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DEVELOPMENT ACQUIREMENTS
AND WORKING LIFE
COLLABORATION OF
INTERNATIONAL HIGHER
EDUCATION STUDENTS
Case: Digital Business Development


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DESCRIPTION

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Abstract This thesis is commissioned by Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Business Department. The research is a case study of an intensive study module Digital Business Development held in August 2014. The purpose of the thesis was to investigate international higher education students' development acquirements during a three-week Digital Business Development course. The research also investigated the success of partnership between Mamk, MPY and international higher education students in their joint project creating a mobile application. The research question of the thesis is how the students' development acquirements are improved during an intensive learning study module. Another research question of the thesis is how the stakeholder partnership between a local company and international higher education students is performed. The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of the corporate partnership model modified to Digital Business Development case study. The corporate partnership chapter introduces the risks and motivation for company co-operation and also discusses cultural dimensions. The entrepreneurship education and intrapreneurship are discussed in the theoretical framework as the theories have a close relation to the research objective of investigating the development acquirements of the students. The research was conducted by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The data for the research was collected by Webropol self-assessment questionnaire sent to the students in advance and after the Digital Business Development course, the students' learning diaries, MPY company representative email interview, and the observation of the Digital Business Development final seminar. As a result for our research, improvements in the students' development acquirements could be identified. The Digital Business Development course partnership was a success as the research data collected from the partners participating in the joint project was very positive and the international environment was appreciated. A need for company collaboration between Mamk and local companies can be identified from the research results. A partnership is needed to increase the development of students' development acquirements and real-life learning environments are beneficial for all the partners in the joint project.		
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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is commissioned by the Business Department Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences (MAMK) Business Department. The thesis is part of a project called “Open House”, which aims at developing the R&D activities in the universities of applied sciences of South Savo region by increasing the exchange of knowledge with working life. The universities of applied sciences in Eastern Finland aim at life-long learning and diverse adult education in addition to youth education.

MAMK is operating as the coordinator of the project in co-operation with KAMK and KYAMK Universities of Applied Sciences. Each of the universities of applied sciences will execute the working life exchanges and other activities with their own co-operative companies. The universities of MAMK, KAMK and Kyamk are operating in Eastern Finland where new entrepreneurial skills are needed because of the shifts in the entrepreneur generation. The business industry of the area is in need of educated young people and experienced professionals to support the regional competitiveness.

The Open House project aims at increasing co-operation of teachers and students between working life experts and to increase teachers’ long-term working life periods. Teachers’ working life periods enables the possibility to discover co-development needs of the co-operating companies, which can be further processed into student projects.

The purpose of the Open House project is in improving research and development competences of teachers, students and working life experts as well as piloting new and different learning environments. Learning environments may be e.g. 24-hour camps organized for students.

The thesis will focus on researching students’ development acquirements and building company partnerships in an intensive learning environment designed for international higher education students. The learning environment was organized as an intensive study module, called Digital Business Development course, which is a part of the Open House project. The Digital Business Development course was organized by MAMK and it was held in August 2014. During the three-week intensive learning

study module, the students implemented a development project, a mobile application, for local a company to enhance the students' working life competences, especially development acquirements. During the Digital Business Development course, the students worked in international groups and participated in the lectures related to digital business were held by international lecturers.

Mikkelin Puhelinyhdistys Oyj, later referred as MPY, is the co-operation company in the Digital Business Development course. MPY is a Finnish company specialized in IT-services. (MPY 2014). MPY's ICT- services and products consist of IT hardware and server systems, data centres and cloud services software, printing and IT consulting service. MPY operates in the Eastern Finland area and in Vantaa and Tampere. (MPY 2014). During the Digital Business Development course the students will make two types of mobile applications to the MPY. The applications to be created are event application and smarhome application for elderly people.

2 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

The thesis aims at answering the question of how students' development acquirements can be improved as part of general working life competences. The focus will be at examining development skills of students of university of applied sciences. The results of the research reflect the improvement of development skills against the previous knowledge of the students regarding their development skills. The research question of the thesis is how the students' development acquirements are improved during an intensive learning study module.

The Open House project's purpose is to help improve them by developing the student's development acquirements in an international learning environment. For international students the intensive study module is an opportunity to assess and evaluate their overall working life and development acquirement skills, so they can understand how to develop them.

The objective of the thesis is to examine students' expectations related to the project's intensive learning environment. During the intensive study module of the Open House

project, the students improve their digital business development skills. They will also improve the development acquirements as a student of university of applied sciences.

Another research question of the thesis is how the stakeholder partnership between a local company and international higher education students is conducted. The research emphasizes understanding how company experience international student projects as a co-operation method. The objective is to look for feedback from the partnership company to understand how the stakeholder partnership is beneficial to them.

The purpose of the thesis is to gather information about the company's expectations related to the students' performance in the project. The thesis will observe how the expectations of the co-operative company are fulfilled in the project, and underline what competences are important from the company's point of view. In this research we will highlight the company and student's points of view by gathering information of their expectations and outcomes of the project. The project's objectives for the company are in improving working life connections to graduate students of the local universities of applied sciences.

3 RISKS AND MOTIVATION IN PARTNERSHIP

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of investigating students' working life competences, especially examining development acquirements improvement related to business management competences. The thesis topic is related to many theories and for that reason, the framework is a mixture of social sciences, educational and behavioral studies, and business. Due to the nature of the thesis and topic related to it, the theoretical parts are combined from several frameworks and adapted to match the thesis' overall contents. The main theories which are focused on the thesis are corporate partnership and entrepreneurship education. The reason these frameworks are chosen for the thesis is because they are related to the thesis objective and support the practical part of the research methods.

The research methods realizing the theory consist of the following:

- Questionnaire and self-assessment in advance and after completion of the intensive learning module for the participating students
- Long-term investigation during the intensive learning module in the form of student diary
- Interviews with the representatives of the company in co-operation with the project
- Observation of the students' familiarization with the co-operating company and the project presentations

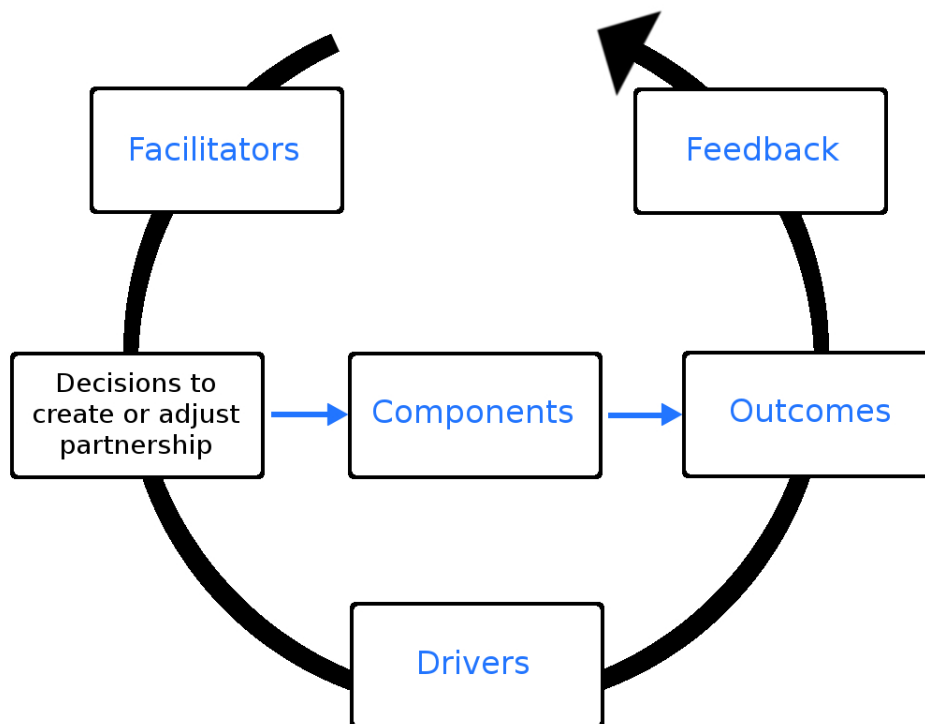
By using corporate partnership framework and entrepreneurial education theory we are able to get information for both research objectives.

3.1 Characteristics of a corporate partnership

A partnership or collaboration starts always with a shared interest and need. People need to be motivated to step out from their comfort zone and seek collaboration in order to find a solution or ideas for the current problem. Finding different kinds of solutions and possibilities requires that people work together with someone who might come from a different culture and background, have a different kind of philosophy or have totally different perspectives to the current matter. (Leawitt & McKeown 2013, 25). In the best situation collaboration can decrease the risk of investment and increase the return by a shared risk and opportunity. (Leawitt & McKeown 2013, 11).

The theory of corporate partnership is discovered and adapted to the case's stakeholders. The thesis investigates a three-way partnership of these stakeholders because they all have a common interest to engage themselves in a partnership with each other. According to partnership theory a partnership is a tailored business relationship based on mutual trust, openness, shared risk and shared rewards between two parties. (Lambert 2008, 22). The results from partnership are achieved by the stakeholders who are working together for a common interest. The partnership consists of:

- Facilitators that enhance partnership growth
 - Decisions regarding partnership: creating new or adjusting the old
- Drivers: the reasons for partnership
- Outcomes and expectations that arise from performance
- Components of partnership: the processes enhancing or creating partnerships
- Feedback back to drivers, facilitators and components



PICTURE 1. The partnership model. Adapted from Lambert (2008, 21)

The drivers for partnership and to partner with a private sector company are in developing competitiveness, and offering services and collaboration possibilities. This is reflected in a case where higher education institutions provide a course in an international environment, as a cross-border partnership. The participating students from higher education institutions crossing national borders is a basis for the cross-border partnership. According to Knight (2005a) the cross-border education as a term means the “movement of people, knowledge, programs, providers, policies, ideas, curricula,

projects, research and services across national or regional jurisdictional borders”. (Sakamoto & Chapman 2011, 19). The motivation for collaboration in a higher education, in the cross-border environment is in building an international reputation and adding value to the institution name as well as generating revenue. The cross-border education is in general context considered a rapidly growing industry of enormous cash flows. (Sakamoto & Chapman 2011, 5-6).

The drivers for a partnership with students are to improve the competences of the institution’s members and to provide new ways of learning in an innovative learning environment for students. The motivation for the higher education institution is student and staff advancement, and meeting differentiating needs of students in addition to other motives mentioned. (Sakamoto & Chapman 2011, 31, 33).

The private sector collaborating in a partnership is motivated by the benefits from students’ efforts and skills in their competences fields. (Sakamoto & Chapman 2011, 48-49). The drivers for the students for partnership and to enrol in the course in Digital Business Development are in improving their competences and having opportunity for real working life professionals’ co-operation as part of their studies. All of these drivers lead to a mutual benefit as the parties are able to work together to increase the development of business in the area while developing the students’ working life skills.

Facilitators are the environmental factors which add the possibility for the success of the partnership. Facilitators include the compatibility of the corporate cultures, management philosophy and techniques, perspective of mutuality between the partners and the degree of symmetry between the firms. These facilitators represent the environment in which the cooperation happens and how easy or difficult the cooperation is. Facilitators are those aspects which either help or hinder the partnership between partners. If the managerial effort and resources are committed in building and enchanting the relationship, partners will receive the better results with lower efforts. (Lambert 2008, 21.)

The partnership components are: the degree and type of the communication between partners, level of commitment and trust, type of contract used, activities between the companies, and the degree of joint investment. The components are the foundation on

which to build the relationship as they include activities and processes of a joint partnership. Components sustain and build the relationship. (Lambert 2008, 22.)

Outcomes and expectations project the performance of the partnership and the ability of the partners to meet the goals of their initial drivers for co-operation. Outcomes of a successful partnership may be: profit enhancement, process improvements, or an increase in competitive advantage. Effective management and appropriate establishment of the partnership improve the performance and the outcomes of the cooperation. (Lambert 2008, 22).

3.2 Collaboration Framework and Risk

By establishing a collaboration framework the success of the collaboration can be managed properly. If a mutual project fails, it has an effect on personal and organizational levels. The risks for a mutual project ending up in a failure might be in the resource allocation such as time, money, and people. (Leawitt & McKeown 2013, 11.) Collaboration may be more difficult for competitive companies even though it can be beneficial to combine the best knowledge and practise from both parties. If people have got used to doing business in a certain way, the collaboration may not be easy as both parties have their own egos, agendas, preferred styles, and biases. (Leawitt & McKeown 2013, 10.)

If the goals and objectives aren't communicated clearly, the risks increase in the cooperation. The lack of communication may lead to misunderstanding and cause unnecessary inconvenience. The different objectives and expectations may also cause risks in the joint project. If the partners have different kinds of levels of expertise, knowledge, investment or assets, it may cause risks arousal among the partners. If the project doesn't receive sufficient leadership and support in the early stage, the risk is also more likely to occur. Cultures and management styles have also a significant role and may result in poor performance, integration and cooperation in partnership. (Northern Ireland Business Info 2014.)

Reference group/ stakeholder communication can be adapted into our corporate partnership theory, because for our commissioning company, Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, the MPY is a reference group not only a partner. In responsible busi-

ness a company who is seeking for reference group the focus is in determining the aspects that are responsibilities of the company. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 130). As mentioned earlier “if the goals and objectives aren’t communicated clearly the risks increase in cooperation” so that’s why the company should be motivated to establish proper stakeholder communication. In order to premise the existence of the company and its business activities communication is important. Other motivational factors effecting the stakeholder communication is the interest in the knowledge of the stakeholder/ reference group, development of business activities, and leadership. Conflict forecasting and management is also easier if the stakeholder communication is properly conducted. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 131.)

There were international students participating in the Digital Business Development course so there where different kinds of cultures represented as well. Cultures have effects on people’s behaviour and manners, and how they perceive different things. Culture can be kept as an organization which has its own beliefs and assumptions, behaviour of the members, and the definition of itself to the external environment. (Burns 2005, 104).

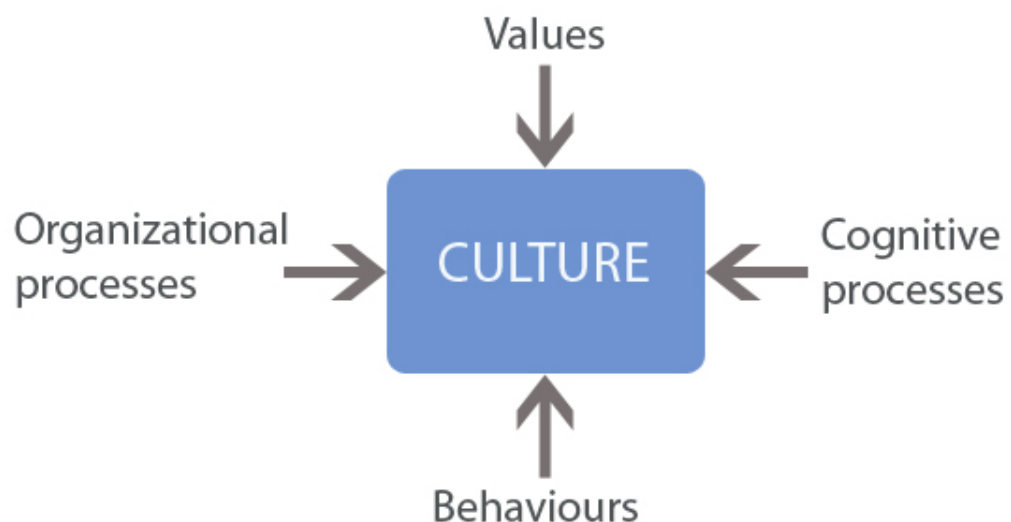
3.3 Cultural dimensions

Hofstede (2005) has defined the dimensions of culture as follows:

- Individualism versus collectivism. This dimension refers to extent that people prefer to work as individuals rather than in a group. Entrepreneurial people tend to be individualistic and they build teams around them which they lead. In the collectivistic culture individuals appreciate close networks and operate as members of a group. The collectivistic culture isn’t that competitive when compared with the individualistic culture, even though in the collectivistic cultures “in-group” teams may compete with “out-groups” which don’t belong to their tribe.
- Power distance: To which extent the community is willing to accept the inequality between people. In the low power-distance cultures, the relations between people are open and informal, information flows are unrestricted, and

the organization structure is usually flat. In the high power-distance cultures, hierarchies are present and relations are formal. The information flow is restricted, and the organization structure is rigid and hierarchical.

- **Uncertainty avoidance:** How do people perceive uncertainty, and do they prefer structured over unstructured situations. Cultures with the low uncertainty avoidance are more willing to take risks, prefer flexibility, and highlight personal choices and decision making. The low uncertainty avoidance culture is motivated by rewarding initiatives and team-play. In the high uncertainty avoidance cultures, people appreciate rules and procedures, highlight compliance and punish errors. The high uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to be loyal and pay attention to details.
- **Masculinity versus femininity:** Achievement, assertiveness, competition and success are the qualifications of a masculine culture. Financial and material achievements with the high social status and prestige are the rewards of the masculine culture. Modesty, ability to compromise and co-operate are the traits of a feminine culture. Quality of life, personal relationships and “soft” values are important for the feminine cultures. (Burns 2005, 112.)



PICTURE 2. Constructing culture. Adapted from Burns (2005, 106)

Organizational culture consists of values, behaviour, cognitive and organizational processes. (Burns 2005, 106). For entrepreneurial organizations such as Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, values are essential and fundamental to make the organization successful. Creativity, achievement, ownership, change and perseverance are the values that can be related to entrepreneurship. Organizational processes include leadership styles, structures, empowerment, controls and rewards, routines and stories. Cognitive processes consist of ethics, beliefs, assumptions and attitudes, in addition to norms and rules of conduct. Behavioural aspects are the things that are related to actual actions in an organization such as: how things are done and what kind of vocabulary is used in the organization. (Burns 2005, 106.)

3.4 Motivation for collaboration

According to Pintrich & Schunk (2002, 5) the determination for motivation is a process where “goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained”. Motivation involves goals and activities around it. Motivation is something that makes people do something through goals which usually are long-term goals such as getting a degree or having a nice working place. Long-term goals are important for individuals to face challenges and sustain motivation.

In Digital Business Development project, the motivational issue for students are the long-term goals in getting their degree and gaining knowledge. The motivation and interest of MPY lies in the hope for new ideas for a mobile application. The commissioning and administrative role of Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences is motivated by its position in South-Savo and the mission of developing the local business environment and increasing its stakeholder activities.



