are different for each company. While Telenor is looking for people who speak Danish, in Lyngsoe Systems and NTU Danish is not a requirement because English is spoken a lot. Lyngsoe Systems and NTU employ highly educated people. For Lyngsoe Systems a bachelor degree would be enough if the person studied business while for and engineer a master's degree is required. NTU is looking only for people who have a Master of Science. Experience is not required for any of the companies. In Telenors' case, people who have studied business whether they have a bachelor or a master's degree they need to have experience, while for engineers a master's degree is required but no experience is needed.

4. Fit between individual personality and company culture or climate

The data revealed for each of the three companies, that the individuals' personality is taken into consideration when talking about its fit in the company culture. In theory, this fit can be viewed from a supplementary fit perspective and needs-supplies fit. It has been mentioned earlier, that both of these are taken into consideration when companies recruit new people. For Telenor, they are a multicultural company where every type of people and cultures are welcomed, therefore the assessment as to whether the individuals' personality fits in the culture remains at the job level. So Telenor emphasizes the individuals' personality to the culture more at the job level. For Lyngsoe Systems it is important that the individuals' personality fits in the overall culture of the company. This can help to work in the same direction in order to reach the goals set. It has not been stated if the company is multicultural or not, however it is assumed it is since they have interns with different nationalities and experience exchanges with branches from other countries. NTU is also a multicultural company, since they welcome people from every country to join their company. Therefore they have to be very open towards new cultures. NTU emphasizes a lot on an individuals' personality and they are very strict when they evaluate a candidate, so his or hers personality must fit in the culture here.

In the end, the assumptions made in the theory seem to apply in reality as well. It has been revealed that companies do emphasize person-organization fit for all of the four operationalizations. Although, there are some differences as to what level they emphasize these operationalizations whether it is at the company level or job level. For example, in Telenors' case, the personality should fit the culture but more at a job level rather than at a company level, whereas for the other two companies Lyngsoe Systems and NTU the personality is important to fit the overall company culture. Regarding organizational and individual values, it has been revealed that all companies emphasize individual values that fit the company, adding to those are a few values that have to fit with the job. When mentioning about goal congruence, this is also very important for each of the companies. However goal congruence is more important at the job level. The individual should share the same goal with the department leader and that way reaching the small goals set in the departments, will help reaching the overall goals of the company. In the needs-supplies fit, individuals look for companies who can satisfy their need, however this is only an assumption. But companies do take a look at what the individual has to offer, because they have certain requirements from him or her.

Next, the research is moving on to comparing the cases between themselves and presents the differences and similarities between the companies.

a. Requirements from future candidates

It can be said that all the companies have similar requirements from their future candidates with a few differences. In the case of Telenor and Lyngsoe Systems, for people who studied business a bachelor degree would suffice, whereas for an engineer a master's degree is required. However, in NTU, the company employs only people that have a Master of Science degree. Also, depending on the job, in Telenors' case for example, for the lower job levels such as a service consultant even a bachelor degree isn't needed because there are people who finished high-school that can do the job.

Regarding experience, it depends on the company. Telenor demands experience from people who finished a business education, but experience is not a demand from people who finished engineering. For Lyngsoe Systems and NTU, experience is not a requirement, since it is more preferred that people gain experience from working in their company.

Also, in Telenor, knowing Danish is a requirement because most of the company's clients are Danish. Telenor employs international people, but only if they know Danish. For the other two companies Lyngsoe Systems and NTU, Danish is not needed as English is spoken very often or daily.

A very important requirement in the case of NTU is the high grades. NTU is only employing people who had high grades during their study, because in their field of work perfection is something they are looking up to. For Lyngsoe Systems, grades are not as important as they do not determine whether the person will work in the company or not. More important are the projects written during the studies.

b. Recruitment process

The recruitment process is almost the same for all the companies. All the CV's and application letters are selected based on the requirements. However, for Telenor there is another company who is doing the CV and application letter filtering, the writing test as well as the first interview. After the right candidates are selected an interview with people from Telenor will take place. For Lyngsoe Systems, they do not have a central HR department, therefore the task of employing people come to each department the job is placed in. The same goes for NTU. All the interviews are unstructured, while at NTU the do ask a few trick questions in order to determine whether the candidate has the right qualities or not. For Telenor this fact has not been mentioned, whereas for Lynsoe Systems the interview is more like a dialog.

All the companies take personality tests, however for Telenor and Lyngsoe Systems, this depends on the job. In Telenor, personality tests are taken at bottom job levels, but not for higher job titles. For Lyngsoe Systems, personality tests are also taken depending on the job. They are probably taken for sales people and engineers. When hiring new people, NTU always takes personality tests, because a candidate's personality is very important for the company.

c. Opportunities for international graduated people

There are opportunities offered by the three companies to international graduated people. All of them offer the possibility of getting an internship in the company. Also, there is the possibility of getting a full-time job after finishing the internship if the interns are good at their job and show commitment.

However, none of the companies offer graduate programs, which are approximately two-year programs designed for graduates. It can be said that it is like a training program.

Lyngsoe Systems is trying to promote their company and the opportunities that are within it by going to the university and looking for future employees or inviting students or their company. Telenor does not do anything in attracting international people, only by offering internships, but these internships are in Danish. NTU is offering internship is English, but it has not been specified if they do other advertisements as well.

d. Recommendations

Companies have slightly different recommendations based on their requirements. For Telenor, it is important that while still students, future candidates should think about starting to learn Danish. Also, for business students it is advised to take an internship so that they can gain a little experience. On the other hand, for Lyngsoe Systems experience and the knowledge of Danish is not as important. For them, more important is the interest the future candidates show in their company. Also, their projects are very important since this is an aspect that matters more. For NTU, high grades are very important, therefore during their studies, people who would like to work in this company are advised to be ambitious in order to get as high grades as possible. Also, they are advised to be aware of what they can do and what they cannot do and be ready to absorb all the information they will gain.

