Stakeholder Engagement in Place Brand Management

A Multiple Case Study of Danish Municipality Branding

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Abstract

Specialet omhandler vigtigheden af at engagere steders stakeholdere i place brand management. I den forbindelse har specialet to relaterede formål. For det første forsøger det at integrere place branding-teori og stakeholder-teori, hvilket efterspørges i place branding litteraturen for at tydeliggøre teoriens argumentation for at stakeholdere er hovedelementet i place brand management. For det andet vil specialet formidle empirisk data, der understøtter skiftet til en kundeorienteret strategi i place branding ved at argumentere for at sted-brands skal struktureres efter brand architecture-modellen. Med udgangspunkt i de to teoretiske discipliner udvikles syv hypoteser som undersøges i et komparativt casestudie af Bornholms Regionskommune og Lyngby-Taarbæk Kommune. Casestudiet går i dybden med de to kommuners stakeholder-forhold ved at foretage kvalitative interviews af henholdsvis den strategiske organisation, tre inkluderede stakeholdere og en perifer stakeholder i forhold til kommunernes brand. Ud fra disse empiriske data foretages analyser både indenfor hver case og på tværs af de to cases for til sidst at diskutere holdbarheden af de syv hypoteser. Undersøgelsen påviser, at stakeholder engagement har betydelig indvirkning på effektiviteten af kommunernes brand management. Bornholms Regionskommune har ikke lykkedes med at inkludere bredere stakeholder-grupper og stedets brand er meget snævert funderet. Dermed karakteriseres stedets brand management som mindre vellykket af de interviewede. Modsat har Lyngby-Taarbæk Kommune haft en dynamisk tilgang til stakeholder engagement, hvilket har medført en stærkere og bredere forankring. Stedets brand management betegnes derfor som effektivt og vellykket. Det er muliggjort af en struktur, der har konkrete adgangspunkter for stakeholdere, som hviler på forskellige sub-brands og som samtidig støtter op om det overordnende paraply-brand. Bornholms Kommune er ved at redefinere deres brand management og bevæger sig mod en lignende struktur, der samtidig vil lægge mere vægt på interaktionen mellem stakeholdere. Specialet afdækker derfor, at de to danske kommuners branding bevæger sig hen imod ensartede formelle strukturer, der sætter stakeholderes opfattelser af stedet og deres behov i højsædet. Dermed bliver specialet også en argumentation for at place brand management handler om at integrere stakeholderes individuelle behov med kollektive behov, der i samspil skaber stedets place brand. Gennem dynamisk interaktion imellem diverse stakeholdere burde steder burde kunne opnå en effektiv place brand management.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Formulation

1.1 Introduction

Places are increasingly adopting business strategies in the competition for investors, companies, citizens and qualified workforce (Dinnie 2011; Kavaratzis 2004; Klijn, Eshuis & Braun 2012; Zenker & Martin 2011). In this competitive environment, cities are increasingly making use of marketing and branding techniques to manage and promote competitive advantages in order to prevail in an arena with extensive mobility of resources. Thus, place branding has emerged as an important field of interest both for practitioners and academics (Hanna & Rowley 2011), as place marketers try to establish the place as a brand promoted to different target audiences (Braun 2012). However, complexity is high. The complexity is evident as cities are comprised of a diverse set of stakeholders, abundant number of organisations steering the brand, limited control over the place product and diversity of target groups (Kavaratzis 2009; Virgo & De Chernatony 2006). At the centre of place branding, thus, lays the alignment of these features and, especially, how the multiple stakeholders of the place negotiate their shared or conflicting place needs and demands. Bringing stakeholder buy-in to the forefront of place branding creates a need to explore stakeholder involvement, influence and engagement in the place brand. This places a strong focus on the stakes of the place as perceived by the diverse stakeholder groups and there is a growing need to more thoroughly address how stakeholders perceive the place and how these perceptions are brought forward in the organisational structure of place brand management (Zenker 2011). As Danish municipalities are showing increasing interest in the application of place brand management (Bitsch 2015; Stagis 2014), this thesis will be an exploration of whom and what actually delivers resources and perceptions to these place brands and how these resources and perceptions are successfully engaged and managed. The thesis will be structured around a multiple case study approach designated at comparing the perceptions of stakeholders and strategic organisations involved in the place brand management at the Regional Municipality of Bornholm – Bright Green Island and at Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality – City of Knowledge and Urban Development. This comparative approach should enable the aim of presenting insights aligning place branding theory with stakeholder theory providing a cross-disciplinary, yet integrated, take on effective place brand management.

1.2 Problem Statement and Research Question

Academics have argued collectively that stakeholders are the most integral part of the place branding practice (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009; Kavaratzis 2012; Merrilees, Miller & Herington 2012). Practitioners are increasingly acknowledging this (Ford 2011; Hanna & Rowley 2012) and, thus, many different approaches are pursued across places in order to push joint place branding and collective action. However, many places face difficulties when pursuing a focused place brand while also wanting to address the place needs and demands of many different stakeholders. This ambiguity is evident in Danish municipalities' place

brand management, for example, through the failed attempt to brand "Aarhus – Danish for Progress" (Christensen 2015). Still, Danish municipalities are increasingly making use of place branding in their effort to differentiate themselves. Against the failed attempts, current place brand management across Danish municipalities acknowledges the need to integrate stakeholders with a stake in the place in the place brand management (Nielsen 2014). However, a comparative study of these efforts is currently missing. In addition, such study would provide essential input to place branding theory in general which still lacks a comparative evaluation (Warnaby, Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2015). Thus, this thesis' novelty lays in the comparison across multiple cases and what assumptions on successful place brand management can be drawn from comparing different structures and mechanisms enabling stakeholder engagement. The study is operationalised in the following research question:

How is stakeholder engagement realised in Danish municipality branding and what influence does it have on effective place brand management?

The thesis seeks to align place branding theory and stakeholder theory. Having this take is supported by academics themselves conceptualising place branding theory as multi- and cross-disciplinary field (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Ashworth, Kavaratzis & Warnaby 2015). Thus, applying branding to places requires the contribution from different fields of study. However, as highlighted by Stubbs and Warnaby (2015), there is an urgent need to integrate place branding theory and stakeholder theory when stakeholders and their stakes are described as the central focus of the place branding practice. Pursuing a successful place brand management requires a strong understanding of the diverse set of stakeholders, their interactions and the power relationships among them (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). The thesis aims to continue the alignment of place branding theory and stakeholder theory by having a point of departure in the understanding of the place product and brand being co-created by those who have a stake in it (ibid.). This allows for the thesis to identify similarities in the two areas of study and work against the current fragmented theory on place branding (Warnaby et al. 2015). Combined with the comparative element, this allows for the insights from the thesis to be used regardless of context and, thus, provide essential insight to theory. In addition, the thesis goes further by actually addressing how the place brand management across different Danish municipalities have organised in order to enable stakeholder participation. Seeing this as the most crucial element of place branding will be underpinned by stakeholder theory's focus "*on overseeing relationships that are critical to an organisation's success*" (Savage, Nix, Whitehead & Blair 1991: 62).

Secondly, the thesis also aims at delivering empirical explorative evidence for the need to a change focus when addressing success measurements of place branding as argued by Zenker and Braun (2015). As mentioned, the thesis will focus on stakeholders' perceptions of the place and the place brand. Essentially,

there is an unclear understanding on how to measure success in place brand management. The thesis will support the re-shifting of focus to a customer-oriented strategy, which is still lacking in urban governance and place branding (Dinnie 2011; Eshuis, Klijn & Braun 2014; Zenker 2011). The perceptions of the stakeholders should be the focus point in exploring successful place brand management and the thesis will address these through a qualitative inquiry across different stakeholders and strategic organisations of the selected cases. This will highlight the specific reasons for stakeholders to join, or not to join, the municipality's branding efforts. The thesis will, then, argue that stakeholder engagement is most efficiently managed through the use of the brand architecture concept (Dinnie 2011; Zenker & Braun 2010) which allows for targeting of multiple stakeholders' perceptions of the place. This will in turn substantiate the alignment of place branding and stakeholder theory providing an assessment of how to enable disparate groups of stakeholders to unite under the same umbrella-brand.

