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**MENTORING PROGRAM – DEVELOPMENT IDEAS BASED ON  
PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK**

HERA and EntryPoint mentoring programs

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## ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis was to gather feedback from the HERA 2012 and EntryPoint 2014 mentoring programs' participating mentors to gain development ideas for future mentoring programs. This data had never been researched before and therefore, important for the commissioner and the program. The aim was to research how the mentors benefited from the program and how they would develop it.

The knowledge base shares background to the need for the mentoring programs by discussing the employment of international students of Finnish HEIs'. To clarify the connections of cooperating parties and programs, the commissioner as well as the previous mentoring programs are introduced. How mentoring is used in business settings and how mentoring is viewed in this thesis finalizes the knowledge base.

Two surveys were conducted to gather feedback from the mentors, a primary survey and an in-depth interview. The quantitative primary survey helped in forming a general idea what type of mentors had participated in the programs, how they experienced the programs and whether they benefited from participation. The purpose of the in-depth interview was to go deeper into the subject, and let the mentors explain their experiences with their own words. Main results stated that more than 80 % of the respondents considered the participation beneficial. The mentors learned new skills, made connections with new people and gained understanding for different viewpoints and cultures. The main issue for development is to find a way to make the program comply more to the needs of the participants.

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Keywords: mentoring, mentoring program, mentor, international student, EntryPoint, Helsinki Research and Education Area, Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

In order to Finland to be competitive and maintain its economic performance, it has to utilize the already existing and talented labor force, and especially the international experts (HERIEC 2016a, cited 14.4.2016). According to CIMO (2013), the number of international degree students in Finland was nearly 20,000 in 2012, and now four years later the number is increasing. International university students have expertise besides great language and cultural skills but Finnish companies cannot seem to understand the potential (Airas, Saarinen, Turunen-Zwinger & CIMO 2015, cited 14.4.2016). Mentoring is seen as one solution in turning international graduates into talented workforce for Finnish companies (HERIEC 2016b, cited 27.4.2016). This phenomenon, that finding and employing international talents is challenging, is behind of the need for developing mentoring programs, and it is the inspiration for this thesis.

Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce acted as the commissioner for this thesis. I completed my professional training in the Chamber of Commerce in Helsinki in the summer 2015, and became familiar with the company. I had thoughts about writing my thesis for the Chamber of Commerce, and we had some fruitful conversations but since I was going to a student exchange in Madrid for the next six months, we decided to return to the matter later. Then in the spring 2016, I contacted the Chamber of Commerce, and we came up with a mutually interesting topic about mentoring programs and their development. The actual topic initially fell into my lap but now reflecting back, it was more than suitable for me because I have first-hand experience from being a student of an international class, and being on a student exchange. Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce is starting a new period of the EntryPoint mentoring program which utilizes the previous HERA mentoring program's mentoring model (HERIEC 2016c, cited 14.4.2016). The mentors and mentees of this mentoring program are internationally-oriented Finnish professionals, and graduated or soon-to-be graduated international university students who wish to be employed in the Finnish labor market (HERIEC 2016c, cited 14.4.2016).

The purpose of this thesis was to gather feedback from the HERA 2012 and EntryPoint 2014 mentoring programs' participating mentors to gain development ideas for future mentoring programs. This kind of data has never been researched before, and now there was a need to hear the opinion of an another participating party that was unheard-of. The aim is to develop the future mentoring programs based on the gathered insight from the previous mentors; how they

experienced the mentoring program, how they benefited from it, and how they would develop it further. The main research questions are:

1. "How did you benefit from participating in the mentoring program as a mentor?"
2. "How would you develop the mentoring program?"

The structure of this thesis begins with the current situation of international university students in Finland, and how important but challenging their employment is in Finland. Then moving on to an introduction of the commissioner and the cooperative parties involved; HERA, HERIEC, COME and EntryPoint. To clarify how mentoring involves these parties with each other, there is a chart provided as well as introductions of the mentoring programs. Since this thesis is based upon mentoring programs, there is a chapter discussing mentoring, and how the concept is seen in this research as well as generally in business settings. Following chapters tell more about how the research is conducted, what were the results and how they can be applied for further use.

## **2 INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN FINLAND**

This chapter begins with showing statistics of international student in Finnish higher education institution (HEIs). There are variable reasons why immigrants decide to move to Finland to study and live but there are few significant reasons why Finland needs talented immigrants. According to Launikari (2013), the population structure of the whole European Union is aging fast, and in the future there will not be enough workforce. High-quality education and research provide Finland a competitive advantage, and HEIs have been part in reforming the society, as well as developing the economy and its productivity by educating new workforce (Ministry of Education and Science 2009, 5). Internationalization brings diversity to the society and enriches it. Internationalization also provides international networks, increases competitiveness and innovation. (Ministry of Education and Science 2009, 9.)

Yet internationalization has been a problem for Finnish HEIs. Foreigners want to move to Finland to study, and stay and find employment but the knowledge of these talents is not used properly, and eventually, they are forced to leave Finland (Garam 2012, cited 22.4.2016). Mr. Apunen, explains in an article Talent available (2010), that the problem is not about enticing foreigners to come into Finland but about exploiting the existing labor within the country. "Here the key are the Finnish employers because they are the ones who either open or close the door to working life" (Launikari 2013, cited 22.4.2016).

### **2.1 Statistics of HEIs' international students in Finland**

Repeating the statistics of CIMO (2013), there were close to 20,000 international higher degree students in Finland in 2012, as can be seen in Figure 1, as the orange line. About 40 % of the international students come from Asia, and the percentage is growing. The second largest group is Europe, and the following Africa. (CIMO 2013, cited 22.4.2016.)

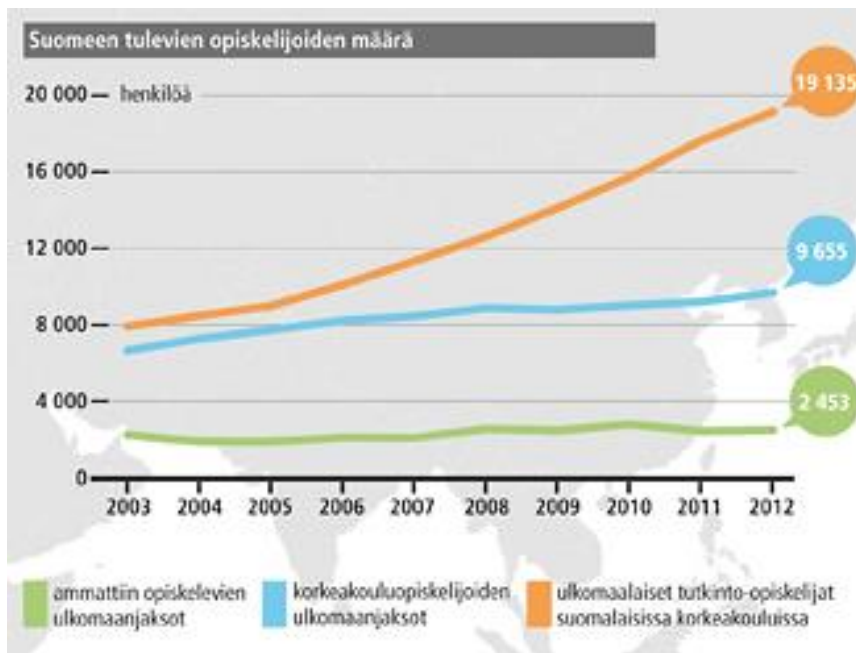


FIGURE 1. Student mobility trend in Finland (CIMO 2013, cited 22.4.2016)

Finnish higher education institutes are distinguished worldwide for their high-quality education (Ministry of Education and Science 2009, 10). Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS) offer almost 400 degrees in English. Education was free for everyone until the Finnish government decided to set tuition fee for students coming from outside EU and EEA countries. (Liiten 2015, cited 22.4.2016.) The percentage of students from these countries is approximately 76 % currently in Finland (Liiten 2015, cited 22.4.2016).

Based on VALOA-project's research (2012, 24), the main motivational reasons for international students to study in Finland are free education, possibility to study in English, improvement in employability, exploring a new country, and reputation of the university. The most popular fields to study are Engineering, Technology and Communication. The ratio between male and female international students is rather equivalent in Finland. (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 21-22).

## 2.2 Employment of international university students

According to International Student Barometer (2015) almost 84 % of international students are satisfied with the level education they receive in Finland. Still the biggest concern is employment after graduation. (CIMO 2015, cited 25.4.2016). Even though, international students receive the same education from the same universities as the Finnish students, their unemployment rate is



more than double than of their Finnish counterparts (Ministry of Education 2009, cited 25.4.2016). Almost 87 % of international students have had employment experience which means that they have been employed at least once after they have graduated (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 33). However, what deteriorates this is that usually the jobs are only temporary or do not correspond the students' education. There also seems to be differences between gender, as percentage of male graduates is slightly higher than female graduates. Some fields have higher employment rate than others. Students graduating from fields such as Engineering or Medical Science were more likely to find a job than students graduating with degree in Culture. (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 29.)

It is easier for international students to be employed back at their home countries than it is in Finland or another country (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 33). The reasons behind this problem derive from different sources. One of the largest issues is the language. Only few foreigners have sufficient Finnish skills which can be explained with the fact, that teaching of Finnish language is lacking for international students and personnel (Ministry of Education 2009, cited 25.4.2016). Some jobs undoubtedly require Finnish language skills, and employers are hesitant to hire a foreigner with wobbly language skills (Vehaskari 2010, 12). Besides language skills, graduates need other skills as well, such as presentation and problem-solving skills, and often previous work experience is expected (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 47). Finland has relatively demanding bureaucracy with restricted language of business and long processing times which delays or even prevents foreigners from receiving important legal paperwork. Other issues are related to networks. It is hard to form a professional network in Finland if one does not have connections to Finnish business environment. (Vehaskari 2010, 13.) Conforming to Finland can also be difficult when there is a family involved, since it might be challenging for the spouse to build a career, and for the children, there are limited amount of options for education and other activities (Vehaskari 2010, 13).