PICTURE 3. Customer relationship building. Adapted from Lockwood & Walton (2008, 107)

If the collaboration is risky, why do partners still seek partnership? The most obvious reason for collaboration is to increase the competitive advantage of both parties. In addition, the other benefits gained from the partnership are motivational factors for the partnership. Benefits gained from the partnership can be:

- access to knowledge and people, meaning that the risk is minimized by increasing the knowledge received from the people.
- increasing effectiveness by creating more appropriate products or services
- increasing efficiency by reducing costs due to the shared project
- support and enable innovation by using new approaches to concur complex issues

- development of human resources, meaning that the partnership increases the working life skills and competences of the employees, especially in the cross-functional partnership
- sustainability development by being more effective and efficient
- organizational reputation and creditability increase as a result of the partnership

(The partnering initiative 2014)

The stakeholder/reference group theory argues that the motivation for partnering can be the shareholder value maximation or stakeholder thinking. The shareholder value maximation is based on shareholders' motivations, needs and profit maximation at the cost of the stakeholders. Putting effort and attention to the needs of a stakeholder is the base of stakeholder thinking. The stakeholder thinking also argues that the shareholder companies exist only for their stakeholders or through them. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 60-61.) Effectiveness perspective also occurs in the stakeholder/ reference group theory. If the stakeholders are involved with the shareholding company, it may lead to the growth of the business or increase in profits. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 61).

Companies usually first determine their own values, and then consider the partnering company's values and the correlation between them. For both parties, it is important to remember that the values aren't usually the same, but the cooperation can still be successful if the stakeholder communication and interaction is active. A company takes into consideration its stakeholders expectations, goals and values, which usually leads to added value for customers, employees and shareholders. (Kujala & Kuvaja 2002, 62).

4 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND INTRAPRENEURSHIP

4.1 Characteristics of entrepreneurship education

The entrepreneurship education theory is related to students' development acquirements because it drives the individual learning process and the background for learning as it is related to the life-long learning concept. The entrepreneurship education theory includes life management, interaction, self-guided action, innovation capacity, and abilities to face changes. (Opetusministeriö 2009, 7.)

Interaction related issues for life-long learners are that they have good communication skills and they are into meeting new people. The life-long learners have good written and spoken communication skills and they are capable of delivering their messages to others effectively. The life-long learners focus on building personal relations and they have good social and collaboration skills. (Adams 2007.)

Life-long learners should have the ability to embrace and face changes. In case of a positive life-long learner attitude towards changes and problems usually, leads to innovative thinking and solutions. The life-long learner is able to identify problems, assess possible solutions, evaluate solutions and possible consequences, and make decisions. (Adams 2007.)

Life management for life-long learners mean the set of organizational skills such as personal/private life skills, working life competences and attitude towards learning environment. Previously mentioned skills consist of time management skills, problem solving and decision making processes, and ability for reviewing. The ability to plan is a skill that life-long learners should have and it is related to the nature of life-long learners who tend be goal-oriented and focused on achievement. (Adams 2007.)

As the life-long learner is committed to achieving certain things in life eg. working place in his/her life, the decisions of the learner are based on self-guided actions. A good attitude towards learning, and working helps life-long learner to achieve his/her goals for example in working life. Life-long learners need to have good confidence in their own abilities in life. The ambition towards life leads life-long learners in their actions. (Adams 2007.)

The life-long learning is based on the individuals' own will to learn and the learning can take place everywhere, not just in education institutions. The life-long learning

can take place in working places, hobbies or other civilian activities, and it can occur at any life cycle of an individual. The life-long education is the facilitator of the life-long learning concept for individuals. (Pohjonen 2002, 11-12.)

The entrepreneurship education as a subject of learning debates whether it can be learnt or not. There are different perspectives, and Kuratko et. al (2005) claim that entrepreneurship can be taught to individuals, while Nicolaou & Shane (2009) other claim that entrepreneurial characteristics are in-born and can't be learnt. There is also a debate of defining what entrepreneurship is and how it should be taught. The components affecting the assessment of how to teach entrepreneurship are the teaching methods, course content design, target audiences and student assessment procedures (Mwasalwiba, 2010).

Studying “on-the-job learning” is showing that entrepreneurial skills are learnt, but these studies are focusing on situations when individuals are learning from experience operating in a company rather than learning by studying in a classroom. This is why training and education both help individuals to achieve the mind-set of entrepreneurial thinking combined with a will and desire to turn the knowledge into working life competences. The culture and procedures of entrepreneurship of each education level (in this case, higher education) are understood best in co-operation with a suitable environment, such as company co-operation. (Rae & Carswell, 2000). Other suitable learning environments in addition to companies/working places, which increase the entrepreneurial activities can be a school's club activities, company visits and meetings, and different kinds of simulations. (Opetusministeriö 2009, 19).

On-the-job learning aims at increasing the cooperation between education and working life, help working places to find employees, introduce the working life rules and practises to students, increase individuals' skills and competences, make the stepping for working life easier, and increase the knowledge about job markets, and also enable the exchange between teachers and working life experts. (Pohjonen 2002, 18). As the working life environment and technology are developing all the time, constant learning is required in education and working life. The distinction between working life and education is diminishing, and that's why on-the-job learning needs are increasing. (Pohjonen 2002, 24).

Students have significant roles in the success of on-the-job learning. If a student is motivated to learn and takes responsibility for the learning him/herself, the on-the-job learning is more likely to be successful. The interaction between on-the-job parties such as the student, education system and company has to be active in order to make the on-the-job learning concept successful. (Pohjonen 2002, 17.) The responsibility of the education system is to preserve the interaction between companies and making new contacts. Education representatives should also support new kinds of education practises and learning environments. The working places/companies should be open to take “apprentices” and provide support for students during their on-the-job periods. (Pohjonen 2002, 17.)

The role of higher education is to integrate entrepreneurship across different subjects and courses, notably within scientific and technical studies. (EUR-Lex 52006DC0033/2006). For higher education entities the public authorities support is needed to provide high-quality training for teachers and to create networks which share and foster good practices. Supporting the mobility between higher education teachers and working life is necessary, and the working life experts should be involved with the teaching. (EUR-Lex 52006DC0033/2006.)

Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences is a higher education institution that does Research and Development work and offers services to local companies. Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences profiles itself also as the life-long learning institute. (Mamk 2014) In the Mamk 2017 strategy, is mentioned that Mamk offers (2014) “high quality higher education where real-life development cases are strongly present.” The Mamk 2017 Strategy states that (2014) “education and R&D activities are combined, which renews the education and brings impulses to the development work.” It is also mentioned in the strategy (2014) that “Education and working life are more in cooperation” and “To encourage entrepreneurship new working methods in cooperation with the companies.” The Open House project and the Digital Business Development course are examples of how Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences’ Business Department is applying the working life cooperation within South-Savo Region in accordance with to the overall strategy of Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences.

The purpose of entrepreneurship education is to adapt the entrepreneurial spirit into students' personal life. The main objective of entrepreneurial education should not be in creating new businesses. According to Koironen and Peltonen (1995,10) if entrepreneurship education and other means of learning are successful, the benefit is transferred into working life and the organizations become more innovative, more productive and of higher quality. Constant learning is a key success factor for organizations to be effective and to be able to develop its operations. (Koironen & Pohjansaari 1994, 69).

Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences has experience in using innovative learning environments in its education and the results from the intensive week learning have been good. According to Aaltonen (2013) intensive learning environments are quite efficient way of learning for students. The outcomes of an intensive week studies are improvements in students' decision making as they need to work under pressure during the limited one week of studying. For international intensive week participants, language skills are essential, and as a result the language and communication skills improve during the intensive international learning environment. The international participants/students gain experience how to work in cooperation with other students who come from different cultures. The real life challenges the students face forces them use creativity in problem solving and increase team-work abilities of students. Stepping out from their comfort zone in unknown environment with unknown people increases the self-confidence of the students when they realize that they can manage the situation and get the assignment done.

According to Aaltonen and Itkonen (2013) when students participate in this kind of intensive learning "requisite courage, language and communication skills and entrepreneurial spirit" are extremely useful. Aaltonen and Itkonen (2013) also state that the intensive learning environments/weeks "generate considerable learning outcomes", which are worth investing in. Multicultural and international learning environments are possible learning grounds for understanding different ways of doing things, which usually brings added-value as new ideas and styles are represented. (Paasonen & Toriainen 2013, 111).

4.2 Intrapreneurship concept and innovation

The concept of intrapreneurship can be determined in several ways but Antoncic and Hisrich (2003) offer the following definitions: individuals inside organizations pursue opportunities independent of the resources they currently control, doing new things and departing from the customary to pursue opportunities, a spirit of entrepreneurship within the existing organization and a creation of new organizations by an organization, or as an instigation of renewal and innovation within that organization in their research.

Innovation is a process that turns creativity into reality. (Kuratko, Goldsby & Horsby. 2012, 6). Innovation capacity and drive for innovative solutions by taking risks is a qualification of an intrapreneurial person (Molina & Callahan 2009). According to Drucker innovations cannot be replicated, taught or learned. (Drucker 1985, 122). By this previous sentence Drucker (1985) refers to “miracle cures”, which occur in the medical field from time to time. In addition, the innovation has the same feature as “miracle cure”: it is extremely rare. Innovative thinking is a matter of choice for every human, but there are some characteristics that determine innovative thinking, which occur from investigating entrepreneurship and innovativeness traits. (Kuratko, Goldsby & Horsby 2012, 10).



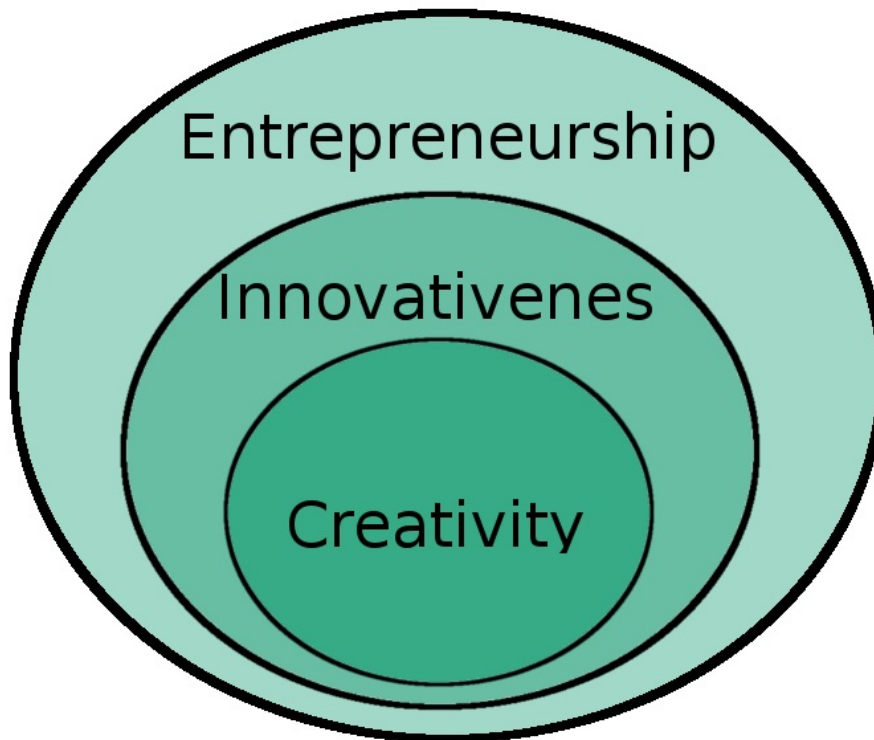
PICTURE 4. The core of entrepreneurship. Adapted from Koiranen & Peltonen (1994, 7)

People who have adapted innovative thinking can be considered goal oriented, driven by achievement, risk-taking, creative, and most of all determined and perseverant. Entrepreneurial characteristics such as passion for business, a tolerance of obstacles, perseverance, trust, determination, risk management, a positive attitude towards change, the tolerance of uncertainties, initiative, the need to achieve, punctuality, an understanding of timeframes, creativity, an understanding of the big picture, and motivation. (Tautila 2010.)

By assessing an individual's perceptions towards problem solving the innovativeness of the individual can be exposed. The focus is in how the individual perceives problem solving instead of the expected outcome which innovation usually aims at. Whether the focus is on aiming at divergent innovation or aiming at perfection by using convergent thinking the individual behind it can be determined to be an adaptor or innovator depending on the attitude and approach to the problem. In the problem solving situations people are either adaptors or innovators. (Burns 2005, 244-245).

An adaptor usually selects a methodical and formal approach to problem solving. The focus is in the solving problems rather than finding new problems or additional solutions. An adaptor is means-oriented and enjoys doing things according to routines and current practices, in addition she/or he is capable of doing work that requires emphasis on details. An innovator is someone who approaches problems from different perspectives and is eager to identify problems and solutions for them. An innovator actively questions the current conditions and practices. The focus of the innovator is in the end of the problem solving situation, and usually an innovator has a low capability to do routine work. (Burns 2005, 244-245.)

Creativity and innovation are often considered to be the same thing. In reality, innovation comes from creativity and entrepreneurship comes from innovation. (Koiranen & Pohjansaari 1994, 10).

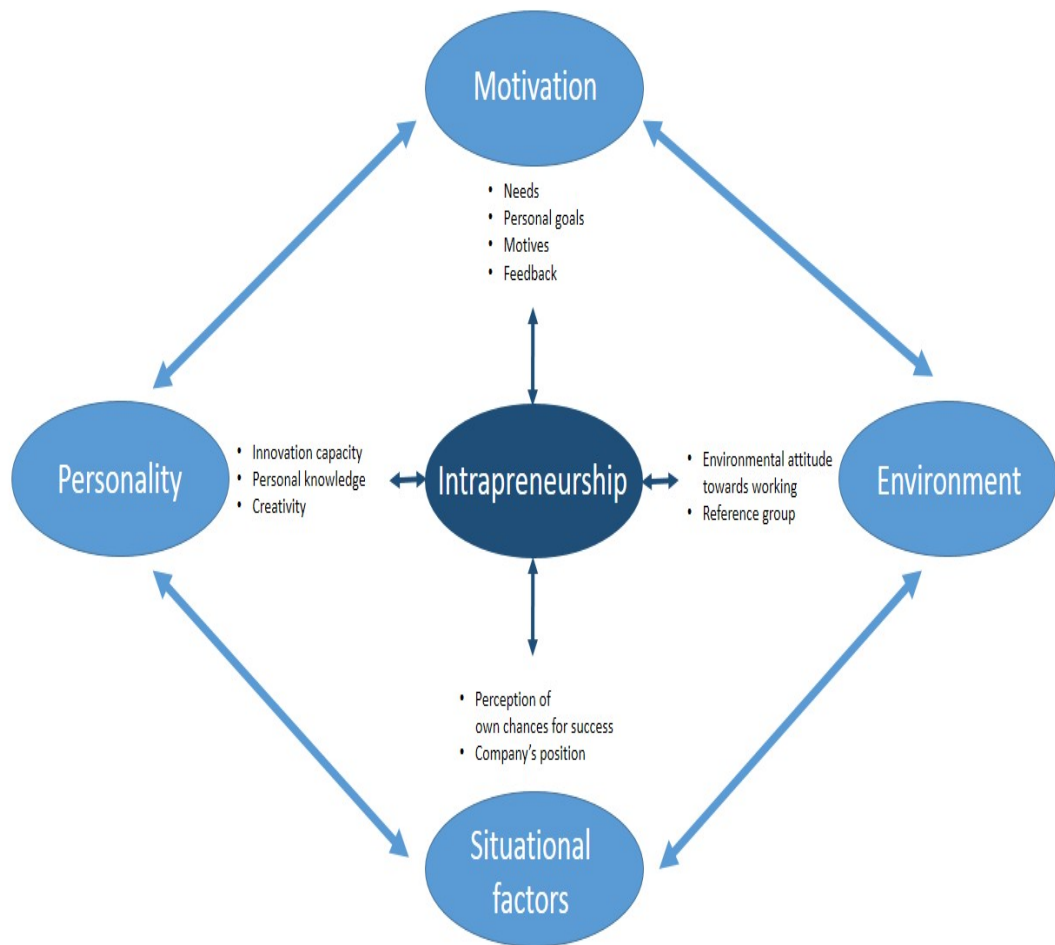


PICTURE 5. Relations between entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.

Adapted from Koiranen & Pohjansaari (1994, 33)

An intrapreneur is motivated to benefit from innovative possibilities. (Koiranen & Pohjansaari 1994, 11). Intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship have mutual characteristics and usually intrapreneurs have an entrepreneurial life style outside the working life.

The factors affecting the intrapreneurial attitude and instantiation in behavior are the individual's personality, motivation, and situational and environmental factors. Innovation capacity, creativity and personal knowledge are personality related characteristics. Motivational characteristics such as personal needs, goals and feedback affect the attitude towards intrapreneurship. Environmental factors such as attitude towards working and reference groups also affect on individuals' perceptions. The perception of one's own chances of success and the company's position are situational factors. (Koiranen & Pohjansaari 1994, 41.)



PICTURE 6. Factors influencing intrapreneurship on an individual level.
Adapted from Koiranen & Pohjansaari (1994, 41)

There are freedom factors that affect the intrapreneurship in an individual. According to Koiranen & Pohjansaari (1994, 74) Pinchot (1986) has determined freedom factors which refer to the factors when organizations give the employees the freedom to work as sole-entrepreneurs. The intrapreneurship should be voluntary in a company, the responsibility of innovation process should remain in the intrapreneur and, the intrapreneur should be able to make individual decisions when it comes to innovation process. Company or organization should set realistic goals for the intrapreneur, but still give space and resources for the intrapreneur to enable trying and developing new things. Risk tolerance in case of failure is also important to the company, as well as patience in supporting the innovation process. Supportive attitude from the other employees and cross-functional teams also enhance intrapreneurship in the company, as

well as possibility to use services outside the company. (Koiranen & Pohjansaari 1994, 74-75.)

Usually when it comes to innovations and the development of innovations, the individualistic approach and intrapreneurship are not enough to make the innovation successful. An innovation process requires a team around it, because innovation is complicated and multistage project and require knowledge from several sources. According to Kuratko et al. (2012, 212) the team in the innovation process should be selected by the organization based on the project.

