INTERNATIONAL HOTEL MANAGEMENT INTERNSHIPS: AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

OF STUDENT EXPEREINCE

By

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Abstract

This research applied a phenomenological approach to investigate the experience of final year undergraduate students who had undertaken 48 week paid management internships within the luxury hotel sector outside of the United Kingdom. There is an emerging research base in respect to students' responses to work integrated learning and co-operative work experience and this study has added to the limited qualitative evidence that exists on students' experience of extended international internships within the hotel sector. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 25 final year undergraduate students in a single British university. The interviews elicited information about how students made sense of their overseas work experience at a point when they were preparing to leave university and enter fulltime employment. Four superordinate themes emerged after the cross-analysis of individual participant's experience. Findings support previous studies into co-operative management education in identifying personal growth and confidence as important phenomena experienced by participants. Furthermore, participants indicated a sense of heightened human capital in the form of cosmopolitan human capital and expressed strong self-belief in their own employability as a consequence of their experience. This increased sense of employability remained true despite intention to work overseas again or to remain within the hotel sector. Original to this research are the phenomena of adversity and resilience coupled with the emergence of sub-themes clustering around positive psychological development that emerged through analysis of participants' internship experience. This study puts forward a theoretical model of international internships and positive psychological capital and contributes to practice in internship and employability mentoring and policy decision making regarding the internationalisation and employability agendas in higher education.

Dedication

To Tom and Jan,

The apple does not fall far from the tree.

Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations

BERA   British Education Research Association

CBI   Chamber of British Industry

CHME   Council for Hospitality Management Education

CIHR   Council for Industry and Higher Education

Co-op   Cooperative Education

CQ   Cultural Intelligence

ESRC   Economic and Social Research Council

HEA   The Higher Education Academy

HEI   Higher Education Institution

IPA   Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

POB   Positive Organisational Behaviour

PsyCap   Psychological Capital

QAA   Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

THE   Times Higher Education

UUK   Universities UK

WIL   Work Integrated Learning

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Context

The Universities UK "Gone International" report (2016) observes that students from all socio-economic backgrounds benefitted in terms of academic and employment outcomes from a period of overseas experience as part of their undergraduate studies. Nevertheless, despite positive academic and employment outcomes, participation in such programmes is low. In 2013-14, only 7.2% of graduating students had experienced some form of international mobility during their studies, up 2.2% on the previous year. This figure includes language students and all forms of mobility above 1 week. 68% of mobile students in this period went to EU destinations and 15% went to North America. 22.4% of internationally mobile non-language students participated in work abroad programmes. When broad subject levels outside of languages and medicine are scrutinised we can see the actual numbers are low. In 2014-15, only 7.5% of business studies and administrative studies students participated in some form of international mobility (n=1715). Of these, only 35% went abroad to work (n=600). The majority of business students went abroad as part of an Erasmus programme. Only 33% of business and administrative studies student who participated in some form of overseas experience in their studies did so through a Higher Education Institution (HEI) organised international mobility programmes.

Changes to UK higher education funding have come at a time when calls from government, employers and higher education institutions for the internationalisation of student experience and embedding of employability into the curriculum have put competing demands

on higher education providers (HEA 2014). This trend will be made more pressing by the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and its employment metrics (DfBS 2016, p12). Furthermore, the result of the 2016 EU referendum has placed uncertainty over the funding of international work experience programmes for UK students in Europe and over future student mobility and the ability of UK HEIs to collaborate on such programmes across borders (Times Higher Education (THE), 2017). This uncertainty is juxtaposed against research that suggests the highly internationalised British economy has created the need for an internationally minded workforce (Lopez-Moreno 2016). According to the British Council (2013) this skillset is rare and UK companies have increasingly been forced to look overseas for highly educated, globally minded graduates.

Previous research in the area of cooperative education and undergraduate international work experience has been described as applied-descriptive and evaluative in scope and lacking in a theoretical underpinning (Lin, Howard & Miller 2004; Colls, 2009).   Focus has been on the quality of provision and support by HEIs and the perspective of students has been for the most part limited to surveys of satisfaction. In-depth analysis of student perceptions of their experience, their abilities and their perceptions of their future employability has been under explored (Coll & Kalinis 2009). In addition, the intersection between internationalisation and employability has only been evidenced for a relatively short time and there are gaps in implementation, research and practice (Jones 2013). Li et al. (2013) point out that research into management education in the hospitality sector has been much neglected. Van Hoof (2000) illustrated that academic interest in the area of hospitality management internships developed over the last decade of the twentieth century. Van Hoof (ibid) noted that these programmes are generally assumed to be beneficial and academic interest focused mainly on student and employer expectations of internship programmes. However, although some

attention has been paid in the literature to international exchange programmes he notes that"… the international internship has received hardly any attention at all, and is not an option that is commonly available to hospitality management students" (Van Hoof, 2000: 6).

Internship experiences of hospitality and tourism students have been the focus of several studies in more recent years. Areas of academic interest have included: HEI and industry links (Busby, 2005); the benefits of international internships on professional development and labour market value (Busby & Gibson, 2010); supporting students on international internships (Gibson & Busby, 2009); students' expectations, experiences and satisfaction with alternative models of work integrated learning (Ruhanen, Robinson, & Breakey, 2013b) and career intentions (Robinson, Ruhanen, & Breakey, 2016). To date, there is little published work on how students make sense of their international internship in terms of their own personal and professional development and future employability.

1.2 Rationale

This study aims to increase understanding of the experience of undergraduate hospitality management students who have undertaken a year abroad working in the hotel industry as part of an institutionally organised work experience programme.   The necessity for this research is threefold. Firstly, there is a gap in understanding of the connexion between internationalisation and employability as mentioned above (Lin, Howard & Miller 2004; Colls, 2009). Secondly, there is a need to develop a theoretical underpinning for studies into international work experience and employability (Coll & Kalinnis, 2009). Thirdly, there is increasing pressure from the government and employers for HEIs to produce graduates with the skills that can be developed through international experience (Jones, 2013; British Council

2013; HEA, 2014). Therefore, practitioners need to be made aware of the role intercultural experience and associated self-efficacy and other positive psychological enhancements may play in meeting employers' expectations of graduates. (Jones 2013, King et al. 2010).

This choice of topic emerged from my own experience of expatriate work and from teaching in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with students who have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of work experience programmes and also working alongside industrial placements mentors and employability tutors who facilitate such experiences. Another motivation for this choice of topic was the relative scarcity of research in the area at a time when government bodies and HEIs are endeavouring to increase student international mobility and work towards the internationalisation of the curriculum (HEA 2016), whilst also responding to calls for greater emphasis on employability in higher education (UUK 2016). This research is concerned with understanding the perceptions of a cohort of students regarding their experience working outside the UK as part of their undergraduate degree. An area of particular interest was how students perceived the international aspects of their experience and how students perceived their employability in light of the experience.

1.3 Research Questions

The primary focus of this study is to examine the ways in which students of hospitality management and related management programme areas perceive their experience after completing an extended period of International Internship within the hotel industry. However, subsequent areas of potential exploration have arisen after an iterative process of initial engagement with research participants and re-engagement with literature. This

reflects the complex and inter-related contexts of International work experience, internships within the hotel industry, career futures and personal growth and development which emerge from participants' reflections upon their lived experience.

Research Questions

RQ1: How do hospitality management students perceive their past international internship within the hotel industry?

RQ2: How do hospitality management students perceive personal and professional development after a period of international internship?

RQ3: How do hospitality management students perceive their employability after a period of international internship?

1.4 Research Orientation

This research seeks to build on existing literature in the area of cooperative education and undergraduate international work experience from a phenomenological perspective, using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA is an idiographic approach to qualitative research which privileges individual accounts of experience before moving on to seek wider generalisations and therefore is well-suited to internship mentoring and employability tutoring which as a community of practice advocates a student-centred philosophy. IPA is a distinctive and emerging approach to qualitative inquiry, which developed in the area of

health psychology, but has the potential to offer valuable insights for management education and organisational behaviour research (Smith et al., 2009). In the absence of interpretivist perspectives in the area of hospitality management education and overseas experience, this research will seek to focus on the personal perspectives of students who have undertaken a year abroad to work within the hotel industry as part of a university organised internship programme. This study will also seek to reveal the ways in which students understand and conceptualise both the international nature of their experience and its impact on their future employability. This research aims to offer a better empirical understanding of such experiences and offers implications for practice for individual internship providers and the wider HE sector and government policy.

Theoretical Perspectives

A theoretical perspective is a conceptualisation of the nature of a research problem, its basis and the analysis a researcher chooses to investigate that problem. This perspective determines how I perceive, make sense of, and interpret data in this research.

As the primary purpose of this research is to understand students' beliefs and explain phenomena, a theoretical framework was adopted which is suited to examine the different ways in which students' make sense of their work experience and future employment. Early in the research process engagement with literature which took phenomenological approaches to studying careers (Cope 2011, Fitzgerald & Howe-Walsh, 2009) pointed towards phenomenology as a useful theoretical framework by which these questions might be addressed. According to Starks and Brown-Trinidad (2007: 1373) "Phenomenology contributes to deeper understanding of lived experiences by exposing taken-for-granted assumptions about these ways of knowing". The possibility of exploring the taken-for-granted

nature of student experience in international internships initially drew me towards phenomenology as a theoretical perspective from which to examine the embodied perception of participants.

Hermeneutics has been adopted as a second theoretical perspective adopted in this research. This rests upon the research questions interpretive nature. Through hermeneutics (from the Greek word 'to interpret' or 'to make clear'), the researcher needs to comprehend the mind-set of a person and language which mediates one's experiences of the world, in order to translate his or her message (Freeman, 2008). It is the purpose of this research is to understand experience (international internship) from the participant's perspective. At the same time, this research aims to formulate critical questions referring to the material gained through analysis of interviews. Further discussion of both the phenomenological and hermeneutical framework adapted in this research is given in chapter 3.

Conceptual framework.

Maxwell (2012: 39) defines a conceptual framework quite widely as a key part of research design and as "…the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs your research". In order to explain the meaning, nature, and challenges associated with the phenomenon of undergraduate international internships in the hospitality industry and their place within students' own thinking about their employability, this study has been informed by several distinct areas of theory from the social sciences. Perhaps the most overarching of these is the notion of capital found in Human capital theory (Blaug, 1976); Social Capital (Coleman, 1988); Cosmopolitan Human Capital (Ng, Tan and Ang, 2011) or Cultural Economic Capital (Jones, 2011); and Positive Psychological Capital (Luthans, 2004).

Other concepts have also supported and informed this research. Firstly, theories of work integrated learning (WIL) and experiential learning have been integral to developing an understanding of cooperative education programmes such as the university organised hotel internship researched in this thesis. Secondly, the cross-cultural nature of the experience and the opportunities for cross-cultural learning are informed by Cultural Intelligence theory (Earley & Ang 2004, Dyne, Ang and Tan; 2017). Thirdly, the multidimensional construct of employability, though perhaps not constituting a single theory in and of itself is a central to this research.

Methodological Framework

A methodology should be suited to a particular research question. My purpose here is to explore the lived experience of student's international internship and how they make sense of this in terms of their own employability. It is important that the methodology resonates with the philosophical approach adapted by the researcher and produces needed results that will contribute to knowledge. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is the approach to qualitative enquiry adopted in this research. IPA seeks to explore how individuals make sense of major life experiences and is committed to the detailed study of each particular case before moving to broader claims.

The field of student internship mentoring and employability tutoring aims to offer individualized guidance based on the unique needs of the student. IPA aligns with this student-centred philosophy as it offers a methodological approach that considers the individual in a specific context. By capturing context specific situations, IPA allows broad-based knowledge to be contextualized within a social and cultural contexts, producing

relevant findings. Further explanation and justification of the choice of IPA is given in chapter 3.

1.5 Organisation of the thesis

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The review provides analysis of literature on internships, work placements or cooperative education programmes within the context of higher education. The chapter includes a review and conceptualisation of internship experience as an educational practice, namely an off-campus work based learning experience, which forms part of undergraduate and postgraduate curricula along with an investigation of the stakeholders involved. Of particular interest will be international internships, wherein the student or internee is engaged in working environments outside of their home country or that of their educational institution. The construct of employability is also examined within this context. The chapter concludes with a section on positive psychological capital. This area of literature was arrived upon after analysis of participant transcripts in an iterative process of re-engagement with literature to help better understand themes that emerged from interpretive analysis.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter sets out the rationale for the selection of the methodological approach and research design adopted in this project. The methodology section considers my own ontological and epistemological position in relation to this research project and my rationale for choosing IPA as a methodology/method. The specific research questions are developed and the underlying rationale is explained. There is also a comprehensive examination of the

research process including ethical considerations and the role of reliability, validity and reflexivity in qualitative approaches such as IPA.

Chapter 4: Findings

The findings provide an in-depth analysis of the students lived experience of a year overseas working in the hotel sector as part of their undergraduate programme. It begins with an overview of the superordinate themes identified through IPA and continues to provide a more detailed analysis of the sub-themes that emerged.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

The final chapter discusses the major findings from the study and where appropriate, links findings not only to literature on co-operative education but also to theory from positive psychology and understanding and theory from career research and cross-cultural management. A model to help better understand the experience of overseas internships and to advance theoretical understanding of the development of positive psychological capital, cosmopolitan human capital and the individual's perceived sense of employability is put forward. The implications of this research for co-operative education practice, internship providers, HEI administration and government policy makers are considered, limitations identified and potential areas for future research are discussed. A summary of the research is given and some concluding reflections are made.

Chapter 2 Literature review

Part I

Co-operative Education, International Work Experience and Employability

This review examines relevant literature on internships, work placements and cooperative education programmes within the context of higher education. The chapter includes a general review and conceptualisation of internship experience as an educational practice, namely an off-campus work based learning experience, which forms part of undergraduate and postgraduate curricula along with an investigation of the stakeholders involved. Of particular interest will be international internships, wherein the student or internee is engaged in working environments outside of their home country or that of their educational institution.

2.1 A Taxonomy of Work-Higher Education Experience

It might be expected that experiences that combine work and higher education might be easily named. However, as Gardner and Bartkaus (2014) illustrate in a review of literature on work experience and higher education, in reality the area is populated by a broad spectrum of terms (See figure 1). Two broad areas are identifiable in terms for student work experience and names for HEI programmes designed to deliver work experience namely work placements and co-operative education. Gardner and Bartkus (2014: 37) point out that while terms may differ with regard to the relative focus on work or education, "…*they all share a fundamental belief that integrating a practical experience (such as work) with an educational experience*

(such as formal coursework) creates synergies that result in meaningful benefits for students and other stakeholders".

Garner and Bartkus (2014) noted that blurring of the terminology used for student experience such as in the usage of integrated learning and work-based learning which they see as umbrella terms to cover a wide range of educational experiences that incorporate formal higher education and workplace experience. Similar blurring was also noted between terms used to describe HEI's programmes designed to deliver such work experience. Garner and Bartkus (ibid) noted that internship was sometimes interchangeable with terms such as externships (Freeley, 2006), internship practicums (Bay, 2006) and cooperative internships.
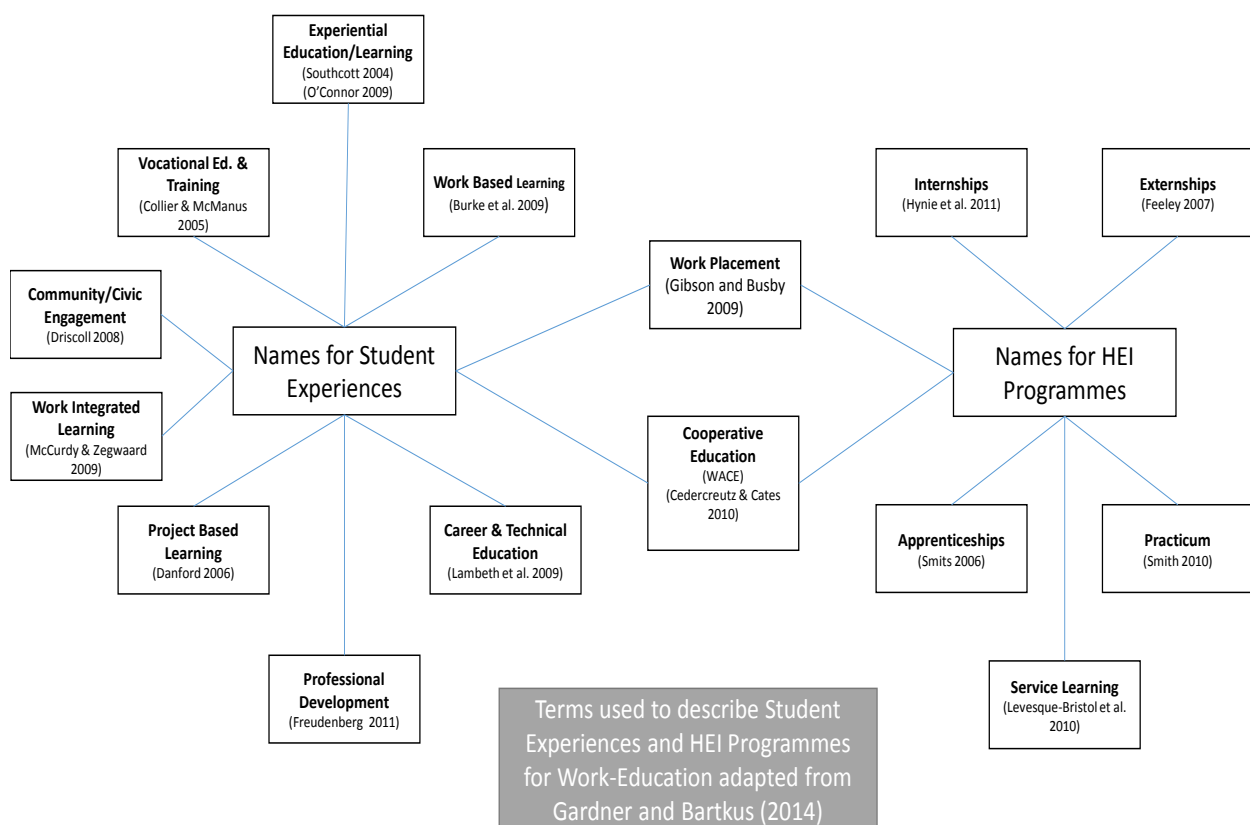
Figure 1 Terms used to describe Student Experiences and HEI Work-Education Programmes

For the purpose of this review, three of these terms need particular attention. Firstly, cooperative education, which is used to describe both student experience and HEI provision

(Gardner & Bartkus 2014). Wilson et al. (1996: 158) describe cooperative education as the principle strategy of cooperative education as "…a joint venture between the academy and the workplace with the latter providing work experiences to students". Cedercreutz and Cates (2010 p20, cited in Gardner and Bartkus 2010) clearly drew a distinction between cooperative education and other models of delivering a work/education experience by defining them as "…an educational methodology in which periods of classroom instruction alternate with periods of paid discipline-related work experience". The structured alternation of periods of practical work and periods of university education differentiates cooperative education from other work experience models.

Work placements, according to Cornelius et al. (2008: 288) "…have been used to help students develop transferable and work-related skills in 'real' workplaces". Vaezi-Nejad (2009: 282) describes London Metropolitan University's *Work Placement for Professional Experience* programme as being designed to achieve the key objectives of gaining a useful work experience; carrying out a work-based project; improving learning experience by applying academic skills by tackling real workplace problems; developing awareness of working environments; acquiring new capabilities and skills. As with other work-education experiences, the term work placement acknowledges the importance of integrating practical work experience with university education.

Internships are, according to Gardner and Bartkus (2014), almost widespread in higher education. After an exhaustive review of literature, Gardner and Bartkus (2014: 46) define internships as "…structured and supervised, involve academic credit, focuses on relevant work experience, and provides students with an opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real world practice". HEIs internships show significant variance in terms of length, content

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and organisation. They may be paid or unpaid, be highly structured or relatively unstructured. Practices differ widely between countries and between universities. Gardner and Bartkus (2014: 47) call for more consistency in practice and note that: "The lack of clearly defined and generally accepted guidelines, such as found in more formally established programs such as cooperative education, presents a challenge for internship program administrators. In essence, there is a need for more consistency in internship practices."

2.2 Work Experience and UK Graduates

The ongoing Futuretrack Study led by the Higher Education Careers Service in the UK and the Warwick Institute for Employment Research is perhaps the most important study into UK graduate careers. It is currently following 50,000 students from UCAS application through to the early stages of their career. Several interesting themes are already emerging from the Futuretrack study. For the purpose of this review, it is interesting to note that the majority of UK graduates gain some form of work experience during their undergraduate degrees (Purcell et al. 2012: 24). Motivation for this may include career development goals or in some cases students may pursue such work experience out of financial necessity and thus is not necessarily part of a structured placement arranged by a University or Higher Education Institution. Data within the survey reveals that 18% of graduates completed one or more types of short term structured work placement as part of their course of studies. Only 10% undertook a 12-month placement as part of their degree. However, it should be noted that the majority of these students were in education or other public service related degree programmes, which includes medicine and health sciences (Purcell et al. 2012: 102). Nevertheless, those who had undertaken work placements or internships as part of their degree were among a higher proportion of respondents to the Futuretrack Survey of UK

graduates who felt that their current job was very appropriate to their qualifications and career expectations (Purcell at al. 2012). This might suggest that graduates who completed an internship as part of their degree were more satisfied with their future career choices. Perhaps worryingly for those interested in graduate careers in hospitality and tourism, the Futuretrack report notes that only 10% of hospitality graduates in the early stage of their career could be said to work in jobs which are done only or mainly by graduates. The figure rises to 25% for graduates of transport and tourism (Purcell et al. 2012). Although other industrial sectors may report similarly disappointing figures for graduate underemployment, this data within the Futuretrack Survey poses challenging questions, not only for hospitality and tourism graduates, but also for policymakers, educators, and employers alike.

2.3. International Dimensions of Hospitality and Tourism Professional Education

The career expectations of students and the hospitality industry around the world have been the focus of several studies (Ruhanen, Robinson, & Breakey, 2013b; Robinson, Ruhanen, & Breakey, 2016). An asymmetrical relationship in the perceptions between education providers and the industry is often recognised and has been problematized in numerous studies (Collins, 2002; Petrova & Mason, 2004; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). Research into graduate careers in the UK hospitality industry is less well evident. Ladkin and Riley (1996) highlighted a significant gap in research into individual career strategies. In this area questions as to what extent periods of overseas or international work experience might form part of such strategies remain unanswered.

Paraskevopoulou et al. (2012) in a study of international mobility, migration and innovation within the hotel sector noted that, for London at least, the hotel industry is dependent upon international managers coming into the city who these authors perceive as

contributing positively to innovation in the industry. This contribution encompasses not only the operational practicalities of the industry but also to the global context of London, and complex processes of mobility amongst both migrant and non-migrant managers.

Many aspects of organisational management and behaviour have arguably become a multicultural challenge (Adler, 2002, Livermore 2010: 3). An increasingly globalising economy has seen ever-greater numbers of organisations operating across national boundaries, exploiting new resources, developing new markets and necessitating the hiring of an internationally diverse workforce. This is as valid for the hospitality and tourism sector as it is for other industries today. Real challenges have been presented to organisations in terms of finding and developing employees who can interact in different languages across cultures (Ascelon et.al. 2008). Changing technological, global, social and economic circumstances affect the motivations and preferences of organizations with a result that employers are seeking individuals with competencies, such as cross-cultural experience, that optimise productivity and growth objectives (Murphy 1999, Zoogah 2010). This might, to some extent, explain a claimed growth in interest by students in opportunities to gain overseas work experience as part of their undergraduate or even postgraduate education (Busby et al. 2009)

Kriegl (2000) claimed that there was an evident need for improved international management training within the hospitality industry. Kriegl reached this view through an analysis of the opinions of managers on expatriate assignments outside the United States. This study indicated that Interpersonal skills, (such as intercultural sensitivity, languages skills and knowledge of differencing working practices and cultural service expectations), were valued by industry managers. These managers also recognised that management education

and training in such areas had been lacking. The study found that managers in the early stages of their career felt ill prepared for international work.

Over several decades, there has been growing interest in the behaviour of people from different cultural backgrounds within the workplace, the interaction between managers and employees in multinational organisations and the challenges of adapting to and coping with working in different cultural contexts (Iles, 1995; Humphreys, 1996). International experience and intercultural understanding cannot be seen as discrete management functions in the same way as core parts of the management curriculum such as marketing, finance, operations or human resource management might be. Instead, international experience has the potential for the development a 'global mindset' and the soft skills needed by business and has therefore become a matter of attention for educators and students interested in preparation for increasingly international workplaces (CIHE 2011).

2.4. Work based learning

The UK Higher Education sector has increasingly devoted resources towards enhancing student's employability in response to student demands and policy concerns (Watts 2006). In February 2000, David Blunkett, then Secretary of State for Education and Employment, stated a desire for all higher education students to undertake a minimum period of work experience. The driving force behind this was the belief that government and HEIs needed to enhance students' grasp of working life and thereby their employability (Little 2006). However, collaboration between universities and employers to enhance the professional education of graduates is nothing new. Such collaborations have been established for well over a century, most noticeably within those degree programmes that

could be seen to possess a vocational or professional inclination (Linn, Howard, & Miller, 2004).

Nevertheless scholarly interest in the phenomena of internship or placement experiences is much more recent (Gault et al 2000). Modern forms of cooperative education between employing organisation and educational providers usually involve a period of work place experience with an appropriate vocational aspect. They are known variously in the USA as cooperative extension, cooperative education and internship and in Britain as a work placement, sandwich placement, practicum or internships with other national and institutional references not uncommon (Gault et al 2000; Busby 2003; Inui, Wheeler & Lankford, 2006; Busby and Gibson 2010). Airey and Johnson (1999: 230) observe that the presence of a period of internship within a degree programme might be indicative of a greater "business orientation" of such courses an observation contrasting with Busby et al. (1997) earlier appraisal of many business internships programmes.

In the UK, internships on business and management type programmes vary in length form 12 weeks to 12 months (Busby 2003). An investigation by Busby and Fiedel (2001) showed that 23% of Tourism and Hospitality related degree programmes in the UK offer a one-year internship, while others range from 1 to 7 months. In some instances, overseas internships were mandatory, "…usually those courses that have a particularly international focus and/or require the student to apply a language" (Busby and Fiedel, 2001: 517). For hospitality managers seeking to be globally competitive, Kriegl (2000) noted that improving language abilities, interpersonal communications, leadership, and the study of international business were the most critical components of professional education. Such capabilities may

arguably be acquired through a successful period of internship overseas or within a highly internationalised environment.

Internships, as a form of cooperative education, offer various advantages not only for the student internee but also for participating businesses and educational institutions (Theil & Hartley 1997). To the internee, these programmes offer access to work experience in order to gain insight into career possibilities, to explore relationships with particular organizations who might provide future career development, form networks and develop interpersonal skills outside a formal educational setting. For participating business such partnerships with students and HEIs provide public relations opportunities and raise company profiles as well as providing sources of potential new labour and knowledge transfer. For HEIs, internships provide links to the real world of work, the opportunity to provide a channel whereby management theory could be applied in practice as well as adding to institutional attractiveness for new students and raising the profile and even status of an institution (Thiel & Hartley, 1997; Coco, 2000; Gault et al., 2000; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Weible, 2010).

In the face of government, business and educational discourse as to the advantages of internships for the individual student and wider society, one might expect to see an increasing trend in student participation. However, this does not always seem to be the case and in fact various studies have noted a declining trend in the UK (Little & Harvey, 2006; Morgan, 2006; Walker & Ferguson, 2009; Aggett & Busby 2011). A survey by Balta et al (2012) as to the determinants of student non-participation in internship programmes in the UK found that those students who chose not to partake in an internship as part of their programme cited, amongst other things, a lack of confidence in issues related to employment as well as their lack of relevant previous personal work experience. Therefore, rather incongruously a

reason stated for not wanting to gain work-based experience was a lack of workplace experience itself. The desire to concentrate on gaining a high degree classification prevented some students from seeking work-based experience. Hence, it seems that some students valued their degree classification over practical experience, an attitude that seems to contrast with that of employers (CIHR 2007; Coco 2000; Hurst & Good, 2010).   Again rather frustratingly, the data does not allow for an investigation as to why students might believe a period of internship might detract from gaining the highest degree classification. On the other hand, students who opted to take an industrial placement as part of their course were motivated by factors such as the rate of pay, location of the employer, perceived benefits from industry experience, and the fact that internships might help them with their final-year research project by providing application of theory, case study information or as a loci of primary research.

Aggett and Busby (2011) in a study that confirmed the findings of Bullock et al. (2009) and Walker & Ferguson (2009) investigated the reasons why some students of Hospitality and Tourism management degrees at one British university opted out of internship programmes. The authors noted a number of reasons, which led to student non-participation. Chief amongst these was 'a lack of understanding of the value of work experience, and a lack of drive and determination' (Aggett and Busby 2011: 112). Nevertheless, within the study there are clues towards other interesting patterns, which might be indicative of the changing financial milieu of British higher education in the first decade of the 21st century. Firstly, the assertion by some students that industry experience had already been acquired outside the formal arrangements of their programme. Although the study does not go into detail here as to whether this experience was acquired prior to the commencement of their studies or during their studies, it might indicate an emergent economic necessity of part time

employment for many students with the changes to the funding of Higher Education. Secondly, the study also points towards a tendency among some students to want to complete their degree programme in as short a time as possible, thereby hastening the onset of full time paid employment.

2.5 Internationalisation of the management curriculum

By the end of the 20th century, educators and business planners speculated that the future world of work would offer increasingly important opportunities for those adept at intercultural communication and graced with cross-cultural leadership skills (Adler, 1998; Barnlund, 1998; Bennett, 1998; Harris & Moran, 1996). To fulfil the imaginings of such business futurists, higher education providers have for a long time envisioned ways to internationalise their curricula to greater or lesser extents (Ryan 2005, Wilkinson, 2006). In the UK, as in other countries, internationalisation inhabits a prominent position on agendas for the enhancements of higher education at national and institutional levels (Knight, 2004, Brookes and Becket 2011). Within such a debate, international internships are positioned as one means by which student experience in higher education can be to some extent internationalised (Brookes & Becket 2011; Black, 2004; Hearns et al. 2007)

As already mentioned, government, industry and educational discourse on increasing globalisation and internationalisation has seen mounting calls for HEIs and employers to work together to produce graduates with the ability to operate in culturally diverse contexts (Crossman & Clark 2011). A study conducted by the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHR, 2007) focused primarily on overseas education of British graduates and claims that one third of employers viewed a graduate with any form of overseas study experience as more employable than those who had none. Additionally, the majority of employers included in

the CIHE survey commented that such overseas experience '…makes an applicant well-rounded in terms of skills, experience and personal development' (CIHR 2007: 14)

One method higher education professionals often cite as a potentially effective means by which to add some measure of internationalisation to higher education is an immersive international experience. For instance, Cheney (2001) claims immersive international experience is the best way for students to gain appreciation for the cultural dimensions of business administration. However, many obstacles prevent students from participating in such opportunities as studying abroad, engaging in international field research, and completing extra-national internships. Despite the development and on-going improvement of international immersion programmes in the US, Cushner and Karim (2003) noted that fewer than 3 per cent of U.S. undergraduates travel abroad for work or study in any given year.

2.6. Benefits of international internships

Nagyand Smith (2016) argue that little known about how an international work experience affects the development and growth of interns. They also highlight a lack of understanding of employer evaluation of international internships. Most importantly for this research they illustrate a gap in the literature on what students consider to be the relevance and value of such international learning programmes. Sanahuja-Vélez and Ribes-Giner (2015) after a systematic review of internship stakeholder research concluded that the positive effects of business internships were a win-win situation for the main 3 stakeholders: students, employers, and higher education institutions. Fundamental to the positioning that international work experience gained through internships is of benefit to the student is the assertion that traditional classroom learning is enhanced by experiencing business practices

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in so-called real-world and diverse cultural settings. Such exposure is seen as facilitating the process of cross-cultural learning which according to Arpan, Folks and Kwok (1994) involves the growth of awareness, understanding, and competency as a vital part of the learning experience. Such opportunities for international work based education could be seen as adding to what Schroorman (2000) views as a positive aspect of the process of internationalising universities. Ortiz (2004: 264) argues that international internships form part of a strategic necessity for universities because they "…offer a rounded education, by allowing participating business students to gain international exposure". Such exposure, Oritz argues, will allow interaction with overseas peers and managers allowing the development of "global competency". To what extent global competency can be gained through exposure to a single overseas culture or working environment is not explained but it is a common theme in the literature on international education generally and international internships and study abroad programmes particularly (Adler & Loughrin-Sacco, 2003; Busby & Gibson, 2010).

2.7. Benefits for Employer Organisations

Internships offer a clear pragmatic benefit for employer organisations. Internships provide businesses with access to potentially high calibre temporary employees to fulfil their short term operational needs whilst at the same time fulfilling a perceived social responsibility of engaging with the workforce of the future and the world of education and training (Gault et al., 2000, Coco, 2000; Divine, Miller, Wilson, & Linrud, 2008). Zhao and Liden (2010) also suggested that internships provide employer organizations and potential new employees with much more realistic opportunities to assess each other and much more truthful environments in which to gauge each other's potential suitability and fit. This is a claim supported by Zhao and Liden's (2010) study of host organisations in the United States wherein

60% of internships resulted in permanent job offers. Set in the real world of the workplace, internships provide increased psychological fidelity that is highly valued within the function of employee selection and training (Goldstein & Ford, 2002).

Furthermore, according to a study by D'Abate (2010) companies who participated in internship programmes also showed increased organisational commitment to new employees more generally. That is to say commitment to internship programmes was also indicative of commitment to the selection, training and development of graduate employees throughout the organisation. Studies by both Coco (2000) and Hurst & Good (2010) found that employers believed internship partnerships provided a conduit by which higher calibre potential new recruits could be accessed and that such links to academia were highly valued by employing organisations as a fertile ground for new recruits. Internships can therefore be seen as having a valued functionality for employers in the recruitment and selection of future graduates.

Cheng et al. (2009) in a study of employability and work experience among accounting graduates in Australia noted that appointing overseas students resulted in significant costs for employers (for instance, the expenses of assisting employees to secure work visas and permanent residence). Such obstacles would need to be overcome to create incentives for internship employers to offer more permanent work to international students post internship. Whether more enduring benefits are both gained and provided by employers through international internships where the internee is expected to repatriate at the end of internship is not sufficiently explored in the literature.

2.8 Benefits for Students

Seppälä-Esser and Glätzle (2017) while highlighting the problems faced by universities in organising and recruiting students for transnational work experience programmes emphasise the potential benefits for students of such programmes. These include the opportunity to experience a different working and social environment and improving language skills, personal development is achieved. Learning to adapt to a new environment helps students, for instance, to learn to think globally, become more flexible and gain independence. These are they claim qualities that future employers are increasingly expecting from their employees.

In a survey limited to the business school students of one large Californian university Hergert (2011) found that graduates placed great value on internship experience. Perhaps not surprisingly, this positive association was even more marked when the internship was seen by graduates to have had direct career instrumentality. This study of US domestic internships raises the question as to how students might perceive the career benefits of an international internship. This is a topic underexplored in the literature, which will be examined in this research.

Hergert (2012) noted that the value of internships might be maximised if universities can provide an appropriate structure and integrate experience with the students' learning needs. Hergert (ibid.) concluded that this approach could go some way to address the criticism often posed toward business education in that it is overly theoretical, abstract or not grounded in the real world of work. Such criticism might be valid in some forms of business degree; however within the area of hospitality and tourism management degrees, at least in

the UK, there tends to be a heavy emphasis on vocational and workplace skills (Busby and Gibson 2004). This may in some way differentiate hospitality and tourism internees from peers from more academic or theory-focused degree programmes.

Busby (2002) recognises three primary aims for students commencing an internship. Firstly, to gain work-based experience and, where appropriate, assume some limited level of managerial responsibility for completing tasks and supervising others. Secondly, an important aim is to gain real world insight into practical management activities and methods. Finally, business internships aim to develop personal qualities such as maturity and self-confidence. This final aspect is the least explored within the literature. Drysdale et al. (2012) in a study of undergraduate students in the UK, USA, Canada and Sweden found that students who had participated in a period of work based learning had increased and sustained levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy and confidence in their future careers. Conversely, Drysdale and McBeath (2014) when investigating the development of the psychological constructs of hope and self-efficacy found no significant differences between students who had participated in co-operative education programmes and those who had not and consequently called for more research to be undertaken in this area.

Several studies see the primary benefit of an internship for the student should arguably be enhanced employability. Knouse & Fontenot (2008) Callanan & Benzing, (2004) and Gault, Redington & Schlager (2000) amongst others argue that students with internship experience will have an advantage in increasingly competitive job markets. This might therefore result in more favourable chances of gaining subsequent graduate employment. Internships may benefit students by reinforcing their academic learning (Hughes and Moore, 1999), whilst at the same time they may also serve to increase internee self-confidence, and

provide an opportunity to establish professional networks (van Dorp, 2008). In terms of longer lasting benefits of internships, D'Abate (2010: 143) argues that "...doing an internship results in more career development support, more job satisfaction, more career satisfaction, more organizational commitment, and faster promotion rates". Driffield, Foster, Higson (2011) examined the relationship between undertaking a work placement and the class of degree achieved. In so doing they challenged previous assumptions that partaking in a placement or internship resulted in better degree classifications. Instead, they concluded that because placements generally have strong selection criteria the calibre of students undertaking placements tends to be higher than average. In their words "...placement students do better because they are better students" (Driffield et al. 2012: 1.). There is little work to date to indicate how students who have participated in international internship programmes within the hospitality industry make sense of the potential benefits they may have gained on such programmes.

