How to Enhance Graduate Employability in Higher Education? Employability, Mentoring and Value

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2022 Laurea

Laurea University of Applied Sciences

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Degree Programme in Service Innovation and Design
Master´s Thesis
June, 2022

Laurea University of Applied Sciences **Abstract**

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Year 2022 Number of pages 84

This study aims to understand how students and graduates can enhance their employability and what role mentoring plays in employability-building. The objective is to develop existing mentoring and career services in the case organisation to better meet the different aspects of employability. The case organisation is a large Finnish higher education institution in the capital region of Finland. The participants of the study are international degree students and graduates.

The study's theoretical framework consists of employability, mentoring, and value formation. From the vast employability theories, Michael Tomlinson´s (2017) graduate capital model is used to create a frame for development work and analysis. The customer-dominant logic of Heinonen, Strandvik & Mickelsson (2010) creates a well-suited approach to evaluate how value emerges for a student in mentoring over a time span. The results show that all five graduate capitals can be enhanced in mentoring. Mentoring provides a framework, a locus, for developing employability capitals and direct employment. Concerning customer-dominant logic, value formation happens in students' ecosystem, and the time span of mentoring benefits can offer a far-reaching value for the student.

The design frame is a case study with some features from constructive research. The research approach is qualitative with an aim to interpret the phenomenon in-depth and understand the experiences and subjective world of the research participants. The study was conducted using a service design process following the Double Diamond model of British Design Council (2005) with discover, define, develop, and deliver phases. Service design methodology was used in different phases of the process. The methodology consists of, e.g., in-depth-interviews, How might we -questions, visual ideation with 10 plus 10 -method, evaluation with Idea Portfolio, and validation interviews.

The outcome of the development work is three practical solutions for the employability enhancement of students. According to the first solution, students could enhance their self-awareness and show their strengths better through discussions with mentors and company representatives. The second solution aims for a better success of students in recruiting processes with a CV-tailoring process. According to the third solution, skilful but shy students could benefit from blind challenge auditions, where they could outline their skills to a company without a need for social networking. With respect to Tomlinson´s graduate model, these solutions enhance all five graduate capitals: human capital, social capital, cultural capital, identity capital, and psychological capital.

The study offers multiple proposals for future development. To succeed in the future labour market, students and graduates need to develop all five employability capitals, not only within higher education, but also in extracurricular activities. The ultimate responsibility for developing employability lies in students´ own efforts, but higher education institutions have an important role in facilitating this development. Social connections and support given to the students, including mentoring, play an essential role.

Keywords: Employability, mentoring, value, graduate capital model

Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulu **Tiivistelmä**

Degree Programme in Service Innovation and Design

Master of Business Administration

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Kuinka vahvistaa opiskelijoiden työllistyvyyttä korkeakouluissa? Työllistyvyys, mentorointi ja arvo

Vuosi 2022 Sivumäärä 84

Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on ymmärtää, kuinka opiskelijat ja valmistuneet voivat parantaa työllistyvyyttään (employability), ja mikä rooli mentoroinnilla on työllistyvyyden vahvistamisessa. Tutkimuksen kohteena oleva organisaatio on korkeakoulu pääkaupunkiseudulla. Tavoitteena on kehittää organisaation olemassa olevia mentorointi- ja muita urapalveluita vastaamaan paremmin työllistettävyyden eri näkökohtia. Tutkimukseen osallistuneet sidosryhmät ovat korkeakoulun opiskelijoita ja alumneja.

Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys koostuu työllistyvyydestä, mentoroinnista ja arvonmuodostuksesta. Lukuisista työllistyvyysteorioista Michael Tomlinsonin (2017) graduate capital -malli luo puitteet kehitystyölle ja analyysille. Heinosen, Strandvik & Mickelssonin (2010) customer dominant -logiikka on sopiva kehys mentoroinnin pitkälle ulottuvan arvonluonnin kuvaamiselle. Tulokset osoittavat, että kaikkia viittä Tomlinsonin esittämää työllistyvyyspääomaa voidaan parantaa mentoroinnissa. Mentorointi tarjoaa puitteet pääomien kehittämiselle ja myös suoraa työllistyyvyttä. Customer-dominant -logiikan osalta arvonmuodostus tapahtuu opiskelijan ekosysteemissä, ja mentoroinnista saatujen edut pitkälle ulottuvaa arvoa.

Tutkimuksen kehys on tapaustutkimus, jossa on konstruktiivisen tutkimuksen piirteitä. Lähestymistapa on kvalitatiivinen: tavoitteena on tulkita ilmiötä syvällisesti ja ymmärtää tutkimukseen osallistuneiden kokemuksia ja subjektiivista maailmaa. Tutkimuksessa hyödynnetään British Design Councilin (2005) Double Diamond -mallin mukaista palvelumuotoiluprosessia, joka sisältää discover, define-, develop- ja deliver-vaiheet. Palvelumuotoilun eri vaiheissa käytetyt menetelmät ovat muun muassa syvähaastattelu, How might we -kysymykset, visuaalinen ideointi 10 plus 10 -menetelmällä, Idea Portfolio -arviointimenetelmä sekä validointihaastattelut.

Kehittämistyön tuloksena syntyi kolme käytännönläheistä ratkaisua opiskelijoiden työllistyvyyden parantamiseksi: Ensinnäkin opiskelijat voivat parantaa itsetuntemustaan ja osoittaa vahvuuksiaan keskustelemalla mentoreiden ja yritysedustajien kanssa. Toiseksi heille voidaan tarjota CV-räätälöintiprosessi, jota seuraamalla opiskelijat voivat onnistua paremmin rekrytointiprosesseissa. Kolmannessa ratkaisussa taitavat mutta ujot opiskelijat voivat osallistua anonyymin yrityshaasteeseen, jossa he voivat esitellä taitojaan yritykselle ilman sosiaalisen verkostoitumisen painetta. Tomlinsonin pääomamalliin suhteutettuna nämä ratkaisut vahvistavat kaikkia viittä pääomaa: inhimillistä pääomaa, sosiaalista pääomaa, kulttuuripääomaa, identiteettipääomaa ja psykologista pääomaa.

Tutkimus tarjoaa useita kehitysehdotuksia tulevalle. Menestyäkseen työmarkkinoilla opiskelijoiden ja valmistuneiden on kehitettävä kaikkia viittä työllistyvyyspääomaa, ei vain korkea- koulutuksen puitteissa, vaan myös koulun ulkopuolisissa toiminnoissa. Perimmäinen vastuu työllistyvyyden kehittämisestä on opiskelijoilla itsellään, mutta korkeakouluilla on tärkeä rooli tämän kehityksen fasilitoinnissa. Sosiaaliset kontaktit ja opiskelijoille annettava tuki, mukaan lukien mentorointi, ovat keskeisessä asemassa.

Asiasanat: työllistyvyys (employability), mentorointi, arvo, pääomamalli

Contents

1 Employability in the changing world of work

Working life is changing as digitalisation, international competition, and the economic structure transformation revolutionise jobs — not to mention megatrends such as climate change and the current political uncertainty. Some of the traditional jobs are disappearing, but new types of jobs are also emerging. Alongside changes in working life, the definitions related to employability are also changing, and the requirements and pressures on those entering the labor market are intensifying. Political and educational decisions should keep pace with this. Ruth Bridgstock (2009, 33-34) argues that "it is ironic that, while policy makers have embraced the move towards this knowledge-based economy in which full-time positions form a smaller proportion of employment opportunities, 'full-time employment' remains the employability indicator of choice of university funding bodies".

This places a requirement to look at employability from a broader perspective. However, many scholars believe that employment is still viewed from too narrow a perspective, including higher education. For example, Holmes (2013), Jackson (2016), and Tomlinson (2017) state that many graduate employment promotion projects still focus too much on skills and attributes that can be directly utilised in working life. Often, however, these skills lead to short-term employment (Bridgstock 2009).

Universities are under increasing pressure to get graduates into the job market. A new funding model indicator came into force in Finnish universities in 2021, which measures the qualitative employment of graduates one year after graduation (Ministry of education and culture 2019). Qualitative employment refers to employment equivalent to education, which is likely to increase cooperation between universities and employers further. However, there are concerns about how the requirement for quality employment considers the broader definition of employability. Bridgstock (2009, 31-32) argues that universities have engaged with a graduate employability agenda called qualitative employment by re-examining which attributes their graduates should possess. Universities focus on fostering students' generic skills that they think make students appealing to multiple employers across multiple work contexts and disciplines.

Denise Jackson and Ruth Bridgstock (2020) state that education cannot contribute to all factors that promote employability but that universities play an essential role in promoting student employability in a variety of contexts: in services integrated into curricula, co-curricular activities that are usually provided by central activities, such as career services, and in extra-curricular activities that are undertaken by students without HE involvement other than advertising perhaps. Denise Jackson and Nicholas Wilton (2016) underline the role

of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in giving students an opportunity to integrate their academic studies with real-world experience. In order to promote the employability of international students in Finland, the largest universities have introduced the Talent Boost program, which aims to integrate business cooperation into higher education studies.

In the intensifying competition, the pressure on individuals is also increasing. It has been shown (e.g., Bridgstock 2009) that there is not much time left for employment-promoting activities in the absence of a tight study schedule of students. In particular, for international students, employment pressures are severe, and challenges have been identified in many places. In Finland, extending the job search permit after graduation from one to two years has become a small relief (Bogdanov 2022). The corona pandemic has also adversely affected students' well-being (Karppi & Konen 2021). In times of pressure, the importance of self-efficacy, resilience, and adaptability grows. According to Tomlinson (2017), self-efficacy is essential in terms of graduates´ ability to achieve career goals and their ability to withstand adverse conditions. Savickas and Porfeli (2012, 663) state that “increasing a graduates’ career adaptability resources or career adapt-abilities is the main goal of career education and counseling". One way to support students´employability is mentoring, which aims at providing students with support and guidance. For example, in Theresa Smith-Ruig (2014) study, the psycho-social support provided by mentors to students functioned as status support, the role of modeling, and friendship, which enhanced the motivation and confidence of mentees. In Finland, many HE institutions organise pair and group mentoring, in which the alumni who graduate from the university are represented by employers. Jackson (2016, 929-930) points out that employers are a prominent community through their involvement in work-integrated learning, including “work placements, client-based projects, internships, simulations, and mentoring programmes”.

1.1 Background of the case organisation

The case organisation is a large Finnish Higher Education Institution in the capital region of Finland. Founded in 2010 as a merger of three higher education institutions, the multidisciplinary institution operates as six schools representing fields of arts, design, business, and technology. The case organisation´s mission is to “strengthen Finland’s innovative capacity through first-class research, art and education”. The purpose of the case organisation is to shape a sustainable future, and the case organisation has chosen three cross-cutting approaches to support this achievement: sustainable solutions, radical creativity, and an entrepreneurial mindset.

The case organisation has a strategic goal of internationalisation of teaching and learning. 26 percent of the 600 master’s students are international students (2021). The total number of degree students is 12,600. The personnel´s number is 4,000, of whom nearly 400 are

professors. The share of international academic staff is 40. The new strategy plans for 2022-2025 states that to foster and recruit “world-class talent”, the case organization leverages its strengths to mention “infrastructures, attractive campus, mentoring, and location in the Nordic countries. (Case organisation strategy and webpages 25 May 2022)

The new strategy plans also highlight the meaning of career services - mentoring, employer connections and internship support - in increasing the employment of international students in Finland. The case organisation offers a variety of career services to international students in collaboration with companies and former students. These services include Talent Boost group mentoring programme for international students, career events, and job fairs. The case organisation also utilises its vast alumni network in the annual mentoring programme, where graduates act as career mentors for master´s students. The half-a-year programme enrolls approximately 160 students annually, half of whom are international master’s students. Denise Jackson (2016, 934) states that higher education graduates, alumni, are often effective career role models for students. Guidance and experience sharing from alumni can be utilised through work-integrated learning, mentoring programmes, online forums, and career stories in newsletters. Similarly, cooperation with trade unions can provide similar opportunities for the benefit of students. According to Jackson and Bridgstock (2020, 736), “Educators may wish to encourage student participation by facilitating mentoring arrangements with alumni and other industry partners”.

1.2 The purpose, objective, and approach of my thesis

The purpose of the thesis is to find ways how international students can enhance their employability. As stated earlier, employability building is still considered as an enhancement of specific skills and attributes that a student needs in the transition to working life. By considering this and engaging students and graduates in the design process, the objective is to find new practical suggestions that enhance students´ role in their own employability-building process. This objective is also supported by a new approach that the case organisation has taken in the form of career design, in which the emphasis is on a student´s individual efforts in employability building.

Given that the objective is to find ways to foster students´employability enhancement in the case organisation, the customer of development work is a student. Throughout the report, I am using words student and graduate. Considering that employability is evolving and accumulating beyond higher education (e.g., Jackson & Bridgstock 2020; Tomlinson 2017), the expectation is that the methods to promote individual´s employability are applicable to both students and graduates. Besides, the participants of the study are both undergraduate students and graduates. Thus, students and graduates are not only the subject of research but in an important role as participants.

The design frame of my thesis is a case study with some features from constructive research. The study is conducted by using a service design process following a double diamond model of British Design Council (2005) and its revambed version of Dave Nessler (2018). Service design methodology is used in different phases of the process. The research approach is qualitative with an aim to interpret the phenomenon in-depth and understand the experiences and subjective world of the research participants. The theoretical framework consists of employability, mentoring, and value formation. I chose Michael Tomlinson´s (2017) graduate capital model from the vast employability literature. The model presents five employability capitals that a student can develop through his or her experiences in different contexts and time dimensions.

Since the objective is to examine how employability could be better supported in mentoring, a closer look must be taken at mentoring and its role in employability-building. According to the two approaches for mentoring — a psycho-social development mentoring or employment-related "sponsorship mentoring" (Kram 1985, cited in Smith-Ruig 2014; Montgomery 2017) — mentoring can provide a locus for employability-building and a channel for employment. If the focus is on the development-type of mentoring, it can be challenging to separate the benefits that are often distal (Wanberg & al. 2003). Due to this reason, earlier research on how mentoring benefits students' employability has not been conducted in the case organisation. When talking about benefits, comes a question of value and how value emerges to the student in mentoring. Customer-dominant logic (Heinonen, Strandvik & Mickelsson 2010) is a well-suited approach to evaluate the value that emerges for a student in their ecosystem over a time span.

The research questions in my thesis are:

- How can students enhance their own employability in mentoring and other contexts?
- What role does mentoring play in students´employability building process? How does value emerge in mentoring?
- How should existing mentoring / career services in the case organisation be developed to better meet the different aspects of graduate employability?

1.3 Structure of the thesis report

The thesis structure is the following: Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5, present the knowledge base of the thesis; employability, mentoring, and value formation. Chapter 2 discusses the literature and definitions related to employability and its evolvement. It also describes Michael Tomlinson 's (2017) graduate capital model in detail providing relative literature around the model. The capital model serves as a theoretical frame for the development work. Chapter 3 briefly describes the definitions and benefits of mentoring that serves as another knowledge

basis for the study. Chapter 4 presents the customer-dominant logic, which is the third cornerstone of the study. Chapter 5 summarises the knowledge base and presents a theoretical framework of the thesis.

The development work with research phases and methods are presented in Chapter 6. The chapter also introduces the principles of research-making and explains the concept and key characteristics of service design, Design Thinking, and the double diamond service design model. Chapter 7 describes the development project results and answers the research questions. Lastly, Chapter 8 summarises and assesses the research work. Also, possibilities for further development are suggested.

2 The multiple interpretations and definitions on graduate employability

In the study of international students´ path from education to the labour market, the concept of employability becomes central. In this chapter, I present recent research related to the employability of students and graduates, and its multiple interpretations and definitions. At the end of the chapter, I summarise the definitions.

2.1 From skills and attributes -dominant approach to broader understanding

In the past decades, employment of graduates has been translated as development of skills and attributes. Leonard Holmes (2013, 540) argues that this possessive approach, one in which graduate skills and attributes are treated as if they are capable of being possessed and used, dominates policy and practice discourse. Holmes (2013, 542) stresses that in most cases, graduate employability initiatives have adopted the terminology of "skills, competencies, capabilities and, more recently, attributes and the combination term, graduate 'skills and attributes'". Denise Jackson (2016, 925) addresses that employability skills, including communication, team working and self-management, are widely considered to enhance graduates´ employment. According to Jackson, there has been a worldwide focus on identifying and prioritising required industry-relevant skills and embedding strategies for their development in the higher education (HE) sector". Also, Michael Tomlinson (2017, 339) addresses that Higher Education Institutions consider graduate employability equivalent to enhancement of graduate employability skills, which prepares students to face the challenges of working life. Geoff Mason, Gareth Williams and Sue Cranmer (2009, 1) state that from employers´ perspective, 'employability' often refers to 'work readiness' including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and commercial understanding that will enable graduates to productively advance the organisation's goals soon after the employment begins. Ruth Bridgstock (2009, 32) argues that skills and dispositions -dominant definition of employability that "might make an individual attractive to potential employers", often focuses on short-

term employment outcomes. These kinds of definitions are often adopted by employer organisations. While forming an important subset of employability skills, employer-driven employability lists do not show the full picture of what is required by the graduate facing the labour market. (Bridgstock 2009, 34.)

The focus has therefore been on answering the needs of industry and how these needs could be translated in the acquisition of career skills and attributes. Recently, skills- and attributes-focused approach, often initiated from the industry perspective, has been criticized by many researchers (Jackson & Bridgstock 2020, Tomlinson 2017, Jackson 2016, Holmes 2013, James & al. 2013, Bridgstock 2009) stressing that employability is a broader and more complex definition. Jackson and Bridgstock (2020, 724) consider employability as a "multi-dimensional, lifelong, and life-wide phenomenon that is malleable and driven by the individual, yet encouraged and facilitated by higher education". Tomlinson (2017) summarizes employability in five interactive forms of capital accumulated through graduates´ experiences within and outside of higher education. Holmes (2013, 541) argues that more attention should be paid on various meanings that employability "has had in the past and continues to have in the present". Holmes criticises the way how graduate employability is simplified as skills and attributes. In this skills-prominent approach, students are required to acquire a list of desired skills and assessed on these, during their studies. It is expected that employers will then be able to make recruitment and selection decisions on these transparent skills. Holmes raise a question on how any employer can make sense of the lists of skills and make a decision between candidates from different institutions. On the other hand, how graduates know are these skills that they possess the right ones. (Holmes 2013, 546.) Bridgstock (2009, 34) stresses that university graduates will require "higher-order meta work skills – the abilities required to continuously recognise and capitalise on employment and training-related opportunities and integrate these with other aspects of the individual's life".

In their study, Susan James, Chris Warhurst, Gerbrand Tholen and Johanna Commander (2013) stress that understanding of graduate´s skill is insufficient, thus the analytical scope should be broaden. James and al. argue that the understanding on skills of graduates have been too narrowly focused on supply, whereas it should take into consideration demand, deployment and development of the skills. With skills supply, James & al. refer to the skills presented through the labour market for employers. These skills comprise not only of hard, analytical skills acquired in education, but also soft skills. Skill demand refers to the skills employers "explicitly solicit during the recruitment and selection process". Deployment refers to the skills that are actually utilised the labour process. Development of skills mean the skills that graduate possess once they transit from education to employment. (James & al. 2013, 958-959.)

Bridgstock (2009, 32) underlines that “generic skill development is an inadequate answer to the question of graduate employability and that for enhanced graduate outcomes in the immediate term and on a sustained basis, universities should promote broader career management competence in students”. To cover the multiple meanings of graduate employability, Bridgstock has developed a model of career management skills, which presents desirable attributes that acknowledges the importance of self-management and career building skills to lifelong career management and enhanced employability for a graduate. According to Bridgstock (2009, 35-38), there are various components in career management skills that are important for graduate employability. These components, address more in detail later, are career management for maximum employability, employability skills, underpinning traits and dispositions, discipline-specific skills, generic skills, self-management skills, and career building skills. Career management for maximum employability refers to “an ongoing process of engaging in reflective, evaluative and decision-making processes using skills for self-management and career building”. In the broadest significance, career management involves “creating realistic and personally meaningful career goals, identifying and engaging in strategic work decisions and learning opportunities, recognising work/life balance and appreciating the broader relationships between work, the economy and society”. (Bridgstock 2009, 35-38.) Also, Denise Jackson ja Nicholas Wilton (2016) emphasise the role of career management skills. According to Jackson and Wilton, career management competencies have a central role in individual´s employability. They have impact on individual´s “wellbeing, job attainment and long-term career success”. (Jackson & Wilton 2016, 268.)

2.2 What role does higher education play in graduate employability?

The debate on the graduate employability is also linked to the role that Higher Education Institutions play in the employment of graduates. According to Jackson and Bridgstock (2020, 724), “many determining factors of student employability have clear implications for higher education learning and teaching practice and delivering pedagogy and opportunities that enhance employability is therefore important”. As the strategic importance of employability grows, so does the pressure on academics, learning designers, and career specialists to facilitate effective interventions through embedded, cocurricular, and extra-curricular pathways. Embedded employability-related activities are those integrated into curricula as a formal component of students’ learning and may form part of their assessment. Co-curricular activities are facilitated by the university but happen outside of the students’ formal course of study, often designed and delivered by career services. Externally organised extra-curricular activities are undertaken by students without university being formally involved.

According to James and al. (2013, 957), graduate employability skills are not acquired in Higher Education Institutions only, but skills are developed in number of contexts, “situs”.

The distinction needs to be made between graduate skills and the skills of graduates. According to James and al., the emphasis has been until know in so-called graduate skills: analytical skills acquired through higher education. The skills of graduates, on the other hand, refer to the skills acquired at school, university, home and during paid or unpaid employment while studying (James & al. 2013, 953). Thus, it is important to distinguish "where graduates' skills are formed and if they are developed and acquired before, parallel to or through higher education" (James & al. 2013, 958). Once transiting to labour market, graduates possess a variety of other skills acquired in other "situs". These skills are used both to get a job and used in the job and developed further in the workplace. (James & al. 2013, 959.) Jackson (2016, 925) states that "graduate employability, which has dominated higher education discourse in recent years, should be redefined to encompass the construction of pre-professional identity (PPI) during university years. PPI relates to an understanding of and connection with the skills, qualities, conduct, culture and ideology of a student's intended profession". (Jackson 2016, 925-926.)