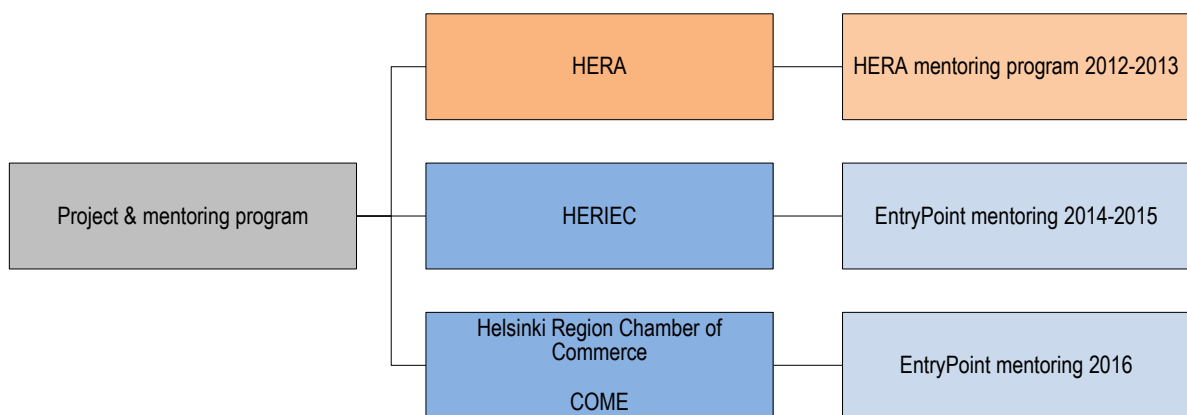
International graduates are not waste of resources, since they are the example of Finnish education system and its success (Garam 2012, cited 25.4.2016). Still, they would be a greater asset if they could richen the labor force and contribute to paying taxes (Vehaskari 2010, 27). Finland is not home to many multinational companies. For international graduates applying for these types of companies is easier because of their recognizability, and English can be used as business language. But these companies are not interested in helping foreigners to settle in Finland. (Vehaskari 2010, 18.) Majority of Finnis-h businesses are small and medium sized. For these companies hiring a foreigner might cause distress. There exist issues concerning for example

common language, communication and culture. (Vehaskari 2010, 19.) Smaller companies can feel that taking on a foreigner demands more time and resources because they need help with integrating into the Finnish society and business environment. Sometimes the skills of foreign applicants are not clear enough for Finnish companies, and they cannot see the value they bring (Airas, Saarinen, Turunen-Zwinger & CIMO 2015, cited 25.4.2016).

The language issue as well as any other issue should be dealt with individual basis. Even though certain skills are vital, they should be identified according to the specific job, and avoid generalization. (Vehaskari 2010, 21.) Skills can also be learned and improved during the job. International students have qualities that should not be overlooked. They have knowledge and contacts to foreign markets, as well as language and cultural skills. (Vehaskari 2010, 15.) Even though, internationalization would not be currently in the horizon for Finnish companies, foreign talents can bring new ideas and innovation (Vehaskari 2010, 14). Providing jobs and recruiting has to be a joint effort of several parties for it to succeed. The government, ministries and universities are responsible for creating and maintaining current, interesting and functional education programs and student services. (Garam 2012, cited 26.4.2016.) The Finnish companies and employers should be encouraged and supported to hire foreign talents to secure economic growth and innovation as well as prevent unemployment (Garam 2012, cited 26.4.2016).

### 3 HELSINKI REGION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chapters 3 and 4 explain the different parties, projects and programs involved in this thesis, and to clarify the connections between these parties, there is a structure available below.



*FIGURE 2. Projects and mentoring programs involved*

This figure demonstrates the projects and mentoring programs that have existed during the past four years, and have influenced how the current mentoring program is carried out. Everything started with VALOA-project. VALOA-project wanted to research how HEIs' international students experienced life after graduation, the outcomes, and their activities (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 3). As a recommendation from VALOA-project, Helsinki Education and Research began to implement the HERA mentoring program. Chapter 4 will go more into detail with the HERA mentoring program but as mentioned earlier, the mentoring model still used, originated from HERA mentoring program, and is therefore influential.

The commissioner of this thesis is Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce. There has been wonder why Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce is cooperating with projects that involve students but as explained in the following sub-chapter, Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce is a connector

of businesses and individuals, and all of the mentoring programs involved businesses and their employees. Helsinki Region Immigration Employment Council, HERIEC, was created in cooperation with the Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce to improve the employment of international talents, and it will be looked more closely in its sub-chapter. EntryPoint mentoring program, period 2014-2015 was part of HERIEC, and even though it used the same mentoring model as the previous mentoring program, the name changed with the new project. (COME 2016b, cited 29.4.2016.) EntryPoint and its two periods will be as well examined in its sub-chapter later.

Chamber of Multicultural Enterprises (COME) is a project of Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce, and part of the At Work in Finland plan. The objective is to help immigrants in matters of employability and ensure that the work is corresponding to their education and skills. (COME 2016a, cited 29.4.2016.) For companies, COME offers assistance in preparing them to recruit international talents. One of COME's services, EntryPoint mentoring program, is designed to advance immigrants' employability in the labor market. (COME 2016a, cited 29.4.2016.) At the present, COME hosts EntryPoint and its second period (COME 2016b, cited 29.4.2016).

### **3.1 Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce**

Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce promotes industry and commerce in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. They currently employ more than 60 people in their Helsinki offices (Helsingin seudun kauppakamari 2016a, cited 14.4.2016). Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce offers also great opportunities for interns in different areas varying from IT to marketing and customer service. Interns are mostly soon-to-be graduates from Finnish HEIs who are finishing their degrees, and gaining valuable work life experience.

Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce is one of the biggest European Chamber of Commerce with its over 6,000 members (Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce 2016, cited 14.4.2016). For companies it is an important partner which strives to strengthen businesses' current and future success. (Helsingin seudun kauppakamari 2016b, cited 14.4.2016.) The Chamber encourages entrepreneurship, and lobbies behalf of itself, and the member businesses as well as provides up-to-date information for the member businesses. The Chamber also educates its members. They organize approximately 250 events yearly on current political, economic and social events. (Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce 2015, 57.)

The Chamber acts as a networker for different businesses and people. Businesses and people from different fields sometimes need each other in order to grow and develop, and in situations like these, the Chamber helps to make the connection with both domestic and international businesses and individuals. (Helsingin seudun kauppakamari 2016b, cited 14.4.2016.)

### **3.2 Helsinki Region Immigrant Employment Council and COME**

HERIEC was a service model operated by the city of Helsinki, Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce and HERA (COME 2016b, cited 29.4.2016). The model was funded by EU and the city of Helsinki, and it lasted from 2014 to 2015. The model was designed to bring Finnish employers and international talents closer together by providing assistance in recruitment and finding suitable work. (COME 2016b, cited 29.4.2016.) EntryPoint mentoring program ran during the HERIEC model, and it served international graduates and soon-to-be graduates in issues related to employment, Finnish society and Finnish business life to mention a few. (COME 2016b, cited 29.4.2016.)

Chamber of Multicultural Enterprises, COME, is in a sense, a continuation for HERIEC, as it continues to carry out the same objectives. The project strives to support employment-based immigrants and the progress of their employment in Finland. The same support is offered for Finnish employers, in order for them to succeed in an international business environment, and recruit international talents to help to accomplish that. (COME 2016a, cited 29.4.2016.) As mentioned, COME is part of At Work in Finland plan. The plan works around employment-based immigration and employment (COME 2016f, cited 29.4.2016). One of the plan's objectives is to gather all of the services and operators under the same roof to ease business and cooperation between employers, immigrants and officials (COME 2016f, cited 29.4.2016). The second period of EntryPoint is nowadays carried out by COME, and it follows the same mentoring model as the previous (COME 2016a, cited 29.4.2016).

### **3.3 EntryPoint**

HERIEC's EntryPoint mentoring program operated from year 2014 to 2015. The program involved international graduates and soon-to-be graduates, and Finnish professionals with international

orientation, and they were formed into pairs. (Helsingin kaupunki 2015, cited 3.5.2016.) The program was volunteer and free of charge. The pairs were instructed to meet at least five times and participate in group meetings and seminars. (Helsingin kaupunki 2015, cited 3.5.2016.)

The EntryPoint mentoring program is based on reciprocal interaction where both parties gain new knowledge and experiences (COME 2016e, 3.5.2016). The mentor provides knowledge about Finnish culture and working life, as well as guides the mentee towards professional development and building networks. The mentors do not have the obligation to hire the mentee. (Helsingin kaupunki 2015, cited 3.5.2016.) Mentors learn about cross-cultural skills, form new connections, and become familiar with talented international workforce. In addition, the program involves a partnership between Finnish HEIs and employers who represent the international students and professionals. (COME 2016e, 3.5.2016.) Besides the mentoring experience, the objective is to encourage Finnish employers and HEIs to “ - - attract, recruit, retain and manage diverse workforce” (COME 2016e, 3.5.2016).

EntryPoint 2016 commencing in fall will be similar with the previous program. The mentor and mentee pairs will again be formed from Finnish professionals and international students of Finnish HEIs (COME 2016e, 3.5.2016). Mentors are open-minded experts who have the will to develop their cross-cultural and management skills, and share their own, as well as listen to others' experiences (COME 2016c, 3.5.2016). Mentees are graduated or soon-to-be graduating international students.

Since the organizers want to maintain and develop the success deriving from the mentoring program, the objective is to make the program long-lasting (COME 2016d, 3.5.2016). To secure the continuation, COME follows the example of TRIEC mentoring partnership, and seeks partners with long-lasting relationships, who are willing to market and encourage mentoring for their employees. The companies and their employees gain new knowledge and experiences with multicultural issues, benefits and international recruitment. (COME 2016d, 3.5.2016.) Simultaneously they build a broader network and can become tempting for international talents (COME 2016d, 3.5.2016).

## **4 HELSINKI EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA**

HERA and HERA mentoring program were sequels to the VALOA-project. The VALOA-project was concerned with the employability of HEIs international students. The research was conducted for both international students, as well as Finnish employers, in order to understand both sides, and their concerns with employment. (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 3.)

According to the study, the key barriers were not only deriving from HEIs' but from outside stakeholders; the Finnish companies and employers (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 89). One of the solutions how these parties could be brought closer together was mentoring. Even though mentoring would not automatically mean employment, the international students would learn more about Finnish working culture and build a professional network. On the other hand, the employers would also gain more connections, and themselves learn more about other cultures and become more understanding towards the international recruits. (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola 2012, 79.)

HERA mentoring program followed the successful mentoring partnership from Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) (Be Global 2016, cited 21.4.2016). TRIEC's mentoring partnership program has proven to help immigrants get employment and become part of the Canadian labor market, while mentors have become better leaders, and gained more knowledge and cross-cultural skills. (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council 2016, cited 21.4.2016.)

### **4.1 HERA**

Helsinki Education and Research Area (HERA) is a group formed by seven universities and eight university of applied sciences from the great Metropolitan area of Helsinki (Helsingin yliopisto 2012, 5). The group's main purpose is to increase the internationalization of the universities, and support their own and their students' development. Services towards international students and personnel are also provided by HERA. In order to increase HERA's visibility and reconcilability, as well as to strengthen their operability, HERA cooperates with businesses, both local and national. (Helsingin yliopisto 2012, 5.)

## 4.2 HERA mentoring program

HERA mentoring program was introduced in 2012 to 2013 in Helsinki. Participants selected to the program were 28 international talented students who were seeking employment in Finland, the mentees. Meanwhile, their counterparts, 28 mentors consisted of Finnish professionals, who wanted to develop their cross-cultural skills, and become internationally more competent. (Shin 2014, 15-16). Mutual objectives were to become more aware of the labor market as well as broaden professional networks (Be Global 2016, cited 22.4.2016).

Participating mentors' professional backgrounds varied from enterprises to other organizations. The mentees originated from 17 different countries, and they were students of different universities in the Helsinki Metropolitan area. (Be Global 2016, cited 22.4.2016.) As in TRIEC mentoring program, the pairs were matched according to their fields. The pairs were suggested to meet at least on five occasions to discuss different themes from educational background to future career plans. The tasks mentors and mentees worked with were, for example creating a CV and looking through job advertisements and applying. (Shin 2014, 32.) Other meetings consisted of orientation seminars, and every pair participated in opening, mid-term and ending meetings (Be Global 2016, cited 22.4.2016).