2.9. Distinctive Benefits of International Internships

Graduates, according to Chalou and Glizzo (2011), will increasingly be required to possess international skills and cultural competency to successfully compete in an increasingly global job market. International internships have been positioned as a possible means by which such personal enhancements might be accrued and as an important educational component to progress in an international career. A logical extension of this argument might then be to push for the necessity of universities to continue to develop international internships programmes to facilitate the career development of graduates. Student expatriation for work experience along with study abroad programmes has been identified as amongst the most effective ways to begin the complex development of the

knowledge and skills required in a global economy (Ortiz, 2004). It seems that this discourse within academia on the benefits of international work experiences for the student is mirrored in the rising uptake of international internships by students. This contrasts with a wider trend mentioned previously for a general decline in the uptake of domestic internships (Little & Harvey, 2006; Morgan, 2006; Walker & Ferguson, 2009; Aggett & Busby 2011). An example of the increasing demand for international internships might be found in AIESEC, a global youth leadership organisation and an important overseas internship intermediary for students and graduates, who reported a 430% increase in uptake of its international internships between 1998 and 2005 (Van 't Klooster et al. 2008). Such internships form part of a pathway for international self-initiating career path strategies for graduates (Vance, 2005). However, this impressive increase is from a low base and figures for 2014-15 show that only 600 students on business and managements programmes in the UK experienced and form of international work experience, the majority of these through the Erasmus programme (UUK 2016).

Andrews and Higson (2008) in a comparative analysis of graduate and employers perspectives across the European Union found that internship or placements "…afforded multiple benefits, providing a valuable learning opportunity during which theoretical skills could be applied to 'real-life' employment" (2008: 416). Furthermore, for many of the UK graduates studied, the most valuable part of formal work-placements was found to be an enhancement of subsequent university studies by resulting application of practical experience and theoretical knowledge. Furthermore for some the internship was claimed to have greatly enhanced their employment prospects.

2.10. Employability

In a review of 187 pieces of research published between 2012 and 2016, Artess, Mellors-Bourne and Hooley (2017) conclude that HEIs are under substantial pressure from government, students and employers to ensure that students graduate ready for the labour market. They argue that employability has become a moral duty for HEIs. Students invest their time and money in accessing higher education with the expectation that it will offer them access to greater life chances than they would have obtained if they had not attended university. However, holding a degree is no longer guarantee of such outcomes. Instead it had become critical that higher education develops students in ways that support them to be successful in the future.

According to the "FutureFit" report by Universities UK and The Confederation of British Industry (2009 p11) employability skills are paramount in importance for organisations seeking to recruit university graduates. There is also some indication within the report that employability skills might encompass some aspects of international, intercultural aptitude. One executive of a major oil company cited in the report explains that in his experience not all students understand what employers are looking for and that even if they possess the prerequisite skills, they are not always savvy enough to show them.   However he concludes:

"But universities are now looking at the softer skills required, given the complex and challenging nature of today's international businesses. The students Shell attracts tend to have the confidence needed to apply their skills in a global context." (Nimai Swaroop UUK & CBI p37)

These "softer skills" and the ability to apply them in global contexts mentioned above are contested to varying degrees within the literature. However, Buckley and El Amoud (2011) point out that there is some convergence in several areas. For example, they cite the report *Ambition 2012* by UK Commission for Employment and Skill (2009) which identifies

team-working, communication, active listing, an interest in learning, problem solving, numeracy, literacy and taking criticism as the competences sought after by employers. Such soft skills are increasingly endorsed by employers (Archer & Davison, 2008). According to Raybould and Sheedy, (2005: 261) recruitment methods increasingly reflect this approach, with the utilisation of selection methods which test 'all-round skills such as team-working, leadership, problem solving as well as technical abilities' The MISLEM project, undertaken by Aston University and partners across Europe, found that the most important generic group of competences required was the acquisition of higher level soft skills, particularly relating to communication (Andrews and Higson, 2008). However for the purposes of this study, it is interesting to note that despite its multinational composition, MILSEM does not reflect upon cross-cultural communication or international competencies as a discreet area of consideration.

2.11. Employability as a Multidimensional Construct

There is little scholarly consensus as to which generic skills should fall under the umbrella term of employability. However, active adaptation and proactivity within the domain of career enhancing personal skills and qualities as identified by Ashford and Taylor (1990), Crant (2000) and Fugate et al. (2004) form the conceptual underpinning of the construct of employability. In such conceptualisations, employability is put forward as a form of "…work specific active adaptability that enables workers to identify and realize career opportunities" (Fugate et al. 2004 p 3).

Fugate et al. (2004: 5) put forward a model of employability which embodied; "…a synergistic combination of career identity, personal adaptability, and social and human capital". More specifically, their conceptualisation of employability encapsulates the

dimensions of: career identity, personal adaptability, and social and human capital. These are argued to interact to enhance career opportunities for individuals within and between organisations. Whilst recognising that each of these dimensions of employability have independent value in themselves, Fugate et al.'s (2005) concept of employability relies upon the interconnectedness of each. These four dimensions figure prominently within literature on internships, international education and overseas work experience and are discussed separately in this review.

Fugate et al.'s (2004) concept of employability as a synergistic combination of career identity, personal adaptability, and social and human capital seems a useful construct by which to examine the international work experience of hospitality management graduates. Fugate's (2004) notions of career identity, and the social cognitive constructs of personal adaptability and self-efficacy (Lent, Brown and Hackett 2002; Bandura 2001) and social and human capital (Blaug, 1976) have formed a basis for the conceptual framework of this study.

Clarke (2017) notes that universities, in response to increasing pressure from governments and employers, have adopted a range of generic skill-based learning outcomes which, when embedded into degree programs, are supposed to enhance graduate employment outcomes. Universities also include internships, work placements and international study in their programmes with the aim of enhancing graduate employment prospects. Clarke argues this instrumental approach to graduate employability does not take into account other critical factors. Drawing on the broader employability literature, Clarke develops a framework that incorporates six key dimensions – human capital, social capital, individual attributes, individual behaviours, perceived employability and labour market factors – to explore and explain the concept of graduate employability.

In an original critique of the employability agenda Kalfa and Taksa (2015) use Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital to identify the limitations of HEIs assumptions that the acquisition and transferability of such skills can enhance students' human capital and, therefore, their employability. They go on to call for as a means to encompass the multiple stakeholders involved in the field of higher education and to explore the implementation of teaching methodologies designed to enable the development of generic skills.

2.12 Internships and Employability

Scott (1992) argued that internships are the single most effective strategy for gaining permanent graduate employment. This claim is based upon the notion that internships allow an employer to minimise risk by getting to know a potential employee during internship. Pianko (1996) reported that in one study of newly hired university graduates 70% had been hired at the end of an internship programme. Fletcher (1989) in a review of research into the student benefits of internships found effects that can be clustered in three categories: career development, career progress, and personal growth. Fletcher (ibid) describes the career progress gained through internships as a kind of employment advantage. These employment enhancements might be in job acquisition or in career progression and might embrace such effects as better pay both at starting points and over early career, reduced time in job searching, more job offers, better employment networking, better interview skills and more impressive C.V.s, for students who undertake an internships as opposed to those who do not (Taylor, 1988; Gardner & Motschenbacher, 1997; Thiel & Hartley, 1997; Coco, 2000; Gault et al., 2000; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Rothman & Lampe, 2010 D'Abate, 2010). In a study of German student's international mobility, Petzold (2017) suggested that when employers

consider hiring professional work experience could be somewhat substituted by study abroad experience suggesting within this European context international experience was valued alongside work experience.

Andrews and Higson (2008) in a comparative study of attitudes among European Union business studies graduates noted that in terms of employability graduates claimed to have greatly benefited from international internships as part of their course of study. However, this theme was not recorded in interviews with UK business graduates.   The level to which international skills and intercultural competence are valued by management within the hospitality and tourism industry is not yet established in the UK. Riley and Szivas (2009 p:105) in an article evaluating skills within hospitality and tourism argue that the industry constitutes "…a special case in which the nature of labour productivity intervenes". They argue that labour is, in this sector generally, separated from quantitative concepts of productivity and adds value primarily in qualitative terms i.e. soft skills and service quality. This might then raise the question as to what measurable value a period of overseas work experience might add to both the individual and the firm by raising an individual's levels of soft skills in a service driven environment.

In a study of employers in 31 European countries Van Mol (2017) observed that international student mobility is often cited as enhancing graduates' employability in globalised labour markets. However, he argues that empirical evidence on this assumed causal link remains limited. The study has two significant findings. Firstly, only a minority of employers considered study abroad as an important recruitment factor. However, employers searching for specific skills valued this experience more highly. Secondly, employers placed higher value on internships abroad compared to study periods abroad.

2.13. International Internships and Overeducation

It could be argued that if employers do not actively seek graduates with international experience then such experiences might be viewed as a form of overeducation. Dolton and Silles (2003) when analysing alumni data to investigate the determinants and consequences of overeducation found that among UK graduates, about half of those in initial years of their career were in jobs where they could be viewed as having a level of education which exceeded the requirements for their job. These are findings that seem to be confirmed by the Futuretrack report into graduate employment (Purcell et al. 2012). However, after some time in the labour force this figure falls to about one-fifth. Nevertheless the question must arise as to whether any additional skills or enhancements gained through a period of overseas internships are a valued asset within the UK hospitality and tourism sectors.

Stanton-Reynolds et al. (2009) in a study assessing the skills considered important for success as an entry level manager in the hospitality industry found that HRM recruiters in the United States ranked skills with so called culture and diversity 36th out of 59. Perhaps this relatively modest ranking would be disappointing to writers who call for the greater need for the inclusion of intercultural and global perspective into the management curriculum. However, it was nevertheless ranked more favourably than some knowledge and skill areas that form part of the core curriculum of many management education programmes; for example budgeting (ranked 51st) and strategic management (ranked 55th). The study does point to highly ranked generic skills which might arguably in some cases be concomitant with periods of overseas or international work experience demonstrated through an international internship, for example effective communication (ranked 9th) flexibility and adaption to change (ranked 10th) openness to new ideas (ranked 22nd). The study also notes that there

was a tendency within the data for recruiters to favour skills, which could be seen as relating to emotional intelligence rather than technical knowledge. Interestingly, this tendency was reversed in the responses of educators i.e. educators favoured technical knowledge over skills relating to emotional intelligence.

At an individual level, human capital theory (Blaug 1976) suggests that educational training is the best means by which to attain admittance into jobs that offer higher pay and more satisfactory working conditions. However, according to Giret et al. (2007) research has highlighted the difficulties for recent higher education graduates to find a job, which they believe, matches their level of qualification.   Qualitative mismatches arise when the qualifications or skills of workers either individually or in the aggregate, are different from the qualifications or skills required for their jobs. According to Sattinger (2012: 1) "Qualitative mismatches cause losses to individual workers in reduced wages, career interruptions, and reduced job satisfaction." Such a qualitative mismatch might be evident in the experience of UK graduates with international hospitality and tourism internship experience but does not seem to be investigated within the literature on internships and career more generally nor for hospitality and tourism management graduates specifically. After an investigation of the hotel industry in Andalucía, Marchante and Ortega (2012) conclude that suitably educated employees are more efficient than those whose education is not matched to the job. In addition, undereducated employees (as compared to job requirements) were deemed to be more efficient than overeducated employees.

According to Littlejohn and Watson (2004) graduates of hospitality and tourism management related degrees see the skills they have accrued as sharing much in common with other sectors. That is to say, the sector specific operational skills and managerial insight

they may have gained through their studies are transferable with other industries. In their view, such graduates may possibly possess a mindset which is flexible across functions and hierarchies in employment and therefore could envision career developments away from the sector which could mean that international experience acquired through an international internship might be valued in later positions.

2.14. Theorising International Internships and International Experience

Despite calls from policy makers and educators, only a minority of students in the UK or worldwide engage, as part of their programme of study, in work placements, educational exchanges, volunteering or other immersive undertakings overseas (Purcell et al 2012; Jones 2011). Nevertheless, there is some suggestion in the wider literature on international internships and cooperative placements (i.e. students and recent graduates expatriating for their internships/placements), to support the view that students' themselves believe that they may gain similar benefits as locals during internships, along with supplementary enhancements, such as heightened communication skills and second-language ability (Coll et al. 2003). Additionally, students returning from international internships may also believe they have also gained improved understanding of different workplace, local, national and regional cultures, and new insights into ways of working and professional practices (Pucillo, 1987; Lim, 2000; Beard et al., 2001; Wong & Coll, 2001; Coll 2004; Coll & Paku, 2006; Coll & Kalinis 2009). However, to what extent such enhancements may be valued by the young professionals themselves and by employers in later career stages is not adequately explored in the literature.

The experience international internships provide students might have the potential to produce great advantages once they enter the full-time job market (Clark, 2003; Feldman et al., 1999). The case for this claim might be stronger in those internships that expose students to international operations and allow them to work alongside experienced, successful managers and benefit from these managers' expertise (Mello, 2006). Adler and Loughrin-Sacco (2003) assert that what they term as global managers (i.e. managers in business with an international focus and operations) rated highly student internships with overseas firms along with foreign language expertise, study abroad, and the knowledge of content areas. Furthermore, they concluded that "…internships provide the international experiential need of the global business community and the needs of students who want to succeed in that arena" (2003:15)

It has sometimes been positioned that international work and study experience will enhance a graduate's career prospects (Cornelius, 2008; Cedercreutz and Cates, 2010; Gardner and Bartkus, 2014). One study of over 3000 International Business students over a 16-year period at the University of San Diego has claimed that international internships and study abroad programmes have a positive impact on the career development of graduates in the United States (Adler et al. 2005). A study complied on the behalf of the Rand Corporation, also in the United States, has argued that although hiring managers in international organisations ascribed little importance towards foreign language skills, they rated highly graduates with international internship or scholastic experience because such graduates might have acquired highly valued industry insights within a global context and cross-cultural experience (Bikson et al. 2003: 25). However it could be argued that such overseas work or study experience might also be indicative of other personal qualities sought after by hiring

managers such as the ability to learn, adaptability, independence, self-reliance and maturity (Archer & Davison 2008)

Some studies have made significant claims about the effect overseas internships might have upon the internee. For instance, Toncar and Cudmore (2000: 59) go so far as to claim that students from an American university were actually "*changed*" by the experience of being an intern at tourism business organisations in Oxford, England. Their study focuses primarily on the value of an international internship to the individual internee to the exclusion of possible negative impacts. Nonetheless the international internship experience they argue offers more the standard benefits of domestic internship such as the opportunity to 'test drive a career' and the chance to put theory into practice or the learning by doing experience (Calvo 2011). Additionally Toncar and Cudmore (2000: 59) argued that;

"…students who have participated in the program have reported or demonstrated that their experiences have had a substantial effect on them as individuals" (2000:59)

Toncar and Cudmore (ibid.) argue such developments as increased self-confidence, self-knowledge, changing perspective and awareness of ethnocentrism(s) might be of significance to potential employers. Indeed such an *"eye stopper"* as an extended period of overseas work experience on a graduate's C.V. might provide a form of competitive advantage to the former internee in the marketplace for graduate employment (Toncar and Cudmore 2000, Cannon and Arnold 1998). Toncar and Cudmore (2000) make an interesting distinction between overseas internships and overseas educational exchanges, with the former offering what they see as more real-world experience than the presumably more cloistered environment offered by study abroad programmes. An interesting if somewhat curious theme in Toncar and Cudmore's (2000) study is that the international internship offers more than just work

experience. Such internees are exposed to more than the world of work but also new corporate and local cultures in life changing ways. Similar *"life changing"* accounts were recorded in White et al.'s (2005) interpretations of American Marketing Management students' experience of work placements in the UK. To what extent such comments are hyperbole or relate to longer lasting effects upon the person and upon career choice and development is unanswered. Root and Ngampornchai's (2013) study of student's international experiences indicated that experiences abroad have an obvious impact on students' cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills. However they also concluded that they do not necessarily help to develop deeper levels of intercultural competence.

Button et al (2005) in a study of British nurses who underwent a period of overseas internship as part of their education concluded that the primary effect such overseas nursing experience had was upon personal development and transcultural adaptation. Similar conclusions were drawn from the study of Enskar et al. (2011) university lecturer exchange programmes and Lupi and Batey (2009) study of American trainee teachers working in Plymouth England. Similarly Sahin (2008: 1789) concluded that Turkish trainee teachers benefitted both "personally and professionally" from a teaching internship programme in the United States and that interns reported increased levels of "self-development" and "became culturally more effective people" with new "global perspectives".

Coll et al. (2003) in an admittedly small scale study of Thai students' overseas internship experience and non-Thai students' experiences in Thailand found that although both groups reported difficulties with language and communication, both groups also described advantages from the international work experience which included improved self-confidence and perceived career enhancement. This would seem to confirm findings of Coll's

(2000) study of student attitudes to international internships (therein termed cooperative education placements) in that students frequently reported problems with the mechanics of the placements, which resulted in periods of stress. Nevertheless the students' interviewed valued the importance of exposure to other cultures and described personal enhancements in so called soft skills such as self-confidence and communication as well as cross-cultural awareness.

In an original turn in the literature on internships generally and international internships particularly Coll (2009) explored employers' attitudes towards international internships within science and technology firms. In so doing Coll (ibid.) revealed that employers interviewed for the study engaged international internees for pragmatic reasons, in similar ways to the reasons they employed local internees. The students engaged by these employers possessed the skills required by their companies and were employed in similar capacities to local interns. This generally amounted to routine work, or specific projects. However, given the long induction times common in science and technology placements, the typically longer duration of international placements was also seen to be advantageous by employers. Employers also favoured the new perspectives international internees brought to the workplace. Coll's (2009) most sticking conclusion was that employers testified that the greatest advantage of international internees "…was the enthusiasm the students brought to the workplace. The employers felt the fact that these students took the risk of traveling great distances provided strong indicators of their commitment and this was borne out in their 'can do' enthusiastic attitude in the work place" (Coll, 2009: 41). A noteworthy concluding remark in Coll's study calls for further research to be undertaken outside of science and technology internships within other disciplines such as business and hospitality as: "These subjects likely

have different needs and an investigation into the success or otherwise of such international co-op exchange arrangements would be of value" (Coll, 2009: 42)

In an influential study, Feldman, Folks and Turnley (1999) found that there was a correlation between reportedly unsuccessful international business internships and insufficient mentoring. The study concluded that mentoring of international internees had a consistently positive impact on socialisation, on the amount of learning gained through internships and upon the likelihood of internees being offered and accepting permanent employment. Moreover, although age dissimilarity did not impact on results successful mentoring was identified as being more likely if the mentor and protégé were demographically more similar in terms of gender and nationality. It should be noted however that the study did not consider important possible demographical descriptors such as race or ethnicity, religion, social background or level of education. Nevertheless, Feldman, Folks and Turnley (1999) give important indications that inadequate mentoring, or in cases where the mentor and internee were demographically dissimilar, resulted in lower levels of learning about international business, less successful socialization to the work environment, worse prospects of job offers from sponsoring organizations, and fewer long-term career benefits from the internship than those in which appropriate mentoring and supervision were provided.

Research suggests well-structured mentorship within work based learning programmes has positive benefits (LaBonty & Stull 1993; Van Gyn & Ricks 1997; Fifolt & Searby 2010). Smith-Ruig (2014) explored the professional and psychosocial benefits reported by students in a mentoring programme as part of their work based learning. These

enhancements included increased confidence, improved work related knowledge and stronger career focus.

Busby and Gibson (2010) were perhaps the first to unearth empirical information surrounding notions of communication, culture, self, and context as key features relating to overseas internships or placements within the tourism and hospitality industries. Yet this concept remains underdeveloped. It could perhaps be posited that the experiential understanding gained by business and management students through participation in international workplace internship is in some ways similar to those that are mentioned within the literature on international work more generally. Although at this stage of their career such internees are most commonly placed in operational or junior supervisory roles within an organisation, their experience can be seen to mirror in some way that of other forms of expatriate labour.

2.15. Human and Social Capital gained through international experience.

Within the management and organisational studies literature on cross-cultural interactions, international education and work experience, there is increasing interest in the international experience of hospitality and tourism managers and the preparation and education thereof. This is hardly surprising as the hospitality and tourism industry is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the world economy and by its very nature is highly internationalised and necessitates the regular interaction of employees and customers from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, multinational corporations within the international hospitality sector have for a long time undervalued the role of cross-cultural training and experience in the selection and development of its managers (Dewald, 2008: 353). Several studies have suggested that international hospitality and tourism businesses would benefit from a greater

realisation of the value of cross-cultural management skills within the industry as a whole and for the selection and training of managers who will be expected to work in an international environment in particular (Ayoun & Moreo 2008; Kaye 1997; Jassawalla et. al 2004; Maganini and Honeycutt 2003; Mwaura et al, 1998; Testa & Mueller, 2009; Connell 1997; Johns & Henwood, 2007; Charlesworth 2007; Strauss & Mang, 1999; Sizoo et al. 2005). However, there seems to be very little, if any, current published work on the interplay between intercultural knowledge and experience and the development of management students' capabilities and employability and none within the field of international hospitality and tourism management.

Tung (1998) argues that overseas work experience could result in a form of cosmopolitan enhancement valuable in today's business environments. Scholarly interest in the concept of global mindset or intercultural awareness or cosmopolitanism dates back to classical antiquity. According to Cheah (2006: 486) the concept of cosmopolitanism has developed from an intellectual ethos to "…a vision of an institutionally embedded global political consciousness". Originating in the work of Aristotle and advanced by the writing of Emanuel Kant, modern interest in cosmopolitanism focuses on issues of globalisation, on the rise of transnational networks and post-national social formations created by different forms of migration. Habermas's (1997) revival of Kant's project of cosmopolitan democracy can be seen as one part of the many waves of scholarly interest in the concept of cosmopolitanism over recent years. Most notable of these is perhaps Appiah's (2010: 69) twofold concepts that "…intertwine in the notion of cosmopolitanism". Firstly that we have obligations to others that are greater than shared citizenship. Secondly that we should become informed of the practices and beliefs of others.

Jones (2011) in a qualitative study of corporate employers' attitudes towards students' international work experience on volunteer programmes reported that corporate employers in the UK valued the "cultural-economic capital" accrued during international voluntary work placements carried out by undergraduates. This somewhat nebulous term referring to cultural sensitivity is not directed at a definite national, ethnic or cultural knowledge per se but in the view of recruiters, "…reflects the valuation of a set of skills acquired through the experience of working in a different cultural context overseas" (2011: 540). Although employers tended to be vague about values they sought in future employees, Jones (2011) states that it is clear that "…the capacity to develop informed opinions based on 'global values', loosely expressed as a positive view of globalisation and an interconnected global society, represents a relevant and desirable capacity for undertaking global corporate work" (2011: 241). This is resonant with Ng, Tan and Ang's (2011) notions of cultural intelligence and cosmopolitan human capital discussed later in this review.

The early sociological theories of role orientation by Merton (1957) and Gouldner (1957) can be seen as the beginning of modern elaboration of the cosmopolitan-local demarcation. Within the domain of work and human capital, the term cosmopolitans most often refers to "…individuals who have the education, experience and skills that enable them to work effectively in many different cultures" (Ng, Tan & Ang 2009: 5.) Modern interest in the cosmopolitan-local division is therefore seen as a form of human capital of significance to the management sciences (Haas 2006; Kanter 1995; Tung 1998). A key area of investigation focuses on what cosmopolitanism can bring to the individual's human capital and is defined by Haas (2006) among others, as relating directly to the degree of international experiences that individuals accrue. In many ways, the concept of cosmopolitanism can be seen as influential to research on international experience and international competencies discussed

in the literature on so called "global mindset" (Levy et.al. 2007, Osland et.al 2006). Levy et al. (2007) contend that although the term itself is not often mentioned in the burgeoning literature on global mindset, its associated attitudinal stance serves as an underlying theme in the corpus since the publication of Perlmutter's (1969) seminal categorisation of ethnocentric, polycentric and geocentric orientations of managers in multinational settings. Perlmutter's (1969) pioneering tripartite typology (and particularly his identification of geocentric [world-orientated] managerial mindsets) and the subsequent research stream on global mindsets marks a significant development in the social science literature for the well-established themes of cosmopolitanism and is perhaps the first application of cosmopolitan theory in the literature on international management.

At an individual level cosmopolitanism can be described as a psychological perspective or mindset. Cosmopolitanism represents "…a state of mind, or – to take a more process orientated view – a mode of managing meaning" (Hannerz, 1996: 102). Cosmopolitans are defined by their "… willingness to engage with the Other… openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity" (Hannerz, 1996: 163). Cosmopolitanism can also be seen as "… a matter of competence… a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting, and reflecting" (Hannerz, 1996:193). Visualised as an individual competence or personal ability it is therefore envisioned within the domain of human resources and human capital.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) theory has been put forward as a framework for understanding successful cross-cultural interactions and as a method in the selection, development and training of international managers (Early & Ang, 2003). Arguably a development of Gardner's (1993) multiple intelligences theory CQ is defined as a

''…multifaceted competency consisting of cultural knowledge, the practice of mindfulness, and the repertoire of behavioural skills'' (Thomas & Inkson, 2004: 182-183). CQ has been described as a competency that enables the individual to recognize and react to cultural differences thereby acting appropriately in a wide variety of situations across a variety of cultures (Thomas, 2006). Cultural Intelligence is a culture free construct observed in individuals of any nationality who have developed the ability to adjust and adapt to diverse cultural situations and an enabling factor in successful cross-cultural interactions, for example see: Early, (2006), Early & Ang, (2003), Ang et al., (2006), Ng & Early, (2006). Peterson (2004 p89) views CQ as pertaining to skills and qualities within the individual. These skills may be communicative or knowledge based for example. Qualities pertaining to CQ may include but are not limited to those such as tolerance for ambiguity, flexibility and open mindedness. Moreover, these qualities are not unrelated to those within the literature on cosmopolitanism and global mindset.

Much of the literature on cross-cultural management research has an epistemological conformity. An objectivist-realist perspective dominates the literature. Most writers in the management literature on culture recognise culture as an objective phenomenon that can be observed, recorded and measured (Aycan 2000). A review of literature indicates that a positivist approach is usually adopted on epistemological levels in cultural management research (Yeganeh, 2006: 362). For more than 30 years since the first publication of Hofstede's (1980) influential if sometimes controversial notion of cultural dimensions and their consequences in the workplace a major theme in global management research has focused on national culture as an influential variable in management performance (Leung, 2009). Although Hofstede's cultural dimensions can be traced back through the work of anthropologists such as Hall (1959, 1976) and Kluckhon and Stodtbeck (1961) he is arguably

among the first to apply the developing theory of cultural dimensions and cultural values to an international study of management. This path has been extended to a greater or lesser extent by Laurent (1983), Schwartz, (1992, 1994), Trompenaars (1993), House et al. (2004). This research represents a fairly unified epistemological position in that this view of culture is drawn from early to mid-twentieth century anthropology which viewed culture as consisting of distinct and measurable principles that can be classified (Bjerregaard et al. 2009). This functionalist and positivist approach which is preeminent in the so called "Hofstedian" tradition can be seen as part of a continuum in intercultural communication research since Hall (1959) that can be seen as a form of cultural determinism.

Earley (2006: 928) called for alternative approaches to conducting value surveys across international boundaries towards "…developing theories and frameworks for understanding the linkage among culture, perceptions, actions, organisations, structures, etc." CQ has been suggested as an alternative paradigm to research philosophies which focus on the measurement and comparative analysis of values attributed to national culture and holds promise for investigating the effectiveness of cross cultural encounters (Gelfand, 2007).

The literature on managers who work in an internationalised environments and expatriate managers' experiences on overseas assignments identifies an on-going need to develop methods for the selection and development of managers who operate across cultures (for example see: Darby 1995, Kaye 1997, Harvey 2001, Harvey, Speier & Novicevic 2001, Jayawardena 2003, Cappellen & Janssens 2005 Dewald & Self 2008, Harvey & Moeller 2009, Takeuchi 2010). As Earley and Ang (2003) claim, cultural intelligence requires cognitive, affective, and behavioural training, it might therefore be a quality which might be identified and developed in managers undertaking duties which involve high degrees of cross-cultural

interaction. Crowne (2008: 397) proposes that if organisations can develop CQ skills during internships, training, and expatriation, then successful cross-cultural managers should be developed. In multinational organisations, strong CQ competency may ultimately influence the success of global leadership, so firms should consider individuals who have had multiple global assignments and some education abroad.

In the literature on manager development, culture and overseas work experience there is increasing interest in the international experience of hospitality and tourism managers. This is hardly surprising as the hospitality and tourism industry is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the world economy and by its very nature is highly internationalised and necessitates the regular interaction of employees and customers from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, multinational corporations within the international hotel sector have for a long time undervalued the role of cross-cultural training in the selection and development of its managers (Dewald, 2008: 353). Several studies have suggested that the international hospitality and tourism business would benefit from a greater realisation of the value of cross cultural management within the industry as a whole and for expatriate managers in particular (for example see: Ayoun & Moreo 2008, 2008a, 2009; Kaye 1997; Jassawalla et. al 2004; Maganini and Honeycutt 2003; Mwaura et al, 1998; Testa & Mueller, 2009; Connell 1997; Johns & Henwood, 2007; Charlesworth 2007; Strauss & Mang, 1999; Sizoo et al. 2005). However there is little current published work on the interplay between cooperative education, overseas or expatriate work experience and the development of soft skills related to intercultural communication such as global mindset, cosmopolitanism or cultural intelligence and none within the field of international hospitality and tourism management.

Part II

2.16 Positive Psychology and Positive Psychological Capital

The initial area of interest of this research was to explore students' international internship experience with a particular focus on the development of cross-cultural awareness and personal and professional development. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009: 113) noted that *'it is in the nature of IPA that the interviews and analysis will have taken you into new and unanticipated territory"*. During analysis of students' interviews some themes began to emerge that were resonant with research already discussed in this literature review such as confidence and self-efficacy and cultural intelligence. However, it became apparent that important and widespread themes were emerging that clustered around psychosocial development and positive psychology that had not been a feature of previous literature about co-operative education, undergraduate internships or students' international experience. Therefore through an iterative process of reengagement with literature a second phase of literature review was undertaken to provide a theoretical understanding of themes that emerge from the analysis of students' transcripts.

Psychological Capital

Luthans and Youssef (2004) define positive psychological capital as the positive and developmental state of an individual as characterized by high self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency. This construct is rooted in two distinct areas; firstly the resource based view of the firm and secondly, positive psychology. Within the resource-based theory of the firm, which seeks to explain the sources of sustainable competitive advantage for organisations

(Newman et al 2014), human capital has been positioned as one of the most valuable resources (Crook et al 2001, Newman et al. 2014). Human capital refers to the supply of knowledge, skills, and abilities, resulting in the capacity to perform labour so as to produce value to an organisation. Inspired by ideas from positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) psychological capital has gained increasing attention as a strategic resource due to its potential influence on human performance (Ardichvili, 2011). Positive psychology is a reorientation of scholarly interest away from the treatment of mental illness towards the study of optimal human functioning referred to as positive psychology (Seligman 2004). The Positive psychology movement began to strive to change psychology's focus from not only fixing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This new movement in psychology addressed the once-forgotten "average person" and began to study potential positive human development (Sheldon & King, 2001).

This turn of interest towards positivity in the first decade of this century embodied in Peterson's (2006: 4) premise that "what is good about life is as genuine as what is bad and therefore deserves equal attention", saw an increase of interest in this area in the fields of management and leadership. Led primarily from scholarship in the United States the focus centred on the dynamics within an organisation that lead to both an individual and an organisation to flourish. This search for "positive deviance" was central to early research in the area (Caza 2016; Cameron & Caza, 2004; Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) and incorporates ideas including virtues, positive organizing, and meaning-making in the workplace.

Cameron & Caza, (2004: 731) defined this new Positive Organizational Scholarship as:

"The study of that which is positive, flourishing, and life-giving in organizations. Positive refers to the elevating processes and outcomes in organizations. Organizational refers to the interpersonal and structural dynamics activated in and through organizations, specifically taking into account the context in which positive phenomena occur. Scholarship refers to the scientific, theoretically derived, and rigorous investigation of that which is positive in organizational settings"

Organisational behaviour has also become another research interest for scholars encouraged by positive psychology's renewed focus on studying what is right about people (or flourishing to use a term from positive psychology). Organizational behaviour researchers have applied positive psychological research to the workplace. Known as Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB) is defined by Luthans (2002: 59) as "…the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace"

POB researchers are interested in a specific subset of workplace positivity constructs. Standards for inclusion in POB research are having a solid theory and research base, having valid and reliable measures, existing at the individual or micro level, exhibiting state-like and developmental characteristics that can be enhanced through brief interventions, and having illustrated an ability to impact work-related performance (Luthans, 2002a, 2002b; Youssef & Luthans, 2007, 2009). Initially subjective well-being and emotional intelligence were proposed as potential areas of interest for POB (Luthans, 2002b), however as the literature developed, the four concepts that have received majority of attention by POB researchers are self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. In Luthans et al. (2004) phraseology if traditional economic capital is what you have, human capital is what you know, social capital is who you know then positive psychological capital is who you are with confidence, hope, optimism and resilience as core traits.

Definitions of confidence in positive psychology literature are founded upon the concept of self-efficacy within the work of Albert Bandura (1994). Bandura's concept involves an individual's belief in their agentive capabilities to produce given levels of attainment. Confidence in positive psychology literature is used in the sense of Stajkovic and Luthans (1998: 240) as an individual's belief "…about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context." According to Luthans et al. (2004) positive psychological capital has been demonstrated to have a strong positive relationship with work related performance. As a trait like characteristic, Luthans points to research since Bandura arguing that workplace confidence can be developed.

Masten, Best and Garmezy's (1990) definition of resilience is the ability to adapt to a specific situation in order to achieve successful outcomes in the face of adverse circumstances. Luthans & Youssef (2007) identify resilience as a positive behavioural trait. Luthans (2002) states that resilience capacities are strengths in changing environmental circumstances. Until the development of the Positive Psychological Capital concept resilience received little interest in organisational behaviour literature. Described as the trait like ability to "bounce back" from adversity (Luthans et al. 2004), it is positioned as a positive capacity in work environments.

The positive psychological construct of hope is perhaps significantly different from the familiar colloquial usage of the word with which we are all familiar. As defined by Snyder et al (1996), hope is constituted of two elements: agency (goal directed energy) and pathways. Here agency refers to an individual's drive to achieve tasks within specific contexts. Pathways refers to the methods an individual can envision to actualise those tasks (Luthans, Norman,

Avolio, & Avey, 2008). Individuals who demonstrate high levels of hope (or alternatively referred to as waypower) also demonstrate increased goal-directed energy and exhibit enhanced capacities to develop pathways to reach their goals (Luthans, Avey, et al., 2008).

Optimism in positive psychology literature also has a somewhat adapted meaning from its colloquial usage. According to Scheier, Carver, & Bridges (2001) optimism refers to an individual's expectancy of positive outcomes. Those high in optimism generally build positive expectancies that motivate them to pursue their goals and deal with difficult situations making a positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future (Luthans et al. 2010; Seligman (1998). These individuals seem to make sense of their experience as something that in various ways enables them to go on to create positive outcomes with regards to their future careers.

Certain of these concepts from positive psychology are used within the literature previously evaluated in this study on undergraduate internships within business and management literature. They are: Confidence (Toncar and Cudmore, 2000; Busby, 2002; Coll, et al., 2003; van Dorp, 2008; UUK & CBI, 2009; Smith-Ruig, 2014); Self-efficacy (Fugate, 2004; Lent, Brown and Hackett, 2002) and Resilience (Archer & Davison, 2008). However, these studies do not elaborate upon the theoretical foundations of these concepts within the positive psychology literature generally, or positive psychological capital specifically. Instead they are predicated as outcomes of successful internships programmes and not linked to broader psychological development.

More recent research into positive psychological capital (PsyCap) has attempted to investigate its influence at individual and organisational levels and to find ways to predict and nurture its developments. A meta-analysis by Avey, Reichard et al. (2011) suggest that PsyCap

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is a useful predictor of performance and work attitudes and behaviours. Research by Luthans et al. (2010) indicated that developing employee PsyCap can lead to positive organisational and individual outcomes.

Avey (2013) attempted to explore the antecedents of PsyCap. This study found that authentic leadership, complexity of task and self-esteem were significant predictors of PsyCap. The study also found that quality of workplace supervision and job characteristics were significant predictors. However, inconstancies in replication of the study in different cultural environments added a note of caution to the study and a call for more work on the antecedents of PsyCap to be undertaken. After an extensive review of research in the area Newman et al. (2014) called for future research to pay attention to possible multi-level applications of PsyCap research, to examine the underlying mechanisms by which PsyCap influences individual-level, team-level and organizational-level outcomes, and identify possible factors that may moderate the relationship between PsyCap and its outcomes.

Summary

Coll and Kalinis (2009) assert that there is no lack of research within the literature on internships and cooperative education. However they also stress that the theoretical underpinning and methodological quality in these areas of research are often inadequate. Research has focused on the benefits of international internships on professional development and labour market value (Busby & Gibson, 2010); supporting students (Gibson & Busby, 2009); students' expectations and satisfaction Ruhanen, Robinson, & Breakey, 2013b) and career intentions (Robinson, Ruhanen, & Breakey, 2016).