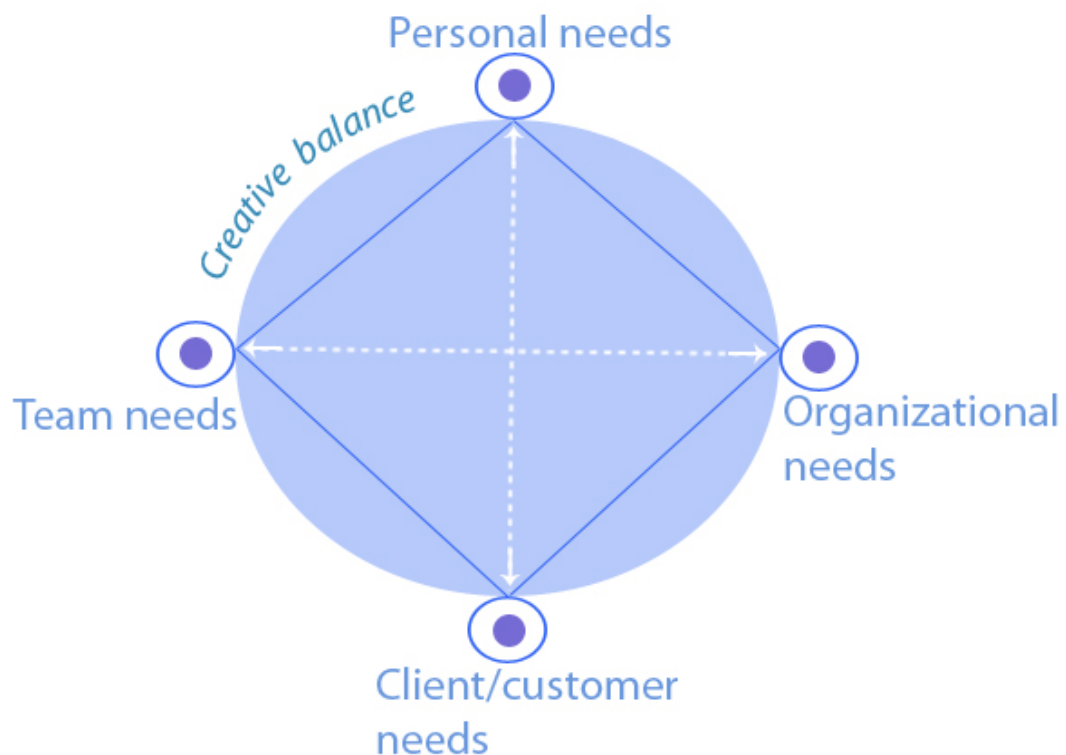
4.3 Innovation teams and communication

Teams can be organized by functionality, purpose, duration or discretion depending on the nature of the organization, the project to be performed, and the knowledge of the team. (Kuratko et al. 2012, 211). The team type dimensions depend on the nature of the innovation. Radical innovations which are meant to create something new may require team which has the following dimensions: cross-functional meaning that the team members come from different functional units in the organization, developmental focused teams are into creating new things and have a permanent approach due to the fact that creating new requires long-term focus. In case of incremental innovation, which aims at the development of some matter, the dimensions of the team are problem-solving focus, specific problem solving purpose, and short-term orientation due to the fact that team is dissolved after the task has been completed. (Kuratko et al. 2012, 211-212.)

Despite the fact how well a team has been organized there are still barriers which have an effect on the success of the team. Previous bad experience, prejudices, introverted personality, and being resistant to new approaches due to age and gained knowledge cause resistance to change in a team. A lack of clear direction and structure may also cause empowerment in a team. In a team there should be someone whose responsibility is to communicate and administrate the functions. The teams should never be used as a tool for downsizing or as a threat to employees' working places. These should be the common mission and goal, and communication for all the employees in order to

ensure employee security to make the teams work properly. (Kuratko et al. 2012, 223.)

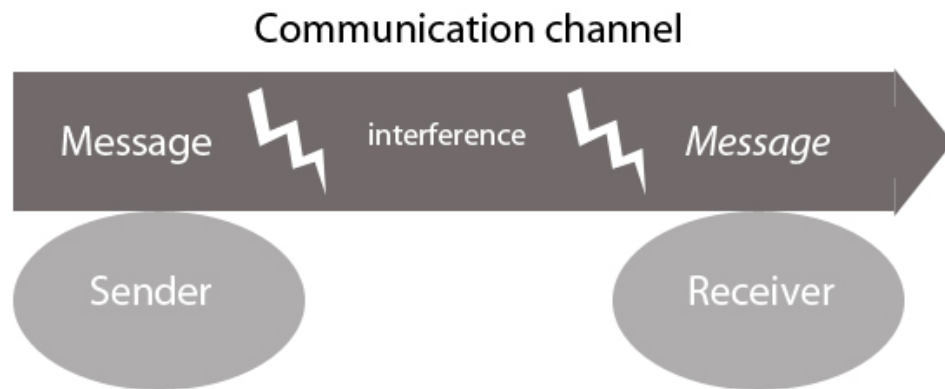
An overly structured team can cause demotivation, conflict, and a lack of cooperation when it comes to creative work. However a team which doesn't get support, focus or leadership for its operations may feel vulnerable, confused and isolated, and defensive or aggressive behavior may occur. (Lockwood & Walton 2008, 82).



PICTURE 7. Relationship and tensions in creative projects. Adapted from Lockwood & Walton (2008, 82)

Even though there are always a possibility for failure and pitfalls in every project, an organization has some elements that support the success of a project. Organizational elements include management commitment, training and development, information resources, reward systems, conflict resolution, and communication. (Kuratko et al. 2012, 215). The management of an organization should develop the team and the team managers, and ensure that the resistance to changes is at the minimum. Organizations should be able to invest in technical and interpersonal training of the team. An organization has to ensure the access for information sources to make the team perform at

the maximum level. Ensuring the access for information sources also helps the team understand and solve problems. Unfortunately the emphasis on the rewarding systems is in individuals instead of teams in organizations. (Kuratko et al. 2012, 215-216.)



PICTURE 8. Communication and interference. Adapted from Lohtaja & Kaihovirta-Rapo (2007, 13)

Communication can be regarded as the hardest part in the team-based environment. Communication can be regarded as a process where humans create and share meanings. People communicate through different symbols, which can be body gestures, or spoken language, and the meaning of different words/symbols such as “a dog is an animal” and facial expressions for example a smile is a symbol of friendliness (Wood 2000, 25). A communication process requires two persons: the sender and the receiver who change roles. (Lohtaja & Kaihovirta-Rapo 2007, 12).

Communication is changing information between humans. Communication transfers meanings through a code system. The code system can be divided into two different categories non-verbal communication and languages. (Wiiio 1989, 109.) Non-verbal communication consists of body language and figurative expressions. Languages can be divided into two categories: uncontrived and, artificial languages, for example computer language is artificial and different nations’ languages are uncontrived. (Jensen & Trenholm 2000, 86.)

According to Tuukkanen (2013, 18) Wiio (1989) has determined communication “laws” which have the perception that: communication usually fails and prospers only in random situations. If the statement can be interpreted in different ways it will be interpreted in a way which causes the most destruction. Communication failures are natural but still they usually cause conflict which can be difficult to solve if they are destructive from their nature. In case of a conflict the resolution should be as constructive as possible as it opens discussions, leads to innovative solutions, increases mutual understanding and communication in a team, highlights the importance of proper communication, and deepens individuals’ knowledge and skills as well as enables personal growth. (Kuratko et.al 2012, 218.)

Culturally diverse teams are more likely to face problems in their team communication. Cultural diversity increases the ambiguity, complexity and confusion in a team. Misperception, miscommunication, misinterpretation and misevaluation are more likely to occur, because the multicultural team members have their different expectations, and perception to relevant information and decision making concerning the team work. (Adler 2008, 134.)

5 RESEARCH METHODS

5.1 Qualitative and quantitative methods

According to Heikkilä (2002) “Qualitative research helps at understanding the research objective and explaining its’ behaviour and reasons behind the decisions.” The emphasis in qualitative research is in certain samples and the aim of the research is in analysing the subject in depth. Psychology and other behavioural sciences may be used as a help when interpreting qualitative research. Qualitative research aims at understanding certain phenomena. Data for qualitative research is collected less-structured and the data usually is in text form. Qualitative research answers questions: Why? How? What kind of? (Heikkilä 2008, 16-17.)

Quantitative research is based on statistics, such as quantities and percentages. Quantitative research investigates the dependency/correlations or changes occurred in the

samples/ certain phenomena. The sample size in a quantitative research is quite high in order to identify changes or correlations in the phenomena. Standard surveys/ research forms with already made answering options are used, and the data is described through numerical quantities and demonstrated with charts or figures. Quantitative research aims at describing the phenomena based on numerical/statistical data. Quantitative research answers questions: What? Where? How much? How Often? (Heikkilä 2008, 16-17.)

As our research can be regarded as a case study, it was important to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods to gain data for our research. A case study investigates particular phenomena in particular settings. (Adams et al. 2014, 98). Our research question was “How students’ development acquirements were developed during the Digital Business Development course?” which is an explanatory question in case study method. Another research question is our thesis was “How did the company find the co-operation with international students during the course and what were the outcomes of the joint project?” which can also be considered as explanatory question. To be able to investigate both research questions we had to choose both qualitative and quantitative methods in our research. Digital Business Development course is real life context course and we evaluated the success of the project for the company’s point view. Evaluation of the development of the development acquirements of the students’ points of view is also conducted in the research. (Yin 2012, 5.)

5.2 Methods used in the research

Methods of the research in this thesis are quantitative and qualitative because of the nature of the objectives. They include:

- Questionnaire and self-assessment in advance and after the completion of the intensive learning module for the participating students
- Long-term investigation during the intensive learning module in the form of a student diary
- Interviews of the companies in co-operation with the project

Observation of students' familiarization of co-operating companies and the project presentations

5.2.1 Questionnaires and self-assessments

In doing self-assessment an individual assesses his/her actions. Self-assessments increase individuals' consciousness of their own experience and results for the actions. Critical thinking and understanding are part of the self-assessment. Individual who is doing self-assessment takes distance and observes the own actions and thinking and also takes responsibility for the quality of the actions and thinking. Structuring his/her own experience, collection of his/her own observations, sharing and interpretation of it, and making conclusions are part of the self-assessment process. (Opetushallitus 1995, 38.)

The results for self-assessments are always subjectively infected, which causes the results to be unilateral. The appraiser is personally attached to the self-assessment, which makes the assessment process harder and the results are not objective. If the individual has a positive perception of his/her identity, the results for the self-assessment may be overly positive and exaggerated. On the other hand, if the individual has negative or critical perception, the results for self-assessment are probably negatively affected and unreliable. Either one of the self-assessment perceptions will not lead in constructive discussion if the perceptions are negatively or too positively affected. (Opetushallitus 1995, 49.)

The self-assessment questionnaire was sent through Webropol to the students participating in the Digital Business Development course. Due to geographic factors such as the students being from Europe, the Webropol survey was the easiest and most time efficient way of reaching them. Self-administrated surveys enable the distribution for the large number of respondents and minimize the time spent on the data collection period. (Zikmund 1997, 244).

Questionnaires provide the freedom for respondents to answer the questions when they have the suitable time. The freedom in filling in the questionnaire may lead to

longer response time, but the results received from the survey may be better if the respondents have had time to think of their replies. Using questionnaires may be hard work for researchers if they have to send follow-up messages or reminders to the respondents but still the questionnaires send via email are more cost efficient than personal interviews or phone calls. Using email questionnaires may also help in contacting the hard to reach respondents who find answering to questionnaires demanding or unpleasant. (Zikmund 1997, 244-245.)

As the questionnaire is sent through email, the researchers lose the control over the survey when it reaches its respondents. The questions presented in the questionnaire look the same printed, but they have different meanings for each respondent. The communication through email can be limited if respondents have something to ask from the researchers. The limitation may cause misunderstanding and affect the reliability of collected data. (Zikmund 1997, 245-246.)

When sending email questionnaires, the questions have to be standardized and instructions for answering have to be clear. If the instructions are unclear, it can lead to respondents' own interpretations and misunderstanding and the respondents may be unwilling to answer. The length of the questionnaire should be reasonable in order to make the respondents answer. Too long a questionnaire may cause demotivation for the respondent, because it requires a lot of effort, and the incentive is not usually that great in answering the questionnaire. (Zikmund 1997, 246.)

Response rate can be considered as the major limitation for sending questionnaires through email. In order to get a good response rate, the survey has to be designed properly. A survey which is too complex, unclear or boring usually doesn't receive high response rate. There is no assurance that the respondent will answer the questionnaire. If the response rate is low (less than 50%), there might be a problem considering the reliability of the survey. (Zikmund 1997, 246.)

Sending follow-ups and reminders may increase the response rate in survey research because it reminds the respondent about the survey and highlights the importance of each response. A properly made cover letter is important for the email survey's success as it introduces the research topic for the respondents and explains the purpose of

the research. By having interesting questions, the respondent is more likely and willing to answer the questions in the survey. (Zikmund 1997, 248-249.)

To make the questionnaire analysis work easier in our research we made some of the close-ended questions with the possibility to describe or explain the answers in the comment box. Five-point likert scale was used as the base of the questionnaire answering as the likert scale makes the answering and analysis easy. (Adams et al. 2014, 125.) As we had attitude related questions in the questionnaire, attitude statements were used to collect data about the students' attitudes and expectations related to the Digital Business Development course.

5.2.2 Student learning diary

In teaching, a student learning diary is considered as a pedagogical method for students to use in their learning. In our research we decided to use learning diary, because we wanted to know what the students were doing during the Digital Business Development course as we could not be present during the project and to see how they were developing their knowledge and skills. We also wanted to use a learning diary as a research method, because we considered that it is not that common research method when doing research.

Digital Business Development course enabled the selection for learning diary method due, because the three-week period which is suitable time for data collection period and not too long time for student who is writing the diary as maintaining the diary requires time and effort. (Adams et al. 2014, 97). When using learning diary as a research method the writers should be selected based on their ability to express themselves and ability to stay focused on the subject. When analysing learning diaries the confidentiality has to keep in mind and also take into account that analysing process requires time. (Adams et al. 2014, 97.)

A student learning diary can be considered as textual data for the research. Textual data can be for example formal reports, minutes of meetings, informal records or personal notes and memos. When using textual data in research, researchers collect texts during the research project, in our case study the students' learning diaries. In research

where textual data is collected, the researchers may also use text written earlier and use texts as secondary data. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 89).

Textual data is used as empirical material, because it is considered to be transparent. Transparency in textual data means that the text represents directly what has been studied. Data is based on the belief of the ability to human to tell about issues. It could be said that the text is a representation of reality. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 89)

In our research, the students' learning diaries are primary data for the research to able long-term investigation to students' development during the Digital Business Development course. As secondary data we used publications of the Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences and the thesis by Petra Paasonen and Anna-Maija Tornainen, whose thesis work was related to the similar topic.

5.2.3 Interview

In general, interviews are conversations between an interviewer and interviewee. An interview consists of questions and answers which are aiming at provide information related to the topic. The purpose of an interview is to provide empirical data for the study questions. Interviews can be made face-to-face, by email or by phone. An interview usually includes two persons, but group interviews are also possible. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 78.)

In our research, we interviewed the MPY representative via email, due to the tight schedule of the MPY representative. The purpose of the interview was to get information about MPY's insights related to Digital Business Development project and the results of it from the company's point of view. We wanted to collect data that would help us to answer the research questions related to the success of the joint project of MPY and Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences.

An email interview is considered to be asynchronous interview as it doesn't happen online. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 104). An advantage of the asynchronous interview is that researchers are able to contact the interviewee if he/she is having tight schedule. Sending an interview via email also gives the interviewee more time to re-

respond to questions as the interviewer is not waiting for an immediate answer. When interviewees have more time, they may consider more how to answer and what to answer, which may lead to better answers. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 104.)

An email interview should be less complex than interviews made for personal meetings. (Zikmund 1997, 383). Due to its nature, an email interview is a structured interview as it doesn't leave room for additional questions or conversation. In an interview the interviewee should be chosen based on that the respondent is the one who is holding the information related to research topic. (Adams et al. 2014, 145). We wanted to gather information on the experience of MPY and the outcomes of the Digital Business Development so the best way of gathering data was to interview the MPY representative Matti Muukkonen who was involved in the project in every stage. To be able to get relevant information we used both closed- and open-ended questions.

Open-ended questions enable the respondent to answer in his/her own words to the questions. (Zikmund 1997, 380). The answers of the open-ended questions may give unexpected information related to the research topic as the open-ended questions enable spontaneous and free form answers. (Zikmund 1997, 381). Open-ended questions enable meaning of the question to be clarified by the respondent, and answers are more in-depth. (Adams et al. 2014, 124).

Close-ended questions may be easier for the respondents to answer if the respondents find answering to questions hard or have difficulties in grammar or spelling. (Adams et al. 2014, 123). By using close-ended questions comparability between cases increases if there is a need for comparison in the research. Close-ended questions are easy for the respondent to answer as questions have certain meaning and the completion of the research is easier. The variability in analyst's interpretation is reduced when using close-ended questions. (Adams et al. 2014, 124).

5.2.4 Observation

Observation can be divided into participant observation and non-participant observation. In the participant observation, the observer is part of the observation group. A participant observation usually requires commitment for the observation group. In

direct observation the observer is watching for example situations (eg seminars) or people (eg students) to which the research topic is related. The time frame for direct observation is shorter than in the participant observation. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 87).

An advantage of the direct observation is that the data collection is made when it happens, so the data is as accurate as possible. In the direct observation, the researched people/sample are not able to describe or say what they believe has happened afterwards. The observation still doesn't offer a straight insight of the people or the sample motivation behind the actions or thoughts related to it. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 87).

In observation the attention should be paid into people's way of communication such as language and non-verbal communication. During the observation, the attention of researchers may be also in the coordination of the event (who initiates the event and what happens), the participants of the event (who is present or involved, what are their reactions and communication like), and the signals of the event (signals regarding the ending of the event, other communication and the correlations between other activities) (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 88.)

5.2.5 Validity and reliability of the research

Validity and reliability are matters which concern the quality of research. It is essential to be able to test the quality of research. (Wilson 2010, 116). Reliability in research refers to the extent in which the research results are the same in repeated trials. If the research is consistent and another researcher can come up with similar findings, the research can be considered as a reliable study. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292).

Stable and consistent results which are also repeatable are signs of reliable research. The reliability can be tested by using inter-judgemental reliability. In inter-judgemental reliability the people with the required skills or authority agree in their assessment decisions in the research. In testing and re-testing reliability, the reliability of the eg questionnaire is done again for the same participants in the research. Parallel forms of reliability use two different tools to assess and measure the reliability. An

alternative version from the original eg question is created and the correlation between responses is investigated to find out whether the results are reliable. (Wilson 2010, 116-117.)

Validity refers to the truthfulness and certainty of research findings. If the conclusions made in research are giving accurate information of what happened, the research is considered being valid. In qualitative research, the validity is related to guaranteeing that the report is correct. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292).

Validity refers to relationship between construct and its indicators. Multiple indicators are used in research when measuring a certain construct. By using multiple indicators, researchers are trying to cover the construct as a whole. (Wilson 2010, 119.)

Validity can be divided into two categories, which are internal and external. Internal validity consists of content and construct validity. Content validity deals with face and sampling validity, and the measurements of them. According to Wilson (2010, 120) “a construct is valid to the extent that it measures what it is supposed to measure.” Triangulation can be also used to identify potential problems of construct validity. Triangulation refers to using qualitative and quantitative methods in the research to validate the findings. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 293).

External validity refers to setting or other cases and how the findings from the research can be combined or generalized. The nature of the researcher has an effect on the external validity. If the researcher is positivist he or she may generalize too much on the results and then the sampling of the case is important. It can be said that the external validity is important for research to provide new insights related to the research topic and enable new and following research topics. (Wilson 2010, 121.)

6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESULTS

This chapter will focus on analyzing presenting the results of the research. The results of the thesis are based on the quantitative and qualitative research methods: students' self-assessment, students' diary, and interviews with the company representative and observation of the students which is described more specifically later in the chapter.

The purpose of the thesis was to acquire data about students' expectations and their development requirements related to the project's working life competence development. To receive this information, we wanted to engage the students to assess their own skills and expectations. Based on the characteristics of the development requirements and working life competences in the theory of the thesis, we drafted a self-assessment form that included 10 indicative questions. (Appendix 6).