According to Leonard Holmes (2013), given that nor higher education institutions or any other institutions control the labour market "in a market-based economy and free society", they cannot guarantee employment outcomes for graduates. Higher Education Institutions can, however, to "promote the likelihood that their graduates will gain what may be deemed as appropriate employment". (Holmes 2013, 540-541.) Jessie Koen, Ute-Christine Klehe and Annelies Van Vianen (2012) state that although those working in higher education do not have a straightforward role in strengthening a student's adaptability and resilience, there are ways to promote its role in the transition to paid employment. The more students and graduates are able to internalise the importance of managing career challenges, the more capable they are of managing disadvantaged situations (Koen et al., 2012).

2.3 Higher education does not guarantee graduate employment

It has been shown that the effectiveness of formal (working life) skills upgrading initiatives in higher education is limited to the future employability of graduates. Holmes (2013, 548) argues that the skills and attributes approach sees graduation as the final stage of higher education, where the student has had to acquire the necessary skills for working life. However, higher education is only one, albeit important, step in the lives of students and graduates. Jackson and Bridgstock (2020, 734) outline that "employability activities are not always reported to lead to improved career outcomes is a disappointing reality for both institutions and individual graduates, given their time-consuming and resource-intensive nature". Also, Geoff Mason, Gareth Williams and Sue Cranmer (2009) address that formal employability skills acquired in higher education are not easily transferred to working life, but the relevant employability skills are developed and utilised in the labour contexts. Bridgstock (2009, 32) underlines that "in the context of a rapidly changing information- and

knowledge-intensive economy, workers must be both immediately and sustainably employable. They must not only maintain and develop knowledge and skills that are specific to their own discipline or occupation, but must also possess 'generic' skills, dispositions and attributes that are transferable to many occupational situations and areas. Tomlinson states that if graduates believe that after a relatively smooth - and in many cases successful - educational experience, they will "fall into seamlessly chosen paths," this can increase challenges and fears later when they encounter experiences that conflict with these expectations. Central to this is the management of expectations and the promotion of related mindsets around flexibility and career malleability. Clearly, those working in higher education need to reaffirm the importance of resilience and the means to proactively manage less linear and stable paths early in the career and beyond. (Tomlinson 2017, 348.)

In their study on the capital acquisition and mobilisation by middleclass and working-class students while at university, Ann-Marie Bathmaker, Nicola Ingram and Richard Waller (2013, 739) found out that students are aware of the fact that a university degree only does not lead to employment. The students understood that to gain advantage in the "recruitment game", they need to "mobilise" capital acquired through various extra-curricular activities. However, Bathmaker and al. argue that students´ awareness of these limitations according to their future employment does not correspond to "a 'feel for the game' of constructing employable selves". (Bathmaker & al. 2013, 739-740.)

2.4 Tomlinson´s graduate capital model

The graduate capital model developed by Michael Tomlinson (2017), is based on the construction of capitals rather than working life skills, which, according to Tomlinson, gives a more detailed and multidimensional picture of the resources that a graduate needs in transition to working life. Tomlinson's model conceptualizes the concept of employability as a group of dynamic, interactive forms of capital that graduates acquire through their experience. According to Tomlinson, the graduate capital model offers a new way to understand graduate employability, with the challenges of facilitating career transitions and smooth career start-ups.

Tomlinson's model is based on the concept of capital, which, according to Tomlinson (2017, 339), has been discussed in the past mainly from an economic and social perspective. The former capital approach has also emphasized the benefits of acquiring formal qualifications and the favourable economic position it creates. The economic perspective has been particularly popular among policy makers, with a strong link between investment in learning and improved employment prospects and earnings. More sociological approaches highlight the ways in which the relative acquisition of cultural capital, largely in the form of educationally and culturally derived knowledge, produces an educational (in)advantage between

individuals. In Tomlinson´s study, capitals are defined as key resources that bring benefits and advantages to graduates. These resources cover a range of educational, social, cultural, and psychosocial dimensions that graduates achieve through formal and informal experiences. The capitals also contain several aspects that interact and help strengthen each other. The most important forms of capital in this approach are human capital, social capital, cultural capital, identity capital, and psychological capital. (Tomlinson 2017, 338).

Tomlinson´s model illustrates two important dimensions for each form of capital: the key resources associated with capital and how they are utilised when graduates enter the labour market (Figure 1). According to Tomlinson (2017, 340), it is important to manage and develop ways to improve these capitals. However, how capital helps graduates enter the labour market determines the actual effectiveness of capital in terms of graduates' progress. According to Tomlinson (2017, 349), one of the key features and strengths of the capital approach is that it highlights a number of employability-creating resources which come from different sources and do not only come from formal education provision. Capital formation is therefore also processual and relational in the sense that capital is acquired and used over time and its effects continue in a number of employment-related contexts. The key is that different forms of capital feed and enrich other forms. Thus, while identity and psychological capital are more personal forms, they can be generative and also influence and be influenced by the generation of other capital.

In the next sub-chapters, I will address the five capitals in more detail.

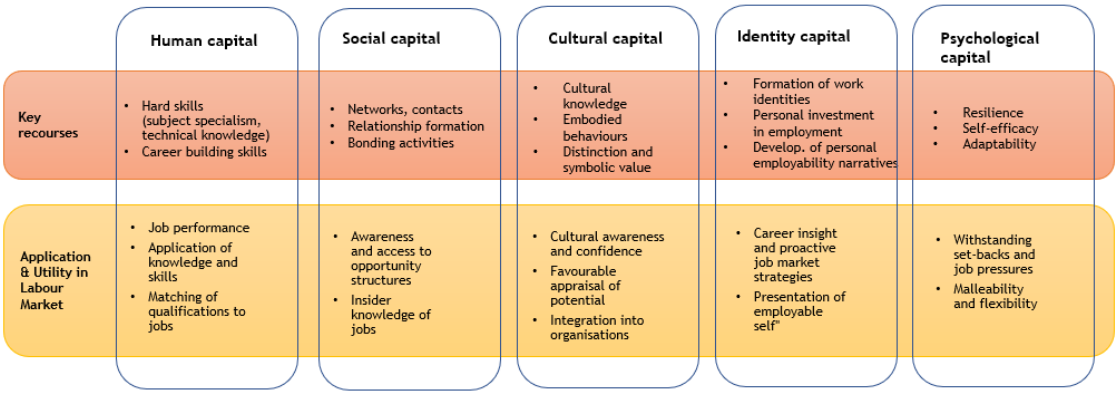

Figure 1: Graduate capital model by Michael Tomlinson (2017).

2.4.1 Human capital: knowledge, skills and future performance

In the graduate capital model, human capital refers to the acquired knowledge and skills that underpin the labour market outcomes. Human capital is most closely in line with the

employability perspective, which asks how and by what means graduates link their formal studies to future employment outcomes. (Tomlinson 2017, 341.)

Tomlinson cites economist Gary Becker's concept of human capital (Becker 1993, cited in Tomlinson 2017, 341). According to Becker, the human capital acquired through higher education embodies a broader body of knowledge, technical and embedded, that graduates use in high-quality professional work positions. The knowledge gained in training and courses empowers individuals in the labour market. According to such an approach, the knowledge acquired in education makes people more professional and thus more productive. Such levels of professional competence reflect specific knowledge and skills on which formal education is a key foundation. In other words, human capital means field-specific and technical "hard" skills, the management of which makes the graduate more skilled and thus more profitable. Such specialized knowledge is acquired specifically in the field of higher education.

Tomlinson (2017, 341) states that although the formation of professional human capital is still important for graduates in several professional, specialist and certain STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, mathematics), in many cases the relationship between graduates with a formal university degree and future employment is looser. Even if the graduate does not make direct use of their subject-specific skills, employers see academically educated people as having a broader skill set to utilize in working life. Human capital has a direct employment benefit in cases where employability is directly related to certain skills and their management, for example, for doctors. The role of universities is to help graduates harness their knowledge in a way that will bring financial benefits in the future. Finding out what skills are needed and how they are targeted to different sectors of work is important, as is demonstrating the productive value of generic knowledge. In other words, what is essential is the ability of the graduate to illustrate the link between technical knowledge and field-specificity and, on the other hand, the generic data acquired and to show how these are translated into future performance.

Human capital includes four components of career management skills presented by Bridgstock (2009, 35-37). Employability skills comprise of the "generic and discipline-specific skills required for performance in a work situation; and career management skills, divided into two categories of competence: self-management and career building". Discipline-specific skills are the skills that address specific occupational requirements and are traditionally included in university curricula. Discipline-specific skills originate in "specific domains, disciplines or subject matter areas". Generic skills are transferable skills and the most widely acknowledged as so-called employability skills in "university, policy and employer graduate attribute lists". "They include such skills as information literacy, working with technology, written and verbal communication, working in teams and numeracy". Career building skills are the "skills relating to finding and using information about careers, labour markets and the

world of work and then locating, securing and maintaining work, as well as exploiting career opportunities to gain advancement or other desired outcomes". (Bridgstock 2009, 37.)

Career building skills include the following aspects (Bridgstock 2009, 38):

- "Being familiar with one's industry – the opportunities and threats that exist and which factors are critical to success.
- Being able to effectively identify and choose the best opportunities for advancement in terms of geography, projects and role.
- Knowing how long to stay in a role, when to exploit a new employment or training opportunity and the ability to move quickly once an opportunity arises.
- Knowing how to effectively apply for and obtain work; representing one's skills and abilities in a way that is attractive to employers or clients."
- Creating social capital by creating strategic personal and professional relationships with those who might provide opportunities and important resources."

According to Bridgstock (2009, 38), a student who is aware that there is a high unemployment rate in a certain profession or geographical location can utilise their self-management and career development skills to build alternative career scenarios. These scenarios apply to different locations, educational options, career choices, or work modes.

2.4.2 Social capital: networks and human relationships

Social capital refers to those relationships and networks that help "mobilize" graduate human capital and bring them closer to the labour market and job opportunities. Social capital increases the graduate's knowledge of the labour market and its opportunities and thus promotes their exploitation. (Tomlinson 2017, 342.)

According to Tomlinson Putnam's (1999) analysis of ´bonding´ and ´bridging ties´ is central in understanding the concept of social capital. Putnam´s concept of bonding ties refers to the internal interactions between individuals that build and maintain cohesion and solidarity as members of a group. Bridging ties, on the other hand, refer to interactions external to the group. In relation to these ties, individuals or groups gain resources – social capital - through networks and their associated norms and trust. These networks and norms provide people with a potentially "better-informed insight and understanding of what opportunities exists, where they reside, who the main gatekeepers are and what they need to access employment". (Putnam 1999, cited in Tomlinson 2017, 342.)

The other important dimension is social capital is the concept of weak and strong ties by Granovetter (1985). Tomlinson refers to Granovetter´s study on the strength of relational bonds individuals tie at formal and informal levels. Central here is how these ties can

generate trust, level of information and insider knowledge these ties can bring. Although strong ties may increase the awareness of employment opportunities in a more immediate way, Granovetter's work emphasise the strength of weak ties in the form of a "relatively thin spread of social connections and contacts – for example, emerging employer contacts – to be influential". The more diverse and "knowledge-enriching" social connections individuals can establish, the more "knowledgeable and trusting" individuals may become towards areas that they are less familiar with. (Granovetter 1985, cited in Tomlinson 2017, 342.)

Paul Greenbank (2011) examines the role of networks in undergraduate´s career decision-making and how undergraduates responded to interventions aimed at influencing their attitude to different sources of advice. "In the case of career decision-making, formal networks can be conceptualised as 'official' university sources of advice from careers advisers, personal tutors and lecturers responsible for modules such as personal development planning (PDP) which often cover careers related issues. Informal networks would include family, friends and other 'unofficial' sources of advice". (Greenbank 2011, 32.) According to Greenbank, students tend to talk to those people in their network they are comfortable and familiar with. His study shows that the lack of proactivity and unwillingness to deal with the unfamiliar explains why undergraduates may fail in using high profile advice. (Greenbank 2011, 31.) According to Greenbank, "it could be argued that a student's personality and mode of reflexivity are more important influences on the role networks play in career decision-making than a student's social background. However, it has to be accepted that the findings of this study relate to a particular type of department and university. Therefore, the values and dispositions of the students may be different elsewhere. Indeed, high-achieving students attending elite universities may adopt very different approaches to career decision-making than the students participating in this research". (Greenbank 2011, 40.)

According to Tomlinson (2017, 343), it is increasingly important for graduates to be able to develop bridging experiences and extend weak ties beyond the formal boundaries of the university. One particularly prominent part of social capital formation concerns the commitment of employers (formally or otherwise) to meaningful and productive interaction with graduates. The bridging activity is not only about passing on valuable employer information to graduates, but also about making graduates visible to employers. Social capital can be harnessed, among other things, through direct contact with employers, so that it promotes the mutual exchange of information between graduates and employers. Employer participation in career fairs and building an online profile (e.g. on LinkedIn) are ways in which graduates can make themselves more visible to employers and enable early contact to employers. Another way of bridging employers and students is to increase graduates´work experience, through traineeships or other forms of employment. This can provide important bridges between formal education and future employment - especially if this provides a

wealth of information on employment opportunities. Such activities clearly benefit participants if they want to work in similar fields of work.

Denise Jackson and Nicholas Wilton underline the meaning of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in their study. “Also referred to as experiential learning, cooperative education and work-based learning, it exists in many forms, including practicums, fieldwork, placements, internships and client-based projects. Within HE, WIL provides students with an opportunity to integrate academic learning with ‘real-world’ experience and encourages both industry feedback on individual capability and self-reflection.” (Jackson & Wilton 2016, 267.) Also, Jackson (2016, 929-930) points out that “employers are a prominent community in higher education through their involvement in work-integrated learning (WIL), which includes work placements, client-based projects, internships, simulations and mentoring programmes.

In their study, Mason and al. (2009, 20, 23) “distinguish between three different mechanisms by which it is hoped to improve employability skills: the teaching and assessment of such skills by departments; employer involvement in course design and delivery; and student participation in work experience through sandwich courses and related programmes”. Mason and al. (2009, 1) argue that if structured work experience is included in a degree and the employer is involved in the design and delivery of the degree, it has a clear positive effect on graduates ’ability to secure employment in so-called graduate-level jobs. "However, a measure of departmental involvement in explicit teaching and assessment of employability skills is not significantly related to labor market performance.”

According to Tomlinson (2017, 349), multimodal forms of learning emerge, and personal development takes place and capital is nurtured through different communities. Advantageous professional networks are created, for example, through employer engagement or work-based learning. This is especially the case if these forms of cooperation offer greater “exposure” to the professional labor market and an increase in confidence in that market. According to Tomlinson (2017, 350), career counsellors have the potential to play an important role in facilitating students' ability to utilize their experiences and to encourage students to present them as a clear labor market value. From the social capital perspective, career services practitioners are a potential source of weak ties for graduates and students. Those working in career services can provide guidance on how to approach employers and better interact with them, especially those who are reluctant to approach employers. Also, Denise Jackson (2016) underlines the role of career services and also other prominent communities, including academic mentors and peer networks. In Greenbank´s study (2011), however, students were keener to receive career support from academic instructors than from career services practitioners they were afraid to have a contact. (Tomlinson 2017, 343.)

2.4.3 Cultural capital: employability and cultural synergy and alignment

Tomlinson (2017, 343) explains cultural capital as the acquisition of culturally valued knowledge, tendencies, and behaviours relative to the job the student / graduate is applying for. The concept of cultural capital was originally developed by Bourdieu (1984, 1986), who examined the transfer of such prestigious cultural knowledge between the socio-cultural environment of individuals and the educational context in which cultural knowledge was validated (Bourdieu 1984, 1986, cited in Tomlinson 2017, 343).

According to Tomlinson (2017, 344), there are several components to the cultural capital approach that remain relevant, which partly explains why some graduates are more successful in transitioning to working life. One relates to the notion of distinction developed by Bourdieu, referring to value-added knowledge, tastes and achievements acquired through a variety of cultural contexts and potentially enriching the social status of the individual. If a high level of education no longer means such a difference, graduates will have to do more to develop methods of distinction during and after their studies. Since higher level of education in itself no longer provides the kind of cultural capital it used to have, graduates need to raise this capital elsewhere. It is essential to understand how this is valued in the cultural domains of the desired employer organisation.

Another dimension of the concept of cultural capital applicable to the employability of graduates is the concept of embodied capital, which is an expression of the desired embodied behaviours and tendencies of individuals in a particular field. Also here, the desired features vary in different labour sectors. The ability to demonstrate the interpersonal and behavioural expectations expressed in a particular area of the organisation is important. Therefore, demonstrating appropriate forms of embodied capital through accent, body language, humour, and a general personality package is important. (Tomlinson 2017, 344). Underpinning traits and dispositions, presented in the career management skills model by Bridgstock (2009, 36-37), are the precursors that underpin the successful development and application of career management skills. There has been a debate whether these personal characters can be developed in the context of higher education. However, there is some evidence that links preferable underpinning traits and dispositions with “comparatively good graduate employment outcomes and higher levels of career success”.

Tomlinson (2017, 344) states that higher education institutions need to think of creative ways to strengthen students ’cultural capital. These include strengthening students' personal self-esteem and horizon scanning. The cultural exposure approach, based on building the self-confidence and value of potential students, has been a key factor in promoting cultural capital. This is based on the principle that if students are exposed to different cultures within a university - including its key actors, ie current students, researchers and managers - this

will challenge their limited perceptions while potentially broadening their horizons. One choice is also to increase cultural understanding and trust in targeted employers. According to Tomlinson (2017, 345), this is accomplished by creating stronger connections with employers through either informal networks and internships or work experience. While the formal technical knowledge of employers' organisations can be important in exploiting technical suitability, this often needs to be complemented by relevant cultural knowledge. The latter includes awareness of cultural practices and trends as well as values and behaviours.

According to Tomlinson (2017, 345), some graduates tend to downplay broader accomplishments acquired outside of formal higher education, especially those that show value-producing distinction. In these cased, industry contribution may help graduates becoming more aware of their wider life and work experiences and present these experiences in more effective ways. Formal recruitment training, especially interview coaching, can help in this regard, giving graduates the opportunity to harness embodied attitudes and behaviours that are better suited to employers 'recruitment practices.

2.4.4 Identity capital: self-concept and personal narratives

Tomlinson (2017, 345) defines identity capital as "the level of personal investment a graduate makes towards the development of their future career and employability". This refers to graduates´ ability to utilise their experience and articulate their personal narrative in a way that it is in line with the future career goals. According to Tomlinson, "graduate's capacity to develop emerging identities and then warrant and perform this in the early stages of the labour market" are important. Investing in identity capital is worthwhile if it actively encourages graduates towards the labour market. Graduates´ self-perception and self-concepts around future work may provide a framework through which they can channel their experiences and profiles.

According to Bridgstock (2009, 38), self-management skills relate to the "individual's perception and appraisal of themselves in terms of values, abilities, interests and goals. These competencies are closely related to the concept of career identity, which is the perceived congruence between aspects of the individual and their career roles". Holmes´(2013) identity model focus on emerging identities. According to Holmes, identity should be defined as a non-existent entity. Identity is socially constructed and negotiated, relative and fragile. The term 'emerging identity' can be used to distinguish concern from either the concepts of identity as a social ascription or of identity as self-concept. Emergent identity may thus be viewed as arising from or in the interaction between the individual and others. (Holmes 2013, 549.) According to Holmes, "graduate employability can be considered as the always temporary relationship that arises between an individual graduate and the field

of employment opportunities, as the graduate engages with those who are ‘gatekeepers’ to those opportunities, particularly those who make selection decisions. In presenting themself to a prospective employer, as a prospective employee, the individual is presenting their claim on being a graduate ‘worthy’ of such employment”. (Holmes 2013, 550.)

Jackson (2016, 925) redefines graduate employability by demonstrating a concept of pre-professional identity (PPI), which relates to “an understanding of and connection with the skills, qualities, conduct, culture and ideology of a student’s intended profession”. According to Jackson, pre-professional identities are developed in ´communities of practice’ during the students´ university years. According to Jackson, a student “makes sense of his/her intended profession through multiple memberships and differing levels of engagement with various communities within higher education’s ‘landscape of practice’”. These communities include student societies, professional associations, careers services and employers. During this process of PPI adoption, students “acquire disciplinary knowledge, develop non-technical skills, practise applying their learning across different settings, and reflect, visualise and imagine themselves as a graduate and novice professional to develop their understanding of self”. This process assists students in “developing a clear understanding of professional standards, values, culture and ethical conduct, how to manage their career and give them a sense of purpose and meaning in relation to their current position and intended professional stance”. The process of identity formation is ongoing and, with adequate exposure and guidance, makes students employable graduates who are ready to transition into an entry-level professional role. (Jackson 2016, 926.)

According to Tomlinson (2017, 346), when higher education is seen as a “landscape of practice”, student development is not limited to specific disciplinary communities, but may also include interaction with employers, career services, teaching, and other forms of experiential learning. The closer such experiences actually relate to future life, the more empowering and self-shaping they become and allow the student to project their self-image into areas of working life. Students who invest more in their careers tend to have a higher level of identity capital because future careers are a strong part of their current and projected future “life project”. Supporting students 'self-image and emerging identities (ie supporting the emergence of identity capital) can be important in managing students' early careers / employability.

Tomlinson (2017, 348) states that there are two key practical concerns related to career adaptability: The first to meet the growing need for contingency planning for early career management and guidance, and another for managing expectations and coping mechanisms for unavoidable stress and setbacks. Higher education practitioners need to raise students ’awareness of the above and steer students’ career goals less around individual jobs and labour markets and more into different career paths, some of which may not be linear and

clearly defined. If students´ emerging identities can be “ruined” early on, then they need to be able to reformulate and re-evaluate their goals and think proactively about ways to re-adapt to new areas of working life.