Previous research has also given insights into the cross-cultural nature of international internships (Pucillo, 1987; Lim, 2000; Beard et al., 2001; Wong & Coll, 2001; Coll 2004; Coll & Paku, 2006; Coll & Kalnins 2009). However the ways in which such experiences may be valued by students themselves beyond the immediate end of such programmes is underdeveloped. To date there is little published in-depth work on how students make sense of their international internship in terms of their own personal and professional development and future employability

Jones (2011) puts forward the thought-provoking concept of "cultural-economic capital" which suggested employers might value student international experience. This is comparable with Ng et al. (2010) theory of cosmopolitan human capital. However the extent to which students themselves believe a period of international internship might affect their career futures is under explored.

Although not mentioned in co-operative education research overtly there is a discernible link between areas of interest such as: Confidence (Toncar and Cudmore, 2000; Busby, 2002; Coll, et al., 2003; van Dorp, 2008; UUK & CBI, 2009; Smith-Ruig, 2014) Self-efficacy (Fugate, 2004; Lent, Brown and Hackett, 2002) and Resilience (Archer & Davison, 2008) and key constructs from the literature on positive psychology and positive psychological capital. However, this literature does not elaborate upon the theoretical foundations of these concepts it employs. Instead such terms are merely used as predicated as outcomes of successful internships programmes and not linked to broader psychological development. Research into how students themselves make sense of their own psychosocial development and employability is overlooked in the literature.

To date there is scant literature on psychological capital in cooperative education and internship settings, or on the development of psychological capital in university year aboard programmes or student international experience more generally. Therefore, research questions were developed that might facilitate in-depth research into the lived experience of students who had completed an international internship in the hotel industry. Of particular interest is how students perceive

themselves and their career futures and how students made sense of living and working in another culture.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Overview

The purpose of this study is to come to a better understanding of the experience of students who have lived and worked abroad as part of their institutionally organised placement or internship within the hotel sector. This chapter will provide a rationale for the selection of the methodological approach and research design adopted in this project. Research within the social sciences offers a potentially bewildering perspective of research choices (Brymann & Bell 2007). Questions of methodological stance underpin the formation of a research strategy and are fundamentally entwined with the formulation of research questions (Collis & Hussey 2009). A research methodology must be informed by the nature of the phenomenon and research questions that lie at the heart of an enquiry. Therefore some discussion of the researcher's personal understanding of the nature of 'being' or 'social reality' and what constitutes knowledge of such reality is necessitated in order to justify the methodological decisions taken in this project.

3.2 Methodological Positioning

As put forward in chapter one, the research questions necessitate a qualitative lens through which to examine the experience of students who have returned from an extended period of international internship within the hotel sector. In-depth interviews were arranged to explore students' experiences of living and working in a foreign environment. Furthermore, the study explored how students perceive any effects upon themselves and upon their attitudes towards work and possible future careers within the hotel industry. In-depth interviews were arranged to explore the experience several months after the completion of their internship.

This choice of design in part reflects the researcher's own positioning or orientation regarding questions about the nature of knowledge and what can be known. Coll and Kalinis (2009) assert that there is no lack of qualitative or quantitative research within the literature on internships and cooperative education. However, they also stress that the theoretical underpinning and methodological quality in these areas of research are often inadequate. Motivated by this call for an improved theoretical basis and research quality, interpretive phenomenological analysis was employed as a means by which to develop a better theoretical understanding of the lived experience of international internships within the hotel industry. In doing so, this research hopes to contribute to the qualitative literature on internships, early career and cooperative education by developing a detailed 'phenomenological hermeneutical' conceptualisation of students' lived experience of international internships within the hotel industry.

The overall methodological approach taken in this study will be discussed in depth but is broadly conceptualised in Figure 2
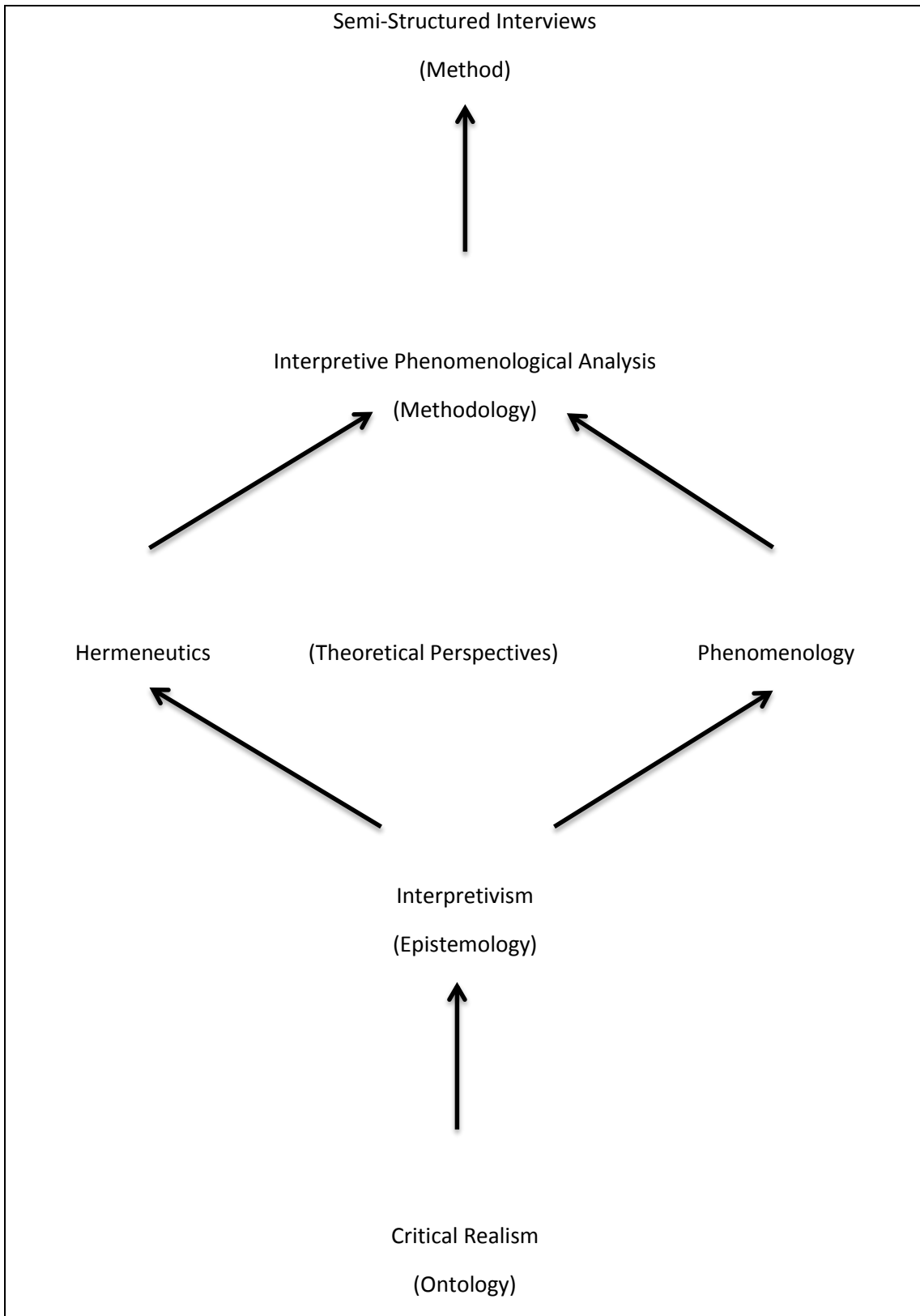
Semi-Structured Interviews

(Method)

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

(Methodology)

Hermeneutics   (Theoretical Perspectives)   Phenomenology

Interpretivism

(Epistemology)

Critical Realism

(Ontology)

Figure 2. Methodological Conceptualisation

Semi-Structured Interviews

(Method)

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

(Methodology)

Hermeneutics   (Theoretical Perspectives)   Phenomenology

Interpretivism

(Epistemology)

Critical Realism
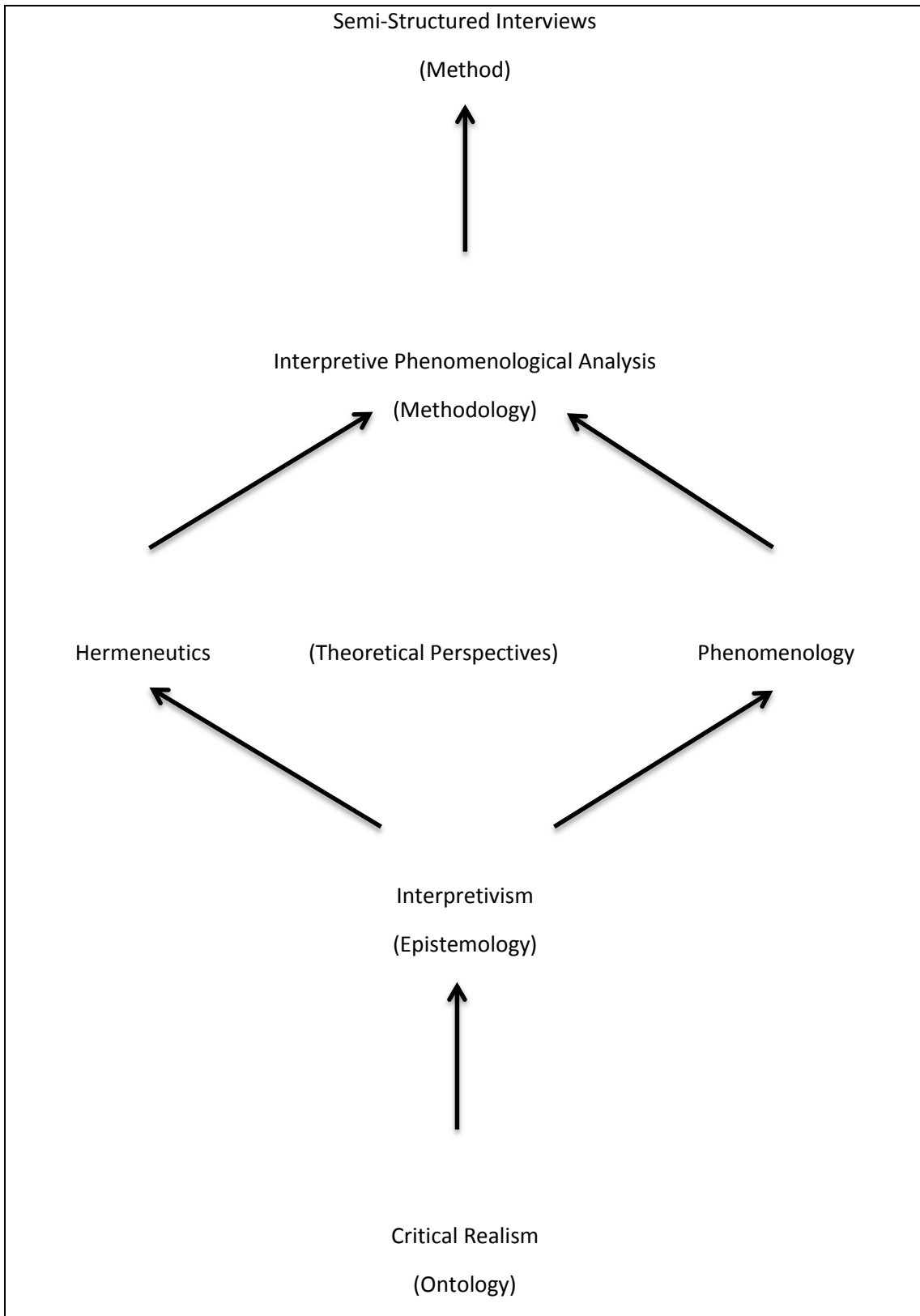
(Ontology)

Figure 2. Methodological Conceptualisation

3.3 Ontology and Epistemology
3.3.1 Ontological Positioning

Debate about the very nature of *being* itself lies at the heart of the distinction between positivist and interpretivist traditions in social research. Ontology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of being; "to what exists in the world, to the nature of reality" (Punch, 1998: 170). Much of the research into internships, early career and cooperative education has taken a positivist approach (Coll & Kalinis 2009). In doing so there is a strong current in the literature, which adopts an objectivist ontological view of the nature of reality (Coll & Chapman 2000, Bartkus 2007). Within such ontologies, reality is held to be independent or unrelated to human cognition or perception. In this view, reality has an objective order or structure that is waiting to be uncovered by the researcher (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). The approach to our understanding of the nature of the social world is sometimes referred to as realism or even naïve realism and is adopted by many of the researchers into international internships, early career and cooperative education (Knouse & Fontenot 2008). Realist ontologies assume that there is a single reality that can be comprehended through rigorous application of scientific methodology in the manner of the natural sciences (Maxwell 2012; Collis & Hussey 2011). Such an approach assumes that knowledge of the social world can be based upon common sense perceptions and is real in some definable or measurable way (Madill et al., 2000)

Research into international internships, early career and cooperative education can be seen as falling into two broad camps. The more prevalent of these takes an ontological position, which is aligned more closely with positivist traditions in social science research, and favours quantitative methodologies, which typically utilise survey based statistical information to gain empirical information into the experiences of international work

experience and cooperative education programmes. Recent examples of such contributions to the literature on internships, early career and cooperative education include Rothman and Lampe (2010), Zoogah, & Abbey, (2010) Zhao & Liden (2010), Gardner and Bartkus (2014), Drewery et al. (2016). Such research takes an objective realist position that certain aspects of culture, work experience and other social and psychological factors really exist and are structured outside of the perceptions of the participants and can possibly be discovered by such empirical means as those mentioned above (Coll and Chapman 2000, Bartkus 2007).

Another research pathway which has grown in significance over the past two decades has been somewhat influenced by constructionist views on ontology. Constructionism can be seen as a philosophical positioning as to the nature of social reality in which knowledge, truth and so called 'reality' can never be truly identified or known in themselves because an objective world independent of human cognition that can be discovered, measured and quantified cannot be known (Pring, 2004). Knowledge of reality is therefore mediated through human cognition. Except in the views of the most radical social constructionists this is not a solipsistic argument. Instead it might be acknowledged that there is a reality, which exists outside of human perception or consciousness. However, outside of human cognition there is no meaning. It is human sense making which brings forth knowledge of social reality. Therefore, reality might be seen as the interface between the objective and the subjective (Crotty 1998).

The ontological reasoning put forward here is essentially one akin to realism. I take Maxwell's (2012: 5) position that; "…there is a real world that exists independently of our perceptions, theories and constructions, while accepting a form of epistemological constructivism or relativism". This is a form of qualified or moderated realism. It is unlike the position of objectivists and naïve realist which accepts that an external world exists (and

awaits) independently of our portrayal of it and the anti-realist perspective taken by radical constructionists that there is no basis for proposing or studying a reality separate from perceptions of the knower (Nightingale & Cromby 2002). Instead I propose an ontological position that a social reality exists independently but can be known through engagement and interpretation. This position, it could be argued, straddles objectivist and subjectivist paradigms which in Burrell and Morgan's (1979) thinking would be incommensurable. The notion of such incommensurability is one I do not support. Without wanting to revisit the paradigmatic discord of previous decades, I see a dialogue whereby paradigm can speak unto paradigm in a more heterogeneous manner. I agree with Nightingale and Cromby's (2002: 710) view whereby a critical realist ontology in which referentiality and objectivity are possible which is limited or partial and 'necessarily dependent upon further empirical and discursive revision'

3.3.2 Epistemological Assumptions

I have argued that there is a social reality beyond our own perceptions but that we know the world only through our own sense making. Berger and Luckmann (1991) maintained that the sociology of knowledge should be concerned with a society's criteria of knowledge and how this is developed. They assert that "…the world of everyday life is not only taken for granted as reality by the ordinary members of society in the subjectively meaningful conduct of their lives. It is a world that originates in their thoughts and actions, and is maintained as real by these" (Berger and Luckmann, 1991: 33)". From a management education and organisational studies perspective, organisations such as higher education

providers and internship providers can be seen as 'life-worlds' in which all practice and knowledge take place through experiential processes (ibid.).

I have previously stated a critical realist ontological foundation for this study i.e. an ontology that is broadly realist in that it accepts a possible reality beyond the perceptions of the researcher. According to Healey and Perry (2000: 120) realism believes that there is a *"real world to discover even though it is only imperfectly apprehensible.'*

However, epistemologically this study follows a far more constructionist form of analysis. Social constructionism is an idea that the social world, as we know it, is socially manufactured through human interaction and language (Berger & Luckmann 1991). In this worldview ontological understanding of reality is negotiated socially, culturally and historically. In other words, such notions of reality are not straightforwardly structured within individuals in the same way as rocks might be structured within geological strata, but are formed through interaction with other people and organisations. To make sense or interpret those constructed meanings others hold about the world while at the same time attempting to exclude (bracket out) any assumptions and prejudices would mean focusing specifically on the individual and their interface with others.

3.3.3 Phenomenology

This study takes a theoretical perspective, which is grounded in phenomenology, which is in turn consistent with the ontological discussion set out previously. Moran (2000) explains, 'the whole point of phenomenology is that we cannot split off the subjective domain from the domain of the natural world as scientific naturalism has done. Subjectivity must be understood as inextricably involved in the process of constituting objectivity' (Moran 2000

p15). The phenomenological approach does not separate the subjects of research from their social and organisational contexts. The goal of research is rather to rely as much as possible on the participant's views of the situation. However, phenomenological studies, as a research method, are comparatively scarce in the internship and cooperative education research literature particularly and in management education literature more generally. This absence has perhaps been caused by the very nature of phenomenology and its relative newness as a research methodology in management and organisational theory. Another inherent difficulty in using phenomenological approaches is related to methodological issues. The methodology and methods applied will necessarily be different according to the phenomena being researched and the thematic attention accorded to them. Management researchers might be advised to consider phenomenological analysis to study traditional research problems (Cope 2003). In adopting a phenomenological approach, a researcher must attempt to understand the reality or perhaps realities working behind the observed phenomenon (Remenyi et al., 1998). An interpretive turn in analysis is therefore necessary.

Knowledge can be gained through the interpretation of other people's accounts of their lived experiences. An interpretive position understands the subjective meaning of social action (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The reality of the world becomes meaningful in terms of intentionality, consciousness and essential relationships. Consequently, interpretive methods, which are based on an approach of understanding, will attempt to comprehend the subjective meanings of both actions and communications from the perspective of the particular actors (agents). Weber (1949 cited in Prasad 2005) referred to this process as the principle of *Verstehen* whereby understanding meaning and intentionality is emphasized over causal explanations. Interpretation according to Smith and Osborne (2008) involves a two-

stage process whereby participants make sense of their lived world experiences and the researcher will endeavour to interpret the participant's sense making process.

Husserl's (1970) presuppositionless philosophy at an epistemological level sees the task of phenomenology in exploring and revealing the essential types and structures of experiences (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). To provide a conscientious and bona fide account of conscious experience, Husserl argued, it is necessary to suspend all prior scientific, philosophical, cultural and everyday assumptions and judgments (Moran, 2000). It is only then that one can attain "...the sphere of 'absolute clear beginnings', in which one can perceive the things themselves as they are in themselves and independently of any prejudice' (Kockelmans, 1994; cited in Cope 2003 p5). It was Husserl's belief that previous philosophers had allowed their presuppositions or prior values, beliefs and philosophical commitments to misrepresent and misinterpret the portrayal of phenomena.

As Wertz (2005: 175) explains: "Phenomenology is a low-hovering, in-dwelling, meditative philosophy that glories in the concreteness of person-world relations and accords lived experience, with all its indeterminacy and ambiguity, primacy over the known." Phenomenological researchers generally agree that phenomenological research methods need to be responsive to both the phenomenon and the association between researcher and the researched. Nevertheless, there is a continuing debate about how to do phenomenological research in practice. Contrasting stances are occasionally taken about what constitutes appropriate or "sound" phenomenological research. Therefore the research community engaged in phenomenological methodology should be seen as a broad church. Writing about psychological phenomenological approaches specifically, Giorgi (1989) maintains that four essential features hold true across all approaches: (i) the research is rigorously descriptive; (ii) uses the phenomenological reduction; (iii) explores the intentional

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relationship between individuals and conditions; and (iv) unveils the essences or structures of meaning inherent in human experiences through the use of imaginative variation. Moreover Giorgi (1997) more straightforwardly argues that the phenomenological method encompasses three interconnected steps: i) the phenomenological reduction, ii) description, and iii) search for essences. Nevertheless despite this seemingly straightforward rubric variations thrive in practice. For example, variations on Giorgi's framework include, the reflective life-world approach of Dahlberg et al. (2008); the lived experience human science inquiry based on Garza, (2007); Todres's (2005,) embodied life-world approach; to name just a few. Further discussion of the contribution of phenomenological philosophy to IPA will be given later.

3.3.4 Hermeneutics

A second theoretical perspective utilised in is study is that of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is a theory of interpretation. It predates phenomenology as a philosophical tradition by several centuries originating in the study and interpretation of sacred texts (Audi 1999). It has since developed as an attempt to provide philosophical support for the interpretation of increasingly diverse textual sources such as historical documents and literary works and converged with phenomenology in the work of hermeneutical phenomenologists such as Martin Heidegger (Smith et al., 2009). Heidegger constructs a theory of knowledge later developed by Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004) in his work 'Truth and Method' which places an emphasis on the importance of language in achieving understanding and upon the context in which that language is produced. Van Manen (1990) uses Schleiermacher's (1977) notion

that hermeneutics becomes necessary when there is a possibility of misunderstanding as a starting point for hermeneutical interpretation

In 'Being and Time' Heidegger (1962) looked to the Greek etymological origins of phenomenology noting the Greek 'phainomenon' could be translated as that which 'appears' or that which 'shows'. Hermeneutics and phenomenology share common cause as their joint concerns is to examine the work as it appears to show itself. Hermeneutics and phenomenology both consider that human interpretation of phenomena are shared, limited and enabled through language and culture.

Heidegger (1962) meticulously examines the possible meanings attributable to appearance with the intention of setting forth his own interpretation of the 'appearance' of our being or existence. In doing so, Heidegger positions phenomenology as an explicitly interpretive endeavour which makes a hermeneutical philosophical turn indispensable in making sense of lived experience. Heidegger's acceptance of fore-understanding (that the researcher's own life world cannot be isolated off from that of the participants) advances Hurssel's (1970) process of bracketing off the researchers own experience to forma more reflective, cyclical or iterative process and has influenced modern reflexive psychology (Finley & Gough 2003)

Hermeneutics

Schleiermacher

Interpretation as a craft rather than mechanism. The aim of interpretation is to undertand the writer as well as the text.

Detailed and holistic interpretation can result in ' an undertanding of the utterer better than he understands himself' (Schleiermacher, 1998: 266 cited in Smith et al 2010)

Heidegger

Engagement with the world is always through interpreataion. Objects can appear as they are or have hidden meaning.

Heidegger scrutinises the relationship between interpretion the fore-structures of our understanding

Gadamer

Interpretation as a dialogue between the past and the present. Meaning will be strongly influenced by the moment at which the interpretation is made.

Figure 3 Theoretical influences of hermeneutics within this study adapted from Smith and Flowers (2009)

Both hermeneutics and phenomenology hold that sense-making and meaning arises in and is a consequence of social interactions, and in Van Madden's view (1990) may be refined through reflexivity and intersubjectivity. Reflexivity is the process through which the researcher pays conscious attention to their own position with a social context and how that position might distort or bias his or her objectivity. Intersubjectivity refers to the mutual establishment of understanding between individuals in a social relationship and the experience of their *lifeworlds*.

3.4 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
Theoretical foundations of IPA

Smith (2004) asserts that IPA is an inductive and explorative approach to research that privileges individual experiences. It has been adopted in this study as I believe it offers a way into the social and psychological world of the participants and allows knowledge to be gained

from the interpretation of participants' own sense making of their experience of international internships. Smith & Osborn (2003) emphasise the utility of IPA in exploring how participants make sense of experience and of their personal and social reality. This is done in order to understand the meaning ascribed to those experiences and not simply describe the experiences themselves. From this it is hoped to construct a thorough understanding of the phenomena under scrutiny to gain an 'insider perspective' using an empathetic and questioning approach (Smith et al., 2009). The individual is conceptualised as cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical within IPA studies (Smith & Osborn 2003). In so doing the language spoken by participants is connected with their thoughts and emotional responses. Smith et al. (2010) offer a well-developed philosophical framework for IPA, which they envision as a tripartite convergence of ideographic, phenomenological and hermeneutical traditions in interpretive research traditions.

3.4.1 IPA as Idiographic Approach

IPA is ideographic in as much as it focuses on the particular and in so doing emphasising detailed and in depth analysis. Analysis is specific to a particular individual within a particular context (in the case of this study an individual participants' sense making of their time working abroad). In IPA claims of wider transferability only emerge after a focus on the particular. Individuals are linked to other individuals but held to offer unique perspectives of particular phenomena.

IPA as already discussed is pitched at the ideographic level, a term traditionally associated with the study of the individual person in psychology. However, it generally serves a wider function than the singular analysis of individual cases. Ideographic level analysis here

is used to distinguish the study of 'specifics' form the study of 'things in general' or nomothetics (Larkin, Watts & Clifton 2006 p103). Hence the study of a specific event or situation might also be considered to be ideographic

Considerable work in applied psychology, the social sciences generally and international work experience and career decision making particularly has been influenced by nomothetic principles. In so doing, nomothetic research hopes to gain understanding at a group or population level. Truths are uncovered in aggregate and general laws of behaviour are potentially revealed. As previously stated IPA contrasts with this approach in its concern with the particular. Cope's (2010) study of entrepreneurial learning through failure is an exemplar study within business and management literature of an ideographic study, which concentrates on specific individuals (entrepreneurs) as they make sense of specific events or situations in their lives (business failure). Similarly this study focuses on individual management students and their individual sense making of their own overseas internship experience

3.4.2 IPA and Phenomenology

Gray (2014: 24) identifies phenomenology as "… an exploration, via personal experience, of prevailing cultural understanding. Value is ascribed not only to the interpretations of researcher, but also to the subjects of the research themselves". This aspect of phenomenology has been a cornerstone for the development of IPA. Smith's (2004) work, which has gained some popularity in qualitative psychology, and health related fields in the United Kingdom but is still emerging in the field of management education and organisational studies, is one example of a number of phenomenological methods which

focus on rich descriptions of lived experience and meanings but which do not explicitly use Husserlian techniques such as the phenomenological reduction and eidetic variation.

Central to IPA is a distinct phenomenological emphasis on the experiential claims and concerns of participants. Smith (2004) argues that his method, which seeks to explore participants' personal lived experiences through idiographic and inductive means, is phenomenological in its concern for individuals' perceptions. However, IPA identifies strongly with hermeneutic traditions, which recognise the central role played by the researcher. In so doing, IPA differs from descriptive forms of phenomenology. A central tenant of IPA research is an acknowledgement of the interpretive stance taken by both the participant in interpreting their own lived experience and the researcher in interpreting participants' account of that experience. Smith (2004) does not advocate the practice of "bracketing" in IPA as a means of managing researcher subjectivities commonplace in Husserlain forms of phenomenology. Instead IPA calls for a reflective practice in which the researcher acknowledges and accounts for the intersubjectivity of phenomenological interpretation

Giorgi (2008) states that the purpose of his phenomenological method is to explain the nature of the phenomenon observed in a more traditional scientific or normative sense. In Giorgi's method, the ultimate goal is eidetic reduction or stripping away to an essential meaning. Idiographic analysis may form part of the process of analysis but the eventual aim is to strip away to the essential phenomenon as a whole regardless of the individual experiences concerned. Individual experiences are therefore ultimately shed in favour of more general meaning. IPA in contrast, seeks out idiographic meanings in an attempt to understand an individual's experience, which may or may not offer more general insights (Eatough & Smith, 2006; Smith & Osborn, 2008). Finlay and Ballinger (2006) describe IPA as a 'variant of phenomenology' that 'aims to explore individuals' perceptions and experiences.

Taking an idiographic approach, the focus is on individual's cognitive, linguistic and physical being'. Smith (2004) described IPA as a form of 'double hermeneutic'. This refers to the twofold sense-making process applied to the method whereby interpretative phenomenological analysis involves a two-stage interpretation process through which the researcher tries to interpret the participant's sense-making activity.

As already stated, IPA attempts to privilege the individual and offer different perspectives from other qualitative methodologies such as grounded theory which have a tendency to be based upon larger sample groups and aim to validate theory (Pringle et al. 2011, Barbour 2007). Small sample size may be a criticism of IPA but as Smith (2004) points out, such limitations might be mitigated by richer depth of analysis that might be challenging in larger sample sizes. This deeper level of analysis allowing the researcher to go beyond overt meaning into deeper, less immediately obvious meaning is put forward as a strength of IPA (Smith et al. 2009).

"Anchoring" and "rooting" are metaphors used to describe how IPA hopes to draw evidence from verbatim transcript analysis about the experiences of the subject. IPA aims to illustrate, inform and master themes by firmly anchoring findings in direct quotes from participant accounts (Smith et al., 2009). Direct quotation and the interpretation of metaphors used by participants are used in theme titles or descriptions to further root the analysis directly in their lived experience. In so doing, it could be argued that IPA aims to go beyond a 'standard thematic analysis' (Brocki and Wearden 2006). However, how firmly analysis can be anchored in real world could be drawn into debate by Smith et al.'s (2009) insistence on very small sample sizes.

Smith et al. (2009) advised researchers to find a 'fairly homogenous sample'. Conversely, they also claim that the effectiveness of an IPA study should be judged by the light it sheds in a

broader context. In regards to a sample of fairly homogenous participants it might seem somewhat spurious to claim wider generalisations.

To counter the criticism of limited generalizability, Smith et al. (2009) suggested that if the research account is sufficiently rich and transparent and related to current literature, the transferability of the research should be apparent to the reader. IPA is therefore not positioned as an autonomous methodology but is contextually driven and reliant. This therefore stresses the importance of researcher's role in the write up and contextualisation of the research. Too exclusive and homogenous a sample will cause difficulty in assessing the transferability and of the research to other groups. Therefore, there seems to be an inextricable friction in IPA studies between privileging the individual experience and transferability to other groups. This may be ameliorated if limitations relating to participants are acknowledged and clarified by researchers (Smith 2009, Fitzgerald & Howe-Wash 2018; Cope 2010).

Giorgi (2000) criticises attempts to represent phenomenological research methods in prescriptive steps or stages. However, Smith et al. (2009), while describing the approach of IPA in a series of 'steps', acknowledged that such courses of action are only suggestions that are open to adaptation in the particular research situations. The convolution of such preparedness for methodological adaptation may seem overly casual to researchers from more positivist traditions. However, this flexibility should not be mistaken for lack of rigour.

There has been a move to operationalize phenomenology taking it from its origin in philosophical debate to more practical applications in the world of academic research (Giorgi & Giorgi 2008, Smith et al. 2009). IPA in contrast to more descriptive phenomenological approaches emphasises the hermeneutic and interpretive elements of phenomenology in

search of convergence and divergence rather than focusing only on collective patterns (Pringle et al. 2010)

Individual IPA researchers are likely to have varying theoretical perspectives. However the unavoidable association with the philosophical tradition of phenomenology merits further discussion. Smith et al. (2010) call attention to Hursserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre as leading figures with the development of phenomenology in the 20th century who have influenced the development of a theoretical foundation for IPA over the last two decades.

IPA researchers take as a starting point Husserl's work in establishing the importance and relevance of a focus on experience and its perception (Smith et al. 2010:21). IPA studies are interested in getting as near to the participants lived experience as possible and in doing so make sense of that experience as it is attributed by the participant. This development of phenomenology entertains a view of the individual as embedded within a world of objects and relationships, 'a world of language and culture, projects and concerns'. This development demands an emphasis on understanding the 'perspectival' involvedness of our existence. That is to say, our involvement in the lived world is personal to each of us while at the same time being a property of our relationship to the world rather than to us as beings in isolation.

"Thus through the work of these writers, we have come to see that the complex understanding of 'experience' invokes a lived process, an unfurling of perspectives and meanings, which are unique to the persons embodied and situated relationships to the world' (Smith et al., 2009 :21)

IPA and Phenomenology (Smith et al 2010)

Husserl

The notion of psychology as a phenomenological science.

The importance and relevance of a focus on experience and its perception.

The concept of intentionallity. That experience should be examined in the way that it occurs. That experience is always concious of something.

Heideggar

Individual is always a person in context.

Intersubjectivity.

Relatedness to the world is a fundamental part of our existence

Existence is always temporal and situated

Merleau-Ponty

Individuals exist in the world as observers forming perceptions.

The embodied nature of our relationship to the world.

Satre

The developmental, porcessual aspect of human existence.

'Existence comes before essence' - that we are always becoming ourselves and that the self is not preexisting but rather an ongoing project to be unfurled.

Figure 4Phenomenological Foundations of IPA

IPA can offer an adaptable and accessible approach to phenomenological research. IPA research suggests procedures for ensuring rigour and validity. It is an approach that emphasises or privileges the importance of individual accounts, suitable for such cases as those of young professionals reflecting upon their own international work experience and career development within the hospitality and tourism industry. IPA has already been of value in psychology and health related research studies and has been applied successfully in management and organisational research. Therefore it might be applied productively to phenomenological research within the area of international work experience and career development in the hospitality and tourism sector.

It is worth noting that in accounting for the rising popularity of IPA studies within applied psychology leading IPA researchers Reid et al. (2005: 21) note that the ontology of many IPA researchers is "broadly realist" in that most IPA studies accept the view that the

world cannot be directly known and instead the world is known through our interpretations based on theory, experience or ideas. We can see that this ontological assumption is similar in some aspects to the critical realist ontology and constructionist epistemology I positioning outlined above and is a move away from the naïve realism of modernist and positivist traditions in psychology (Robson 2011; Nightingale & Cromby 2002) This nuanced distinction from the objective realism of many positivist researchers in applied psychology perhaps denotes the discipline's origins in forms of research paradigm more akin to the natural sciences while encompassing a move towards interpretivist epistemologies in the development of qualitative psychology.

It is interesting to note that Reid et al. (2005: 21) make a distinction between IPA and the ethno-methodological version of Discourse Analysis (Potter & Wetherall, 1987). In their view Discourse Analysis necessitates a discursive psychology and constructs a 'texutal ontology' within which links between real-world actions and discourse are difficult to make because the real world can only be seen as a construction (Stokoe et al. 2012). This poses difficulties for researchers interested in not only gaining understanding but also influencing practice. The critical realist ontology and constructionist epistemology suggested by Nightingale and Cromby (2002), Alvesson (2009) and Maxwell (2012) amongst others, might in some way go to assuage Reid et al.'s (2005) unease with the ethnomethodological version of Discourse Analysis they find problematic in applied psychology research.

3.5 Method

3.5.1 Research Questions and IPA
As discussed in chapter one, the principal area of focus of this study is to examine the ways in which students perceive their experience after completing an extended period of international internship which the hotel industry. A method that allows for the exploration of

the lived experience of student internships that could build upon the limited literature in the area is necessary. Additionally, the lack of literature as to how hospitality management students perceive themselves and their future employability after an international internship requires an approach that allows for unanticipated themes to be explored. IPA has been chosen as a research approach for two key reasons. Firstly, as discussed above IPA has well developed theoretical foundations firmly rooted in interpretivism and offers an operationalised method by which to explore lived experience and interpret phenomena on an individual level while allowing meaningful generalisations to be made across cases. Secondly, as literature into the psychosocial development and employability of hospitality students is as yet emergent IPA, offers a means by which to enter uncharted territory which cannot be anticipated in an interview schedule (Smith et al., 2009)

3.5.2 Research Context

This study was conducted in one university in the UK. All participants were drawn from the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Events Management, which as of 2012/13 had 2217 full time students on undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. The university has a large range of management education and technical education programmes in the areas of hospitality, tourism and culinary arts. The university has strong links to industry and at any one time 150-200 students are typically on internships arranged through the Industrial Placements office. Of this number, approximately 60-80 opt to so an internship overseas.

All participants on overseas internships self-selected to undertake a period of 48 weeks paid internship with a hotel outside of the UK. The internships programmes at the

university are either elective or a course requirement depending upon the programme of study. The choice of overseas or domestic internship was entirely student led. Institutional support was provided by the university in arranging internship interviews but selection was entirely dependent on employers' requirements and student merit.

3.5.3 Ethics

I have a dual role as researcher and practitioner, which necessitates an increased reflection upon the ethical standards relating to my study. This is particularly important within the present research context as I am employed within the university being studied and it is essential that my conduct as an educational practitioner and researcher guarantees the well-being and best interests of the participants and reflects well upon the university which is my employer.

In order to demonstrate the centrality of ethics within this study, I have embedded a discussion of the ethical issues relating to sample selection and data collection within the relevant sections of this discussion on methods. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate the integral nature of ethics to the design and implementation of this study.

I have demonstrated compliance with three codes of practice in research ethics namely; the British Educational Research Association Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011); ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (2010) and the University of Birmingham Ethical Review. These various codes have slightly nuanced emphasis on the various aspects of ethics in research but have a share commitment to raising awareness in practitioners so the need to act within the best interests of research participants and to act with respect, competence, responsibility and integrity throughout the research process.