1.3 Delimitation

The thesis is mainly interested in the diverse set of stakeholders located within the places (for a detailed description see Stubbs & Warnaby 2015). Therefore, external stakeholders (or customers) will not be addressed in this thesis. As argued, internal stakeholders are the most integral part of place brand management and this justifies their central place in this thesis. Places may have many different internal stakeholders and in order to maintain a clear focus in the selection of interviewees, it was early on decided to delimit interviews to the strategic organisation, three involved stakeholders and one peripheral stakeholder within the two places. This should provide both an internal and an essential external view on the place brand management. Choosing to interview a peripheral stakeholder should work against a biased view in favour of those who perceive the place brand management to be successful. Through this deliberate choice of stakeholders, the thesis will be able to systematically compare the findings from the Regional Municipality of Bornholm and Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality.

The thesis aims to provide a synthesised take on place brand management enabling it to assist urban development as called for by Ashworth et al. (2015). Therefore, it draws on insights from both so-called place branding and destination branding even though these terms are often limited to either business and management literature or tourism literature, respectively. However, as argued by Hanna and Rowley (2012), it is important to extend the review of place branding to the related concept of destination branding, as place branding originates from the tourism literature. Destination branding is, nevertheless, limited to a single industry while place branding goes beyond this and has a more encompassing approach. In this regard, it is acknowledged that the two literatures have different starting points but also that they can inform each other resulting in an even stronger take on place brand management. Therefore, the thesis does not distinguish

between the two terms in order to support the notion that place brand management comprises the entire place and all its stakeholder groups.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

The structure of the thesis is the following: Firstly, relevant literature and concepts are extensively reviewed to gain an understanding of the theoretical outlook on place branding and stakeholder theory. These two theoretical strands are, then, aligned and seven hypotheses are constructed on the basis of the elaborated literature review and alignment. In the next section, the applied methodology is outlined in order to make clear how the thesis logically moves from research question and hypotheses development to analysis and final discussion through the use of an iterative process and a multiple case study approach. In this, the two cases will be introduced in order to justify their strategic selection providing basic data on both. Chapter three is comprised of ten qualitative interviews and covers the analytical part of the thesis making within-case and cross-case comparisons of the two Danish municipalities structured around the themes used in the interview guide. This unfolds the cases and gives the reader a sound knowledge of the empirical findings. Chapter four centres on a discussion of the hypotheses put forward in chapter two and, thereby, it seeks to test them by comparing the theoretical propositions with the empirical findings. This will support the thesis' aim to align place branding theory with stakeholder theory by arguing for the use of the brand architecture concept in place brand management. In the end, limitations are addressed before concluding on the research question put forward in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Background and Research Design

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The thesis' outset is formed by place branding theory and, thus, this area will be outlined in the first part of the following. Firstly, essentials from the branding literature and their relevance for place branding will be addressed; secondly, the concept of the place will be outlined and finally, branding of the place and the importance of the place's stakeholders will be defined. After this, stakeholder theory will be introduced with regards to the stakeholding concept and the importance of stakeholder management. This leads to a discussion of the similarities between place branding and stakeholder theory. This will be used to construct seven hypotheses.

2.1.1 Place Branding

2.1.1.1 Essentials from the Branding Practice and the Relevance for Place Branding

Following Kotler's definition of a brand as "*a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*" (Kotler 1991: 442 as cited in Keller 1993: 2), Keller develops his customer-based brand equity. It takes place when the customer is familiar with the brand and holds "*favourable, strong and unique brand associations in memory*" (Keller 1993: 2). Customer-based brand equity, then, refers to the differential effects of brand knowledge on the consumer's response to the marketing of the brand. In this understanding, one important element is that the consumer believes that the brand has attributes and benefits that satisfy their needs and wants (Keller 1993: 5). Thereby, the aim of marketing and branding should be to satisfy the needs and demands of the customer (Zenker & Seigis 2012). Furthermore, a brand is defined as a "*network of associations in the minds of individual persons*" (Zenker 2011) making it difficult to manage and control for the producer. This means that the value of brands is primarily located in the mind of the consumer and not at the hands of the producer (Hanna & Rowley 2012: 103). This puts the perceptions of the consumer at the centre of the branding exercise. The construct of the brand is comprised of the perceptions of the consumer and the product's identity. With regards to place branding, the place becomes the product and the various place stakeholders deliver the perceptions.

Place branding has benefitted from the theoretical developments in corporate branding (see Kavaratzis 2009; Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009), as the two areas face many of the same difficulties. A corporate brand is "*a single umbrella image that casts glow over a panoply of products*" (Hatch & Schultz 2001). Corporate brands need to be drawn from the organisation's identity and, in return, communicate a subset of this identity to its various stakeholders (Leitch & Richardson 2003: 1067). This is a consequence of people holding

different perceptions of the brand and the brand has to operate through these multiple meanings. The view of the city as "*a complex organisation made up of a large number of political, cultural, institutional and economic groupings, each with their own interests*" (Stigel & Frimann 2006) justifies the comparison of place branding with corporate branding. Needs and demands of stakeholders are essential and the navigation through these is a matter of receiving and sending perceptions and meanings. In addition, Stigel and Frimann (2006) argue that corporate branding (and place branding) is about reaching a consensus on identity, often with difficulties, in order to create a focused signal in the rapidly changing marketplace.

Keller's (1993) attention to the customer's needs and wants is currently being reconfigured through the argumentation for the shift to a service-dominant logic in marketing (Payne, Storbacka, Frow & Knox 2009). The service-dominant logic is refocusing the attention to the customer perspective as the central perspective is that co-creation "*involves customer's active involvement and interaction with their supplier in every aspect, from product design to product consumption*" (Payne et al. 2009: 379). The exchange environment is shifting from a focus on tangible goods to the exchange of intangibles such as skills, knowledge and processes (ibid: 380). In the service-dominant logic, customers engage in dialogue and interactions with supplier. At the centre of this logic, thus, lies "*that value starts with the supplier understanding customer value-creating processes and learning how to support customer's co-creation activities*" (ibid: 380). In this regard, the customer has an immense effect on the creation of value together with the supplier. The customer becomes an active player instead of a passive recipient. The customer perceives the brand through "*a cluster of functional and emotional values*" (Virgo & De Chernatony 2006: 382) which, once again, acknowledges the importance of the customer's needs, wants and perceptions in the branding practice. In a place branding context, this can be compared to the place needs, wants and perceptions. As Warnaby et al. argues "*places cannot be conceived other than through the people who inhabit and use them*" (2015: 247; see also Kavaratzis 2012). Efficient place brand management is, thus, a continuous co-creation process enabling both the sharing of information on place needs, wants and perceptions but also the pooling of resources across the various stakeholders (Sheehan, Ritchie & Hudson 2007; Warnaby & Medway 2015).

2.1.1.2 Places' Impact on Identity and the Structure of Place Branding

Places have always had an immense effect on peoples' self-perception and. The naming of geographical areas goes back to the first settlers which sought to name places in order to take ownership of it and, most importantly, define themselves in contrast to the surrounding world (Hansen 2012: 271). The positioning of places is, thereby, a very historical feature of the human environment which continuously takes place. People's identification with places develops dynamically over time. As highlighted by Mayes, place identities derive "*from the intrinsic features and history of a given place and a shared (personalized) relationship to these elements*" (Mayes 2008: 125 as cited in Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013: 74) and, furthermore,

"*place identities are constructed through historical, political, religious and cultural discourses; through local knowledge, and influenced by power struggles*" (Govers & Go 2009: 17 as cited in Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013: 74). These assumptions about place identities have several implications for describing the importance of places. Firstly, place identities are dynamic, as they develop over time. Secondly, they develop through continuous interaction between people. Thirdly, people perceive the place through their relationship with the place. In this regard, stakeholders are a very important part of place branding, as they are the ones bringing about the place brand through their "conversation" with each other (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). Therefore, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) redefine stakeholder's importance. They are not only informants to the place branding process, as the stakeholders are the ones collectively producing the brand with place brand managers as facilitators. As Zenker and Petersen argue, place identity is "*understood as a shared mental representation of a place*" (Zenker & Petersen 2014: 716). These mental representations are formed from three types of city communication: 1) the primary communication which is the communicative effects of the city's actions when communication is not the main goal of these actions i.e. physical attributes or citizens' behaviour, 2) the secondary communication which is the formal communication through official channels i.e. advertising and 3) tertiary communication referring to "*place word of mouth*" (Zenker & Petersen 2014: 717) reinforced by media and citizens (Kavaratzis 2004). Place identification can, thus, be prolonged as a "*meaningful link between the self-concept and the identification target*" (Zenker & Petersen 2014: 717). In other words, there needs to be a fit between the city attributes and the stakeholders self.