Koen and al. (2012, 404) have developed a training to provide university graduates with better career adaptability resources to tackle the challenges graduates face in transition from school to working life. According to Koen and al., the training “provided training participants with career adaptability resources and helped to buffer against a decrease of career adaptability. Lastly, employed participants who had taken part in the training reported higher employment quality than those who had not taken part in the training”.

According to Tomlinson (2017, 350), internships and other forms of paid work can be important links between studies and the labour market and are often valued by students. Gaining experience and utilising and presenting it is important and awareness of how these experiences can be utilised. Such experiences, as well as those gained by students in and around formal university education, are important in capital development. Extra-curricular activities are perceived to strengthen students' identity capital, not so much as transferable skills. The key is to package and present these skills to employers in a way that highlights their special personal value. In a competitive and congested market, this has become increasingly important. Experiences that may be useful in graduates ’ability to articulate personal narratives are worth gaining and presenting. At the target workplace, graduates should embrace this and convey it in a way that convinces the employer and shows that the report is directed at the employer's policies.

2.4.5 Psychological capital: resilience and career adaptability

According to Tomlinson (2017, 347), psychological capital is a significant form of capital because it is based on psychosocial resources that enable graduates to adapt to and respond proactively to unavoidable career challenges. The challenges and adversities of employment have increased as the access to employment of an ever-smaller number of university graduates is straight forward. The level of adaptability of graduates is also important, not only in navigating in precarious terrain, but also in coping with challenges and setbacks, such as potentially continuous periods of under-employment and unemployment, as stated by Mel Fugate, Angelo Kinicki, and Blake Ashforth (2004). According to Fugate al. (2004, 21-23), optimism in the work domain, propensity to learn, openness, an internal locus of control, are central to personal adaptability and are all supported by self-efficacy (Fugate & al. 2004, 21-23)

In his study on career construction theory and practice, Mark Savickas (2005) presents a concept of career adaptability, which comprises four global dimensions: career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence. These dimensions represent response

readiness and coping resources individuals need to manage critical tasks, transitions, and traumas as they construct their careers. (Savickas 2005, 51.) According to Savickas, being concerned about one´s "own vocational future is the first and most important dimension of career adaptability". Career concern means future orientation and willingness to put effort and prepare on future´s actions. (Savickas 2005, 52). Career control refers to individual´s capability to individually decide on their career. Here, self-control has an important role. Third dimension, career curiosity, emerges from sense of self-control and leads to self-awareness of one´s preferrable occupations and work opportunities. (Savickas 2005, 55.) The fourth dimension, career confidence indicates "feelings of self-efficacy" concerning the individual´s ability to successfully execute a course of action needed to make and implement suitable educational and vocational choices". Since career choices require lots of resources from an individual, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and encouragement play an important role here. (Savickas 2005, 56.)

The concept of career adaptability has been later addressed also in Mark Savickas´ and Erik Porfeli´s (2012) study where they created a measurement of Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) together with collaborators in 13 countries. According to Savickas and Porfeli (2012, 663), "increasing a graduates´career adaptability resources or career adapt-abilities is the main goal of career education and counselling. Addressing four dimension of career adaptability resources, "concern about the future helps individuals look ahead and prepare for what might come next. Control enables individuals to become responsible for shaping themselves and their environments to meet what comes next by using self-discipline, effort, and persistence. Possible selves and alternative scenarios that they might shape are explored when curiosity prompts a person to think about self in various situations and roles. These exploration experiences and information-seeking activities produce aspirations and build confidence that the person can actualize choices to implement their life design."

According to Tomlinson (2017, 347), self-efficacy is important, not only in terms of graduates 'self-achieved ability to achieve career goals, but also their ability to withstand adverse conditions. Another key factor is resilience, i.e. the ability to withstand pressure and disruption early in a career in a potentially uncertain and unstable atmosphere. The higher the level of psychological capital graduates have, the more proactive and adaptable they are in such circumstances. Some tendencies related to psychological capital are more common in some graduates than others. Other elements related to psychological capital, including enabling mindsets, openness to experience, and risk tolerance, may also continue to convey how potential adverse effects in the labour market situation are addressed. (Tomlinson 2017, 348.)

2.5 Summary of discussion

In the past decades, student or graduate employability has been seen as a list of skills and attributes. The focus on employability building has been on how higher education can support the development of skills and attitudes for companies' needs and ensure readiness for work. This approach has recently been replaced by an understanding that employability is a more complex and multi-dimensional concept. In an ever-changing and increasingly precarious working life, effectiveness of formal working life skills is limited to the future employment. The role of meta-skills, capitals, and career management abilities – acquired within an outside of higher education, have become vital for graduate employability. Tomlinson´s graduate capital model compiles the employability theories and presents employability building through five capitals (Figure 2).

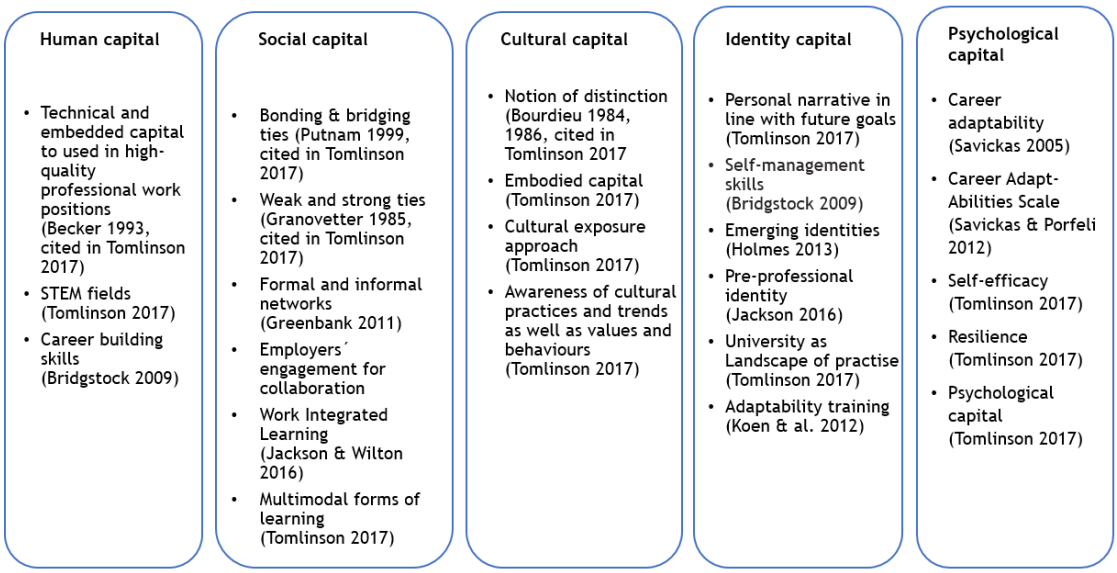

Figure 2: Tomlinson´s graduate capital model and relevant literature.

3 Mentoring as a frame for employability-building

Mentoring forms one part of the knowledge base in this study as it serves as a frame and a locus to support student employability. Given that the aim is to show which parts of employability can be promoted within mentoring and mentoring programme and how, the theoretical emphasis is on employability. Therefore, I do not elaborate the interactive role of mentoring here in detail. Mentoring and mentoring programme can be thought of as a time frame during which the student develops his or her own employability through a conversational relationship. The value, benefits, and employability-building outcome of mentoring depend on the quality and content of the mentoring relationship. Determinants include the student's goals and aspirations for mentoring, commitment and activity, the

content of the mentoring meetings, and the role and opportunity of the mentor to support the student.

3.1 What is mentoring?

According to Päivi Kupias and Matti Salo (2014, 11) mentoring is most often defined as an approach in which a more experienced mentor guides a younger and more inexperienced mentee. Mentoring is based on confidential interaction between the mentor and mentee, and it is based on mentee´s need and objectives for mentoring. Despite the simple starting point for mentoring, the content and definition of mentoring is heavily context dependent. According to Peter De Cuyper, Hanne Vandermeerschen, and Damini Purkayastha (2019, 112), the definition of mentoring varies according to the mentoring context, the extent of standardization, and the purpose of mentoring. Julie Haddock-Millar (2017) notes that many studies do not provide a precise definition of mentoring. As a result, mentoring research quotes the so-called neighborhood theories: coaching, coaching, and socialization. Haddock-Millar states that the definition of mentoring has expanded considerably from the traditional United States-based Protégé mentor dyad. Beronda Montgomery, Jualynne Dodson, and Sonya Johnson (2017) also refer to this outdated definition of mentoring, in which a senior or more experienced person provides one-way advice and guidance to a beginner or a person with limited experience in a particular field. They position mentoring as a clear and deep commitment based on a thorough understanding of the mentee and his or her personal career aspirations. Mentoring very often includes counseling but goes beyond counseling in terms of individual knowledge and bilateral commitments and interactions, which include providing counseling based on a deep personal understanding of the mentee's past experiences, strengths and weaknesses, personal aspirations, values, and professional goals (Montgomery & al 2017, 2.) Kupias and Salo describe the development of the focus of mentoring through four generational models, from the traditional setting, where a mentor transfers information to the mentee, to current peer setting, where mentor´s and mentees´ role is based on more equal dialog.

Theresa Smith-Ruig (2014) refers to Kram´s (1985) division of two types of mentor functions. First is career-related support aimed at mentee´s progress in the organisation, through, for example, the following functions: "sponsorship, visibility and visibility, coaching, advocacy, and challenging assignments". The second mentoring function is psycho-social support referring to the inter-personal aspects of the mentoring relationship and the ability to influence the mentee's identity, competence, and effectiveness. In psycho-social mentorship, mentor´s role may include "role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling and friendship". (Kram 1985 cited in Smith-Ruig 2014, 771)

De Cuyper and al. (2019, 112) suggest that mentoring is often divided or standardised into formal and informal mentoring. Formal mentoring refers to teaching and guiding in a higher education institution. According to Montgomery and al. (2017, 6), in formal mentoring, mentors are also often assigned to students. Informal mentoring, in turn, refers to more free mentoring, where the mentoring relationship is based on spontaneously offering or seeking help (Montgomery & al. 2017, De Cuyper & al. 2019). De Cuyper and al. refer to a conference presentation by Rhodes and Boyden in 2016, who also disclose a third form of standardisation of mentoring: non-formal mentoring, in which the key is that it includes a third party that connects the mentor to the mentee. Unlike informal mentoring, non-formal mentoring takes place within a (mentoring) programme (Rhodes & Boyden 2016, cited in De Cuyper & al. 2019, 112). De Cuyper and al. (2019) have developed a concept of mentoring to work for migrants. The concept definition is also well suited as a definition of a case organisation mentoring programme for international students:

> "A person with more local experience (mentor) guides a person with less experience (mentee) to support the mentee in making a sustainable transition to the labour market. Both mentor and the mentee voluntarily commit to mentoring and establish mutual contact through regular meetings. The mentoring relationship is initiated, facilitated and supported by a third party, an organisation. Although the mentoring relationship is asymmetrical, it is reciprocal in nature. Thus, a mentoring programme established by the organisation brings a mentor and mentee together, and monitors and supports their relationship." (De Cuyper & al. 2019, 117.)

3.2 The benefits of mentoring for the mentee

According to Montgomery (2017), "sponsorship mentoring" in North America focuses on the career success of the protege, while "development mentoring" in Europe focuses on the personal development of mentees. The Tomlinson Graduate capital model presented above also relies more firmly on the European perspective on development mentoring. According to De Cuyper and al. (2019, 110), mentoring develops so-called bridging capital, which encompasses externally-oriented contacts or networks and brings together people from different social groups and classes. Roxanne Reeves (2017, 187) states that mentoring facilitates access to a valuable, often difficult-to-understand and inaccessible tacit knowledge, which is hard to reach through formal channels such as courses and training.

Mentoring encompasses many forms of employability enhancement, as shown in Theresa Smith-Ruig´s (2014) study on the effectiveness of Lucy Mentoring Programme in Australia. The study presents various career-related and psycho-social benefits for students, including increased confidence, knowledge about students´ chosen profession, stronger career focus and career understanding, and post-study employment for some. Students also recognized the importance of networking and making professional contacts in interaction with mentors. Mentors provided students with help in contacting potential employers and often acted as

referees for them. (Smith-Ruig 2014, 776.) In Smith-Ruig´s study one third of the students were employed through mentoring. Also, in the study of Shelley Kinash, Linda Crane, Madelaine-Marie Judd and Cecily Knight (2016) on stakeholders´ perspectives on graduate employability strategies, mentoring is associated with stronger employability outcomes for students and graduates together with extra-curricular activities and membership in professional associations. In contrast, Jackson´s and Bridgstock´s (2020) study shows that mentoring — especially as an extra-curricular arrangement — brings value in broadening networks but to a lesser degree creates employment opportunities.

In mentoring, the time dimension is also essential. Because mentoring is about cumulating capital, only some benefits become immediately visible or available for a student. Connie Wanberg, Elizabeth Welsh and Sarah Hezlett (2003) divide benefits into proximal outcomes, that is direct benefits, and distal outcomes. When looking at the proximal benefits for the mentee, an outcome of a positive mentoring experience is cognitive and affective learning and social networks that make the mentee satisfied with the mentor and mentoring programme. The distal outcome for mentees can include career development and progression, enhanced performance, and better work and life satisfaction. Haddock-Millar (2017) also highlights the temporal dimension of mentoring. When mentoring is considered a development project where " mentee experiences significant change and gain greater insight through enhancing the quality of their thinking". In this case, it is vital to assess longitudinal development by looking at the change in the longer term.

4 Is value exchanged, co-created or embedded?

The value formation is the third part of my research knowledge base. Starting from the 1990s continuing to the 2000s, discussion of value formation in marketing and business literature has strongly shifted from traditional goods-dominant logic to more customer-centric service-dominant logic and further to customer-dominant logic. In this chapter, I shortly describe the change of paradigm focusing on customer-dominant-logic in which the focus is on value emergence in the customer´s world.

4.1 From goods-dominant logic to customer-dominant-logic

Christian Grönroos (2008) argues that in the traditional provider-dominant logic, value is embedded in companies´ products that were outputs of manufacturing processes. According to Robert Lusch and Stephen Vargo (2014, 5-8), an outdated goods-dominant logic has many problems. The most prominent one is its centricities on goods rather than solutions and experiences; the firm rather than human actors; and exchange-value rather than use-value. Jukka Ojasalo and Katri Ojasalo note that many businesses still operate according to goods-

dominant principles due to a "lack of managerial approaches and tools" (Ojasalo & Ojasalo 2018, 71). According to Kristiina Heinonen, Tore Strandvik and Karl-Jacob Mickelsson (2010, 536), one of the key challenges in service management has traditionally been the perception that customers are the “ultimate judges” of a service company’s performance. The services are seen as designed by the company and delivered to the customer.

In 2004, Vargo and Lusch suggested a new business logic, service-centered dominant logic, a paradigm that replaced in many places the academic debate on the relationship between the customer and the producer, the nature of the "product" to be exchanged, and the creation of value. The logic brought new focus of unit of exchange, goods, customer´s role, determination of value, company-customer interaction, and source of economic growth. Vargo and Lusch summarised the service-centered dominant logic (later service-dominant logic) into the following principles:

- **Primary unit of exchance:** People exchange to acquire benefits of specialised competences (knowledge and skills) and services – rather than exchanging for goods.
- **Role of goods**: Goods are embedded knowledge, intermediate products – not end products.
- **Role of customer:** The customer is a coproducer of service, not a recipient of goods.
- **Determination and meaning of value:** Value is not determined by the company, but a customer perceives and determines the value. Companies can only make value propositions. Value is determined in use of a customer (value-in-use), not in terms of exchange (value-in-exchange).
- **Company-customer interaction:** The customer is an active participant in the coproduction of service, not only acting to create a transaction with resources.
- **Source of economic growth:** Wealth is obtained through the "application and exchange of specialized knowledge and skills", whereas wealth is "obtained from surplus of tangible resources and goods" in goods-dominant logic. (Vargo & Lusch 2004, 7.)

Later, service-dominant logic has gained a foothold in the marketing literature, and value creation has “become a central issue in discussing whether service as a perspective or logic can offer marketing something new” (Grönroos 2008, 299). Although the perspective has shifted from companies to service and customer´s value creation in the service, Heinonen and al. (2013), argue that service-dominant logic is still very service provider-dominant, not customer-dominant. The debate and presented ideas in service-dominant logic position the consumer or customer as a partner in co-creation employed by the company. (Heinonen & al. 2010, 532.) Also, Kristiina Heinonen, Tore Strandvik and Päivi Voima (2013, 109) argue that service-dominant logic (SDL) presents value as value-in-use, where value is considered to be generated in a dyadic co-creation process. Based on work theory, the client activates or

integrates resources to create value, ontologically demonstrating that value is something that an actor can always consciously create (Heinonen & al. 2013, 109).

4.2 Customer-dominant logic

In 2010, Kristiina Heinonen, Tore Strandvik and Karl-Jacob Mickelsson from the Nordic School presented a new value logic substitute to service-dominant logic, customer-dominant logic. The new customer-dominant logic aims to have a more comprehensive understanding of how value emerges in customers' lives, practices, and experiences. According to Heinonen and al. (2010, 533), “what needs to be addressed is how value emerges for customers and how customers construct their experience of value of a service provider's participation in their activities through a sense-making process tasks". In customer-dominant logic, a customer is in the center, not the service, the service provider, nor the interaction of the customer and the provider. The focus, however, is on what a customer is doing with services to achieve their own goals.

4.2.1 Why customer-dominant logic?

In the later customer-dominant logic article from 2013, Heinonen, Strandvik and Voima argue that many studies emphasize service elements, and existing studies do not sufficiently conceptualize how value is created in the multicultural reality of customers and the ecosystem (Heinonen & al. 2013, 108). An example of this, Heinonen and al. (2013) mention the fact that service research has focused on examining a particular service system from a service provider’s perspective, for example, service blueprinting, or the interaction between a customer and a service provider over a period of time (Payne & al. 2009, cited in Heinonen & al. 2013). According to both examples, the service is considered co-creation from the service provider's perspective. Because the primary goal of a service is to facilitate value for the customer, service-dominant logic does not provide a complete understanding of what the customer is doing with the service.

The difference between customer-dominant logic and traditional service-dominant logic and service management (goods-dominant-logic), for example, goods-dominant logic, is well presented in the visual model of Heinonen and al. (2010) A T-shaped model, presented in Figure 3, illustrates how in customer-dominant logic, the customer's perspective encompasses not only the service but also the customer's other activities and life. The model clearly distinguishes between the worlds of the customer and the service provider and the time frames of the services. At the top of the model is a timeline with history, pre-service X, service X, post-service X, and future. The timeline describes how in customer-dominant logic, the customer not only uses the service in the service time frame, but the service potentially integrates into the customer's experiences and activities outside the service event.

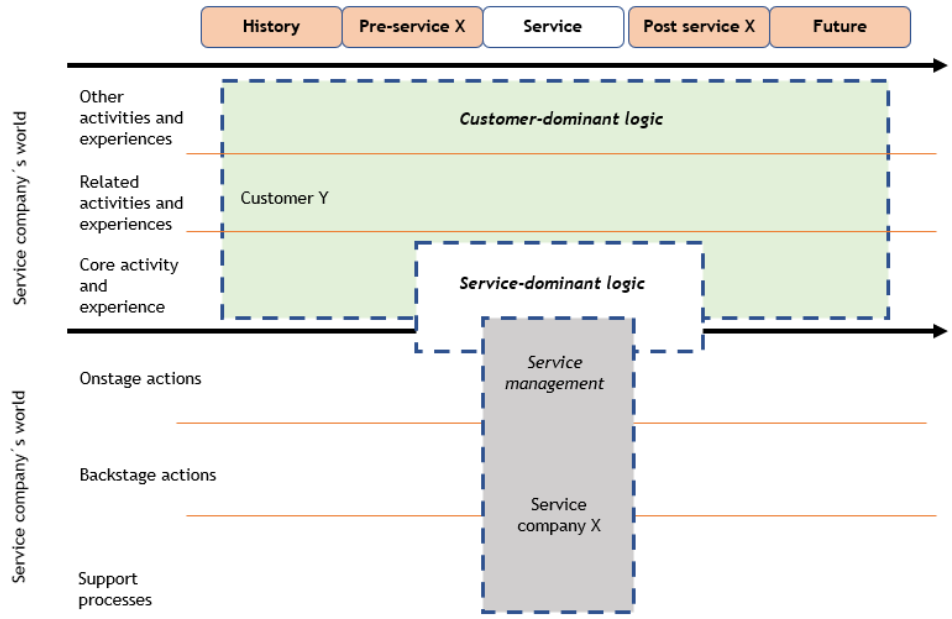

Figure 3: Customer-dominant logic compared with the service-dominant-logic and service management (Heinonen & al. 2010).

Heinonen and al. stress that SD logic and service management focus only on those activities and experiences that are directly linked to the service. However, “the customer never uses a service in a vacuum", and the customer´s understanding of service differs from the service provider's perspective. (Heinonen & al. 2010, 534-535.)

4.2.2 Value formation in CD logic

According to Heinonen and al. (2010, 536), it has been argued that, unlike traditional goods-dominant logic, SD logic focuses on value co-creation in a process where the customer realises value while using the resources of the service company. From service-dominant logic´s perspective, value-in-use and value-in-context are totally different views than traditional exchange value thinking of goods-dominant logic. Heinonen and al. (2010, 537) argue that “the service provided by service company X and used by the customer becomes embedded in the customer’s context, activities, practices and experiences together with the service company’s activities”. Besides service x, the value may include different kinds of facilitating and support services before and after and loosely related services. Together, these factors illustrate what co-creation can mean, how the service experience should be defined, and “how value emerges and is realised for the customer”.

Heinonen, Strandvik and Voima (2013) present five different dimensions for value formation that answer how, where, and when value is created, on which value formation is based, and who determines value. The five dimensions are compiled in Table 1, also presenting the

different approaches between provider-dominant logic and customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2013, 111).