This study focuses on the international work experiences of adult learners within higher education. The nature of the participants and the context of the study meant that few difficulties were anticipated with regard to the University of Birmingham's Ethical Review process and ethical approval was achieved in a relatively straightforward manner. Although all participants were self-selecting adults, gave fully informed consent and were treated with confidentiality and anonymity, their nature as students within a higher education provider in which the researcher is also a practitioner meant that careful planning and implementation were necessary to comply with ethical guidelines, which govern educational research (BERA, 2011). The ethical issues identified in this study relate to sample selection, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, eliminating participant harm or stress, the informed right of withdrawal or non-participation and data usage and storage.

Ethics in Practice

As mentioned above three ethical codes of practice were referenced to ensure that as a novice doctorial researcher my work conformed to the core principle of doing no harm either to participants involved or to businesses and institutions associated with the research. Other guiding principles were to ensure informed consent of participants, respect the privacy of participants and to avoid the used of deception (Gray 2016).

Informed consent and Avoiding Deception. A detailed information sheet (appendix 1) was devised to explain to participants the purpose of the study; the type of participant required for the study; the voluntary nature of participation in the study; details of the process of processing signing and collecting consent forms; the interview process; the possible disadvantages of participation; the possible benefits of participation; post interview transcription and the storage of transcripts and data; how anonymity and confidentiality will

be preserved; the choice to desist from participation in the study and how results of the study might be used. Programme managers placed notices on the VLE calling for participants and announcements were made in group tutorial calling for interested participants to provide an email contact. Programme managers then generated a list of contact emails through which the interview information sheet (appendix 1), consent forms (appendix 2) and interview schedule (appendix 3) were emailed to interested participants. Once consent forms has been collected participants were contacted to arrange an interview. Before each interview started the information sheet was reviewed and the consent form discussed. Confirmation was sought that participants had read and understood the information sheet; understood that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any point without needing to give reason.

Privacy, Anonymity and Confidentiality. At the start of the analysis process, the transcribed text was anonymised, the names of people, companies and locations were redacted (see appendix 4). Participants were given a pseudonym and transcripts a number code to avoid identification. Also names of employers in host organisations or the home university were redacted. Similarly comments which might cause reputational damage to businesses or the home university were similarly redacted. Audio recording were downloaded onto a flash drive and saved with a number code. All records relating to the research, including consent forms, transcripts and original recording and were stored in a locked filing cabinet in accordance with the University of Birmingham ethical protocol. (See Appendix 1)

3.5.4 Sample

Phenomenological research favours purposively selected individuals who share common experiences "…so that detailed patterns of meaning and relationships can be identified" (Gray, 2013. p208). As a result of negotiations within the subject university, within in the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Events Management; with academic faculty and staff within the Industrial Placements Department, a strategy was formulated whereby participants could be recruited for the study without being contacted directly by the researcher. The primary focus of this study is to investigate the perceptions of students who have completed an international internship and who could be considered to be planning their career futures after university. Therefore students were invited to participate if they were in their final or penultimate semester of study.

In relation to recruitment, the Ethical Approval Committee at the University of Birmingham felt that placement co-ordinators and programme managers should circulate information about the project (allowing potential participants to contact the researcher directly), rather than giving contact names/details to the researcher. This was duly arranged and a call for participants was issued through programme managers and the Industrial Placement Department. A notice calling for participants was also placed on the universities virtual learning environment.

In total, 25 students from across the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Events Management indicated to their programme manager that they would like to participate in research interviews about their international internship. All 25 students were on hospitality degree programmes. Participants were then contacted by the researcher and given an outline

of the research project, an interview schedule and a letter explaining how their information would be used, how their confidentiality would be ensured and their right to withdraw.

I believe that in order to gain a deeper understanding of the social and psychological phenomena that underlies student experience of international internships it is possible to construct a relatively small scale qualitative inquiry. Commensurate with the core philosophical positioning of IPA, the sample was selected purposively so that insight might be gained into the lived experience of a comparatively homogeneous cohort of students who have completed a period of international internship within the hotel industry (Smith et al. 2010). The sample was drawn from a broadly similar vocational and academic subject area. Nationality and gender were not used as sample selection criteria and all of the participants were in the age range of 20-23 years old.

Individual differences in gender and nationality might suggest a lack of homogeneity within the sample. However some diversity in these areas was judged to be desirable. The obvious educational, vocational and life stage similarities between participants was judged to broadly fulfil the principle of homogeneity within IPA. The sampling criteria in this study correspond with Smith et al.'s (2010: 49) belief that participants should *"represent a perspective rather than a population"*. Participants were therefore selected for their ability to grant access to a particular perspective on the phenomena under scrutiny. That is to say, the ideographic approach I have outlined previously is concerned with understanding international internship experience within the particular context of the participants' individual lived experience. The detailed case by case analysis of this ideographic approach I have outlined strives to examine the perceptions and sense-making and therefore does not necessitate the large sample sizes needed to create a nomothetic statement of group level claims.

In summary therefore sample selection criteria was based entirely upon two fundamental aspects of students' shared lived experience. Firstly that they were undergraduates within the same university, studying within the same vocational area and receiving the same institutional support. Secondly that they had completed yearlong internship outside of the United Kingdom. Students who had participated in summer internships or internships less than 48 weeks were excluded. Students who had undertaken self-initiated gap year work experience were also excluded. Ethnicity was not a consideration within the sample criteria. The principle reason for this was a fundamental ethical positioning of the researcher that nationality or ethnic identity should not be a means through which participants were excluded from the study. A consequence of this unwillingness to focus on the lived experience of "home" students an exclude other students' lived experience was that participants who came forward from a diverse range of national and ethnic backgrounds (see Figure 5). Naturally EU and "overseas" students studying in the UK have already accrued a lived experience of international mobility and it could be argued that they therefore fall outside of the homogeneity of experience previously discussed as a feature of IPA. However, the double internationalism was not seen as a weakness but a possible means by which to gain further insight into HEI organised international work experience. Furthermore to exclude such voices would be ethically questionable and in a highly diverse and internationally mobile industry such as hospitality operationally flawed. It is an interesting feature of analysis in chapter 4 that participants made sense of their experience and their impact on their career futures in very similar ways. Surprisingly nationality, previous experience or the cultural distance between host country and the individual had little impact on how participants made sense of their experience.

Gaining informed consent was an essential first step in the information gathering stage. This was essential in order to maintain my standing as a professional practitioner within the subject university, foster the development of trust between the researcher and the participants and to uphold the ethical integrity of the study. Taking as a starting point the British Educational Research Associations guidance that "…voluntary informed consent is the condition in which participants understand and agree to their participation without any duress, prior to the research getting underway" (BERA, 2011: 5)

Informed consent was gained initially in writing then again verbally before research interviews. It was emphasized to participants prior to recruitment that the information they might chose to provide would remain confidential and anonymous and that their right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity would be guaranteed throughout the reporting of the project. (See Appendix 1 and 2) Participants were also assured that no employer, internship geography or internship mentor would be named in the reporting of the study. Participants were then asked to sign a consent form stating they understood their rights within the project. Participants were also given the opportunity to read any transcript resulting for their interview and withdraw parts or all of their comments.

Transcript Code	Pseudonym	Gender	Nationality	Provider Location	Internship Experience
P1	Alan	M	UK	Eire	Food and Beverage, Hotel Operations Management
P2	Andrew	M	Czech	Eire	Food and Beverage operations
P3	Beatrice	F	UK	USA	Food and Beverage operations
P3	Brian	M	UK	USA	Front Desk, Customer Relations, Food and Beverage Operations
P4	Connie	F	UK	Eire	Front Desk, Sales and Marketing
P5	Carrie	F	UK	UAE	Front Desk, Food and Beverage, Events
P6	Ted	M	UK	Eire	Food and Beverage Operations
P8	Helen	F	UK	USA	Front Desk, Customer Relations, Food and Beverage
P9	Emily	F	UK	USA	Food and Beverage operations
P10	Joanna	F	UK	USA	Front Desk, Back office, Sales
P11	Jenny	F	UK	USA	Food and Beverage operations
P12	Jane	F	UK	USA	Food and Beverage, Front Desk, Customer Service
P13	Josh	M	UK	USA	Customer Relations, Sales, Events
P14	Kamila	F	Lithuania	Cyprus	Food and Beverage operations
P15	Kate	F	China	USA	Food and Beverage, Sales and Marketing
P16	Kerry	F	UK	Hong Kong	Front Desk, Events, Food and Beverage
P17	Kaitlin	F	Singapore	China	Front Desk, Events, Food and Beverage
P18	Leona	F	Slovakia	China	Front Desk, Events, Customer Relations, Food and Beverage
P19	Fleur	F	UK	Eire	Front Desk, Events, Customer Relations, Food and Beverage
P20	Lucy	F	Slovakia	USA	Front Desk, Hotel Operations Management, Food and Beverage
P21	Maggie	F	UK	Eire	Food and Beverage Operations, Back office, Finance
P22	Paula	F	Czech	USA	Front Desk, Events, Customer Relations, Food and Beverage
P23	Ross	M	UK	USA	Front Desk, Events, Customer Relations, Food and Beverage
P24	Robert	M	UK	UAE	Front Desk, Events, Food and Beverage
P25	Sophie	F	UK	Spain	Front Desk, Back Office, Sales, Finance

Figure 5. Participants' Destinations and Work Experience

3.5.5 Data Collection

In order to explore the lived experience of students who had returned from an extended period of international internship, an approach that allows participants to offer a rich, detailed, first-hand account of their experiences was required. Consequently in-depth semi structured interviews were arranged (Kvale, 2008). Implementing semi-structured interviews allowed for a degree of preparedness whereby pre-identified topics could be explored and discussed (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Perhaps equally as important was the flexibility, which semi-structured interviews allow. In this way there were no constrictions as to how the interview evolved organically and how issues arising from the participants might be encouraged to develop within the research conversation. In this way topics of individual importance could emerge from the participants in ways which could not have been predicted by the researcher. Each interview was planned to last for approximately one hour, which was judged an appropriate amount of time for the detailed exploration of the participants' experience (Smith et al 2010).

Before the interviews, 10 open-ended questions were prepared along with associated prompts to further encourage the research conversation (Bryman and Bell, 2009). The questions were designed to allow participants the opportunity to give rich description of their experience and reflect upon personal and professional changes and reflect upon how this experience might affect themselves and their career futures. This prearranged structure or interview schedule (see appendix 1) allows the interviewer to have an agenda for the interview without being a prescriptive boundary for the conversation (Kvale 2009).

Nevertheless the highly individual nature of each participant's experience might require a more naturalist or organic development of the research conversation with the consequence that a strict interview rubric which is adhered to should be avoided (Smith et al. 2010). Open-ended questions were adopted in the interview wherever possible with the intention of promoting more naturalistic conversations with the hope of producing richer and more genuine and realistic information without being led by the interviewer.

Interviews were digitally recorded with the consent of the participants in order to make a verbatim transcript from which to gain data for analysis. (See Appendix 4)

3.5.6. Analysis

Smith and Osborn (2008: 66) note that "...the assumption in IPA is that the analyst is interested in learning something about the respondent's psychological world". This understanding may be presented in the form of "...beliefs and constructs that are made manifest or suggested by the respondent's talk..." or in other cases "...the respondent's story can itself be said to represent a piece of the respondent's identity" (Smith & Osborn 2008: 66).

The primary concern of my analysis is to comprehend the story and the meaning of conversations about students' experience of international internships. This is to go beyond description and necessitates a high degree of interpretation. Interpretation of meaning and sense making are central to this endeavour and the aim here is to understand the complexity of experience within the participants' accounts and not simply to count the frequency of topics therein. It is meaning and not frequency, which is a fundamental principle of IPA (Smith & Osborn. 2008). In analysing participants' transcripts it was imperative to "learn about their mental and social world" through "a sustained engagement with the text and a process of

interpretation" (Smith & Osborn, 2008: 66). However in doing so, IPA strives to produce "…a systematic and practical approach to analysing phenomenological data" (Barker et al. 2002: 81).

This analysis followed guidelines on IPA (Smith and Osborn 2008; Smith, Flowers et al. 2009; Smith et al 2010) as to the transcription, commentary, identification and collation of themes from the interview transcripts. This was done on a case-by-case process before identifying common themes between and across multiple transcripts. Insight was also gain from Kempster and Cope (2010) and Cope (2011) as to the iterative process of "enfolding literature" whereby in order to create a higher level of analysis needed for the production of a theoretical explanation at a higher level of abstraction a constant movement between existing theoretical knowledge and the data from transcripts was necessary.

IPA of has identified student experiences, viewpoints and attitudes towards international internships. This necessitated a large amount of manual endeavour in reading, reviewing and marking up suitable themes from over 200,000 words of transcript text. Indeed, the about intensive workload is sometimes seen as a potential drawback to the approach. The analysis followed guidelines from Smith and Osbourne (2008) and Smith et al (2009) as to the transcription, commentary, gathering and collating of themes from source material. Transcripts were read, and re-read multiple times often over the course of several weeks. The analysis evolved through a series of incremental steps as emergent themes were identified. Focus on the unit of analysis in each case was documented on a manual basis (in the margins of transcripts initially then in Word and Excel as a theme book was compiled). Once this one done for each individual case and thematic codes identified the documents were further researched to amass a case comparisons across the database.

Jason Cope (2011) extended upon Smith and Osbourne (2008) and Smith et al (2009) guidance to create a pragmatic approach to IPA analyses was adopted in this study (see figure 6). The IPA approach recognises the central importance of meaning rather than events: "meaning is central, and

the aim is to try to understand the context and complexity of those meanings rather than measure their frequency." (Smith and Osborn 2008: 66). Like Cope, they advise an idiographic approach starting with individual cases (interview transcripts) and gradually moving from the individual unit of analysis to more general themes and claims applied across cases. This process is described in detail (Smith and Osborn 2008: 67-79) and is primarily a paper-based, manual series of steps to derive themes and meaning from the text.

Stage 1 (Transcription) Stage 2 (Familiarization) and Stage 3 (Immersion and sense making) were achieved through an iterative process of reading and re-reading the transcripts. The audio recordings of the original interview were also repeatedly listened to. The use of audio replay served two purposes: firstly, it provided an additional check on the accuracy of transcription and minor corrections were made to the text as a result; secondly, it provided additional context at various points of the interview recalling turns of phrases and intentions of language use. This stage of analysis took much more time than had been anticipated by a novice doctoral researcher.

Stage 4 (Categorization) involved the extraction of numerous comments and highlighted sections of text (all recorded in the Microsoft Word transcription of each interview) into a categorization scheme. This scheme evolved over time, and two major observations can be made about this experience. Secondly, each interview was read (multiple times) and analysed in sequence, and it became clear that certain codes were common to multiple interviews (see appendix 5). Stage 4 involved the laborious process of transferring codes arising from analysis of an interview into a thematic view. This was done manually, by listing codes in a new document and posting any codes, comments and quotations from the original transcription into a new document layout. This process involved some consolidation of codes, merging some together into one (for example "growth" and "development" into "growth and development"). The listing of codes, and the consolidation of these codes where appropriate, is then reviewed to develop a list of thematic codes, or emerging themes: this is depicted in Figure 7.

In Stage 5 (Association / pattern recognition) the themes identified from each interview were combined into a single master document for all interviewees. This document (my theme book) provided the basis for analysing themes and patterns across cases. For example, the consolidated thematic list brought together diverse interview experiences (e.g. a student discussing their internship in China compared with a student discussing their experiences on the west coast of Ireland) the same issue raised (e.g. loneliness, family troubles, skills development, pride) allowed comparison and discussion of commonality and differences between subjects. Furthermore, it exposed categories that were unique to only one interview – these singular cases also provided a basis for commentary. After this stage, findings were reviewed and written up as a thematic review encompassing all 25 interviews at once.

IPA of student interviews revealed the emergence of themes that had not been anticipated by previous engagement with literature. This necessitated a re-engagement with literature or as Cope (2011) phrases it a moving back and forth between data and theory. Themes that emerged such as adversity, resilience, self-efficacy, confidence, and optimism were thus found to be central themes with the literature from the area of positive psychology generally and the construct of positive psychological capital more specifically which proved to be a useful theoretical lens through which to develop discussion of these findings.

Process	Level of Analysis	Description of Analysis
Stage 1 Transcription	Listening	Verbatim transcription semantic content of each individual interview based on audio recording
Stage 2 Familiarisation	Reading and rereading the case	First Immersion in the data, active engagement with the data. Searching for richer detailed sections. Searching for contradictions and paradoxes. Highlighting shifts from general to specific in participants' accounts of their experience
Stage 3 Immersion and sense making	Diagnosis of the case	Examination of semantic content of transcripts. Detailed and time consuming noting of all areas of interest. Identifying ways in which participants create their narratives. An unstructured commentary. Language used and context is noted. Descriptive comments on content are made. Linguistic comments on specific language use are made. Conceptual comments which are interrogative and interpretive are made.
Stage 4 Categorisation	Developing emergent intra-case Themes	Resulting from stage 3 volume of data is reduced whilst endeavouring to capture complexity. Connections, patterns and Interrelationships noted. Smaller exemplar pieces of data are recorded along with conceptual comments to ensure analysis is grounded in data.
Stage 5 Association and Pattern Recognition	Searching for Connections across intra-case Emergent Themes	Proceeding from stage 4 recording how the themes appear to fit together in relation to the research questions. Themes grouped together out of the sequential order they appeared in the transcript. Abstraction: developing superordinate themes. Polarisation: identifying oppositional themes. Contextualisation: relating themes to life events. Numeration: identifying how often a theme is discussed. Function: Identifying what function a theme is serving for an individual. Bringing it together: Producing a graphic or tabulated compilation of the themes.
Stage 6	Enfolding literature	Analytical discussion of the data which involves the theory building process of "enfolding literature" which is required for the production of a theoretical explanation at a higher level of abstraction
Stage 7 Next Case Analysis	As in Stages 1-6	Moving on to the next individual transcript analysis. An attempt to Bracket (set aside) assumptions and knowledge from previous cases.
Stage 8 Looking for Patters Across Cases	Enfolding Literature across cases	Connections between and across interview transcripts. Graphic or tabular representation of themes, identify individual and shared meaning. The research is phenomenologically grounded in data but also interpretive and hermeneutic requiring an iterative. This requires a movement back and forth between existing theory and data.

Figure 6. Overview of IPA Process adapted from Smith et al. (2010) and Kempster and Cope (2010)

3.5.6 Quality in Qualitative Research - Validity and Reliability

Critical reflection upon the process of data collection and analysis outlined in this chapter requires contemplation of the issues surrounding validity and reliability in qualitative studies. The concepts of validity and reliability are seen as the "gold standard" of quality in quantitative research (Savin-Baden & Howell, 2013). Validity at its most fundamental level here means that a researcher must be able to demonstrate that the findings are "true". Of course this philosophical statement is deeply rooted in the ontological debate of the nature of reality. In attempting to establish validity, a researcher sets out to demonstrate the research truly measures that which it claims to have measured. In other words, do the data collection methods allow the research questions to be addressed? Establishing validity is a concern of both qualitative and quantitative research endeavours and several kinds of validity are relevant to both approaches. Savin-Baden and Howell (2010) note that qualitative researchers more often refer to Internal Validity (examination of how findings match reality) and External validity (the extent results may be assumed true for other cases). Reliability, another "gold standard" in quantitative research, focuses on the quality of the process by which data was generated and reliability suggests the collection and measurement of data should be consistent and repeatable. However, these terms may need some redefinition within qualitative approaches to research as the researcher in many forms of qualitative research is immersed in the research process in a way that is in conflict with the attempt to objectively place oneself at a neutral distance and observe the phenomenon (Golafshani, 2003). According to Golafshani (2003, citing Lincoln and Guba, 1985) redefining reliability in qualitative research requires the adoption of a new terminology of quality in research. Golafshani's (2003 p601) language of quality in qualitative research calls for a focus on:

Credibility, Neutrality or Conformability, Consistency or Dependability and Applicability or Transferability. However some researchers have maintained that validity and reliability remain "pertinent in qualitative inquiry and should be maintained" (Morese et al. 2002, cited in Savin-Baden & Howell 2013: 473)

Confirming validity in qualitative approaches can be problematic (Smith et al. 2010). The question as to as to how to establish validity is dependent upon the researcher's philosophical stance (Creswell and Miller, 2000; Golafshani 2003, and Savin-Baden and Howell 2013). Those qualitative researchers who hold a more pragmatic philosophical stance may choose to adopt validity and reliability as their criteria since they fall closer to realism than idealism. Researchers who fall closer to idealism, for instance constructivists may find the terms validity and reliability too grounded in positivist traditions to be adequate criteria for their research. Therefore, the concept of validity in qualitative research is not fixed. Rather it is dependent upon how the research process unfolds or develops (Golafshani, 2003). A qualitative approach may be considered valid if it retains a level of integrity and quality and is an accurate and truthful account of an individual's experience (Coolican, 2014). Validity can be demonstrated by the extent to which findings are interpreted fairly and consistently and whether another researcher could upon further analysis reach similar conclusions (Coolican, 2014). Indeed, the replication of verbatim quotation within findings of IPA was a feature of the method that initially attracted me to this approach as, although it is arguably verbose, participants' words live on within the analysis and allow the reader to engage in a level of analysis themselves. This evidencing of transcript data can be linked to the argument for the trustworthiness of a particular qualitative study (Golafshani, 2003). Smith et al. (2010) identify including verbatim raw data from transcripts and enhancing descriptive validity and

considering findings in relation to existing literature as part of the process of triangulation and theory generation.

3.5.7 Validity, Reliability and IPA.

Issues pertaining to validity and reliability are as important to IPA as in other forms of qualitative research (Smith et al., 2010). The double hermeneutic, i.e. the researcher's attempt to interpret the participants' interpretation of a phenomenon, is a concern for interpretive research. There is possible capacity for misreading or misunderstanding and introduces a level of uncertainty which needs to be addressed within any qualitative study. According to Smith and Osborn (2007), IPA recognises the research context as a dynamic process where the researcher's role is central. Sensitivity to context and the development of mutual understanding between the participant and the researcher is seen as essential for the success of IPA. IPA recognises the highly subjective nature of data interpretation and calls for the interpretations to be well evidenced and grounded in raw data.

IPA endeavours to ensure validity and reliability by suggesting a standardised rubric for data collection procedures, rigorous documentation and transcription, and interpretation that is transparent and grounded in raw data (Smith et al., 2009). As indicated above, this research rests primarily upon the researcher's own interpretations of participants' experiences. It also rests upon purposive and homogenous sampling methods as opposed to aiming towards a more broad and representative sample. Therefore, in order to address concerns of validity within this research Yardley's (2008) four principles of quality in qualitative research have been utilised. I reflected upon all four principles throughout the design, data collection and analysis stages of this research.

Sensitivity to Context: The researcher should be well grounded in not only the data collection methods and analysis but also in the data collection method's underpinning philosophy. The in depth discussion of methodology above and rigorous analysis following and a commitment to reflexivity and a mindfulness of the interviewer-interviewee relationship support this principle. The context also includes explicit awareness of the socio-cultural milieu (Smith, Flowers et al., 2009: 180). Commitment to this principle is demonstrated by the researcher's knowledge of participants' backgrounds, destinations and employers as well as the context of the host HEI and broader knowledge of employment in the hospitality sector.

Commitment and Rigour: This second principle pertains to how data was gathered and analysed. In data collection engagement between interviewer and interviewee is essential in obtaining relevant and insightful material. This is supported in this research by a rigorous application of the method above and a similar commitment during the analysis stage. Time commitment and skills needed for a large IPA review are significant. Thoroughness is demonstrated in the careful conduct of interviews and the development from descriptive to interpretive analysis.

Transparency and Coherence: Yardley's (2008) third principle can be demonstrated in the findings chapter where the detail of my presentation and clarity of my interpretation are open to scrutiny. Conclusions drawn and themes identified should demonstrate an internal logic i.e. they should be consistent with the raw data presented. Smith et al., (2009, P 182) point out that "It is not that contradictions should not be in the data, they are often the richest part of the text, but that the analysis of the contradictions should not in itself be contradictory". Similarly the principle applies to sections above where discussion of participant selection is clear and appropriate. Preliminary findings were presented at research conferences (Gannon

2017, Gannon 2014, and Gannon 2013)) and discussed with academics and practitioners in the field of co-operative education.

Impact and Importance: It is of course the hope of every writer that their findings will be of interest. Impact within the host HEI is apparent and the research has already been shared with key stakeholders therein. Initial findings have also been shared with careers counsellors and professionals in the area of co-operative education in hospitality management. Final results and theoretical and practical contributes have been accepted in future conference proceedings (Gannon 2018). It is hoped that upon completion further conference papers and a journal publication of key findings could add to knowledge within the domain of co-operative education generally and hospitality management education specifically.

3.5.8 Reflexivity

Some approaches to qualitative research pay particular attention to the threats to validity and reliability, which might result from the role of the researcher within the research process (Golafshani, 2003). IPA requires the immersion of the researcher within the research process and benefits from a reflexive discussion of how subjectivities were managed. Healy and Perry (2000) and Cresswell and Miller (2000) suggest reflexivity as one means by which a researcher operating within a critical realist paradigm might try to enhance the validity of their research. In doing so, researchers "self-disclose their assumptions, beliefs, and biases" (Cresswell and Miller 2000, p127). IPA researchers tend to avoid the traditional phenomenological approach of 'bracketing' (setting aside) of previous knowledge and assumptions as a somewhat impossible endeavour. Instead, IPA favours an emphasis on critical self-awareness and the way in which a researcher's own values, experiences, interests and assumptions are likely to

influence the process of research from methodological formation to data collection and analysis. Reflexivity is an assessment of the potential influences upon the interpretation of the researcher and the recognition of the improbability of establishing a truly objective stance in relation to the data. This sits with the stated ontological positioning of this research in that it is an acknowledgement that "reality is 'real' but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible" (Healy and Perry 2000: 119). As such, reflexivity is an assessment of the potential biases within the process of the research and is aimed at mitigating the potential criticism of research traditions that place high value on objective and 'scientifically' informed social research. Much qualitative research tends to reject the idea that the researcher can usefully apply natural science methods in social enquiry. Therefore, as a researcher it is important to maintain a continuous process of reflection within the research process and an awareness of the researcher has influenced the analysis and interpretation of data.

An emphasis on critical self-awareness and the way in which the researcher's own, experiences, values, assumptions and preconceptions are liable to influence the collection and interpretation of qualitative data, and to recognise the impossibility of maintaining a purely objective stance to the subject matter (Smith et al 2009). As such reflexivity is an assessment of the potential biases within the research process and is a way of trying to mitigate for the criticisms of positivist adherents who value an objective and scientifically informed research process with an observer neutrally uncovering observable and natural facts (Coolican, 2014). In the case of this research this may be biases already established within my own thinking and behaviour as a practitioner. An awareness that I come to the research with preconceptions as to the quality, merit, and possible flaws within current internship provision was necessary. Indeed such preconceptions were a driver in initiating this research. As a researcher and practitioner it is also important to maintain an ongoing

reflection within the study on one's own past experiences, learning within the research process and how this may have influenced analysis and interpretation. The rigorous, in-depth and immersive process of analysis outlined previously in this chapter permitted many occasions for reflexivity. Through the double hermeneutical process, discussed in chapter 3, in trying to making sense of students sense making I was mindful of not forcing on to student accounts of their lived experience my own notions of international experience and internships. Interpretations of students lived experience had to coherent in and of themselves in a presuppositionless state. In order to do this the long iterative process of interpretation outlined previously in this chapter allowed for space to develop between my own lifeworld and that of the participants. Presentations of findings as works in progress to colleagues and supervisors on numerous occasions also increase my awareness of interpretations that relied solely upon my own lived experience for their cogency and those which could be made sense of in a similar ways by other people. In order to separate myself further from practice I withdrew from all forms of internship tutoring and undergraduate teaching within the programmes areas examined in this research during the research planning, data collection and analysis stages of this research. It is interesting to note that the presuppositions with which I came to this research, primarily regarding support and mentoring during international internships, were not a significant part of participants' accounts of their experience and do not feature to any significant extent within the findings and discussion.

3.5.9 The Researcher's Position.

I am employed as a lecturer by the same university in which interview participants were enrolled as full time undergraduate students. This allowed important access to information on partner employers and destinations for international internships. It also allowed for an intimate knowledge for the mentoring and support mechanism's available (or not) within the university. However, this insider position whilst allowing important access inevitably leads to certain possible assumptions as to the quality of support and mentoring available. As a tutor within the institution, I have been party to stories both positive and negative about international placement students' experiences. As a member of staff I have also been party to discussion about relationships with employers, the cost of mentoring and support for such programmes and the difficulties involved in finding and maintaining good relations with employer organisations. I am therefore deeply embedded within the context of the research. Mindful of this from the beginning, I attempted to apply strategies that might mitigate this close involvement with the context of the research. My primary roles are of teaching and course management is within the Postgraduate School where my work brings me into contact with students who choose to undertake placements or internships as part of their studies. This was my original source of interest in the field. In designing this research I chose to focus on undergraduate students within the university as there would be less professional contact between them and myself. Participants were recruited with whom I had no teaching or supervisory contact.

Shared experiences between the researcher and the interview participants were not limited to the familiarity with the same university. When as a student myself I took the opportunity to study abroad for a year in the United States, and although in full time education in contrast to the student participants who were in full time employment, I came to the research process with certain assumptions about the year abroad and its position in a young adult's life

experience. Similarly, I spent the first 8 years of my early career in various teaching and management positions in Asia and Europe, which has given me a set of expatriate experiences by which I am likely to internpret the experiences of student participants within this research. My teaching area involves an interest in international hospitality and tourism management, expatriation, training and international HRM, interests I brought with me in the formation of this research. I believe data in this research support the discussion of some elements of these areas of interest in my research. However, engagement with participants' transcripts saw the emergence of themes through a process of 'enfolding literature' that were connected to areas of positive psychology that were beyond my previous education or professional interest and necessitated a steep learning curve with hitherto unfamiliar theory. This inevitably slowed down the process of analysis while I gained sufficient subject knowledge to be confident I could make coherent and transparent linkages between data and theory.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight and examine the perceptions of the sampled student internees that emerged through the interview process. The chapter begins with an overview of the themes identified. This provides a framework for the more detailed discussion of the themes that follow. The privileging of the verbatim evidence from transcripts is an essential feature of IPA analysis (as discussed in chapter 3). Themes identified and analysed in this chapter will therefore be presented using verbatim quotations. The presentation of verbatim evidence provides portrayals of participant accounts, whilst at the same time encouraging readers to engage in the interpretation process themselves.

Themes represented here in quotations are indicative of important experiential phenomena that emerged through the participants' own sense making of their experiences and the interpretive engagement of the researcher with the transcript evidence. Verbatim quotations are used to represent themes identified in the analysis and are in no way exhaustive. It is not my intention to indicate a frequency of themes within individual transcripts or across transcripts, but rather to analyse the meaning of these phenomena within the lived experience of participants.

Through the in-depth analysis of the interview transcripts (see Appendices 4 and 5) six substantial and predominant themes were identified:

Theme I.   Adversity

Theme 2.   Growth

Theme 3.   Positive Psychological Capital

Theme 4.   Cosmopolitan Capital

Theme 5.   Career Futures

Theme 6   Mobility

These superordinate themes emerged through the interpretive analysis of 25 participant transcripts. These subordinate themes were identified in over 53,000 words of participant verbatim quotations taken from over 200,000 words of transcript evidence.

	Adversity						Growth							Positive Psychological Capital						Cosmopolitan Capital				Career Futures				Motilities		
	Homesickness	Relationships	Working Conditions	Living Conditions	Isolation	Finance	New Person	Mentoring	Mastering tasks	Promotion & Responsibility	Exploring new roles	Maturity	Pride	Confidence	Independence	Self-efficacy	Resilience	Employability self-belief	Optimism	Language & Communication	International Networks	Cosmopolitan community	Cultural Intelligence	Exploiting Experience	Changing Careers	Impact on Study	Employers Opinions	Future expatriate work	Global Opportunities	Returning home
P1		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
P2			X	X	X				X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
P3	X		X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
P4	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
P5			X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X			X	
P6			X									X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	
P7	X		X	X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X			X	
P8	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	
P9	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X				X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
P10	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X		X		X					X	X	X			X
P11	X		X				X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
P12	X		X				X		X		X			X		X		X		X		X	X		X		X	X	X	
P13			X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
P14			X				X		X	X	X	X		X		X			X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X	
P15			X	X	X		X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X		
P16			X	X	x				X	X		X		X		X	X	X					X						X	X
P17			X	X			X					X				X		X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
P18			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
P19	X		X		X	X	X			X	X			X				X		X			X	X	X		X	X	X	
P20	X			X			X			X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X	X		X		X	
P21		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	
P22			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X		X	X		X		X				X		X	
P23			X			X				X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		X			X		X		
P24			X				X		X	X	X			X		X		X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X	
P25			X				X		X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X		X	X	X	

Figure 7. Superordinate and Subordinate Themes Identified in Participant Transcripts

4.2 Adversity

Although often presented in promotional literature as exciting and gratifying experiences, foreign work experience programmes pose a number of both personal and professional challenges to individuals. Occasionally these are events in personal or family life, which are not attributable to the overseas internship experience such as bereavement and business failures. However, stresses within work or personal domains seem to be amplified by the separation and possible isolation linked to living away from home.

Experiences of adversity, hardship and even floundering were often rationalised as part of the internship experience. In so doing participants were not only making the best of a difficult situation but saw the experience as something from which they could draw strength and personal, psychological enhancements. Richard's account of his experience expresses adversity in starting an internship in Dubai. The struggle through what he calls "horrible times" and the eventual analysis of those hardships as a part of his learning.

There are the negatives. I'm not going to lie. I did have some horrible times. I wanted to come home. The start was really difficult. I did get a warning. Not a formal warning but there were times when I did things wrong and I learnt from my mistakes. There were some negative aspects but I try and dwell on the positives because luckily there was more positives than negatives, thank God. (Robert: 317-324)

As we shall see adversity is not always discussed in purely negative terms. It is something which when overcome or "pushed through" may lead to the development of various personal, professional and psychological enhancements.

4.2.1. Homesickness, Relationships and Isolation

Unsurprisingly part of the way in which some of the participants made sense of their experience in leaving the UK to work in foreign hotels is expressed in terms of homesickness. The theme of homesickness is present in the experience of P3; P4; P7; P8; P9; P10; P11; P12 P19; P20. Being "out there" or "over there" is a common way of describing the experience. Figurative language implies the centrality of UK life and the otherness of the internship experience. The internship is external from their normal lived experience, distant and separated not only spatially but also psychologically. That is to say, participants indicated that the experience put them not only in a different place but a different state of mind. This is not

to say the experience is described as peripheral, as we shall see, it is often described as a transformative life experience. The physical distance and separation from home is given significant meaning. The experience of being separated from family and the support of family is expressed as being difficult and a source of anxiety or stress. Nevertheless, enduring or overcoming these periods of separation are often considered as part of the internship experience which result in resilience, independence and enhanced confidence. The following extract from Jane's transcript exemplifies how the participants sometimes put forward accounts of homesickness and then follow them immediately by counter narratives of various kinds. In this case, Jane gives an example of an instance where she experienced homesickness. Conversely, she immediately countered this by describing a happy environment and personal strength.

I had one night I called home crying. I woke my parents up and I was like, "I really miss home and my family." Just talking to them for ten minutes I felt better but no, I was in such a happy environment all the time and I'm a very independent person as well so I was rather enjoying it. (Jane: 104-106)

For Emma, part of the singularity of the international internship was the sheer distance from home. Separation from family and familiar support networks forced Emma to find ways of coping on her own. Emma believes this separation helped her to develop a resilience she did not have before.

That just knowing that you just cannot physically go back. When times are hard you have to find a way of dealing with it you have to find a way with copying with it without I dunno, going back to your parents… going back to your friends you actually have to find ways of dealing with it yourself. (Emily: 50-56)

Brian described how at times he wanted to leave the United States and return home to England. However, he recognised these feelings were intermittent or transient and that they were countermanded at times by opposite feelings of wanting to stay for longer than the internship period.

Obviously, there were stages where all I wanted to do was come home, and then other stages where I wanted nothing but to stay there for a very long time. (Brian: 16-19)

Brian found that the physical separation, the great distance and the communication problems of living far away added to his sense of homesickness at times and compounded his feelings. If Brian had felt he could easily return home he would not have such feelings of homesickness. Feeling immobile or even stranded makes his sense of separation greater.

Building a friendship with a fellow British intern helped ameliorate Brian's sense of longing for home, friends and family. Brian and his friend supported each other through periods of

homesickness and the ability to discuss their feelings about living away from home gave mutual benefit. The creation of a friendly domesticity between Brian and his roommate fashioned a home away from home, which was mutually supportive.

I think I just kept going. You know, I was very close to the guy that I shared a room with and we got on really well. Surprising. We knew each other before we went out but we became really good friends so we would speak to each other a lot about how we're feeling and we'd do a lot of things together to make sure that we wouldn't miss home so much and ...So we kind of made our own little home in our apartment for the two of us. Because he was missing home as well. (Brian: 86-94)

Reflecting on his experience, Brian explains that establishing communication links back home through the use of modern communications technology and by 'pushing through' the difficult stage of settling in he slowly adjusted. Other participants used endurance metaphors in similar ways. By meeting new people and becoming accustomed to the environment he began to value the experience of living and working abroad.