Seeing stakeholders as the ones collectively producing the place brand has an effect on the role of place brand managers. Managers are not the producers of the brand but are "*called to initiate, facilitate and stimulate the brand construction process*" (Kavaratzis 2013: 82). This leadership of collaborative arrangements are crucial to the success of a place branding effort (Palmer 1998). As mentioned, the needs, perceptions and resources of place stakeholders are the ones that need to be shared in the place branding management. This means that "*a wide range of public and private organisations have responsibilities for delivering tangible and intangible components*" (Palmer 1998: 186). This creates a need for an affective sharing structure and this structure needs to have a leadership. As collaborative place structures enable stakeholder buy-in to other stakeholders' resources and knowledge, an initial part of such effort will be characterised by distrust and perhaps incompatibility. The distrust needs to be downplayed by a collaborative leadership and the incompatibility needs to be used in an effective way. The leadership can alleviate differences and provide common outlook through shared visions while acknowledging the various stakeholders' diverse wants and goals. In addition, Palmer found that place stakeholders join place branding efforts for "*the social benefits of networking with other people*" (Palmer 1998: 199) and not just for economic reasons. This highlights the interaction between stakeholders as the most important part and, once again, justifies the assessment of place branding as a dynamic process involving continuous development of

relationships. Managers of the place branding, thus, needs to have a mind-set facilitating continuous involvement of stakeholders (also peripheral not included from the beginning), as the stakeholders would describe the collaborative place branding arrangements as successful by assessing their number of new relationships created through it.

2.1.1.3 Branding of the Place and the Importance of Stakeholders

The thesis understands place brands as "*a network of associations in the consumer's mind based on the visual, verbal and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design*" (Zenker & Braun 2015). This definition has a direct link to Keller's definition of customer-based brand equity and this means that a place brand is based on many different perceptions located in the minds of people (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009). Many of these perceptions (or identities as described earlier) co-exist within the place and place branding is the management of these. Successful place brand management is reached through an alignment of the place brand with place stakeholders' psychological and functional needs.

The thesis is mainly interested in the intra-city customers referring to the diverse set of stakeholders located within the place (for a detailed description see Stubbs & Warnaby 2015). These groups can be different from place to place but common for places is that tensions between them may exist (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker 2013). It is important to identify the different groups and, thereby, acknowledge potential conflicts. Participation of all the stakeholders needs to be integrated in all stages of the process in order to alleviate tensions and potential conflict. Furthermore, "*stakeholders feel more committed and loyal to a brand if they have been involved in the construction of the brand, because during their involvement they can influence the content of the brand*" (Zenker & Erfgen 2014: 227). These assumptions have two implications for place brand management. Firstly, place brand managers need to disperse power across many stakeholders. Something that can be difficult in a political and developmental context which place branding often takes place in (Eshuis, Braun & Klijn 2013). Secondly, inclusion of well-established stakeholders is more easily achieved than the inclusion of more incomprehensible and dispersed stakeholder groups (i.e. citizens). These two action points are of immense importance to the structuring of the place brand management, as the success of the branding effort will often be tested against them. Zenker (2013) argues that internal target groups have more diverse set of place associations and perceptions than external groups. This complicates the development of a strong umbrella brand, if the internal stakeholders lack an access point and feel that the brand is too abstract. In fact, this can – intentionally or unintentionally – create an in-group and out-group distinction which can result in a very narrow focus across stakeholders and lead to narrow success criteria for the place brand management.

Hanna and Rowley (2012) found that place branding practitioners see place branding as a "*coordinated, area-based, multi-stakeholder approach, harnessing the skills, experience, and resources of those in public, private and voluntary sectors*" (p. 108). Thus, place branding is a strong part of overall place management and development and this makes democratic legitimacy a core aspect of place brand management. Involving place stakeholders (as many as possible) can support the democratic legitimacy of the decisions made on place brand management (Klijn et al. 2012; Klijn & Edwards 2013) and it is crucial in order to achieve successful alignment of stakeholders and place brand. In this understanding, place brand management has an ability to become a system integrating earlier disperse stakeholders.. Then it becomes much more than branding but actually a community configuration tool. Thus, even though power dispersal will often be unequal, there is a need to consider all stakeholders (Merrilees et al. 2012) to mediate democratic legitimacy. Furthermore, Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) argue that "*no single entity had total control over the success of the place*" (p. 103). Place brand management has to be done through resource pooling and by moving all stakeholders together allowing for reciprocal buy-in to each other's resources. Through this, place branding becomes legitimate and prevents one stakeholder group from taking ownership of the place brand.

2.1.1.4 The Brand Architecture Concept and Measurement of the Place Brand's Success

The aim of place brand management is to develop a common vision which each stakeholder can support while their own needs and wants are acknowledged (Stubbs & Warnaby 2015; Eshuis et al. 2013). This is a difficult balancing act, as the place branding effort should not end with the lowest common denominator. As described, the branding of places should shift to a customer-oriented approach giving more focus to the place brand perceptions of the different target audiences. The perceptions of the place will lead to brand effects such as identification or satisfaction (Zenker & Braun 2010). As perceptions differ among the stakeholders, there is a need to introduce the brand architecture concept which allows the umbrella place brand to target specific audiences through sub-brands. The aim is to build a strong umbrella brand through the stakeholders' strong identification with specific sub-brands (Dinnie 2011; Zenker & Braun 2010) and introduce different strategies for each sub-brand. Then, the stakeholders can engage with the sub-brand which they feel recognize their own place needs and wants. Furthermore, place brand managers can focus more specifically with the place needs and wants, especially, if place sub-brands have their own managers. The use of sub-brands will also have other important benefits. It should enable more positive brand effects. For example, stronger brand identification by providing an easier access point for the stakeholders than a general one-fits-all place brand. In addition, it should prevent a too narrow focus on one distinct stakeholder group allowing for inclusion of peripheral stakeholders (Zenker & Braun 2010) and increase satisfaction.

Using the brand architecture concept in a place branding context highlights the importance of place satisfaction and identification in measuring the success of place brand management. The thesis aims to show

that using place sub-brands has a stronger impact on the two brand effects than a one-fits-all place brand. Following the customer-based brand equity, Zenker and Braun (2015) argue that brand perceptions would lead to measureable brand effects such as "*willingness to stay at a place, or resident satisfaction, or positive place behaviour like caring for the place*" (p. 213). This should be the primary focus of success measurement.

2.1.2 The Stakeholding Concept

2.1.2.1 The Stakeholder

Stakeholder theory takes it outset in Freeman's definition of a stakeholder as "*any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by, the achievement of the organization's objectives*" (Freeman 1984: 46). Stakeholder theory is, thus, based on the concept of a "stake" referring to the interest someone has in an organisation. It is generally agreed that stakeholders include those that have legitimate interests in an organisation's activity (Donaldson & Preston 1995; Ford 2011; Hill & Jones 1992). These interests can be diverging and stakeholder theory is "*about managing potential conflict stemming from divergent interests*" (Frooman 1999: 193). Management of stakeholders involves identifying key stakeholders, their interests, ability to influence the mission of the organisation and how they and their interests change over time (Ford 2011). Thereby, stakeholders are an important part of an organisation's dynamic environment. Greenwood (2001) describes two approaches which organisations can have towards stakeholders. Either the stakeholder is a means to an end for the organisation or the involvement of the stakeholders is an end in itself.

Freeman's initial definition of a stakeholder is categorised as the broadest definition of a stakeholder (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997; Greenwood 2001), as it states that the stake and the role as a stakeholder is open to anyone. The only ones excluded from having a stake are the ones unable to affect the firm (having no power) and those that are not affected by the firm. In contrast, the narrow view of stakeholders includes only those stakeholders that are essential to the survival of the firm. In this view, stakeholders are defined in accordance with their direct relevant to the firm's economic interests (Mitchell et al. 1997: 857). Having this view is based on the notions that manager's reality is comprised of limited resources, limited time and attention as well at limited patience for dealing with external constraints. The broad view of stakeholders is much more complex, as the managers acknowledge the need to include a large amount of entities in their decisions. Thus, stakeholders are defined as a much more diverse and heterogeneous group allowing for any of these groups to express their interest upon the firm. Clarkson (1995) categorises stakeholders as either primary or secondary. Primary stakeholders are entities "*without whose continuing participation the corporation cannot survive as a going concern*" (ibid: 106). Therefore, there exists a high level of interdependence between the organisation and its primary stakeholder groups. Secondary stakeholders are

"*those who influence or affect, or are influenced or affected by, the corporation, but they are not engaged in transactions with the corporation and are not essential for its survival*" (ibid: 107). These stakeholder groups' capacity lays in their ability to mobilize public opinion either in favour or in opposition to the organisation. In this respect, none of the stakeholder groups can be ignored. Furthermore, Clarkson (1995) describes stakeholder groups as dynamic entities, as their interests in an organisation's activities develop through the "*past, present or future*" (ibid: 106).