How Value cannot always be considered to be consciously and reciprocally created by the company or in the co-creation process; instead, the value is seen to be formed in the emerging process. Value is created through customers' behavioral and mental processes, when customers interpret their experiences and reconstruct the accumulated customer reality into which value is embedded (Heinonen & al. 2013, 109.)

Where Value is created not only in the interaction and management zone of the company, but in the accumulated reality and ecosystem of the customer. Heinonen and al. expand the dimension of value and shift the core and dimension of the customer experience through passing through service to living in the customer's cumulative reality and ecosystem. Value creation is not seen to take place only in the isolated sphere of a service or relationship, but value is generated in the experiential context of living, often outside the control area of direct interaction or service provider. (Heinonen & al. 2013, 110.) According to CD logic, the scope is not limited to the service resource framework managed by the company. Instead, value is made up of several visible and invisible experiential spaces – for example, biological, physical, mental, social, geographical, and virtual - that reflect the customer's often uncontrolled ecosystem and life sphere. (Heinonen & al. 2013, 110.)

When Value must be seen from a longitudinal and multi-contextual perspective, encompassing several different personal and service-related value frameworks. Suppose value-in-use is no longer seen as a mere behavioral activity but also as a mental activity. In that case, the time frame is not only related to the service process but can be extended beyond the interactive process (Heinonen & al. 2010, 539). The time frame and usage of value are thus determined according to the dynamic context in which the value formation process occurs. The service experience and the value recognition in the process are thus dependent on the customer's past, present, and future. Customers can be seen as part of their own evolving reality which has a history, a present time and a future. The whole experience and its potential value appear in a personal context with multiple internal and external layers and time frames. (Heinonen & al. 2013, 110.)

What Value is not limited to the cognitive or even resource perspective, but value is also interpreted and experienced socially in an experiential-phenomenological manner. Instead of seeing value based on the service provider's resources, value can be seen as embedded in the customer's subjective life and reality. Because value is always personal and relative, it is considered to be related to the service and the customer's multi-contextual and dynamic activities. For example, if a customer eats alone, has the flu, and has not eaten for several hours, the value potential is different than in situations where eating is part of a social

experience with old friends, and the client is physically healthy. The value is relative on several levels. Value is cumulated and formed in a process involving multiple personal and service-related value frameworks. The customer connects the experience with his or her accumulated reality and ecosystem. This connection happens consciously or unconsciously at a given moment and in a given situation. (Heinonen & al. 2013, 111-112.) If the customer lives a hectic and stressful life, the service process requirements are different from those for another customer who has too much time (Heinonen & al. 2013, 116).

	Provider-dominant logic *Value creation is orchestrated by the service provider*	**Customer-dominant logic** *The customer orchestrates and dominates value formation*
HOW	Value is created Value creation is based on a structured evaluation	Value is formed Value formation is based on an emerging process
WHERE	Value is created in the interaction Value creation takes place in the control zone of the company	Value is formed in the life and ecosystem of the customer Value formation takes place in the control zone of the customer
WHEN	Value is created when the company is active Value-in-exchange/value-in-use	Value formation is temporal and not necessarily and directly related to company activities Value-in-use/value-in-experience
WHAT	Value creation is defined by the service provider Value is based on customer perceptions of company-created value propositions	Value formation is determined by the customer relative to alternatives on multiple levels Value is based on experiences of customer fulfilment
WHO	Value creation is idiosyncratic The value unit is an individual and can be grouped into segments	Value formation is also collective and may be shared The value unit consists of different configurations of actors

Table 1: From a provider-dominant logic to a customer-dominant logic (Heinonen & al. 2013).

Who Value is not isolated because the reality of the customer is related to the reality of others. Therefore, value is always collective and shared, as it is multi-personal in nature. Although the customer would physically be alone in the customer experience, the experience is always influenced by the customer's internal and external context. Heinonen and al. (2013, 112) suggest that the customer experience and the interpretations made before, during, and after it are affected by the "affective, social, economic, cognitive, physical, psychological, and biological" dimensions that form the "potential value landscape". For example, a

customer's experience of a family vacation is also affected by his or her family members´ experiences of value creation. Only the individual is not in focus, but the whole customer ecosystem is relevant, referring to a network of actors, activities, and practices that shape and are shaped by experiences. Customer-dominant logic emphasizes the customer's personal, multi-contextual reality rather than the service or customer relationship (Heinonen & al. 2013, 112). According to Heinonen and al. (2010, 539), "the customer and most of the value-in-use emergence might be invisible to the company, beyond the company's visibility line". This is in contrast to the traditional line in the visible service and its interface for customers described in service blueprinting.

5 Summing up: Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of my study is the relationship between mentoring, employability and value formation. At the center is the customer, in this context a student (Figure 4). From the extensive literature on employability, I have chosen Michael Tomlinson's graduate capital model (2017) as the starting point for my work, in which employability is described in terms of capital accumulated through experience. The employability model describes well the broad temporal and contextual dimension of employability, in which the graduate accumulates employability capital over a long term and in many different settings.

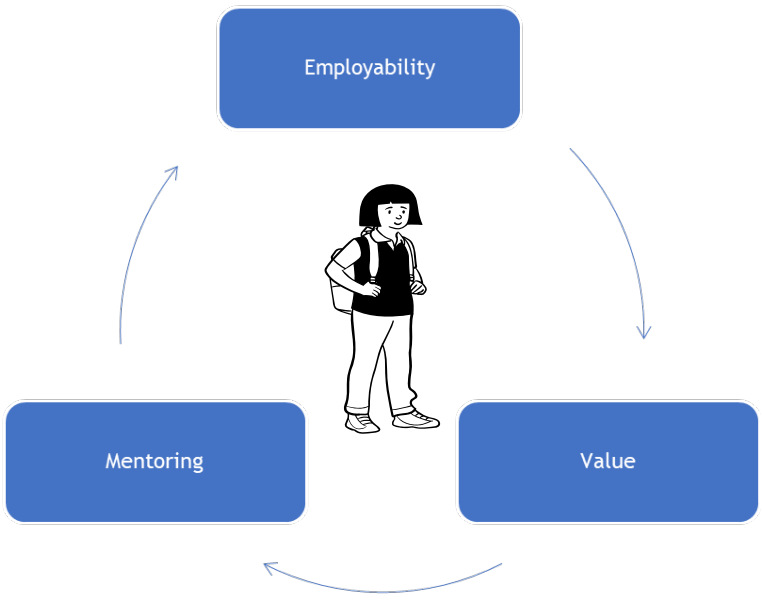

Figure 4: Theoretical framework of my study describes the relation between mentoring, employability, and value formation.

Mentoring provides a framework for employability. Mentoring (programme) is a service that promotes student's employability and is specifically designed to enhance the employability of the student being mentored.

In mentoring, a student (mentee) builds his or her employability in a series of interactive meetings with a mentor. Because it is a developmental process, the time horizon of the benefits of mentoring is also long. The provider of the mentoring programme views the service from the perspective of the duration of the programme. For a customer, however, the service timeline is much longer. For example, in mentoring, the cumulation of employability begins before the student starts higher education studies and continues well after the programme and graduation, throughout working life. In terms of developing their own employability. In other words, a student participating in mentoring wants to develop their employability.

The value in this study is employability, more specifically, graduate capital. The customer is a student, mentee. The aim is to understand how mentoring supports and promotes the five capitals presented in the capital mode, in other words, enhance employability. What makes mentoring interesting is who is the service provider. Is it the case organisation that provides the framework for mentoring and facilitates the mentoring relationship, or is the mentor providing support - mentoring service - to the student? This aspect is particularly relevant to the mentor-protegé setting, where mentoring is one-dimensional. On the other hand, it is conceivable that a student is also a service provider here if mentoring is viewed from the perspective of a development process in which the mentee generates value for him- or herself by participating in mentoring and developing him- or herself.

From the value creation logics, I have chosen the customer-dominant logic, which is suitable, especially when looking at mentoring and employability capital. According to the logic, value emerges in the customer's life, activities and experiences. Value formation takes place in the student's world, which includes, e.g., studying, work, and the outside world. In addition to this contextual context, CD logic is applicable due to its time dimension, where value generation is associated with the time before and after the service. Neither the benefits of mentoring nor employability are limited to the service event, but their time span is very long.

Value in co-creation, presented in the service-dominant logic, partly describes value creation in the interaction between a mentor and a mentee. However, because the focus of the work is on the accumulation of student employability capital, the model created by customer-dominant logic is better suited to my study. Also, the value-in-use mindset is often not suitable for mentoring with an abstract takeaway. As noted above (Wanberg & al. 2003), the benefits of mentoring are partly direct and partly indirect. In mentoring, the time span plays a central role in value formation. In mentoring, value emerges during mentoring and long

after the meetings. Value can arise long after the mentoring process, why it is hard to evaluate the proximal outcome of the process. Haddock-Millar (2017, 17) states that

> --an expectation might be that the mentee experiences significant change and gain greater insight through enhancing the quality of their thinking. If this is the case, then the examination of change over time is important in order to determine longer-term development. A single data collection point is a deeply inadequate method to approach the evaluation of mentoring relationships, where a longitudinal method facilities analysis over time.

The time span for value creation is therefore long. The time span and the mentee´s current, past, and future life are strongly linked to mentoring (cf. Heinonen & al. 2013). It is conceivable that in American-style mentoring, where the goal is even direct employment through a mentor, value is immediately generated during the service. However, if the focus is on the European trend of mentoring, where the purpose of mentoring is self-development, value formation extends over a longer period of time. This is because any new learning gained during mentoring will accumulate capital and can be realised years after the actual service.

6 Development process and methods

In this chapter, I describe the development process of my study. The design frame of my study is a case study with some features from constructive research. The study is conducted by using a service design process and methodology. The qualitative approach and abductive reasoning are central to my study. First, I will highlight some key characters or research-making. Then, I will explain the concept and key characteristics of service design and present a double diamond model that describes the service design process of my study. Lastly, I explain the development process in detail, including the processes and the methods I have used. Also, relevant methodology literature is described in the chapter.

6.1 Research approach, design frame, and reasoning

The research frame of the work is a case study, which also has features of constructive research. Although the aim is to gain an in-depth understanding of the topic and conduct a service design study in a case organisation, the results could be applicable in other contexts, especially in other HE institutions. Gary Thomas (2011) states that this generalisation is not characteristic of case studies. Thus, the line between case study and constructive study is unclear in this context. According to Thomas (2011, 21), a case study is a frame that offers a boundary to the research. The aim is to have a rich picture and analytical insights by looking at the research subject from different angles and using different methods. Thomas (2011, 35-36) addresses that research questions often guide the approach and design of research. However, what is noteworthy about the case study is that it encompasses different kinds of approaches and ways to do the research, thus being like an umbrella. Thomas stresses that

the case study “is about focus rather than approach”. Ojasalo and al. (2009, 52-53) suggest that case study is well suited as a starting point for development work when the purpose is to obtain in-depth and case-specific information about the issue under study and to produce development suggestions and ideas. A case study provides information about a phenomenon in its real environment. The case study aims to understand much of a small study population than a little of a large group. Typical research questions are how and why.

On the other hand, constructive research aims to solve a practical problem by creating new construction, i.e., a concrete output (Ojasalo & al. 2009, 38). The change is tied with earlier theory. A close dialogue between theory and practice is central and the implementation and evaluation of developed solution and its feasibility. The constructive approach is close to innovation production; however, not all outputs of the development processes are new innovations. The objective of the constructive research is to find a new, theoretically justified solution that brings new information and is functional, making this approach a bit challenging. According to Ojasalo and al. (2009, 63), proving the functionality of the thesis work often requires extra work and is hard to prove.

Another aspect of research approach is theoretical reasoning. According to Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill (2016), there are three main approaches for theory development: deduction, induction, and abduction. The chosen reasoning or reasonings depend on the research emphasis and the nature of the research topic. Deductive reasoning starts with a hypothesis that is tested in a study and a theory or hypothesis is formed based on the testing. In inductive reasoning, the theory is derived from the data. Abductive reasoning is suitable for research that has much information in some context but not in the research context. With abduction, data is collected to explore a phenomenon and identified as themes and patterns. The aim is to generate a new or modified theory, which is then tested many times through additional data gathering. Abductive reasoning combines deduction and induction. The process is not linear in abductive reasoning but goes back and forth. (Saunders & al. 2016, 144-150.)

The research approach of my study is qualitative. According to Saunders and al. (2016, 168), qualitative research examines participants´ meanings and relations between them by using different data collection and analysis techniques. Qualitative research is interpretative because a researcher wants to discover “subjective and socially constructed meanings” about a phenomenon under study. It can also be seen as naturalistic, as research is often in a natural setting, where confidence is sought to be developed through participation and in-depth understanding. These definitions apply well in my study as the objective is to understand students´ employability-building processes and interpret their relations and meanings.

6.2 Research triangulation, validity and reliability

According to Thomas (2011, 68), triangulation – looking the research subject from different angels and vantage points - is essential prerequisite in case study approach. Marc Stickdorn, Markus Edgar Hormess, Adam Lawrence, and Jakob Schneider (2018) state that method triangulation is important in research as it improves the accuracy and richness with the use of different methods in data collection over the same phenomenon. Same findings with different methods usually validate and verify the results. In design research, however, method triangulation ensures that insights are based on data, which is robust enough for design decisions done based on it. Especially in exploration, collecting rich data and perspectives is key. Another triangulation need applies to data, which can be triangulated through different types of data outputs.

Thomas (2011, 62-63) argues that in the case study, reliability and validity are not the primary concern. Thomas explains this by saying that a case study is an inquiry about one case, and it cannot be assumed that if the study were repeated at different times with other people, the results would be the same. According to Thomas, the same principle applies to both reliability and validity when it comes to making judgements about its value in case study research. It is not possible to know in the case study what is coming, which makes the validity less relevant. According to Saunders and al. (2016) the challenge in reliability occurs when using in-depth and semi-structured interviews in data collection. The interviews are not easily repeatable as they present the reality of the in a given time in a situation which might change soon. The circumstances where interviews are conducted are dynamic and complex. Thus, researcher should explain in detail the design process and justify the choices to ensure reliability. (Saunders & al. 2016, 398-399.)

6.3 Research ethics

According to Katri Ojasalo and al. (2009, 48-49), the norms of scientific research apply to industry-based research, and all development processed should aim for societal impact. In the ethical recommendations for thesis writing at universities of applied sciences (Arene 2020, 17), the need to acquire enough information on the topic subject to research is also highlighted, as well as the independence of the thesis writer and the work- and practice-based nature of the study.

The ethical recommendations for thesis writing at universities of applied sciences highlight the key research ethics principles. Based on the guidelines, the storage and usage rights of the research materials need to be agreed and accepted by all parties. The voluntary of participants is a core requirement for research. Also, Thomas (2011, 69-70) addresses the importance of consent. Participants should be informed about the purpose and nature of the study, including methods; expected benefits of the study; and “possible harm that may come

from the study"; confidentiality, anonymity and data storage; "ethic procedures to be followed and appeals"; and the contact information of the researcher. In my study, I sent participants research requests, where I explained in detail the objective of the study and the role of volunteers, as well as the use of data. Since I made the study in my work organisation, and the research participants were the key stakeholders, the data regulation of my organisation also applied to my study. Thus, I did not have to request a separate research permit.

According to ethical guidelines, more attention needs to be paid to the processing of personal data and the protection of the data of the persons subject to research, including the pseudonymisation and anonymisation of research materials and results. (Arene 2020, 7.) To protect my research data, the raw data of my study, including the interview and workshop results, is saved in the case organisation´s file with the limited access. The personal data from interviews was first pseudonymised and then anonymised.

6.4 What is service design?

The definition of service design is complex and constantly evolving. According to Stickdorn and al. (2018), Service Design can be explained as a hands-on mindset, a process which aims for innovative solutions through iterative cycles of research and development, a toolset, a cross-disciplinary language that brings people from different silos together, and a management approach "when service design is sustainably embedded in an organization". According to Eun Yu and Daniela Sangiorgi (2018, 42), Service Design relates to experience-centered approaches to innovation and is influenced by human-centered design, design thinking, emotional design, and contextual design. Regardless of the definition or the approach, the following principles apply to all service design interpretations: Service design is human-centric and collaborative with focus on the real world, leaning on the holistic process with sequent steps and phases and constant iteration (Figure 5). (Stickdorn & al. 2018).

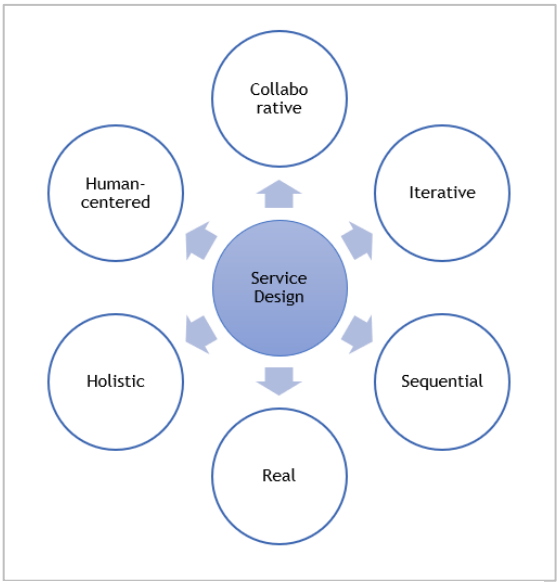

Figure 5: Key principles in service design. (Stickdorn & al. 2018).

Service design focuses on real-world projects with emerging activities and patterns instead of the theoretical processes. Service design processes should always adapt to the problem one wants to solve, no other way around. The

chosen process depends on the challenge and complexity, the people involved, underlying ideas and problems, the organisation, and the monetary and time resources. Designing the process and which methods and tools to use in the process is the core skill of the serviced designer. (Stickdorn & al. 2018.) According to Kim Goodwin (2009), an effective design method guides designers to do “what they do best: visualizing concrete solutions to human problems”.

Divergent and convergent thinking and doing are in the core of the design process. The interplay of generating new knowledge, opportunities, and solutions (divergence), and focusing and reducing options (convergence) is essential to successfully executing design processes. Stickdorn & al. call these different phases "Yes, and.." and "Yes, but…" sides of the design process. The core here is to understand when divergence and convergent phases should be used in workshops and in the whole design process. Service design process is never a linear process, something that is planned first and then executed as planned. Instead, it is an iterative and explorative process that requires adaptation during the process. This makes service design hard to visualize as a linear process. (Stickdorn & al. 2018). Sam Kaner, Lenny Lind, Catherine Toldi, Sarah Fisk and Duane Berger (2014, 6) present four examples of divergent thinking in participatory decision-making: generating alternatives, free-flowing open discussion, gathering diverse points of views, and suspending judgment. The convergent counterparts for these are evaluating alternatives, summarizing key points, sorting ideas into categories and divergent and convergent phases in their diamond of participatory decision-making. These examples show that divergence-convergence phases do not apply only to idea generation but also to thinking, speaking and decision-making.

6.4.1 Design Thinking

The service design is based on Design Thinking. In 2012 Katja Tschimmel described it as a complex thinking process focusing on new realities, the application of design culture and its methods into new areas, such as business innovation. Design Thinking today is not only a cognitive process or a mindset. However, it has become more “an effective method with a toolkit for any innovation process, connecting the creative design approach to traditional business thinking, based on planning and rational problem solving” (Tschimmel 2021, 13). Diego Rebelo (2015) summarises the relation between Design Thinking and services design: "Design Thinking is a methodology used to innovate and solve business problems. Service Design is about applying design thinking and design methodologies into immaterial products.”

According to Tschmimmel (2012), Design Thinking provides new tools and processes to any kind of creative processes, not conducted by designers only but carried out by interdisciplinary teams in any organisation. Design Thinking serves as an effective tool for innovation processes bringing design approach to traditional planning and rational problem-

solving processes. Tschimmel states that “perception in and through images” is central in Design Thinking. Other central aspects are sketching that helps designers to think and elaborate ideas, early prototyping to visualising and testing new solutions, which enables early failures, and human-centred approach - collaborative way of working, participatory co-creation methods. (Tschimmel 2012, 2-4.) Tschimmel (2012) stresses that the outcome of Service Design Thinking (SDT) method is a process with interactions, not a finished product. The focus is on services´ interrelated actions and dynamic as a whole. Tschimmel (2012, 11) address that the design thinking processes are constructive in their nature meaning that there is not objectively right or wrong model to choose from. The choice depends on the disciplinary background of the innovator, the characteristics of the innovation task, its context, the innovation team, and the time allocated for the process.

In service design, abduction is not just about the theoretical approach but about the thinking process. According to Tschimmel (2012, 3), abductive thinking is central in Design Thinking, relying on future possibilities with new and different perspectives. In abductive thinking, emotions and feelings are the same line as rational thinking. According to Stickdorn and al. (2018), abductive thinking refers to the logic of "what might be". It is about synthesizing knowledge, understanding knowledge in a new way, and finding a new, best plausible explanation based on the findings fused into your personal and professional experience. Abductive thinking is intuitive - intuition combined with research knowledge. Its intuitive nature also means that it is by definition uncertain; it is a suggestion of what could happen. It is not about what is "right" but what is "likely and possible"

6.4.2 Double Diamond design process

Well-known service design model, Double Diamond model by British Design Council, was launched by British Design Council in 2004. The model highlights principles of people understanding "put people first", visual and inclusive communication, collaboration and co-creation, and iteration are highlighted. The model consists of two diamonds, where the divergent and convergent phases described earlier, are clearly visualized. The starting point of the double diamond is a challenge followed by the first diamond with divergent discover phase and convergent define phase of define. The discover phase helps to understand what the problem is. The define phase is about defining the primary challenge in a different way based on the insights gathered in the discover phase. The second diamond describes the phases of divergent develop and convergent deliver phases. The develop phase describes co-designing and seeking multiple answers to a clearly defined problem. Deliver includes testing and improving solutions. As a result of the design process, there is an outcome. (Design Council 2022.)