And we figured out times when we could Face Time or Skype or whatever to speak to parents, kind of just pushing through that initial phase and the phase of being bad weather and not very fun to be there, kind of just getting through that to the summer and meeting all the new people coming down was very ... once you got to that bit, it was worthwhile waiting. (Brian 96-101)

Connie made similar uses of web based communication technology but it was a poor substitute for real contact particularly during a time of trauma and family break up. The divorce of her parents seems to have been made worse by her physical separation from the family.

Yeah, most certainly, because you can't just go home and ... yeah, you can Skype and stuff, but it's not the same as being ... and whilst I was away, my mom and dad were getting divorced as I was away, and they were both moving house. That was so difficult because they weren't always contactable. (Connie: 332-336)

Ted was not surprised his move to Ireland to take up an internship resulted in some level of homesickness. He emphasises that the move to Ireland was a greater separation than the move to university. The physical distance adding to his disconnection with the security of home was compounded by difficult working relationships in the internship hotel, which made him feel he wanted to return before the end of the internship period.

I was very, very homesick at the time, because it's getting used to the new environment, being away from home. Obviously, I'd been to University for the year before but this was different because I was in a different country. I think it's obvious that you're going to be a little homesick. I was going to go back sooner because I didn't really get on with the general manager at the time, who's no longer with us, let's just say, was really kind of hard on me. (Ted 41-48)

Jenny took a week's holiday and went home during her internship in America. She considered not returning. But in this case a yearning for home was not the real reason. Instead she

reflected that the nature of the work within the internship hotel made her consider not returning at the end of her holiday. Adjusting to the monotony of work and the long working hours proved unattractive.

Yeah, I took a week off work to come home and I didn't want to go back, but I'm glad I did go back. There was a time where you just got ... It wasn't really homesick. It was just like fed up of the same thing. I'd never had a full time job before. It was literally full time, 6 days a week.   (Jenny: 61-64)

Not all reflections on homesickness were personal. For Ross, homesickness was something other people experienced. Some of his peers experienced homesickness and felt the need to see friends and family from home. Ross ascribes this to differences in personality.

I personally love it. And I know for a fact this isn't a place for everyone because for the other four people that were … was at my hotel at the same time, at some point during the year, some of them earlier on, some of the later on during the year people are homesick and I think all four of them at some point saw a member of their family. (Ross 177-184)

Ross's enjoyment of the experience seems to create a sense of maximising the experience. To be homesick is a 'waste of time'. Ross perceives the internship as an opportunity not to be missed and therefore rationalised feelings of homesickness as an opportunity lost.

I think I knew from day one I wasn't ever going to be homesick. As soon as you get on that plane, you're going to be like, "Oh, I miss it already." And then in mind I'm thinking forward to when that day comes, surely that highlight is significant you just have to think I shouldn't waste time being homesick. I'm going to be home and I'm going to have many of years at not worrying about being homesick when I do get home. (Ross: 188-203)

4.2.2. Separation from Family and Relationships

The theme of homesickness is interconnected in some participants' reflections on being separated from family, friends and partners. For Alan unable to easily reach his girlfriend working in another part of the host country, added to the stresses of adjustment in the early part of his internship.

I did have a partner at the time…which makes things very difficult on a personal level as well… so there was definitely a feeling of isolation there. It wasn't a fantastic first three months certainly. I did eventually adjust and started to develop, I started to enjoy it a lot more. (Alan: 106-113)

Beatrice experienced two instances of family bereavement during her internship. The distance and physical separation from family made a bad situation worse. The demanding working conditions and high expectations of employers within the hotel internship organisations seemed to make the distressing situation worse.

I mean going over there are things you have to deal with from being away from your family… I mean I had to come home twice while I was over there because I lost family members… but that was awful… really hard to deal with…I had to have a week off to deal with this… then going through that has made me stronger. (Beatrice: 277-290)

Similarly for Jenny, separation from her mother during her mother's illness made a bad situation worse. Jenny showed remorse and guilt at not being 'being there for' her mother when she went into hospital. A supportive employer allowed her time off to return home but nevertheless whilst at home she felt unwilling to return to the internship.

My mum actually had some health issues and had to have surgery, so I got really upset that I wasn't there and I couldn't be there for her, which is why I spoke to my boss about it. He said "Oh, you can take a week off and go home." He was lovely. I got home and I got to see everyone. When I got home, it was like I'd never left kind of thing and I was like "I don't want to go back." Then when I went back, everything kind of changed because it was starting to be winter. It was Christmas and it was nice. (Jenny: 69-79)

For Emily a more positive experience working in a prestigious resort hotel in the United States has made her realise the draw of family is stronger than the attraction of travel. Although she values the experience in terms of personal growth and the reassurance that she knows she can succeed in a new environment in the longer term she sees 'moving out there' and being away from friends and family as not for her.

I am just a different person in so many ways… just coz…it's not necessarily like I am worldly…but …I did travel quite a few places in America, saw new things…and just the experience of being abroad…being away from my family and knowing that I could do it…and…I don't really want to. I know that now, but I know that because I did it. I know that it's just not for me moving out there. (Emily: 380-387)

After several months working at a hotel in Ireland, Ed took a trip home and renewed contact with his family and his friends "re-booted" him. Separation from his support networks at home had left Ted feeling homesick and dejected. Contact with them and supportive discussions with them helped Ted move forward. Later having a girlfriend in Ireland gave him further reason to remain.

When I went home. My friends and family kind of re-booted it for me. Kind of had a little pep-talk with them, you know. And I actually had a girlfriend in January there also, so I think that made me feel better about it as well. Like I had something else that I could kind of hold onto….But that was something else to hold onto. Something that made me feel better about myself as well. (Ted: 84-91)

Like other participants, Sophie recognised the difficulty of being separated from friends and family and keeping in contact. Nevertheless, despite this she valued the experience of going away and saw it in her own terms as a better experience than staying at home in England.

I mean it was hard being away from your friends and family and I didn't stay in contact as much as I wanted to but I glad I went away rather than staying in England. (Sophie: 66-67)

4.2.3 Financial Problems

As final year students in a British university, the participants were familiar with the financial implications of tuition fees, student loans and the necessity of part time employment. Financial problems and learning to manage money of very limited budgets is a theme that emerged in several interviews (P1; P5; P8; P9; P10; P13; P18; P19; P22; P23). Josh exemplified an experience common to several participants that the internship salary did not in itself meet all his living and travel costs. He remained dependent on a student loan and support from his parents as well as his salary from his full time employment

Well I had my student loan. And I had to have money off my parents so it wasn't enough. I got by but it was difficult… But I used most of my student loan for travelling and I used the money I got from work as my essential money. So I got by. I kind of tried to prioritise (Josh 93-96)

In Alan's experience, it was impossible to save money for leisure or travel. His salary provided a bare minimum, which he hoped to supplement with overtime. His employer was more inclined to give time off in lieu than pay overtime meaning he could take time to travel but not giving him the means to do so.

That's not possible, cost of living is so high, wages are no good, unless you get paid overtime, which is unlikely. You are more likely to get time off in lieu. (Alan 230-232)

For some participants the need to manage money and the growing sense of personal responsibility was part of the developmental experience of the internship.

I learned a lot about myself as well as the job… I learned that I could do it for myself… be on my own… but I also learned how to be more responsible for… money… and just sort of everyday life and not just working and how to get up in the morning. (Maggie 71-75)

Brian seemed to take pride in his ability to manage on a very limited budget and even strategised how to maximise his earning potential by doing overtime and managing this schedule to maximise his earnings. In doing, so he learned how to be himself, an independent adult.

I think I learned how to be me. That sounds a bit weird, but I've come back able to budget money. Over there I had to ... I went out there with, I think, about $100 , so I didn't really start with very much at all. And so being able to save my money and live off only $9 an hour for 35 hours or so a week ...It was a challenge...And to always have kind of the future in sight...what if I don't get any hours that week because it's really quiet?, or can I work triple hours this week in a different department to get overtime pay so I can have more money and put that into savings for the end of the year. (Brian 270-300)

Ross believes if he had taken regular full time employment and spent a year working in hotel operations he would have earned more money.

For example, throughout that year I could have probably earned twice as much money as I did there, but my preference for the year was learning and as they were happy to facilitate I worked the most amount of positions of over 400 staff the summer while I was there. (Ross 337-343)

However, the limited training wage offered by the internship programme was more than compensated for by the opportunities for training and personal development that the internship offered. Ross therefore rationalised the lower salary as sufficient recompense for the experience offered.

4.2.4 Working Conditions and Working Environments

When asked about working conditions, the participants reflected on the long hours, split shifts and antisocial hours often expected in the hospitality industry. Related to this were reflections on low pay and its connected financial implications.

When asked if he would recommend a hotel internship outside of the UK, Alan responded that although the opportunity to develop skills during a good placement was possible in his experience the financial rewards would be limited.

I would say yes if you are looking for a good placement and looking to develop skills…. I think a lot of students use it to try and build up some money… That's not possible in Irelands… cost of living is so high… wages are no good… unless you get paid overtime… which is unlikely… you are more likely to get time off in lieu. (Alan 230-232)

Working in a demanding food and beverage operation where she quickly had to take on extra hours and extra responsibilities, without extra pay, might seem 'horrific' to others in Beatrice's exploration of her own experience during the interview. However, rather than seeing this as a bad experience she valued it as an opportunity to learn about food and beverage operations. It seems as if, by being thrown into a chaotic environment, Beatrice learned more about the business and received greater responsibility. When asked what she had learnt on the placement, Beatrice responded:

Learning you can push yourself… doing 90 hour weeks… ok it's not good for you… but the badly organised… sort of awful times at the hotel… times when everyone else would have thought oh this is horrific on our placement… we learned so much more in those times… I think if I had have gone somewhere else… where it was very easy going I don't think I would have learned half the things… I don't know… just the basic things about the business… it's just interesting that when you are forced into it you can work out how to run rotas… who can run breakfasts who can run dinners… you work it all out. (Beatrice: 174-183)

What might seem poor working conditions are sometimes interpreted by participants as having unforeseen benefits. Rather than being a source of complaint, enduring long hours and a long working week and being immersed into such a febrile working environment seemed to enforce a sense of competence and confidence in the job for Ted.

I had to be very kind of formal all the time. Doing this for eight, nine, ten hours a day for six days a week, it kind of made me more confident. But even my friends there, they kind of brought me out of my shell as well a bit. (Ted 145-147)

When encouraged to reflect upon working conditions during the internship Brian's interpretation of his experience took a somewhat different turn. Pay and working hours were not contentious issues in Brian's interpretation of his time working at a resort hotel in the Southern United States. However he reflected that his role in customer services was made difficult by a major hotel renovation, which was the cause of many customer complaints, which added to the stresses of his adaptation to the new environment. Therefore, it was the physical environment of the workplace or the conditions he worked in that were important in his account.

And so we got there and it was very difficult because they were going under a renovation, the front desk was tucked in a corner of a conference room, and there was no ... and everyone going there was offered comforts but no one was happy because there was so much noise and so much dust, it was so cold and it was so wet and so it was very miserable. (Brian: 215-220)

However, despite calling the experience "horrible", this negative early experience in his internship is rationalised by Brian as part of the internship learning experience. Dealing with customers who were unhappy about staying on a building site gave Brian the opportunity to solve real problems and he felt empowered to resolve customer complaints. He felt that he grew in the role. The adversity he experienced was valued not disparaged.

Our first two months, or first two and one-half months. That experience taught me an awful lot about dealing with issues and solving issues and having the freedom to give people things and being able to talk to people and relate with them and taught me a lot about how I can be in a job role. And so I find that experience, no matter how horrible it was and how many times it was difficult, I found it very useful. (Brian 222-229)

Brian continued to reaffirm this sense of adversity making him better in the role. This strengthening ability to solve problems in the workplace is linked to the mentorship of good

managers. The support of managers in the internship hotel empowered Brian and confirmed

his sense of effectiveness in the role.

To go through that and to experience that, and then in the summer time when problems came up and when things happened it was like that, you could deal with it, you could just, you could really focus on getting the problem solved. And the support that I had, what I felt like I had from my manager and from the front office manager and the desk managers and all of them were very supportive and if you were going to make a decision, then they'd go with you on that decision, or if you needed help or if you wanted them to do something for you, then they were more than happy to do that. (Brian 231-240)

Not all reflections about accounts of conditions within the workplace were negatively

positioned. Ted who had already mentioned long working hours found that accommodation

provided off site by the employer saw his personal situation improve. Previously he had been

living onsite making the distinction between work and private life blurred.   Having

accommodation off site is an improvement in both his working and living conditions.

January was great, I even had my own flat there. They offered to give me my own flat to share with someone. I think living on my own, originally I was staying in the hotel. So my personal life was in the hotel, my work life was in the hotel. So I think being outside of it, in my own place kind of made me feel a little bit better about it, you know? (Ted: 55-60)

For Connie workplace accommodation meant she was put into a situation, which caused her

considerable distress. Connie recounts how she was placed in a flat with several co-workers.

One of these co-workers and flatmates developed a serious drinking problem and stole

several times from her flatmates and employer.   Connie was afraid to return to the

accommodation at times. Living in this enclosed environment provided by the employer and

cohabiting with colleagues might be a pressurised environment in itself. Add to this the

explosive mix of alcohol fuelled antisocial behaviour and crime and Connie's distress became

apparent.

In any other situation, I wouldn't put myself in that environment, but I had to carry on in it, and we never told anyone here at the placement office. Looking back, apparently we should of, but then it was a case of what could they have done? If management at the hotel couldn't even do anything, how is the placement office at university going to help us? (Connie 240-249)

When asked how she tolerated these living conditions, Connie's response is perhaps

surprising. Despite living with an alcoholic and a thief she thinks she 'lived the dream'. Being

in Dublin, doing work she loved was enough compensation for the unpleasant living

environment.

I genuinely think at the time, I loved my job; I loved the people I was with. I had the best life. I literally, I joke that I lived the dream, but genuinely did. I worked 9 to 5, I missed Friday, could go out in Dublin on the weekends. I literally blocked her out basically. Everything else was so good that it made that little thing, even though it was who I was living with, it made it insignificant, the minute I left that house. (Connie 257-263)

Accommodation provided by Josh's employer in downtown Newark, New Jersey, provided a scene of urban decay not often portrayed in promotional literature for internships in the US.

It was… a hostile environment… it was borderline ghetto… where we lived… so that was another obstacle. But I know that made me more aware of my surroundings. Walking down the street at 3 a.m. to catch a bus to work… and the other side of the tracks they would call it… well the downtown ghetto. You had to keep your wits about you constantly. There were people getting shot down the street… it was… it was yeah… well English wasn't the first language on the street… so if you wanted to go into a shop they didn't understand your English. (Josh 49-58)

Areas with statistically much higher crime rates and the associated problems of urban poverty are perhaps the places parents and university tutors might prefer interns to avoid. However in this place, less often associated with the glamorised image of overseas internships, Josh found vibrancy and cosmopolitanism. He also seemed to draw strength from his ability to cope with being in such an environment.

The area near the airport. Lots of Brazilians, Hispanics, Latin American… A lot of poor families. But a vibrant area. I wouldn't have changed it. Once you got to know the make-up of the area it was fantastic. Even the downtown district. I remember waiting there at the bus stop at 10 o'clock at night waiting for the transfer and being petrified. It was horrible. But it's those situations that build you up for the future. (Josh: 59-69)

Working to a demanding rota, split shifts and double shifts often common in hospitality work were clearly demanding and had a physical impact on Josh. His health suffered and he lost weight. Despite this demanding and distressing work environment Josh makes sense of the experience in terms of personal strength. If he could endure these conditions he felt sure he could endure anything.

Their working culture is…I leaned about ways of working. In New Jersey they don't have the same working regulations we have… the amount of time between shifts was sometimes just 4 hours… where here you get at least 8, you have time to go home, get fresh, sleep. (Josh 120-125)

In a similar way, Fleur makes sense of her time spent in a hotel in Ireland, which was declared bankrupt and put into receivership as difficult but worthwhile. Despite coping with the stress of a failing business, her interpretation of her own experience was both enjoyable and 'something to get through'

The good experiences always, come out on top even though I'm not going to lie, some days at first I didn't want to be there but my attitude is quite like I'll just get through it...like it's fine, it's just a year of my life and it'll be great experience and I'm going to do it. But then, there was quite a lot of managerial problems and food costs, and at this point when I was on placement, the hotel was in receivership. It got sold to the banks

because so yes, it was very tough for everybody and that put more demands on the staff. (Fleur: 146-160)

Fleur's experience working in food and beverage operations was arduous and something to be endured. Talking about the working conditions Fleur gave emphasis to the stress caused by hospitality working hours. Learning on the job was a source of stress, but by contrast also a personal satisfaction.

That was very stressful and there was a lot to learn…, obviously guest demands, but that's the bit I found the best because I love serving. I've got that, like, caring personality so I found that, like, fun but obviously doing all the product knowledge and things like that I found really hard. But I got there in the end. (Fleur: 105-108)

Fleur's experience within the hospitality industry in Ireland, with stressful working conditions has left her with the opinion that the industry was not for her. This is not a personal failing. Nor is this due to an inability to cope with stress. Fleur believed she coped well. Instead she believed work in hospitality requires a passion that she lacks.

Definitely know from being in Ireland that I don't want to want to work in the food and beverage industry. It's too stressful. Not that I can't handle stress - I handle it really well compared to other people. But I know that I've got no passion in that industry whatsoever. Fleur: 194-198

Sophie also faced the problem of working in a business that was in administration providing a working environment with added challenges. Eventually her placement ended when the receivers cancelled all internship programmes without notice

We had so many problems in the placement…. In the business and…it ended early because the previous year they had gone into bankruptcy… and the university didn't know that…. They sent us out there not knowing… and at the end of the 9 months when they told us we had to go… they said this could have happened at any time… the administrators could have sent us home after just a month… so we were not happy about it. (Sophie: 63-74)

The hotel under receivership, which was cutting services and facilities to help reduce costs, resulted in constant complaints from customers who had paid for better. Yet Sophie saw her experience working in customer services role as a valuable one for her because it afforded opportunities to engage with business problems not normally encountered during an internship. Experiencing a business in difficulty perhaps offered Sophie greater opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Yeah but it was such a good experience for me personally… because I got to work in… I was working in customer services… because we had members because it was an ownership hotel…it was my job to talk to the customers…I got to learn so much about the bankruptcy and the administration because it was my job to explain it to the customer. (Sophie: 90-96)

Sophie's experience in Spain is a part of her overall experience of hospitality work which also encompasses full and part time work in the UK. What she perceives as bad management practices rather than poor hospitality working conditions per se has left her frustrated and wondering if there is anything better.

It's just that I have been working in hotels with really bad management… and it is just… I am sure if I worked in a hotel with really good management it might be different…but so far it has been the same experience and it has just been AGHH! [sighs] (Sophie 164-168)

4.3 Growth and Development

As part of a structured work based learning programme provided through co-operation between employers and HEIs, providers and participants anticipate the development of personal and professional skills and qualities that are enhancements to the student experience (Thiel & Hartley, 1997; Coco, 2000; Gault et al., 2000; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Weible, 2010). This was often positioned by participants as growing up or gaining maturity (P1; P3; P4; P5 P14; P16; P17; P23). This is perhaps to be expected as a year's international work experience is clearly a major milestone within the life of a young adult. However the experience of personal growth and development is sometimes made sense of in more transformative language. Becoming myself and becoming a new person are themes that were recurrent in participants' accounts of their experiences
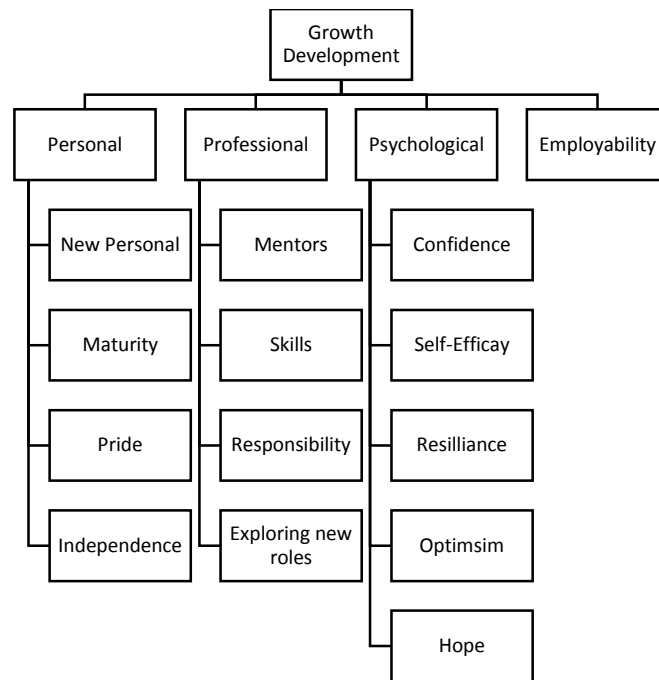
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Figure 8. *Superordinate and Subordinate themes of* Growth/*Development*

4.3.1 Becoming a new person

An important theme was change. Moreover, that change was often positioned as transformative and positive. This change is personal, self-reflective and positive. The international internship offers the opportunity for personal growth, personal development identified by participants within themselves and often validated by comments from family and friends. Themes of personal change, transformation and even reinvention were evident in numerous transcripts (P1; P3; P5; P7; P9; P10; P11; P12; P13; P14; P15; P17; P18; P19; P20 P21; P22; P24; P25)

Brian saw his internship in the USA as an opportunity for growth, a possibility for reinvention and reshaping.

I just think because you're given the opportunity just to throw yourself at something and do anything or just be someone new, or be the person that you really want to be or just change naturally as time goes on. (Brian 310-313)

This psychological transformation into a new person was accompanied by a physical resculpting of himself as Brian became interested in looking after himself and working out. Remembering the end of his internship, Brian's experience was focused on returning home as a changed person.

I'm ready to go home, I'm ready to go back and be this new person. Because I was aimed at coming back and being kind of that new me. Because I started working out a lot and exercising a lot and just taking care of myself a lot more, because I felt like I wanted to. (Brian 356-365)

For Maggie, the distance away from her previous life allowed a space to grow. A new space to reinvent herself away from her past to be what she wanted to be.

I think it allowed me to be what I wanted to be while I was on my placement … I didn't have to be what I was when I was at home. I could recreate myself… and be like this new person with these new people. It gave me space. (Maggie 158-161)

For Joanna, being on an international internship in the USA allowed her to create a work persona, a new character in her own words that allowed her to act more confidently in the workplace. Within this theatrical metaphor, Joanna interpreted the experience as giving her confidence to perform in new ways.

I was kind of playing a character through the whole time. Which was, I think it was quite good actually. It gave me a little bit... like, people say when they, like, act, they feel like they're playing a different person so if they're not that confident. I think it gave me a little more confidence. It felt like it was a little bit of a different person. (Joanna 60-65)

Like many participants, Ross saw the changes within himself as positive enhancements of his personality. The distinctiveness of the experience changed him for the better.

It's certainly changed me as person for the better, you know, the life experience I achieved, you know, and gained over there. (Ross 316)

Ross's international experience has opened horizons and allowed him to imagine new possibilities for himself in ways that were not possible before the internship

There's a whole different world out there that you can go and experience and live your life and that sort of new knowledge to me… it made me a lot more relaxed as a person. I worry a lot less about certain things because I know there are opportunities like that out there.   (Ross 373-375)

For Connie, a year living and working outside the United Kingdom changed her and changed the future she sees for herself giving her new possibilities that she would never have envisioned before.

I look back and it changed things; it changed everything really. I don't know, I could've easily … well, when I'm finished in the next year, I'm going to go to Australia because I've got relatives over there, and I'm just going to go travelling, and I would never have done that, ever. The thought of going to a different country, and I know I will know him, but I'm still going to be on the other side of the world. (Connie: 437-447)

4.3.2 Maturity

An overseas placement offers not only work experience within the hotel industry but an environment in which to mature. Participants mention maturing as an adult or growing up as a phenomenon experienced during their time overseas. It seems the experience was more intense than the experience of leaving home to go to university. Being further away and in a foreign country offered more opportunities to transition into adulthood.

The challenge of full time work seemed to bring Ted into the real world. The placement was a time for him to put away childish things and "fight" or endeavour to work for the things he wants out of life.

I just thought this is real life now. This is no messing around, you know I'm not a kid anymore. This is what you have to do. You know you're an adult, your 21-years-old. You have to have to fight for it. You have to fight for the things you want, things you enjoy. (Ted: 305-310)

As discussed previously the placement overseas is often seen as life changing. For Fleur this transformative experience is made sense of in terms of maturity and coming into true adulthood.

Going away on placement and coming back it's kind of like you grow up. You kind of grow up when you come back from placement because the experience is kind of life changing in a way. (Fleur: 290)

For Maggie, personal maturity is represented in her enhanced social and communicative skills. Being able to communicate and interact with other adults from other diverse social and cultural backgrounds made her feel that she had fully come into herself

I do feel I matured quite a lot while I was over there… I learned how to talk to different people… different classes… and cultures… in different ways and how to create rapport with people… when to empathise… when to sympathise… that sort of thing… I learned quite a lot. (Maggie: 89-84)

Participants often wanted to stress that they did not see themselves as immature before the overseas experience but that the experience in various ways offered greater opportunities to develop.

I think I've matured a lot and I wasn't immature before. It surprised me how much learning and maturing and progressing I still had in me at that point. Moving away it gave me a different way of thinking. Back at home I had no worries or stresses or anything. Over there, there was no way out it. You got a problem, you could easily run away. (Ross: 367-372)

Working in the United States, in some sense isolated from his previous life, gave Ross a sense that he had to face up to problems. Being so far from home meant he couldn't "run away".

Being overseas therefore provides a theatre for growth and maturity which is an often unexpected outcome of the experience.

4.3.3 Independence

Independent is often connected in participants' narratives of their experience to descriptions of maturity and growth. For Emily working in the United States was "properly away from home" a separation from her previous life which provided the opportunity to develop independence.

When I moved to university it was the first time I had been away from home but then I went to America and it was the first time I had properly been away from home, rather than you know just being a few hours …. It was a chance for me to be truly independent, truly find myself, and immerse myself in my career. (Emily 36-42)

Again for Sophie the "moving away" or separation from the support she had experienced in her youth proved to her that she could live independently and create a life for herself and she has confidence that she could do it again

I am more independent. Moving away completely on your own and having to do everything… making a whole new life somewhere else… I think that would help for the future because I know I could basically move anywhere else and I know I would be fine… I would be able to take care of myself and I wouldn't need anyone else, I know I could get a job and I know budgeting and do all that. (Sophie: 316-324)

For Brian the unfamiliarity of being in a new job, in a new country and experiencing new cultures offered better opportunities for him to develop as independent life skills and mature as an individual.

As well as that was learning how to be independent, buy my own food, exercising and doing the work I needed to do for when I got back here and being social and going through various different things, was all …I felt like there was a lot more growing up to be done over there in a new culture, in a new environment with brand new people, different money. **(Brian: 300-305)**

From the lived experience of participants both the closely related themes of maturity and independence can be discerned. It can be seen that moving away to a new culture and the separation from familiar experience adds to the otherness or distinctive nature of the experience and is perceived as a reason for the development within the individual of characteristics that are valued as positive enhancements.

4.4 Professional Development

4.4.1 Mentoring and Working with professionals

A theme that seems to have enhanced participants' sense of personal growth and development was the opportunity of working with and learning from professionals and mentors. Discussing his developing professional relationship with his manager, Alan was motivated to perform well and try harder for his mentor, which in turn caused his manager to invest more effort in developing Alan.

I think that kind of kick started me into trying harder and I think when he saw that stating to happen that's when he started to develop me further. (Alan: 196-199)

Brian took the opportunity to learn more about the business from the managers he worked with than was simply necessary to perform his job function. The managers were a resource from which Brian could draw more knowledge and gain more sophisticated levels of experience. A desire for learning was rewarded by managers and this added resource of professional development was instrumental in shaping Brian's experience.

If you wanted to learn something that wasn't in your job role, if you wanted to learn something that the managers do, like they'd write a report that deals with the VIP arrivals and they do the upgrades and the comments and things like that, if you wanted to learn how to do that from a manager's point of view, then they teach you, and I got to where I had to do schedules and how to control the budget with the schedule. And so the work experience and the things I learned from the managers and from the job itself was invaluable. (Brian: 242-250)

Managers and mentors could also be a source of new ideas about career futures. The opinions of professionals matter a great deal to many participants. Maggie was surprised and seemingly flattered when her boss suggested career pathways, which had previously not occurred to her. The fact that her manager could see career futures for her beyond hospitality based upon her work and personal development in the hotel was a source of encouragement for Maggie.

My boss said… you would be really good in sales because you know how to talk to people… you can project yourself… you know want. Sales is going to be a good idea… so I thought oh I'll have a look (laughs). Never before my boss had said that. He said oh you'd be good in Sales or PR or events so I thought I'd have a look…. And he said if I couldn't find anything else he's always have me back. (Maggie: 179-189)

Praise and affirmation from managers is a source of self-confidence and self-efficacy with participants' experience

Then having a mentor telling you your stuff is good or what you are doing is great and you are developing and you are becoming better in certain ways. It made me look at myself in different ways, making me think I can do things. It is possible for me to do these things. (Emily: 409-414)

For one participant the general manager fulfilled the role not only of mentor but as role model and someone to seek inspiration from

The general manager, he was like my role model. If people would look up to me like people that looked up to him! He had the personality, had the knowledge, experience ... but he was a really good person as well. And I remember, he told me that it would be great for me to have this experience in America. (Leina: 249-254)

4.4.2 Skills development

As a principal purpose of internships is to enhance a range of skills development in real business learning environments, it is to be hoped and expected that participants might experience some form of positive development in professional skills during the internship (Thiel & Hartley, 1997; Coco, 2000; Gault et al., 2000; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Weible, 2010). A sense of skills development was common to the experience of many of the participants (P1; P2; P3; P4; 5; P7; P8; P9; P10; P11; P12; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P21; P22; P24; P25). These skills ranged from professional task mastery to softer people skills such as communication and working in a team. The acquisition and self-realisation of competency is often a source of personal satisfaction and even pride. Initially Ted's lack of skills was a source of anxiety about being able to cope with the job. After the internship he was more self-assured in his skills.

When I first arrived there, I didn't have any skills at all in the industry whatsoever and I was, obviously, a little bit sceptical about how I would join into it. (Ted: 23-24)

On my CV currently I have a kind of endless lists of things I've done at the hotel and skills that I've got now. I don't want to big myself up too much, but there's not something I can't do know. I can do all the hard stuff. (Ted: 274-280)

Through skills development confidence is acquired. In Maggie's case there was a new self-assurance in her abilities to communicate effectively in the workplace; a constructive experience to carry forward in her professional life.

I gained a lot of personal skills… self-confidence… learned how to talk to people… create rapport… it was valuable… that sort of thing. (Maggie: 209)

For Jane, the communication skills gained from working in an international and multi-cultural environment are valuable transferable skills to carry forward into future careers.

I think because I had so much interaction with people from all over the world … I think just communication with people in general. I've always been one to communicate effectively but I think my communication skills have improved and I think that is beneficial in whatever industry you go to, whatever country you go to. (Jane: 217)

4.4.3 Responsibility and Gaining Promotion

Responsibility is a phenomenon that is something to be "taken" or assumed or be "given" or bestowed within participants lived experience. At times this is a source of satisfaction. However, in some cases it is something that has to be coped with. Responsibility can be something that cannot be avoided in the workplace and is almost overwhelming to those with little experience.

I learned to deal with responsibility. With… ok you HAVE to do this… you just do it. It was a huge responsibility… I mean I didn't really have the courage at first. (Beatrice: 157)

However the experience of acquiring responsibility, though not easily achieved, is something of meaning in the experience of participants

It was my first major role and responsibility and working with a team from across the world; Germans, Japanese, you name it, dynamic groups, was quite interesting and a big challenge. Very valuable experience. (Robert: 39-42)

For Brian, responsibility within the work place was interconnected with responsibility as an adult. Empowered within the workplace to make decisions and manage his own work is interrelated with the freedom of living away from his parents and familiar support networks. Brian makes sense of these experiences as part of the same phenomenon. An experience that advanced his sense of self.

Plus the freedom and responsibility that I was given, you feel more superior and you feel like you're more ... I'm trying to think of the words ... I think just the freedom that I was given over there and the freedom of not having my parents right there or having close friends right there. (Brian: 315-324)

Connie was promoted out of Food and Beverage operations and "up" literally and figuratively to the Finance Department. This was a welcome change away from the monotony of food service to a position and experience she genuinely valued.

I know I really, really loved the fact that I was given that much trust like that, it was a nice thing, being given trust. I really loved being up there. I loved all my job roles. (Connie: 166-170)

Joanna was empowered in her workplace to make decisions and be accountable for her own work. This required learning and adjustment but was ultimately valuable.

They want you to own your problems, and not always rely on the managers, which is what I'd done in the past, definitely. So that was one of my challenges, kind of, becoming accustomed to that. I think there were ways in which they helped us to do that, which were good. (Joanna: 366-370)

Being given new roles and responsibilities and gaining promotion are sources of personal satisfaction which enhance an interns thinking about themselves. Being chosen to work in a prestigious location within the organisation was a clear source of pride for Josh.

I got appointed as first member in the club house [name omitted] I relished every single minute in there. And because we were serving the highest paying guests, and VIPs and many actors and actresses and I got to escort many celebrities through security to the club house… that was the area I took pride in. I took pride in that. (Josh: 163-172)

4.4.4 Exploring new roles

The opportunities offered by internship providers to work in different job roles often in areas beyond the previous experience or even imagination of the participants was often a source of great satisfaction. Experiencing new job roles and career opportunities figured positively in the experience of numerous participants (P1; P2; P5; P6; P8; P9; P10; P11; P12; P13; P14; P15; P18; P19; P20; P21; P22; P23; P24)

Interestingly, positive accounts of exploring job roles within the hospitality industry were occasionally positioned as being of merit in order to disregard them from future career decisions.   Robert's experience in a front office department has excluded that role from his future.

I want to see how a hotel works and see if this is the right thing for me to do. I hated front office. Never going to do it again. Maybe it's the way I experienced it but I'm not interested at all. (Robert: 267-269)

Similarly being able to shadow managers in various roles within the hotel gave Paula the opportunity to decide on which areas of the operation she personally favoured.

It's hard to remember what I thought about my career before going in the States. I don't know what, what plans I had, what plans I had what was in my mind, but because I had the opportunity to shadow different managers.   I got to see what they were doing, how they do it, I kind of noticed, okay, I don't want to be in this person's shoes ever. (Paula: 378-383)

After some months in the company Connie was given the opportunity to try an entirely new role in the finance department. A role that she that she flourished in. This unexpected move

away from food and beverage operations made her feel both valued and at the heart of things and opened up new career possibilities for her.

Yeah, it made me think about the future, and eventually, I would love to, I don't know if accounts, but maybe a back of office, but in a hotel, but a back office job. When I said that I worked in accounts, people literally just said oh, wasn't that boring, but literally, because it's a hotel, things are happening all the time. Hotels are just a whole world of things going on. (Connie: 472-482)

Joanna was eventually given the responsibility of training new staff with the food and beverage department. This positive experience has encouraged her to consider HRM and training as a possible career in the future and has impacted upon her studies at university.

Well like I said, I'm kind of interested in training. And I'm actually doing my dissertation on training at the moment as well. (Joanna: 620-624)

In these cases, the opportunity offered by an internship within the hospitality industry to develop transferrable skills applicable to business and management roles outside of the industry is discussed as an advantage. This contrasts with previous studies, which position the decision to explore new roles outside of the hospitality industry in a negative light.

4. 5 Positive Psychological Development

The analysis of the participant transcripts progressed a pattern of themes that seemed to cluster in the area of positive psychological development. These were: Confidence; Self-Efficacy; Resilience; Optimism; Hope. A sixth theme Employability-Self Belief was identified but will be discussed separately due to its interrelatedness to other areas

Certain of these themes were consistent with literature previously evaluated in this study on undergraduate internships within business and management literature were predicted by previous studies. Primarily these were Confidence (Toncar and Cudmore,2000; Busby, 2002; Coll, et al., 2003; van Dorp, 2008; UUK & CBI, 2009; Smith-Ruig, 2014) and Self-efficacy (Fugate, 2004; Lent, Brown and Hackett, 2002) Resilience and Adversity were mentioned only briefly in previous studies (Archer& Davison, 2008). Moreover, certain themes seemed to emerge in such consistent patterns that were not fully evident in previous literature on co-operative education experiences so that a reengagement with literature was necessary. These themes seem closely consistent with areas within the literature of positive psychology and the workplace and more specifically Luthans et al. (2004) theory of Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap) discussed in part 2 of chapter 2.

Confidence, Resilience, Hope and Optimism are words within common usage but with specific meaning within the context of this analysis. Hope and optimism may be synonymous in common usage, therefore, before presenting the analysis of these themes each section will give a brief definition from literature by means of re-introduction.

4.5.1 Confidence

Confidence here is used in the sense of Stajkovic and Luthans (1998: 240) as an individual's belief "…about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context." This definition is founded upon the concept of self-efficacy within the work of Albert Bandura (1994).

As stated previously, studies by Toncar and Cudmore (2000) Busby (2002) Coll, et al. (2003); van Dorp, (2008) UUK & CBI (2009) Smith-Ruig (2014) on co-operative education programmes where undergraduates participate in an extensive period of workplace experience, indicated that a common phenomenon of such experience was the development of confidence within participants. This positive psychological enhancement is a phenomenon which is well attested within the transcripts of participants in this study. It is a theme common to 23 out of the 25 participants in this study.