Recent developments in stakeholder theory have tried to put more emphasis on social identity aspects in the definition of stakeholders (Crane & Ruebottom 2011). Claims on firms may "*come from a broad range of demographic, cultural, political and societal*" entities (ibid: 77). Claims are, thus, not solely based on economic interests but also pushed by stakeholder group's social identity. By using social identity to define and distinguish themselves, groups draw on the social identities to make claims, mobilise and act with regards to the firm which is much stronger than economic identities. Thus, Crane and Ruebottom argue that social and economic identities should be combined in the definition of stakeholders and this would enable a more comprehensive mapping of stakeholders (ibid: 85). In this view, stakeholders do not act in order to satisfy rational interests but to affirm their collective identity (Rowley & Moldoveanu 2003). Then action becomes part of a groups self-definition opposed to being defined by the focal organisation's actions and objections. This would also help to decentralise the focal organisation locating it within a network of social relationships working in cooperation with stakeholders' identities and needs.

2.1.2.2 The Importance of Stakeholder Management

Stakeholder theory's core focus "*on overseeing relationships that are critical to an organisation's success*" (Savage et al. 1991: 62) is evident across the literature. Organisations need to address stakeholder expectations and act accordingly (Rowley 1997) or as Clarkson (1995: 112) put it; "*the economic and social purpose of the corporation is to create and distribute increased wealth and value to all its primary stakeholder groups without favouring one group at the expense of others*". This is necessary in order to maintain stakeholders continued participation and delivery of resources. Hill and Jones (1992) label this as the "implicit" contract between managers and stakeholders. Managers must, therefore, develop relationships and create communities enabling sharing of value (Freeman, Wicks & Parmar 2004) and stakeholder management provides managers with capabilities to deal with conflicts and cope with dynamic external environments. The aim of stakeholder management is, thereby, to align corporate priorities with stakeholder needs (Wolfe & Putler 2002). Thus, Donaldson and Preston (1995) argue that stakeholder theory has a normative core involving the understanding that the interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value. Each stakeholder group deserves attention in its own rights. However, they argue that stakeholder they does not imply that all stakeholders should be equally involved in all processes and decisions. This refers back to the

debate on whether managers can satisfy all stakeholders or whether "*satisfaction of one group inevitably comes at the expense of others*" (Stubbs & Warnaby 2015: 104). Thus, stakeholder theory argues for managers to set up reciprocal supportive frameworks aligning diverse stakeholder interests and, thereby, legitimise their own function (Donaldson & Preston 1995).

2.1.2.3 Managing Stakeholders

Savage et al. (1991) acknowledges that organisations operate within a dynamic stakeholder environment. It is based on the assumption that "*as stakeholders become more active towards, knowledgeable and interdependent with an organisation, management becomes critical*" (Savage et al. 1991: 62). Savage et al. somehow dissolves the primary or secondary stakeholder identification by describing issue salience as the most important part for outlining key stakeholders. In this view, "*stakeholder diagnosis is an ongoing activity*" (ibid: 63) and managers should constantly address stakeholders' interests, capabilities and needs. Supportive stakeholders can become unsupportive and unsupportive stakeholders can become supporting. The assumption is, thus, that stakeholders can be moved from one category to another, as stakeholder groups should be characterised with regards to their potential to threat or potential to cooperate with the organisation (ibid: 63; Stubbs & Warnaby 2015). Important to address is stakeholders' capacity, opportunity and willingness to threaten or cooperate.

Savage et al. (1991: 65) then develops four stakeholder types: 1) the supportive stakeholder, 2) the marginal stakeholder, 3) the non-supportive stakeholder and 4) the mixed-blessing stakeholder. The supportive stakeholder is the optimal stakeholder; high on potential for cooperation and low on potential for threat. The marginal stakeholder is either specially supportive or threatening. The non-supportive stakeholder is high on potential threat and low on cooperation potential. The mixed-blessing stakeholder is high on both cooperation and threat. Different strategies are then assigned to each stakeholder group: the supportive stakeholder should be involved (their cooperative potential is often overlooked), the marginal stakeholder should be monitored, as their interests are very narrow and issue-specific, the non-supportive stakeholder should be managed through a defensive strategy and, finally, the mixed-blessing stakeholder should be managed through collaboration as the potential for threat will be diminished. Underlying these types and strategies is the assumption that a stakeholder management framework should "*transform the stakeholder relationship from a less favourable one to a more favourable one*" (ibid: 71). When the organisation has built a positive relationship with a stakeholder, the relationship can be managed through a less intensive involvement strategy. In this view, stakeholder management is not only about managing (and satisfying) existing relationships but continuously develop relationships with peripheral stakeholders.

Mitchell et al. (1997) develops the categorisation framework by ascribing power, legitimacy and urgency to stakeholders. In their view, "*stakeholder salience will be positively related to the cumulative number of stakeholder attributes – power, legitimacy and urgency – perceived by the managers to be present*" (Greenwood 2001: 32). Once again, the dynamic nature of these attributes is highlighted but also that these attributes are subjectively ascribed and that the stakeholder may not be conscious of their own attributes. Thereby, managers have a central role in defining stakeholders' salience and should work as a moderator of relationships (Mitchell et al. 1997: 871-872). In addition, Mitchell et al. argues (as did Savage et al.) that potential stakeholders are as important as existing ones. Mitchell et al. distinguishes between influencers and claimants. Influencers have power over the organisation whether or not that they have legitimate claims, any claims at all or wish to press claims. Claimants may have legitimate claims (or illegitimate) but they may or may not have power in order to influence the organisation. Power and legitimacy is, thus, different dimensions which can overlap or exist without each other. The urgency attribute is rather situational and issue-specific. From this, seven stakeholder classes are then defined (ibid: 873-874) ranging from "definitive" stakeholders to non-stakeholders or potential stakeholders. All of these stakeholder groups need a strategy in order for the organisation to prevail in its environment.

2.1.3 Towards an Alignment of Place Branding and Stakeholder Theory

Place branding and stakeholder theory both acknowledge that their respective practices take place in an environment comprised of a diverse set of stakeholders. This calls for frameworks enabling managers (place brand managers) to navigate through diverging interests and prevent potential conflict by aligning the many stakes and interests. Furthermore, both disciplines discuss and argue for an inclusive management approach. Place branding theorists acknowledge the danger of only including well-established stakeholders in the place brand management while stakeholder theorists continue to highlight the importance of not satisfying the needs of one stakeholder group at the expense of others. Thereby, the two disciplines face the same difficulties in distinguishing between narrow and broad definitions of stakeholders. As argued by Stubbs and Warnaby (2015), place development collaborations too often represent a narrow range of local interests. Savage et al. (1991) argues it is important to address all stakeholders in the environment and move them from less favourable positions to more favourable ones. In place brand management, this would mean to move peripheral stakeholders closer to the core of the brand and avoid a narrow view. Sheehan et al. (2007) has found evidence for the use of Savage et al.'s typology of stakeholders in a destination branding context, as destination marketing organisations perceive stakeholders according to their potential to threat or cooperate. Place brand management, thus, needs to be seen as an on-going and dynamic process with a long-term commitment in order to prevent dissatisfaction in the environment. Thus, it could be argued that place brand management and stakeholder management share the core assumption about "*overseeing relationships that are critical to an organisation's success*" (Savage et al. 1991: 62).