An overall agreed recommendation, is that internationals should start in making their own networks. Networking is very important in Denmark, therefore it could make it easier to look for a job as well as getting tips on how to prepare for it.

When talking about the job market today and the willingness of Danish companies to employ international graduated people the view isn’t so bright. Also, the number of job vacancies which is 1205 in 2012, would not be enough for all the internationals that graduate, if the assumption is that all of about 2400 students will finish their education in Denmark. It is has been commonly agreed by the people interviewed that companies in Northern Jutland are not willing to employ international people, especially if they do not know Danish. There are a few reasons for that. First, companies here are not so internationalized and have offices only here in the northern part of Denmark. If they were internationalized they would have offices in other places around the world. A second reason is that they don’t know that there are people who are willing to work for them. There are a lot of companies placed in the country side, therefore it can be said that they are not used to having different cultures. Therefore, it is assumed that some of the job vacancies will be given to Danish people as it is more comfortable for the companies to have employees from their own culture. Adding to that, it has been shown that there are around 1400 people that move to bigger cities like Aarhus or Copenhagen to look for a job, because they think there are more opportunities there. This is also a problem because people don’t know that there are a lot of companies placed in the country side. Therefore it is maybe a lack of promotion from both sides: the companies and the international graduates. For companies in the country side, they would have to try harder in promoting themselves. Also, the graduates should research the areas around big cities and contact the companies asking them if they would be willing to employ international graduates. This also helps them in creating their own networks.

5.1. Summary

This chapter has presented the findings resulted from three interviews with three different companies. First, the findings were compared in order to see if what the theory suggests applies in reality as well. Results revealed that companies do emphasize each of the fits presented which are: organizational and individual values; goal congruence between individuals and organizational leaders or peers; needs-supplies fit and lastly, fit between individual personality and company culture or climate. Afterwards, the results were compared in order to find out differences and similarities between: requirements, recruitment process, opportunities and recommendations. It has been revealed that they are quite similar, but with a few differences. Of course, when it comes to requirements it depends on the company. For the recruitment process, it is quite similar for all the companies, however regarding the personality test; it is more emphasized in some companies than in others. Regarding opportunities, they are the same for every company, but one of the companies is taking one step ahead in promoting themselves and one reason for that is the location. The recommendations are also quite different because they are based on the requirements. One overall recommendation agreed by all companies was regarding networking. Unfortunately, the interviewers opinion about companies in Northern Jutland being willing to hire international graduates are not positive. There are reasons regarding internationalization and perhaps size of the companies. Location is also an issue because there are companies placed at the country side however people do not know about the opportunities there.

Chapter 6: Reflections

This section aims to present the writers' reflections upon the thesis, such as how it was written or what could have been done differently. The research conducted in this thesis revealed the answers to the research questions formulated in the problem formulation. Unfortunately, the number of companies interviewed for this thesis was too low comparing to the number of companies in Northern Jutland. However, it can be assumed that even if the number of companies interviewed would have been higher, the result would probably still be the same when talking about the willingness of companies in Northern Jutland to employ international graduates. A reason for not favoring internationals was that the companies in this region are not that internationalized. Still, there are small and medium sized companies that are going to international markets, but they are not used to other cultures. It can be assumed that the companies are not promoting themselves enough among international graduates. However, perhaps more answers could have been found regarding how companies promote themselves and what do they emphasize when employing personnel and what kind of people they are looking for. This could have revealed other differences and similarities.

The research could have been more conclusive if it would have been done for a longer period of time, say two or three years, in order to see the changes in the companies' behavior. For example, in two or three years companies may be more internationalized and this might make them more willing to employ international graduates. Or if companies are planning to enter new markets, if hiring international graduates in order to do research about the market chosen might make it easier to see advantages and disadvantages as well as develop suitable strategies for that market. This is helpful because an international who comes from the country the company choses to enter in, gives the company insights about the market and about the country, their culture, preferences etc. Would this matter make them consider employing international graduates?

Also, perhaps it could have helped if international graduates would have been interviewed as well to see if they are willing to stay and work for a company in Northern Jutland. Or see how they feel about the companies hiring habits if they know any or if they had tried to get a job in a company but didn't and share their experience about it. It has been mentioned in the previous chapters that international graduates don't know that there are opportunities in the country side and that is a reason why they move to bigger cities. If they knew about these opportunities, would they be willing to work there? If not, why?

The theory presented in this thesis is trying to reflect the reasons behind the companies’ hiring decisions. Person-organization fit may not be fully applied to what is happening in reality, but parts of it seem to matter when companies decide whether to employ a person. Normally, person-organization fit is a measurement to see if the person has its place in the company or not. This measurement is done when the person is already in the company. It could be done before employing a person, but it would take a lot of time and effort in order to do the measurement and get the results. However, the thesis does not aim to measure person-organization fit. Person-organization fit is used in order to understand to a certain level the companies hiring decisions. Perhaps more theories could have been found by researching organizational behavior theories regarding recruitment, however the timeframe awarded to this thesis did not make it possible.

Useful data might have been needed, such as the number of internationally oriented companies in Northern Jutland, but none of the sources found contained such data. It would have been useful because it can be assumed that internationally oriented companies are more willing to employ international graduates. Also, using quantitative methods to collect data, such as questionnaires might have gotten more answers for the problem formulation, but perhaps the information gained from them might not have been accurate.