According to Shin (2014), there were natural variations between the pairs and individuals. Some mentors and mentees were more active and committed, in terms of communication and self-development, while others remained more passive listeners. Some pairs went beyond the initial objectives which possibly built their sense of cohesiveness, and created value for both (Shin 2014, 42). All in all, the mentoring program was a success for both parties. Mentors mentioned learning new skills and acknowledgement of different perspectives as the benefits of the mentoring program. The international students highlighted the new acquired knowledge about Finland and Finnish labor market, and how their confidence had grown during the program. (Be Global 2016, cited 22.4.2016.) Another emphasis was put on personal activity. Some students were employed during the program with the help of guidance and practical assistance, as well as because of their own efforts. (Be Global 2016, cited 22.4.2016.)



### **4.3 Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council**

The concerns with immigrants' employment are the same in Canada as they are in Finland. Domestic workforce is diminishing while the number of skilled and educated immigrants is growing (The Mentoring Partnership 2016c, cited 21.4.2016). Immigrants are the solution to workforce shortage but there exist obstacles within the work culture, and how the immigrants could apply and demonstrate their skill set. (The Mentoring Partnership 2016c, cited 21.4.2016.)

Mentoring was introduced to solve the issue in 2004 when the TRIEC mentoring partnership program was piloted (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council 2016, cited 22.4.2016). After more than ten years of experience, according to this program, mentoring is the most effective way to positively influence employers' attitudes towards international talents concerning recruitment (Be Global 2016, cited 22.4.2016). The program joins together mentors and immigrants from the same field of business. Employer partners of the program will internally promote the mentoring opportunity to its personnel, and select volunteers to act as mentors. (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council 2016, cited 21.4.2016.) Immigrants will apply to become a mentee through service delivery partners, who will match the immigrant with the right mentor. Both the mentors and mentees are committed to the program for four months. (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council 2016, cited 22.4.2016.)

Mentees of this program have had to live in Canada for less than three years, and during this time have not had working experience in the country. Otherwise, the mentee should have minimum of three years of international work experience. (The Mentoring Partnership 2016b, cited 22.4.2016). They are required to have sufficient English skills, and at least a bachelor's degree from another country. (The Mentoring Partnership 2016a, cited 22.4.2016.) Eligibility to work in Canada is naturally also required (The Mentoring Partnership 2016b, cited 22.4.2016). Mentees are at the time unemployed but actively looking for employment.

Mentors are Canadian professionals who have more than three years of experience in the field concerned. They should have active professional networks and links to people and associations. (The Mentoring Partnership 2016b, cited 22.4.2016.) Mentors support their mentees in areas of building and developing their professional network, understanding the Canadian work culture and the context of their profession in Canada, and sharing information and insight related to the industry, profession and other matters. (The Mentoring Partnership 2016b, cited 22.4.2016.)

## 5 MENTORING

This chapter discusses what is mentoring and how mentoring is used in general in business settings. Later on, there will be a clarification of what mentoring means in this thesis and which concept was chosen.

### 5.1 Mentoring in business

The most traditional form of mentoring is more or less defined as a more experienced senior or mentor giving advice and helping a less experienced junior or protégé. Mentoring can be explained in various ways and it has evolved quite significantly (Kram & Ragins 2007, 659). In business mentoring, the mentee can receive support in various forms. With career-related support the mentee can learn new job-related, interpersonal and organizational skills and competencies, build a network, and further his career by possible promotion. (Kram & Ragins 2007, 668.) The mentoring experience can, when successful, increase individual performance, job attitude and job satisfaction (Kram & Ragins 2007, 668). Psychological support from the mentor builds the mentee's personal growth self-esteem and self-confidence which again increases the performance and the well-being of the mentee (Kram & Ragins 2007, 673).

However, the perception of one-way mentoring has become outdated and inadequate. Mentoring is a reciprocal process which affects the mentor and the organization (Ehrich, Hansford & Tennent 2004, cited 11.5.2016). In their literary review, Enrich, Hansford and Tennent have utilized articles by Douglas (1997) and Murray and Owens (1991) which are further referred in this thesis. According to Douglas (1997), the mentor himself gains self-confidence and personal fulfillment when giving back. As for the organization, Murray and Owens (1991) mentoring increases productivity because of more motivated workforce.

One great characteristic of mentoring is its adaptability. Even though mentoring works great on one-on-one basis, it can also be applied to different forms. In cross-mentoring e.g. cross-cultural and cross-gender, the parties represent different characteristics and views. (Kram & Ragins 2007, 659.) Mentoring can also involve groups with group-mentoring and mentoring circles. With the help of technology, mentoring does not have to be restricted to certain place and people can use e-

mentoring. (Kram & Ragins 2007, 659.) Mentoring is a tool which can be applied for all kinds of people and situations. As it can be used for helping immigrants to seek employment, like in the TRIEC mentoring partnership, also famous and successful entrepreneurs like Mark Zuckerberg and Richard Branson have had a mentor (Small Business BC 2016, cited 13.5.2016).

## **5.2 The concept of mentoring in this thesis**

As seen, mentoring has several definitions and it can be applied in various ways. For this thesis there was one definition which possessed all the important characteristics, and as it happens, it is the center of the EntryPoint mentoring program.

Mentoring as a transformational activity involving a mutual commitment by mentor and protégé to the latter's long-term development, as a personal, extra organizational investment in the protégé by the mentor, and as the changing of the protégé by the mentor, accomplished by the sharing of values, knowledge, experience, and so forth (Scandura & Schriesheim 1994, 1589).

The factors wanted to be achieved with mentoring are something new and beneficial for all of the parties involved. Another factor is that the relationship between the mentee and mentor is more meaningful and they can share values rather than staying passive participants of the mentoring program.

## 6 RESEARCH

The objective of this thesis was to gather feedback from previous years' mentors on how they experienced the mentoring programs and saw their development opportunities. The participants were mentors who took part in HERA mentoring program in 2012 and EntryPoint mentoring program in 2014. The reason why mentors were chosen to be the target group of this thesis is based on the following. The Finnish mentors are more likely to remain in Finland and have an influence to Finnish companies and employees. As the previous studies have demonstrated, unfortunately part of the international graduates are forced to leave Finland due to unemployment which causes brain drain. In the future, the mentors might face new mentees and have an impact to several people, whereas the mentees' experience might be just one occasion. Another emphasis was put on the benefits. It is considered that people, and in this case the mentors, are more willing to participate in a program from which they can benefit.

Gathering the feedback was carried out with two separate surveys: a primary survey and an in-depth interview. The primary survey was a quantitative questionnaire created with Digium tool by the commissioner, and it was sent via email to 46 mentors who had participated in the previous mentoring programs. They had roughly two weeks to answer the questionnaire. The survey consisted of 17 questions which varied between multiple-choice, scale, open and demographic questions. The purpose of the primary survey was to form a general idea what type of mentors the programs have had, how they have experienced the programs and benefited from participation. The actual development ideas were asked in the in-depth interview but the primary survey could demonstrate the strong areas that benefited the mentors the most, and the areas that had room for improvements. The development ideas were able to be indirectly assumed from the answers.

At the end of the survey, mentors could tick a box to let know their willingness to take part in an in-depth interview. The in-depth interview provided the mentors an opportunity to share their experiences and explain them with their own words. The purpose of the in-depth interview was to go deeper into the subject that was presented in the primary survey. The in-depth interview was a semi-structured qualitative interview that was executed face to face with the mentor and with permission, recorded for later transcribing. The in-depth interview consisted of 13 questions which were divided into six following themes: experiences, benefits and challenges of the program, the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentor-employer relationship, participating again and further

recommending the program, as well as improvements and development ideas. The interviews took place in June of 2016 in Helsinki at the mentors' place of work and in Helsinki city center. On average the interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

## 7 RESULTS

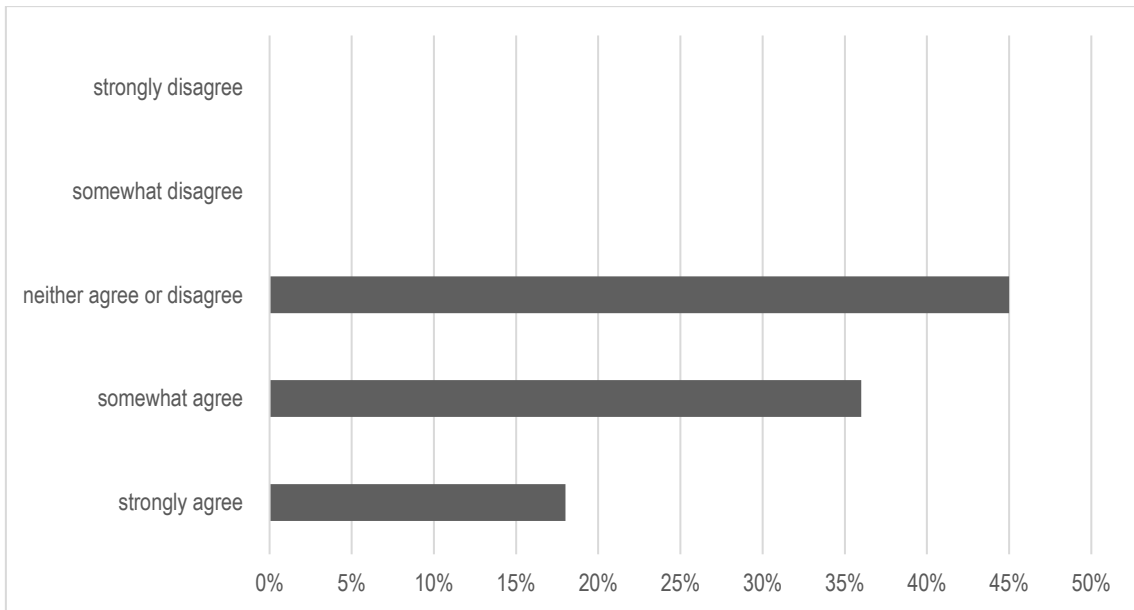
This chapter discusses the results of the two surveys, the primary survey and the in-depth interview. As mentioned, the primary survey was an online questionnaire sent to 46 mentors. Unfortunately, only 11 of the 46 mentors responded to the survey which affects the validity and reliability of this research but on a lighter note, this sample corresponds to 25 % from all of the mentors. The fact that these kind of mentoring programs are still new in Finland and still in their development phase, might partially explain the low percentage of the respondents. The passed time could have also contributed to the low number, since it has been about four years when the first mentoring program took place, and people might have moved forward and cannot recall their experiences.

From the primary survey's 11 respondents four expressed the willingness to participate in an in-depth interview. The final number of mentors participating in the interview ended up being three. The original target number of mentors for the in-depth interview was five to seven, therefore having only three participants felt rather disappointing for the research. As with the primary-survey, the low participation number affects how reliable and valid the results of this research are seen.