To gain long-term investigation of the contents of the study module from students' points of view, a student diary was collected after the completion of the intensive learning. The students wrote the diary daily, and described their tasks and insights of the study module. The student diary was voluntary for the students and it was conducted anonymously. We drafted a model of the student diary in advance for the students (appendix 7). The purpose of the diary was to gain understanding how students perceived learning in a set environment and to see how the diary supported the understanding of the learning process.

On the day of the students' presentations, we used an observation method of the students' participation as a tool to gain data for our thesis. We observed and evaluated how much students had put effort in the seminar day as it was the most important part of their Digital Business Development study module. We were observing the students by listening and watching their performance and behavior on the seminar day.

We also arranged an interview with the representative of the co-operative company, MPY. The interview was executed via e-mail, because it was the easiest way for the company to answer our questions. The co-operative company representative, Matti Muukkonen who is Executive of Business Development, was interviewed shortly after the intensive learning module to gain understanding of the company's expectations and objectives concerning co-operational project. We wanted to include the company's point of view in the thesis in terms of evaluating its usefulness and the success of the project. In order to understand better which working life competences were important for the co-operating company, the interview had emphasis on them. (Appendix 8).

6.1 Self-assessments

We decided to send self-assessments in two parts: in advance before the students began their study module of Digital Business Development, and so that a similar self-assessment was collected after the students completed their study module. All the students participating in the study module were sent the self-assessment form a Webropol-survey link. Participating in the self-assessment was voluntary for the students and it was conducted anonymously.

The goal for the self-assessment was to find out if the students met their own expectations and benefited from the learning process. We also wanted to find out what expectations students had before participating in the study module and if they had previous experience of similar studies that were conducted in co-operation with companies.

The self-assessment sent for the students in advance (appendix 4) and after Digital Business Development included 10 indicative questions based on the theory of corporate partnership and entrepreneurship education (page 4, 12). The questions were formed as ranking scales combined with open-ended questions. The main purpose was to collect data of the students' self-evaluation of their skills, what expectations they had and how it is reflected in their learning. We wanted to design the questionnaire as a ranking scale to make it easy for the students to use their intuition when choosing the suitable option. We also wanted to ensure the answers that the students gave us would strictly reply to our research goals.

After the completion of the Digital Business Development study module, we asked the students to participate in another self-assessment. Originally we planned to send three self-assessment forms, so that we would collect also one of them in the middle of the course, but when planning the self-assessment, it seemed best to conduct it in advance and after the study module. This way we could narrow the similarity in the answers and keep the research objective more focused. Instead, we decided that during the Digital Business Development study module we would collect learning diaries from the students which would give an open chance for the students to write about what they felt was important for their learning.

The second self-assessment was sent a week after the Digital Business Development. It included similar questions to the one we sent before. As our goal was to find out how the students improved during the course, we wanted to keep the form and the questions united, and include open-ended questions for a feedback possibility. This way we could gain interaction with the students and get more in-depth answers of why they felt they have improved their skills or why felt they hadn't improved their skills. (Appendix 5).

TABLE 1. Self-assessment respondents in the first part.

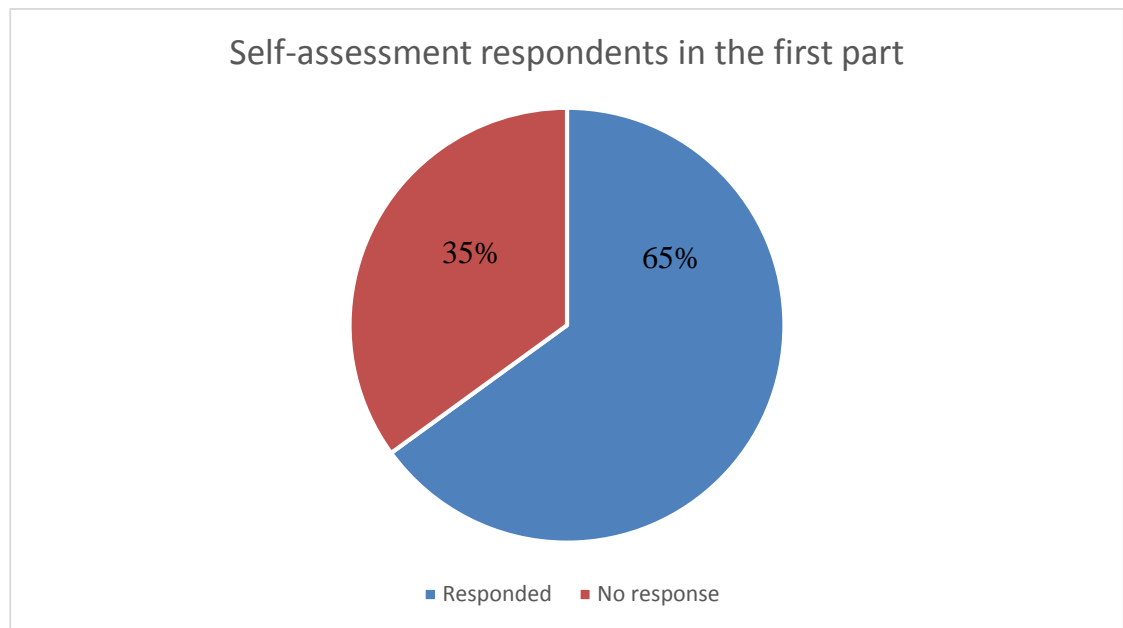
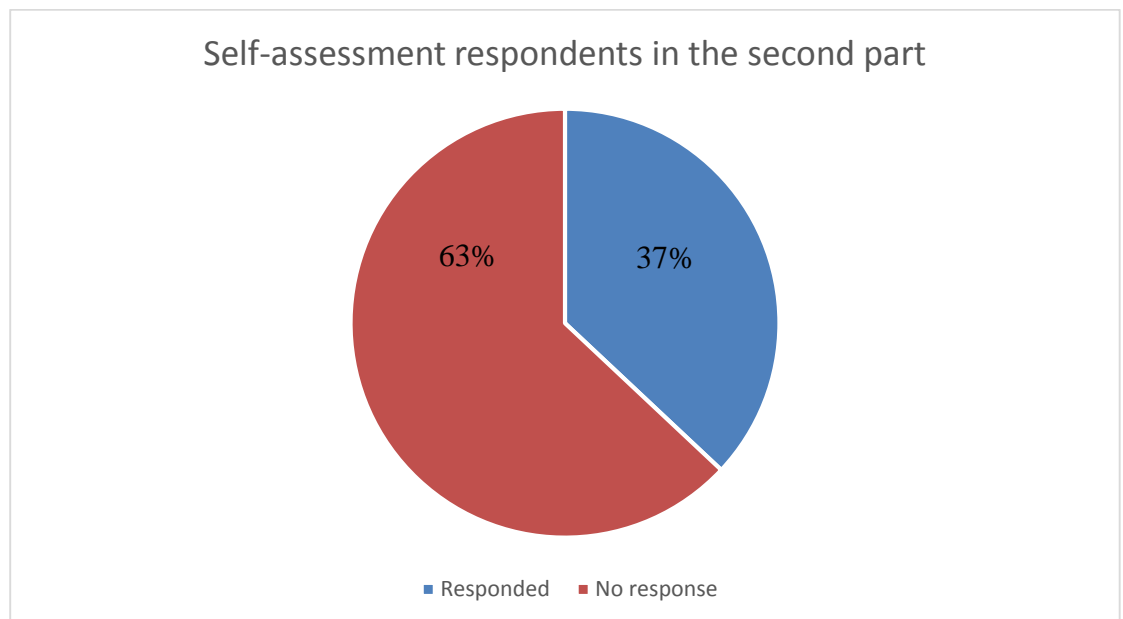


TABLE 2. Self-assessment respondents in the second part.



Both self-assessments had a good response percentage. In the first self-assessment, we received answers from 65% of the respondents (table 1). In the second self-assessment, we received answers from 37% of the respondents (table 2). We believe the second self-assessment was more difficult and time-consuming for the students and therefore had fewer respondents. As we are only comparing the results of the two self-assessment with each other, and the results of the self-assessment are related to the course contents and not compared to any generalized fact, the results are viable to be used in our data analysis.

As our self-assessment included open-ended questions and ranking scales where students chose the best option and only one option, the processing of the data was done by using different methods. The first and the second self-assessments were compiled in a Word file, which created tables of the responses from each section and questions. These parts are easily comparable to each other when put side-by-side to one Word file compilation. The open-ended questions' answers were processed through a Word file as well, so we could compare the answers between the respondents. The difficulty of the open-ended questions was that some of the respondents gave really in-depth answers and some only answered in a few words. In future it would be better to set a minimum of words to the open-ended questions part to receive similar answers length and content wise, for improvement of the structure.

6.2 Results of the self-assessment 1

As mentioned above, the response percentage rate of the self-assessment was fairly satisfying (table 1). The self-assessments were completely voluntary for the students to participate. We wanted to include in our first self-assessment also a part which would give us background information of the respondent types. All of the respondents were students in a higher education institution (table 5).

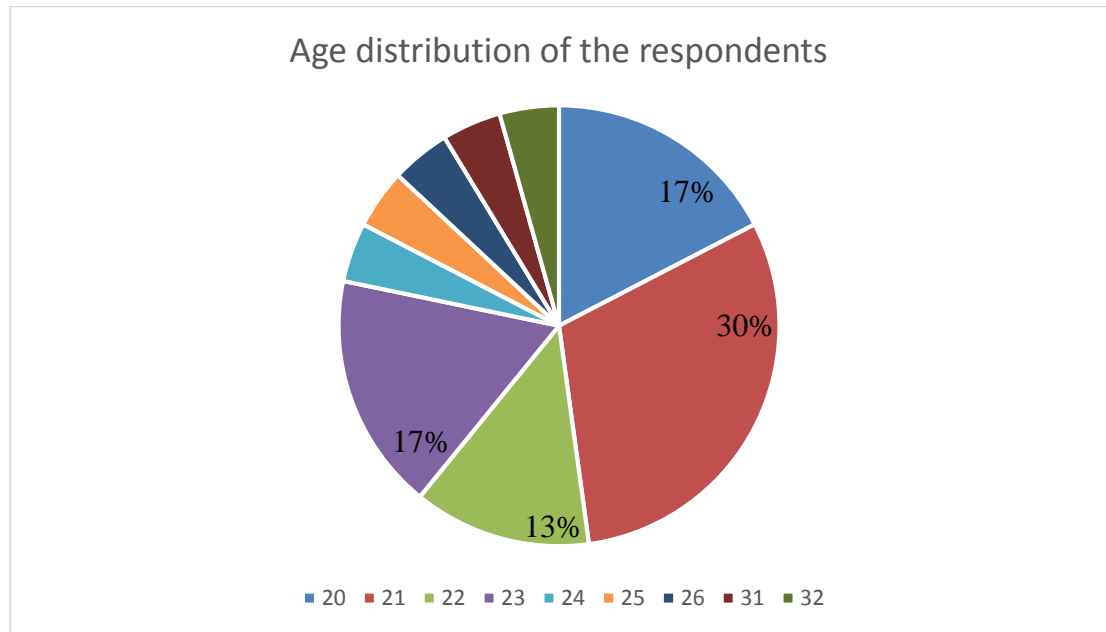
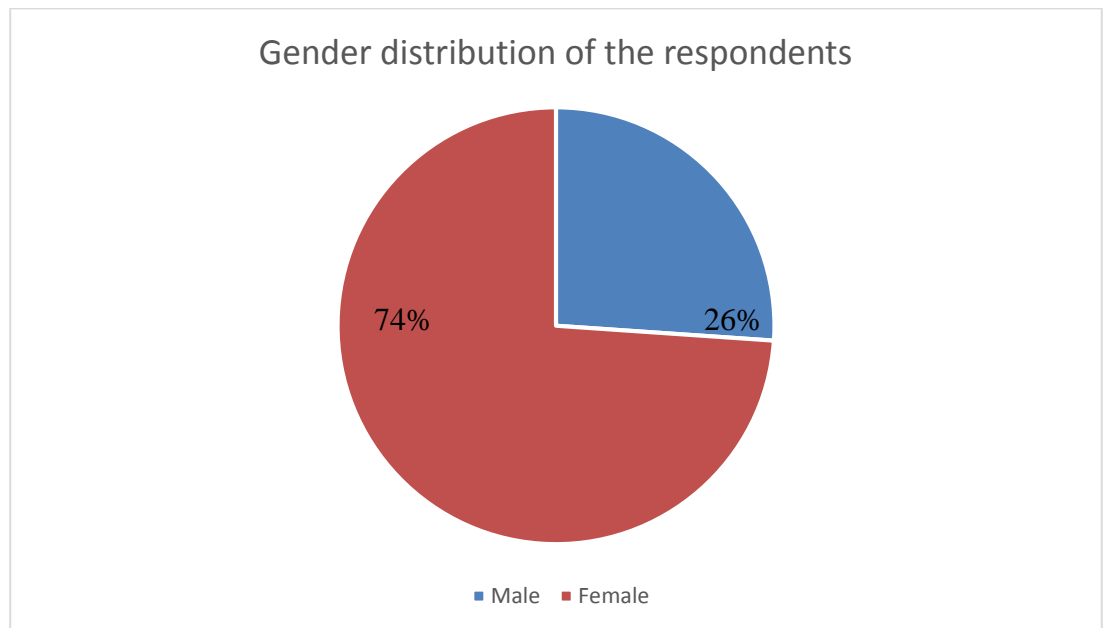
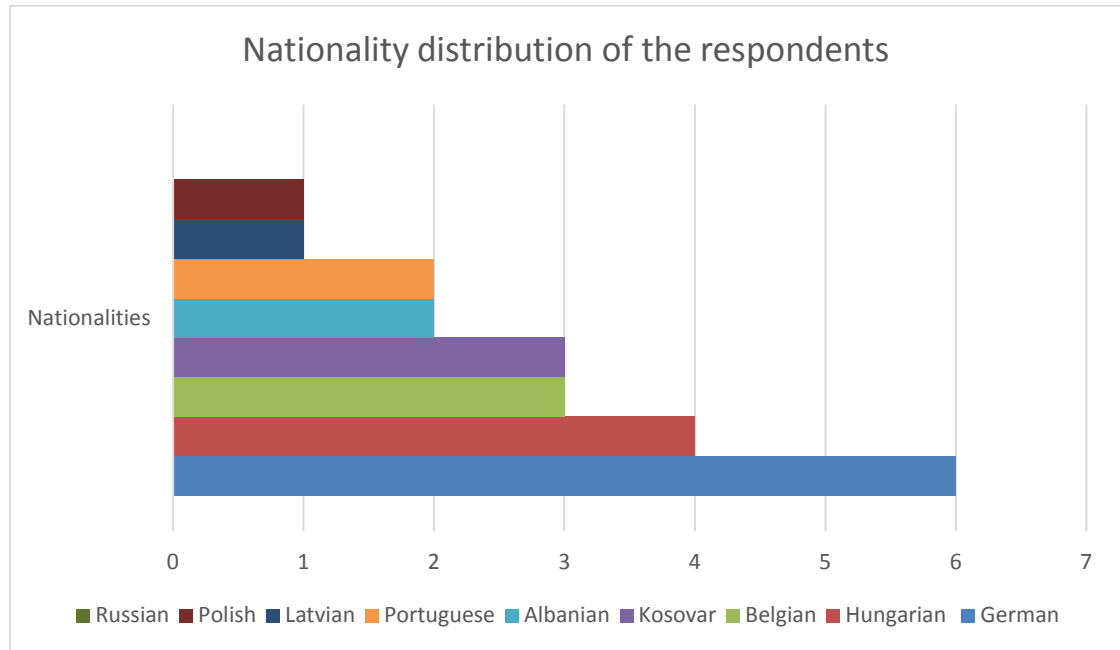
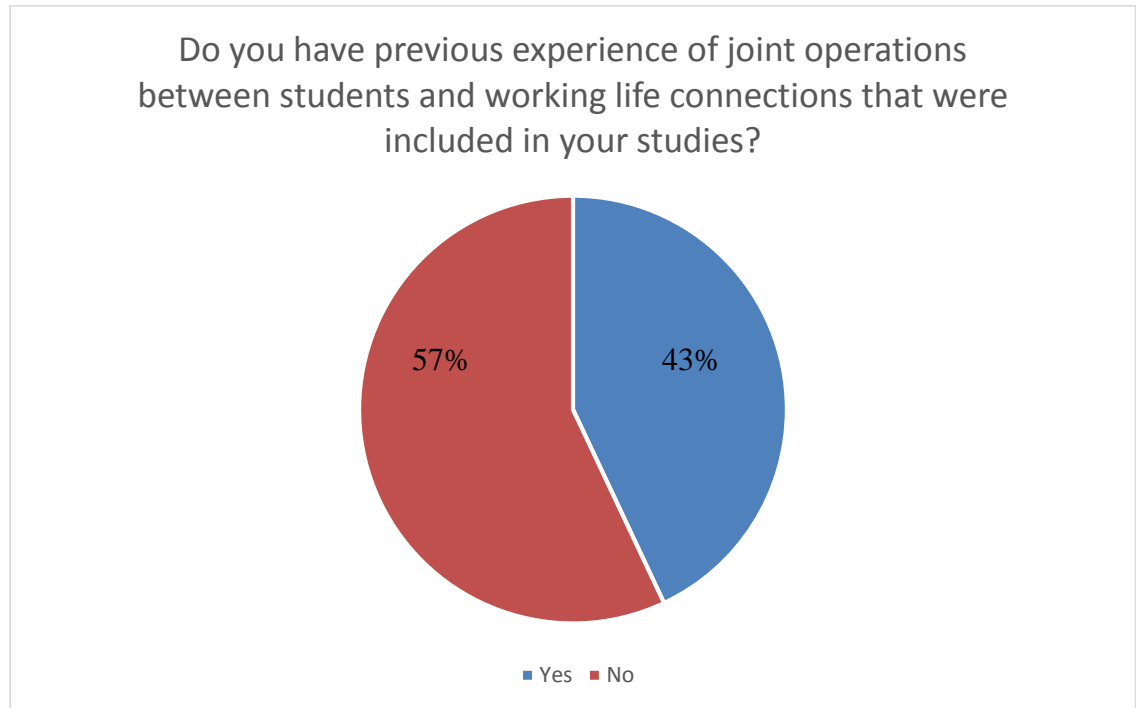
TABLE 3. Age distribution of the respondents in self-assessment 1.**TABLE 4. Gender distribution of the respondents in self-assessment 1.**

TABLE 5. Nationality distribution of the respondents in self-assessment 1.

We can see from the background questions that the self-assessment included age group from 20-32 years old respondents, the biggest age group of respondents being around 23 years. The respondents average age is 22,7 (table 3). The respondents also specified their gender, which showed that the majority of the respondents were female (table 4). The nationalities of the respondents varied and the biggest nationality group of the respondents was German (appendice 5). We wanted to know the nationalities of the respondents because they come from different cultural backgrounds which may affect our research results. The cultural differences in a multinational learning environment affect people's behavior, manners, and how they perceive different things (page 8-9).

TABLE 6. Previous experience of the respondents in joint operations.