Place brand management needs to reconfigure its focus to the perceptions of the stakeholders through the acknowledgement of the consumer-based brand equity concept, corporate branding's focus on umbrella brands and the shift to a service-dominant logic. This means that stakeholders' place needs and wants should be in focus. This is in agreement with stakeholder theory's assumption that stakeholder groups are defined in accordance with their legitimate stake/interest in an organisation's activity. In a place branding context, the stake is related to the place. This is because place identity is created through the relationships and interaction among stakeholders. They collectively produce the place (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). In line with this, stakeholder theory argues that social identity plays a key role in stakeholders' actions towards organisations. Actions are done in order to affirm collective identity (Crane & Ruebottom 2011). In this regard, all entities within a place are stakeholders and place brand managers, thus, needs to treat involvement of place stakeholders as an end in itself. This would enable the co-creation aspects of the service-dominant logic because both disciplines have logics working towards optimal sharing and pooling of resources and value.

The legitimacy aspect is essential in both disciplines. However, stakeholder theory acknowledges that legitimacy can exist without power. In other words, stakeholders with legitimate interests in an organisation may not have the power to make use of that legitimate stake. In addition, a stakeholder may not be aware that they have a legitimate claim towards an organisation (Mitchell et al. 1997). Place brand management should take this into account. Stakeholders may lack access points, as the overall brand is too far away from their own perceptions of the place and themselves. In this regard, the brand architecture concept with sub-brands becomes crucial in aligning diverse stakeholders under the same heading. Through this costumer-oriented approach, place brand management would thoroughly incorporate stakeholder theory's focus on moving peripheral stakeholders closer to the activities of the organisation and achieve legitimacy.

As argued by Stubbs and Warnaby (2015), there is a difficulty of aligning stakeholder theory's notion of a focal organisation with place brand management. However, both disciplines highlight the need for leadership of some kind. They both argue that managers should function as facilitators and moderators of relationships alleviating differences and push collaboration. Thereby, there is a need for a central entity in both disciplines. Both also highlight that managers should be seen as stakeholders themselves and their subjective attitudes could have an effect on the management of relationships. It can be argued from both disciplines that managers should use a broad stakeholder definition continuously through the place brand management, as continuous network establishment is central to stakeholders' measurement of success (Palmer 1998).

2.1.4 Hypotheses Development

Based on the elaborated theory and concepts above, the following seven hypotheses are developed. As written above, the complexity of the stakeholder environment is evident in the two disciplines and as argued this can lead to a narrow stakeholder focus and the possibility that one stakeholder group's interests are satisfied at the expense of others. This leads to the fist hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1**: Having a formal stakeholder engagement and place brand management structure can help to avoid a narrow stakeholder focus.

The structure should be flexible enough to enable potential stakeholders to engage in the place branding effort. As argued above, this is only possible if the structure is based on the assumption that stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process. Therefore, the second hypothesis will propose that:

> **Hypothesis 2**: A broad and dynamic stakeholder view has a positive effect on stakeholder engagement and place brand management.

Continuous stakeholder engagement is, thus, to be seen as the core of place branding and not as a means to brand the place. By acknowledging this, co-creation could be enhanced and hypothesis three deals with this:

> **Hypothesis 3**: Seeing stakeholder engagement as a goal in itself has a positive effect on the co-creation of the place brand.

As outlined above, both disciplines address the importance of a central entity taking the role as moderator of relationships. This should result in stronger collaborations across diverse actors. With this in mind, hypothesis four states that:

> **Hypothesis 4**: Having a central entity functioning as a network facilitator has a positive effect on stakeholder engagement.

If stakeholder involvement is an end in itself, place brand management needs to address stakeholders' specific place perceptions and needs as elaborated above. In addition, the central entity requires a tool to address the stakeholders individually. Thus, hypothesis five states that:

> **Hypothesis 5**: Making use of the brand architecture concept with sub-brands for each target group increases stakeholder engagement and place brand legitimacy.

Allowing for each stakeholder to have their individual access point should enhance their participation both with regards to providing and making use of collective place resources. Hypothesis six states that:

> **Hypothesis 6**: A high degree of interaction between stakeholders has a positive effect on the measurements of success in place brand management.

As argued above, measuring success in place brand management, thus, comes down to addressing stakeholder perceptions and, especially, if they can identify with the brand and each other. Hence, the seventh hypothesis is that:

> **Hypotheses 7**: Deriving place brand legitimacy from the collective place identity will increase identification and satisfaction with the place brand.

2.2 Methodology

The thesis' research design is grounded in qualitative research given the explorative nature of the research question. As outlined, the thesis aims to explore underlying assumptions for how stakeholder engagement is realised in Danish municipalities' branding and, thereby, attitudes embedded in place brand management are essential to address. Qualitative research is a useful way to explore the stakeholders' understanding of the processes and structures taking place across cases (Virgo & De Chernatony 2006). Furthermore, qualitative research is flexible in its approach to knowledge building because the phases of data collection and of data analysis take place interchangeable (Andersen 2006: 190; Winn 2001). Both qualitative and quantitative methods aim at identifying "*clear and consistent patterns of phenomena by a systematic process*" (Marshall & Roosman 1989: 140 as cited in Winn 2001: 142) while qualitative research is "*an umbrella phrase that refers to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of interview, participants observation, and document data in order to understand and describe meanings, relationships, and patterns*" (Tracy 2013: 36) contrary to quantitative research's focus on numbers (Andersen 2006). Qualitative research is about exploring what people actually do. The thesis has the aim of putting the perceptions of stakeholders at the forefront of place brand management and the use of a qualitative method is perfectly suited for this purpose and problem formulation. The qualitative case study research design is chosen, as it allows for in-depth investigation of real-life situations and "*tests views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice*" (Flyvbjerg 2006: 235). Qualitative case study research is an important method for accumulation of knowledge and, through this, it can provide novel insights. In addition, the thesis' novelty is that it aims to take a multiple-case approach within the place branding strand and using the case study research design provides useful methodological remedies for achieving reliability and validity. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), the purpose of the qualitative interview is to understand the day-to-day life from the interviewee's perspective. The qualitative semi-structured interviews used in this thesis are, thus, performed in order to collect detailed descriptions of the interviewee's life-world as part of the overall qualitative case study research. Thus, the interviews function as the primary data while official documents, news articles etc. function as secondary data (Andersen 2006: 151).

2.2.1 Theory of Science and Paradigmatic Discussions

Tracy (2013: 2-4) introduces three central concepts that underlie a qualitative research project: self-reflexivity, context and thick description. Self-reflexivity refers to considerations on how researchers' past experiences, point of views and roles affect the researchers' interactions with and interpretations of the research scene. Thus, all researchers have a point of view or a way of seeing the world. Rather than framing this negatively, qualitative researchers acknowledge this and even celebrate this because of its potential positive contribution to investigations. Context refers to qualitative researchers' ability to submerge into a

scene and make sense of it. It is about gathering every little fact and using the context to create new expanded knowledge. In this regard, empirical and theoretical resources are needed in order to understand particular phenomena and the two are interwoven Thick description is related to context and refers to researchers' being immersed in a culture, investigating "*the particular circumstances present in that scene, and only then move toward grander statements and theories*" (ibid: 3). Qualitative research requires a detailed description in order to produce meaning. The thesis' is founded on these concepts, as it has a holistic approach to knowledge building when it tries to align two theoretical strands, provide empirical evidence for the brand architecture concept and acknowledges existing knowledge while still trying to expand it. Furthermore, the thesis adheres to Tracy's approach to research suggesting that "*qualitative data can be systematically gathered, organized, interpreted, analysed and communicated so as to address real world concerns*" (ibid 2013: 4). This is seen in the thesis' extensive use of a case study research design, hypotheses development as well as the constructed themes used in the interview guide.

Paradigms are an essential part of any study understood as "*preferred ways of understanding reality, building knowledge, and gathering information about the world*" (ibid: 38). Traditionally, researchers have firmly positioned themselves within one paradigm. However, recently, divisions between paradigms have blurred, as contemporary researchers frequently "*use concepts and tools from various paradigmatic approaches*" (ibid: 47) depending on the aims of the study. Still, it should be noted that choosing one paradigm can exclude another. With this in mind, the following will revolve around the paradigms of positivism, post-positivism and interpretivism.