Confidence is positioned in participants' experience in two ways. Firstly, as work-based self-efficacy, that is to say, an individual participant's belief in their ability to succeed in specific work related situations or to accomplish workplace tasks. Secondly, confidence is represented as professional and social confidence, which developed as part of the year abroad and extended beyond the domain of work and into other areas of life.

The acquisition of new confidence can be transformative. As Emily explained, as her abilities grew in the workplace she changed as a person:

I came back I was SUCH a different person, I was SO much more confident, I had so much more character and I was so much more … I don't want to say confident again….I was just so much happier with my abilities…and ….with the breadth of knowledge I had when I came back compared to when I went out there. (Emily: 435- 450)

Confidence for Beatrice was a quiet confidence in her abilities to perform work tasks. The obligation of having to accomplish tasks and knowing she could accomplish tasks seemed to be the basis of her confidence.

I'd say working there has definitely made me more confident. Not in a huge sort of arrogant way.. But just sort of… because you had to get on and do things I know I can now… I have realised when I do competitions and stuff now I am used to that sort of pressure. (Beatrice: 236-240)

Sophie believed she could achieve more because of her improved skills and personal qualities and that these enhancements would be attractive to future employers.

Yeah I feel that I could definitely achieve more than I used to think that I could. From my experiences… from everything as a whole… being more independent, my confidence, I feel like I could look more attractive to an employer now. I feel like my CV looks a lot more attractive now. (Sophie: 388-391)

Leina believed she communicated more effectively at work and that she gained specific hospitality related skills and knowledge that made her more effective in the workplace. She was confident that she could instigate change at work.

It's improved my customer service skills and language skills. Working for five star companies, it just gave me a knowledge about hospitality as a whole. Like I can implement things now. I can change things. (Leina: 432-435)

Confidence for Paula was something that grew from gradual improvements and persistent effort.

Then you get to the point where you kind of, kind of get to know what you're doing, which is good. And, again, if you're growing and try to know even more and even more and then you get to the point where you know what you're doing, you're confident. (Paula: 330-333)

The internship could be a platform from which to launch a career. Robert's confidence came from the self-belief in his abilities to flourish in the hotel industry after completing a successful internship in Dubai.

It's made me more confident, more aware. I'm definitely more conscientious now of the fact I'm going into work now because of the internships. I think internships are really good. It's a platform for you to get into your real job. Before going into the internship I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. (Robert: 157-162)

Although previous literature on work based learning programmes and co-operative education does acknowledge the development of confidence as a positive outcome of such experiences that confidence is positioned in the domain of work or academic related skills (Toncar and Cudmore,2000; Busby,2002; Coll, et al.,2003; van Dorp,2008; Smith-Ruig, 2014). The development of social confidence, itself a work related asset, is not well developed in previous literature. Participants in this study demonstrated self-efficacy in their ability to communicate and develop relationships in a variety of contexts. This was often positioned as being derived from the circumstances of having to live and work in a foreign country. Separation from home and the familiar forced some participants to communicate and form new relationships in ways they would not have felt confident to do back at home.

I think I am a lot more confident than I was. Before I was always quite shy. I am still relatively introverted… but nowhere near to the extent… I could quite happily strike up a conversation… or… I think I am a lot more spontaneous than I was. (Alan: 284-287)

The development of self-confidence in Brian is evident as he makes sense of his own maturity and ability to have faith in his own decision-making without being unduly influenced by his peers.

I think I'm a lot more confident in myself and who I am and the things I want to do. I feel like I can make a decision without being influenced by other people. I can say I don't want to do something and not fear people judging me for it, things like that. I feel like I can be a more independent yet confident person. (Brian: 368-380)

A naturally introverted person, for Connie moving to another country was an experience which saw her thrown into situations that forced her to form new relationships and communicate with strangers in ways she would not have done before. This confidence in her ability to communicate and make her presence felt in public was a positive development that had influenced her behaviour beyond the internship.

It wasn't a choice of being a recluse, you couldn't be by yourself there. That helped so much. Without the placement there, that wouldn't have happened and now I am fine in any social situation. Now I even ask questions in class, and I never would've done that in the first year, do you know what I mean? I know I've always been a bit of a quiet person, but there's a difference now; I am not scared of social situations. (Connie: 322-329)

Moving to a foreign country and starting a new job in an unfamiliar environment was a big step for Ted. His sense of achievement in accomplishing a successful overseas internship was a source of confidence. Confidence was the biggest change he saw in himself since the internship.

Personally, I think it was the confidence. Because I was far away, I've never been so far away on my own before. So as a young adult, that was a big step for me. And a big achievement for me. (Ted: 173-177)

Going "out" to Cyprus alone developed Maggie's confidence. She came to see that she could accomplish tasks in the workplace and that her skills and her opinions were valued. This increased confidence was affirmed by her partner and family adding to her self-efficacy.

The confidence to communicate… to project myself… confidence to know that I am doing alright… that I am not useless… my opinions aren't unvalued… all that sort of thing. My boyfriend said I was a lot more confident when I got back… he noticed that… I didn't have a lot of self-belief before I went out and now I realise that I can do stuff now and he realised that… but I think that my parents noticed that I had grown up quite a bit… that I had matured. (Maggie: 129-140)

4.5.2 Self-Efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their agentive capabilities to produce given levels of attainment (Bandura 1994). Often interwoven in participants' accounts of increased confidence in other more general areas such as social confidence examples of self-efficacy here are presented as task specific competencies gained through the experience of participants. Forms of belief in self-efficacy either in job specific tasks or in more general life skills such as independent living and communication were clearly evident in 22 of the 25 participant's accounts of their experience.

For instance, Emily referring to her work related skills stated that:

I would be nowhere near where I am today without having had that year and worked with those people. (Emily: 375-376)

For Leina, work experience in a 5 star hotel in China has given her a belief in her agentive capabilities to provide service particularly to international guests

I know exactly what to expect how to treat guests. It improved my customer service skills and my language skills. Um, also, working for five star companies, it just gave me a knowledge about hospitality as a whole. I can implement things now. I can change things. (Leina: 432-435)

Needless to say, enhanced agentive capabilities are a hoped for outcome of successful internships. Nevertheless evidence of task mastery and the development of personal and professional capabilities are well evidenced in participants' accounts of their experience.

Then you get to the point where you kind of know what you're doing is good. (Paula: 330-333)

The development of self-efficacy in work within her hotel internship is put forward with a sense of pride by Paula. As she lists here enhanced capabilities she exudes pride and assurance

Customer service, dealing with complaints. Time management, team working, um these are … I mean as I have said I could give you so many examples with, with each of them and things that happened. (Paula: 502-504)

Numerous participants believed that capabilities gained through their experience would be of interest to future employers (P2, P3, P7, P8, P9, P11, P12, P13, P15, P16, P17, P18, P19, P20, P21, P22, P23, P24, P25).

On my C.V. currently I have an endless lists of things I've done at the hotel and skills that I've got now. I don't want to big myself up too much, but there's not something I can't do. I can do all the hard stuff. (Ted 274-280)

For Ed and for other participants this sense of self-efficacy is something which put forward as a something to be exploited with career development and has a prominent position on their CVs. Similarly Brian's beliefs about his ability to perform job specific tasks is something he can capitalise upon in his future career.

It wasn't just the front desk, I went into sales, and housekeeping and revenue so I can adapt my CV to the job that I'm applying for, and I can say, "Oh, I spent time on the social media marketing committee at the hotel," and so I know how about marketing, I know how to market a hotel on the social media. And so I can adapt my CV, depending on the experiences that I had out there. (Brian: 494-502)

This self-assurance in both personal and professional competences is always positioned as one of the positive outcomes of the internship. This enhanced sense of self-efficacy as stated previously, is often coupled with other aspects of enhanced self-confidence and is often very positively positioned within the accounts of participants experience and often contrasts markedly with descriptions of adversity in the workplace or in the broader experience of participants previously discussed in this chapter.

4.5.3 Resilience

Resilience received little attention in the literature on co-operative education until Mate and Ryan (2014). Their work-based on narrative analysis of professionals' work experience suggests that introducing the notion of work-related resilience as a positive psychological enhancement to co-operative education students may improve their chances of having successful careers. Brown (2003), Archer and Davison (2008) Coll and Zegwaard (2006) mention resilience as one possible positive outcome of work based learning programmes. Resilience here refers to the phenomenon of overcoming adversity or stress (Rutter 2001). Rutter (2007) suggests that resilience is something people develop by being in adverse situations. Of particular interest to this study, Masten, Best and Garmezy's (1990) definition of resilience is the ability to adapt to a specific cultural context in order to achieve successful outcomes in the face of adverse circumstances. Luthans & Youssef (2007) identify resilience as a positive behavioural trait and Luthans (2002) states that resilience capacities are a strength in changing environmental circumstances.

Josh developed resilience in learning to adapt to very demanding working conditions. This awareness of his own resilience was also perhaps a source of confidence in his work capabilities and a source of optimism in being assured of a positive outcome if he were to face similar difficult conditions again.

It was very demanding. Very demanding. I would have 2 hours sleep. It was demanding…But in essence when I look back I recon if I can do that I can pretty much do anything. (Josh: 126-127)

As an integral part of her degree course, the 48-week placement in the United States was not something Lucia could easily walk away from. The problems caused by communal living in accommodation provided by the internship hotel were something she would have rather avoided. Instead she demonstrated resilience in forcing herself to adapt to the living and working conditions and enjoy them as much as she could.

I told myself I'm on the placement, I cannot quit because then what would I do with my life so I cannot quit. So I was like, I'm just going to enjoy this as much as I can and in order to do that, I need to learn how to live with the people who are around me all the time. (Lucia: 129-133)

For Leina, working in a hotel in China caused communication problems that she had never faced before. Adapting to a new job in a new environment far away from home was a strain in itself, which was, compounded by her lack of Chinese language skills. Great effort was needed on Leina's part to improve this situation by acquiring some level of Chinese language ability.

So what I found very difficult was the language barrier. Even the Chinese trainees or the staff, employees in the hotel, um, it was very hard sometimes to communicate, that's why I had to push myself to learn Chinese. (Leina: 75-83)

Fleur worked in a 5 star hotel in Ireland with a prestigious reputation that placed high demands on the staff. She "…stuck it out there a year". Generally, she spoke positively about the experience of living and working in Ireland. However, work within hospitality she saw as stressful, a stress she was keen to emphasise, that she could handle. This stress was not only caused by the often long and antisocial working hours associated with hospitality work but also the performative nature of emotional labour. She later went on to say that knowing she could handle that type of stress would be useful in the future.

I definitely know from being in Ireland that I don't want to want to work in the food and beverage industry. It's too stressful. Not that I can't handle stress - I handle it really well compared to other people. But I know that I've got no passion in that industry whatsoever. (Fleur: 194-205)

The first few months of an international internship seem to figure strongly in the participants' understanding of their own development of resilience and growth in other areas. For Alan alcohol provided some comfort in this difficult period of adaptation.

And combined with the massive amount of drink … it wasn't… yeah it wasn't a fantastic first three months certainly. … I did eventually adjust and started to develop… started to enjoy it a lot more. (Alan: 110-113)

Brian's horrible first few months adapting to life and work in South Carolina were something he had to 'push through'. This time taught him a lot about how to cope with stress and adapt to new situations. In retrospect, this was an experience he valued as part of his development.

Our first two and a half months. And that experience taught me an awful lot about dealing with issues and solving issues. … And so I find that experience, no matter how horrible it was and how many times it was difficult, I found it useful. (Brian: 222-292)

Kind of just pushing through that initial phase and the phase of being bad weather and not very fun to be there, kind of just getting through that to the summer and meeting all the new people coming down was very ... once you got to that bit, it was worthwhile waiting. (Brian: 96-101)

Ted admitted to feeling far more homesick than he ever would have imagined. That combined with a poor relationship with a manager at work made him seriously consider quitting and returning to England. However, after talking to friends and family he decided to endure the difficulties a little longer. His figurative language is that of fighting and struggling to progress with his job and his internship. After this resolution, things improved for Ted.

Like I said, I just kind of…hmmm… sucked it up, if you know what I mean? I just thought this is real life now. This is no messing around, you know I'm not a kid anymore. This is what you have to do. You know you're an adult, your 21-years-old. You have to have to fight for it. You have to fight for the things you want, things you enjoy. (Ted: 305-310)

For Kathy, knowing she has demonstrated reliance in the past by facing challenges and adapting to stressful situations is a source of inspiration to face testing roles again. Working in Hong Kong gave her a belief in her own resilience and an appetite to seek out demanding positions again in the future.

I have faced some difficulties before and now I can get used to them. Now I would really like to achieve something challenging. I would like another challenge. So now every time I face some problems I tell myself … look back at what you have already faced… even though at that time you thought it is really hard for you it is really a large problem… you have already solved them right… so it is really easy… don't be afraid of the problem which is facing you. (Kathy: 299-309)

4.5.4 Hope

As defined by Snyder et al (1996), hope is constituted of two elements: agency (goal directed energy) and pathways. Here agency refers to an individual's drive to achieve tasks within specific contexts. Pathways refers to the methods an individual can envision to actualise those tasks (Luthans, Norman, Avolio, & Avey, 2008). Individuals who demonstrate high levels

of hope or waypower also demonstrate increased goal-directed energy and exhibit enhanced capacities to develop pathways to reach their goals (Luthans, Avey, et al., 2008)

Brian demonstrates this sense of hope or waypower in the way he strategized about adapting the experience he gained overseas to different job applications. This experience gave him multiple avenues of possibility.

It wasn't just the front desk, I went into sales, and went into housekeeping and revenue and things like that and so I can adapt my CV to the job that I'm applying for, and I can say, "Oh, I spent time at the social media marketing committee at the hotel," and so I know how to market ... I know how this hotel runs I know how to market a hotel on social media, and what they need to do and things like that. And so I can adapt my CV, depending on my experience that I had out there and kind of change it up quite freely. (Brian: 494-502)

When asked, Josh asserted that he would certainly repeat the experience of living and working outside of the UK. His past experience gave him the drive to want to work overseas again and his experience and contacts already working in the Middle East have shown him a way forward with his intentions.

I would like to pursue work with a Middle Eastern airline. So I would like to work abroad again. In the Middle East even though the money isn't all that good, it provides you with a lifestyle that I would jump at the chance of doing. I have been thinking about the Middle East because I have a friend… an ex-student… and I have seen where she is living and what she is doing and I want to do that too. (Josh: 103-108)

His experience in America has opened up new possibilities and new career pathways, which Ross feels enabled to follow because of his positive experience in America.

Human resources is now something that I'm interested in, and that's as a result of that year and to the human resources team at the hotel that I worked in. I got a lot of interaction with them on a regular basis…I saw the value behind them and the things they were teaching us. (Ross: 496-507)

And I did my dissertation project based around HR topic. And I do believe later on in my career after I've gone through an operational route I'll likely to be moving across to a HR area maybe a training or something like. (Ross: 518-522)

The experience has given Ross an enhanced motivation to succeed as he feels it has empowered him to achieve more. He believed that a way forward to a HR role within the hotel industry would be to gain more operational experience first before specialising in a field he has come to see himself able to succeed in. The experience coupled with his university studies resulted, he believes, in him being offered a management position instead of the part time waiting job he recently applied for.

That was really the pivotal direction they took me in because when I came back the first job I applied for was just a waiter's position, but due to my experience in America accompanied with the degree that I am studying I got offered a management position at Premier Inn.   (Ross: 664-654)

Similarly, for Robert working in a 5 star hotel in Dubai allowed him to experience new roles and new possibilities within the hotel industry. Success and importantly recognition of that success at a role within the sales and marketing department has given Robert the drive and waypower to succeed again within that area and opened up the pathway of a career in sales and marketing.

I said I wanted to work in a hotel. I'm really attracted to marketing now and sales from the experience that I got. I think it's really interesting, going on a sales course and meeting people, making business deals for the company and getting rewarded. I like people to tell me I've worked hard. I like to be known that I've been rewarded for something. I like to be recognised. Recognition is important to me. (Robert: 64-69)

For Leina, the positive experience of working in China gave her the sense that she was capable of achieving other remarkable things, opening up a new world of possibilities for her.

In Shanghai, I met so many people. … and they just opened my eyes and that's when I realized like anything is possible. I can do anything. If I work hard …I literally can do and go and live anywhere. (Leina: 228-234)

Later, Leina declared her intention to stay within the hospitality industry and saw ways forward in which she could achieve the position of General Manager within a hotel

I knew I like hospitality and I just thought like I would love to be a general manager now. Manager is just a one step on the way there. So I think my dream job would be to work for an international company. Like probably the dream job would be to travel as well within my position. (Leina: 492-500)

Lucia saw her current part time job as a step down from the positions she held during her internship.   Nevertheless, she displayed agency and waypower in achieving improved outcomes when she finishes her studies and seeks full time work because she believes her placement has shown her bigger possibilities.

And the experience I have from my placement, I think that the receptionist is very downhill for me but it's just a job to get me through university. That's all. So yes I think I have more, bigger goals than I had before my placement because I know that I can do it. Before I didn't know, I wasn't so sure but I just know that I can, I can do it so I have bigger goals than before. (Lucia: 264-269)

For Emily, the experience of going to work in a hotel in the United States has given her a sense for her own capacity to work abroad again. She also saw ways in which she could make that possible by using the relationships she has made with employability tutors with the careers department at the university to help make a future transition abroad straightforward.

Then I also looked at going back again overseas. There are loads of work abroad programmes… all sorts… you can teach English overseas…having to sort everything out yourself… scary…but I know could go and ask the placement department here… I have a good relationship with them since America… having been abroad I

know I can… and having that relationship with my placement tutor… I know she would help me if I wanted to. (Emily: 662-664)

4.5.6 Optimism.

There was evidence to suggest that within several participants' accounts of their experience either through a sense of exceptionalism or a sense of achievement that optimism in individual futures was apparent. According to Scheier, Carver, & Bridges (2001) optimism refers to an individual's expectancy of positive outcomes. Those high in optimism generally build positive expectancies that motivate them to pursue their goals and deal with difficult situations making a positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future (Luthans et al. 2010; Seligman (1998). These individuals seem to make sense of their experience as something that in various ways enables them to go on to create positive outcomes with regards to their future careers.

For Connie, the rejection from her first choice of location in the United States and having to take a second choice hotel in the Republic of Ireland in which she eventually flourished was something she makes sense of as both a positive lived experience and something from which she can draw inspiration for other positive outcomes in the future.

The rejection from America has proper helped me so much. If I don't get a job, if I go to an interview, I'm like, okay, that's not happened, but something else will happen. I think actually being rejected from that was such a good thing for me, if that makes sense. (Connie: 74-78)

Ted who had little confidence in himself before the internship programme was confident and ambitious when asked about his future. He saw future international work within the hotel sector as a possible pathway to securing the financial stability that would enable him to achieve his long-term entrepreneurial ambitions. This positive expectancy of gaining work in the United States and elsewhere could one day lead to him owning his own food and beverage operation. Work within the hotel industry was a positive means to an end.

I'm fairly confident, maybe a bit too confident about it. I've got a lot of ambitions. I want to maybe one day own my own bar or restaurant, or both, who knows? I still want to work in hotels. I thought that maybe after I get my degree, graduate, I'm going to head over to the States, like I said. Probably stay there for five years, more or less, just to get some more experience. And a bit of finance sorted out. And then open up my own place. Really want to, yeah. Hotels, I want to get more experience in the hotel industry. But long term it's not what I want to stay with. (Ted: 327-332)

For Ted optimism is shown in the possibility of being "an independent" and is made achievable through his academic interest in hospitality business management and the experience he gained in the industry.

I want to be an independent because I've been studying business. So it's always something that's I've been kind of wanting to be. And I've always been interested in business, I've got a very kind of wide knowledge of business and how it's run. So it's something that I can exercise in the future. (Ted: 336-342)

Sophie exhibited a confidence and independence gained by working abroad on her internship year from which she draws conclusions about positive future outcomes of possible future expatriate work. This confidence in her independence and ability to be fine anywhere was the source of her optimism.

So I think that helped for the future because I know I could basically move anywhere else and I know I would be fine… I would be able to take care of myself and I wouldn't need anyone else, I know I could get a job and I know I know budgeting and do all that. (Sophie: 316-324)

Fleur felt comfort in believing that she had the ability to succeed in a career within the hotel industry even though she felt the need to explore other options before she finally settles on a career choice. She knows she will do well and has been told she will do well within the hotel sector, which is a source of optimism even though she felt the need to investigate other paths.

So I kind of want to experience different loop holes first before I, like, make my decision on "yeah, I want to stay in hospitality industry and yes I want to stay in hotels" because although it's a potential career and I know I'll do well in it and I've been told that I'd do very well in the industry so that's not the issue. It's just my personal happiness - whether I want to stay in the industry or do something totally different. (Fleur: 381-394)

4.5.6 Employability Self Belief

The imagined positive opinions of potential future employers were a common theme. Participants often believed that future employers in the UK would look favourably upon their overseas experience. Although there were several cases where participants mentioned actual job interviews and real positive feedback on their experiences, for most participants concentrating on finishing their final year in university those opinions of employers remain imagined. Whether or not this is realistic is a matter of conjecture. However, it does seem to show that participants are optimistic about what employers will think.

Showing that and individual has gone away and done something different without the support of their friends, family and institutions seems to be something that several participants experienced as a positive experience employers would value. This potential opinion of employers is justified as it demonstrates confidence, independence, resilience and communication skills which participants are optimistic employers will see as valuable characteristics.

I think it would show that I have been able to go away for a year and I have got that confidence in myself… and I have lived in a different community… I think they would see that as positive…they would have to meet me (laughs) coz I am amazing (laughs). (Maggie: 260-264)

I think it is…like I have not applied for that many jobs in hotels yet… that was going to come next… but I think they will see that she has got that… she has met a lot of people working on the front desk… she knows the from office system… she can clearly communicate with a wide range of people and she is confident enough to go and live by herself for a year. (Maggie: 267-273)

For Emily, the experience was a source of competitive advantage over job candidates.

In a non-biased way I think that they [employers] would probably choose me perhaps… just because maybe… I took the chance… I did you know accomplish a year abroad whether it was because I didn't have a choice or not I still stuck it out… it shows a kind of commitment to your career as well. (Emily: 604-607)

Moving away from home in the UK and being away from one's comfort zone was an advantage for Beatrice and Hanna. In the minds of these participants, the experience seems to offer greater opportunities for development than domestic work experience might have and therefore be seen by potential future employers more favourably.

I think the fact that it was America… you were going away from your family and away from what you were used to… and you know it's away from your comfort zone… and it's hard to know what's your comfort zone is until you are out there… I think employers definitely see that as… as a progression…. That you are willing to do something to get into your career. (Beatrice: 411-416)

I think being able to say that I've moved away, gone and worked in another country, shows a lot. I can say that in my job interviews, or I can say, I did move away and I learned a lot. They might think, oh, that shows a lot of responsibility or shows she's quite confident. And, um, like I said, my confidence and my chit chat, it got a lot better. I think I can definitely apply that to other jobs. Like I said, it can apply to everything. So, um, yeah, kind of exploit that. (Joanna: 917-924)

Robert was optimistic that his experience in Dubai would be an advantage in future job interviews.

I'm going basically be straight to the point. Just tell them my experiences. What I've learnt and what I've gained from it. I think my experience abroad would, I'm sure, play as an advantage to me, hopefully. (Robert: 116-122)

In this, Robert demonstrated that not only did he value his experience but that he believed that employers would also value his international work experience and that this would in turm increase his employability within their eyes.

4.6.1 Cross-Cultural Experiences.

The lived experience of international internships within the hotel industry for participants in this study is sometimes discussed in terms of distinctive opportunities for cross-cultural leaning and the perceived benefits of this upon the individual, most notably upon individual participant's sense of self and future potential. The cultural differences experienced are a unique distinction that separates this experience from the experience of internships at home. Brian, like several other British participants who use phrases such as "out there" or "over there" mark a distinct psychological boundary between home and abroad.

The culture that they have out there and the way people behave and they treat each other and the way people were towards you is very different from here. And the people that you meet, because you'd have people coming in from all over the States as well as all over the world to do their internships… we lived with two Filipino guys and then people who came in from Jamaica and Africa and Eastern European countries, as well as the rest of the States, and they all have different opinions and views and having a really mixed group of people really gave you the opportunity to see things differently and learn things differently   (Brian: 385-392)

The sense of participation within an international and cosmopolitan environment is put forward as a positive and enhancing experience; an experience with greater opportunities for learning.   Participants speak of the experience in terms of: gaining cross-cultural communication skills (P2, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P13, P14, P15, P18, P19, P20, P21, P22, P24, P25) gaining international networks; (P1, P3, P5, P6, P9, P18, P22, P23); being part of an international community (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P1, P12, P13, P14, P18, P20, P21); and gaining cultural intelligence (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11, P12, P13, P14, P15, P16, P17, P18, P19, P20, P21, P22, P23).

4.6.2 Cosmopolitan Experience

The internship environment offered opportunities to learn about host cultures. Furthermore the multicultural nature of the hospitality industry as a nexus between international customers and employees offers a cosmopolitan learning environment. An environment that is perceived to have distinct importance in the experience of the participants. An environment that offers the opportunity to mix with other forms of worker mobility and migrant labour within the host nation's hospitality industry. This is evident in various ways

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in the experience of all 25 participants and this is exemplified in the experience of Emily, who working in the United States had the opportunity to learn about the language and culture of other migrant groups.

Working with Mexicans I learned a bit of Spanish, I was helping them improve their English. Interesting to hear about why they came to the U.S. What they were doing there. I heard about their families, about what it was like in Mexico where they lived or about working conditions and living conditions it was just fascinating. A learning experience really. Because I was a bit, not naïve, I hadn't really mixed with people like that before so it was just nice to learn about what is going on. (Emily: 159-168)

For Emily the internship provided a cosmopolitan learning experience that she had not had the chance to experience in her previous work and education in the UK.

It is possible to discern from participants' accounts of their lived experience that international internships within hotels offer a more than bi-national exchange of cross-cultural learning. These workplaces are multicultural communities in which the participant can experience both language and communication diversity. Even when cultural difference was perceived to be relatively small, through either proximity or linguistic similarity, participants valued the opportunities for cross-cultural learning they had experienced as in this example from an English national working in the Republic of Ireland.

You would expect because if the geographical proximity that it would be very similar and certainly on the surface there are lots of similarities. But it is not until you have stayed there for some time that you start to notice the intricacies. I think that's what trips a lot of people up when going abroad. (Alan: 262-267)

Alan had previously discussed the multicultural mix of the hotel's employees' relative isolation on the west coast of Ireland.   This along with nuanced cultural differences meant that Britain and Ireland although geographically, linguistically and culturally close in many respects still offered Alan the opportunity to experience cultural diversity.

For Fleur working in Spain was an opportunity not just to learn about work within the hotel industry and experience Spanish culture but also to begin anew, begin from scratch away from the familiarity of home Fleur felt like a blank canvas. Extending her own metaphor this is a canvas upon which to redraw herself.

Being away from home, being away from the English culture and being away from everything here kind of leaves your mind like a blank canvas I guess. And you have the experience from scratch and learn everything from scratch. (Fleur: 259-263)

Ross recognised that other people may have had successful internships in the UK but for him the sense of achievement of having lived and worked in another culture is comforting and a source of pride.

Maybe other people have that same sense of achievement on a placement in the UK, but for the type of person that I am and things that I respond to, I can tell and I know that moving away and having that experience, living in different cultures, having those stories and having that knowledge that you know that none of your friends have got, it's comforting you know. (Ross: 382-390)

For Ross, this sense of exceptionalism in his experience is empowering and in his mind sets him apart from his contemporaries and experiencing cultural diversity is fundamental to this understanding. Learning about new cultures and learning how to adapt to new cultures and capitalise upon that knowledge in the workplace is also crucial to the understanding of the intenship experience.

4.6.3 Cross-Cultural Competencies

Opportunities to develop better understanding of other cultures and gaining the skills and personal qualities needed to succeed in culturally diverse environments was often a prized part of the experience of participant.

I'm attracted to all these different cultures and seeing different people and I'm really passionate about different cultures and how we all are different, but then still similar. And of course the internship did that, leaving [the UK], experiencing something so radically different than what I knew and still enjoying it so much. (Paula: 448-452)

Like other participants Paula believes that her lived experience developed a capability to relate and work effectively across cultures. This development of cultural intelligence, as exemplified by the following extract from Maggie, is an adaptive quality developed through the acquisition of knowledge and skills gain during the international work experience.

I think it has given me a realisation that about the range of differences, how different people can be... so I can't always just think about myself... I need to think about the people I am going to be working with and sort of adapt myself to the place I am going to work. (Maggie: 224-229)

These capabilities developed through international work experience are perceived as having valued not only during the internship but also on return to work in within the hospitality industry in the UK as this example from the experience of Leina suggests.

For me, being in China, helped me to understand Asian guests. When I'm working in the UK and I have these people coming in, I know exactly what to expect, how to treat them. For example, my colleagues, co-workers who've never been abroad, they kind of don't realize that there's just this cultural gap between the guest and the employee. (Leina: 58-66)

The self-identification of cross-cultural competencies by individual participants is something which is valued as an enhancement gained through their experience and numerous

participants (P2, P3, P4, P9, 10, P11, P12, P13, P15, 16, P17, P18, P19, P19, P20, P22, P23, P24, P35) believed that it would be positively valued by future employers.

What I noticed when I came back and I applied for a job, them seeing that I've done an internship in Shanghai, it's like, "Oh wow." It's definitely improved my CV. (Leina: 581-583)

These beliefs that their international experience set them apart from their peers and that cross-cultural competencies (such as language and communication skills, knowledge of other cultures and cross-cultural adaptability) will be advantageous capabilities in their future careers and, that these enhancements will be valued by future employers mark significant phenomena within the accounts of individual participants' lived experience. The emergence of such phenomena as improved communication skills, developed international networks, belonging to a cosmopolitan community, form central themes in participants' sense making of their international internship experience. These commonly held beliefs were always positioned within the accounts of participants as both positive and empowering. Paradoxically, these themes emerged after accounts of adversity experienced by living and working in a foreign country.

4.7 Summary

This chapter presented the in-depth analysis of the students lived experience of a year overseas working in the hotel sector as part of their undergraduate programme. Four superordinate themes emerged from IPA of participants' transcripts; Adversity, Development; Cross-Cultural Experiences and Career Futures. Some of these are to be expected and even hoped for in students who have worked overseas. For instance, the primary purpose of such internship programmes is to develop professional skills. However in-depth analysis led to the emergence of important sub-themes that were not predicted in previous research and necessitated a reengagement with literature, this time in the area of positive psychology, which had not originally been an area of interest for this research. Similarly, although the international nature of the experience was expected to be an area of importance for participants the way in which students made sense of this experience and the importance they attached to it and to their future careers was not predicted by engagement with previous literature. These areas will be elaborated upon and theorised in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions
5.1 Overview

The research detailed in this thesis applied a phenomenological approach to investigate the experiences of undergraduates in a British university who had undertaken an overseas internship within the hospitality industry. In phenomenological terms this meant examining the "life word" of students regarding a specific experience; in this case their expatriate internship. A further area of interest of this research was to explore how the students experienced the expatriate internship in terms of their own personal and professional lives and in terms of their own sense of their career futures.

This chapter will discuss the implications of the findings analysed in chapter 4 for existing research and literature. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009: 113) noted that *"…it is in the nature of IPA that the interviews and analysis will have taken you into new and unanticipated territory".* This was found to be the case with this research. The themes that emerged across the participant transcripts were often unanticipated and often had not been identified by previous research in the area. Therefore an iterative process of reengagement with the literature outside of the core themes prevalent in scholarly writing on student internships and international work experience was necessary. This chapter is structured around the three main contributions of this thesis namely: a modelling of the development of Positive Psychological Capital through the international internship experience. Secondly, a theorisation of the relationship between international internship experience and the development of cosmopolitan human capital. And, thirdly, an examination will be given of the effect of international internships on the hospitality management students' perception of their own employment futures.

Furthermore, this chapter will discuss how the participants experienced adversity, and the transformational phenomena of personal and professional growth.   These will be discussed as possibly antecedent to the development of the positive psychological constructs of resilience, self-efficacy, hope and optimism, which are in turn integral to Luthans et al. (2007) construct of positive psychological capital. This will be followed by a discussion of cosmopolitan dimensions of the international experience, which despite posing challenges has perceived distinctiveness. This experience presented opportunities for cross-cultural

learning and the development of cultural intelligence, which were highly important to participants. These developments in turn were antecedent to the development of cosmopolitan human capital. Linkages between personal and professional growth, the cross-cultural nature of the experience and development of cultural intelligence will also be made. Similarly adversity and overcoming adversity are also linked to the expatriate nature of the experience. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss how positive psychological capital and cosmopolitan human capital might be linked to the development of participants' belief in their own employability both within and outside the hospitality sector. To begin this discussion a new model of International Internship Experience is proposed (see Figure 9). This model of international internships and particularly development of employability self-belief resulting from enhanced positive psychological capital and cosmopolitan human capital form the theoretical contribution of this research. The Elements of this model will be further discussed in subsequent sections along with discussion of implications for practice and recommendations for further research where relevant. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the limitations of this research and implications for policy and practice in the future.
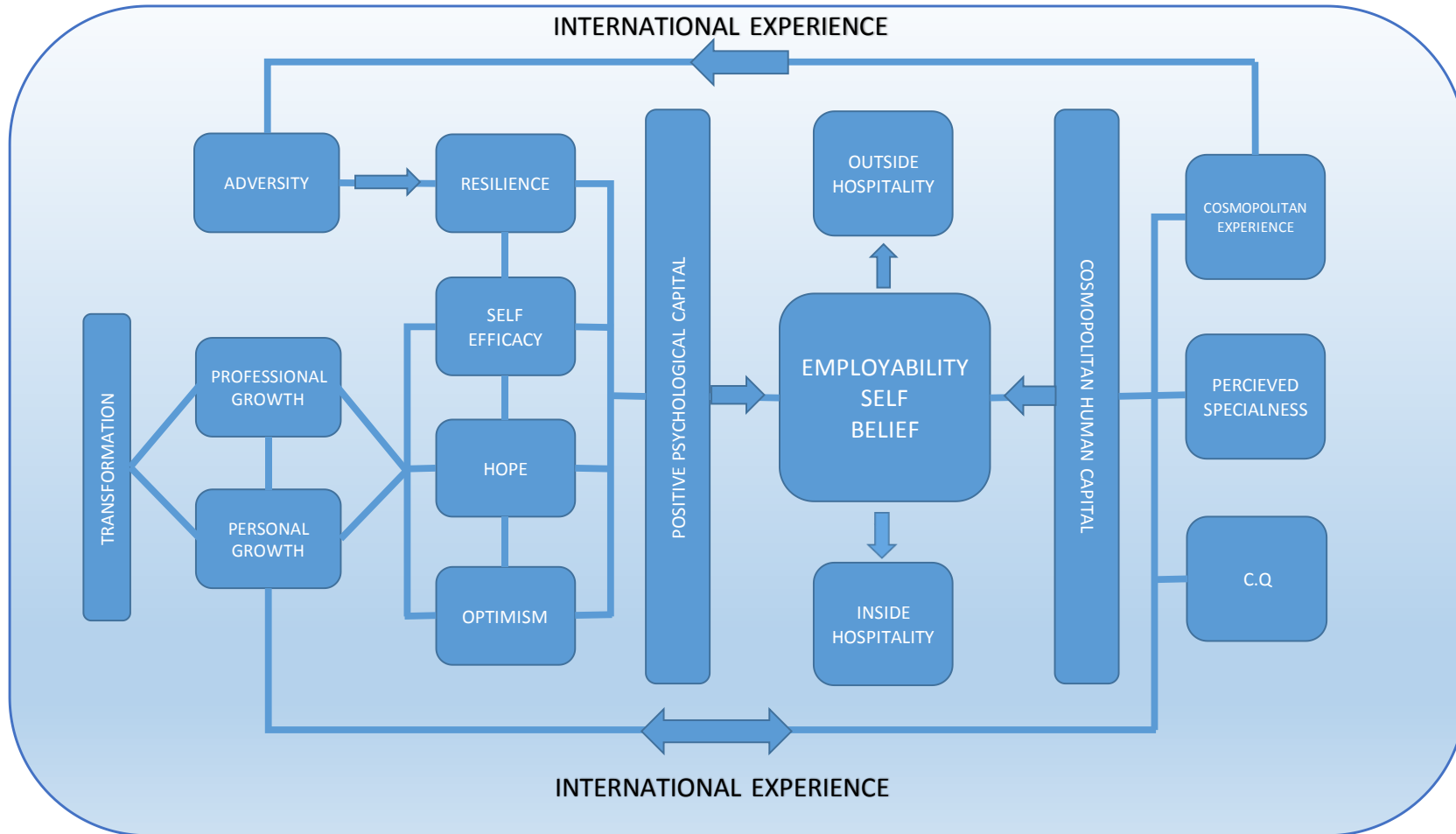
Figure 9. A Model for the Development of Employability Self-Belief Gained Through Undergraduate International Internships

5.1.2 A model of the development of employability self-belief gained through undergraduate international internships

IPA of participants' experiences of undergraduate international internships within the hotel industry has suggested that there is evidence to believe that participants make sense of their experience as something that has positively enhanced their personal and professional lives. This enhancement is made manifest in a variety of ways by individual participants, however a shared perspective among participants is that a belief in personal employability develops through participation in the internship programme. This is self-reflective and suggests participants believe employers, for a variety of reasons, will value their experience. Therefore it is possible to hypothesise that expatriate internship experience allows participants to acquire an enhanced sense of their own employability. This was revealed by both participants who expressed an intention to pursue careers within the hotel industry and those who expressed intentions to develop careers in other areas.