There are many versions of British Design Council's double diamond models. I found a revamped version of Dan Nessler (2018) the most descriptive and suitable for my design process (Figure 6; Appendix 1). Nessler (2018) explains that the starting point of the design process is point A “Don´t know, could be”, where there is no or only a vague notion of something. The aim is to move on to point B “Do know, should be”, where the answer and solution to the problem at the beginning can be found. According to Nessler (2018), the four phases of a double diamond can be condensed into two main stages: experience strategy and experience design. The first stage includes discover and define phases and is about “finding the right question to answer or the right problem to solve”. The goal is “doing the right thing”. The second stage is about executing the experience design consisting of develop and deliver phases. The goal here is to “do things right” and “find the right answer or the right way to solve the problem”.

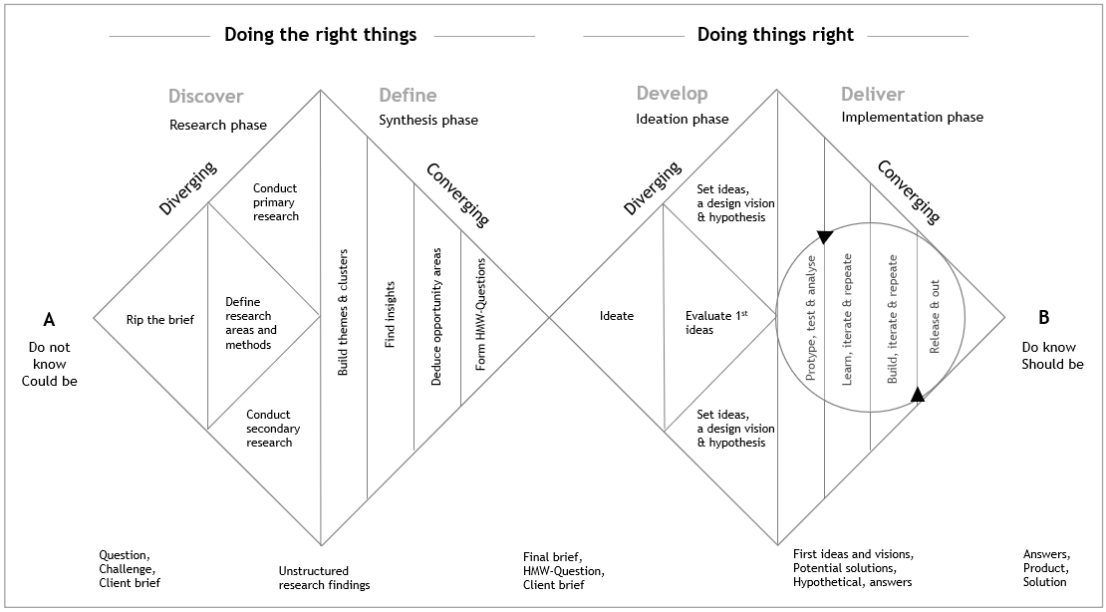

Figure 6: Revambed double diamond by Nessler (2018).

What is different Nessler´s (2018) revambed model in relation to the Design Council´ original model, is its clear, and comprehensive visualisation. The model pictures the different activities and steps in discovering, defining, developing, and delivering phases. According to Nessler (2018), different tools, techniques and methods may be applied in all these steps. Nessler (2018) also has adjusted the order of different steps and naming, clarifying the meanings of different phases by bringing lot of information in the same picture. The model model shows that also divergent discover ja develop phases include convergence: In discover phase, defining research areas and methods, and in develop phase, evaluating first ideas. Nessler´s (2018) revambed model also illustrated iterative nature of the deliver phase with a circle loop. The final point of the process is verbalised as "should be" (besides Do know),

which highlights the fact that service design process is much about iteration and only seldom the end delivery is a ready solution.

6.5 Service design process and methods

In this chapter, I will go through the service design process. I explain in detail the different phases and methods used in them. The service design process is summerised and illustrated in Figure 7 according to Nessler´s double diamond model. The figure describes the design process from research question definition to final solutions and ideas for future development. Grey circles describe the methods in the research phase. Orange circles address the methods used in the co-creative workshop for students. The white circles indicate future development. The picture illustrates the divergent and convergent phases and iteration, both that are chasteristic for a service design process.

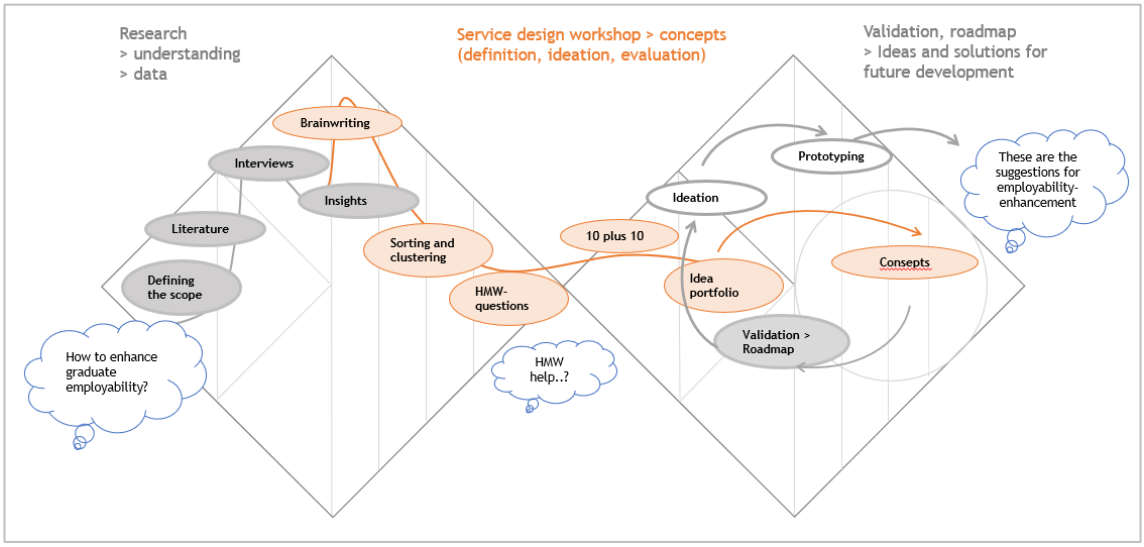

Figure 7: Service design process according to double diamond model (modified from Nessler 2018).

6.5.1 Designing the research process

According to Thomas (2011), designing a case study, or any other research, starts with clarifying a purpose and research question. A question “What do I want to know?” or “What do I want to find out?” helps the researcher in the right direction. Thomas stresses that it is essential to start the research with a process with the purpose and question, not by choosing a design frame or methods in the first place. (Thomas 2011, 26-29.) After clarifying the purpose and forming the initial research question — How students can enhance their employability — it was time to examine “what is already out there” regarding previous

research and existing data (Stickdorn & al. 2018). I dived into the literature about employability and later into the literature of mentoring and value formation.

At this point of the early process, I did not know my research approach, design frame, research methods or method of analysis, or the process, which were all needed for designing the research. Thomas argues that the design process is recursive and not linear and requires going backwards and forwards. (2011, 26). In service design, the word is iteration, as stated earlier in this chapter. The design process is presented in Figure 8.

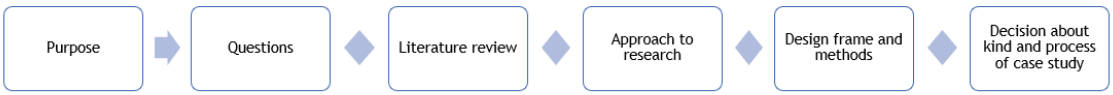

Figure 8: Design process of a case study is recursive (Thomas, 2011).

Once I gained lots of information from the literature review, I refined my research questions, outlined the design process, and selected the first methods. According to Thomas (2011, 37) and Stickdorn and al. (2018), the chosen research methods depend on which methods can answer the research question. Later, through various iterations and gaining more data, I defined my work's design frame and approach. The description of my work's complete service design process (Figure 7) was ready only a month before finalising this thesis report.

The original aim was to study how international students can enhance their employability. There is an ongoing debate on what universities could do to support international graduates´ employment and how companies should change their attitudes and recruiting practices. However, later in my study, as I decided to switch the scope to students´ long-term employability building, the bottom fell from this targeting. The participants of my study are international students and graduates, but the solutions are applicable to all students regardless of their nationality or Finnish language skills. However, it is valuable to collect insights from international students and graduates and much of the raw data can be used in other development purposes.

6.5.2 Gathering employability insights

To gain deeper understanding of graduate experiences on their employability and employment, I chose in-depth interviews as a research method. Empathising with the customer is the core aspect of the research process, as stated by many researchers (Portigal, 2013; Stickdorn and al. 2018; Tschimmel 2018; Kouprie & al. 2009). The objective for interviewing was to collect data and insights on graduates´ path and transition from higher education to the labor market and understand which factors were highlighted in their employability. The public debate has focused on the possibilities for companies to recruit

foreign talent. However, I wanted to focus especially on the individual employability factors and the role of mentoring in finding employment. I also wanted to bring the key insights from the interviews as a starting material for the service design workshop described later in this chapter. According to Katri Ojasalo and al. (2009, 95), interviewing is a good choice of method if there is a need to emphasize an individual as a research subject and his/her own individual experience. There is also a chance to collect new information that has not been collected before. According to Steve Portigal (2013, 3), interviewing is about exploring not only users´ behaviours but also the meaning behind them. Before knowing what could be designed, new opportunities can be identified with interviews (Portigal (2013, 6). Next, I will describe the interviewing process in detail from planning to data analysis.

Planning the interviews

The interview process started with recruiting the right interviewees, which proved to be the most challenging and time-consuming part of the process, as I wanted the interviewees to meet specific criteria. I wanted to interview graduates who had earlier taken part in the mentoring programme and had been employed in Finland after graduation. Besides, I wanted them to represent different fields, nationalities, and genders to be representative. Later, I learned that representative sampling does not apply to case studies (Thomas, 2011). Finally, I managed to find four interviewees after sending fifteen requests. The second phase was to make an interview field guide (Appendix 2) and determine the questions. According to Portigal (2013, 39), creating a field guide with interview details is important since it prepares an interviewer for unexpected turns in the interview. The field guide usually includes an introduction and participant background, the main body, projection/dream questions, and wrap-up. My interview field guide followed the recommendations of Portigal except for the dream questions. I wrote the questions in full sentences using open-ended questions in "I" form (Portigal 2013, 70).

Conducting the interviews

The interviews were conducted from January to March 2022 as close meetings. Three interviews took place in cafés in Helsinki and Vantaa, and one in interviewee´s workplace. I let the interviewees select the place, as I wanted to save their time and to "embrace interviewee´s world" (Portigal 2013, 17). The interviews took 50-60 minutes, and they were recorded, as I knew it would be challenging to make notes and listen actively at the same time. According to Ojasalo and al (2009, 96), recording the interview liberates the interviewer to observe the interviewee and makes it possible to report the interview in more detail. I wanted to make sure that I was able to document the full content of the interview and also make the interview flow and leverage the opportunities that arise, as stated by Steve Portigal (2013, 84).

The interviews started with a short introduction, where I explained the purpose of the interview and where the interview material would be used for. I also emphasized the anonymity of the results. Interviews aimed to hear the interviewees´ story with pain points and opportunities from the time of arrival to Finland to the stage they are now. The interview started with a broad kick-off question "Can you tell me about your arrival in Finland. Why did you end up studying at the case university?" The main body covered questions on the following head topics: study time in Finland, career services, mentoring experiences, graduation and job-seeking, and perception of employability. The interview concluded with a wrap-up question, "Is there something you would like to add or ask me?" and thank you, as suggested by Portigal (2013, 42). I aimed to build rapport during the interviews with careful listening and paying attention to my body language. I made only few notes since I wanted to keep the eye contact with the interviewee (Portigal 2013, 106). Despite having the interview questions listed in the field guide, I changed the order and form of them depending on the flow of the interviews. I also added some questions to specify, what the interviewee had said, and even added some questions if something interested had risen in the discussion. This kind of interview is a semi-structured in-depth interview (Ojasalo & al. 2009; Saunders & al. 2016). All the interviews achieved the tipping point, a phase where the interviewee starts to tell more freely, as described by Portigal (2013, 24). After wrapping-up the interviews, happened what Portigal describes as a "doorknob phenomenon": the interviewees started to add some points in their earlier answers. Answers and questions often arise after an event – or an interview in this case – as it is challenging to "empty" at one time. (Portigal 2013, 80.) Surprisingly, I did not feel any awkwardness during the interviews, as warned by Portigal (2018, 78), but the interviews flew easily. I guess this was because the interviewees had a chance to describe their study and employability path that was close in the past. This storytelling method turned out to be a good choice for this type of employability-related interview.

A small sample of interviews concerned me from the beginning. Ojasalo and al. (2009, 100), the sufficient number of interviews depends on the nature and objectives of the research. According to Thomas (2011, 64-65), sample is not a right word in a case study because it is not a generalized study that seeks to obtain a representative sample that represents the quality of the whole. According to Thomas, "the choise that you make regarding your subject is nothing like a sample" but it is a choice or selection. From the beginning, I was aware that four interviews would cover only a part of the possible insights on graduates´ employability. However, I was certain that even a small number of interviews would bring more quality to my research than a survey with more respondents. This was especially true if considering the interview data as a starting point, emphasising material, for the workshop. Also, Ojasalo and al. (2009, 100) state that in the interview analysis the quantity does not replace the quality. If my study were based solely on interviews, their number would not be sufficient.

Analysing the interviews

The next step was to analyse the interview data. According to Portigal, working on research data combines the steps of analysis – breaking larger pieces of information into smaller ones – and synthesis, where the pieces are put together into new themes, implications, or opportunities. This iterative process includes informal processing on experimental data from the interviews and "diving into documented data". (Portigal 2013, 136.) This informal processing started once I wrote down key highlights from each interview (Portigal 2013, 117), which worked as a basis for the thematic areas in data compilation later. The dive into the documented data began after transcribing the interviews. I used Microsoft Word´s dictate and transcribe function for transcription, which converted recordings into text. It took some time to make the modifications into this automatic text, nevertheless, it was a much faster method than writing transcription in traditional style of listening and typing. Transcribing the interviews gave me a good opportunity to reflect myself as an interviewer. I noticed that there were quite many hmmm´s and yes´s among interviewees´ responses, which showed that my affirmations were quite many and loud. Although these vocalisations build rapport, an experienced interviewer learns how to make these affirmations silently using head-nods and facial expressions (Portigal 2013, 26).

After transcribing the interview, it was time for the content analysis, which, according to Ojasalo and al. (2009, 126), can be data-driven or theory-based and theory-driven. In the latter, the analysis classification is based on a theory or a conceptual system. The first step was to create a frame of analysis, which in my study followed the five capitals in Tomlinson´s (2017) graduate capital model described in the chapter 2. Then, I moved to data reduction and coded the interviews using thematic cards (Ojasalo & al. 2009, 127) to cluster the interview data for later interpretations. In this method, I "scanned" the data based on the graduate capital model and marked the text with the capital-related codes: Social capital was marked with (SOCIAL), cultural capital with (CULTURAL) and so on. After the coding, I compiled the text pieces into new thematic cards and searched for patterns and connections. According to Ojasalo and al. (2009, 99-100), it is essential to find regularities, the insights that appear in several interviews. Without finding these connections between different interviews, the analysis turns easily superficial. Coding the interview material with thematic cards was the first step in interpreting the data. The further interpretations and conclusions from the interviews are presented in chapter 8. They key insights from the interviews, material from the thematic cards, were also used in the employability workshop, which I present next.

6.5.3 Designing concepts for employability-enhancement

The ideation phase of the research process was conducted in a co-creation workshop with the stakeholders in April 2022. The participants were seven international students and two graduates that took part in the ongoing mentoring programme as mentees and mentors. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the initial aim was to examine, how international students and graduates could enhance their own employability. However, during the design process the scope of the work changed. The workshop's target was to create a solution – a tool, process, method, task - that an (international) student/graduate can use to enhance his/her employability. This solution could be used during or within mentoring or in other career planning contexts. Another target was to provide students especially with an opportunity to gain more information on employability aspects and to challenge them for ideation process that could help them later.

The workshop consisted of all four stages – discover, define, develop, and deliver - in double diamond service design process described earlier. To ensure a smooth flow for the workshop, I made a step-by-step facilitation plan with exact time slots. The chosen facilitation plan with chosen methods is illustrated in Table 2. Although the time slots are presented as exact times of 5, 10, 15 minutes, I used inaccurate time slots of 3, 7, 13 minutes etc. as suggested by Stickdorn and al. (2018). Since the workshop was time-constrained, lasting only three hours, different methods were run on a relatively tight schedule.

Introduction
The workshop started with a short introduction to workshop´s target, workshop guidelines, and the concept of safe space. In order to make participants feel welcome, some snacks and refreshments were offered. Nine people were divided into three sub-groups, each with three members.

Warm-up: Sketching 30 circles
The workshop started with 30 Circles Exercise, an excellent method for preparing for a divergent ideation phase where lots of ideas need to be generated. Participants were asked to draw 30 recognizable objects in a template with 30 circles in the method. Only three minutes were given. According to Tom Kelly (2018), the goal of 30 Circles Exercise is to push participants to test their creativity by sketching objects in a concise period of time. Besides warm-up exercise, 30 circles is a great learning on ideation, where the goals of fluency (the speed and quantity of ideas) and flexibility (ideas that are genuinely different and distinct) balance.

Understanding what the problem is: research wall & insights
The starting point for the workshop was the graduate capital model of Tomlinson (2017), and

	Facilitation plan
17.00 **17.20** **17.25**	Snacks & welcome, target of the workshop, workshop guidelines Split into teams Warm-up: 30 Circles
17.35 **17.40**	Introduction to topic: research wall Creating shared understanding (boundary object) Time to read the insights and become familiar with the topic Brainwriting: Creating new insights independently Discussion in groups: selection of 1 insight / cluster of insights
17.55	Generating questions: How might we questions Generating trigger questions Grouping and clustering (opportunity areas) Selection of 1 HMW question/cluster as a design challenge
18.10	Break
18.15 **18.20** **18.35**	Warm-up: "Yes, and.." Generating answers/concepts: Sketching: 10 + 10 Evaluating & ranking: Idea Portfolio
18.45 **19.15** **19.35**	Prototyping and testing: Desktop walkthrough Visualising the concept: Storyboarding/visual statement Presentation of solutions to other group(s)
19.50	Wrap-up: I liked, I wish, I will

Table 2: Facilitation plan and used methods.

key insights from interviews. Thus, the workshop was based on primary data (interviews) and secondary data, that is, data collected by someone else (Stickdorn & al. 2018). The target was to create a shared understanding, a boundary object, between participants. Paul Carlile (2004) describes boundary objects as a way people share knowledge across boundaries. He divides knowledge-sharing into three categories: pragmatic transformation, semantic translation, and syntactic transfer. The key idea is that when the novelty of topic arises, there is "often a lack of common knowledge to adequately share and assess domain-specific knowledge at a boundary" (Carlile 2004, 557). The boundary object for the workshop participants was participation in the mentoring programme and being foreigners in Finland, possibly job seekers too. On the other hand, as the participants represented different fields

and cultures, and their mentoring (and job-seeking) experience was unique, I wanted to offer participants common ground with the research canvas. The participants were given time to introduce them to the graduate capital model, which was visualized in the canvas and hung on the wall (Figure 9).

30 insights, word-to-word quotations from interviews, representing all five graduate capitals, were written on post it notes. These insights were the key finding of interviews representing different challenges and opportunities interviewees had faced in transition from higher education to labor market in Finland. Some insights also concerned the challenges during studies but were linked to later employment issues. Each group received ten post it notes with insights and were asked to place the post it notes next to the right capital on the graduate model canvas. The target was to allow the groups to build a better picture on the topic this way. Groups were also asked for ad their insights in the brainwriting method. According to Tschimmel (2012, 14), the objective in brainstorming sessions – including brainwriting and brainsketching - is to create many ideas intuitionally without limiting oneself rationally in a short time. In relation to brainstorming, in brainwriting, the asset is that participants do not need to speak out their ideas, which aloud participants to ideate freely

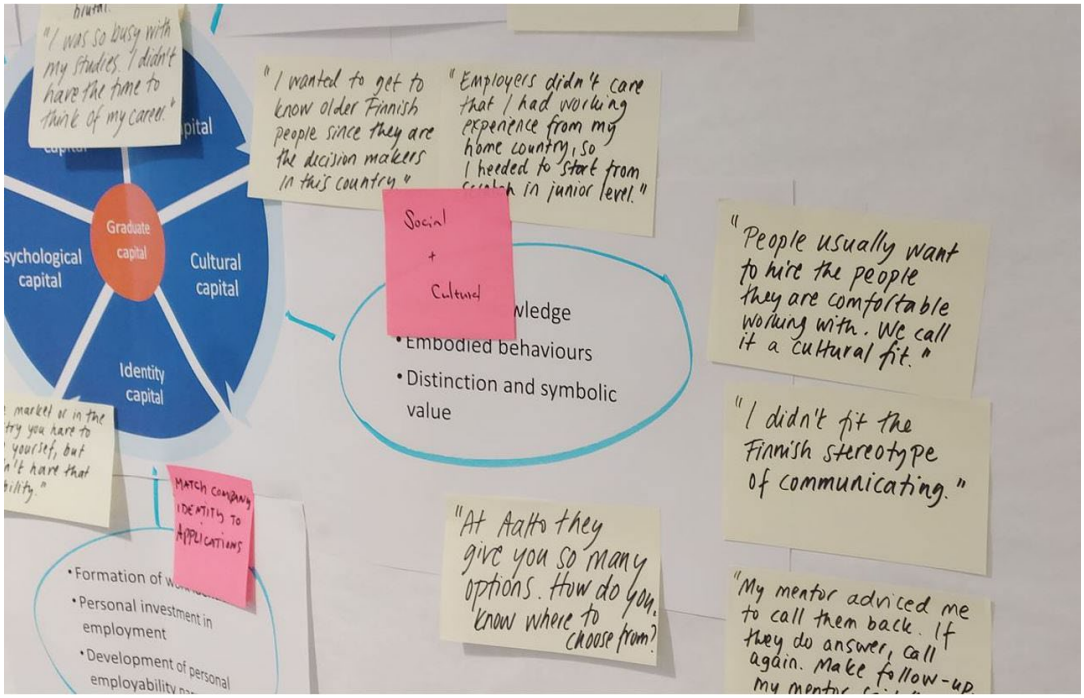

Figure 9: Research canvas with Graduate capital model and key insights.

and present unusual suggestions. Since brainwriting insights was an optional part of the process and it was not presented as a separate individual task, the workshop participants added only two insights. There was also time pressure, which may have affected.