Positivism assumes that true reality exist and can be discovered (Tracy 2013), theory should be deductive and that research is objective and value-free (Henderson 2011). In this regard, research is conducted in order to observe, measure, predict empirical phenomena and build tangible knowledge (Tracy 2013: 39). The objective reality can be revealed by the use of correct methods and by applying these methods in a correct manner often through hypotheses development and testing. Post-positivism tries to amend positivism. It acknowledges that research should aim for the objective reality and pursue casual explanations across empirical patterns (Tracy 2013). However, it believes that the understanding of reality is biased (ibid.) referring to the researcher's theoretical propositions, prior knowledge, background and values that affect what is being observed (Henderson 2011). Thus, aiming for the objective reality is preferred while acknowledging that it is difficult to reach. In this regard, biases are seen as liabilities which need to be corrected or minimised. Often, this is done by triangulation – referring to the "*use of multiple types and sources of data, diverse methods of collection, various theoretical frames…*" (Tracy 2013: 40). In this way, a continuous critic of the researcher's own background takes place in search for validity and generalisation (see more below). Interpretivism is in contrast to positivism, as it denies the existence of objective reality (Tracy 2013; Cohen & Crabtree 2006). It assumes that "*reality and knowledge are constructed and*

reproduced through communication, interaction, and practice" (Tracy 2013: 40). Thus, the researcher is a mediator of knowledge. The focus is, thus, on multiple meanings, multiple participants and contextual processes. In this regard, it is essential to analyse "*social action from the actor's standpoint*" (ibid: 41).

The thesis is informed both by the paradigms of positivism and interpretivism while it mainly adheres to the approach of post-positivism. As described, lines between paradigms have recently blurred and post-positivism somehow takes a stand between the two opposites of positivism and interpretivism. It is a paradigm "*that can move positivism from a narrow perspective into a more encompassing way to examine real world problems. Post-positivism emphasises meanings, not unlike interpretivism, and seeks to explicate social concerns*" (Henderson 2011). The thesis strives for the objective reality by systematically exploring multiple cases and multiple place brand stakeholders' perceptions. It does this by acknowledging prior theoretical propositions from two theoretical strands while still making use of an iterative process where empirical evidence inform its propositions. In addition, it has a strong emphasis on the methodological remedies of case study research and on triangulation of data to pursue reliability, validity and generalisations. As noted by Henderson (2011), "*the value of post-positivism is the representation of a narrative that balances personal and professional experiences and theoretical interpretations with a compelling story. Post-positivism enables researchers to be reflexive about their position related to a topic that they find compelling*". Having this outlook allows the thesis to address "*multiple interpretations of reality*" (ibid: 343) while being able to systematically categorize them by the correct use of methods.

2.2.2 The Explorative Study and the Iterative Process

The thesis begins with the formulation of the overall research question and the wording of this research question signifies that knowledge on "how stakeholder engagement in Danish municipality branding is realised" is lacking and, thus, the aim is to address this and explain how this influences place brand management in general. Following this, the thesis can be labelled as an explorative case study, as it seeks to address less known conditions and phenomena (Andersen 2006; Yin 1998). The aim of the explorative study is to formulate interesting points and questions which can be more closely examined in future research. The thesis, thus, aims to provide a broad description of the conditions as possible. In addition, the explorative approach is also significant in the thesis' aim to move towards an alignment place branding and stakeholder theory. However, it does not mean the thesis is without any theoretical propositions (Yin 1998: 236). As the thesis starts with the overall research question revolving around stakeholder engagement and place brand management, it takes its beginning in these two theoretical strands. Therefore, the previous theoretical review is used as a guiding foundation for hypotheses development, the appropriate case study research (i.e. case selection), the development of the interview guide as well as the empirical analysis and discussion. The development of hypotheses is an important part of the explorative case study (Andersen 2006: 21; Yin 2009:

138), as the hypotheses provide focus to the overall research question and, thereby, also provide a needed structure for the study in order to avoid that the explorative case study goes in different directions. This should maintain the quality of the study ensuring that the new knowledge can be categorised and reproduced.

By taking an explorative case study approach, the thesis is also guided by the iterative process (Eisenhardt 1989; Miles & Huberman 1994). Different approaches can be assigned to research: Some researchers choose a specific topic which fascinates them without having any expectations of the following process. This "*open-ended approach is particularly worthwhile for brand new researchers who are perfectly content studying 'whatever happens*" (Tracy 2013: 8). Other researchers start from well-known phenomena, for example, in order to follow a distinct research trail. They start by defining the research area and, then, choose the scene to investigate. The iterative process is located as a medium between these two approaches, as "*the researcher alternates between considering existing theories and research interests on the one hand, emergent qualitative data on the other*" (ibid: 8). The researcher starts by stating an overall idea, propose different research locations and, finally, become more specific about the phenomena to be examined. Thus, the process is a "*constant iteration backward and forward between steps*" (Eisenhardt 1989). The thesis has followed this approach, as the overall idea is to investigate stakeholder engagement in place brand management (as put forward in the research question) while still being open to how the specific focus should unfold. By addressing theoretical strands from both place branding and stakeholder management, an overview of the current trends is outlined and importantly which areas need further research. By acknowledging the need to put stakeholder perceptions at the forefront of place branding, qualitative interviews are chosen as an important tool. From this, cases with different approaches to stakeholder engagement are chosen on the basis of a review of Danish municipalities' branding efforts. Empirical data from the cases, then, informs the existing literature and provides guidance for how to structure the theoretical framework and narrows the focus of the thesis towards an argumentation for the brand architecture concept. The cross-case comparison is then used to inform the hypotheses development, as the diverging or converging empirical data provides insights on how to align place branding and stakeholder theory. By making use of this iterative and the hypothetical-deductive approach, existing knowledge on the topic is acknowledged while still aiming to supplement the knowledge as much as possible.

2.2.3 Case Study Research

Yin characterises case study research as a "*complex and multifaceted*" practice (Yin 1998: 229) but also that case study research can be fruitful investigation of phenomena and context (Yin 2009: 24). In addition, Yin argues that researches can derive facts from the case objectively, that theory-driven investigations are most suitable and that multiple-case studies should be based on replication logic (ibid). The thesis' basis is formed by these assumptions. It takes its beginning in the theories on place branding and stakeholder management

from which it develops hypotheses to be tested through empirical inquiries into multiple Danish municipalities by using replicable qualitative interview guides. As outlined, these different steps of the case study method are performed through an iterative process which allows the thesis to be dynamic in its approach to knowledge building while still maintaining confidence in the results. Often, case study research is criticised for having problems with generalisation, subjectivity and validation and that it can only be used for preparing the later "real" study (Flyvbjerg 2006). However, Flyvbjerg puts case knowledge at the forefront of human learning by stating that "*it is only because of experience with cases that one can move from being a beginner to being an expert*" (ibid: 222). Case study research is, thereby, a very important knowledge building practice providing insights which push human learning and expertise.

As the thesis began with a wish to investigate how stakeholder engagement is actually carried out in place branding practices, it is important to articulate a research question providing room for different approaches while still maintaining a clear focus. One difficulty of case study research is the abundance of data (Yin 1998) and a focused research question will help the researcher to use it efficiently (Eisenhardt 1989: 536). Thus, the thesis' research question is broad enough to enable selection of various municipalities and open to different approaches to stakeholder engagement while still maintaining that stakeholders and place brands need to be managed which is derived from the theoretical propositions. The research question is, then, used as a reference point for the rest of thesis. In this regard, the thesis' research question already makes use of the concept of triangulation. So-called triangulation combining either different data or data collection techniques to clarify the same phenomenon or problem is used to provide different perspectives while still aiming to align these (Yin 1998). This will result in a more robust thesis, as triangulation will overcome problems of biases and validity. The thesis uses triangulation when it addresses the municipalities' own material as well as news articles with regards to selecting cases and, then, compares this data to the thesis' theoretical propositions and, afterwards, the data from the qualitative interviews. As the theoretical propositions are signified in the hypotheses, these function as strong guidelines for data collection and analysis while also being practical constructs for the triangulation carried out through the thesis.

An important part of case study research is the selection of cases, as generalisability "*can be increased by the strategic selection of cases*" (Flyvbjerg 2006: 229). Cases should be chosen for their validity rather than their representativeness (Flyvbjerg 2006; Andersen 2006) in order to produce deeper insights. However, cases are diffuse, as the boundaries between the case and its context are difficult to identify. Case study research has the advantage of being able to deal with contextual conditions and, thus, allows the researcher to start a study without knowing the precise boundaries of the case (Yin 1998). Thus, the thesis acknowledges that when choosing the municipalities to investigate and the informants to interview, their contextual entwinement could become an important factor for how place brand management took place. Therefore, the thesis was

rather open to adjustments along the way (i.e. additional important interviewees could be highlighted as interviews took place). However, the thesis is from the beginning designed as a multiple case study across Danish municipalities, as this "*would strengthen or broaden the analytic generalizations*" (Yin 1998: 239). As stated earlier, the thesis' novelty lays in its exploration across multiple cases. Furthermore, the thesis have the interrelated aims of aligning place branding and stakeholder theory as well as providing empirical evidence for the need to a re-shift focus when addressing success measurements of place branding. In order to provide insights which can be extended to others place branding efforts, the choice of cases is based on maximum variance which means selecting cases that are different on selected dimensions. If consistent patterns occur across the different municipalities, it should be relevant for others as well.