We also included a background question for the respondents of their previous history of co-operational projects (table 6). The answers to the question showed that 43% of the respondents had previous experience of similar working life joint projects. The question also included instructions to specify the nature of the previous joint project and we received very different answers of the respondents' backgrounds.

The experience of previous projects according to the respondents were conducted from case studies, international environment projects, internship experience with working life, practical study assignments, and group work in general. In some answers of the respondents it was unclear if they had really understood the question and the answers were too generally expressed. Since the background questions are not the emphasis of the thesis research objective, this does not affect our data analyzing misleadingly.

As mentioned earlier, the self-assessments conducted were forms based on the theory of entrepreneur education and corporate partnership. We chose the most fitting topics

of the theories to use as a basis for the questions type and content. The 10 topics are indicators of the questions given to assess in the self-assessment form. (Appendix 6).

6.2.1 Self-assessment 1: Entrepreneurship education

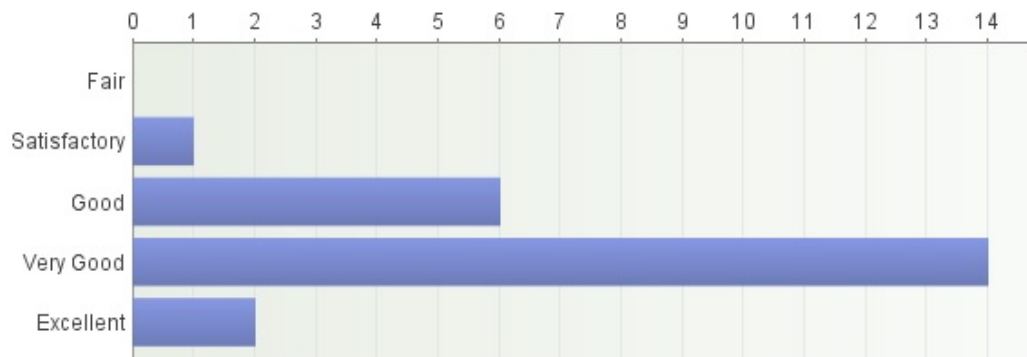
For the first part of the self-assessment structure we used questions based on entrepreneurship education theory (page 12). The theory used in the questions consists of life management, interaction, self-guided action, innovation capacity, and the ability to face changes. The questions were the following:

- How would you evaluate your time management skills? (Such as punctuality, scheduling your work, meeting deadlines)

TABLE 7. Self-assessment 1: Time management

5. How would you evaluate your time management skills?

Number of respondents: 23



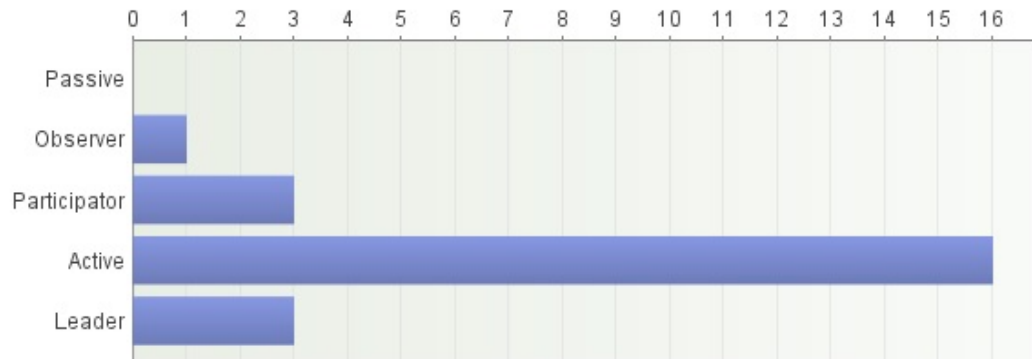
The first question gave us results so that 60% of the respondents considered their time management skills to be “very good”. Of all the respondents, 95% considered their time management skills to be in the range of good, very good or excellent. (Table 7.) Considering the unusual and fast-paced environment of the study module where learning is taking place, we can consider the findings to be desirable and good.

- How would you evaluate your team working skills? In a team, which role would be the most natural to you?

TABLE 8. Self-assessment 1 results: Team working

6. How would you evaluate your team working skills?

Number of respondents: 23



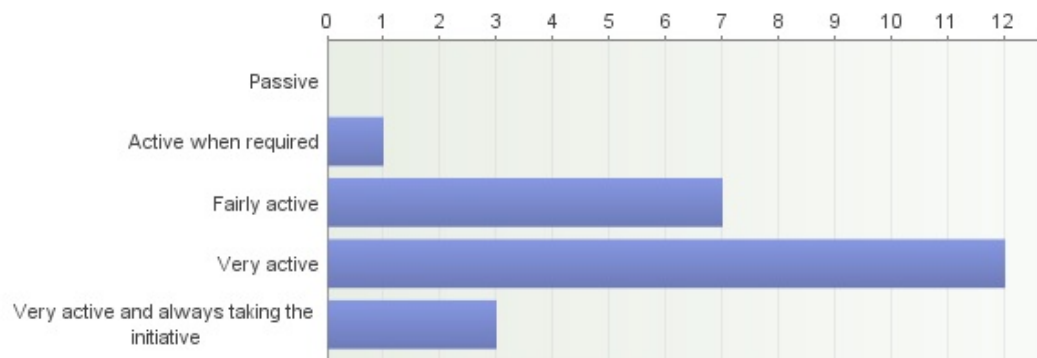
The second question, which was reflecting the interaction of the students, gave following findings. 69% of the respondents evaluated their role in the team as an “active”. The rest of the answers were divided so that 13% of the respondents considered themselves as “leaders”, 13% as “participators” and 4% as “observers”. None of the respondents chose the role “passive”. (Table 8.) Considering that the study module had group work emphasis, the findings show that the teams consisted of fairly active students and their team working skills can be considered good.

- Evaluate your level of self-activity in an education environment.

TABLE 9. Self-assessment 1 results: Self-activity

7. Evaluate your level of self-activity in an education environment

Number of respondents: 23



The third question, based on entrepreneur education traits, gave us results about how students evaluated their self-activity levels in an education environment. The majority, meaning 52% of the respondents, evaluated their self-activity to be “very active”. 30% of the respondents answered “fairly active”, 13% answered “very active, and always taking the initiative”, and only one respondent, counting as 4%, answered “active when required. No respondent answered “passive”. (Table 9.)

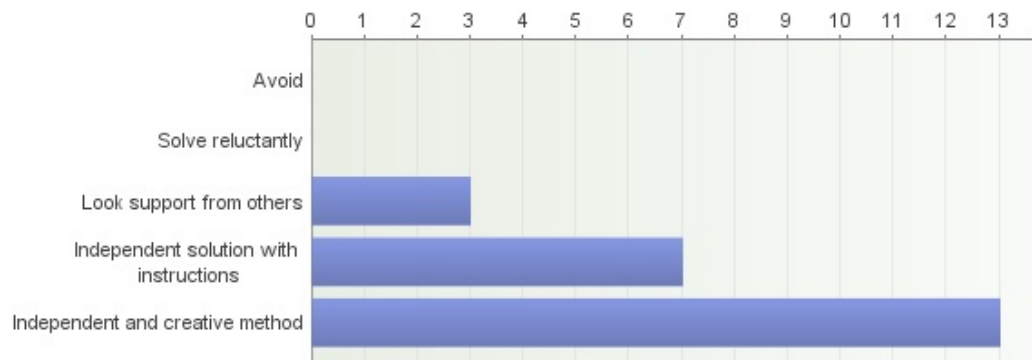
In a self-assessment of entrepreneur education, this can be marked as a highly important question, as it is directly related to how student’s development skills are reflected in an education environment. To the research, the results are desirable and very good. The best opportunity for development in a learning environment is based on student’s motivation and self-activity (page 14). From the results a conclusion can be made that the students enrolled in the study module of Digital Business Development were suitable for this type of learning environment.

- How would you approach a situation that requires problem solving?

TABLE 10. Self-assessment 1 results: Problem solving

8. How would you approach a situation that requires problem solving?

Number of respondents: 23



The fourth question of the topic entrepreneurship education, shows that the student’s answering the self-assessment were independent problem solvers and going towards the problem solving rather than away from it. 56% of the respondents answered “independent and creative method” as a solution to problem solving situation, 30% answered “independent solution with instructions” and 13% answered “look support

from others” when faced with a problem solving situation. None of the respondents avoided the problem solving situation or felt reluctant to face it. (Table 10.)

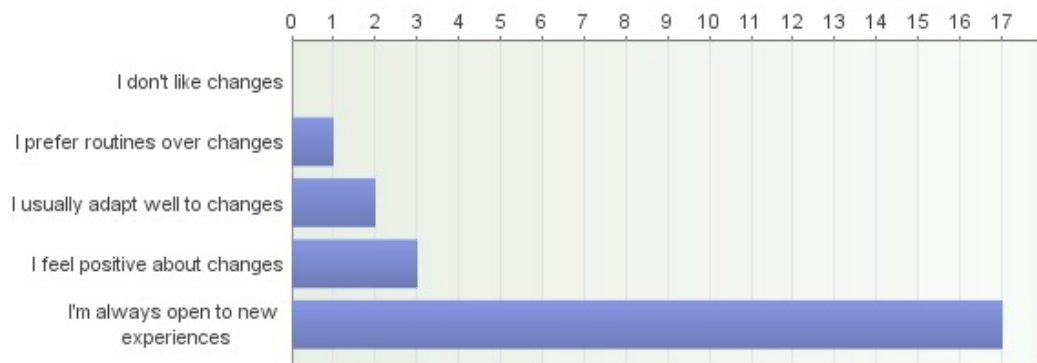
Again, for the research the results of entrepreneurship education traits are favorable. Problem solving is strongly connected to working life skills as part of student’s development acquirements and very essential for learning, especially in an intensive learning environment (page 15). Considering the Digital Business Development course contents and methods of learning, the students face many problem solving situations. The nature of the course is also problem solving and in general creativity based as well. This means it can be concluded that the students had good chances of succeeding in the learning process.

- How well do you adapt to changes? Which one is the most appealing to you?

TABLE 11. Self-assessment 1 results: Adapting to changes

9. How well do you adapt to changes?

Number of respondents: 23



Adapting to changes was the last question of the entrepreneurship education and it showed that the students felt positive and open about changes. As much as 74% of the respondents answered “I am always open to new experiences”, and 13% of the respondents answered “I feel positive about changes”, which concludes that the majority of the students are adapting to changes very well. 8% of the respondents answered “I usually adapt well to changes” and only one respondent (meaning 4%) answered “I prefer routines over changes”. None of the respondents answered “I don’t like changes”. (Table 11.)

Considering that the environment of learning in Digital Business Development course was intensive and international, the answers from the students of their self-assessment are very good. It can be concluded that the students are suitable for this type of learning environment. As a new and innovative learning environment, the importance of adapting to changes and changing conditions is emphasized. The students who feel themselves to be open and well-adaptive have chances of succeeding in a demanding learning environment.

6.2.2 Self-assessment 1: Corporate partnership

For the second part of the first self-assessment we used corporate partnership theory as a basis for the questions of self-assessment. The theoretical themes of the questions were based on drivers, facilitators, decisions, components, as well as outcomes and expectations (page 5, picture 1). The questions were ranking scale questions. We asked students to intuitively choose the option in the ranking scale which felt the most true to themselves. The ranking scale questions were the following:

- How would you evaluate your motivation towards studying?

TABLE 12. Self-assessment 1 results: Motivation

10. How would you evaluate your motivation towards studying?

Number of respondents: 23

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Not motivated	0	0	5	10	8	Highly motivated	23	4.13

The first question of corporate partnership traits is about drivers. As our driver we chose motivation. The respondents answered the motivation ranking scale so that the average of an answer was 4.13 on a scale from 1-5 (table 12). This means in general the respondents were very motivated towards studying.

We asked the students to assess their motivation towards studying, as motivation is one of the most important factors for a succession of the collaboration (page 10-11).

The motivation can be thought of as a driver, which drives the student for engaging in studying, and the motivation also drives the student to stay interested when facing challenges. In an environment of collaboration, in this case Digital Business Development including a working life project, motivation as a driver is important for both participants to be successful.

- How do you perceive the study module? (International lecturers, intensive studying, company co-operation, international group assignments etc.)

TABLE 13. Self-assessment 1 results: Perceptions

11. How do you perceive the study module?

Number of respondents: 23

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
No expectations	0	0	4	11	8	High expectations	23	4.17

In the second question we asked the students how they perceived the study module of Digital Business Development and its contents before it started and before they had had any lectures. The respondents answered the perceptions ranking scale so that the average of an answer was 4.17 on a scale from 1-5 (table 13). This means in general the respondents had fairly high expectations and a good perception of the study module of Digital Business Development.

We asked the students about their perceptions of the study module as an indicator of facilitators (page 6). Facilitators can be considered important assets to the collaboration's success. The facilitators of the collaboration are connected to the motivation of the participants as well. Facilitators can raise expectations or smother them if they are not desired.

- Was it difficult or easy for you to decide to participate in this study module?

TABLE 14. Self-assessment 1 results: Decisions

12. Was it difficult or easy for you to decide to participate in this study module?

Number of respondents: 23

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Very difficult	0	0	2	9	12	Very easy	23	4.43

In the third question of the corporate partnership traits, we asked about a decision making process. The respondents rated the decision making scale so that the average of an answer was 4.43 on a scale from 1-5 (table 14). This means the respondents' decision making process was very easy and confident.

The decision making process is essential for a collaboration process. The certainty of decision making increases the benefits of the collaboration and reduces the risks. The level of commitment is important when evaluating decision making traits. In general decisions made with confidence are suitable for collaboration foundation. (Page 5.)

- How committed are you to this study module? How much effort are you willing to put in?

TABLE 15. Self-assessment 1 results: Commitment

13. How committed are you to this study module?

Number of respondents: 23

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
No effort, little commitment	0	0	3	8	12	High effort, very committed	23	4.39

In the previous question we asked about decision making process. In the next question we asked about the related topic of commitment of the students towards the study module and learning process. The respondents rated the commitment ranking scale so that the average answer was 4.39 on a scale from 1-5 (table 15). This means the respondents' commitment towards the study module and learning process was very good.

The commitment level is important for the success of the collaboration. It is a partnership component that affects all the parties of collaboration (page 5). The students'

commitment affect an individual and group level on the outcome of the learning process and results of the collaboration. This as a component is important for risk-management and increases trust between the collaboration partners, because high commitment means situation where there is control and mutual understanding (page 6-7).

- How would you consider the usefulness of this study module to you?

TABLE 16. Self-assessment 1 results: Expectations

14. How would you consider the usefulness of this study module to you?

Number of respondents: 23

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Not useful	0	1	1	10	11	Very useful	23	4.35

As the last question of partnership traits, we asked about students' expectations related to the study module of Digital Business Development. The respondents rated the usefulness ranking scale so that the average answer was 4.35 on a scale from 1-5 (table 16). It can be concluded from this that the respondents' expectations of the usefulness of the study module was very high. The students participating in the study module had an expectation that it would be useful to their learning experience.

The topic of expectations of collaboration is one of the most important factors for the success of partnership (page 5). When all parties have expectations for collaboration, it creates the foundation for the partnership and raises the question "Is it beneficial for me to collaborate?" Expectations drive the collaboration to take form, and when the participants of the collaboration find useful elements, they are committed to work towards the outcomes of the collaboration (page 7, 11-12).

6.3 Results of the self-assessment 2

As mentioned in the beginning of Chapter 6, the response percentage was good in both self-assessments. In the self-assessment 2, the response percentage was lower however (table 2). The questions and the structure of the self-assessment 2 were simi-

lar to the first one but required more in-depth answers from the students. Participating in the self-assessment 2 was also voluntary.

For the second self-assessment we asked the students to evaluate themselves again in the questions based on the entrepreneurship education and corporate partnership. The second self-assessment was sent after the completion of Digital Business Development course. (Appendix 5.) We wanted to contact the students soon after they had finished the course to get answers when their memories of the experience would still be fresh.

Since the recipient group of the self-assessment 2 was the same group as before, all students in the Digital Business Development course, we decided not to include another background questionnaire. We sent an e-mail with a link via Webropol survey to invite the students to take part in the second part of the self-assessment. We emphasized that the students who answered in the first self-assessment would be in an important role to assess their skills again, but we also invited any student in the Digital Business Development course to answer the self-assessment.

6.3.1 Self-assessment 2: Entrepreneurship education

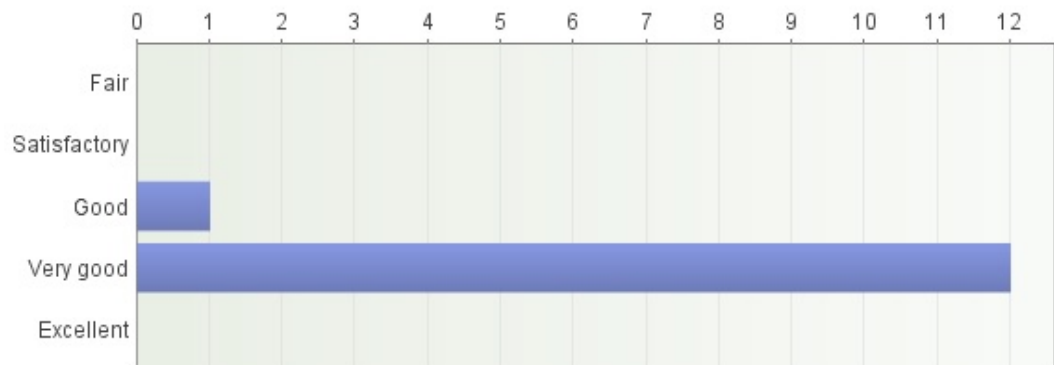
For the second part of the self-assessment structure, to be filled in after the Digital Business Development course, we used the entrepreneurship education theory based questions. The theory used in the questions consists of life management, interaction, self-guided action, innovation capacity, and the ability to face changes (Page 13.) The questions were consisted of the following:

- How would you evaluate your time management skills during the course?

TABLE 17. Self-assessment 2 results: Time management

1. How would you evaluate your time management skills during the course?

Number of respondents: 13



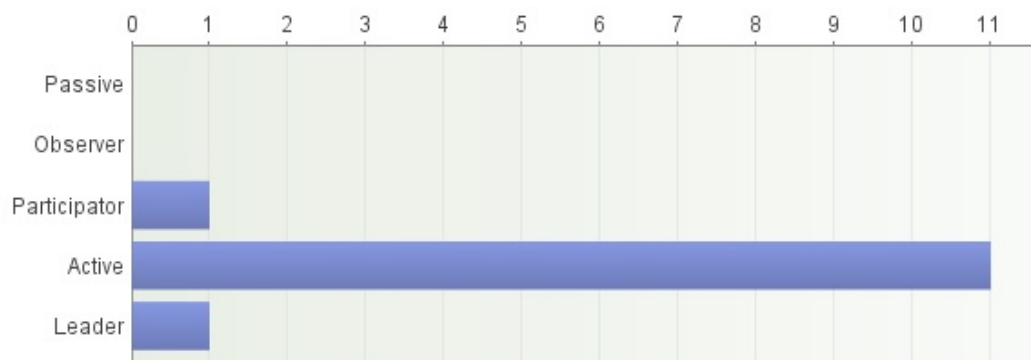
In the first question of the self-assessment 2, we asked how the students would evaluate their time management skills during the course, and the results were that 92% of the respondents answered “very good”, and 1 respondent, i.e. 7%, answered “good” (table 17). The results can be considered very good, and when compared to the self-assessment 1, the results improved slightly, since 100% of the respondents evaluated their time-management skills to be in the range of good and very good.