### 7.1 The primary survey

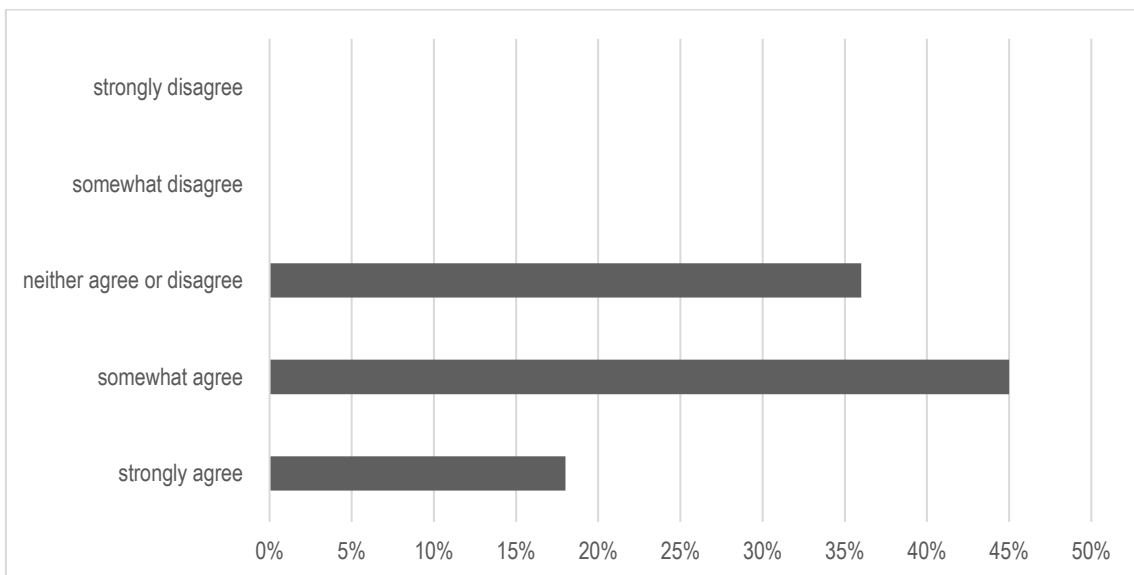
The first question of the survey clarified which mentoring program the mentor participated, HERA mentoring program or EntryPoint 2014 mentoring program. The division was close to equal, as 55 % of the mentors took part in HERA mentoring program, and 45 % in EntryPoint mentoring program.

The next nine questions were scale questions. The questions reflected the benefits the commissioner thought would derive from participating in a mentoring program, and by using scale questions, it could be seen whether the mentors would agree or on the other hand disagree. Based on the results it is safe to say that in most cases the mentors agreed with the benefits.



*FIGURE 3. I am more satisfied with my current job than before. (n=11)*

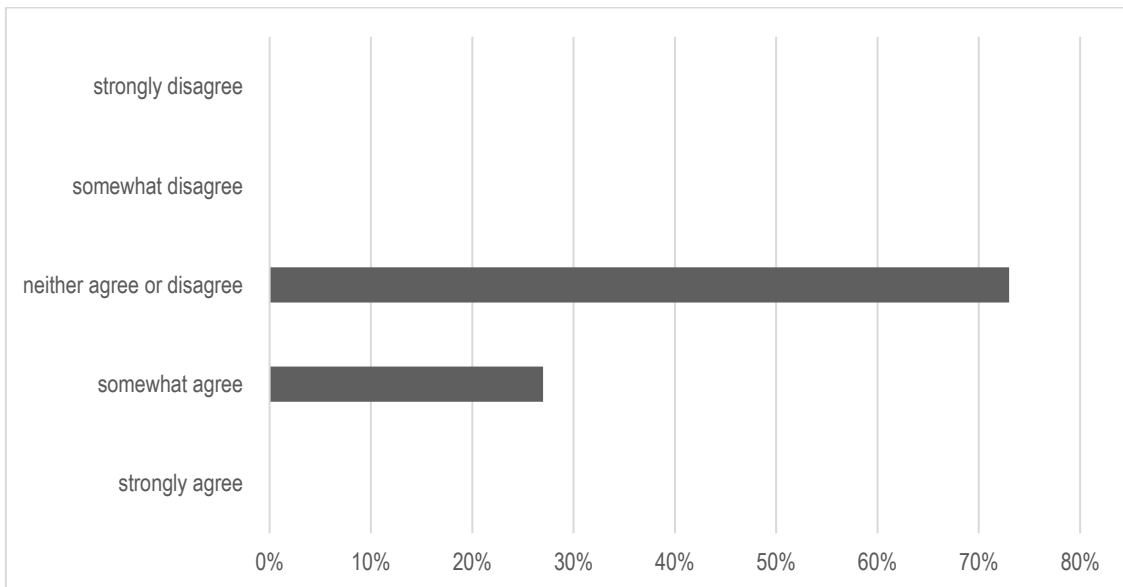
After the participation the mentors did feel more satisfied with their job but they were cautious about saying it, since it is hard to draw a conclusion that the mentoring program would be the only reason behind it. 45 % of the respondents neither agreed or disagreed, while 36 % somewhat agreed and 18 % strongly agreed.



*FIGURE 4. I am more socially connected with professional networks than before. (n=11)*

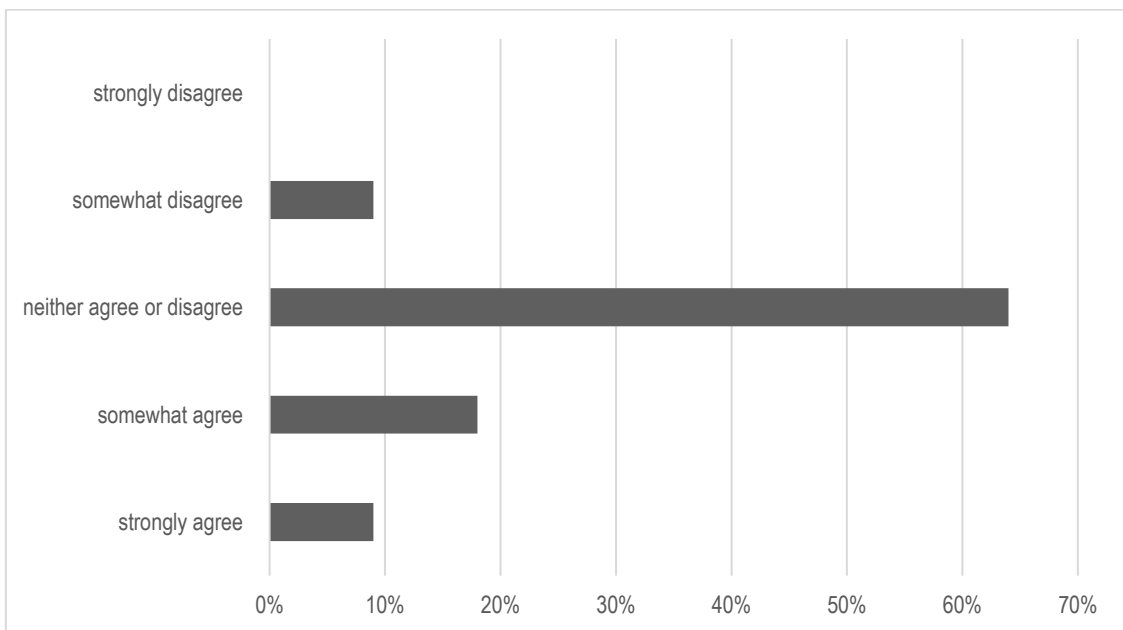
During the mentoring program the mentors interact with the organizers and other parties, as well as with other mentors which explains their views on professional networks. Naturally professional

networks will also expand when dealing with new people. The largest percentage of 45 somewhat agreed with the statement, 36 % neither agreed or disagreed, and rest 18 % strongly agreed.



*FIGURE 5. I feel more comfortable in the multicultural workplace than before. (n=11)*

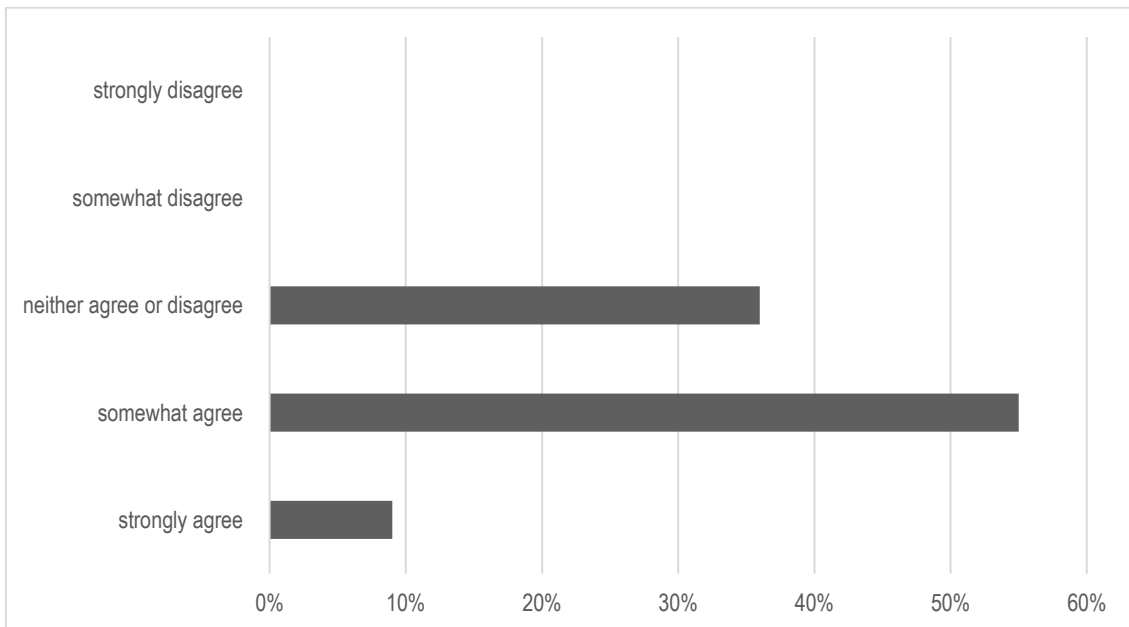
The mentors' feelings were quite neutral towards the statement as to the experience would make working in the multicultural workplace more comfortable as more than 70 % neither agreed or disagreed and 27 % somewhat agreed.