Another limitation in the thesis could be the integration of different chapters. The reader might find it difficult to see the connection between the different chapters in this thesis, especially starting from the Northern Jutland overview to the cross-case analysis. However, the writer has tried to diminish this, although it might not have been successful.

Conclusion

The thesis’ aim to answer the research questions formulated in the problem statement regarding the attractiveness of non-danish students to companies in Northern Jutland has been achieved.

The first chapter of the thesis has presented the chosen paradigm this being the interpretive paradigm. Afterwards, the appropriate methodology has been chosen: the case-study methodology. The second chapter of the thesis presented the theories applied. In this thesis, one theory was considered to be more appropriate to the phenomena studied and that theory is person-organization fit.

Next, an overview of Northern Jutland was given, in order to see the economic development of the region as well as other facts in relation to the subject of the thesis. Future predictions of the region have also been showed in order to see where the region is heading towards the future.

The empirical research chapter presents the data gained from the interviews. The interviews are presented as separate cases. First, the data gained through interviewing an employee from Telenor was presented, being followed by the data obtained from an employee of Lyngsoe systems and the last interview was with an employee from NTU. All of the data was structured the same way in order to make it easier for the writer to compare it.

The data analysis was based on the data gained from the interviews. First the data was compared based on the person-organization fit theory, which revealed that companies do emphasize organizational and individual values; goal congruence between individuals and organizational leaders or peers; needs-supplies fit and lastly, fit between individual personality and company culture or climate. Next the data was compared in order to find differences and similarities between: requirements, recruitment process, opportunities and recommendations. It has been revealed that there are similarities between the companies, but there are also differences, especially at the level where they assess fit, whether it is company level or job level.

The thesis has a reflection part which in which the writer states what she would have done differently regarding the data and the analysis, as well as the theory. Also, the limitations within this thesis are presented and also what kind of future research can be done.

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Appendix

Comparative Emphasis Scale

The Comparative Emphasis Scale is briefly described through a section from an article written by Bruce M. Meglino from The Moore School of Business, University of South California.

"What is the Comparative Emphasis Scale?

The Comparative Emphasis Scale (CES) is a copyrighted instrument that is designed to measure four general values that have been shown to be operative in the workplace: achievement/working hard, concern for others/helping others, fairness, and honesty/integrity. The scale utilizes a forced choice or ipsative format for a number of reasons. Because values are thought to be less than totally conscious, they are believed to be most evident in choice situations. Moreover, values are highly socially desirable. Forced choice or ipsative measuring instruments have been shown to reduce the social desirability response bias inherent in other measurement formats (see Meglino & Ravlin, 1998 for more information on values and their measurement).

The CES requires respondents to choose between pairs of single phrases, each describing behaviors that reflect a different value. Each value is compared to every other value four times, with each replication consisting of different behavioral statements. These statements were matched for social desirability, with male/female differences taken into account. Statements were also matched on the extent each represents the value it is associated with. Use thus far has indicated that individuals respond to the instrument in a generally transitive manner; that responses relate to decision making, prosocial behavior, ratings of performance, and self-ratings; and that congruence on the measure between supervisors and subordinates is related to satisfaction, commitment, and other important work outcomes."

Interview 1 - Telenor

A: What do companies look for in a candidate? How did u get employed?

H.Z: "I got the job first when I was living in Norway doing my bachelor; I got offered a job by Telenor in Aalborg and two years after starting at Telenor I decided to do a master's degree. What I've done is that I went part time from my job and started a master's degree. When I did my internship I did it for Telenor and the master thesis as well. So, theoretically two semesters I was doing a part-time job for Telenor. The other two semesters I worked full time. I was in touch with many students finishing their career. I know one Romanian girl, Oana Barbu, she was studying at Aalborg University, she graduated 3-4 months ago and she was doing the engineering at Telecom. She took her internship at Intel and it was difficult for her to find a job even though they are looking for engineering positions, so she had to accept a PhD program and continue studying as a PhD. So the stories are different for everybody. Another Romanian girl, Catalina, studying the same as Oana, found a job a TDC in Aarhus. If you ask me it's a question where you look for a job, because it's difficult to find a job in Northern Jutland and that's due to the fact that you should do Danish, which is a must."

A: So it's a must to know Danish?

H.Z: "In our current geographical location it's a must to know Danish, if we are talking about a proper job. A job connected to your education, a full time job. Because you can also get a full time job as a bartender but it's not connected to your education. As long as we talk that, then geographic positions in Denmark mean a lot. If you go to Copenhagen or Aarhus you might find interesting jobs in English but I would say in long term if you want to develop in a company it's a must to know Danish. But then you would have discussed a level of Danish."

H.Z: "The important thing is how much you use your academic background to your job. With a similar study as mine you would never use your direct knowledge at your job. If you're doing engineering they would definitely hire you because of your education, or if you're a doctor or a nurse they would hire you because of your education. If you're doing a business oriented education, it's not much about the education, of course it counts but it's a fine level of balance with your work experience."

A: So you would also say that wok experience is very important

H.Z: "If you talk about business oriented studies"

A: It depends what you study

H.Z: "What you study, where you want to work. So even though Denmark is quite a small country, still there are differences in which places they need what sort of qualification. It is a package, and having said that it is a question of networks. Networking means everything today; I would say you would never find interesting jobs from job advertisements. 60-70% of the online jobs or on job banks have already the right candidates. However, the problem in a country like Denmark, is that even though you know I am going to take this person for the job you cannot do that, you have to put the job on the job bank or in an internal source and then receive the candidates and in the end pick the person you want. So if you want to get the right job you should have the right connections. This is related to any country. Sometimes, as a foreigner if you are getting a job based on your qualifications that would be because they do not have that much of that qualification in their country and on top of that you are a special person, you have published some articles in different channels which for them is like you are a different person.”