	PLACE 1: BORNHOLM	PLACE 2: LYNGBY-TAARBÆK
LOCATION	Geographically "cut off" from the rest of Denmark (located in the Baltic Sea)	Greater Copenhagen
SIZE	40.215 residents (2014)	54.237 residents (2014)
BRANDING BUILT UPON	Tourism, geographical location, nature, green technology	Education, university (DTU), global workforce, knowledge and know-how
STRATEGIC ORGANISATION	Mixed: Business Center Bornholm and Bornholm Municipality	Private: Secretariat and board
INITIAL STAKEHOLDER GROUPS	Narrow Green technology firms	Moderately narrow DTU (University), educational institutions and larger local knowledge-based firms
FOUNDED	2007-2008	2011-2012
FUNDING	Public (through Bornholm Growth Forum)	Private (membership fees + fundraising)
BUDGET	-	3 million + fundraising (project specific)
EMPLOYEES	1-10 (Business Center Bornholm)	4 + consultants (secretariat); plan to hire more in the future + 7 board members
PHASE	Ended (about to redefine and restructure)	-
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	Platform for exchange (no specific structure or restrictions)	Membership association Networking within networks
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION	Low	Moderate
KNOWLEDGE SHARING	Very specific: green technology	Specific: knowledge and intangibles
IN-GROUP/OUT-GROUP RELEVANCE	High (green technology)	Low Located in Lyngby-Taarbæk + inclusion of peripheral stakeholders
IMPORTANCE OF EXTERNAL TARGET GROUPS	High	High

Table 1: Case Characteristics

As table 1 shows, different dimensions are outlined based on both general characteristics and the theoretical proposition of the thesis. Flyvbjerg (2006) highlights the dimensions: size, form of organisation, location and budget. These dimensions differ across the two cases. Interestingly, place 1 (Bornholm – Bright Green Island) has no current budget compared to place 2. However, the reason for this is that the place brand management is currently being reconfigured as the initial planned period has ended. This highlights one important reason for choosing exactly these cases: Place 1 (Bornholm – Bright Green Island) has carried out their branding since 2007 and place 2 (Lyngby-Taarbæk – City of Knowledge and Urban Development) since 2011. Thus, the place branding efforts are located across various phases of the branding lifecycle. The strategic consideration for this is that it allows for the thesis to take a dynamic look on Danish

municipalities' place brand management while supporting the maximum variance case selection. In addition, the dimensions 'Strategic organisation', 'Initial stakeholder groups', 'Funding', 'Organisational structure', 'Citizen participation', 'In-group/out-group relevance' and 'Importance of external target groups' are mostly informed by the theoretical propositions of place branding and stakeholder theory. Some of these could be filled-in based on the review of official material while others would be completed with data from the interviews. However, all dimensions and data were triangulated across the different sources of evidence and maintained or revised accordingly. The cases differ highly in their organisational structure with place 1 having no specific structure or restrictions for the place branding effort while place 2 is structured around a membership association with membership fees. Thereby, the places differ in their organisational structure for stakeholder engagement. In addition, the two places have different strategic organisations with place 1 having a mixed central entity, while place two has a private central entity. Finally, the places are also wide-ranging in citizen participation going from low at place 1 to moderate at place 2. From these differences, it can be argued that the cases differ both in fundamental dimensions (as described by Flyvbjerg) and dimensions based on the thesis' theoretical propositions. This should enable the thesis' results to be extended to other municipalities on a valid foundation (Eisenhardt 1989; Flyvbjerg 2006; Yin 1998).

	PLACE 1: BORNHOLM	PLACE 2: LYNGBY-TAARBÆK
STRATEGIC ORGANISATION	**Bornholm Municipality** Allan Westh, Labour Market Chief	**City of Knowledge and Urban Development** Caroline Arends, CEO
STAKEHOLDER	**Business Center Bornholm** Fredrik Romberg, CEO	**The Technical University of Denmark** Claus Nielsen, University Director & Chairman of CKUD Board
STAKEHOLDER	**Co-Creative** Søren Femmer Jensen, CEO	**Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality** Tina Reinicke, Climate Coordinator and Coordinator of Network on Climate and Green Technology
STAKEHOLDER	**Greenabout A/S** Per-Martin Boesen, CEO	**Visma Denmark** Sabrina Hansen, HR Consultant
PERIPHERAL STAKEHOLDER	**Destination Bornholm** Dorthe Lind Thornton, Head of Marketing	**Lyngby Boldklub** Kristian Maimann, Head of Communications

Table 2: Interview Informants

In addition, the places have embedded units of analyses, as specific interviewees are chosen strategically as well. At both places, the strategic organisation is interviewed, three stakeholders are interviewed and a peripheral stakeholder is interviewed (see table 2). The stakeholders are chosen from their involvement in the place branding effort both based on initial review of official documents and news articles but also compared with the data from the interviews. For example, at place 2, Visma Denmark was highlighted in the interview

with CEO Caroline Arends, as Visma Denmark recently had relocated to Lyngby-Taarbæk in order to participate in the place brand. The peripheral stakeholders are chosen with regards to their importance in the local community though not being a part of the place brand. Interestingly, Lyngby Boldklub had recently initiated the work to become a part of the place brand (place 2) while Destination Bornholm (place 1) continued as a peripheral stakeholder. Being open to new informants in the empirical data collection process is supported by the explorative and iterative approach of the thesis. Having these embedded entities as informants allows the thesis to make comparisons within-cases as well as cross-cases (Eisenhardt 1989).

The quality of a case study should be tested continuously (Yin 1998: 242-243) and the thesis does this by having multiple sources of evidence, using a replication logic across the places and developing a case study protocol. The protocol is an important tool for enabling reliability of the case study. A good case study protocol contains study questions, procedures and rules for data collection (ibid: 246). Bearing the replication logic in mind, the thesis' interview guide was written down with comments on how to reframe them in the field and across cases. The basic questions are considered as guidelines for the researcher and could, thus, be revised in accordance with the interviewee's context. For example, the wording in the questions across all two cases is different, as the places are at different phases of the place brand management. Simultaneously, the data were organised in a case study database with information from both documents and interviews. This allowed for highlighting of topics and the within-case and cross-case comparison to take place immediately (ibid: 1998). This supported a strong line of evidence as data were compared with the initial research question and the hypotheses in order to develop a logical argumentation through the thesis. In addition, data analysis should be flexible enough to pursue new insights as they are discovered in the diverse data (Yin 1998; Flyvbjerg 2006). The continuous critical approach to data should support the validity and reliability of the thesis.

2.2.4 Structure of Interview Guide

Ten qualitative interviews are part of the empirical data in the thesis' case study. The interviews were conducted in Danish to create a comfortable interview setting and, therefore, the wordings of the interviewees will be paraphrased in English throughout the analytical part. Direct quotes are translated as truthfully and close to the original Danish wording as possible. The interview guide is prepared based on the study's research question and its theoretical propositions in order to answer the problem formulation and provide various insights on the issues related to those theoretical propositions. Therefore, the interview guide is structured in themes informed by the alignment of place branding and stakeholder theory, however, keeping in mind that some of the themes overlap. The interviews in this thesis are semi-structured as knowledge on the topic is gained beforehand while being open to new and different viewpoints that the informants highlight (Kvale & Brinkman 2009: 130). When conducting interviews, it is important to create

"*a logistically feasible and comfortable interaction that will encourage an engaging, honest and fun dialogue*" (Tracy 2013: 159). Therefore, the interviewer attempts to build a nice and trustful atmosphere where the interviewee feels comfortable with sharing experiences, attitudes and feelings openly. Thus, the interview guide is comprised of dynamic questions easing the formality. In addition, the questions are kept relatively short and simple in order to make it easier for the interviewee to answer (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 130-134). This is done by operationalisation of theoretical concepts into themes and subsequent questions (Andersen 2006: 76) which can be easily comprehended by the interviewee. Throughout the whole interview, the interviewer tries not to influence the interviewee in order to be open to new and unexpected findings while still being aware of the propositions which the interview aims to provide insight to (ibid: 168). In this way, the data collection process continues the iterative approach as theoretical propositions and data inform each other dynamically. The interview is, thus, seen as an exchange of information (Tracy 2013) where knowledge can be extracted through the conversation.