- Looking back, how would you evaluate your team working skills during the course?

TABLE 18. Self-assessment 2 results: Team working

2. Looking back, how would you evaluate your teamworking skills during the course?

Number of respondents: 13



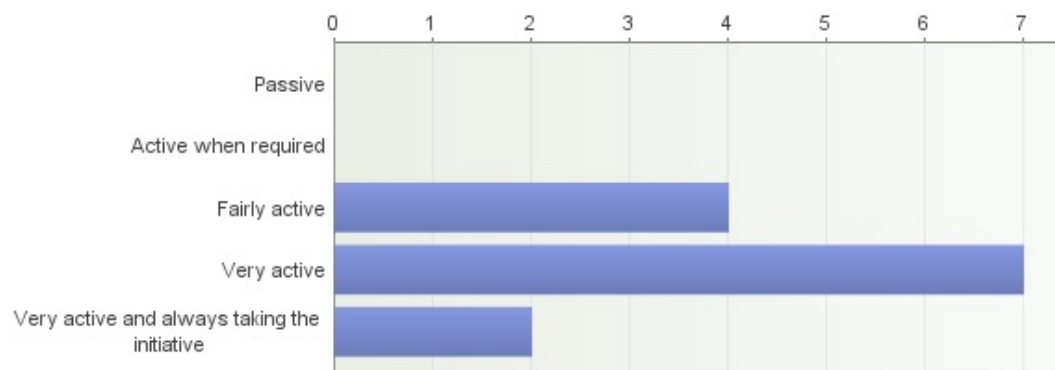
In the second question of the self-assessment 2, we asked how students would evaluate their team working skills during the course. We received results from the respondents so that 84% answered “active” and the remaining 16% (i.e. 2 respondents) answered “leader” or “participator” (table 18). It can be concluded that the main group of the respondents evaluated themselves as being active members of a team. Comparing the results to the self-assessment 1, the results improved slightly and the results showed that the team roles were more clearly definable to the students.

- Evaluate your level of self-activity towards learning during the course.

TABLE 19. Self-assessment 2 results: Self-activity

3. Evaluate your level of self-activity towards learning during the course.

Number of respondents: 13



In the third question of the self-assessment 2, we asked how students would evaluate their self-activity levels towards their learning in the course. The results of the respondents were the following: 53% of the respondents answered “very active”, 31% answered “fairly active”, and the remaining 15% of respondents answered “fairly active” (table 19). The results show that all of the respondents would evaluate their self-activity levels to be rather active than passive, and roughly half of the students evaluated themselves being very active towards learning.

We also asked the students with open-ended questions to specify their answers in a few words. Most of the students said they put effort in to participating and they took responsibility for their learning. These were the comments from some of the students: “I was always trying to learn more about the subject and I’ve been a very participative

student during the course, giving ideas and asking for any doubt that may arise.” “I always tried to participate during the lecturers and to get involved in the discussion.”

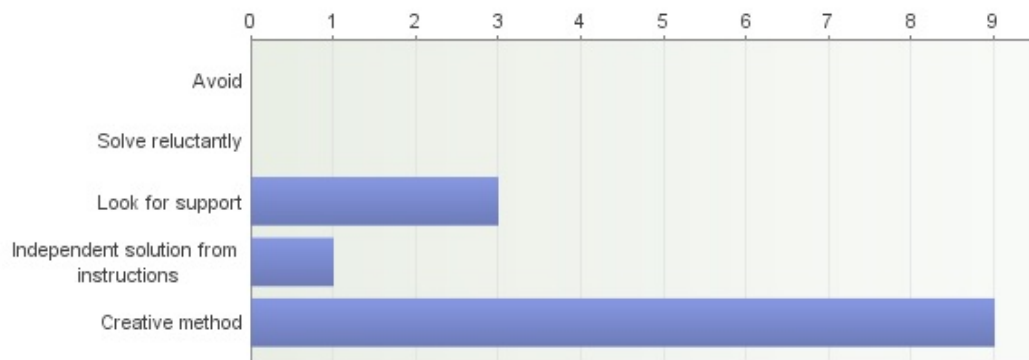
On the other hand, two students pointed out that the course contents were already familiar to them and it affected their self-activity levels. One student however felt that the subjects covered in the course were tiresome to study, because it was all new to him/her. The students also wrote that the group work affected their self-activity positively: “We had such an excellent team during these three weeks. It was much fun and benefit from participating during our group work!” “The roles were distributed evenly in our group and everyone fulfilled their work actively.”

- How did you approach a situation that required problem solving during the course?

TABLE 20. Self-assessment 2 results: Problem solving

5. How did you approach a situation that required problem solving during the course?

Number of respondents: 13



In the fourth question of the self-assessment 2, we asked how the students would approach a situation that requires problem solving during the Digital Business Development. The results were the following: 70% of the respondents answered “creative method”, 23% “look for support”, and one respondent, i.e. 7%, answered “independent solution from instructions” (table 20).

Underlining the fact that creativity is an essential part of the intrapreneurship skills and a part of innovativeness as problem solving (page 19), the results are very good

and favourable for the research. The results reveal that the biggest group of the respondents were creative problem-solver, and the course was well suited for their learning and development. In fact, we can also notice the same findings during the observation of the student's seminar work.

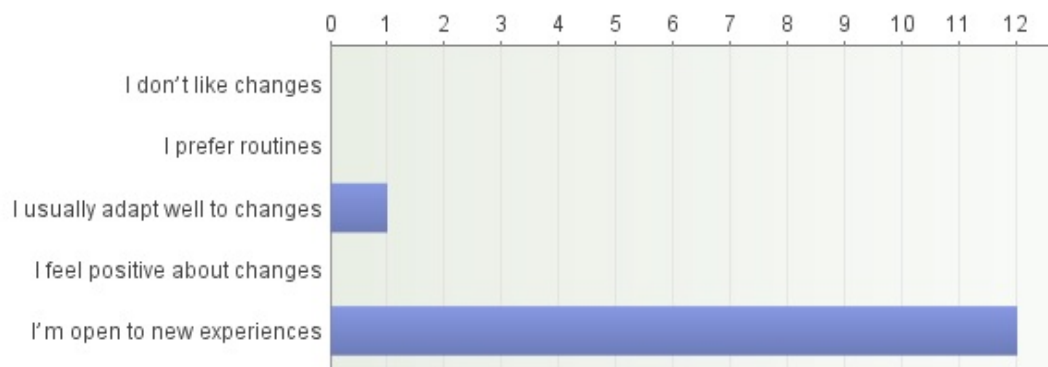
We also asked the students again to specify their answers with open-ended questions with a few words. Most of the comments said group working was the essential way of problem solving and that the creativity bloomed inside the teams. Many students were appreciative that the tasks were team-based, and the satisfaction of the teams reveals that the group dynamics and communication were very good during the course. One student wrote the following, which sums up the general atmosphere of the answers altogether: "When I meet a problem, while working in a group, first I tend to look for an answer or help at my group-mates or think creatively, trying to avoid standard answers and solutions."

- Do you feel that you've been able to develop your ability to face changes?

TABLE 21. Self-assessment 2 results: Adapting to changes

7. Do you feel that you've been able to develop your ability to face changes?

Number of respondents: 13



In the last question of the self-assessment 2 covering the entrepreneurship education topic, we asked the students how they felt about adapting to changes and whether they have developed their ability to face changes. The results were the following in the self-assessment: 92% of the respondents answered "I'm open to new experiences" and 1 respondent, i.e. 8%, answered "I usually adapt well to changes" (table 21). The an-

swers of the respondents show that all of the students apart from one individual felt they improved their ability to face changes. These results are very good and mean that the students participating to the course are very open-minded towards changes. This is a positive indicator of a good and innovative mind-set, which is essential part of intrapreneurship skills (picture 6).

We also wanted to receive comments from the students and we asked with open-ended question the students to specify their ability to face changes. In general the students commented the course contents to be good and challenging, and the international, multi-national environment to be exciting. It opened up their abilities to break routines and anticipate new experiences. One of the students commented the following: “I really enjoyed the experience because it is very enriching to meet/learn both new cultures and subjects regarding our social and professional life. Following this I'm sure that it would be very interesting to have more abroad experiences because nowadays, in my opinion, our home is the world.”

We also want to point out that the students were clearly excited about the challenges the international group had and they also emphasized the importance of team work. Two students commented the topic: “It was a great experience to work with people from other countries. I never expected it so hard but it helped me a lot for the upcoming years.” “It is always challenging to work together in an international team but it is also a great opportunity to develop your own skills further.”

6.3.2 Self-assessment 2: Corporate partnership

For the second part of the self-assessment structure, to be filled in after the Digital Business Development course, we also used questions based on corporate partnership theory. The theory of the questions consists of life management, interaction, self-guided action, innovation capacity, and the ability to face changes. The questions consisted of the following: drivers, facilitators, decisions, components, as well as outcomes and expectations (page 5). The questions were ranking scale questions. We asked the students to intuitively choose the option in the ranking scale which felt the most suitable for themselves. The ranking scale questions were the following:

- How would you evaluate your motivation during the course? Did your motivation improve during it?

TABLE 22. Self-assessment 2 results: Motivation

9. How would you evaluate your motivation during the course? Did your motivation improve during it?

Number of respondents: 13

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Not motivated	0	1	1	6	5	Highly motivated	13	4.15

For the first question of corporate partnership traits, we used the theory based on drivers. We chose motivation as our driver. The answers we received from the respondents were set on a ranking scale so that the average answer was 4.15 on a scale from 1-5 (table 22). This means that the motivation of the students was fairly good, as most of them rated their motivation to be 4 or 5. Comparing the results with the previous self-assessment, we can see slight improvement in the answers. In general, the answers of the respondents in both self-assessments were good.

We also asked the students to specify their answers in a few words. We wanted to see what the driver for the motivation of the students is during the course to achieve their goals. Motivation as a driver is essential to learning and success (page 10). The students commented their motivation in various words, but the most emphasized factor was team work and working with real cases. One of the student commented: “Yes it (the motivation) did, because I had such a good group and all the team members really did their best. This gave us the discipline to go further and further.” Another student pointed out the following of the course contents: “Real case, real task, helping real people = motivation to work.”

We also want to mention how important a good setting of learning environment is for a student’s motivation. One student made the following comment of the course structure: “It was my first experience abroad and it was in my professional field - digital marketing, so I was highly motivated to attend this course and I've become more motivated when I arrived at Mikkeli and I've seen how well organized it was, how we

were received in Mamk and the huge chances I had to meet so many different cultures.”

- Did your expectations meet with reality? Were you satisfied with the content of the course?

TABLE 23. Self-assessment 2 results: Expectations

11. Did your expectations meet with reality? Were you satisfied with the content of the course?

Number of respondents: 13

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Did not meet expectations	0	1	5	5	2	Expectations fulfilled completely	13	3.62

In the self-assessment 1, we asked the students how they perceived the study module of Digital Business Development. The respondents were fairly satisfied and had high expectations of the course contents. In the self-assessment 2, we asked the students again about their expectations related to the course. The answers we received from the respondents were on a ranking scale from 1-5 set to the average of 3.62 (table 23). Most of the students had good expectations, and they rated the ranking scale to be 3 or 4.

However, comparing these results to the previous results in self-assessment 1 covering expectations, we can see that the expectations deteriorated. In general the range of answers were still good, and we can find the reason for the deterioration from the answers the students gave in the previous questions. Some students pointed out that the course contents were repetitive and covering already familiar topics, while others commented that the course contents seemed harder than expected because of their background. Nevertheless, it can be conducted from the observations data that all of the seminar projects were executed according to instructions and in general the students were satisfied with the overall experience of Digital Business Development course (appendix 9).

- Would you decide to participate again in a course like this?

TABLE 24. Self-assessment 2: Decisions

12. Would you decide to participate again in a course like this?

Number of respondents: 13

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
I would definitely not participate again	0	0	1	3	9	I would gladly participate again	13	4.62

Connecting the topic of the question of decisions to the previous self-assessment 1, it also can be concluded that despite the deteriorating of the results in expectations, the respondents seemed happy about the course. In a ranking scale from 1-5, the average answer was 4.62 (table 24), which means most of the participants would gladly participate again in the course of Digital Business Development. In the light of these answers, it can be conducted that the course was very successful and something the students felt to be useful for their learning.

- How committed were you to this study module? How much effort did you put in your studies?

TABLE 25. Self-assessment 2: Commitment

13. How committed were you to this study module? How much effort did you put in your studies?

Number of respondents: 13

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Not committed, no effort	0	0	3	6	4	Very committed	13	4.08

We asked the students about their commitment to the course, and how much effort did they put in their studies. On a ranking scale from 1-5, the average answer was 4.08 (table 25), which means the students were committed to the course. Comparing the results from the previous self-assessment 1, it can be seen that the results changed a little and deteriorated. All in all, the components of commitment results are still good in both self-assessments and we would like to emphasize the students' motivation being good throughout the course (table 12, 22), so in this sense the deterioration of the results in the commitment does not affect negatively the overall results.

- How would you evaluate the usefulness of this study module? Did you learn working life skills and/or improve professional expertise in any areas?

TABLE 26. Self-assessment 2 results: Usefulness

14. How would you evaluate the usefulness of this study module? Did you learn working life skills and/or improve professional expertise in any areas?

Number of respondents: 13

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
Not useful	0	1	2	6	4	Very useful	13	4

In the last question of the self-assessment's corporate partnership theory questions, we asked the students to evaluate the usefulness of the course to themselves. Most importantly, we wanted them to comment how they felt they improved their professional skills during the course. On a ranking scale from 1-5, the average answer was 4.0 (table 26). Comparing the previous answers in the self-assessment 1, it can be seen that the results changed a little and deteriorated. However, the average answer being 4.0 means that the students considered the course to be very useful and comparing their previous answers, the expectations changed during the course (table 16). This leads to the fact that it affected results in both the expectations and the usefulness.

- Please explain your previous answer and specify what was the most useful to your learning. What did you learn?

Exploring the comments students gave us in this open-ended question, it can be seen that the general atmosphere was good in their evaluation of the course's usefulness. Many of the students commented the international environment to be very useful and educational in their learning process. One of the students wrote: "The most useful lesson I learnt from this course was the understanding of cultural differences and how creative a multinational group can work. I also learnt that a new way of progressing can be much more effective than the ways we are used to." These were the majority of thoughts of the students who responded to the self-assessment 2.

We also received comments of the course contents from some students. To some students the contents were already familiar: "I was a little disappointed from the course because most subjects of the lectures were already familiar to almost all the participants of the course. I expected to learn more new things instead of repeating already

known topics.” “As mentioned before there were some things I already knew but also a lot I didn’t know so I definitely had a learning success”.

However, some of the students learnt many new subjects during the course: “As I am studying in completely different field, I did not have any previous experience in digital business development, therefore I truly enjoyed all the gained knowledge and skills in various subjects.” “I learned how to make a video en now I know something more about the Hofstede theory. I also learned how to talk to persons with different cultural backgrounds.” In the light of these comments, it can be concluded that the students had different backgrounds. Some had more advanced knowledge and some had little knowledge to begin with in the course.

We also want to point out the comments that were raised in some of the students’ minds. A couple of the students felt that the contents of the course were especially well designed when they got a chance to work with a real company. The students commented the following: “The most important was working with real cases, to real company - practice with working with clients.” “Solving real problem for a real project.”

6.4 Student diaries

As one of our data collection methods, we used a student diary (appendix 7). On the second day of Digital Business Development, we were introducing ourselves and our thesis topic at the beginning of a course lecture and told the students we were seeking for voluntary members to fill in a student diary during the three week course of Digital Business Development.

The purpose of the diary was to get an understanding of a student daily life during the three-week course. We wanted to know what the students would be doing during their lectures and what they’re feelings were when they were studying, and mostly this was because of the fact that we would replace the student observation with the diary, since we could not take part in the course and observe the students in their learning process ourselves. The student diary was made on a basis of our own template, where we had included days according to the Digital Business Development course schedule.

We asked the students to fill in the student diary each day and to describe their learning process in a few words. We asked the students to write down if they learnt something new, or if they were covering topics that were already familiar to them. We also wanted to see how students perceived the company co-operation and to comment things related to it. We also wanted to get an insight of how the team work was functioning in the teams that they were divided to in the beginning, whether it was positive or negative.

6.4.1 Student learning diaries – week 1

On the first week of the Digital Business Development course the students were excited to start working in an international environment. The students were having several team-building exercises which they commented to be very useful to help get to know each other better. One of the students commented that they learnt through these exercises to open up better to new people, and it was an important notification to understand there is no need to be afraid of new situations. This is a good sign of a development of the ability to face changes in life.

The students commented the teams getting closer quickly, and that they used methods of strengths and weaknesses to find out their individual assets in the group. The teams were functioning well. The students also felt that the subjects covered during the first week in the lectures were important and that they learnt something new.

It was also important that the students in each team had time to work on their own, because it increased the exchange of knowledge between students. In the teams, some were more familiar with the subjects of the lectures or had deeper knowledge of something that was not covered in the lectures by the lecturers. On the other hand, some student commented that the time reserved for teams' individual working time was not enough and that they had to continue working after school hours. One of the students wrote that they had difficulties in the team where they had no technical competence of creating a video for the case, and wished the subject of video creation would have been included in the lectures.

6.4.2 Student learning diaries – week 2

During the second week of the course, the students learnt important facts about presentation skills. The students had very varying backgrounds on presenting in front of an audience but most of the students commented that the presentation skills were very helpful. The students also had more in-depth lectures about copy-writing, entrepreneurship, and making a business plan. The students commented that the lectures of copy-writing were a disappointment as the students felt that it was unrelated to their projects, and the perception of the quality of the lecturer seemed to vary.

During the lectures of entrepreneurship, the students were very interested in the topics and felt it was important knowledge for their project task, and also for the future of their professional competence. During the second week of the course, the students were feeling the pressure of the quick-paced schedule. They commented the atmosphere being stressful and busy, and some teams had more challenges in proceeding on time. However, in general the students commented the week being very interesting and full of new topics to learn. One of the students pointed out that the company, MPY, had visited the campus to answer to the students' questions, which had been helpful and had made it clear how to continue with the project task.

6.4.3 Student learning diaries – week 3

On the third week of the Digital Business Development course, the students were having lectures about cultural differences and web-based business. They also prepared their presentations of the project task and made preparations that would support their solution.