A: So you need something special in your CV and application letter

H.Z: “Well that is one thing because to begin with there should be a demand. If you want to study the market history in Telecom, if you go 5-6 years back or 10 years back, companies were stealing each other’s employees, because there was a war of having qualified employees and the market was good, the companies were earning and they wanted to develop and grow so they needed people. So they had to offer better salaries to get employees. But if you look at the market today, there are many qualified employees without jobs. If you were a foreigner 10 years ago and wanted to find a job that would have been easier because there weren’t that many people, they were satisfied with the jobs they had.”

A: Do you know how they filter CV and application letters in Telenor? What do they look at?

H.Z: “Even though we have a central HR channel it is quite different. If you are looking at the base level, our base level would be people working at the customer service. We actually pay a company doing the recruiting for us. But still they are choosing the right candidates based on the CV, first interview, the writing test and so on for that basic level. After that we would send one of our leaders who are working on field from the customers’ service saying “this company chose these 20, would you go see if these 20 are right for the job?” Sometimes we might be pressured and say “well we need 20 we have 20, we get those 20” But as soon as you talk about academic jobs, jobs which we actually had two position openings as project leaders we got so many applications both internally and externally. In the end they took 2 people externally, newly graduated from Aalborg University studying IT leadership and Management and they were of course Danes. Because it was quite an obvious choice that they were going to interact with Danes. If you ask me for someone who is doing higher education at the level of master, what’s the most important thing, I would definitely say that if you have a goal that you would like to work in Denmark then you should take very good internship company place when you’re doing your internship because that means a lot. This is the time; often you cannot go to companies and say “can you get me in? I can work 3 months for you”, because by regulation you cannot do this. But if you go and say “I’m doing my internship, I want to be a trainee” of course they have the possibility, it doesn’t cost them and if you show what you could do for them then you mind be the qualified person to consider as an employee.”

A: How do they consider you as a qualified person when becoming a full time employee after the internship?

H.Z: “Let’s say you want to do your internship. If you’re doing your internship for a company there are some expectations for a normal employee. Let’s say if you have a goal of handling 10 tasks in one week, as a trainee, you should do 15. So you should do more than a normal person, you should be the fantastic person in this case. And that’s how it opens up opportunities even though later on you get the job you will do the tasks as everybody else, but at least while you are having those possibilities you have to do the best out of it. In some peoples case they actually decide to extend their education. That's what Oana did: she extended her internship, because her internship was paying her money not as much as full time, but she decided to extend her internship until January. That means that you're done with your degree but you can as much write in your CV that you have 1 year work experience which has nothing to do with your academic background. And often what you will learn is that one thing is what you can write on your CV and second is what you learn on the field. As I said, what happens in reality is quite different than what happens in theory and academic."

A: In the end, you do more than what the company asks

H.Z: "While in the company yes, if you get the chance but on the other hand I would say that it is quite normal for someone that has a master's degree, if you have to start at the level medium, you actually sometimes have to go start at the low position. We have people nowadays working as a normal service consultant with a master's degree, answering peoples' calls, answering their billing questions and you would say for this you don't need a master's degree, you have people from high school doing this. There are people with master's degree that are doing the same as people coming from high school. However, for them is important to say I'm entering the company, I'm inside the company so I'm looking for opportunities, I have analytical skills then I can get a job. The problem is that if you're a company and you get the applications, you have someone with higher degree and someone who just finished high school. Which one do you chose in the majority of cases? The high school one. The reason for that is that if you're taking someone who has a master's degree then the person is basically over qualified. Then you would say that this person just wants to have a job, a primary earning base, but as soon as they will find a job that will fit their profile you won't have this person. So it's not a good investment. Even though they have a high school degree and they might go in 1 year, at least we have the assurance that in 1 year we still have this employee."

A: Maybe it is easier to get a job if you only have a bachelor…

H.Z: "Yes, because the companies say it's a fine level and so on."

A: But a Dane said that if you don't have a master's degree it is more difficult to get a job

H.Z: "Depends in which sense. We do have department leaders in our company who have nothing more two years after high school degree, in Denmark we call it AP degree. We do have people and if you look at their education, they took their education while they were working. As a base level why they are boss or department leader, they didn't have the top education. That's because the main question is what sort of field are you talking about? I do agree you need to have a master's degree if you're going for an engineering medical education. Coming about the business job business field, the whole thing is about what you can. Can you show results? Do you know the business? Do you know how to negotiate, communicate with your surroundings?

They don't care if you have a master's degree, bachelor degree, PhD, or just high school with 15 years' experience."

A: What about with students that don't have work experience?

H.Z: "If you don't have the connections, you somehow have to start from the bottom level. If you start at the bottom level and you show you can do something more, and that you are willing, for instance your Danish is not tip-top, but you are willing to learn Danish, you are making an effort then I would say you would have some chance to start with. But mainly if you ask me, I would just recommend anyone as soon as enters Denmark, while doing your education, learn Danish."

A: How does Telenor attract foreign students?