*FIRUGE 6. I feel more valued in this organization than before. (n=11)*

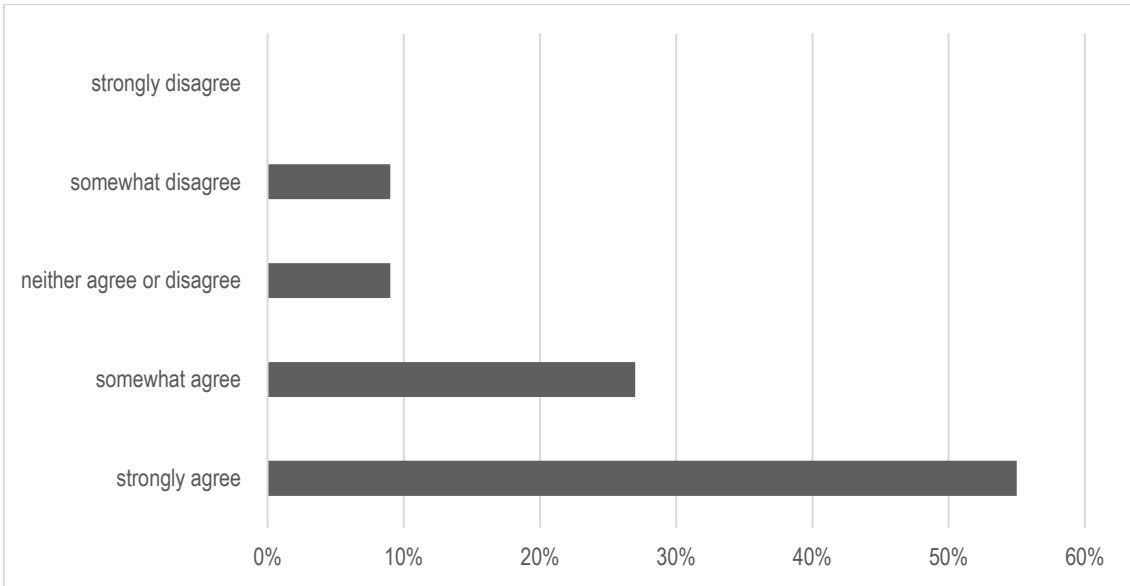


According to mentors' responds it is somewhat difficult to state that participation could directly affect the value of the participant at his or her workplace. More than 60 % neither agreed or disagreed, 18 % somewhat agreed, and from the remaining 18 %, half strongly agreed and another half somewhat disagreed.



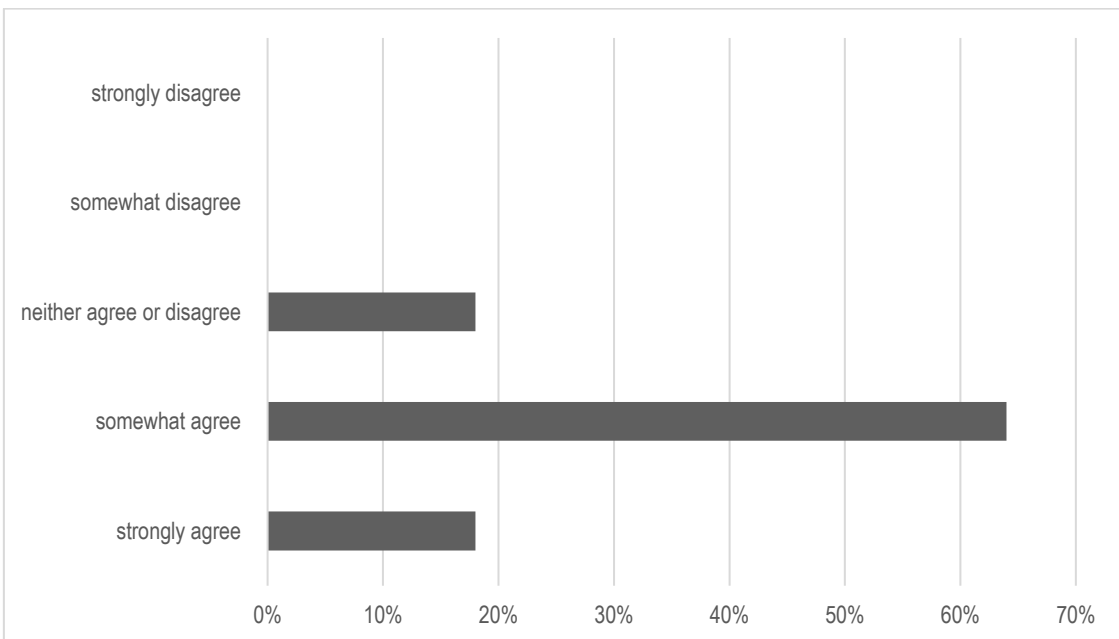
*FIGURE 7. My cross-cultural competencies have improved. (n=11)*

After a multicultural mentoring experience, more than half of the respondents feel that their multicultural skills have improved. 9 % strongly agreed but more than one third neither agreed or disagreed. The uncertainty might stem from the fact that the experience only lasted for about six months, and based on a relatively short experience it can be difficult to say whether the skills have become any better.



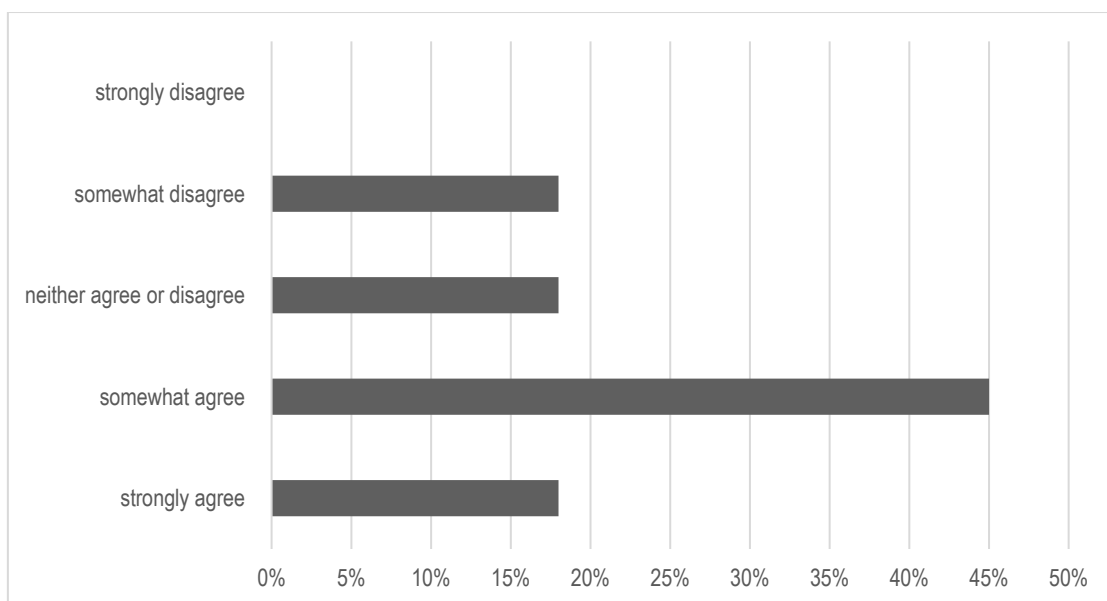
*FIGURE 8. I highly value the benefits of taking part in the abovementioned mentoring programme. (n=11)*

Benefits of the mentoring program are highly valued by the mentors as 55 % strongly agreed and 27 % somewhat agreed. When asking about overall benefits, the mentors had less uncertainty compared to when asked about specific benefits. Only 9 % neither agreed or disagreed. The rest 9 % of the respondents somewhat disagreed with the statement which can give some indication that there could be something to be improved.



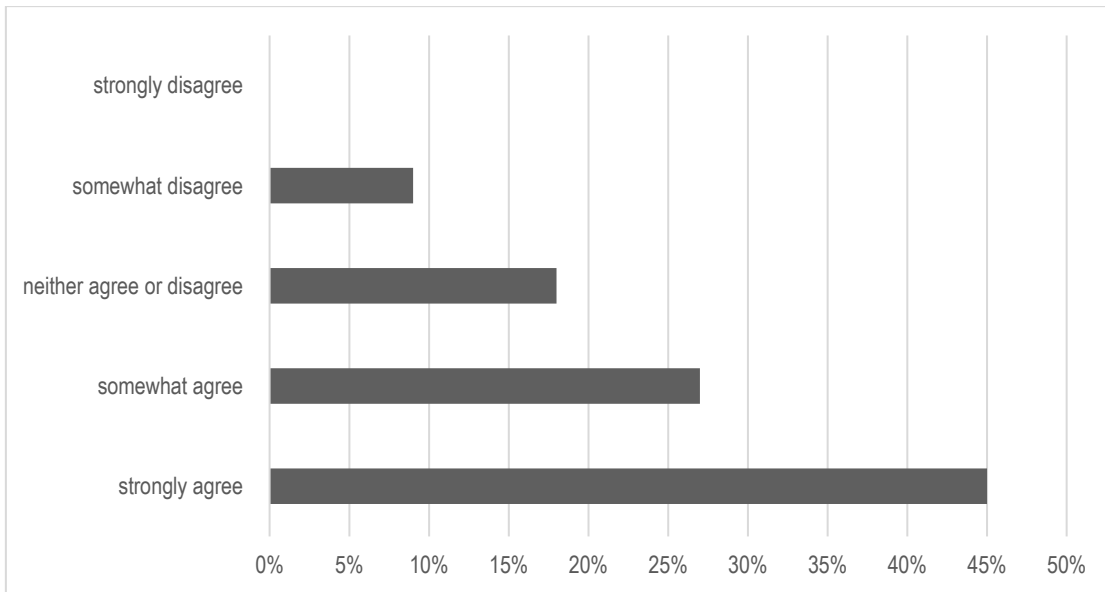
*FIGURE 9. Based on my perception, I think it was beneficial to my mentee. (n=11)*

When it comes to viewing the mentee and how he or she has benefited from participating, the majority of the mentors believe taking part was beneficial for their mentees. 64 % of the respondents somewhat agreed while 18 % strongly agreed and another 18 % neither agreed or disagreed. The question in itself is important because for the program it is relevant to know the mentors feel that their mentees benefit from the program. As all of the mentoring programs are reciprocal processes where all of the parties gain something from participating, it would be concerning, if the mentors did not see mentoring being beneficial for their mentees, as the program would not have a solid foundation.



*FIGURE 10. I am satisfied with the overall quality of the abovementioned mentoring programme. (n=11)*

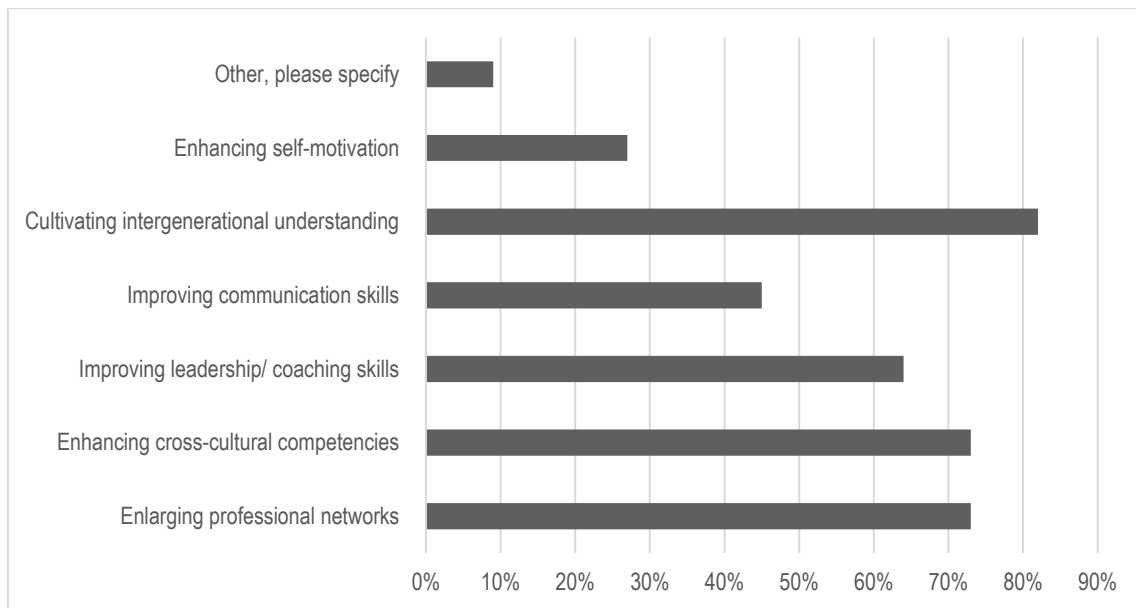
The statement about the overall quality of the mentoring program and the related satisfaction had the most variety when it comes to the responds. 45 % somewhat agreed and 18 % strongly agreed. 18 % neither agreed or disagreed while 18 % even somewhat disagreed. This sort of variation indicates that people experienced the program quite differently and it can be speculated that there is room for improvement and making the program more cohesive. The mentoring programs were pilots at the time and going through their first period which can partly explain why the participants would have such mixed responds.