Several subordinate themes emerged through IPA that were congruent with literature in the field of Positive Psychology (Seligman 2002) generally and the construct of Positive Psychological Capital (Luthans et al. 2004) more specifically. This had not been anticipated prior to analysis and came about through an iterative reengagement with literature during the analysis stage. Luthans et al.'s (2004, 2007) model of PsyCap places the positive psychological constructs of resilience; self-efficacy; hope and optimism as antecedent to the development of PsyCap in the individual. IPA of participant experience in this research has suggested that expatriate internship experience is seen as transformative in terms of personal and professional growth which is in turn antecedent to the perceived development of self-efficacy, hope and optimism within participants. It has also been observed that participants' accounts of adversity experienced during the internship were often interconnected with the perceived sense of enhanced resilience which corresponds with literature on positive psychology (Luthans, 2002; Luthans et al 2004; Linley, Seligman 2002; Joseph & Linley 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi 2014).

A second area to emerge through IPA of participants' experience related to themes corresponding to specific expatriate, cross-cultural and international aspects of the experience. This area had been anticipated prior to analysis and indeed had formed the

original area of interest for this research. Participants' accounts indicated that their expatriate experience was regarded as something special that distinguished participants from their peers. The cosmopolitan nature of the expatriate internship with cross-cultural encounters with host country nationals and other international workers within the hospitality industry were sometimes sources of difficulty such as mutual-misunderstanding, culture shock, communication barriers and homesickness. However, it was also positioned as something positive and to be proud of. Participants also expressed positive development in areas closely aligned with the construct of cultural intelligence (Earley 2003). Participants believed they had enhanced language and communication skills, knowledge of other cultures and motivation to work in other countries in the future. Participants articulated the perception that future employers would value this cultural intelligence and cosmopolitan experience thereby enhancing their future employment prospects. This belief in a cosmopolitan human capital (Ng, Tan and Ang, 2011) or cultural-economic capital (Jones, 2011) can be hypothesised as contributing to participants' general sense of future employability, within domestic or international settings and inside or outside of the hotel sector.

Analysis in this research has proposed the development of both positive psychological capital and cosmopolitan human capital within individual participants. Furthermore, it would seem to be the case that these enhancements are congruent with a developing sense of a participant's own employability. This employability may as yet be untested in the employment marketplace but it is nevertheless a positive psychosocial development gained through participation in international internship programmes. This was found to be the case for participants who intended to build management careers within the hotel industry and for those who intended to look for employment in other industries after graduation.

5.2 International Internships in the hotel industry and Positive Psychological Capital

Analysis of the students' experiences revealed themes that were associated strongly with constructs within the literature on positive psychological development (see figure 5). As noted in chapter 2, this had not been anticipated in previous literature on co-operative education, international internships and hospitality management education.

5.2.1 Adversity.

The students' accounts of their personal feelings and experiences of working on an internship programme in a hotel outside of the UK were broadly congruent with some previous studies in the area. As discussed in chapter 2, a key areas of interest within the literature on the subject of undergraduate international co-operative placements or internships, and transnational educational mobility more generally, are the personal and professional benefits such programmes bring to participants (Busby 2002; Callan & Benzig 2004; Busby and Gibson 2004; Ortiz 2004; Andrews & Higson 2008; Knouse & Fotenot 2008; Vance et al. 2011; Hergbert 2011; Jones 2008; Drysdale et al. 2012; Waibel, et al. 2016). However, an important and original theme to emerge in this research were narratives of adversity.

The literature very rarely reflects upon adversity as a feature of overseas internships. Hoof (2000) noted that a positive outcome of international work experience for undergraduates is learning to cope with adversity. However, how the phenomenon of adversity might be experienced has not been explored. Busby and Gibons (2004) observed some of the problems and issues students encounter when moving from university to a more independent environment including lack of support and problems with communication. The phenomenological approach undertaken in this research allowed for a more in-depth insight into adversity, hardships or difficulties experienced by students undertaking a year abroad working in the hotel industry. What emerged from the analysis of participants' lived experience is a much richer discourse on adversity than previously evident.

Some difficulties may be expected in moving to a foreign country for work experience. Though arguably predictable, such adversity is not explored to any great extent within the literature on international co-operative education (Busby 2002; Callan & Benzig 2004; Busby

and Gibson 2004; Ortiz 2004; Andrews & Higson 2008; Knouse & Fontenot 2008; Vance et al. 2011; Hergbert 2011; Jones 2008; Drysdale et al. 2012; Waibel, et al 2016). Therefore this research has served to address a gap in the literature in that the analysis of participants' experiences reveals adversity in the form of homesickness and separation from loved ones, isolation, living and working conditions and financial problems. It was noted in chapter 4 that in the sense making of adversity, the participants often characterised experiences in terms of problems that were successfully surmounted. Discussion of adversity was often seen as underpinning the development of personal or professional characteristics that were viewed as beneficial by participants. As a researcher who is professionally engaged in student mentoring and supervision, the emergence of such narratives of hardship and difficulty was disturbing. However, rather incongruously they were not the core feature of the participants' narratives. Themes of adversity often emerged early on in the interviews. Participants often began by talking about the difficulties of adjustment they had faced. This was often expressed in terms of things to be got through, endured or overcome. Even the most disturbing accounts of relationship breakdown, illness and bereavement were discussed as just a part of the overseas placement experience. As stated before, there is little previous precedent for this in the literature. However, these themes are resonant with ideas within the literature on positive psychology (Luthans, 2002; Luthans et al 2004; Linley, Seligman 2002; Joseph & Linley 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi 2014.) Butler (2010 p1) observed the idea that "…positive changes following adversity is found in literature, religions, and philosophies. Most notable is Nietzsche's famous dictum, "What doesn't kill, me makes me stronger." The experience of strengthening through adversity raises questions for further research, which will be discussed later.

This highlighting of adversity generates an important implication for practice. HEIs have a duty of care for students participating in institutionally organised internships. In view of the narratives of adversity, which emerged through this research, a strong argument needs to be made that HEIs need to invest in adequate preparation guidance/training. Many students initially seemed ill prepared to cope with the difficulties of moving to live and work in another country. Furthermore, the case needs to be made for support and mentoring to address the worst impacts of adversity not only in the workplace and living arrangement of students but also in support of the broader wellbeing of students during their period overseas. There

would of course be a cost implication for HEIs either in maintaining such support and mentoring programmes. However given the duty of care inherent in HEI organised international student mobility programmes and the perceived benefits of such programmes by students, employers and government bodies a strong case needs to be made in favour of investment in such support.

The phenomenon of adversity also has important implications for future research. Previous research is sparse on the issue of adversity during internships (Coll 2009) (See chapter 2). A longitudinal study of positive psychological development through adversity in international Internships is recommended. Future research ought to examine whether adversity in international internships is linked to the development of positive psychological development.

5.2.2 Transformation

The development of personal and professional qualities through the international internship emerged as a core component of the participants' experiences. Some of the growth and development experienced were to be expected and indeed are primary objectives of work experience programmes of this nature. Co-operative education programmes are designed to allow internees to gain industry insights, acquire or enhance skills and explore new roles (Coco, 2000; Gault et al., 2000; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Busby 2002; Weible, 2010). It should therefore be anticipated that participants' accounts are likely to feature these themes and similar findings were presented in chapter 4.

Becoming a "new person" was a powerful theme of development to emerge from the participants' experiences. The designation of this theme was taken directly from several participants' verbatim transcripts. This powerful metaphor of change emerges in many different forms and is often related to growth and development in specific areas such as social confidence and communication skills. These subordinate themes of positive change that were specifically expressed by participants were a direct consequence of their international internships experiences.   The notion that international internship experience is transformative is rare but not unprecedented in the literature on international internships. Toncar and Cudmore (2000) noted that participants had been "changed" by the experience

and that it had had a substantial effect on them as individuals. White et al. (2005) also reported "life changing" accounts of international internship experiences. Findings within this research support these two previous studies. Personal growth and development were significant phenomena revealed in this research and all of the participants positioned this change as transformative and positive. The change was personal and self-reflective. This general positive change was interrelated to other themes of positive psychological development that emerge in more specific areas. This is consistent with Toncar and Cudmore (2000: 59) findings that a similar cohort of students had interpreted their experiences to have a substantial effect on them as individuals.

The findings from this study serve to highlight a research gap in the area of psychosocial development and international internships. The findings suggest that international internships are considered to be transformative in positive psychosocial growth by participants (confidence, communication, self-efficacy, resilience, hope, optimism). (See Figure 9). A longitudinal study of psychosocial development through international internships is therefore needed in future research to further explore the development of this phenomenon overtime.

5.2.3 Professional Growth

As noted previously, a number of the participants placed emphasis on the positive enhancements they gained by the opportunity to work with professionals and learn through the influence of a mentor. This emerged not only as a positive experience in and of itself, but was also integral to other positive developments in their skills and personal qualities. This is in line with one of the primary purposes of any well-organised internship programme (and confirms that well-structured mentorship within work based learning programmes has positive benefits). Findings in this study also suggest support for Smith-Ruig's (2014) supposition that positive relationships with mentors lead to other psychosocial benefits. These enhancements included increased confidence, improved work related knowledge and a stronger career focus. Similarly findings in this study suggest agreement with Feldman, Folks and Turnley's (1999) conclusion that mentoring of international internees had a consistently positive impact on socialisation and on the amount of learning gained through internships.

Findings from this research suggest support for key concepts from the literature on internships. These included an enhanced sense of maturity as predicted in the work of Busby (2002) and Archer & Davison (2008); and that the international internship leads to a sense of personal Independence (Archer & Davison 2008). Also the opportunity to gain levels of responsibility in completing tasks and supervising others within the employing organisation lead to an enhanced sense of achievement and human capital (Busby 2002). According to Littlejohn and Watson (2004), graduates of hospitality and tourism management related degrees see the skills they have accrued as sharing much in common with other sectors.

These findings are in keeping with those of previous studies into the benefits of positive intern/mentor relationships and well-structured and supported internship programmes (LaBonty & Stull 1993; Van Gyn & Ricks 1997; Fifolt & Searby 2010; Smith-Ruig 2014). HEIs need to invest in establishing strong industrial relationships to establish a network of internship providers who are committed to sell structured internship programmes and mentor interns. HEIs also need to provide support before during and after the internships to enhance intern development. Although this might arguably entail further costs for providers the potential benefits in terms of student experience and graduate employment, which in turn have favourable outcomes for HEIs in terms of National Student Survey, the TEF and institutions prestige, make a strong case for further investment.

5.2.4 Positive Psychological Development
Confidence and Self-Efficacy.

Confidence was a significant theme to emerge within the lived experience of the participants in this study. This was positioned in two ways. Primarily, confidence was represented as general psychosocial skills, which developed as part of the year abroad, which extended beyond the domain of work and into other areas of life. Confidence in competencies discussed included such belief in enhanced abilities as communication skills, adapting to new cultures, living independently and forging new connections. Secondly, confidence emerged as work-based self-efficacy, that is to say, an individual participant's belief in their ability to succeed in specific work related situations or to accomplish workplace tasks. These included

such abilities as: managing a bar; managing food and beverage production; front office management; business finance; dealing with customer complaints.

Bandura (1997: 382) defines confidence as a non-descript colloquial term that "…refers to strength of belief but does not necessarily specify what the certainty is about."   For instance participants sometimes discussed being confident in their future career plans without being able to detail the sources of that confidence. As discussed in chapter 4, participants most frequently interpreted their own experience as leading to positive gains in confidence in very general or non-specified ways. This was often interconnected with narratives of growth and personal development linked to the internship experience. The emergence of this theme supports previous studies by Toncar and Cudmore (2000) Busby (2002) Coll et al. (2003); van Dorp, (2008), UUK & CBI (2009), Smith-Ruig (2014).   These studies on co-operative education programmes in which undergraduates participate in an extensive period of workplace experience indicated that a common phenomenon of such experience was the development of confidence within participants. This positive psychological enhancement is a phenomenon, which featured consistently in the transcripts of participants. It was a theme common to 23 out of the 24 participants in this study.

Bandura (1997, p382) differentiates his theoretical construct of self-efficacy from the colloquial use of the term confidence. He defines self-efficacy as: "…belief in one's agentive capabilities that one can produce given levels of attainment." This sense of personal agency, i.e. a self-belief in skills and abilities to perform specific tasks was a theme widely expounded within the evidence from participants' transcripts. Drysdale, et al. (2012) in a study of undergraduate students in the UK, USA, Canada and Sweden found that students who had participated in a period of work based learning had increased and sustained levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy and confidence in their future careers. However, in a later study, Drysdale and McBeath (2014) found no significant differences between cooperative education and their non-participating peers in the development of the psychological constructs of hope and self-efficacy and therefore called for more research to be undertaken in this area. This research has highlighted the development of self-efficacy in several areas, which are specific to work within the hotel industry and some which are transferable to work and social skills more generally thereby suggesting support for Drydale et al. (2012). The

simple phrase "I can.." was recurrent in the transcripts and referred to work-specific and more generally applicable life skills. Moreover this research has suggested that the expatriate nature of the internship experience, which encompasses cultural and geographic distance from home provided an environment, which enhanced self-efficacy in social and communicative tasks. To have completed the overseas internship was expressed as something special and an achievement. Success and specialness were expressed to demonstrate argentic capabilities in going on to achieve success in other areas of career development, academic study and social interaction. Participants percieve they can go on to succeed in other areas of work and social life.

This research supports previous studies by Toncar and Cudmore (2000) Busby (2002) Coll, et al. (2003); van Dorp, (2008) UUK & CBI (2009) Smith-Ruig (2014) that predicated self-efficacy develops through the completion of successful internship programmes. Further research in the area to measure the development of self-efficacy through international internships in the hotel industry taking a longitudinal approach is recommended to further establish this connection

These findings have important implications for practice in a time of declining funding for higher education (Johnes, 2016) and increased demands for employability to be embedded into university learning (Watts 2006). HEIs need to continue to recognise the importance of, and invest in, well-structured work based learning programmes because as this research has shown they can be demonstrated to have promoted the development of social confidence and self-efficacy. These are positive enhancements to individuals in future employment and fit well into the skills agenda. Again this will necessitate debate as to the allocation of resources by HEIs to support such experiences. This needs to be set with the context of extremely low participation rates in such programmes (UUK, 2017), and calls for further internationalisation of UK undergraduate experience (HEA, 2017)

5.2.5 Resilience

Resilience emerged through IPA as a significant theme in the psychological growth of certain individual participants. This research has suggested that overcoming the adversities faced in

moving to a new country, working in a new and demanding job and being separated from customary support networks lead to the development of resilience. Resilience received little attention in the literature on co-operative education until Mate and Ryan (2014). Their work based on narrative analysis of professionals' work experience suggests that introducing the notion of work-related resilience as a positive psychological enhancement to co-operative education students may improve their chances of having successful careers. Brown (2003), Archer and Davison (2008) Coll and Zegwaard (2006) mention resilience as one possible positive outcome of work based learning programmes. Resilience here refers to the phenomenon of overcoming adversity or stress (Rutter 2001). Rutter (2007) suggests that resilience is something people develop by being in adverse situations. Of particular interest to this study, Masten, Best and Garmezy's (1990) definition of resilience is the ability to adapt to a specific cultural context in order to achieve successful outcomes in the face of adverse circumstances. Luthans & Youssef (2007) identify resilience as a positive behavioural trait. Luthans (2002) states that resilience capacities are strengths in changing environmental circumstances.

Original to this research is the suggestion that adversity in forms such as difficult working conditions, difficult living conditions, financial problems, distance from friends and family, isolation and homesickness were things to be "pushed through" or endured. Adapting to stressful situations either directly work related or connected to the expatriate nature of the internship was a characteristic of the internship experience that was not anticipated by previous engagement with literature. Resilience gained through the experience was something that was positively positioned in participants' narratives. Believing in their own strength to endure was interconnected with belief in other argentic capabilities and optimism for the future. Referring to a demanding job with long hours one participant noted *"It was demanding, but in essence when I look back I reckon if I can do that I can pretty much do anything".*

These findings suggest the need for further research in the area of resilience and international internships. Support was found for Brown (2003), Archer and Davison (2008) Coll and Zegwaard's (2006) theory that co-operative education enhances resilience. Moreover these findings suggest support for Mate and Ryan's (2014) theory that work-related resilience can produce a positive psychological enhancement to co-operative education students which may

in turn improve their chances of having successful careers. This research contributes to the literature on international internships for hospitality undergraduates and the development of resilience. However, further questions are raised. The extent to which resilience resided in individuals prior to the internship and to what extent the internship itself facilitated the development of reliance remains a matter for further research.

5.2.6 Hope

An interesting and unanticipated theme to emerge from engagement with participants experience was the construct of hope. Snyder et al. (1996) define hope as constituted of two elements: agency (goal directed energy) and pathways. Here agency refers to an individual's drive to achieve tasks within specific contexts. Pathways refers to the methods an individual can envision to actualise those tasks (Luthans, Norman, Avolio, & Avey, 2008). Individuals who demonstrate high levels of hope or waypower also demonstrate increased goal-directed energy and exhibit enhanced capacities to develop pathways to reach their goals (Luthans, Avey, et al., 2008). In essence, hope involves the will to achieve something and knowing how to achieve something.

Participants who strategized about how to build upon their overseas experience in future career plans exhibited hope. This emerged in accounts of how participants planned to adapt their experience to future work both within and outside of the hotel industry. The experience could be demonstrate specific skills and qualities to future employers and the experience could be used to map out future pathways. The participants who expressed the intension to remain within the hospitality industry demonstrated drive in moving their careers forward and knowledge of how to do so. It is a feature of hospitality internships that student interns frequently have the intention to leave the industry after work experience (Busby & Gibson 2010; Zopiatis, & Theocharous, 2013). This was the case with several participants in this study. It might be expected that such an experience might not lead to the development of hope, however this was not the case. For instance, one participant who did not wish to work in the hotel industry after graduation thought he would use the experience positively to demonstrate transferable customer service and marketing skills in other industries. Participants who expressed an interest in future expatriate mobility also demonstrated hope.

The experience had given them the drive to seek to live abroad again and the knowhow to achieve this gaol.

These findings contribute to the literature on international internships by proposing an association between internship experience and the participants' sense of hope in future employability. However, once again further questions are raised. Further research is needed to explore the extent to which individuals develop the positive psychological construct of hope through the experience of the expatriate internship. A longitudinal study is recommended to measure the possible development of hope before and after the internship period.

5.2.7 Optimism

This research has suggested that participants were confident about the future. This was characterised by their broad expectancy that future career outcomes were likely to be positive. There was evidence to suggest that within several participants' accounts of their experience either through a sense of exceptionalism or a sense of achievement that optimism in individual futures was apparent. According to Scheier, Carver, & Bridges (2001) optimism refers to an individual's expectancy of positive outcomes. Those high in optimism generally build positive expectancies that motivate them to pursue their goals and deal with difficult situations making a positive attribution about succeeding now and in the future (Luthans et al. 2010; Seligman (1998). These individuals seem to make sense of their experience as something that in various ways enables them to go on to create positive outcomes with regards to their future careers. This research has identified through IPA the theme of optimism in the narratives of participants. However, it is not possible to say whether or not optimism was a psychological characteristic of the participant before the internship or whether it developed as a result of the internship experience. That is to say participants expressed optimism particularly in regards to career futures, but crucially this may well have been a pre-existing characteristic and so should not be speculated here. Nevertheless optimism was positioned in participants' accounts of their lived experience in such a way as to suggest in their own sense making about the experience optimism about the future is associated with the experience. Participants seemed to associate positive enhancements gained through the experience with positive outcomes in the future. Optimism had not been

anticipated as an area of interest prior to the research as it was not evident in the literature. This research raises questions as to whether the psychological construct of optimism and international internship experience are interrelated. Further research needs to be undertaken to explore the antecedents of optimism in international internship students.

The findings of this research allow for the proposition to be put forward that successful international internships lead to the development of optimism in their future career development. However, further research is required to measure this development over time. This study contributes to the literature on international internships by proposing an association between internship experience and the participants' sense of optimism in future employability. A longitudinal study is required to establish the extent of the development of optimism before and after the internship period.

5.3 Cosmopolitan Human Capital and International internships Cross-Cultural Experience

Graduates, according to Chalou and Glizzo (2011), will increasingly be required to possess international skills and cultural competency to successfully compete in an increasingly global job market. As discussed in chapter 4, participants in this research revealed the belief that their experience had afforded distinctive opportunities for cross-cultural learning and expressed the perceived benefits thereof. The cultural differences experienced were seen as a unique distinction that separates their experience from that of interns at home. The participants placed significance on gaining cultural intelligence, including enhanced cross-cultural skills and cross-cultural knowledge, living in cosmopolitan communities and experiencing life away from the familiarity and security of home. They thought this would be advantageous in future career development as it would be something valued by employers and make them stand out from the crowd.

Jones (2011) suggested that corporate employers valued students' international work experience resulting in "cultural-economic capital" for participants. Jones (ibid) indicated this is not directed at a definite national, ethnic or cultural knowledge per se but in the view of recruiters, *"…reflects the valuation of a set of skills acquired through the experience of working in a different cultural context overseas"* (2011: 540). Similarly this research suggests

that participants agreed with CIHE (2007: 14) findings that overseas experience *'…makes an applicant well-rounded in terms of skills, experience and personal development'*. Findings in this research suggested that participants' have a similar sense of enhanced employability and cultural-economic capital most notably upon individual participant's sense of self-efficacy and future potential.   The participants also held strong beliefs that future employers would value their international experience. In a few cases, participants had received positive comments in job interviews about their experience, confirming their own perceptions. However, for most of these final year students, employer opinions on their experience remained speculative. This self-belief in increased cross-cultural knowledge and skills and motivation to use and enhance them coupled with perceived employer regard thereof is resonant with Ng, Tan and Ang (2011) notions theory of cultural intelligence and cosmopolitan human capital.

Ortiz (2004: 264) argues that international internships allow interaction with overseas peers and managers allowing in turn the development of "global competency". This research supports the notion that participants believed that they had gained beneficial skills and experience that had a cross-cultural dimension. Immersion within an international and cosmopolitan environment is positioned as, although challenging, a positive and enhancing experience by participants. This emerged as an experience with enhanced opportunities for learning.   Participants valued gaining cross-cultural communication skills; building international networks; being part of a cosmopolitan community and gaining cultural intelligence. These enhancements suggest support for Crossman and Clark's (2011) assertion that international internships are a means by which HEIs and employers can work together to produce graduates with the ability to operate in culturally diverse contexts. The recognition of positive skills enhancement by participants' might also suggest support for Cheney's (2001) assertion that immersive international experience is the best way for students to gain appreciation for the cultural dimensions of business administration

Findings from this research also suggest support for Vance (2005) that international internships form part of a pathway for international self-initiating career path strategies for graduates. Several participants in this study revealed future intentions to work overseas after graduation either in the immediate future or at some unspecified point. This mobility was expressed in terms of opportunities opened through participation in the internship and an

inclination for expatriate experience that had developed through the internship. To some extent this might be expected as participants in this research were all self-initiated in joining the international internship programme and therefore may arguabley have been predisposed to an international self-initiating career pathway. However this is unclear as no pre and post international internship research exists to support or deny this notion.

This research suggests that participants believe that employers will value their international expatriate internship experience. This suggests support for theories pertaining to cross-cultural experience and human capital put forward by Jones (2011) and Ng et al. (2011). Once again this raises further questions. However information as to the impacts of international internships on employment and career development remains limited. On the basis of the research findings, it seems possible to speculate that international internships may lead to the development of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and cosmopolitan human capital (or cultural-economic capital).

5.4 Employability

The perception that future employers would have positive opinions of participants' international internship experience was a common theme. This was an empowering perception and had positive outcomes on decisions to stay within the hospitality industry or to pursue careers in other business areas. Participants often believed that future employers in the UK would look favourably upon their overseas experience. There is some research to suggest that this might be the case (Jones 2011). Although there were several cases where participants mentioned actual job interviews and real positive feedback on their experiences, for most participants concentrating on finishing their final year in University those opinions of employers remain speculative. Research is needed to establish the extent to which employers within the hotel sector value an extended period of overseas internships. Nevertheless, this research contributes to the study of international internships by suggesting that participants are optimistic about potential future employers' options of their experience.

Showing that an individual has gone away and done something different without the support of their friends, family and institutions seems to be something that several participants experienced as a positive experience employers would value. This potential opinion of employers may be justified as it possibly demonstrates confidence, independence, resilience

and communication skills so that participants are optimistic that employers will see as valuable characteristics. Fugate et al.'s (2004 p 3) conceptualisation of employability is put forward as a form of *"…work specific active adaptability that enables workers to identify and realize career opportunities"*. There is some evidence to suggest within this research that participants' social and work related self-efficacy developed through the internship experience and the psychological contsructs of hope and optimism identified as possibly arising through the internship experience helped participants identify and realise career opportunities. To this end, findings from this study support previous research by Andrews and Higson (2008) in that the participants had a raised sense of their own employability. However although claims have been made about corporate employers placing value upon undergraduate's international experience, Stanton-Reynolds et al. (2009) indicated that cross-cultural competencies per se were not high up on employers' agendas.

This research suggests that participants have an increased sense of employability not only because of the job related skills that they had acquired but through a belief in other social and psychological enhancements that participants perceive themselves to have acquired. As we have seen, these enhancements centre on the construct of positive psychological capital (Luthans et al 2007). The international nature of the internship with its opportunities to experience more than the normal hospitality management training curriculum was also highly valued by participants. There was a perception of specialness or distinction in their experience. Participants' perceived a personal advantage in acquiring cultural intelligence and experiencing life in cosmopolitan communities. These enhancements can be argued to centre around the similar constructs of Cosmopolitan Human Capital (Ng, Tan and Ang, 2011) and Cultural-Economic Capital (Jones, 2011).

These findings lead to the speculation that international internship experience is associated with the development of Employability Self-belief**.** This has Implications for future research. Students developed a sense of their own employability through the international internship**.** However, research into employers both inside and outside the hotel sector as to the merits of an extended period of expatriate internship is not extant. Furthermore, research into the comparative employment outcomes of international versus domestic internship students is not apparent. Therefore, the need for research into employer opinions of international internships and employment destinations of interns is highlighted by this research.

HEIs and career mentors need to capitalise upon interns' enhanced sense of employability and encourage interns to strategise how best to put forward internship experience in career decision making. Furthermore, HEIs might well be advised to collate data on international internships and student employment destinations to substantiate claims that they are participating in the current UK HE agendas of Employability and Internationalisation.

5.5 Contributions to Theory.

Contribution to the development of theory in the area of international internships is threefold. Firstly, this research has posited that the distinctive environment offered by international internships for hospitality management students in destinations far from their country of origin and institutional support present conditions that provide for transformative personal and professional growth which is antecedent to the development of positive psychological capital. Secondly, that the cross-cultural and cosmopolitan environment of these international internships also presents conditions which foster the development of cultural intelligence and a sense of cosmopolitan human capital within participants. Finally, this research has positioned that these two heightened senses of positive psychological capital and cosmopolitan human capital within the individual are associated with a sense of the enhanced employability. This sense of employability extends beyond the hospitality industry as individuals believe employers in other sectors will also value the experience.

5.6 Contribution to Practice

This research has contributed to practice within tertiary education work experience provision and mentoring in two key ways. Firstly, the findings of this study contribute to policy at national and institutional levels. This research adds support to a mounting body of literature on two contemporary national and transnational policy agendas: employability and the internationalisation of the higher education curriculum. Findings within this research provide support for the importance of both university organised experiential learning and work experience programmes and initiatives to provide undergraduates with international experience. However, actual participation rates in the UK are very low. The importance students place on these experiences and the positive psychosocial enhancements that they

can provide should be used to further support and expand international work experience programmes within higher education. Secondly, this research demonstrates the need for investment in international internships. The issues of adversity which emerged during this research focus attention on the necessity for HEIs to provide preparation and assistance throughout the internship programme and ensure that support mechanisms beyond work mentoring and tutorial relationships, extending where necessary, to student welfare and counselling. As these programmes have the potential to offer significant gains for participants, HEIs need to invest in building strong and long lasting relationships with employers in overseas destinations to provide this much valued cross-cultural work experience.

5.7 Limitations

There are several possible limitations of this research. Firstly, the methodology applied here (IPA) has not previously been used in co-operative education research. There are precedents of phenomenological work in the area (Groenewald 2003; Cullen 2010). However phenomenological examination of internship lived experience is rare in qualitative research on internships (Coll and Kalins 2009). Furthermore, examples of qualitative approaches specifically in hospitality internship research are scarce. IPA findings are ideographic and therefore do not support the generalisation of findings to a wider population. In IPA research sample size is small (although in the case of this research 25 is a large number of interviews by IPA standards) and sampling logic applied in other qualitative approaches is not appropriate. Additionally as IPA's primary goal is to focus on the "life world" of individual participants, triangulation is not only problematic but may be considered redundant. When experiences emerged that were comparable to the experiences of other interviewees, these were noted and incorporated into the analysis. However, establishing the facts of students' accounts of their experience is not the primary focus of this research, but rather understanding the meaning of the experience from their perspective. This is the hermeneutical facet of IPA; it rests upon the interpretation of meaning. The narratives that emerge from each interview are not only rich and deep but are rooted in an approach that

aims to minimise preconceptions, and as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, lead to unexpected territory.

Another possible objection that may be raised is the reliance on memory. As interviews took place with final year undergraduate students six months to one year after the end of their internship the reliability of memory may be questioned. As discussed in chapter 2, much past research into students' attitudes to internship experience relies on post experience surveys carried out close to the end of their internship. Few researchers have attempted to explore the interpretation of the experience over time. Indeed, it was noted in analysis that negative events were often given a positive spin. Interviewees may recall events incorrectly, or recount them selectively to create a narrative that puts forward a more positive account. Methodologically the recollections themselves whatever their veracity are the focus of IPA. The "lived experience" of the interviewee includes how they might incorrectly recall or retell past experiences. Also how they interpret those past experiences in their current life world is an area of interest to IPA.

Another possible limitation is the recruitment methods used in this study. All the interviewees came from the same school within the same British university. Homogeneity of experience is a key selection criterion for IPA research, therefore although from varying demographic backgrounds, the participants all experienced similar structures of support and mentoring provided by the same university and were studying and working in similar contexts. Participants were self-selecting which raises the possibility that students who felt less engaged with the internship experience were hidden from this sample. As noted in the findings, interviewees' rich narratives often raised unsettling accounts of adversity not often associated with internships in previous research. As discussed previously these accounts though meaningful to the interviewees were often accepted as part of the expatriate internship experience and sometimes seen as sources of strength, which place the interviewee in a positive position. It is possible that students for whom the experience was negative did not come forward.

Another possible limitation is the inexperience of the researcher as a doctoral candidate. Although this researcher has extensive professional experience of working with students and personal experience of expatriate life and work the skill of the interviewer is integral to the success of such research (Smith, Flowers et al. 2009). To mitigate against such inexperience

all appropriate doctoral training courses were attended within the graduate school of the University of Birmingham and IPA workshops held at other institutions were attended. Work in progress and final findings were presented at various West Midlands Doctoral Colloquiums, CHMI Research Conferences and an internal staff teaching and learning conference to gain advice and feedback on the methodological approach and quality of work. Finally, Yardley's (2008) framework for the limitations of qualitative research discussed in chapter 3 were applied to this research, namely:

1. Sensitivity to context: IPA was chosen to address the potential sensitivities surrounding students' experience of life and work in a foreign country and to enable them to explore freely their employment and educational experience provided by the university. The open extended interview process allowed the exploration of individual experience. Sensitivity to the educational relationship between interviewer and interviewee was addressed through a reflexive approach to research design.

2. Commitment and Rigour: IPA offers a clear framework and guidance on collecting and analysing information (Smith and Osbourn 2008, Smith, Flowers et al. 2009). IPA introductory and advanced training workshops were attended. This research has followed such guidance and documented the process in detail.

3. Transparency and Coherence: Original audio recordings; Transcripts; tabulated stages of thematic analysis are available on request within the parameters of university regulations to other academics wishing to evaluate how the methodology was applied

4. Impact and Importance: Policy initiatives to encourage work experience and international skills development are given increasing importance at institutional and sector level (UUK 2017). The impact of this thesis lies within (1) the in-depth insights into the lived world of students with expatriate internship experience (2) a focus on a particular vocational sector (hotel management) (3) a focus on employability and university supported work experience (4) implications for practice within the host HEI and industrial partners.

5.8 Implications for Future Research, Practitioners and Policy

It is the intention of this study to contribute to knowledge regarding the impact of international internships supported by British universities within the hotel sector. This thesis

has documented and analysed how students reacted to and made sense of their experience working overseas with particular reference to their own personal and professional development and to their career futures.

Possible areas for further research based upon the findings of this research have been highlighted throughout this chapter. They centre upon the need for further research in three areas:

1) Longitudinal or cross sectional studies of expatriate internship students aimed at measuring the development of positive psychological capital and cosmopolitan human capital over time.
2) Comparative cohort studies with students who (i) do not participate in internships (ii) students who undertake an internship within their home country to evaluate the difference in experience of the these students and students who participate in international internships.
3) Investigation into actual employment outcomes over time.

This research has contributed an added sense of the importance of international internships in the educational experience of students. The students made sense of the experience in terms of both personal and professional benefits which they believed impacted positively on their studies and upon their future employability. Students also reflected upon adversity and resilience, a sense of achievement and specialness resulting from the international internship. The implications for academic tutors and internship mentors are threefold. Firstly, students valued direct contact with tutors and mentors and that direct contact needs to be maintained. Secondly, an awareness of the many unanticipated forms of adversity faced by students is needed in order to prepare future students for international internships and to provide support for students while abroad. A variety of support strategies to compliment current support needs to be explored including extending access to such facilities as counselling and emergency financial support offered to students who remain at university in the UK. Thirdly, the personal and professional growth, sometimes referred to as *life changing* by students needs to be something HEIs more generally and academic tutors and mentors specifically need to be aware of. Positive psychological development has been seen to be an asset in other areas of organisational life (Luthans, 2004). The potential for international internships to provide positive psychological development needs to be considered in the promotion,

recruitment and selection processes. Furthermore, academic tutors and career advisors should be prepared to facilitate students to capitalise upon enhancements in positive psychological capital and cultural intelligence gained through periods of overseas work experience as they plan their future careers and apply for jobs.

Policymakers here includes politicians, think tanks, quality control agencies and civil servants who direct public finding and policy in the areas of education and skills development and university practitioners. QAA Benchmarks for Business and Management (2007) call for integration of theory and practice by a variety of means including industrial placements. Yet such provision may be seen as costly in times of tightening financial constraints brought about by cuts to Higher education funding (UUK, 2013), falling student numbers (Heacademy.ac.uk, 2017) and the impact of Brexit as it unfolds (UK Parliament, 2017). At the same, time there have been calls to prepare graduates for global job markets (HEA 2017) yet actual numbers of business and management students participating in international internships are very small (UUK, 2016). These calls have been made in a time of unprecedented austerity and retrenchment in government investment in higher education (UUK, 2017). Furthermore the uncertain outcome of Brexit negotiations may see a possible UK withdrawal from certain international work and study experience programmes such as Erasmus which currently provides the majority of business students' overseas experience (THE, 2017). The financial and political threats to such international work experience programmes seem juxtaposed to the Prime Minister's calls for *"A truly global Britain"* (BBC News, 2017; The Guardian 2017). Establishing and maintaining links with international internship providers is costly and could potentially be seen as a strain on already pressed resources. Similarly, mentoring and support of students engaged in such programmes is an additional cost for HEIs in a time of financial uncertainty. The insights contributed by this thesis into the positive psychological development, increased cross-cultural skills and more positive outlook on future employment expressed by students should be used to add to the argument that current provision of such programmes should not only be maintained but further developed to prepare graduates for future careers in which international skills and experience will remain important.

Information Sheet.

Title of Research Project: The Lived Experience of International Work Placements in the Hospitality Industry.

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Sponsor: University of Birmingham

Qualification: Doctorate of Business Administration

Thank you for your interest in this research study. Before you decide whether you want to take part you need to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this project is to explore the experiences of international work placements within the hospitality industry. Students at a British university who are in their final year and have complete an internship or work placement outside of their home country will be interviewed to investigate their experiences of internship outside of the UK.

Why have I been invited?

People invited into this study can be female or male, UK, EU or Non-EU citizens who are currently in the final year of their undergraduate degree or in the final semester of a taught master's degree. We are asking for volunteers to be interviewed who have completed an internship or work placement as part of their programme of study to participate in this project. You have been invited because it is believed you match these requirements.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part if you do not wish to. This information sheet describes the study and what you will be asked to do to allow you to make an informed choice. At the end you will be asked to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part. You will only be sent the questionnaire if you return the consent form. Even if you have completed the consent form you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. Whether or not you provide your consent for participation in this research study will have no effect on your current or future relationship with your own or any other university..