The students commented the third week being very busy and the most challenging, as it can be expected in an intensive learning environment. The students wrote that the lectures held on cultural differences were very important and insightful to their cultural professional competence. They felt that their teams were working well, but understanding cultural dimensions was still helping them to function better in co-operation amongst the teams. One of the students wrote that they had differences in opinions

inside the team but they learnt to respect each other and came to an understanding in the team.

Some students wrote that the time reserved for the project work in the teams was not enough and that they felt they had difficulties in their time management. This can also reflect some cultural differences in the teams, as they were multinational, and it creates an environment where it is harder to work together if the understanding of time management is very different amongst students. The students also commented that the teams worked very hard to come up with a good solution for the project. They also liked the feedback from the lecturers and the representatives during the last days of the course, because it gave them the possibility to improve their work and get suggestions from a new point of view.

6.5 Company interview

In the research, one of our objectives was to receive information regarding working life collaboration from the company point of view. When planning the thesis, we decided we would include a company interview in our research. The co-operating company in Digital Business Development course was MPY (page 2). The students completed seminar projects for MPY, during the Digital Business Development course. We wanted to receive information from MPY how they felt about the course and the students.

We arranged an interview (appendix 8) with the MPY representative Matti Muukkonen, Executive of Business Development. At first we were planning to set up the interview as a telephone interview, but due to the busy schedules of both sides, we arranged the interview by e-mail. We also wanted to include a personal evaluation of the project work by Vesa Jordan, Director of Sales Support and New Services, which was received through Anna-Maija Tornainen, Project Worker in Digital Business Development (appendix 9).

6.5.1 Interview with company representative – Matti Muukkonen

We had a structured questions for the e-mail interview, and we chose the questions to be suggestive in nature, so that we would get answers related strictly to our interest. First, we asked MPY to evaluate the usefulness of the Digital Business Development course (and the project related to it) from the company's point of view. Muukkonen replied that the overall experience was very useful and the company received good ideas from the seminar projects. However, Muukkonen pointed out that the projects did not reveal specifically what the company had expected.

When asking about the student-company collaboration during Digital Business Development, it seems it was mostly trouble-free. However, related to the expectations of the company regarding the collaboration, Muukkonen says the solutions of the students were very innovative, but a little bit further off from what the company had hoped. The gap between the ideas and their implementation is quite wide. According to Muukkonen, MPY had expectations of more traditional and functional solutions from the projects. However, Muukkonen says that the project outcomes are still viable ideas and will possibly be developed into practice for MPY. Some of the ideas of the student projects will be put to a product development process.

We asked about the satisfaction of MPY with the Digital Business Development course projects because any business collaborating is putting in their valuable time and therefore we wanted to hear their point of view of the outcomes. Muukkonen says they would gladly participate again in a similar student collaboration project. They also have already began the think-process of another possible collaboration, since the beginning of Digital Business Development collaboration MPY has found ways to use student collaboration for new development purposes.

When asking about the future plans, and how a collaboration project with Mamk would increase the competitiveness of MPY as a business, Muukkonen says it is still uncertain. However MPY is cautiously expecting that the student collaboration with Mamk will add value to their company in the long-term perspective.

6.5.2 Personal evaluation of the project – Vesa Jordan

We received a form from Anna-Maija Torniainen, Project Worker in Digital Business Development in which she had interviewed MPY representative Vesa Jordan, Director of Sales Support and New Services. The evaluation of the project is that the co-operation was appreciated by MPY. The subjects covered were interesting and the conversation was open. The organization of the course went well, and the company got new angles for developing their services. Jordan says the material the students created was amazing and that the company was very happy with the outcomes. The results were viable to use in the development of their business. Jordan also says that MPY would like to co-operate with Mamk in similar projects in the future as well. (Appendix 9.)

Both interviews show that the co-operation between MPY and Mamk is handled with respect. Based on the results of the company perspective, it can be concluded that these kinds of projects are necessary for the development of the local business life, and the Digital Business Development course can be considered as a good example of the kind of operation that is successful. In the long run, the competitive advantage is increased on both sides, because successful partnerships are a foundation for commitment in the future as well. For MPY the collaboration enables the possibility to get new development ideas and access to innovations which students can provide. In the case of Mamk, these kinds of projects increase the attractiveness of the institution for international students.

6.6 Observation of the Digital Business Development seminar

The student were observed during their final day of Digital Business Development course. The final day included seminar projects that were cases given to students by MPY. The students had two different cases and each team was working on either one of the cases. The cases included tasks the students had been preparing during the three weeks of Digital Business Development. As mentioned before, we were present during the last day of the course when seminars were held in Mamk's main campus. We could not participate during the three weeks of Digital Business Development so the observation is focused on the seminar work only.

The students of Digital Business Development course knew us, as we had introduced ourselves during the first week and told them we would be writing our thesis on the basis of Digital Business Development. On the day of the observation we were not participating in the course, except to thank those students who had participated in the student diary writing.

We made some shorthand notes during the observation of the seminar for our own purposes. During the seminar presentations, we noticed that the students had very good atmosphere in all of the groups and their preparations were well executed. As our other data of the Digital Business Development course suggested, the students had good motivation and they were really committed to executing the course tasks well. We could see that during the presentations the group dynamics were good in each group and all the members had a role in the presentations. The students were good performers and supported each other during the presentations. This is also reflected in the self-assessment comments, where students mentioned in several cases that the international atmosphere was beneficial to the group work and they found themselves enjoying team work.

During the presentations of the seminar projects, it became clear when observing the teams that three of the groups had exceptionally good outcomes of the project task. They had clearly innovative teams and the groups' communication was effortless. In the end, two of those groups received the best idea diploma from MPY. We asked a member of one of the groups (group NUNO Family) to describe how they worked in the team and what did she think was the key to winning the best idea diploma. She replied that her team, which was consisted of five persons, were all funny, creative and serious at the same time. Her group was having fun during the Digital Business Development course but still managed to learn something and use it for their advantage. She described her group having an atmosphere of closeness and the group being "a family".

We also observed the company's representatives while they were watching the presentations during the seminar. Three company representatives were present and we noticed that all of them were watching the presentations with great interest. The compa-

ny representatives commented each presentation carefully and seemed pleased with the outcomes of the teams.

We also noticed that during the pauses of the presentations the students were excited of each other's ideas as well. Even though the whole Digital Business Development group was divided into smaller teams, we became aware of the fact that the teams also encouraged each other. This leads us back to the fact that the group dynamics were very good, despite the multinational backgrounds of the participants, and the communication between the teams was also good. The overall atmosphere of the students participating the course was friendly and hard-working.

Reliability of the research

In general the results were consistent and there were no large differentiations with the results of self-assessments done in advance and after the course. The research can be considered reliable based on the inter-judgemental evaluation method (page 30). The supervisor of our thesis agreed with us regarding the results, because the supervisor of our thesis was involved in the Digital Business Development course and he got good insights about how the course was conducted. By sending self-assessment in advance and after the course we were able to apply parallel form evaluation to our research.

Validity of the research

We had multiple indicators in our research to show that it was valid. The triangulation method combining qualitative and quantitative research methods also increase the validity of the research (page 31). In our thesis, we included self-assessment, learning diary, interview and observation as research methods, which required the triangulation and confirms the validity. The limitation for the validity is that we as researchers may have problems with external validity (page 31), as we have subjectively assessed the results. Students' self-assessments and learning diaries are as well subjectively affected (page 26) because we cannot monitor the students' personal influence and we have to rely to the textual data they have provided to us.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The thesis topic was formulated from the interest of the commissioner, Mamk. Mamk is the administrator of the Open House project. Mamk as a commissioner wanted to receive information of students' development acquirements and collaboration as part of the Open House project purposes. The thesis research focused on Digital Business Development course, which is part of the Open House project. The Open House project's purpose is to increase working life collaboration, entrepreneurship, and pilot new and innovative learning environments.

The purpose of our thesis was to investigate the improvement of the students' development acquirements during Digital Business Development course in a joint project with working life collaboration and in an intensive learning environment. The investigation took place in August 2014, and the focus of the research was to investigate international higher education students' working life competences which are included in the development acquirement. The students were asked to do a development project task in collaboration with a local company, MPY during a three-week intensive course.

We also wanted to investigate the working life collaboration between international higher education students and MPY. From the student point of view, we felt that it is important to investigate the possibilities which would increase the working life skills especially in Business Management Degree Programme. From our experience the connection with working life and higher education could be improved in the case of international business education in Mamk. We believe that Business Management students would be more motivated to work with real life cases, and at the same time gain working life experience and competence. We also feel that when the working life connections are established during the time of education, it will add value to the students' professional competence, as well as improve their chances to connect again upon graduating. The working life will also benefit from students' efforts to add value to their business.

As there was no clear theoretical framework for development acquirements, we decided to approach the research problem by using entrepreneurship education and intra-

preneurship as a theoretical framework. As the entrepreneurship education includes the concept of life long learning, it was used as an approach to acquire the research data of students' development acquirements (page 13). To investigate the collaboration between the students and MPY, we decided to use the corporate partnership theory. The corporate partnership model is modified to suit our case study, because the collaboration between educational institutions and businesses cannot be examined purely from the business perspective.

As we were writing the theoretical framework of the thesis, we noticed that the similarities of the subjects needed to be taken into consideration when assessing the relation of the research and the theory. At first we had some challenges to understand how the theoretical framework would be applicable to the research design. The selection of the framework required a familiarization of several sources before we were able to select the most suitable framework which would support our research objective. We noticed that entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship and innovation have similarities which have an affect on the corporate partnership in reality. All of the theories are closely related to each other when used in the context of examining development acquirements in a learning environment.

7.1 The development of student's development acquirements

From the self-assessment questionnaire sent to the students in advance and after the Digital Business Development course, we were able to get necessary data for the evaluation of the students' development acquirements. The questionnaire can be kept as the foundation for our research as it provided a lot of useful information about the students' perceptions towards lifelong learning and working life collaboration. By comparing the results from both self-assessments, we were able to see improvements in the questionnaire results. There were improvements in self-assessments in most of the questions, from which we can make the conclusion that the students' development acquirements had developed. From the self-assessment results we got the information that the students' development acquirements were very good to begin with, and therefore the students attending the Digital Business Development course had good prerequisites to improve their professional competence.

Based on the research data from both self-assessments, it can be concluded that the students liked the real life context of the course. The course was designed to improve the professional competences of the students and the students felt that the experience was useful for their learning. The results from the self-assessments show that international and collaborative learning environments are needed and they have a positive affect on students' development acquirements. The course tasks were appreciated and multinational team working proved to create innovative thinking. Regarding the student perspective, all participants in the course felt that it was useful which means they gained professional competence and therefore their development acquirements developed during the course. All the participants would also take part again in a similar project.

From the self-assessments, we were able to identify some problems that the students faced during their learning process. As the students had different levels of expertise at the beginning of the course, it made the experience of the course contents occur irrelevant or unnecessary for some students. On the other hand, some students had little or no experience of the subjects covered during the course lectures and they found the course to be extensive. The students also criticized that the course contents did not help their projects in the way that the knowledge gained could have been utilized in the task. According to the self-assessments, students argued that they would have wanted to study subjects which would have had straight relation to their project task during the course.

From the learning diaries, we received information that the course schedule seemed to be problematic for some students. During the three- week intensive course, the studying was fast-paced and the students considered that it had an affect on the project performance. The students had the motivation to deliver the best results, but the environment was not that supportive time-wise. The results were good, but from the learning diaries we can get the insight that the team work was successful but they were frustrated with the execution of some parts of the course.

From the company interview we got positive feedback regarding the Digital Business Development co-operational project. There were still some developmental aspects that arose from the interview with the representative. MPY hoped that the students' tasks

would have been more realistic and viable, even though the ideas of the students were found as innovative.

From the observation of the seminar we got the impression that the collaboration between students and MPY was a great success. The feedback that the students received from the MPY representatives during the seminar presentations was positive and exciting. The overall atmosphere was warm and supporting, and the students were enthusiastic.

7.2 The boundaries and limitations of the research

Boundaries

Because the topic of the research objective is related to the development acquiresments and company co-operation, we needed several viewpoints for the theoretical framework of the thesis. Relying on only one theoretical framework would have not provided enough perspective for us to work with, and we would have lacked some very relevant topics in our research. With some guidance from our thesis supervisor and from our own experience with getting acquainted with the topic of our research, we became to the conclusion to select the theoretical framework from the entrepreneurship education, intrapreneurship, and modified corporate partnership. The development acquiresments are constructed from these theoretical components and we considered that they support the idea behind the self-development in general. We believe that the traits of self-development are in correlation with the theory of intrapreneurship and lifelong learning which is included in the entrepreneurship education. In the theory, we also discuss innovation because innovation is related to the course contents, and the innovation traits arouse from the intrapreneurship theory

The focus was on working in the environment of Digital Business Development course which gave us the boundaries to work with. The research was limited to the students, Mamk as an institution, and MPY as a company. We conducted the research from the student point of view because during the early stages of our thesis process we had a discussion with our commissioner. We discussed the purpose of the thesis concerning Mamk as an institution and therefore came to the conclusion that it would be

best to investigate the students' development acquisitions because they are part of the Open House project's objectives. As we were proceeding with the thesis process, it became obvious to select the students' point of view, without it we would have not been able to reach the research objective at the heart of the problem.

We also wanted to include the company point of view in our research because of the fact that we wanted to understand the insights of the company as a partner in a collaboration with Mamk and its students. We also thought that it is critical for Mamk as the organizer and part of the project to get information of the collaboration from the MPY's point of view. Since the partnering includes a lot of effort from both parties, the benefit received from the mutual project should be at the maximum level, and it is important for the organizer to get feedback in order to develop the partnering with the local working life community as it is the objective of the Open House project as well. It is also important for Mamk to get feedback from the students who participated as a third component in the partnership whether there are some development issues or topics that had not risen when the course and its contents were designed.

Limitations

In this research, we could have also applied different methods. Benchmarking could have been a method which would have given different kinds of views on the objective of the research. Benchmarking with a similar project in another setting where the collaboration was executed with higher education students and local companies would have given a comparison point for us to work with. A benchmarking comparison itself would have not been a sufficient research method for both research objectives, meaning that the development acquisitions could not have been investigated through benchmarking, but the company collaboration could have. So we came to the conclusion not to use benchmarking as a research method, because it would have required a lot of analysis and we also wanted to keep in our mind that the main research objective was in students' development acquisitions and less in the company co-operation.

Our research could have included a discussion about the topic of investigating methods which increase teachers' working life exchange, as it was included as an objective of the Open House project. We could have interviewed the participating teachers

about their experiences in this kind of teaching environment. The purpose of the Open House project is to create new and innovative learning environments and methods, and these factors concern the teachers' roles in the succession of these learning methods and the overall results of the project.

At the beginning of the thesis process, we had a discussion and were provided the possibility to investigate the teachers' perspectives but we decided to focus on the student development acquisitions as it was an extensive topic. A limitation for leaving out the teachers' points of view was due to the fact that we have no previous knowledge or experience concerning teaching and the aspect of it. We came also to the conclusion that if we had chosen the students' development acquisitions and teachers' working life exchange as our main research objectives, it would have been reaching out to the side of pedagogy and lacking the side of business. For the purpose of our own professional growth, it was also important for us to investigate the business point of view by choosing the company co-operation.

In the research we did not include much investigation about the background of the participants for learning and team building, which would have been one way to assess the development of development acquisitions in an international learning environment. In the theoretical framework, we still mooted the cultural dimensions and innovation team communication as it definitely had an influence in the group dynamics. However, the intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship education are closer related to business and if we would had chosen the basis for the theoretical framework in cultural dimensions or communication it would have tilted the direction to social sciences/psychology. If the theory had been based on social science/psychology theories, there would have been too wide a gap between social sciences and corporate partnership when the nature of the thesis is still business.

7.3 The development suggestions

Based on our research, we have come to the conclusion that time-wise the course contents could be different. The students participating in the course of Digital Business Development pointed out that the schedule was demanding. From the results of the student point of view, we got the information that some of the course contents were

irrelevant or already familiar to the students and the course contents didn't support the development project related to the tasks. Some of the students felt that it also affected their performance concerning the development project.

The course contents could be improved so that the students would have more time to focus on the development of the task regarding the project. If too much information is provided to the students, we consider that it limits the in-depth development of the development acquisitions. We consider that too extensive course contents may be a threat to a student's development acquisitions, if they are left unmotivated and not wanting to focus on the learning process. If the course contents were regarding more specific topics, it would help the students' development acquisitions to improve and the students would feel that they are studying useful topics and the course contents are clearly related to match the goal of the whole project development. It would also benefit the company when the results would be further improved.

We also came to the conclusion that the timing could be different. In the Digital Business Development course there were no Finnish students as participants. The students and the organizers had wished for Finnish students to participate in the course, because it would have been an important asset considering the fact that the course was conducted in Finland and the companies were local Finnish companies. If the course had Finnish participants, the communication with the companies could be improved, and the international students would not feel estranged in a foreign country. If the course were organized in May the Finnish students might be more likely to participate as the most of the students work during the summer time from the beginning of June till the end of August.

From the research data, ie students' learning diaries we received information that there were some gaps between the knowledge and skills among the groups. For instance one group had no experience in making videos, which was one task of the project and guidance for that was not provided during the lectures. We suggest that if possible, more attention is paid to the group formation. We are aware that it is time consuming and requires a lot of work, but we still believe that it would make the experience for each participant in this kind of course more pleasant. Asking detailed background information about the student's existing knowledge and competencies in advance could

be a solution for this. If the groups are equal the competition will be fair. To increase the knowledge and expertise in this kind of Digital Business Development course involving IT-students would have been an asset for groups. Involving IT-students would have also made the project outcomes more precise and realistic, which was the company's wish.

7.4 Ideas for future development

We have considered different developmental aspects for the future of organizing a project in partnership with local companies. For example the project could be arranged so that there would be two or three different course focuses, eg marketing, application creation, and innovation management. The students would be divided into groups based on their interest and the experience they are professionally looking to improve. The groups could be arranged so that during a three-week course, two weeks would be used for studying intensively the specific course contents chosen by the student and at the same time working on the project task of the course. The last week of the course would be used for combining the skills learnt during the course and finalizing the project task.

We believe that if the students had time to focus on a certain field of studies, it would increase the improvement of development acquirements. By organizing the course in a way presented earlier, it would also increase the co-operation inside Mamk's departments. Depending on the topic for the future project, the departments could work in collaboration eg if the co-operating company's object of the collaboration will be in developing a health application, the students from business, IT and nursing could work together. This would definitely increase the development acquirements regarding professional competences. At the same time, it would create connection with students and working life as well as improve language skills in the internationalizing environment. In the local area of South-Savo there are companies which would benefit from the collaboration with Mamk as Mamk has variety of study fields.

7.5 Personal evaluation

The thesis process was a long-term process for both of us. We had a clear idea what we wanted to investigate from the beginning, but we had some difficulties in choosing the theoretical framework to suit our thesis. We also want to mention that the topic of our thesis was not very conventional for business students, and the topic reaches many fields of professionalism. However, during the thesis process we both had enthusiasm for the topic as we are both interested in development skills and company co-operation, and in the end, we succeeded to produce a thesis we can be proud of.