*FIRUGE 11. I will recommend EntryPoint to my colleagues and friends. (n=11)*

Recommending the mentoring program forward as well received larger variety than majority of the questions. The trend was more positive as even 45 % of the respondents were ready to strongly recommend the program to their colleagues and friends and 27 % were somewhat ready. 18 % neither agreed or disagreed and 9 % somewhat disagreed.

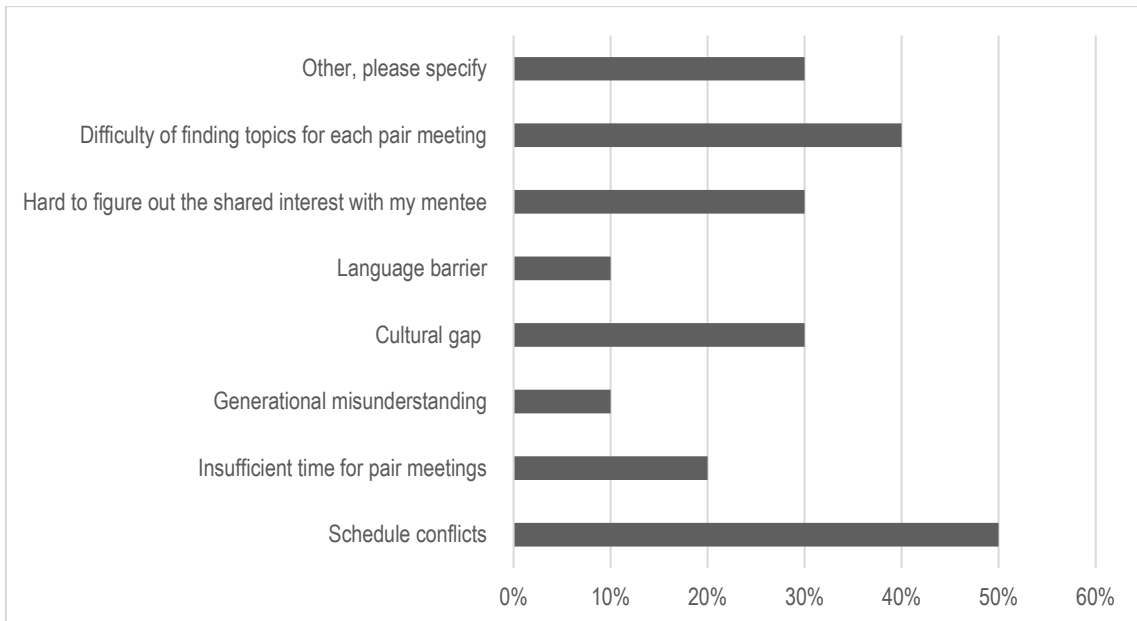
The next three questions were multiple-choice. The mentors were asked to choose the benefits and challenges they faced during the mentoring program, and for looking into the future, what kind of activities could be included in the EntryPoint 2016 mentoring program. Due to agreement with the commissioner, all of the information could not be included in this thesis. Therefore, in the following questions, the option Other, please specify, is not explained.



*FIGURE 12. Please choose all benefits of taking part in the abovementioned mentoring programme. (n=11)*

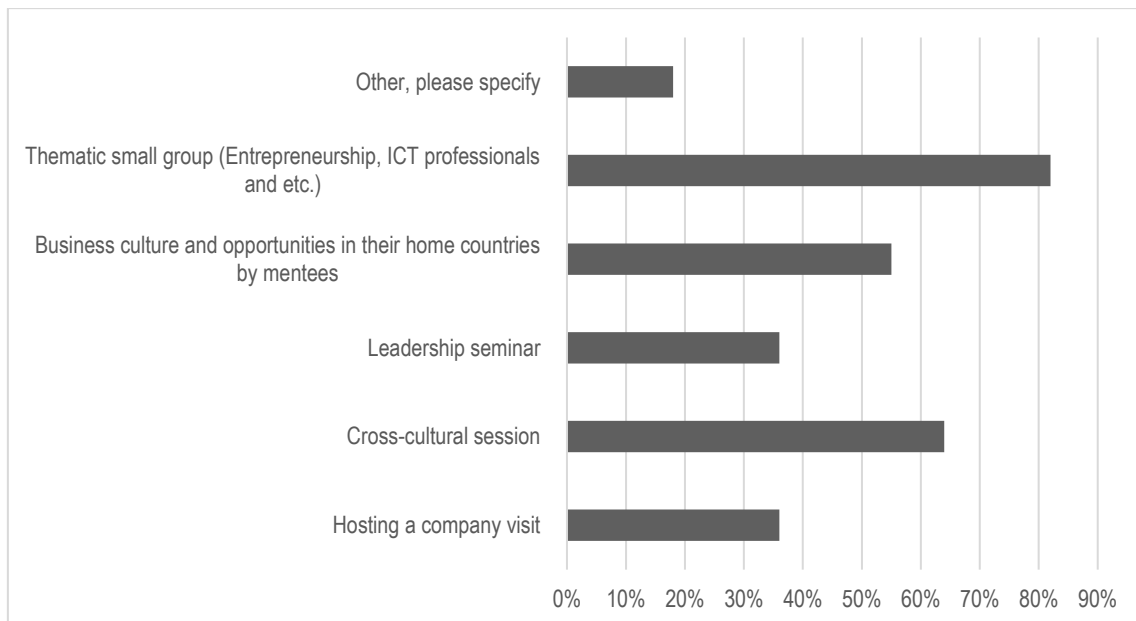
To research the main benefits of the mentoring program, there was a list created with cooperation of the commissioner. The benefits were enhancing self-motivation, cultivating intergenerational understanding, improving communication skills, improving leadership/coaching skills, enhancing cross-cultural competencies, enhancing professional networks and other. The benefits chosen by over half of the respondents were cultivating intergenerational understanding, 82 %, improving leadership/coaching skills, 64 %, enhancing cross-cultural competencies, 73 %, and enhancing professional networks, 73 %. There were no unpredictable responds concerning the benefits but the fact that such a large number of mentors considered gaining an understanding of the students as the most valuable benefit, was really positive. The less acknowledged benefits of the program were other, 9 %, enhancing self-motivation, 27 %, and improving communication skills, 45 %.

As mentioned earlier, the question other will not be answered in this thesis due to an agreement with commissioner. The question will appear in the rest of the questions and left unexplained.



*FIGURE 13. Please tell us what challenges you encountered during the abovementioned mentoring programme. (n=11)*

The list of challenges of the mentoring program was created with cooperation of the commissioner. The dispersion of the challenges was greater and none of the individual challenges raised such a high percentage as the benefits. The challenges the mentors could choose from were difficulties of finding topics for each pair meeting, hard to figure out the shared interest with my mentee, language barrier, cultural gap, generational misunderstanding, insufficient time for pair meetings, schedule conflicts and other. The most problematic issues were difficulties of finding topics for each pair meeting, 40 %, other, 30 %, hard to figure out the shared interest with my mentee, 30 %, cultural gap, 30 %, and schedule conflicts, 50 %. Language barrier, generational misunderstanding and insufficient time for pair meetings did not seem to be big issues as their percentage stayed under 20. Again the results did not have any major surprises. Schedule conflicts raised the largest percentage which makes it the biggest issue with the mentoring program. Other problems were related to the topics and communication between the mentor and mentee. For the future mentoring programs, the discussion topics could be more closely determined.



*FIGURE 14. Please tell us what kind of activities you'd expect us to include in EntryPoint 2016 mentoring programme. (n=11)*

As a final question, the mentors were asked what kind of activities they would expect to be included in the next mentoring program. The options were thematic small group, business culture and opportunities in their home countries by mentees, leadership seminar, cross-cultural session, hosting a company visit and other. The activities that appealed most interesting for the mentors were thematic small group, 82 %, business culture and opportunities in their home countries by mentees, 55 %, and cross-cultural session, 64 %. It is interesting to see how the challenges and desired activities have a connection. Other activities had the following responds: other, 18 %, leadership seminar, 36 %, and hosting a company visit, 36 %. As mentors felt finding topics to be somewhat challenging, in the future they hoped to have more organized conversations, and with other mentor-mentee pairs. Cultural gap also rose as one of the main challenges and possibly due to that, mentors were interested in cross-cultural sessions and learning the business culture and opportunities in the mentees' home countries, in order to bring down the gap.

The rest of the questions were demographic questions which purpose was to form a sense of what type of people participate as mentors. The mentors were asked their field of business, degree, gender and age. 55 % of the responding mentors were male and 45 % female.

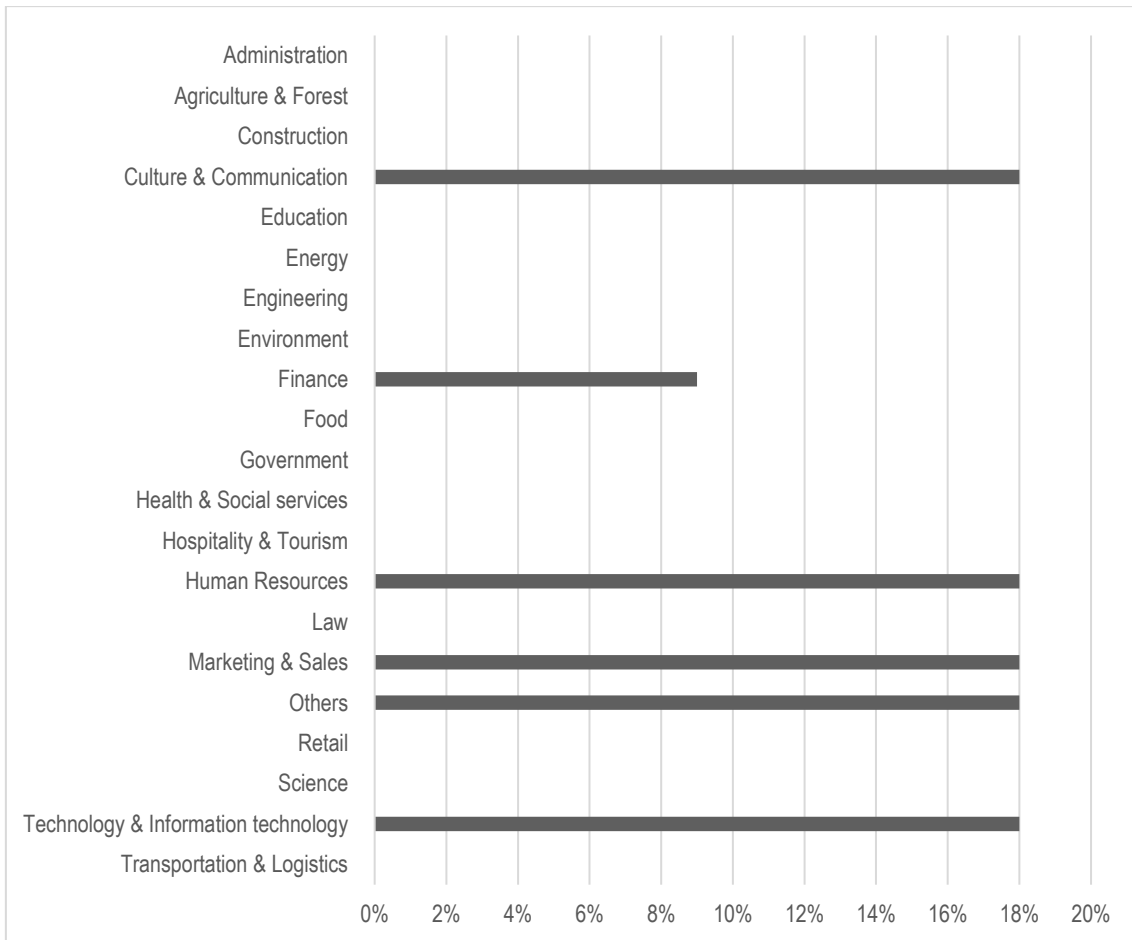


FIGURE 15. Which category(s) best describe the field of your business? (n=11)