After clustering and brainwriting, groups were asked to discuss the capitals and choose one capital (and its insights) they found most interesting. This capital represented an opportunity area the group would like to work with further. Since the workshop did not include persona or user journey methods, groups were asked to give their "person" a working name. Who was the person behind the quotations attached next to the capital they chose? Empathizing the person and giving that person a name also helped the group in the next phase.

Defining opportunities: How might we -questions

After insights and opportunity areas, the next phase was generating how might -questions. According to Stickdorn and al. (2018), how might we -questions is a suitable method once the ideation is based on research and knowledge. The process of how might we -questions methods is explained in detail in Stickdorn´s and al. online method library (Stickdorn & al. no date). According to Maria Rosala (2021), the How might we template was first introduced by Procter & Gamble in the 1970s and adopted by IDEO and has since become prevalent in Design Thinking and in the use of design teams (Rosala 2021). The how might we -exercise started from the insight or cluster of insights chosen by workshop group, The task was to convert insights or part of them into design challenges in the form of questions. Groups were asked to write the trigger questions in the form of "How might we …"

Translating insights into How might -questions is not always easy, as I have found out earlier in the workshops I have facilitated. For this reason, I provided participants with a tip list on things they should consider. This list followed the tips presented Rosala (2021). According to Rosala (2021), How might we -questions should be based on actual problems or insights. The questions should not suggest a ready solution to the problem, but the scope of the question should be broad so that it does not restrict possibilities. To avoid solving symptoms, root problems should be addressed. Rosala (2021) also recommends to "phrasing" the How might questions positively instead of using negative words (e.g. easier versus less difficult).

After creating as many How might we -questions as possible, groups were asked to discuss them and sort them into clusters. Two out of three groups created enough questions to be clustered, while one of the groups created four questions, not enough for clustering. After clustering, grouping How might we questions into opportunity areas, groups were asked to prioritize and choose an individual HMW question/cluster as a design challenge. This caused participants a bit of frustration as they were asked to choose one question or cluster rapidly and abandon others. According to Stickdorn and al. (2018), this groan zone, where the divergent phase turns quickly into a convergent phase, can be facilitated by enabling design teams to discuss and sort the ideas that have just been produced, or to have a break, to bring clarity among participants. Kaner and al. (2018, 281-282), stress that to facilitate participants through this inevitable phase, creation of shared understanding between participants is important. Listening skills, including paraphrasing, drawing people out, and energy

management are essential facilitation techniques here. Stickdorn and al. (2018, Ideation) state that this phase of the process should not take too long, though, as there is a risk that participants "fall in love" with their ideas the more time they invest on them. The friction can be reduced by breaking down the decision-making process into many steps and selecting one or more clustering and ranking methods.

Warm-up: "Yes, and.."

After a short break I chose to conduct another warm-up session with "Yes, and.." method recommended by Stickdorn and al. (no date) to do before ideation methods like 10 plus 10. The method clearly shows the difference between divergent and convergent phases. I asked participants to have a pair and start the first round telling their pair what they are going to do in summer. Then the other partner responded starting with "yes, and…". The I asked them to have another round starting their plans with "yes, but..". After rehearsal, I asked participants to tell, what was the difference between these two phases. As Stickdorn and al. (no date) state in the method notes, "yes, but" is more familiar for many participants, especially in academic surroundings.

Ideating concepts: 10 plus 10 & nose-picking

Next, it was time to start ideating concepts on the design challenges they had chosen before the break. Both Tschimmel (2012) and Stickdorn and al. (no date) underline the vital value of ideating by drawing. According to Tschimmel (2012, 15), generating ideas and perspectives by fast free-hand sketching is a great way to make ideas tangible and concrete. According to Stickdorn and al (no date), drawings are helpful as they usually carry more information than a paper with few words. 10 plus 10 method helps groups to ideate a wide variety of concepts quickly and at the same time to get a deeper understanding of how "a specific design challenge can be tackled". The visual approach helps them get specific. (Stickdorn & al, no date.)

I asked the groups to create at least ten sketches that address their design challenge in five minutes (Figure 10). Knowing that drawing might be a new ideation method for some participants, I pointed out that drawings are just memory aids. Only those who were sketching the drawing, needed to understand the content (Stickdorn & al. no date) since they would be explained later to other group members. After five minutes, I asked the groups to lay down their sketches on the table and quickly discuss and explain the content of the drawings. Next, I asked the participants to choose one among those sketches created by the group using the nose-picking method. As adviced by Stickdorn and al. (no date), I told participants not to choose the "sexiest" or "most high-tech" sketch but focus on the possible benefits and impact on the sketched concept. According to Stickdorn and al. (2018), quick voting like nose-picking help groups to make a fast decision and not to slip on out of habit discussion. After nose picking, it was time to move to the second round of 10 plus 10. I asked

Figure 10: Sketching ideas with 10 plus 10 method. Photo: Milja Koski.

groups to draw ten versions of the sketch the group had just chosen. I felt a bit of frustration in the air, but all groups managed to make ten sketches in the given time. The groups had 20 ideas or more to take into idea selection in the next phase.

Sorting and evaluating the concepts: Idea portfolio

For sorting and evaluating, the concepts produced in 10 plus 10 method, I decided to use Idea Portfolio. Instead of just quickly choosing the idea to work on further, I wanted the groups to be more analytical when evaluating the concepts. According to Stickdorn and al. (no date), Idea portfolio is a good way to "prepare the groundwork for an informed decision, and even allows a strategic view of the options". In idea portfolio, ideas produced in the earlier phase were ranked using two variables, evaluation criteria, whose values are on x- and y-axis. Since the sketches had been drawn on A4 size papers, it was easier to place the graph, portfolio, with values on the floor, where axis was marked with tape (Figure 11).

First, groups were asked to decide on the evaluation criteria, the values on the x- and y-axis. According to Stickdorn and al. (no date), impact again feasibility is the most common criterion. This was also the criteria used in all groups. After evaluating the sketches, groups were asked to rate the sketches, giving each two variables 0 to 10 points and writing each sketch's summarized value. Then, groups placed the sketched accordingly on the portfolio. This was repeated for each sketch until there was a matrix of evaluated and sorted drawings on the floor. Finally, I asked the groups to decide which ideas/ideas they would like to continue with, "low-hanging fruits" (Stickdorn & al. no date) or some else.

Prototyping the concept: Desktop walkthrough

The following planned method was a desktop walkthrough for testing and protyping the concept. Unfortunately, due to a delay in the schedule, I needed to skip this method to ensure that groups have enough time to communicate their concepts and solutions. Thus, the concepts were "raw" first versions without iteration.

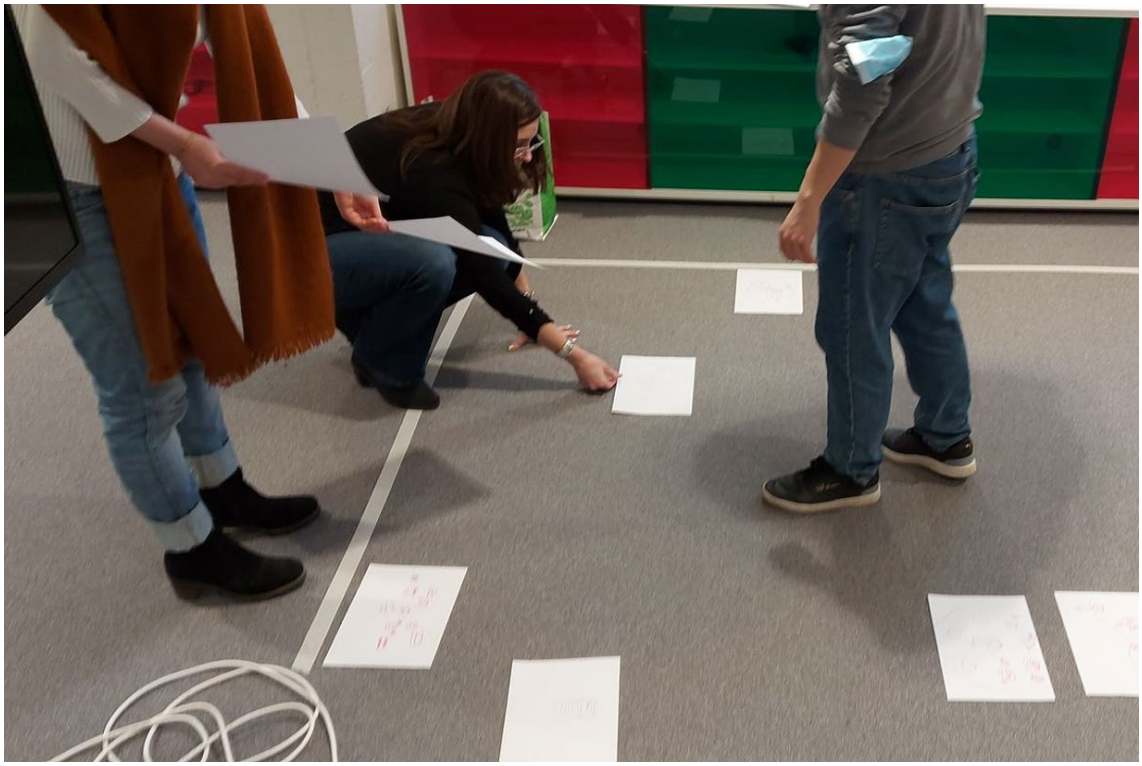

Figure 11: Evaluationg concepts with Idea portfolio method. Photo: Milja Koski.

Presenting the concept: Story boarding or Vision statement

In the final method, I gave groups two alternative methods how to present their solutions. The first one, storyboarding, was a cartoon-type of presentation method, where the service was illustrated over a time period highlighting the interaction between characters. According to Kim Goodwin (2009), “Because interactive products change state over time, generative interaction designers need a good way to represent those state changes in sketch form. Storyboarding used to portray action over time—a rough draft of the visual story. Goodwin (2009) states that the storyboarding technique helps to visualize and refine the end product before “working in a more expensive medium”. Since services involve “flow of action” that is expensive to code for testing, visualizing the design scenario with a series of story frames is an excellent way to assess that flow. (Goodwin 2009, Framework.) Two out of three groups chose this method. One group decided to present their concept on a Vision statement canvas, where they summarised the solution and its characters verbally and graphically. The statement included a title short description of challenges and solutions. The key benefits listed in the statement highlight the value visible.

After sketching the visualisations, the groups presented their concepts to the whole group. I asked for permission to video record the presentations to remind the content and small details afterwards. This was a good decision as it turned out that only one of the visualisations included enough visual content, so that it could be interpreted afterwards.

Besided ensuring the data retention, I had a chance to be more present once the groups presented their ideas.

Wrap-up and feedback: I liked, I wish, I will
After the solution presentations, it was time for wrap up. I shortly summarised the activities they have made during the workshop. After that, I asked the participants to gather in the circle with me. I explained that this is a I liked, I wish, I will activity. In the first round, I started by being an example and said what I liked in the event. Next, I passed a pen to the student sitting next to me and asked her to say what she liked and then pass the pen to the person next to her. I also said that if a person would not like to say anything, they could just pass the pen for the next person. The second round was about ´I wish´, that is, what could have been done differently. The last round was about ´I will´, what everyone will take home from the workshop. As I wanted to ensure clear takeaways for the participant, it was interesting to hear what the participants said in the last ´I will´ round. I had used this feedback method before and know already it was a nice closing for the event.

6.5.4 Validating solutions: collecting feedback

As there was no time to test ideas during the workshop, I decided to ask for feedback from the ex-mentees interviewed at the beginning of the study. These validated interviews were conducted as online interviews in May 2022. In the validation interviews, I presented the solutions to the respondents and asked their perceptions and opinion on the solutions. The results of these validations are presented in chapter 7. Unfortunately, one of the interviewees did not have time to participate in the interview, but three respondents gave valuable feedback. Usually, solutions are tested and validated early in the service design process. According to Stickdorn and al. (2018, Prototyping), prototyping is used in service design to "explore, evaluate, and communicate how people might behave in or experience a future service situation". Prototyping is essential to reduce risk and uncertainty for a successful project at an early stage. In Eun Yu´s and Daniela Sangiorgi´s (2018, 48) study, protyping operated "as a trigger" to bring flexibility into the entire New Service Design process. Early failures central to prototyping were seen as an opportunity for new learnings.

7 How to enhance graduate employability?

In this chapter, I present the results of the development work. First, I present the insights from the in-depth interviews of the graduates and their relation to five graduate capitals. Interviewees were asked to describe what was central in their own employability building and what should be done to promote students´employability. Then, I present three solutions that were designed by the students and graduates in the service design workshop. In the third

part, I answer the question about the impact of mentoring on graduate employability and how value emerges in mentoring. In the last sub-chapter, I summarise the results.

7.1 Central factors and capitals for employability

This sub-chapter presents the graduates´ perceptions on employability-building according to five capitals presented in Tomlinson´s (2017) graduate capital model. In the interviews, graduates´ were asked, what they found central for their employability, in other words, which factors made them employable. The employability factors are summarised in Figure 12 below. Getting employed required much effort and was emotionally tuff for most of the interviewees. It was apparent that doing full-time studies and searching for a job simultaneously needed lots of effort.

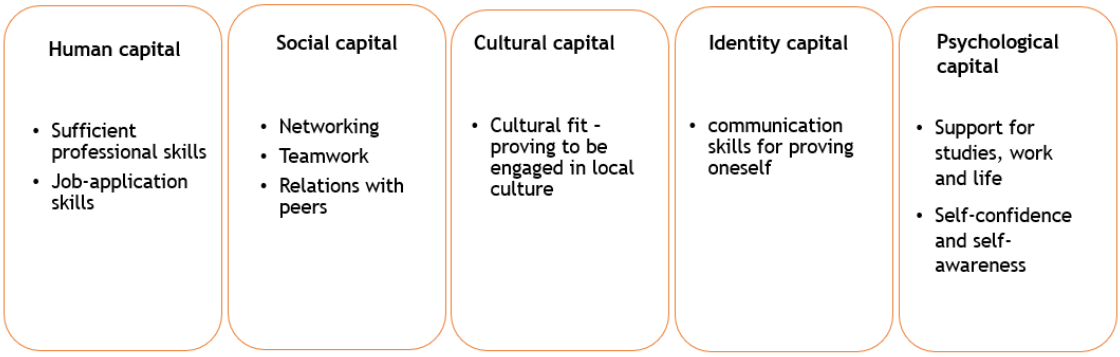

Figure 12: Interviewees perception on their central employability factors.

7.1.1 Human capital: Student needs to have sufficient professional skills and job-application skills

As stated in Chapter 2 by Tomlinson (2017), in many cases the relationship between graduates with a formal university degree and future employment is loose. Although the hard skills of human capital were not highlighted in general, interviewee 2 outlined that his educational background with good technical skills as the first employment factor. This is in line what Tomlinson (2017, 341) states about STEM fields, where technical “hard skills” play an important role. Interviewee 4 pointed out that a job seeker needs to know what he or she is doing and have sufficient professional skills, but one does not have to be the best in what one is doing. According to interviewee 4, a portfolio is important for designers, and in content gathering for the portfolio, internships play a significant role. According to interviewee, having work-experience from a well-known company gives an advantage when looking for another job.

Job-application skills were stressed in the interviews. Interviewee 1 pointed out that higher education institutions should make sure that foreigners know and learn how to apply for a job

in this country because it is not the same everywhere. Also, CV clinics´ role was highlighted. All interviewees mentioned CV writing guidance. According to interviewee 3, refining a CV helped him to get a summer job. Interviewee 4 stated that it would be nice to have some tangible guide on how exactly to find a job because, for her, the most important and easy way to build a career is to make friends and socialize because she found her first job through a friend. The interviewee mentioned CV clinic as a nice and useful service, which helps students write a CV and motivation letter. The job-application skills are a part of career management skills of Bridgstock (2009) presented in Chapter 3.

7.1.2 Social capital: Networking and connections enable employment

Social capital — including networking and binding relationships with employers and peers — was considered as a central factor in graduates´ emloyability. According to Tomlinson (2017, 342) networks help to "mobilise" human capital and bring students and graduates closer to the labour market and job opportunities. Recruitment and career events organised by the case organisation were mentioned as central channels for enhancing employability. Interviewee 1 stated that "I´ve gotten now two (full time) jobs in Finland and going to a third one now. Both of them were related to the case organisation, for sure, for sure." For interviewee 1, mentoring events also played an essential role in expanding networks.

The interviewee 1 also highlighted that it is good if a mentor is Finnish, at least if a student wants to be employed in Finland. It is important to connect with older Finnish people who are the decision-makers. Interviewee 2 stressed the meaning of networking, which is heavy work, but an effective tool for job search. In networking, positiveness and looking for the same interests between people, are central. Also, interviewee 3 mentioned networking skills as key employability factors, as they are something that employers see right away once communicating with the job applicant.

Interviewee 4 said that enhancing international students´ employability is through more collaboration with companies is essential. This follows Tomlinson´s (2017, 343) claim that it is increasingly important for graduates to be able to develop bridging experiences and extend weak ties beyond the formal boundaries of the university. The interviewee mentioned a course with direct collaboration with companies. According to the interviewee, international students should get more exposure to the companies as "students who don't go to any events from the company they have basically no way to connect with those companies" and especially with people working there. The interviewee stressed that it is vital to create straight links to the employees of the recruiting company: "It would be nice to have this kind of thing that you just know the company and you could have some connections." She also stressed that "would be nice to have international students be paired with the ones that not that Finnish but more international companies."

Interviewee 3 pointed out that many universities are already doing good work providing with career services, for example, job fairs through which many friends of the interviewee had found a job. Interviewee 3 stressed that these job fairs should be places where companies not only represent themselves but, at the same time, look for talent.

According to interviewee 4, networks and teamworking are essential in international students´ employability. She pointed out that by going abroad to study, one should not just hang out with other like-minded people or friends since staying inside a social "bubble" gives a disadvantage to them.

> "They only hang out with their own friends with the same nationalities and don't join different things and sort of the network is very limited. So, I think that will make their searching for job more difficult compared if you're just going and trying to know more people in different events in the company."

The interviewee herself was very active in exploring different opportunities, volunteering, talking actively with random people, and joining events and parties, even though she was not a "party person". Being curious, connecting with different people, and expanding the network are vital steps. According to Granovetter (1985), collecting these weak ties is important for individual´s employability. The more diverse and "knowledge-enriching" social connections individuals can establish, the more "knowledgeable and trusting" individuals may become towards areas that they are less familiar with. (Granovetter 1985, cited in Tomlinson 2017, 342.)

According to interviewee 4, when companies recruit people, they are more likely to hire a person they know and are comfortable working with, interviewee 4 pointed out. Expanding networks and using them to foster employability is not only students´ matter but also important for graduates. "You have to be very good with socializing and teamwork", interviewee 4 stressed. Interviewee 2 stated that

> "Networks was the most important thing as it was the only way to get into interviews, if I knew somebody. I met people all the time, but they weren´t hiring. The networks were critical. It was lot about getting foot on the door. Leveraging the network (contacting people through LinkedIn) to get something out of. And that´s why mentoring programme is important. A little bit of a network."

Also, peer networks were found important. Interviewees 1 and 4 emphasised the importance of social networks during their studies. Interviewee 1 was obliged to create his networks in other contexts than within his major, as the student organisation had peer events only in Finnish when the interviewee was studying. For interviewee 3, building up peer networks was first challenging because he felt that spending time with other students revolved around the sauna evenings. "In the beginning, I used to isolate myself from others and that somehow became a loneliness factor". Luckily, the interviewee found later social contact through a

hobby. For interviewee 4, connections with peers were essential and helped her get in a job interview as her friend introduced the interviewee to an employer. According to interviewee 4, it is vital to strengthen students´ understanding of the importance of belonging to a community. ”-- to tell them that if you want to get a job, it's actually very important you kind of being part of the community”. Putnam calls these connections ´bonding ties´ which maintain cohesion and solidarity as members of a group. (Putnam 1999, cited in Tomlinson 2017, 342). The interviewee also said that some international students explain their bad luck in labor market with racism, even if the reason is somewhere else. Interviewee 4 addresses this in the following quote:

> “I think it's sometimes really easy to create this kind of image if you are not really trying to connect with them, then they think you are a bit more hard to reach, because maybe then they kind of starts to form this image that because you're foreigner, you are a bit hard to reach, but that's not true. I think it's also sometimes to make it clear that. Like no companies racist, they just want good working people and then they sometimes they did not find. You know, maybe not because they didn't like your nationalities, maybe just because you are not open to them enough and things like that and I think sometimes this needs to be made a bit more clear.”

7.1.3 Cultural capital: Cultural fit is essential

An interesting point of view was from interviewee 1 who stressed that it is vital for international students to convey that they are committed to Finland and willing to live in Finland. To show and prove this might be hard. Interviewee 3 found that fixed contracts that companies offer are not unfavorable as "they give the others opportunity to show them what they can” and give the company time to invest in the employee and see if she or he is a good match. According to interviewee 4, before hiring an employee, many companies first chat with the job applicant to see if they like the person and find the person nice to work with. According to the interviewee, it is not about how good the person is, in terms of technical skills, but a cultural fit is critical. According to Tomlinson (2017), this embodied capital is an expression of the desired embodied behaviours and tendencies. Tomlinson stresses that the ability to demonstrate the organisation-specific interpersonal and behavioural expectations is important.