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part you will be asked at the end of this form to return your consent form. As soon as your consent form is received I will contact you again to arrange a convenient time for a face to face interview. The interview will be private but will take place on your own university campus. If you consent an electronic recording of the interview will be made. The recording will be used to make a transcript of your interview. This transcript will be used in the analysis of data for the research project.

What will I be asked during the interview?

The questions you will be asked will be about your experiences during your internship or work placement. You will be asked about how you experienced the internship or placement both professionally and personally. You will also be asked about your career plans after university.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Some of the questions may touch on personal issues to you. If you find that any of the questions cause you to feel uncomfortable or distressed you are free to stop answering at any time. If you feel you want to discuss anything with the researcher before or after the interview please use the contact details above. If for may reason you feel that issues arising from the interview

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

You will receive no direct benefit from taking part. Your participation may, however, provide information about international work experience programmes for hospitality management graduates to help the planning and development of such programmes in the future. Through your participation you may also be able to reflect upon your own career goals and employment future.

What happens after the interview?

After the interview has been transcribed and analysed I will contact you again to ask you if you agree with my interpretation of the interview. If you like a copy of the transcript will be made available for you. If you would like access to a copy of the final draft of my research project please ask.

Will I be identified in the study?

Every effort will be taken to protect the names of the participants in this study. Also the names and locations of work placement or internship providers will be protected in order to ensure the anonymity of participants. Your identity will not be recorded as part of your data, and will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this study. All information you provide will be kept confidential, except as governed by law.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

The information collected in this study will be used only for the purpose described in this form, and will be available only to the Researcher listed on this Information Sheet and other personnel involved in this study at the University of Birmingham. All records related to your involvement in this research study will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. Data gathered from this study will be maintained as long as required by regulations, which is up to 5 years following the publication of articles or communications describing the results of the study.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If for any reason after the interview you feel that you would like to withdraw from the study you may do so at any time before the anticipated completion date of 1st September 2015. Should you choose to withdraw, you can also request that any data collected from your participation be withdrawn from the study. If you request this, any data collected from you will be located and destroyed. You may make this request at any time prior to the submission of the data for publication.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

It is hoped that the data from this study will be used in a doctoral thesis. It is also hoped that a published research paper or a conference presentation may result, though this is not assured.

Further information and contact details.

If you would like any further information, please contact the researcher:

Greg Gannon

Doctoral Researcher

Birmingham Business School

University of Birmingham

Email:

1.   I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2.   I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

3.   I understand that data collected during the study, may be looked at by individuals from the University of Birmingham and from regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data.

4.   I understand I can contact the researcher at any time if I need further information.

5.   I agree to answers I provide during the course of this study being used for publication

6.   I agree to take part in the above study.

7.   I agree to all of the above.

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

. . . .

If you are still happy to take part in the study, please print, complete and return this consent form to:-

Greg Gannon

Doctoral Researcher

Birmingham Business School

University of Birmingham

Email:

1.	Tell me a bit about yourself.
2.	Tell me about your internship.
3.	How was your internship?
4.	How did you find living and working abroad?
5.	How did you find the experience of working in other cultures?
6.	How do you perceive your internship now that it is over?
7.	How you perceive yourself after the internship?
8.	How do you perceive your future career after the internship?
9.	How do you use your internship experience in developing your future career?"
10.	Are there any other issues that are interesting or important to you

Interviewer: So tell me a bit about yourself?

Ross: So, I'm 21. Lived in ▮▮▮▮▮▮ all my life apart from the year I spent in America, which is one of the main reasons why I actually took the course at ▮▮ because someone I worked with in my very first job, which is listening hospitality they were just about to leave for America and that, you know, really interested me.

So, I started speaking to them, oh how to get into that, how are you doing that. And they said they do hospitality at ▮▮▮▮▮ and part of the course is that you have to work fulltime for a year, and if you have the availability to do so then half of their students were going to abroad to America, and that right there basically is the reason I chose to do hospitality at a university.

Interviewer: Because you heard about someone else going on the internship program?

Ross:

Interviewer: So, you're working hospitality being had no big desire to this part time job working as a food runner in a pub from Austin's.

And it was just sort of some things to make a bit of money, you know, while I was at college. Then, all of a sudden seeing someone else go to America and they were leaving for America that actually dictated my career path to make a career of it?

Interviewer: So before that you had no idea to make a career out of it?

Ross: No, at that point I had no idea whatsoever, I mean, literally no idea where I was going. Now, I look back on it, it was frightening and such lack of direction of where I wanted to go. I mean, I wasn't too rude because at that point I was just sticking to all my strums and taking the subjects I was always best up and just taking each year of my life as it came. But, beyond when I finished college I really had no idea what I was doing.

Interviewer: How did it sound to you that, that the friend of yours that was going on … they're going to go to America you said?

Ross: Yeah, they … they were going to America as well and I didn't even find out all lot ahead. All they said was it's part of my university studies. I'm going to work fulltime in America for a year. And that piece of information alone was like, "Wow, I want to do that." So, then I started talking to a few people about the type of subjects he was doing; hospitality business management and what it would be useful for and etcetera.

And then people started telling me about that subject. So, I started saying, "Um, I could actually … I could get into that a bit." Like I already worked in hospitality as such, you know, at a really basic level. I could see myself and into that type of subjects. And so that's how it came about.

Interviewer: So, tell me about your actually placement or internship?

Ross: So, the placement and it was the first call back I got because we were supposed to pick a few options, and the one that I went ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, and as soon as they called me back it was the first call I received. I accepted without hearing any other offers.

And, I was confident in that decision. I didn't take that lightly. Um …

Interviewer: Why were you so confident about that particular one?

Ross: Because of two reasons. Um, one reason is the lifestyle that I was being put into. When it was described to me, you know, it was like it was a small island that you work in and it's surrounded by a beach, there's … at this point, you know, one of the nicest place is for people, um, and just when it was described to me the environment that I was living in, that was significant for me, because any hospitality condition I could or adapted to, you know, different styles of service, anything like that. the thing that would make a useful year for me, I believe in settling in and being myself would be the life, sort of the life I live and being in somewhere where it's just surrounded by island and beaches, I could … that was something that really attracted to me whereas moving abroad and going into one of the city, it wasn't as appealing.

And then, not only that, you know, I've done research into the organizations that they actually were not just the locations. And, Westin seem like a great company to be part of. It's part of Starwood, one of the largest companies in the world. So, those two together are the reason why I chose to go there.

And then the year itself, it probably the best year of my life today and it will be difficult to beat immediately. Um, and it's for lots and lots of reasons both to do with work and not to do with work, and I think that's the beauty of going abroad and experiencing something like that.

And the work inside of it, they were a company that really did facilitate any learning that you wanted to do, and that was both students such as myself going abroad for the purpose of learning and also they have the [inaudible 00:06:36], anyone, any member of stuff, you know, housekeeper, you know, away from anything like that. if you want to learn and develop yourself, they really aided that.

And so, it's was a great company to be with them for that. I think I've shadowed every department in the building, which was made a lot easier to be fair in the fact that I didn't do it immediately when I first went there, I got thrown in the deep end as such.

And, there was two F&B students myself and another ▆▆▆ called ▆▆, and it was kind like of, I don't know, it was a flip of the coin or anything like that of where we would be going, but one of us would be going to host in one of the restaurants which was subsequently be the most boring job on sight. And one of us would be going to room service that would be potentially … now I look back on it and you know, I mentioned this to the managers there. I said that position is the most accessible for learning and development for someone in my position, because for the room service you have to interact with every department especially the way they do room service is about you're interacting with every department.

You also got effectively a licence to do what you want and use positively, you know, the benefit friendliness. For example, if there was an order to come through, room service doesn't take the order, it's called through by … it's called service express and that's where every call in the hotel is directed to. And they would take the order. So, it's not like you'd have to be stuck into the room service room. I was able to get out, you know, go around the hotel, walking, I'm just speaking to people.

And they love that, the managers did you know, because you could find out about people's days, any problems, you know, let me help you know, maybe we can do something that can as a matter of time I find a problem and fix it just as a result of being out there not just being stuck in this office.

It was really great and then go and help out in all the departments as well. So, I got my radio with me and as soon as an order comes in it take 20 minutes before the food's cooked anyway. So, wherever I was I could finish what I was doing and go back and so it was just … I was able to go out and learn as such.

And, I was also the only person in room service and it was in a time of year where they started getting busy than they anticipate for their labour scheduling. So, it's kind of like me, myself and I running room service. And it was getting a bit of recognition there was a lot of people send off … it's getting stuck in, is doing well and that a stepping stone to if I ever wanted to go and shadow someone it will be like, "Yay." He puts his fair share of effort, you know, my … come in. And that was … that would be key to that. So, you really are over working wise, it was a really successful year.

Interviewer: You talked about the opportunities of going to ████████ and you said that's the best of going abroad. Could you explain that a bit more?

Ross: That's more in towards the life experience side of it. For, as I said for myself someone who's lived in ██████ all my life, studying in ██████ and at university in ██████, that wasn't necessarily for choice of wanting to be at home. In fact, it was nothing to do with that. it was basically to do with that … that's where the best options always were especially for the university.

I think ████████ is as good as any of the hospitality university is proving to be so. And then also it was offering this course to go abroad and so I thought yeah why not.

So, then to move abroad is the exciting part for me. It was made easier. Now, I look back on it by the fact that I wasn't the only one there.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ross: There was another four people from our university at the same hotel and then there was probably close to 12 or 13 on the island from the university and from the same course. So, there was more familiar faces from time-to-time. It was nice but I think in the environment that I went to I could have coped with just knowing one person on our people.

It was just a really nice place to live, you know, it's a type of place where you're going into the supermarket and every person you walk past, looks at you and smiles and waves. And it's … you know, first I was thinking did I know … I'm looking there and you know, trying to figure out if I know her from somewhere. And then after a while I realize I was … it's a nice place to live. And anyone says hello to anyone. And for anyone … anyone to go and live in that type of place, I think they'll sure will not enjoy it.

Interviewer: How do you find being away, being abroad?

Ross: I personally love it. and I know for a fact this isn't a place for everyone because for the other four people that were … was at my hotel at the same time, at some point during the year, some of them earlier on, some of the later on during the year people are homesick and I think all four of them at some point saw a member of their family. But for that was them flying away or the family member couldn't to them.

I didn't see any of my friends or family all year. I didn't feel the requirement to … because of how, you know, how comfortable all of us in the environment.

And, so I think it's a lot to do with personalities in wherever you'll be. Which side which you'll be and wherever you will be homesick. The reason why I think I knew from the day one I wasn't never going to be homesick, because this what tied to all of them. So, the second you leave it's going to be like a holiday you're going to miss it. As soon as you get on that plane, you're going to be like, "Oh, I miss it already."

And then in mind I'm thinking forward to when that day comes, surely that highlight is significant you just have to think I shouldn't waste time being homesick. I'm going to be home and I'm going to have many of years at not worrying about being homesick when I do get home. So, to have that philosophy and

know the second you leave you're going to miss it, that's when you're going to take … make the most of every second you're there.

Interviewer: How did you find … you were telling them before, how did you find working in America?

Ross: At first, just … pertains to the slight differences in personalities and what people expect. And, not only that, you know, I'd worked in Marston's beforehand, and then I'd left to go work in a … like a four star luxury hotel. Of course the expectations of the guests are going to be a bit different. But, once … you know, a couple of weeks have passed by and I'd adapted and sort of had a stronger idea of expectations of the company, expectations of the guests as such.

It was a lot easier working in America then it was in England and that's basically because of the accents, because of the novelty of …

Interviewer: Because of your accent?

Ross: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ross: And it was a novelty for the guests. Anytime a guest would come in and they would be like, "Oh My God. Where are you from?" Like … and I thought I'd get bored of telling the story or just speaking to someone about that, but I find when you speak to any guests about that the rest of the interactions that you have with them then are actually made a lot easier if there was ever a problem. And I would go over and say is everything okay, and then if that was a first one I'd had any interaction with them, they'll be like, yeah, everything is fine, and they'll you, where are you from. And like, so the problem wasn't there because there was another … they've got this interesting trying to find out what's the deal [inaudible 00:16:19] here.

And so that novelty made both working life and social life a lot easier. If you ever needed anything from a stranger, Oh could you help me please. And they're Oh yeah of course. So …

Interviewer: How about the American … the cultural difference of living and working in America. Did you experience any differences?

Ross: Um, differences. When you say culture, there's a few different ways in which that could be interpreted and not just for nationality. The islands that I lived on was nicknamed in America, the rich man's paradise. And to go from living in ▮▮▮▮▮▮, you know, in a city type place and the cultures that would come within in a city area to a place where money isn't really an issue and you know, the sun shines every day and anyone can go to the beach any second. They're like everything was a lot more relaxed and happy in that environment.

And so any cultural differences weren't a problem so, they were just differences. And I think I love the traits I adapted to a bit, you know, I would do certain things like I wouldn't leave the [inaudible 00:18:01] like a loose T-shirt and a loose shirt, shorts and flip flops. And I wouldn't have evolved in that before living in England but that their dress code and I think by the end of it I've probably got back any different outfits so I could dress exactly like an American, wouldn't I?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ross: Um, trying to think if any of it cultural.

Interviewer: Did you learn anything about yourself as British or English whilst you're out there?

Ross: Um, yeah. There is … there's a lot of things and actually I appreciate being British for, ah, as I probably I was in … for example, things like medicine and …

Interviewer: Healthcare.

Ross: Healthcare over there. and how risky they are as well with … we've had jokes and medicines because you're forever hearing about, Oh, they're recalled a drawback if you've experienced any side effects or deaf or anything like that. That would actually be an advert break on TV. We've had some … a commercial saying if anyone you know has died of this drug, you can be entitled to compensation so you just wouldn't get that in England, like it wouldn't get to that stage. So it's a lot riskier.

Interviewer: … that's makes social difference, is it?

Ross: Yeah. And it just seems to be accepted as such. If something like happened over here, there'll be a national accident and saying like why is this happened. It's just accepted over there.

So, social side to it is, you know, these are difference. Um, I don't think stereotypes are necessarily true because being British there would be certain members of the team that work over there that would display their own types. I mean, you know, like you want to go and get some fish and chips. And over there I'm just like, I don't eat that too often actually.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Ross: And, yes words like mate, mate … they were talking something like that. I said, that's too often to worry about, you know, and so you might rethink all the people's stereotypes and perceptions it doesn't apply and nothing that's after learning about culture in university I realize that although there are a certain number of traits that you could apply to certain cultures where we do that for nationality or something like that.

There's so much diversity in a culture of a small town in England like it's impossible to really successfully use stereotypes in the last situations like that, because … it wouldn't apply to most people.

Interviewer: Yeah, so by having … stereotypes apply to you, you realize …

Ross: Yes, I thought if and I ever go abroad and I had stereotypes for certain people, because of maybe nationality or something like that I would now see that it's probably the case it doesn't apply to most people over there.

Interviewer: You've been back for more than 12 months?

Ross: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's given a period of kind of a cooling off period.

Ross: Mm Hmm (Affirmative).

Interviewer: Yeah. Looking back on a year in ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, how do you perceive it now, now that you're back you're home. Now that's it's over for a year. How do you look back on it, what do you think about it?

Ross: I think a little back and … obviously what I see is happiness and all I see is progression, because it was one of the most progressive times in my career. For a lot of reasons I think hospitality is what you know and who you are, and it developed both for those things for me.

It's certainly changed me as person for the better, you know, the life experience I achieved, you know, and gained over there. um, and then on top of that as well, I do believe that ▮▮▮▮ is probably one of the one of the best hospitality companies in the world for its training, for its empowerment of staff, for you to do well and for your learning. And that's about as you go into any other companies but …

Ross: So, year for the actual learning that company offers as well. I think is really, really useful to someone that wants to go in and learn. For example, throughout that year I could have probably earned twice

as much money I did in there, but my preference for the year was learning and as they were happy to facilitate I worked the most amount of positions of over 400 staff in the summer while I was there.

Interviewer: You could have earned more by …?

Ross: By sticking to a single position, the higher paying position like a server or something like that, but I chose I said, no I want to learn this, I want to learn everything in certain area, I want to go across to a different area and learn everything there and work all the positions there.

So, year for the actual learning that company offers as well. I think is really, really useful to someone that wants to go in and learn. For example, throughout that year I could have probably earned twice as much money I did in there, but my preference for the year was learning and as they were happy to facilitate I worked the most amount of positions of over 400 staff in the summer while I was there.

Interviewer: You've spoken very positively about the year. Um, how do you see yourself since the internship personally as an individual?

Ross: I think I've matured a lot and I wasn't immature before, and it surprised me how much learning and maturing and progressing I still had in me at that point. Um, moving away it gave me a different way of thinking in the fact that if I was ever, you know, back at home and I had worries or stresses or anything, kind of thought like there was no way out it was like, you know, you got a problem and it's not to say like, oh yeah you could easily run away as a … but it's just saying that if you're ever find traps in some way you're living and you hit a dead end and there's no progression anything like that.

There's a whole different world out there that you can go and experiencing and live your life and that sort of knowledge to me… it made me a lot more relaxed as a person. I worry a lot less about certain things because I know there are opportunities like that out there.

Interviewer: Do you think you could have got that extra maturity… that sense that you're not worrying about problems at work so much if you had done internship in the UK?

Ross: No. not at all. Um, well, you could have at some point, you know, up to a certain degree. And maybe other as I said other personalities than me have been able to achieve that same sense of achievement on a placement in the UK, but for the type of person that I am and things that I respond to, I can tell and I know that moving away and having that experience, living in different cultures, having those stories and having that knowledge except that you know that none of your friends have got as such, it's just, you know, it's comforting you know.

And I think the … to experience a lot of things that … all the people having experience, you know, and thrown in a country that no one else has been that was a big part of maturity and it just wouldn't have been possible over here, because if I'd lived in England as well I can guarantee that I'd have seen members of my friends and family multiple times throughout the year whereas moving away for the year and not seeing them, it made me realize my strengths that I could do something like that and not have a requirement to have to go back and see my friends and family.

It would have been different if it wasn't a year's placement and it was like a continuous placement, you know, because I wouldn't have had that end date where I was going back. And I think that end day really drove me throughout the year because I'm looking at the clock and the calendar and it's like, Oh three months have gone by and have I done anything at work, you know, and that sort of progression that I wanted to do in the year.

Have I experienced life experiences over there, have gone visit the places, I wanted to do anything like that, because if I was in the UK I would be less likely to change myself to meet those times because it's in the UK and you can go and do that anyway. But, living abroad you're more restricted to the clock and once that time comes that time's been and gone.

Interviewer: It sounds to me like you wanted to maximize the experience.

Ross: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, get the most out of it. And just to check, you seem to be saying that because it's an unusual experience the opportunity to work oversees. That helped you feel … you said, you gained maturity to that because you're were doing things that you're contemporaries didn't have the opportunity to …

Ross: Yeah, it felt like a level of importance as well. Um, yeah. And …

Interviewer: Has it helped you when you've come back? Has it held you back in England that change?

Ross: Yeah, I believe so in both work and life because the things that I've experience in America in a working environment, you know, I don't think it will be likely to experience in the UK hospitality industry. And then the same goes for especially the social life of it I was experiencing over there, you know, being inside I mean environments that I know wouldn't be possible because it's difference in cultures.

I mean and just the experience in knowledge helps in a lot of different variety of ways in perhaps how you deal with the problem over here or come up with new ideas, bring in ideas that you've seen over in America and bringing them back the UK.

The most significant one was when I told my new operations manager when I came back and started working with ███████ that he was wrong … and he was wrong he got fired eventually not because of what I said he was wrong, but I'd seen the importance of guests service and satisfaction of service or waiters as we call them to have smaller sections, you know, and taking a holistic approach, being there from start to finish, taking all the orders, bringing them drinks, bringing them food things like that.

And had that benefits to the experience and then when you try to tell me that waiters should be having, you know, 12 to 14 tables I just plain told him, no you're wrong. For this type of service that you claim to be wanting to be offering to guests … that I've seen are poured and how they go about it that absolutely left in your face if you told them that they had that many tables to facilitate and still give great service.

And I was proven to be right …

Interviewer: This … I mean, and you were still a student but you feel you could say that to a manager.

Ross: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ross: Yeah, that's probably an attitude of who I'm as well, you know, I wouldn't expect everyone to do that but if it wasn't for that year and seeing different styles of hospitality service and different cultures, and there's no way I would have challenged him because I'd probably experience the same level of tables and service in whatever it was English restaurant I worked in.

Interviewer: Did friends back home or family back home. Did they see a change in you after you returned?

Ross: Um, He didn't directly mention it but I think from my dad I could see that he had a lot more respect for me, and he didn't have lack of respect before. But he's someone, you know, he's difficult to impress and

as such and for me going over there, taking care of myself, coming back, and he said … he said to me when I go back, he said I was surprised at some point over there I thought you were going to give us a call and say like I need money, you know, or something like that. He said, I didn't hear from you for three months.

And that was the truth [inaudible 00:34:36] speaking to anyone. I was getting … and getting by and making the most of the time there. He said you know, really fair play that you went over there and you've just taken the experience with both hands and you didn't have any trouble doing it either.

And so from that side of it, I think it's whether or not people saw an actual change in me I think it was more of a belief in that I had, you know, that drive that I wanted to make it a success and … so, it was just more of who I'm.

Interviewer: Did your year has influenced your future career or your future career plans?

Ross: It certainly has for more ways than one. Um, human resources is now something that I'm interested within, and that's as a result of that year to human resources team was on sight for the hotel that I worked at. So, I got a lot of interaction with them on a regular basis. They have interactions with everyone but then only that they had weekly or monthly training sessions with the staff. And most training sessions I've benefited from so much.

I saw the value behind them and the things they were teaching us immediately realized I think there was a type of teaching called awareness teaching that is a term to I can up with … to do with the project that I did.

And the important of awareness training is that it's not nothing new to you, it's just adapting the way that you think and just making you realize, Oh yeah I can relate, one experience that I've felt of what you were telling me there and then I want to understand the reason behind it.

And there was a lot of that type of training and it was just so useful, and you know, it improve interactions with guests or certain situations that was put in. so, then that interesting HR came up, brought that back with me and then I took it as option at university.

And I did my dissertation project based around HR topic. And I do believe later on in my career after I've gone through an operational route I'll likely to be moving across to a HR area maybe a training some of the things or something like. And that's sort of a direct result of that …

Interviewer: Have you tried to exploit that experience in, ah, planning or finding future jobs?

Ross: Um, how do you mean?

Interviewer: Is it something that you'd highlight on your CV or in an interview? Is it something that you would want to talk about or have talked about?

Ross: Um, is something that I have talked about when I was applying for that job at ███████. When they've given examples of experiences, all my experiences came from one was in America and then when I tried to display, um, my understanding of certain areas of topics or things that they were asking me, I would sometimes use that as an example and the fact that the training that they received and that we received and we were given there regularly and how that helps.

So, then I use that to say … I would like to use … apply similar things as a manager, you know, somewhere like that doesn't have HR or I'd like to use HR tools to help the staff learn how to improve them, because I do value this … of daily HR import.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's been really interesting. Is there anything that's interesting or important to you about your internship experience that we've not touched upon or?

Ross: Um, I mean … well, me go back there one day later on in my career. Um, perhaps in my late '20s early '30s. I foresee, you know, having a very vague idea of my career looks like, but I'm going to at the moment my intention is … most of my progression and developing within England. And then when I reach a stage in my career where there's not really many more steps above me to climb particularly higher and when I look at the option of moving back over into an environment such as the one that was saying at … is it me in ███████ necessarily but it could be likely to be so, um, for a number of reasons, they type of people there, the lifestyle, how relaxed and happy everyone is. That's just an environment that I would love to live in permanently and the environment that I'd arrange or would work in moving in.

And then even though I work long hours the type of social environment that was there and the people involved, it never eat above me when I continue long hours.

Interviewer: Yeah, so you'd like to get on with your career here, progress, train and then you'd consider going back to that type of environment?

Ross: Yeah, and as I say, you know, I was working a lot of hours while I was over there. So, when I'm at that stage of my career where, you know, there's less requirement to work those long manual hours and more reason why I was sort … maybe 95 or something more social in that aspect, but I mean I don't have to put too much more work into develop the positions, you know. I would like to go and make the most of the environment where you can relax.

It will almost be like an early retirement but not … I'm not retiring and so working full time. That's a thing … that's how it would feel to me for the type of environment that was.

Interviewer: So, part of the drawback there would be that for the environment not for the physical environment, the working life, working culture. But it's important to progress the career first?

Ross: Yeah, I mean … because now I know and I'm so aware of the social aspects of that I think it would be more difficult for me to progress my career in an environment as such as that because obviously I've enjoyed life so much over there, you know, where as in England … for me in anyway environment in Birmingham is the fact that you can … you focus on your progression and your development things such that. put hardworking earlier on and that'd be easy to do so.

And then in an environment that England is compared to somewhere like a beach environment where the sun's out every day and you just want to go and sit by the pool, you know, you're not too worried about working longer hours for the extra bit of money you could be happy just to relax. So, yeah I would say of that for when I don't necessarily need to put in the 70 hour weeks.

Interviewer: And just before we wrap up, every second year student or level five students are considering their place and options, the UK, abroad. And if abroad where and what type of job. What advice would you give to some students who are planning internship now?

Ross: The advice I would give would be first to assess who are you as a person, um, and that could involve getting advice from other people as well because some people don't easily have an understanding of who they are. You know, should be some questions to be asked how will you cope not seeing your friends and family for a year.

How easily are to … do you think you can adapt to different cultures maybe they have already done so being in ███████ so that's where you tick that off or something.

As long as you've got a personality that is acceptable to moving abroad into a different environment and being away from your friends and family, I don't think the question which should be whether you should move abroad or not it should be where you should move abroad for that placement.

As long as you've got the basics and need to experience as well to get the job the same as any other job. And so as long as you meet the criteria that fits someone to move abroad, 100% do it. Don't question it at all because I've seen people who weren't sure about it and then they've done the year and they've gone that was the best thing I ever did. And some people will have that doubt for different reasons, but if the criteria's match it should be done.

I had a reason why America is such a good option is because the cultures are relatively similar. Not too much of a shock, language is the same for the best part of it. Who you are as an individual, if you were British and you come near any type of British because they love Irish, Scottish, English. I never saw any Welsh over there but I'm sure they would. Who you are and what that means will make things a lot easier for you in both your work and social life.

Comparing that to some people I've heard move over to Spain or placements in areas like that, they didn't have such a good time. Um, for example the Spanish region that she was in it was really important that she spoke Spanish and she was discriminated and outcast before she did start speaking Spanish. That's something that you wouldn't have to worry about in America.

Um …

Interviewer: Would you do that again?

Ross: It depends on which context really because if I was to go and do it now, that'd actually take a year out of my career development and as a result of that placement there looking back on my career, that was really the pivotal direction they took me in because when I came back the first job applied for was just the waiter's position, but due to my experience in America accompanied with the degree that I was studying I got offered a management position in Premier Inn.

And that … and so, really the year in America has dictated strongly the direction I'm now going in.

Interviewer: Good. And before we wrap up, have you got any questions for me about any of this?

Ross: Um, no.

Interviewer: Or anything that we've talked about?

Ross: No, I think it's a good summary.

Interviewer: Yeah, so just to go through again. Everything you said is confidential and this will be typed to a particular transcript and the transcript will be for analysis, and then locked away basically. If you ever feel like you want to withdraw or amend anything that you've said, then just let me know and we can do that.

If there's anything that you said which is identifies a company or a person, I'll redact that on the transcript. It just means I'll block that, so it will remain private, Okay? Thanks, Ross.

Ross: You're welcome.

Emergent Themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory comments
Personal Change Professional Growth Self-knowledge Positive Change Sense of the opportunity offered Sense of the specialness of the internship Maximising the experience Making the most of the internship	Interviewer: Yeah. Looking back on a year in ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, how do you perceive it now, now that you're back you're home. Now that's it's over fa year. How do you look back on it, what do you think about it? Ross: I think a little back and … obviously what I see is happiness and all I see is progression, because it was one of the most progressive times in my career. For a lot of reasons I think hospitality is what you know and who you are, and it developed both for those things for me. It's certainly changed me as person for the better, you know, the life experience I achieved, you know, and gained over there. um, and then on top of that as well, I do believe that ▮▮▮▮▮ is probably one of the one of the best hospitality companies in the world for its training, for its empowerment of staff, for you to do well and for your learning. And that's about as you go into any other companies but … Ross: So, year for the actual learning that company offers as well. I think is really, really useful to someone that wants to go in and learn. For example, throughout that year I could have probably earned twice as much money I did in there, but my preference for the year was learning and as they were happy to facilitate I worked the most amount of positions of over 400 staff in the summer while I was there. Interviewer: You could have earned more by …? Ross: By sticking to a single position, the higher paying position like a server or something like that, but I chose I said, no I want to learn this, I want to learn everything in certain area, I	*Major reflection upon self and upon the time in America.* *The internships was central to his progression/development as a professional* *The internship developed his personal and professional sense of self* *The experience is transformative and positively positioned.* *Personal change for the better* *He feels the company offers excellent opportunities for development.* *Obvious loyalty to the internship provider* *He rejects better earning roles (Service) in favour of broadening his experience.* *Maximised opportunities to experience different roles in the company* *Broadening experience by taking on as many roles as he could*

Getting the most out	want to go across to a different area and learn everything there and work all the positions there.	
	So, year for the actual learning that company offers as well. I think is really, really useful to someone that wants to go in	*The internship is an opportunity to learn.*
Learning Opportunities	and learn. For example, throughout that year I could have	*He values the opportunity of learning over earing.*
Learning through experiences job roles.	probably earned twice as much money I did in there, but my preference for the year was learning and as they were happy to	*The learning experience and opportunities for development are of prime importance*
The value of learning at work	facilitate I worked the most amount of positions of over 400 staff in the summer while I was there.	*Does he feel he did better than his peers who might have earned more?*
	Interviewer: You've spoken very positively about the year. Um, how do you see yourself since the internship personally, as an individual?	
	Ross: I think I've matured a lot and I wasn't immature before,	
Maturity	and it surprised me how much learning and maturing and progressing I still had in me at that point. Um, moving away it	*The year was a time of personal change. He moves into fuller maturity.*
Separation from home	gave me a different way of thinking in the fact that if I was ever, you know, back at home and I had worries or stresses or	*Strong sense of this progression/development and maturity*
	anything, kind of thought like there was no way out it was like,	*Being away, moving away changes the way he thinks about things, he*
Different ways of being	you know, you got a problem and it's not to say like, oh yeah you could easily run away as a … but it's just saying that if you're ever	*saw another way of life.*
Diversity of life	find traps in some way you're living and you hit a dead end and	*Back at home he could see ways out. He could not see alternatives*
Personal growth	there's no progression anything like that.	*back home difficulties became traps*
	There's a whole different world out there that you can go and experience and live your life and that sort of knowledge	
Personal growth	to me… it made me a lot more relaxed as a person. I worry a lot	*Seeing the world differently.*
	less about certain things because I know there are opportunities	*The positivity of seeing different ways of being/doing*
New ways of thinking	like that out there.	*Experiencing diversity of lifestyle relaxed him.*
Opportunities for future	Interviewer: Do you think you could have got that extra	*Experiencing difference allows him to feel <u>less</u> stressed*
	maturity… that sense that you're not worrying about problems at work so much if you had done internship in the UK?	*He can imagine different futures for himself?*
	Ross: No. not at all. Um, well, you could have at some point,	*Does he show hope for the future?*
	you know, up to a certain degree. And maybe other as I said other personalities than me have been able to achieve that same sense of achievement on a placement in the UK, but for the type of person that I am and things that I respond to, I can tell and I know that moving away and having that experience, living in	

Sense of achievement
 	
Distance
 	
Difference/diversity
 	
Pride in achievement
 	
A more intense experience
 	
A space to grow
A chance to grow
 	
Being away allowed change
	different cultures, having those stories and having that knowledge except that you know that none of your friends have got as such, it's just, you know, it's comforting you know.
	        And I think the … to experience a lot of things that … all the people having experience, you know, and thrown in a country that no one else has been that was a big part of maturity and it just wouldn't have been possible over here, because if I'd lived in England as well I can guarantee that I'd have seen members of my friends and family multiple times throughout the year whereas moving away for the year and not seeing them, it made me realize my strengths that I could do something like that and not have a requirement to have to go back and see my friends and family.
	        It would have been different if it wasn't a year's placement and it was like a continuous placement, you know, because I wouldn't have had that end date where I was going back. And I think that end day really drove me throughout the year because I'm looking at the clock and the calendar and it's like, Oh three months have gone by and have I done anything at work, you know, and that sort of progression that I wanted to do in the year.
		For him being overseas was the crucial element. Being overseas differentiates his experience from peers at home
		
		The separation from home and the cultural distance from home were fundamental to his internship experience
		Distance and difference make the experience ore important for him
		Having better stories to tell is important. He has confidence in his own narrative
		He has a sense that his experience is more than his peers
		
		Being abroad added to his maturity his growth
		
		He couldn't have had the same experience at home.
		At hoe he would have has contact and with friends and family and stayed as he was. Being away allowed him to change
		
		Gave him confidence in himself and in his strengths resilience to live and work abroad away from the familiar life of home

A more intense experience A greater experience Making the most of the internship	Have I experienced life experiences over there, have gone visit the places, I wanted to do anything like that, because if I was in the UK I would be less likely to change myself to meet those times because it's in the UK and you can go and do that anyway. But, living abroad you're more restricted to the clock and once that time comes that time's been and gone.	*The length of the internship is important. A year away with a defined ending* *Being overseas allowed him to change to grow.* *In the UK he would have stayed the same* *The year abroad was finite and an opportunity that had to be maximised before it was gone*

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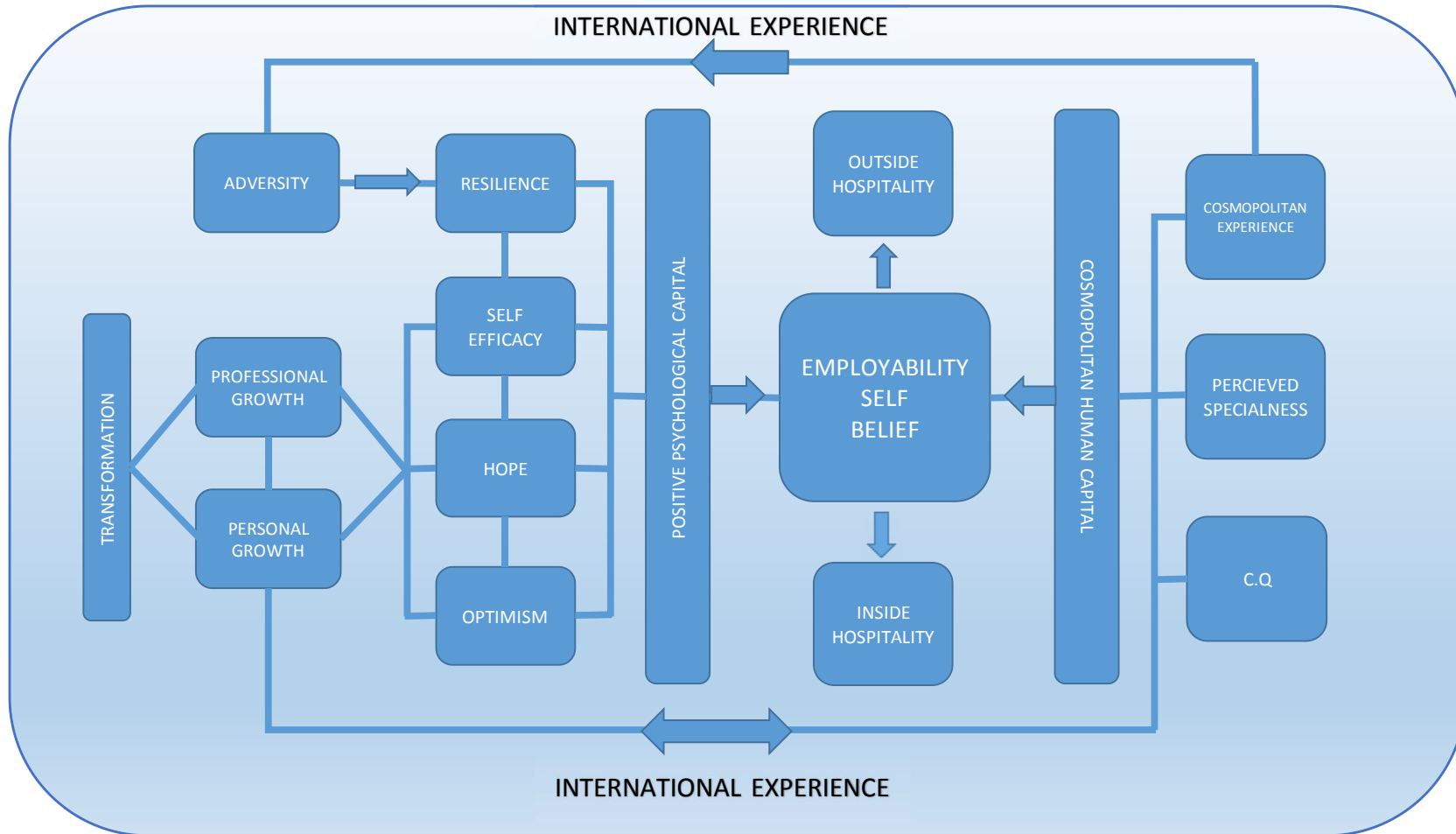
Figure 9. A Model for the Development of Employability Self-Belief Gained Through Undergraduate International Internships