H.Z: "We don't. That's simply the answer. We do have some trainee positions, we have four main departments and we could say we have our concerned director, he has his trainee, but he's Danish of course. In a company like Telenor, even though we are an international company, we are the 5th biggest operator on the whole planet; still we don't have that much connection with the other Telenor companies. What we have is from the director levels. You don't see that often for instance corporation network, that we are doing some joint venture projects or anything else that kind. That's why it's quite limited. We do actually have, at the moment sitting in the company 20 people that don't understand Danish but it's because they are coming from Telenor India. It's like an experience exchange. They are nerdy, they are working on one specific area, and you might have 5 Danish employees among them which they have to communicate somehow. Besides that, we are a communication company, for us in Denmark; our customers are Danish so you wouldn't expect our customers are willing to speak English. That's also a problem. On top of that we don't have that many foreigners in Denmark, so the chance that we need to have a separate line just to service our English spoken customers is not that much. Also, our Danish employees speak English as well so why do you need a separate line."

H.Z: "The funny part is now we are talking about these issues. We do have this program Youth will Ambassador and you would question what is the program about? Because it's not for free to study in Denmark, the government has a cost for one's education. The students are coming from European countries so they don't pay for their education. However, what we are saying is that if we are looking at 2020, in Denmark there will be a lack of qualified employees. This is a fact. There is much estimation on it, if you are looking currently in the market today, everything looks quite dark, there are many unemployed people and so on. But there are calculations showing that, if you go close to 2020, there will be a need for qualified people. And then you would've said "should you start with the program now?" we have at least 6-7 years. And usually you cannot just act 2-3 years prior to a program so you have to be prepared for this. So that's what we do at Youth Goodwill Ambassador, even though that if we are having 150-200 members I would say 80%-90% will leave the country."

H.Z: "The growth of education and job title should be together. You cannot just finish high school and say "I'm going to do a master's degree". Your parents might like it, but looking from a career perspective that's not good. Let's say that there's a person that has a master's degree but no experience. What can you use this person for? You just know theory. In best case, I would say go to high school or to first year university students and teach them theory because obviously you don't know how to apply your theory."

H.Z: "We do take the personality test. The tool we are using now is called Aenegram. Still, within this test there can be different types of people. So it's not like a fact book, but it's giving some indications. What is interesting with Aenegram, is that you will be positioned in one personality, however there are 9 types of personality and if you are one type you would be neighbor to other two aenegrams. Let's say I am type 3 so I am neighbor to type 2 and type 4. Beside that I have direct line to type 9, so in different situations for instance, if I get stressed and angry, I am type 9. What is type 9? Type 9 is someone like "I don't care about anything." So if I get frustrated I don't do anything, I just sit back and wait and see what other people do. Therefore, whatever is the situation you can change type and that's what's interesting about Aenegram. Based on a huge company like us, we have 1200 employees in Aalborg, we don't have direct strategies that we employ people like this and like that. It is quite different from customer service to different management groups. They will recruit based on different priority list and so on. Priorities set by the specific job position or set by a specific leader. Now we have a strategy in the company that all positions should be approved by a consored director, so if you say "I need this person with these qualifications", then the consored director should approve it. But of course it is also quite limited what the consorted director knows about the position. But I would call this a procedure that we have to go through."

A: Are the personality tests given for every type of job, even at the bottom level or trainees?

H.Z: "The personality tests are used for the basic job levels, however not on sophisticated job titles."

A: How many people inside Telenor are participating at the interview and do they consult between themselves or is somebody else also involved?

H.Z: "Team leaders will interview the candidates for the second round, and eventually choose the right candidates."

A: On the website it says that the values of the company are customer satisfaction and being one of the best in the business. Can you tell me if the right candidate should share the same values as the company's? Do you know if they ask about this matter at the interview, or expect to read about it in the application letter?

H.Z: "The values are suitable to all job titles, so all right candidates with their differences will match the values."

A: Should the individuals' personality fit in the company's climate or culture?

H.Z: "Telenor is a firm with place for different type of people and culture. It is mainly up to a certain job description if the person matches the job profile or not."

A: Is it important that the candidate has the same goals as the organizational leader or the same goals as the department leader he is hired for? Should the goals of both be compatible?

H.Z: "This is also different based on the job description, but indeed everyone should be motivated for the job they apply for."

A: Should the individuals' personality fit in the company's climate or culture?

H.Z: "There is no standard personality which need to suit Telenor, and based on this all characters with their differences can adjust in company."

Interview 2 – Lyngsoe Systems

A: What is your company doing?

K.A.C: "We are mainly in the logistic area. And in 5 industries: postal, library, supply chain, airport and we are a sub supplier for a company called Crisplant. They are producing and manufacturing huge solutions for both airport, distribution solutions and we are doing the software for these solutions. That is what mainly we are doing."

A: What is your job in the company?

K.A.C: "I work in the postal department. But in fact, I'm working with other departments as well. For instance, right now we are looking at the hospital industry. They are going to build 5 hospitals in Denmark and they are going to be finalized approximately at the same time in 2020. And they have a need for track and tray solutions. They have an area of an inner city; it will take approx. 30 min from going to one end to the other. So they are quite huge and they have a need for instance hospital equipment, doctors and so on, so they know where they are. Right now we are working in this industry and we are more departments working together. We have branches in Canada, US, Romania and we have small sales offices in Sweden and Germany."

A: Are you planning on entering new international markets?

K.A.C: "Right now we are looking at Africa. We have a solution in South Africa but I don't think you can compare South Africa with other African countries so we are looking at Ghana as an opportunity. But also the other African countries, some of them are very interesting because they have quite huge growth rates and the middle class is growing too so we might do something in the western part of Africa as well."

A: You said you work together with other departments. Do you also work together with the human resources department?

K.A.C: "In fact, we don't have a human resources department. The responsibility of the human resources is placed at the each division. Nearly each of the departments has their own marketing manager."