7.1.4 Identity capital: Communication skills help exposing the hard skills

Interviewee 2 pointed out the role of soft skills, such as communication skills and customer orientation skills, that he needed in the product presentations for clients. In the job interview, communication skills were needed to expose his technical skills, and later in bonus negotiations. These soft skills are something that employers see first, so they are so important. "It is your sincerity to really show what you have bought".

When thinking about the role of Finnish language for international students, interviewee 4 stressed that the importance of language skills depends on the task one works with, and that the language is most needed in tasks where one needs to conduct research interviewing clients. Also, interviewee 1 mentioned that it was difficult for him to get a job where he should be in close contact with clients. Interviewee 1 stressed that many times, instead of learning Finnish, it is worth using that time to master other skills since, to get a job, one must learn Finnish properly.

> “You just have to choose yes Finnish or no Finnish.” The interviewee wanted to give new or graduated international students advice that "maybe instead of spending time actually learning Finnish, you could just polish your skills and be good in what you're doing. If you do not know Finnish, your other communication skills and English level have to reach a certain level.”

7.1.5 Psychological capital: Self-confidence and self-awareness should be strengthened by offering support and guidance

Interviewee 2 pointed out that starting from a future dream is important, acting as a clear direction, "a North", for career choices. Another crucial thing is having a person or persons who trust the dream and give support. The interviewee used to believe that traditional job-seeking skills are the ones that matter but came to another conclusion based on his experience. The most important thing is to trust in oneself and be compassionate because good job application skills do not matter if one lacks confidence or fulfills dreams imposed by someone else. This perception follows Savickas´ (2005) concept of career adaptability, which represent resources individuals need as they construct their career (Savickas 2005, 51). According to the interviewee 2, one should to start from inside, to do a manifestation of one´s dream. Coaching oneself, self-coaching to increase self-confidence is essential.

The role of different kinds of guidance and support provided by the case organisation was highlighted in the interviews. Interviewee 2 used all career support opportunities at the department and the psychologist because he was active in her own needs. For him, the support provided by tutors was significant in guiding his studies, although there were too many study paths to choose from. Also, interviewee 4 pointed out the support given by academic personnel. According to the interviewee, professors in Finland are very friendly and helpful compared to her home country.

Interviewee 3 praised different forms of support for students. Visiting a doctor and a career psychologist made him feel not being alone with his problems. The support gave him a boost to change his habits and become more active.

> “The career psychologist was guiding me that day. It will be fine. That's part of life where it will struggle. And then there will be. So, it was kind of a positive way of interacting in, so I thought that is something because it's not for free If you are working. It's for free if you are a student. And it's a big thing it is a big

> thing. Unless you really realize it but when you really use it. -- I didn't went out to the burnout phase. So before I touched that level, there were solutions provided by [the case organisation].”

According to interviewee 4, international students should be given a bit more confidence “that they are actually in the same in the same starting point” with Finnish students. She pointed out that it is not about the lack of Finnish language skills, but “sometimes it's just for the skills and how dedicated you are.”

Interviewee 2 pointed out the importance of coaching in students´ employability. The case organisation should hire coaches for students. According to the interviewee, present-future-oriented coaching is a good tool that includes empathetic talk, but it is also a goal-well-oriented approach. Also, group coaching is another option. Within mentoring, interviewee 2 suggests that mentors could be taught and given tools, especially coaching tools, to help their mentees. Interviewee 3 stressed that to engage more mentors for students, mentoring success stories should be highlighted, and mentors should be given an award and put on a pedestal. The interviewee said that for mentors who have been struggling in their life, it is easier to understand students who are struggling and support their way into the industry. “If I don't think about the time when I was struggling, I really can't understand the feeling of a student and to really feel that”. According to Savickas (205, 56), career choices require lots of resources from an individual, why self-esteem, self-efficacy, and encouragement play an important role here.

7.2 Solutions for employability enhancement

The aim of the development work was to find practical ideas and tools for students to enhance their employability. In the workshop for mentees and method, the target was to create a solution — a tool, process, method, or task — that a student or graduate can use to enhance their employability. The solution could be used during or within mentoring or other career planning contexts. The focus was on students´ or graduates´ role in their own employability-building process, not the solutions provided by the industry. The solutions were tested in the validation interviews afterwards.

Next, I will present the outcomes of the workshop: 1) Mari´s adventure – The Discovery, 2) Profile to kill ;), and 3) The Blind Audition > Toward Equality, and interviewees feedback on them. The three solutions are also compiled in Figure 13 that shows the service design process from chosen graduate capitals and key insights to the design challenge and the final solution, as recommended by Stickdorn and al. (2018). According to Stickdorn and al. (2018), the “ultimate documentation” of ideation are protypes, which, however, do not contain all the information of previous steps. The more complex way is to track the ideas into their initial origins, e.g. knowing what is the idea, how might we -question, opportunity are, insight, and customer statement behind a prototype. (Stickdorn & al. 2018, Ideation.)

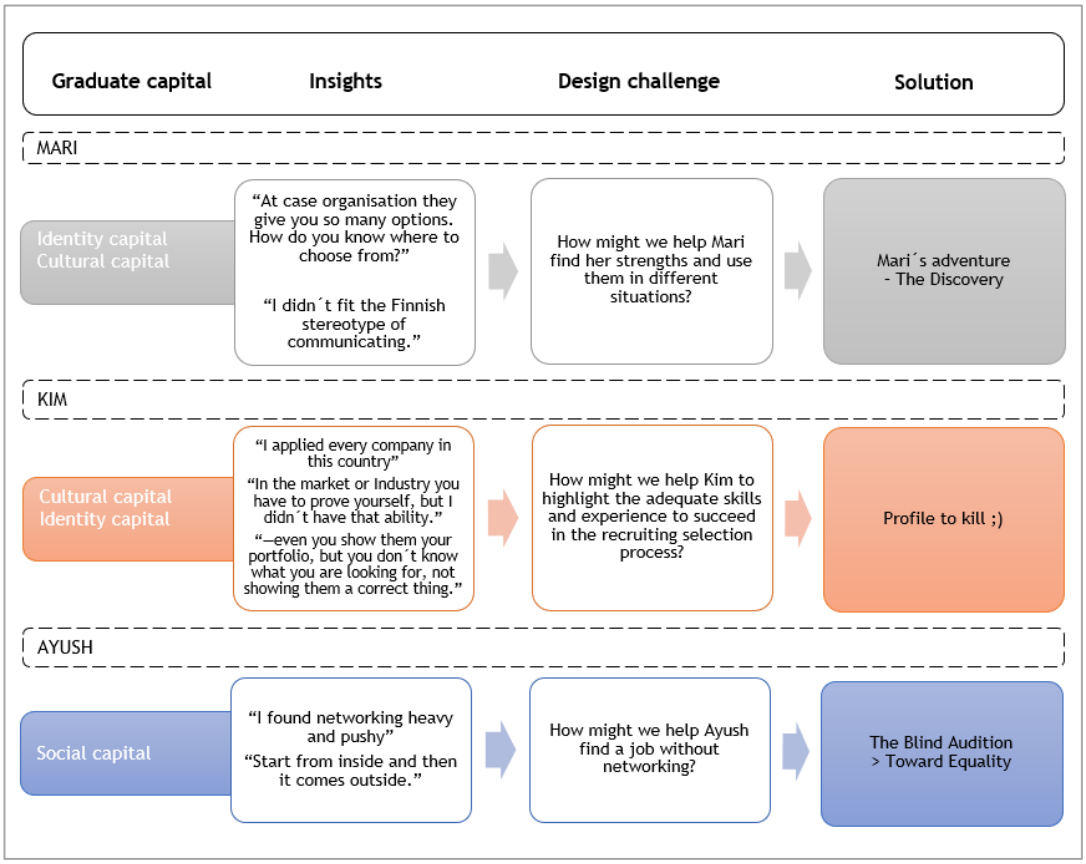

Figure 13: Three solutions to enhance the employability of students.

7.2.1 Mari´s adventure – The Discovery

Group "Mari" came up with a networking solution, which resulted in better self-awareness of the student. The solution is presented as a storyboard in Figure 14. The solution, a process, starts from a student´s need for advice and sparring. A student goes to the case organisation´s career services center, where a (staff) person guides the student in contact with company representatives for work-related discussions. Representatives of companies, mentors, and coaches, from which the student receives support and advice represent different fields and work in different roles. The collaboration with companies is not a matter of providing jobs or internships, but through discussions, the student understands themselves and their strengths and values. Thus, the discovery is better self-awareness. The design challenge, the How might we -question, was "How might we help Mari find her strengths and use them in different situations?" The design challenge originated from two key insights from the interviewees that represented identity and cultural capital from Tomlinson´s graduate model. The key insights were: "At case HE they give you so many options. How do you know where to choose from?" and "I didn´t fit the Finnish stereotype of communicating."

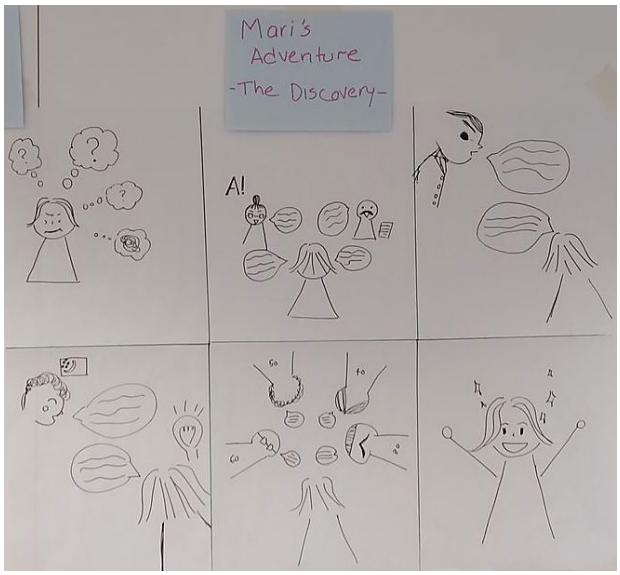

Figure 14: “Mari´s adventure – The Discovery” aims at better self-awareness

All respondents found Mari´s adventure – The Discovery a good solution. Interviewee 3 found the solution Mari´s adventure – The Discovery most applicable, as it gives s chance to the student or to the job applicant to learn about himself or still develop areas where he is weak, which, according to the interviewee, is essential in the employability. Also, interviewee 2 liked the ideas of the interviews, which did not need to have a specific goal or aim for an internship, but aim for self-approvement, which is very important.

Interviewee 3 pointed out that this solution was the best for long-term investment. He had learned about his weaknesses in mentoring in mock interviews with his mentor. According to the interviewee, not knowing oneself and working on strengths and weaknesses can be a significant factor in not getting to the final round of interviews. The interviewee pointed out that it is essential to invest in the learner, enabling organisational learning. Learning is about self-awareness, knowing oneself, and why Mari´s adventure – The Discovery, is on the right track. Also, constructive and sincere feedback plays an important role here.

7.2.2 Profile to kill ;)

Another solution, presented in Figure 15, from group "Kim" is called Profile to kill, which is the creation process of differentiated CV profiles. It is an iterative process to describe how a student should build their company-specific, tailor-made CV profiles by acquiring information about companies, their culture, and positions and adding innovativeness in their CV before sending applications. In the first phase, students create an individual file about their profile. Students introduce themselves to a target company through the internet and Youtube videos in the next step. Students also participate in relevant events, for example, mentoring events, job fairs, and conferences, to acquire more information about company culture and employees´ experiences. The aim is to create differentiated CVs and applications that add value to the company. The aim is also that the student presents themselves more innovatively than with a traditional CV, such as a video presentation. The design challenge behind this solution is “How might we help Kim to highlight the adequate skills and experience to succeed in the recruiting selection process?” The group chose the following insights as a

Figure 15: "Profile to kill" aims to success in the recruitment process.

starting point for their ideation process: "I applied every company in this country", "In the market or industry you have to prove yourself, but I didn´t have that ability." and "—even you show them your portfolio, but you don´t know what you are looking for, not showing them a correct thing." These insights are part of identity and cultural capitals by Tomlinson.

The interviewees liked this solution´s practical approach, and the importance of tailor-made CVs was recognised. Interviewee 2 found that the solution had a more practical approach, which is very important. When interviewee 3 or his colleagues applied for a job and were frustrated not finding one, they targeted their applications and inquired about the product and events to join. Addressing his own experiences in job search, interviewee 1 pointed out that the problem statement should have focused on the latter part of the recruitment process: getting to the interview instead of screening the CVs:

> "You have this problem that the killer CV is gonna help you through the first thing, but if you're having problems with like getting the interviewer to really, truly understand you and get your point across, then the killer CV is not going to help you with that so much."

Interviewee 3 addresses that keeping track companies´requirements requires much investment from the student. The long covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine have also brought changes to the job search. Interviewee stated that employers value self-direction and adaptability more than before, which requires a graduate to be more adaptable than before. "It´s up to applicants now". They need to be active and follow the internet and social media what is happening. "Companies are looking for guys that are more flexible, not the guys who need a boss all the time." These are the new capabilities or skills that employees are looking for. There we could have tools to fasilitate this change.

7.2.3 The Blind Audition > Toward Equality

The third solution, presented in Figure 16, is about organising anonymous online challenges, which combine recruiting companies and students. The solution enables shy students, like Ayush, to present their skills to the employer without networking. The case organisation facilitates the process and finds out the needs of the recruiting company in the first phase. The second step is about defining the challenge. The third phase is designing a good challenge, and the fourth organising the challenge event for students, for example, a blind coding event or anonymous art gallery. Before taking part in the challenge, students are asked to design their ideal career path. The challenge results will be shared with a company for evaluation in the last phase. The solution highlights the skills of the students whose strength is not in communication and social skills but perhaps in hard skills. Thus, it puts the shy students in the same line as extroverted networkers. The solution enables companies to know the candidates without prejudice and the candidates to have less "pushy conversation". The starting point for the solution were two key insights from the interviewees: "I found networking heavy and pushy" and "Start from inside and then it comes outside." The group formulate their design challenge as "How might we help shy people to find a job without networking?"

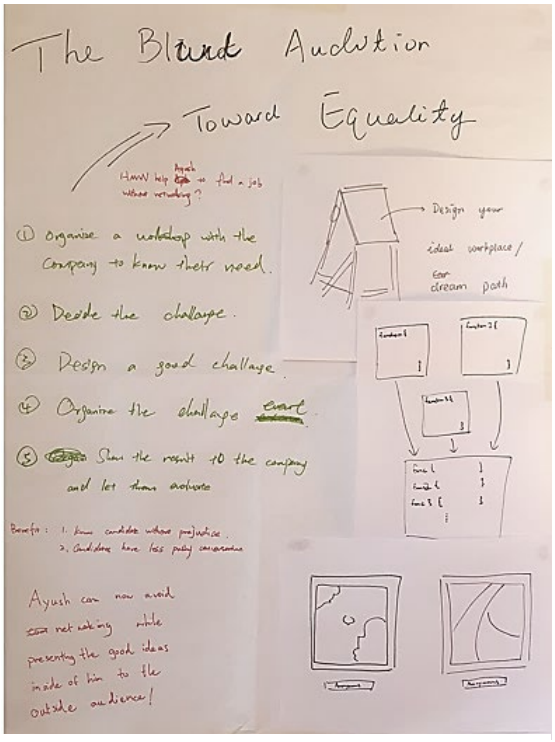

Figure 16: The Blind Audition > Towards Equality" aims to recruitment without networking.

Interviewee 2 found the solution exciting and neat, something that represented a different approach. For the interviewee, a good thing with the solution is that it is targeted at different kinds of people, also for introverts, as it does not require face-to-face communication. He also liked the process as it reminded a game. Something that could be tried, he said. Interviewee 1 found this solution a bit complicated since there are a lot of skills that a graduate needs but cannot be anonymised, like presentation or teamwork skills. "They cannot anonymise presence and clarity in your communication." According to the interviewee, technical skills, such as the coding presented in the solution, can be anonymised, but not when applying for, for example, sales and consulting positions. According to the interviewee, this solution could be well used in challenges where coders solve a real-life problem. The results would then be ranked "based on the clarity and the

procedure and the eloquence of the problem solving". This is possible to do in writing but not spoken, interviewee addressed. The interviewee tells an anecdote about American firms that anonymise job seekers 'ethnic origin, nationality, and gender. The interviewee had also applied to a Finnish company where anonymisation was used. However, many companies also use video CVs, which is challenging to implement anonymisation. Also, interviewee 3 mentioned that many universities are already doing this in job fairs where they organise blind interviews. Also, some recruiting companies are hiring anonymously.

7.3 The role of mentoring in employability building process

One of the study objectives was to understand the role mentoring plays in the development of student employability. Because the interview sample — or “selection” as stressed by Thomas (2011) — was so small, no general conclusions can be drawn from the results. However, the interviews brought essential insights into how the interviewees experienced mentoring in terms of employability.

Assessing the role of mentoring depends on the goals set for mentoring. Referring to the American and European mentoring trends presented by Montgomery (2017), the case organisation mentoring model incorporates features from both. However, the emphasis is on developing employability competencies, where personal development leads to career success at its best but is not a primary target. The graduate capital model of Tomlinson, presented in chapter 2, also relies more firmly on the European approach to development mentoring. As stated by Tomlinson (2017, 349), one of the key features and strengths of the capital approach is that it emphasises the importance of a variety of employability-generating resources acquired in different contexts. Capital is also acquired and used over time and its effects continue in a number of employment-related contexts. This perspective applies to mentoring as well, where the benefits can be seen later graduate´s career.

7.3.1 Mentoring fostering graduate capitals

Next, I will present the results of the interviews and summarise the benefits according to graduate capitals. Despite the small sample, the interviewees’ mentoring experiences are ranked in all five capitals (Figure 17). Out of the four interviewees, mentoring had the most profound impact on interviewee 3. The reason for interviewee 3 to apply to mentoring was that he felt lonely and needed support. For him, it was amazing that there is a free programme, where graduates act as mentors voluntarily. Mentoring programme gave the interviewee "a social life", support and guidance for life in general, and employment. The interviewee outlined how his mentor helped him settle in Finland and succeed in life - eventually, mentoring "changed his life". Interviewee´s mentor gave hands-on guidance in his job search and helped him find a job. The interviewee worked in a non-professional job

during his studies to get money to send to his family in his home country. The mentor took the interviewee to another city for a job interview, gave advice for the job interview, prepped him afterward, and advised him to approach the company even after the interview. After the interviewee graduated, his mentor encouraged him to apply for another degree and gave him practical advice for life in general.

> "I can easily say that your mentor was the one, but I would still say that it was a mentoring program. It would have not been possible to meet this lovely guy in the world, if I didn't get to this university and if I didn't get this program. It is all linked and it starts from that mentoring program."

Also, interviewee 1 was very happy with his mentoring experience. Interviewee 1 participated in mentoring because he wanted to get a job and hoped to get support for it. The latter objective was fulfilled, as he found valuable contacts through his mentor. This networking benefit is also supported by many researchers (e.g. De Cuyper & al. 2019; Jackson´s & Bridgstock; Smith-Ruig 2014), as stated in chapter 4. For the interviewee, the mentor was a person who opened up doors.

> "He really opened his notebook for me. He introduced me to everyone he knew. He was a really good mentor and a nice person. He helped me to navigate with these older Finnish people that I didn´t have access to otherwise."

Mentoring events played an important role for him, as he got a chance to widen his network. He stated that mentoring programme´s value lies in providing network opportunities for students. For two of the interviewees, the role of mentor was more of a friend. (SOCIAL) Interviewee 2 applied to mentoring programme because he was open for new experiences and felt that mentoring sounded nice. For the interviewee, mentoring did not have a role in enhancing the interviewees´ employability, but it provided a friendship kind of connection:

> "For me, that was like a little injection, you know, happiness. Just spending one hour with someone. Also talking was nice, he was really old, he also have a life experience. We have a lot of interesting in common, so I guess the people [in case organisation] did the job because it was just total match."

Interviewee 4 applied to mentoring because she wanted help finding her career path, knowing her next step, and what she should do in the future. Also for her, mentoring was "something very interesting", and she thought that one should have a mentor at every stage in life to guide in the right direction. For the interviewee, the mentoring experience was a bit different, as her mentor was a professor. According to the interviewee, a mentor from a company could have given more tangible help in finding a job. However, the interviewee found the mentor very nice and stated that "most importantly mentally mentor is also very important". Mentoring provided her with valuable support and friendship. Mentor was an important contact to have as a foreigner. Chatting with the mentor provided the interviewee

with different perspectives, alternative models for career paths, and concrete advice for a design idea.

7.3.2 How mentoring ranks in graduate capitals

In terms of **human capital**, so-called hard skills are primarily received through study lessons, not in mentoring. On the other hand, some sectoral expertise is also acquired through mentoring. One of the interviewees mentioned that she had received valuable advice for her design work. Instead of hard skills, the career building skills presented by Bridgstock (2009) have a central role, including, for example, support for job application and interviews.

The role of mentoring in promoting **social capital** is prominent. Mentoring expanded the interviewees networking opportunities and offered a close contact from a mentor. Mentors of mentees 1 and 3 brought them close to job opportunities, opening you up a door towards the labor market. According to Tomlinson, social capital increases the graduate's knowledge of the labor market and thus promotes its utilisation. Mentoring broadens the mentee's image of job opportunities and potential markets/places. Mentoring makes employer representatives "available" to students.

Cultural capital is especially emphasised in the setting where the mentee is an international student who receives cultural guidance from a local mentor. Thus, cultural guidance was addressed in the interviews. Some interviewees highlighted the role of their own personalities in job search. According to Tomlinson (2017, 344), the ability to demonstrate interpersonal and behavioral expectations expressed in a particular area of an organisation is important. Therefore, the demonstration of embodied capital through accent, body language, humor, and the general "Personality package" is relevant. Mentors can have a significant role in conveying tacit sector- or company-specific information to the mentee (e.g., Reeves 2017). How does the Finnish work culture differ from the work culture of an international student? What are the differences between the different sectors? How can mentoring help bring information about these "behaviors" in the field?