The mentors' field of business divided into six categories: culture and communication, finance, human resources, marketing and sales, others and technology and information technology. Some of the listed fields did not directly correspond to the mentors' job and therefore, the mentors had to choose the second best option. As the purpose of the mentoring program it to match a student and mentor from the same field of business, currently the number of field on businesses is rather concise. For the next mentoring program, the organizer could target a larger variety of professionals.



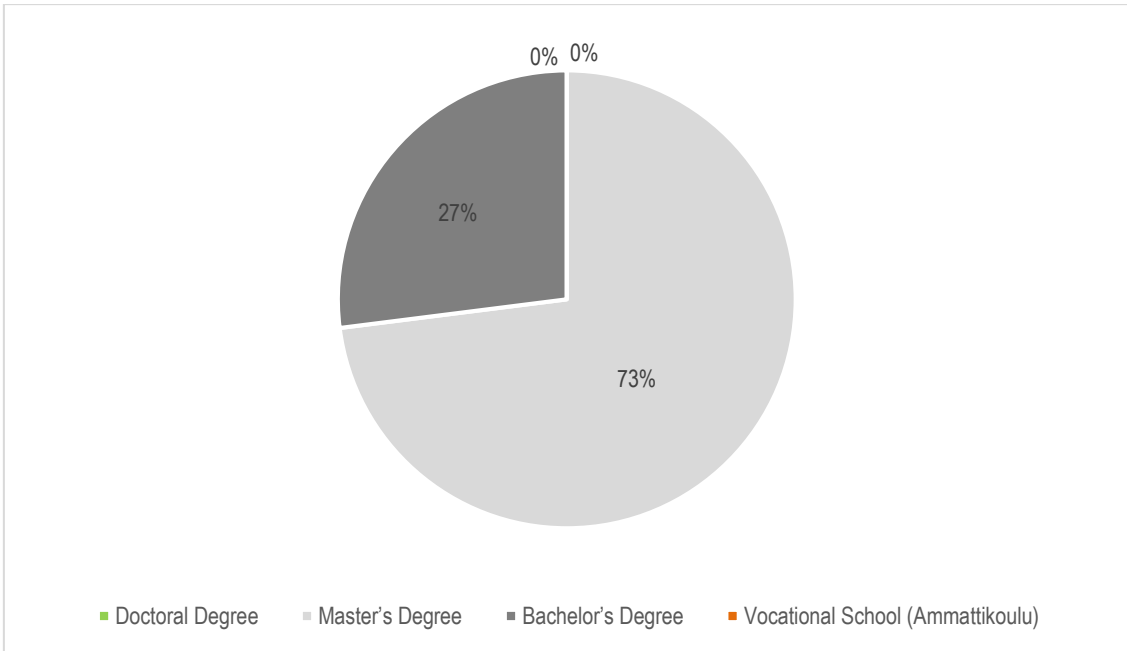


FIGURE 16. Which type of advanced degree(s) do you hold? (n=11)

The majority, 73 % of the mentors had a Master's Degree and the rest 27 % had a Bachelor's Degree.

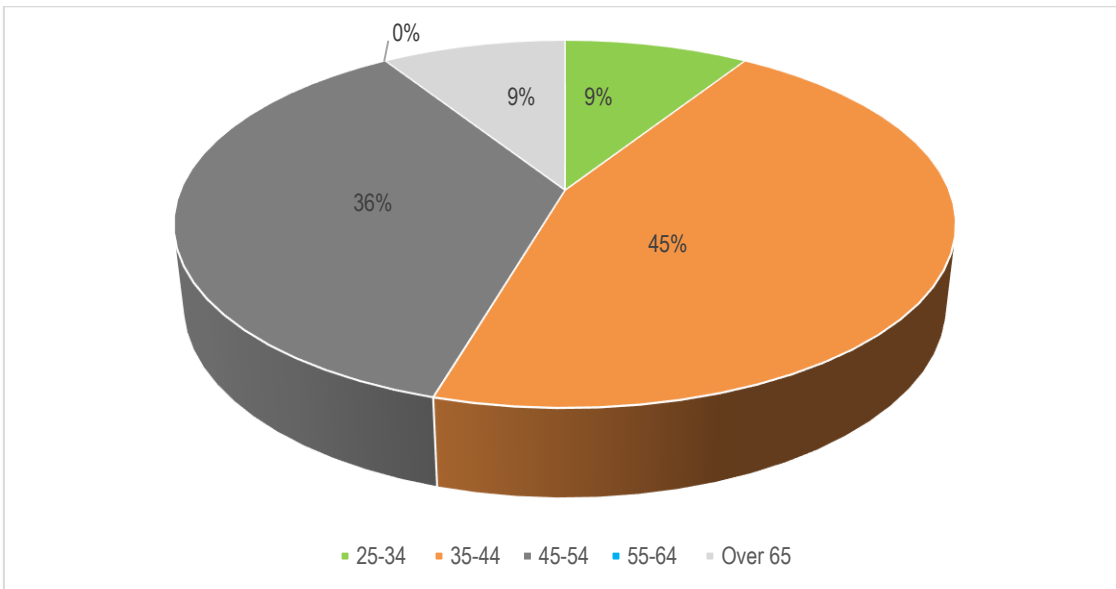


FIGURE 17. Age (n=11)

When it comes age, the largest age groups of the mentors were 35-44 and 45-54 year olds. 9 % represented age group 25-34 and another 9 % over 65 year olds. None of the respondents were between 55 and 64 year of age.

## 7.2 The in-depth interview

The in-depth interview was based around few themes which helped to navigate the conversation. The six themes were overall experiences about the mentoring program and about being a mentor, benefits and challenges of the mentoring program, the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentor-employer relationship, whether they would consider participating again and to whom they would be recommending the program, and improvements and development ideas.

Overall the mentors experienced the mentoring program as a positive experience and would participate again. Especially, the goal of the program was seen very important since hiring talented international students could prevent brain drain and increase internationalization in Finnish businesses as well as bring in new fresh ideas and innovation by questioning how business has been done in the past. The organizer was considered as great, however, the mentors had different views about how the actual mentoring program was and should be organized. The program started out great and everyone were excited but after a while, everything in a way fizzled out. The opening seminar and common meetings were described to have a great atmosphere but some thought there should be less talk about the actual mentoring process and more focus on common themes, and what is the initial goal of the program. Among mentors, there were varying views and procedures as well as differences in activity. Part of the mentors felt the program would need more structure as others felt that too much control would block the creativity. Other mentors hoped more common discussions and joined activities while others wanted to focus on their mentees and did not see the common meetings as relevant for achieving the goal. Everyone mentioned that having a great mentee and relationship made the experience rewarding and successful.

The benefits of participating in the mentoring program were all related to learning something new. The mentors got the chance to meet new interesting people and make important social and professional connections. They gained understanding for new cultures, behavior and broke stereotypes that they previously might have had. Mentors learned new and different ways of doing business as an addition to listening new, fresh and different viewpoints. Most importantly, the program and the mentees brought awareness about how difficult employment actually is in Finland. Some of the mentors could reach the goal of the program and hired their mentee after the mentoring program ended.

The challenges of being a mentor derived from the mentoring program as well as from the mentors' personal schedule. Some felt that the program did not have enough structure nor the goal was clear enough for every participant which made it difficult to have effective meetings with the mentee. One of the mentors suggested that the program should in the future be shorter, for example three months versus the current six-month program. Shorter time span would make the program more active and effective, and the mentor and his or her mentee would have more frequent meetings within the schedule. All of the mentors expressed the want to spend more time with their mentees than originally suggested in the mentoring program.

When it comes to improving the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentors all agreed that the time spend together with the mentee was not enough. As a suggestion, the pairs could voluntarily or based on set dates, see for example on a weekly basis. Some meetings should also have a set agenda, as not all of the participants were clear with the program and its expectations. One of the improvement ideas was to mimic TET, työelämään tutustuminen in Finnish. During previous mentoring programs, all of the mentors had brought their mentee to their workplace, and thought it was the best way to get familiar with Finnish businesses and Finnish business culture. The mentors were, as an addition, asked about the mentor-employer relationship. For most parts, the mentors' employers were positive about their employees' participation in a mentoring program. Based on the mentors' perceptions, the benefits for the employers varied from gaining new information and ideas to the possibility to present a great company image, and most importantly, the possibility to hire a great international employee.

When asked about who to recommend the mentoring program and what type of characteristics a mentor should possess, the mentors pointed out that mentoring is a reciprocal process. A good mentor wants to listen and understand his or her mentee and is ready to work with the mentee. Mentoring is rather simple and in this case, has not that much to do with educating but coaching and guiding the mentee. The mentors felt that a mentor does not have to have previous experience with mentoring, in order to participate in the mentoring program. Yet, one mentor expressed that having experienced mentors and their experiences and knowledge could benefit the program and its participants.

The final questions were concerned with improvements and development ideas of the mentoring program. As the most important, the mentors felt that the structure and the activities of the program needed the most improvements and developing. Mentors had relatively good experiences about

the starting seminar and the shared information but some clarification about the goal was needed. In the future mentoring program, the participants should be more precisely explained why the program is organized, what is wanted to be achieved and how the goal is going to be achieved with the mentoring program. However, the participants are individuals and have different backgrounds, and might differently need and want more support from the organizers. Perhaps in the future, for first time mentors there could be more guidance and for the ones who have more experience, the starting seminar could be voluntary or in a form of a short informative video. The organized leadership seminar was found to be unnecessary, as the focus of the program were the students and the mentors already have leadership skills acquired through their work.