A: So when hiring for a job, what kind of candidates is your company looking for? Experience or?

K.A.C: "It is mainly high educated, but they don't need to have experience. In fact on the 2nd of May we are participating at the university in some kind of job session at the canteen. We are looking for 5 new educated people, mainly engineers. We are trying to promote that out there. It's a mix because we had a couple of years where we didn't hire new educated people But you somehow get a lack, a lot of new inspiration is coming from the new educated people, so when you have a lack of these for instance 5 years you also have a lack of new ideas and new impulses. So it's very important every year to hire new educated people. That comes up with innovation."

A: What about education? Is a bachelor degree enough or it's required a master's degree?

K.A.C: "It depends on what kind of job you are talking about. In marketing for example, bachelor is enough but it depends. For example, engineers need to have a master's degree."

A: What about languages? Is Danish a requirement?

K.A.C: "No, it's not a requirement. We have branches in US and Canada and we have solutions in 60 countries so we are all speaking English also. Often we have colleagues from the other branches like Romania, 2-3 all the time. Experience exchange and sometimes they are here doing a job with Danish colleagues or sometimes we are down there. Nearly every week we have 1-2 from our Canadian offices. So if you are here you would hear English a lot."

A: But if they were to be employed at the branch here in Denmark, would they need to know Danish?

K.A.C: "No, not necessarily. We have an international student right now. Maggie from IBE. She is a trainee; she's doing her master's degree."

A: In your opinion, what should be written in an application letter?

K.A.C: "It's a very good idea to take a close look at our web page and find out exactly who to approach with the application. It's a good idea to investigate a bit about the industries we are in and our solutions. So we have a focused application not a generic one that you are sending to 15 other companies. Because it's 'obvious when you are reading an application like that, that it's not only meant for you, it's meant for a lot. And then you can say, well okay, the guy/ girl has an interest in working with us but it's more general, they haven't spent time on looking exactly at us and what they can offer us. Getting a job is a matter of selling yourself. So the better you are doing a sales job the easier you are getting a job. It's a good idea to look at the industries and suggest ideas in the application. Maybe you have some experience in an industry we are working with. It's always a good idea to come up with ideas and show interest in the company you are approaching."

A: Is there a way you evaluate a candidates' personality before hiring?

K.A.C: "Sometimes we are using tests but not always. It depends on the job. Sales people or engineers but I'm not sure. Test is only a supplement. You cannot use the test alone and it has a lot to do with who you are, if you have chemistry between the manager and the applicant. It's sometimes the best because, of course you can look at the grades but what does it tell. It has a lot to do with the person and not that much with the grades. They won't decide whether you will work here or not. I have some work with the university as a supervisor and you can never rely on grades. I'm not looking at grades, at all; I'm more looking at what kind of project you have done, where your interests are. For me it counts more what you have done."

A: When taking an interview, how many persons are at the interview?

K.A.C: "Normally 2-3, the division manager and sometimes if it's in software we have a project manager participating and a software developer which has a similar job, to talk more in practice about the job."

A: How is the interview going? You have certain standard questions or is it more free?

K.A.C: "It is more free, it's a dialog."

A: These persons, are they consulting other people from the company?

K.A.C: "They are consulting between themselves."

A: Does your company attract foreign students by offering internships or graduate programs? Do you have graduate programs?

K.A.C: "No, we don't have graduate programs, but we have these kinds of internships. Maggie is one example. Cristina she is in the business service department. She is from Romania, she studied at Aalborg University and she got a job after an internship."

A: So there are chances to get a job after the internship.

K.A.C: "Yes"

A: Are there any ways you attract foreign students? Going to job fairs, or at the University?

K.A.C: "We had nearly 90 students from IBE visiting us in November. That was a kind of branding ourselves towards the students."

A: Do you do this once or twice a year?

K.A.C: "Through the year of the crisis we haven't done much about it but we started up again. We are approaching different areas, now for example engineers as of 2nd of May. And I think in the autumn we will do a similar event as we did last November where we are inviting IBE students to come here for a day, also visiting other companies in the area. As a company placed in the country side we really need to promote ourselves because a lot of you only think that there are jobs in big cities so you are not looking at the possibilities around the big cities, at the country side. In fact there are a lot of opportunities there. And sometimes they are more willing to employ new educated and highly educated. In fact that is what I'm trying to work with the municipality about branding it and branding the interesting companies in this area. Copenhagen, Aarhus, Aalborg and so on, companies there are getting a lot of attention. It's nice to be in a big city, you have a lot of other activities you can do but this is only 30 min drive and you can easily spend 30 min on a bus or bike also transporting you forth and back to work. You can say you have bigger opportunities in the countryside and also in smaller companies like ours because you get more challenged in many ways. It's not only a job; you will be involved in different projects."

A: Is your company interested in hiring international students? Are you offering jobs in English?

K.A.C: "I don't remember if we are making advertisements in English as well, I'm not sure. We do have a lot of visitors from all over the world."

A: In your opinion, are companies in Northern Jutland willing to hire international students?

K.A.C: "The answer is no. But I think it has more to do that they don't know the opportunity exists. Maybe they are a bit afraid of hiring both high educated people and people from other countries. That is maybe the biggest difference between working in a bigger city than in a country side. Because we are not that much used to different cultures and so on. I think it is changing but it takes years. I think it has a lot to do also from the university side, that they are marketing the opportunities that are, and we are quite lucky that we have a good university. In fact I'm working together with the university, I'm promoting more towards small to medium sized companies exactly in this area, simply to tell them there are a lot of opportunities. A lot of these small-medium sized companies are going to international markets. It is a very good experience to either have an employee from that market you want to approach or simply get the knowledge on how it is to work with more cultures than your own. I think it's very good for the companies trying that and I hope they are willing to do it when they are on the other side."