Afterwards we can say that we had some ideas we would have liked to do differently in our thesis process. We would like to add some improvements for the company interview and observation. Our interview as a research method was based on only one company representative, and the way the interview was conducted provided data that was challenging to include in our thesis because we were expecting to receive more in-depth answers to our questions.

The observation method had also some shortcomings, because if we could have participated more in the observation during the Digital Business Development course, it would have increased the reliability of the research in our thesis. Observing applicable things is also important when presenting the data of the results. Therefore the observation part of our research methods could have been improved by setting clear markers for the students about the important things to observe. We could have then compared our own observations of everything related to the course and its contents to the things the students pointed out in the self-assessments and student learning diaries, and make a conclusion of the results according to the data.

8 TIMETABLE

Our thesis process started in March when we had the first conversation with the thesis commissioner Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Business Department. At the beginning of the thesis process, we had a discussion about what our thesis topic should be and what would be an interesting topic for us, which would also serve the Open House project's aims. One of the Open House project's aim is to increase the development of the students' development acquirements, and we decided to investi-

gate how the development acquirements are developed during the Digital Business Development course held in August and organized by Mamk. We also wanted to attach company point of view to our research so we decided also to investigate the success of the company co-operation with partnering company MPY.

During March, we got familiarized with the possible theories on which to build the research. We also made the research plan which would guide us through the thesis process. The selected theories were entrepreneurship education, intrapreneurship, and the company co-operation model which would be modified into our research objective. Based on these theories, we were able to start doing the self-assessment questionnaires for the students. We decided to use self-assessment as our research method, because the research objective was to get information on how the students' development acquirements were developed and the only way for doing that was to collect the students' own evaluations. The self-assessments were done already in May, because our commissioner wanted to take a look of the self-assessments before summer holiday. We had a discussion also with our thesis supervisor in May that it would be beneficial for our research to collect students' learning diaries to get better insights of the students' development and overall perceptions about the things that the students were doing in the course when it begins.

During June and July, we prepared for the upcoming company interview and decided the questions we should ask from the MPY representative. We also discussed together what we should observe during the Digital Business Development course seminar. The most important task regarding our thesis process was sending the self-assessments through Webropol to the students in July before the Digital Business Development course started.

In August we observed the Digital Business Development seminar to get insights on how the project had succeeded. We also had an email interview with the MPY representative, in which we asked about the success of the co-operation with Mamk and international students. We also sent the second self-assessment questionnaire to the students after the Digital Business Development course in August.

The writing part of the thesis started at the beginning of September. First we decided to write the theoretical framework and then start analyzing the research data. After overcoming some difficulties at the beginning of the writing process, we proceeded quite quickly.

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OPEN HOUSE

Työelämälähtöistä TK-toiminnan kehittämistä

Työelämälle ideoita ja osaamista ammattikorkeakoulujen asiantuntijoilta. Ammattikorkeakouluille työelämästä näkemyksiä tutkimus- ja kehittämistoimintaan.



Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö

Osaamisen vaihtoa korkeakoulujen ja työelämän välillä

Työelämä tarvitsee osaavia nuoria ja kokeneita ammattilaisia. Nuorten kouluttamisen lisäksi elinikäinen oppiminen ja monipuolinen aikuiskoulutus tukevat alueellista kilpailukykyä. Open House -hanke kehittää ammattikorkeakoulujen tutkimus- ja kehittämisosamista vuorovaikutteisesti työelämän kanssa.

OPEN HOUSE

lisää

- opiskelijoiden ja opettajien yhteistyötä työelämän kanssa
- opettajien pitkäkestoisia työelämäjaksoja
- asiantuntijapalveluita yritysten käyttöön

kehittää

- opettajien ja opiskelijoiden valmiuksia tutkimus- ja kehittämistyöhön

pilotoi

- uusia oppimisympäristöjä yritysyritysten työhön ja tutkimus- ja kehittämistoimintaan

YHDESSÄ VAHVAKSI

Yhteistyötä yritysten kanssa tehdään ammattikorkeakoulujen opettajien ja asiantuntijoiden työelämävaihtojen kautta. Työelämäjaksojen aikana työstetään suunnitelmia yritysten kehittymiselle. Yrityksillä on myös mahdollisuus antaa opiskelijoille oppimistehtäviä ja opinnäytetyöaiheita.

Yhteistyöstä yritys saa kehittämisehdotuksia ja uusia ideoita toimintaansa. Samalla asiantuntijoiden, opettajien ja opiskelijoiden tutkimus- ja kehittämismuodot kasvavat.

Hankkeen hallinnoijana toimii Mikkelin ammattikorkeakoulu (Mamk) Etelä-Savosta. Yhteistyökumppaneina ovat Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu (Kamk) Kainuusta ja Kymenlaakson ammattikorkeakoulu (Kyamk) Kymenlaaksosta. Ammattikorkeakoulut toteuttavat työelämävaihdot ja tehtäväkokonaisuudet omien yhteistyöorganisaatioidensa kanssa. Open House -hanketta rahoittaa opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö.

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Digital Business Development Course contents



Name of the course	Digital Business Development
Extend	5 ECTS
Time	4.8.-22.8.2014, classes from Monday to Friday at daytime, group work in the afternoon and evenings
Description	<p>Aim of this course is to implement a digital business development project for a local company or an organisation in multinational student groups. During the intensive course students will learn the concepts and practices of digital business. Classes are taught by international lecturers from the European partner institutes. Each lecturer will teach app. 8 hours in a topic which will support students' project work. Challenge of this course is to communicate in foreign language and to be able to work in an international group. Each team has one advisor from an academic institution and a mentor from the industry, and local tutoring students.</p> <p>While working in the multi-cultural groups students will learn to manage a project and how to be a team member.</p>
Objectives	<p>Students learn to identify the key factors of web-based business, Students get an overview of teamwork as a leading style.</p> <p>Students will understand the principles of cultural diversity and the meaning of international aspects in multinational groups. Students can learn how e-marketing can be used in different marketing functions and to apply the elements of the marketing mix in an online context.</p> <p>Students will understand the principles of entrepreneurial marketing, Students get an overview of copywriting in the digital marketing environment.</p> <p>Students understand the principles of entrepreneurship and business planning.</p> <p>Students can identify organizational values and cultural differences in the working environment.</p>
Assessment	<p>Team-work and communication skills</p> <p>Presenting and participating in the workshops</p> <p>Oral presentation of the case / solution (+ PowerPoint presentation),</p> <p>Written final report 3-5 pages (deadline to be informed during the course)</p> <p>Evaluation criteria: 80% for the project; 20% for class room activities plus course assignments given by the lecturers</p>
Language	English
Number of students	approx. 30 students

This course is implemented by an international group of higher education institutes (SPACE Network) around Europe and is coordinated by Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences.



WELCOME TO MIKKELI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Summer in Space 2014

Digital business development -course

4.8. - 22.8.2014

We want to warmly welcome you to Mikkeli, Finland to participate in the Digital Business Development –course at Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences.



WEEK 32

		place
Mon 4th of Aug		
9.00 – 9.15	Registration in the main campus	D1 lobby
9.15 – 10.30	Welcome / Practical issues / Campus tour	D209
10.45 – 12.15	Course description & evaluation criteria (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	D209
10.00 – 10.15	Campus bikes (Anna-Maija Torniaainen)	the library
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Team-building (Simona Casaite)	Xinno
	Teaming up the students for the project	
17.00 – 18.00	Get-together for the students (bowling)	Bowling hall
Tue 5th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Team-building (Simona Casaite)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Company and case presentations <i>We are going to visit the company premises and get familiar with the company and the cases</i>	MPY
Wed 6th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	D209
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	D209
Thu 7th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	e-Marketing (Antonio Vieira)	Xinno
Fri 8th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	e-Marketing (Antonio Vieira)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.00	Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	Xinno

Own expensed WEEKEND opportunity: **Jurassic Rock Festival** in Mikkeli (8th of August – 10th of August) read more: <https://www.facebook.com/jurassicrockfestival>



WEEK 33

		place
Mon 11th of Aug		
9.00 – 10.30	Programme of the week, project check (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	D209
10.00 – 12.00	Reporting and presentation skills (Elina Halonen)	D209
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Entrepreneurial marketing (Ana Lima)	Xinno
Tue 12th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Entrepreneurial marketing (Ana Lima)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Copywriting (Gisele Broos)	Xinno
Wed 13th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Copywriting (Gisele Broos)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Entrepreneurship and business planning 1 (Dori Pavloska)	Xinno
Thu 14th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Entrepreneurship and business planning (Dori Pavloska)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	
13.00 – 15.45	Entrepreneurship and business planning (Blaciga Rizoska-Tulov)	Xinno
16.00 -	<i>Sauna evening in Lahdenpohja (5 km from Mikkeli) for students, departure 4 pm from the Campus</i>	
	<i>Together with the international summer term -students</i>	
Fri 15th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Entrepreneurship and business planning (Blaciga Rizoska-Tulov)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 15.00	Presentation and reporting skills (Elina Halonen) Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	Xinno

Company representative(s) visit to the Campus during the week



WEEK 34

		place
Mon 18th of Aug		
9.00 – 10.00	Programme of the week, project check (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev)	D209
10.00 – 12.00	Reporting and presentations skills (Elina Halonen)	D209
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	
13.00 – 16.15	Organizational values (Karin Kuimet)	Xinno
Tue 19th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Cultural differences (Karin Kuimet)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	
13.00 – 16.15	Web-based business (Frederik Marain)	Xinno
Wed 20th of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Web-based business (Frederik Marain)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	
13.00 – 16.15	Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev, Peter Tasi)	Xinno
Thu 21st of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Working in teams (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev, Peter Tasi)	Xinno
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 16.15	Preparation for presenting the group work (Sami Heikkinen, Mikhail Nemilentsev, Peter Tasi)	Xinno
Fri 22nd of Aug		
9.00 – 12.15	Presenting the results to the company	Dexi-stage
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch	Dexi
13.00 – 15.00	Evaluation and feedback of the presentations Rewarding the most innovative solution Certificates of participation Summarizing the course	Dexi / Xinno

Farewell evening with the other international summer term students

Self-assessment 1 Webropol



Digital Business Development study module - Self-assessment

This self-assessment is a part of a thesis related to Digital Business Development study module held in August 2014. We would appreciate if you would take some time to answer this self-assessment to help us with our research. Choose the option that is the most appealing to you. Use your intuition, don't think too much of the questions. The self-assessment will take only few minutes to answer.

Please provide us with the following information before starting the self-assessment.

Age *

Gender *

Nationality *

Do you have previous experience of joint operations between students and working life connections that were included in your studies? If you answered yes, please specify in a few words. *

- Yes
- No

How would you evaluate your time management skills? *

Punctuality, scheduling your work, meeting deadlines

- Fair
- Satisfactory
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

How would you evaluate your teamworking skills? *

In a team, which role would be the most natural to you?

- Passive
- Observer
- Participator
- Active

Self-assessment 1 Webropol

Leader

Evaluate your level of self-activity in an education environment *

- Passive
- Active when required
- Fairly active
- Very active
- Very active and always taking the initiative

How would you approach a situation that requires problem solving? *

- Avoid
- Solve reluctantly
- Look support from others
- Independent solution with instructions
- Independent and creative method

How well do you adapt to changes? *

Which one is the most appealing to you?

- I don't like changes
- I prefer routines over changes
- I usually adapt well to changes
- I feel positive about changes
- I'm always open to new experiences

In this section you will find a scale of 1 - 5 in the answers. The scale is set to ascend from lower to higher. There are five answer options. Please select the answer from the scale that is the closest to your self-evaluation in each question.

How would you evaluate your motivation towards studying? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not motivated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Highly motivated

How do you perceive the study module? *

International lecturers, intensive studying, company co-operation, international group assignments etc.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High expectations

Was it difficult or easy for you to decide to participate in this study module? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very difficult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very easy

How committed are you to this study module? *

How much effort are you willing to put in?

	1	2	3	4	5	
No effort, little commitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High effort, very committed

How would you consider the usefulness of this study module to you? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very useful

Please remember to press SUBMIT when you are finished!

Self-assessment 2 Webropol



Digital Business Development - Self-assessment 2

You have filled the self-assessment **before** Digital Business Development study module. Now we are asking you to evaluate your personal development and performance **after** the course.

We would appreciate it very much if you would take some time to answer this self-assessment to help us with our research. Choose the option that is the most appealing to you **now**.

The self-assessment will only take few minutes to answer. Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

How would you evaluate your time management skills during the course?

*

Such as punctuality, scheduling your work, meeting deadlines.

- Fair
- Satisfactory
- Good
- Very good
- Excellent

Looking back, how would you evaluate your teamworking skills during the course? *

In a team, which role did you take?

- Passive
- Observer
- Participator
- Active
- Leader

Evaluate your level of self-activity towards learning during the course.

*

- Passive
- Active when required
- Fairly active
- Very active
- Very active and always taking the initiative

Please explain your answer briefly

*

Self-assessment 2 Webropol

How did you approach a situation that required problem solving during the course? *

- Avoid
- Solve reluctantly
- Look for support
- Independent solution from instructions
- Creative method

Please explain your answer briefly. *

Do you feel that you've been able to develop your ability to face changes? *

Which one is the most appealing to you now, after finishing Digital Business Development.

- I don't like changes
- I prefer routines
- I usually adapt well to changes
- I feel positive about changes
- I'm open to new experiences

Please explain your answer briefly. *

How would you evaluate your motivation during the course? Did your motivation improve during it? *

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not motivated | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Highly motivated |

Please explain your answer briefly. *

Did your expectations meet with reality? Were you satisfied with the content of the course? *

International lecturers, intensive studying, company co-operation, international group assignments etc.

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Did not meet expectations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Expectations fulfilled completely |

Would you decide to participate again in a course like this? *

Consider the international and intensive learning environment and company co-operation.

- | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| I would definitely not participate again | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | I would gladly participate again |

How committed were you to this study module? How much effort did you put in your studies? *

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not committed, no effort | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Very committed |

How would you evaluate the usefulness of this study module? Did you learn working life skills and/or improve professional

APPENDIX 5(3)

Self-assessment 2 Webropol

expertise in any areas? *

Not useful 1 2 3 4 5 Very useful
○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Please explain your previous answer and specify what was the most useful to your learning. What did you learn? *

Self-assessment raw questions

1

Sini Pudas
 Laura Tuukkanen
 Degree programme
 L811SN

THESIS
 Self-assessment questions

31.5.2014

This self-assessment is a part of a thesis related to Digital Business Development study module held in August 2014. We would appreciate if you would take some time to answer this self-assessment to help us with our research. Choose the option that is the most appealing to you. Use your intuition, don't think too much of the questions. The self-assessment will take only few minutes to answer. Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Fill in the following information before starting the self-assessment:

Age:

Gender:

Home country:

5 questions: entrepreneurship education

Life management

- How would you evaluate your time management skills? (Such as punctuality, scheduling your work, meeting deadlines)
 1.Fair 2. Satisfactory 3. Good 4. Very good 5. Excellent

Interaction

- How would you evaluate your teamworking skills? In a team, which role would be the most natural to you?
 1.Passive 2.Observer 3.Participator 4.Active 5.Leader

Self-guided action

- Evaluate your level of self-activity in an education environment
 1.Passive 2.Active when required 3.Fairly active 4.Very active 5.Very active and always taking the initiative

Innovation capacity

- How would you approach a situation that requires problem solving?
 1.Avoid 2.Solve reluctantly 3.Look for support 4.Independent solution from instructions 5.Creative method

Ability to face changes

- How well do you adapt to changes? Which one is the most appealing to you?

Self-assessment raw questions

2

1.I don't like changes 2.I prefer routines 3.I usually adapt well to changes 4.I feel positive about changes 5.I'm open to new experiences

5 questions: corporate partnership

Drivers

- How would you evaluate your motivation towards studying?
(Not motivated)1. 2. 3. 4. 5.(Highly motivated)

Facilitators

- How do you perceive the study module? (international lecturers, intensive studying, company co-operation, international group assignments etc.)
(No expectations)1. 2. 3. 4. 5.(High expectations)

Decisions

- Was it difficult or easy for you to decide to participate in this study module?
(Very difficult)1. 2. 3. 4. 5.(Very easy)

Components

- How committed are you to this study module? How much effort are you willing to put in?
(No effort)1. 2. 3. 4. 5.(High effort)

Outcomes & expectations

- How would you consider the usefulness of this study module to you?
(Not useful)1. 2. 3. 4. 5.(Very useful)

Student learning diary template

1

Your name

DIGITAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Degree programme

Learning diary

STUDENT LEARNING DIARY

Write down your everyday learning process in a few words during the study module of Digital Business Development. Describe the learning process: did you learn new skills or do you feel that you're already familiar with the topics of the lessons? Describe how the co-operation with the commissioning company has succeeded and how your team has worked in co-operation during the course. If you had difficulties, write down them as well.

For example you can describe what you have done during the day, how studying has felt or anything that feels worth of mentioning.

Note: The table will expand more when you start writing. Don't make alterations to the table form, just write down your thoughts and *remember to save* it to your computer every time you write something.

Week 1

Day 1	Write here...
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	

Week 2

Day 1	
Day 2	

Student learning diary template

2

Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	

Week 3

Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	

Learning diary submission deadline is **21 August 6 p.m.** When you have finished your diary, send it to: Sini.Pudas@edu.mamk.fi

If you have any questions or problems with the form, contact to the same e-mail for help.

APPENDIX 8

Company interview

Hei

Kävin elokuussa tapaamassa sinua pikaisesti Digital Business Development opintojaksoon liittyen. Teemme opinnäytettä "Development acquirements and working life collaboration of international higher education students in South-Savo" liittyen opintojaksoon ja keskustelimme mahdollisesta videohaastattelusta kanssasi.

Aikataulumme on kuitenkin varsin tiukka, joten sopisiko sinulle jos vastaisit sähköpostitse muutamaan kysymykseemme?

Kuinka hyödylliseksi arvioisit Digital Business Development projektin?

Miten yhteistyö sujui ja minkälaisia ennakko-odotuksia oli? Vastasiko toteutus odotuksia?

Aiotaanko opintojaksolla tehtyjä tuotoksia hyödyntää jatkossa Mpy.lla?

Osallistuisitteko uudelleen vastaanvanlaiseen projektiin?

Löytyikö opintojakson myötä uusia kehittämiskohteita, joihin opiskelijoita voisi hyödyntää?

Koetteko, että työelämäprojektit/ yhteistyö Mamkin kanssa lisää kilpailukykyä yrityksessänne?

Kiitos haastattelusta jo etukäteen!

Ystävällisin terveisin

Laura Tuukkanen & Sini Pudas

Project work**Personal evaluation****“opiskelijat kommentti”**

“Cooperation with you was great. The conversation was open and subjects were interesting. All of the organizing went well. We got a lot of new angles to developing new services and the material made by the students was amazing. We are very happy with the results. We are able to utilize the results in developing our business. We are willing to cooperate with you in these kinds of projects in the future”. Company representative, Vesa Jordan, Mikkelin Puhelin Oyj (MPY), Director of sales support and new services.



Figure Ö. Student group after three weeks of hard work.