When it comes to the activities during the previous mentoring programs, there was growing demand for group activities and joined events, and one suggestion was to establish and schedule the common activities early on, as for many it might be difficult to find enough time in their calendars. The mentors also felt that by joining together, the mentees as well as themselves could benefit from other participants who have expertise in different areas. One mentor specifically mentioned how startups became strongly forward and in the future they should be addressed more. Group mentoring was also introduced, as one of the mentors explained how he took in other mentees when their own mentors had hindered from participating. The mentees should not be just educated but taken into workplace and learning themselves, as all of the mentors stated. The mentees learn more when they can follow their mentors around the workplace and can actually be part of the workplace's daily operations and learn the culture. By integrating the international students into the workplace, other employees become more prepared for internationalization and working in a multicultural workplace, and can see the opportunities it brings. One of the mentors pointed out that if Finnish companies do not evolve and grasp internationalization, someone will come to the market and take their place. The activities need more engagement and variety as well as to be more hands on. Besides having the important one-on-one meetings and being actively at the workplace, the mentees should be given real cases to solve and the opportunity to be a part of a concrete project.

All of the mentors expressed the importance of LinkedIn. The site is a great tool for targeting and contacting future mentors and mentees as well as keeping contact with one's existing professional network. Some of the mentors have added their participation in the mentoring program in their LinkedIn profile which is a great way to increase visibility and bring awareness for the mentoring program.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to gather feedback from previous mentoring programs' mentors on their experiences and benefits of the mentoring program, and possible development ideas. Based on the gathered insight from the previous mentors, the aim is to develop the future mentoring programs. The research problem was approached with the following two research questions:

1. "How did you benefit from participating in the mentoring program as a mentor?"
2. "How would you develop the mentoring program?"

The respondents of this research were mentors who are experts in their own field, and participated in a mentoring program. When it comes to figuring out how the mentors benefited from the program, two surveys were used; a primary survey and an in-depth interview. The primary survey consisted of multiple-choice, scale, open and demographic questions, and with the survey, both direct and indirect benefits could be discovered. The actual development ideas were researched with the in-depth interview but some indication to improvements was also discovered in the primary survey from the areas where the respondents disagreed to the statement.

First, more than 80 % of the respondents considered the participation as beneficial. Gaining and learning something new definitely turned out to be the theme when asked about the benefits. The mentors stated new experiences, new connections, and learning and improving their own skills as the main benefits. Participation improved job satisfaction and the individuals felt more valued in their organization compared to the prior. By mentoring and having social and international interaction, the mentors' leadership as well as cross-cultural skills developed during the program. Demonstrating with percentages, the most acknowledged benefits of the mentoring program were the following, cultivating intergenerational understanding, 82 %, improving leadership/coaching skills, 64 %, enhancing cross-cultural competencies, 73 %, and enhancing professional networks, 73 %. Additionally, gaining an understanding was important to many. The mentors got the chance to listen the young, and how they view today's business world. With this program and experience, the difficulty of international students' employment in Finland was brought forward and realized.

The answers of the primary survey which disagreed with the statement, gave indication for improvement. Everyone experienced the mentoring program as individuals, and for some the

overall quality of the program was not completely satisfying. The same reaction was also discovered when viewing how the mentors valued the benefits. The benefits not seen as strong as the others were improving self-motivation and communication skills. When reflecting this to the acknowledged challenges of the program, there could be a link between them. The areas that proved to be most challenging and dissatisfying were difficulties of finding topics for each pair meeting, 40 %, other, 30 %, hard to figure out the shared interest with my mentee, 30 %, cultural gap, 30 %, and schedule conflicts, 50 %. If finding enough time to get together with the mentee was difficult, and there were difficulties in finding mutually important topics and interests during the time spent with the mentee, it can definitely affect negatively, how the mentors keep themselves motivated during the program, and how their good communication skills could not always help to correct the situation.

During the in-depth interviews, there was a lot of discussion about how the program should be structured, as naturally participants had varying backgrounds and experiences, and while others wanted and needed more support and guidance, the others wanted to have more independence and freedom. For some the goal of the program was not clear which partly resulted in insufficient meeting as mentioned above. Every mentor wanted to spend more time with their mentee which is as much as a positive response and it is a challenge. It was great to see how involved the mentors were with their mentees but as individuals, everyone personally arranged the time to spend with their mentees, and not everyone has the same amount of freedom in their schedules. As a conclusion for future mentoring programs, the program should more comply to the needs of the participants.

## 9 DISCUSSION

Writing this thesis was a great experience, and a challenge needed. The time reserved for writing this thesis by my own choice, was more or less five months which gave me the opportunity to do the work without excess stress due to the schedule, and freedom for creative flow. The thesis could have been completed in a much shorter time but from my point of view, the way everything turned out made this the positive experience as it was.

Writing the knowledge base helped a lot with setting the tone for the rest of the thesis, and it was the most challenging but rewarding part of the thesis, as I gained a lot of knowledge but only the most necessary could be part of the thesis. The found and selected references, supported my point of view which gave credibility for the thesis. The topic was really interesting which contributed to making the writing of this thesis enjoyable. Also I could relate to the topic since being a student of an international degree, I have seen firsthand the difficulty of employment of international students.

Creating the surveys proved to be challenging, since it was difficult to narrow the questions to so few, and still wanting to receive as much as information as possible. Therefore, the only solution was to conduct two surveys. The surveys were formed with the help of an amazing contact person from the commissioner Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce. The primary survey was sent by the commissioner which helped me a lot, since my main responsibility was to gather information through in-depth interviews. As mentioned in the research chapter, the size of the research sample was 25 % from all of the mentors. The amount was smaller than originally anticipated, and it affected the reliability and validity of this research. To me as a researcher the small amount was rather disappointing but what saved the situation, was the fact that every single one of the three mentors I got the chance to interview, were all different and had a lot of varying opinions of the mentoring program. The amount of time and effort that analyzing the results took, caught me by surprise, and it turned out to be the most time-consuming part of this project. I feel that both of the research questions were successfully answered, and the information gathered can be utilized for future mentoring programs.

Then, what could have been done differently and what is left to be researched about this topic. As mentioned, the amount of the responds was smaller than expected. I feel the amount could have been higher, if the feedback was gathered right after the mentoring programs ended since mentors

had already forgotten what happened four or two years ago when they participated in the HERA mentoring program and EntryPoint 2014 mentoring program. Other angles the topic could be researched from, is to interview the mentors more in-depth compared to this research or research the mentors' counterparts, the mentees. The fact that there was no knowledge whether the mentees still lived in Finland hindered from gathering feedback from the mentees. Another aspect would be to gather feedback from both participant groups and compare them. The fact that this topic has so many research viewpoints makes it really interesting and worth continuing in the future.



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### Post Survey of Cross-cultural Mentoring Programme

#### Scale survey

What is the year of your previous participation in a cross-cultural mentoring programme among the follows?

- HERA Mentoring 2012-2013
- EntryPoint Mentoring 2014-2015

Please rate how you think/feel in each of the following questions:

**After participating in the abovementioned cross-cultural mentoring programme**

I am more satisfied with my current job than before.

*neither*

*strongly agree    somewhat agree    agree or disagree    or somewhat disagree    strongly disagree*

●                    ●                    ●                    ●                    ●

I am more socially connected with professional networks than before.

*neither*

*strongly agree    somewhat agree    agree or disagree    or somewhat disagree    strongly disagree*

●                    ●                    ●                    ●                    ●

I feel more comfortable in the multicultural workplace than before.

*neither*

*strongly agree    somewhat agree    agree or disagree    or somewhat disagree    strongly disagree*

●                    ●                    ●                    ●                    ●

I feel more valued in this organization than before.

*neither*

*strongly agree    somewhat agree    agree or disagree    or somewhat disagree    strongly disagree*

●                    ●                    ●                    ●                    ●

My cross-cultural competencies have improved.

*neither*

*strongly agree    somewhat agree    agree or disagree    or somewhat disagree    strongly disagree*

●                    ●                    ●                    ●                    ●

Please tell us your opinion on the following questions:

I highly value the benefits of taking part in the abovementioned mentoring programme.

*strongly agree*   *somewhat agree*   *neither agree or disagree*   *somewhat disagree*   *strongly disagree*  
           

Based on my perception, I think it was beneficial to my mentee.

*strongly agree*   *somewhat agree*   *neither agree or disagree*   *somewhat disagree*   *strongly disagree*  
           

I am satisfied with the overall quality of the abovementioned mentoring programme.

*strongly agree*   *somewhat agree*   *neither agree or disagree*   *somewhat disagree*   *strongly disagree*  
           

I will recommend EntryPoint to my colleagues and friends.

*strongly agree*   *somewhat agree*   *neither agree or disagree*   *somewhat disagree*   *strongly disagree*  
           

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## Post Survey of Cross-cultural Mentoring Programme

### Multiple response

Please choose all benefits of taking part in the abovementioned mentoring programme

- Enlarging professional networks*
- Enhancing cross-cultural competencies*
- Improving leadership/ coaching skills*
- Improving communication skills*
- Cultivating intergenerational understanding*
- Enhancing self-motivation*
- Other, please specify*

Please tell us what challenges you encountered during the abovementioned mentoring programme

- Schedule conflicts*
- Insufficient time for pair meetings*
- Generational misunderstanding*
- Cultural gap*
- Language barrier*
- Hard to figure out the shared interest with my mentee*
- Difficulty of finding topics for each pair meeting*
- Other, please specify*

Please tell us how you succeeded to overcome the abovementioned challenges.

Please tell us what kind of activities you'd expect us to include in EntryPoint 2016 mentoring programme

- Hosting a company visit*
- Cross-cultural session*
- Leadership seminar*
- Business culture and opportunities in their home countries by mentees*
- Thematic small group (Entrepreneurship, ICT professionals and etc.)*
- Other, please specify*

## Post Survey of Cross-cultural Mentoring Programme

### Demographic questions

Which category(s) best describe the field of your business?

Select

What is your job title?

Which type of advanced degree (s) do you hold? Select

Gender:

- Male  
 Female

Age: Select

## Post Survey of Cross-cultural Mentoring Programme

### Last page

Please leave your contact information if you

- Would like to share your testimonials on COME2.FI website (if so, we will contact you in due time).  
 Would like to participate in the in-depth interview in June 2016. The interview will be part of a Bachelor's Thesis by Essi Ryökäs who is studying a Bachelor's Degree in International Business in Oulu University of Applied Sciences (OAMK). In her thesis, how to develop a cross-cultural mentoring programme will be discussed based on the feedback of previous participants.

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Job Title:

Company:

## Post Survey of Cross-cultural Mentoring Programme

Thank you for completing the survey and please click "Send" to submit your responses.

We will contact you and keep you updated in due time.

We expect to meet you again this autumn at EntryPoint 2016.

[www.comez.fi](http://www.comez.fi)

< Back

Continue later

Send



1. How did you experience the mentoring program?
2. How did you experience the mentoring program as a mentor?
3. How did you benefit from participating in a mentoring program?
4. What were the challenges of being a mentor?
5. How were you able to help your mentee?
6. How did your mentee help you?
7. How would you improve the mentor-mentee relationship?
8. How did your employer deal with you participating in a mentoring program?
9. Did your employer benefit from your participation?
10. How would you feel about participating again?
11. Who would you recommend participating in a mentoring program?
12. How would you improve the mentoring program?
13. What are the specific areas for improvement?