A: Do you collaborate with other universities?

K.A.C: "Yes, also with Aarhus University. I have a project together with Aarhus University so I am there about once a month, the project is about cow tracking. I am working with the researchers and the professors there. We have a PhD student here for about three months; she was doing some testing for us. I will not say that we often have students from universities but we are working on finding more student jobs and part-time jobs. But again, you can say that it is our big disadvantage because if it's only a part-time job and you take the bus 30 min, maybe it's not worth it. Maybe we can do something with internships."

A: How do you think international students should prepare themselves for a job in Northern Jutland after graduating?

"The same as I said about others. Focus on the company, find out if they are international or not. Call the receptionist asking them if they speak English and how do they feel about using the English language and so on. But doing some small research about the company before approaching it. It is difficult. Another answer to that could be, contacting people with a good network. I have a side company where I'm coaching people for jobs. So far I have not been doing it for international students but I will. That is the next step in that company's development strategy. But I have been doing that and it is quite successful."

A: So you are helping students in getting a job?

K.A.C: "Yes, students getting a job. Or highly educated people because it's not only students in fact, it's graduated people that can't get a job. So that is the people I am approaching with that concept."

A: When are you planning to approach international students?

K.A.C: "When I have time. And when I have a request from a foreign student I will do it. I am using my network to get meetings, to train the candidates on how to do the CV's and the applications, I am trying to get the companies for them."

A: How many graduated students do you have now?

K.A.C: "It's a few because I have my ordinary job. It is between 1 and 3. Not more because I am doing this individually. What is different to other job cultures is that it is very important that you are getting to learn about the candidate to give the right advices and to get the right match."

A: So you are looking for fit between the candidate and the company.

K.A.C: "Not exactly fit, because I am listening very much to what the candidate has to say. What kind of job does the candidate want, is that a realistic job, yes/no, if yes where and what places geographically, do you want to stay in Aalborg or go to Copenhagen. It's a kind of puzzle. And when you have made the puzzle it's much easier to approach the companies because you know much more about exactly what you want and when you know what you want you are also more precise in approaching the companies. That’s what makes the big difference because when you are approaching the companies knowing exactly what you want, they say you have more confidence. That’s a part of it too because I’m trying to give confidence and inspiration to doing this kind of job because for many people, it’s not that easy to call a company you don’t know or a person you don’t know how to approach or have meetings with people you don’t know and maybe you are a bit insecure about the situation and you don’t know how to feel about it and so on. So it’s training phone calls and meetings all the times so you are prepared for these kinds of meetings, you have the answers. What happens is, when you have meetings regarding a job, and I am standing here and asking you questions, then very often the applicant is thinking forward, so when you are getting a question from me, you are thinking what kind of answer they want to hear from you, so you are thinking a lot and you are not aware of what you are saying out of your mouth. What I’m trying to do is to give you that confidence that you need because as I said in the beginning it’s a matter of selling yourself, it is a resource that you are selling and that is yourself. You need to be a good salesperson. It’s a 10 session program and so far people have got a job.”

A: How did you come up with the idea?

“Because I have been at the university for 6-7 years now and I think it’s a waste of resources. Students being graduated and cannot find a job. Denmark is looking for high educated people and if they cannot find a job, I cannot find what’s wrong here, where does it go wrong. And then I’m born in this area and I would very much like to stay here as an older person but if that is going to be possible we still need a population with high educated people working so we can keep up the standard here as well. I have seen a lot of people graduating from Aalborg University and going to Copenhagen because there are more career opportunities. I think that it’s a pity because we have a lot of opportunities and interesting companies here as well, so we are trying to see more of these graduates…When you’re looking at head hunting, I have twisted it. So instead of a head hunter approaching the candidate, the candidate is approaching the company. Normally the company pays the head hunter and here’s the opposite way around. The company doesn’t risk that much. The head hunter normally gets nearly half a year salary if it’s at a higher level and that’s quite a lot of money. Instead investing that money in a head hunter it’s nicer to have the opportunities presented. At least that is my vision.”

A: A lot of students, myself included, don’t know about the opportunities. A lot of us look on the internet or don’t use their networks or they don’t have networks yet and they don’t know how to make them.

K.A.C: “I can tell you that 80% of all jobs will never be shown on the internet or newspaper. It’s only a very small amount that comes to that step. So develop a very good network. That’s where I have my long career and experience, having a lot of different kinds of people to approach and I am approaching them “Hey I have this candidate, so have a talk with him/her over a cup of coffee. Share what you know about this company.” And it works but it’s getting started and it’s getting started the right way.”

A: On the website it says that the company's values are building long lasting relationships with the customers, through knowledge, commitment, thoroughness and trustworthiness. Can you tell me if the right candidate should share the same values as the company's?

K.A.C: "I hope so. Of cause it depends on the job – but you can say that have the last three ones as personal capabilities is a very good idea in any job function."

A: Do you know if they ask about this matter at the interview, or expect to read about it in the application letter?

K.A.C: "I don't think you will be asked, but again the last three ones are good personal competences."

A: Should the individuals' personality fit in the company's climate or culture?

K.A.C: "Yes that is very important"

A: Is it important that the candidate has the same goals as the organizational leader or the same goals as the department leader he is hired for?

K.A.C: "Working in the same direction though wards the same goal is a must."

A: Should the goals of both be compatible?

K.A.C: "Same goal – if I understand you question correct."