Participation in mentoring can already be seen as a step towards **identity capital** development, as it is a proof of student´s willingness to develop him/herself. Interviewee 3 stated that before mentoring, he could not find a job was because he did not know how to prove himself to employers. According to Tomlinson (2017), graduates should be able to demonstrate their competences to an employer, instead of just listing skills. Holmes presents a pragmatic approach for identity method: the student should develop ways to present their identity and prove that they are worthy of the job they are applying for. Also hearing about

career options accumulates student insights from the working life and helps them to focus on their career.

Career and life guidance and friendship were mentioned as **psychological capital**. Given that mentoring is about relationships mentoring already basically develops a student's psychological capital. All the interviewees had struggled with their studies and/or in getting employed. Thus, the role of a supportive mentor was important. As stated by Brown (2012), and Koen and al. (2012), career adaptability learning is important for students to manage disadvantaged situations they will face.

Figure 17: The benefits of mentoring according to Tomlinson´s (2017) graduate capitals.

7.3.3 How does value emerge in mentoring?

As noted in Chapter 5, the value of mentoring is employability, more specifically, graduate capital. In mentoring, value is created in a conversational relationship with the mentor, but from the perspective of the accumulated employability capital, especially in the student's own world. As stated before, the value creation of mentoring is not limited to the mentoring service situation but the current, past, and future life of the mentoring are strongly linked to mentoring (cf. Heinonen & al. 2013). This is why customer-dominant logic describes the value creation of mentoring particularly well. According to Heinonen and al. (2013), value creation occurs not only in a limited service situation but also in the experiential context of the customer's life. Mentoring also extends to the student world in the dimensions of study, work, leisure, and interpersonal relationships. Mentoring takes place in this complex world, and its semester (including only the duration of the mentoring program) is also strongly linked to the student's current world. Heinonen and al. (2013) suggest that value is not created but it emerges partly unconsciously. With regard to mentoring, an essential consideration is that the mentee may not be aware of the benefits of mentoring at the time of mentoring. An insight into the benefits can arise at the very moment when the knowledge, doctrines, and ideas obtained are of practical use. According to Heinonen and al. (2013), the service experience and thus the perceived value is contextual. The actor's experience of mentoring is

significantly influenced by his or her life situation, such as his or her study and work situation and personal experience of being in Finland. As stated previously in the mentoring literature, mentoring is associated with proximal and distal outcomes (Wanberg & al 2003, Haddock-Millar 2017). Because the development of employability through capital is a long-term event, the benefits of mentoring can only be realised over time. In Koen´s and al. (2012) study of career adaptability training, the benefits were not immediate but came with time.

I have sought to describe these contextual and temporal dimensions in the value creation process for mentoring (Figure 18). The image is a modified version of the image of Heinonen and al. (2010) presented in Chapter 4, which describes the differences between different business logics. However, I do not distinguish between the onstage, backstage and support activities of the service provider´s world. The reason for this is that they do not show value to the customer in his or her life. Such as Heinonen and al. (2010, 535) state: "--the challenge of the service company becomes to manage onstage and backstage actions so that they support the network of customers' independently orchestrated activities.

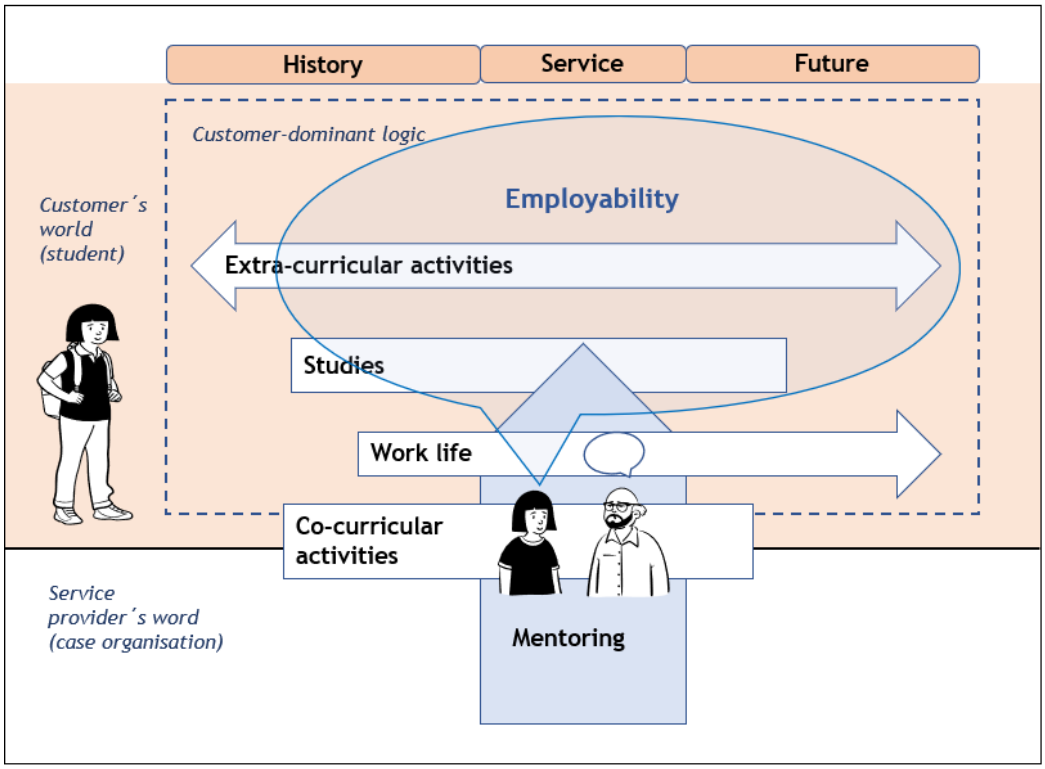

Figure 18: Value formation for a student in mentoring according to customer-dominant logic. Modified from Heinonen and al. 2010.

7.4 Summary of results

The results of the study are summarised in Table 3. The table presents a relation between the perceived employability factors of the graduates, solutions designed in the workshop, mentoring´s value, and five graduate capitals examined earlier.

Based on the study, all five graduate capitals have a central role in the employability building of students and graduates. The interviews highlight the role of social connections and networking for employment and how important the support and guidance provided by the case organisation is for students' self-confidence and self-awareness. Also, ability to communicate and prove one´s competences, good job-application skills, and adopting to local culture are addressed.

With respect of mentoring´s impact and role on students´ employability, different factors were highlighted in the interviews. In mentoring, developing career building skills, including job-application skills, is central. In the social aspect, mentoring provides with contacts and networking opportunities enabling employment. Mentoring brings information about Finnish working life and cultural practices to promote students´ cultural capital. Mentoring provides a framework for developing one's own identity through a dialogue and support and helps a student to increase their self-awareness and resilience. Proximal value is created in the interaction with the mentor, but distant value emerges primarily during a longer time perspective in students´ own ecosystem.

Three concepts resulting from the ideation workshop were suggested to find practical solutions to enhance students´and graduates´employability in mentoring. The focus of the first solution — gaining perspectives through discussions with company representatives — is firmly on self-development and the individual’s learning process. Of the three solutions, this was experienced most applicable in validation discussions. Another solution was the iterative CV creation process with an aim to highlight adequate skills and experience to succeed in the recruiting selection process. The pragmatic solution was praised, although the problem was also seen at a later stage in the recruitment process in job interviews. The third solution with an anonymous online challenge enables students to present their skills to the employer without networking. The solution highlights the skills of the students whose strength is not in communication and social skills but perhaps in hard skills. This was considered a fresh idea, but its applicability in different fields was challenged.

Graduate capitals (Tomlinson 2017)	What is central in employability? (according to interviews)	How the solutions from the service design process enhance students´ employability?			What value does mentoring bring in terms of employability? (according to interviews)
		Mari´s adventure – The Discovery	Profile to kill ;)	The Blind Audition > Toward Equality	
Human capital	Sufficient professional skills and job-application skills	Gaining new information in discussion with company representatives	Practice of job-application skills (tailor-made, differentiated CVs)	Emphasizing use of hard skills. Improvement of career building skills.	Hands-on guidance for job-search and interviews; Advice for a design idea; Help in finding a job
Social capital	Networking, connections with company representatives and peers	Discussions with company representatives offer new contacts.	Joining company events provides with networking potential.		Network opportunities, mentor opening up doors Social events, social life Friendship
Cultural capital	Cultural fit and improving oneself. Showing engagement to stay in Finland.	Understanding the commun ication styles related to different company cultures	Acquiring information about companies, their culture, and positions	Acquiring information about companies and their needs.	Help in settling in Finland and gain success in life Help in navigating with “older Finnish people” (decision-makers) Mentor important contact for foreigner
Identity capital	Communication skills for exposing one´s hard skills	Ability to use strengths in different contexts; Improving self-confidence and awareness	Ability to highlight adequate skills and prove one´s skills	Exposing one´s hard skills through an anonymous challenge	Help in learning to prove oneself; Personal investment in employment (participating in mentoring); Understanding alternative career paths"
Psychological capital	Self-confidence and self-awareness to scope in labor market. Support and guidance received within HE institution.				Support and guidance for career and life; Mental support; New experiences and satisfaction

Table 3: Employability factors and solutions to enhance graduate employability. The table also shows the value mentoring brings to employability.

8 Conclusion

This study aimed to understand how students and graduates can enhance their employability and what role mentoring plays in employability-building. The objective was to develop existing mentoring and career services in the case organisation to meet the different aspects of employability better. The development work was conducted as a service design process using service design methodology. The primary research data was collected from in-depth interviews of four graduates with an aim of having a deep understanding of the topic. Tomlinson's (2017) graduate capital model and key insights from the interviews with graduates were a starting point for an ideation workshop with seven students and two graduates. As a result of the workshop, three solutions for employability enhancement were suggested.

Assessment of the development setting

Conducting research solo can easily lead to researcher bias (Stickdorn & al. 2018). To avoid the bias, several researchers should be included in the data collection, synthesis, and analysis. As the study was conducted by the author only, researcher triangulation could not have been made without the possibility of engaging colleagues. It would have been beneficial to conduct the study as a small group, but this was not possible. Being aware of the researcher bias, attention to tendencies with the interpretations and conclusions was paid special attention. The whole design process was run through in four months, alongside the author´s work. For this reason, the author did not have time to conduct several workshops engaging even more different stakeholders, including personnel from the case organisation or more graduates. Also, the ideation phase, where the aim was to find possible solutions for enhancing students´ employability, was run on a tight schedule, thus being more like a design sprint than a long-term design process.

The small number of interviews to obtain a representative sample was also a cause for concern. However, the interviews provided a good sample of different perspectives and insights as a basis for the workshop and direct development suggestions to promote employability. Holmes (2013, 546) criticizes how graduate employability surveys are conducted as questionnaires measuring individual skills. In this study, the data collection was done through interviews, and the focus was on the quality data instead of quantity. This also allowed for a completely different research approach to what the survey offers. The interviewees were able to reflect on their own employability without employability being presented as a series of different career skills. According to James and al. (2013, 959), case studies provide a better understanding of graduates´skills with questions how, where, and how. Another challenge in mentoring surveys is that the effectiveness of mentoring is often examined as part of a broader career survey. Many forms of employment promotion that may be part of a mentoring or mentoring programme are mapped out as separate services. For

example, mentoring was one of the 12 strategies in Kinash´s and al. (2016) study, where they studied how students, graduates, employers, and universities perceive employability strategies. The other strategies included, for example, career advice, attending networking or industry information events, and developing graduate profiles, portfolios, and records of achievement. These are often essential parts of the mentoring programme and one-on-one meetings between students and their mentors.

Future development opportunities in the case organisation

As a result of the development work in the case organisation, three solutions for employability enhancement were suggested. The solutions were the outcome of the ideation workshop with a target to create a solution — a tool, process, method, task — that an (international) student/graduate could use to enhance his or her employability. The final step in the design process was to validate the solutions in the interviews. The next phase is to examine which solutions or parts of the solutions could be implemented as new or parts of existing services. The coaching and mentoring solution "Mari´s adventure – The Discovery" is a concept for a new service. Its student-centric development perspective fits the case organisation´s career design approach well. Guidelines for creating a tailor-made CV ("Profile to kill") could be provided as part of existing career training and mentoring tools. An anonymous design challenge "The Blind Audition" could perhaps be promoted as a part of recruitment services for companies. The next step in the design process is to have another iteration round in the case organisation, as Figure 19 presents. The first step is to frame a roadmap for the design process. Next, an ideation workshop for the personnel will be conducted following a prototyping round and ask more stakeholders, e.g. students and graduates, to join. Then prototypes will be validated either within the prototyping sessions or as separate validation interviews. The outcome of the process is a new service or development of an existing service to enhance graduate employability.

The study proves that it is essential for students to be active in strengthening their own employability and developing their employability in various ways — including career adaptability and malleability — to face the precarious world of work. To succeed in the future labor market, students and graduates need to develop all five employability capitals, not only within higher education, but also in extracurricular activities. The ultimate responsibility for developing employability lies in students´ own efforts, but Higher Education Institutions have an important role in facilitating this development. Thus, students should be better helped to meet post-graduation challenges. Here, collaboration with companies and graduates plays an important role. Support and guidance given to the students, including mentoring, highly benefits students. Mentoring provides a framework, a locus, for students to develop their employability capitals, gain contacts and support, and even direct employment. While students are the driver of identity formation, it is a shared responsibility among stakeholders concerned with enhancing graduate employability (Jackson 2016, 934-935).

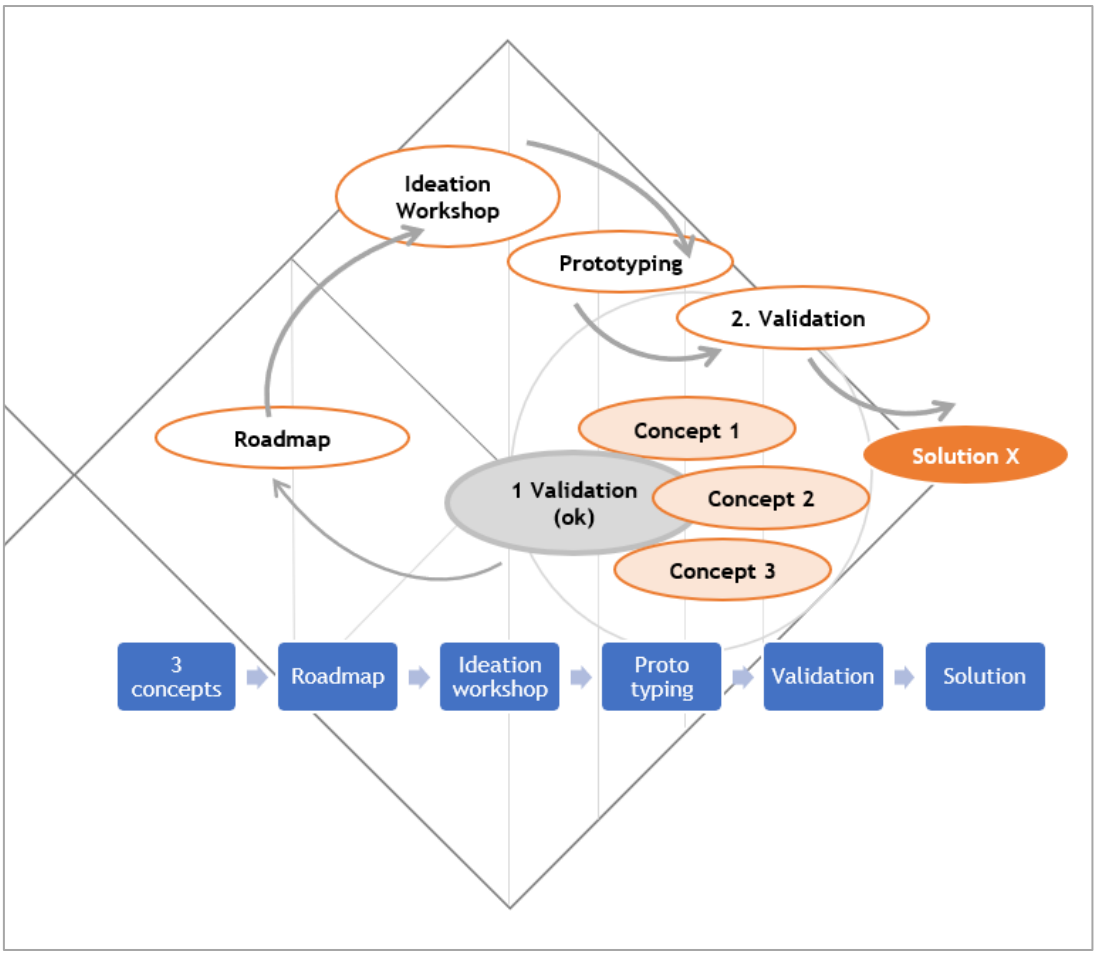

Figure 19: Next steps in the design process.

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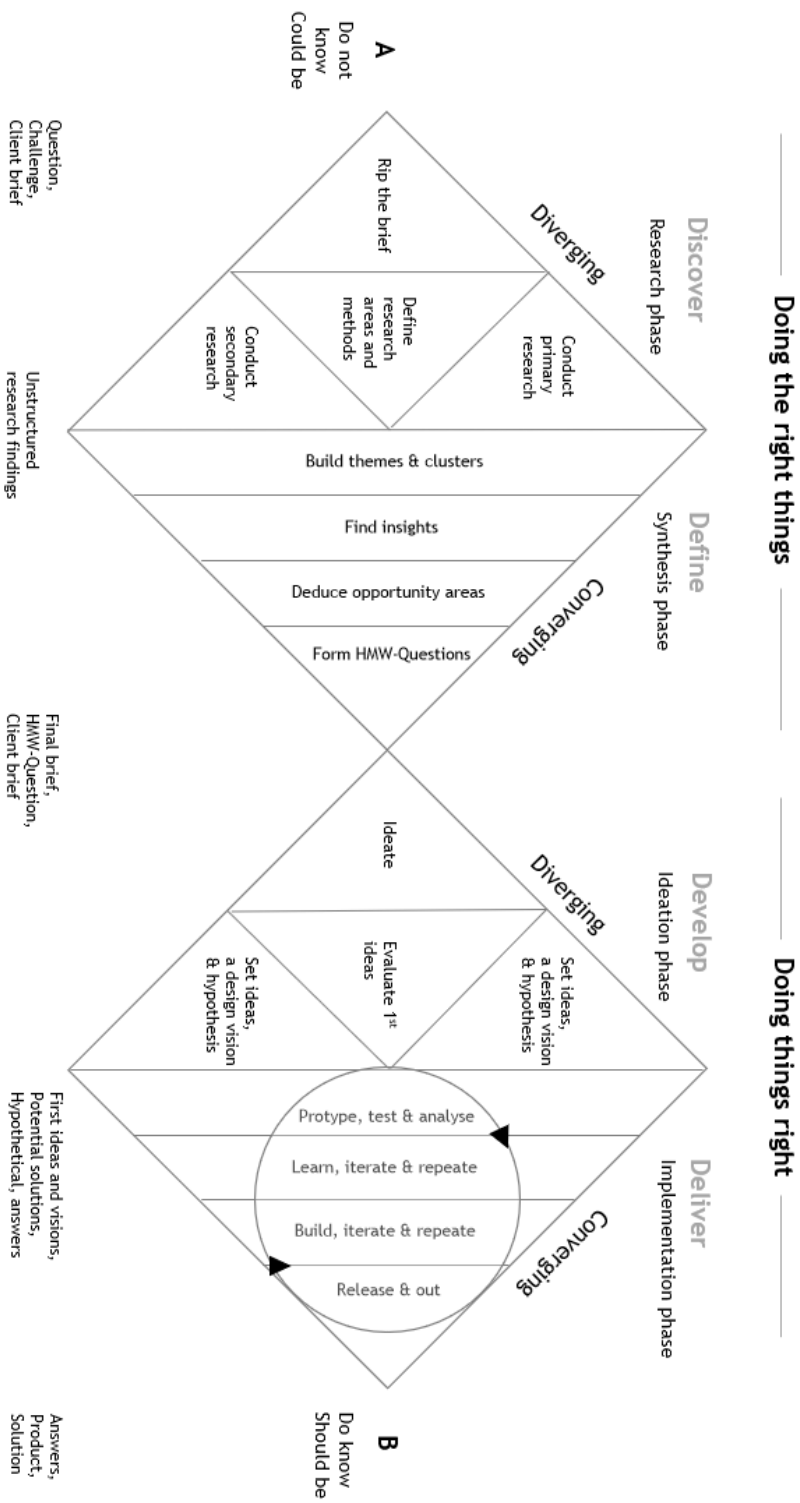
Figures

Appendices

Appendix 1: Revambed double diamond model by Nessler 2018.



Appendix 2: Interview field guide

Interview field guide

Introduction

- The purpouse of interview

Warm-up: Arrival to Finland

- Could you tell me about your arrival to Finland? How did you end up studying in the case university?

Study time in the case university

- Could you describe your study time in the case university?

Career services

- Could you tell me about your personal experience about the career services provided to international students in the case university?
  - Do you know what kind of career services are provided?
  - Have you used any while studying?

Mentoring experience

- I would like to hear about your experiences on mentoring
  - Why did you decided to participate the mentoring programme back in year xxxx?
  - Do you remember what were your objectives for mentoring?
    - Where those objectives fulfilled?

Graduation, job search and employability competences

- Could you tell me about the time when you were graduating?
- How was your experience in searching for a job? How did you end up applying for a job in Finland?
- When thinking about your own experiences and skills, which factors you find central in your own employability?
- On the basis of your own experiences and perceptions, which factors are important in finding employment in general?
- Now, based on your own experience, what could the higher education institution do to enhance international students´ or graduates´ employability?

To conclude

- Did we miss something? Is there something you would like to add?
- Is there something you would like to ask me?