Interview 3 – NTU

A: What is your responsibility in the company?

R: I'm the managing director

A: What is your company doing? I read on the internet that you are coordinating European projects in Denmark.

R: Yes, we are a consultancy company, doing multidisciplinary consultancy within engineering and economics.

A: Only engineering and economics?

R: And a lot of interdisciplinary policy etc. but we do project management from the office here in Aalborg.

A: So you are only in Denmark?

R: No, we have a new office in Brussels and we have project offices around the world. We are working in 95 countries now. It is mainly in developing countries. Most of Europe, but are focus is in developing countries around the world.

A: Africa also?

R: Africa, Middle East, South America, Asia specific.

A: Is it a Danish company?

R: Yes, 100% Danish company.

A: When hiring for a job, what candidates are you looking for in terms of experience, education or skills?

R: First educations, we only hire Master of Science. That's minimum. We have tried to hire people who do not have an academic background, and it is not possible for them to work because we have very complex area that we are working in. So for us it is necessary for have at least MSc level.

A: Do they need to have work experience?

R: Not necessarily, no.

A: What about language?

R: Danish is not a requirement. The company's language is English, and we have to cover a lot of different languages, so all languages are welcomed Russian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic etc. We try to have many languages because our clients also speak different languages.

A: How do you filter CV and applications? What should be written in an application letter?

R: First of all, we are looking for the applicants with high grades from university. That's a filter for us, because we work a lot with perfection, we work a lot with clients that will have to trust in that we can provide a perfect product consultancy report with no mistakes etc. because we should be the ones that are taking care of these mistakes. So we want candidates that are best in the class. Grades are important for the newly graduated.

A: Do you evaluate a candidates' personality before hiring him or her or after the interview?

R: Always, that is one of the key areas for us also, because u cannot change personality. It is very important for us. We can teach the candidates and new employees, we can teach them everything but we cannot change their personality. So that a very important thing.

A: What kind of personality tests are using?

R: We have only our internal assessment sheets. We are not making psychological tests because these reflect how you answer and how you believe yourself you are. That is my assessment. But we asses during the interview, we have a few trick questions we make some notes on the behavior during the interview. That also determines whether the candidate is good for us.

A: So are you looking for a personality that fits in the company's culture?

R: The good thing about us is that we have many different national cultures. But the company culture is, it's very important that you have the sense of affection that you want to make the best every time. Also that you acknowledge other co-workers competences also, that is not only your way that is the best way. You have to do that if you are as multicultural and multidisciplinary as we are.

A: Are you trying to take a close look at what the candidate has to offer?

R: As we work so much in a niche we have to teach candidates often what they should know. We are mainly looking some more general aspects, so whether they have worked at another company it has to be very specific for it to count for us. Most important for us is the personality, the capability, meaning the grades, and the ability to learn, the absorptive capacity, how much do you absorb.

A: You mentioned the interview before, how is the interview going, do you have any specific questions you ask?

R: Normally what we do first we analyze the application and CV, we see if there are things we would like to know, as I said before we have some trick questions. We are always 2; sometimes we are 3, whether to check if this person fits in a different department. But we try to first of all make notes; also, we need to find out if this person fits in personality or in general behavior.

A: Are these persons consulting between themselves or are there other people they consult with?

R: For instance I do not have time to participate in all interviews, often we have several rounds of interviews, and often I participate at the last ones after we have taken out some people that there we doubts about or do not fit exactly what we require.

A: Does your company attract foreign students by offering internships?

R: Yes we do.

A: Is your company interested in hiring international students?

R: Yes.

A: Do you think that companies in Northern Jutland are willing to hire international students?

R: No, not really. Because they are not so internationalized. Many of them are focused here. If they are more internationalized as we are, they would not be staying here. They would be moving to somewhere where it's easier Copenhagen, Brussels, Paris, New York etc. Where there is always better accessibility for flights meeting etc.

A: Do you think before the crisis it was better on the job market?

R: Maybe yes, because they were more opened, because they had more time. But I think still, the understanding of, and I know several other managers from other companies, that sees it as a sort of social burden that they should take their part of this because the university is pushing for it etc. But we see it as a potential for recruitment, if we have an intern here, this person has the possibility to have a job interview in half a year or more. Because then you can show what you are able to do. So it's not only sitting here 30-40 min but you have an opportunity to show what you can do.

A: So you are evaluating them for half a year.

R: Yes, because we do take the best of the interns and hire them afterwards. Several of the people sitting here are some of the best students that we have had and we chose to hire them.

A: How do you think international students should prepare themselves for a job in N Jutland?

R: First of all, I think they should analyze themselves, know what they are capable of, in order to explain what they can do. And also acknowledge that the capacity they have at this stage, they can do some things but there are some things they cannot do. Typical reason for us not selecting a student, in case they think they can solve the world. Because then they don't have the ability to learn. Although you have an MSC you can do things, but there are also things you still need to learn because you have got some general tools. But these tools should be applied and there you will get the experience that can be used. So whether they have had a few experiences during their studies which are not relevant for us it does not matter much for us. The MSc and grades show that we have a good raw material that we can work with. We've had candidates that have been out 2-3 years in a public body or in a production company, there are a lot of things we have to deal with because they have learned procedures and routines that do not comply with what we do. Also if you are in the marketing department you are allowed to make a lot of mistakes that we are not allowed to make. You can make typos by mistake or copy paste something wrong, which do not do a lot of damage but for us we are presenting something that would be a part of the national policy of the country so u cannot have a wrong copy paste where the country is not the same or etc. So we have some other challenges that we need to take into consideration when selecting our students or our candidates.