The interview guide has six themes and is structured according to the establishment of a dynamic and logical interview situation (cf. appendix I). The themes are the following: 1) general characteristics, 2) stakeholder attributes, 3) involvement, 4) influence, 5) commitment and 6) satisfaction and success. The themes are all derived from topics highlighted in the theoretical review and, thus, uphold the important line of evidence starting with the research question (Eisenhardt 1989). The first theme is 'general characteristics' and is both used to make the interviewee feel confident in answering the questions and to provide basic data on the place brand management. This could later be used for triangulation. The second theme, 'stakeholder attributes', is used to describe how stakeholder groups are perceived both by the strategic organisation and by stakeholders themselves. The third theme, 'involvement', addresses the stakeholders' involvement in the place branding either through their decision power or interaction with other stakeholders. The fourth theme, 'influence', addresses the needs and wants of the stakeholders and how these are acknowledged in the place brand management structures. The fifth theme, 'commitment', is used to provide insights on the stakeholders' alignment with the place brand and other stakeholders. Finally, the sixth theme, 'success and satisfaction', is used to extract if there was an agreement on the success measurements of the place brand and its management which is highly relevant for the thesis' focus on how success should be measured in place branding. The themes are used as reference points in the analysis part of the case study, as this continues the "*categorising, summarising, condensing or recombining*" (Yin 1998: 251) both in within-case and cross-case comparisons. Having these themes as reference points will allow patterns to emerge before generalisations are carried out and, once again, support a logical sequence from the thesis' theoretical propositions to its final results.

2.2.5 Methodological Reflections

Reliability and validity are two key concepts in any research project. Reliability refers to the consistency and accuracy of the study's findings while validity refers to the strength and justification of the results (Andersen 2006: 80-82). Qualitative research has often been criticised for being biased compared to the proclaimed objectivity of quantitative data (Andersen 2006: 210). However, qualitative data can in fact be both reliable and valid. By having a post-positivistic approach, the thesis aims for objective reality while acknowledging that biases are inherent in qualitative research. Therefore, the thesis uses case study research remedies extensively, adheres to the concept of triangulation, maintains a solid chain of evidence and has a transparent database (cf. appendix II). Thus, it takes a continuous critical approach to knowledge building. Generalisation from the cases is inherently related to the validity of the research. The validity is drawn from the thesis' emphasis on a logical chain of evidence from research questions to final results and its multiple-case approach using cases with maximum variation. The logical chain of evidence is signified in the sequential moves from research question, hypotheses development, case analysis and finally hypotheses testing. The hypotheses are, thus, available for testing in other contexts. Transparency is thus maintained by explicitly stating which constructs the empirical evidence are tested against. Furthermore, the thesis aims for analytical generalisation (Yin 1998) by analysing similarities and differences between cases. Thereby, the results can be used to investigate other place branding contexts.

As the thesis has a post-positivistic approach, the researcher thinks carefully about how research is experienced in a certain context both "*despite of and because of who they are*" (Tracy 2013). The strength of the thesis, thus, lays in its iterative, holistic and critical approach to the exploration of place branding in Danish municipalities. The thesis acknowledges prior knowledge while pushing for new insights from practitioners interchangeably.

Chapter 3: Analysis

The following chapter covers the analytic part of the thesis. The analysis is structured according to the themes used in the interview guide informed by the theoretical propositions. Consequently, the analysis begins with a detailed description of the two cases in order to unfold the "*narrative*" of the cases (Flyvbjerg 2006) which is essential to grasp the large amount of data. The analysis sequentially digs deeper as each theme unfolds. The analysis deals both with within-case and cross-case comparison. Within-case comparisons deal with how the place brand management is perceived by the strategic organisations, involved stakeholders and peripheral stakeholders within the case. This will be pooled across cases in the cross-case comparison of similarities and differences.

3.1 Characteristics of Cases

Bornholm – Bright Green Island (BGI) took its beginning in 2007 as a strategy to increase the inflow of citizens to the island (P1_Westh). In the beginning, it had two main strategic organisations: Business Center Bornholm and the Regional Municipality of Bornholm with financial support from Bornholm Growth Forum (Business Center Bornholm 2013). However, it quickly changed to become a concrete branding strategy primarily focused on actors within the green energy sector (P1_Romberg; P1_Westh). Noticeably, it was regarded as a business strategy among the participants, as highlighted in the interview with Per-Martin Boesen from Greenabout A/S. The actors in the green energy sector were well-structured and, thus, the branding strategy revolved around them in the beginning. Therefore, Business Center Bornholm was the primary strategic organisation with 10-15 employees working with BGI at its highest (P1_Boesen). The target groups were primarily centred on sustainable business (local, national and international), educational and research institutions, as BGI aimed at branding Bornholm as an exploratory for sustainable energy. However, it was also presented as a branding strategy resting on four cornerstones: Sustainable Business, Good Living, Smart Island and Green Destination (Business Center Bornholm 2013). Thereby, it signals a broad strategy targeting many different stakeholders (i.e. citizens and the tourism sector) with a comprehensive focus on the unique environment and location of the island.

Currently, BGI is about to be reconfigured, as the initial planned phase has ended. Allan Westh, Labour Market Chief at the Regional Municipality of Bornholm, highlights some retrospective developments and future directions for BGI. Many of the changes having taken place on Bornholm has not been regarded as part of BGI, or at least, not verbalised as being brought about through BGI. Rather, changes are caused by general developments in society. In this regard, the communicative efforts have not been efficient in coupling BGI with general tendencies in society and telling the story of the BGI results (P1_Jensen; P1_Westh). Referring to this, the reconfiguration of BGI, currently being discussed between different stakeholders, will probably be structured around an independent secretariat as strategic organisation.

Something which is also asked for by the different stakeholders interviewed. This secretariat should be facilitating and coordinating especially in connection with networking. The budget will continue to be drawn from Bornholm Growth Forum. In addition, one important change which has occurred during the period from 2007-2015 is that the label as strategic organisation has shifted from Business Center Bornholm to the Regional Municipality of Bornholm. The municipality is responsible for the reconfiguring of the branding strategy. Interestingly, the stakeholders argue collectively that particularly the municipality should have a stronger role (P1_Boesen; P1_Jensen; P1_Romberg) and show stronger political support for BGI. Business Center Bornholm is now regarded as a stakeholder with its own project under the BGI place brand. Following this, it can be argued that both the strategic organisation and the stakeholders call for a stronger focal entity in the place brand management as argued continuously both in place brand and stakeholder management (Kavaratzis 2013: Mitchell et al. 1997; Palmer 1998; Stubbs & Warnaby 2015).

Noticeably, both the municipality and Business Center Bornholm address that BGI has not been embedded among the citizens of Bornholm (P1_Westh; P1_Romberg). In addition, the tourism sector has not at all used BGI and, thus, a major stakeholder in the local community is not a part of it (P1_Thornthon). The strategic organisation agrees with the interviewed stakeholders that among the actors within the green energy sector there has been a strong cooperation. Within their agenda, a common ground and sense of community has existed (P1_Boesen). However, these rather informal cooperative structures have been limited to that particular stakeholder group. Collectively, the involved parties address that BGI needs a more formal structure engaging a more diverse set of stakeholders, if BGI is aiming to become an encompassing place brand. In this regard, it is relevant to address how place brand management is about aligning diverse stakeholder interests (Braun et. al 2013; Zenker & Erfgen 2014) supported by stakeholder theory's focus on the intrinsic value of all stakeholders (Clarkson 1995; Donaldson & Preston 1995). As argued in the theoretical review, place brand management needs a stakeholder engagement structure.

Lyngby-Taarbæk – City of Knowledge and Urban Development (CKUD) was initiated in 2011 when seven organisations located in Lyngby-Taarbæk started to address how synergies between them could be reached in order to develop the municipality as a knowledge- and university city (P2_Arends; Lyngby-Taarbæk Kommune 2011; P2_Nielsen). The aim was to use the Danish Technical University (DTU) located in Lyngby-Taarbæk municipality as a key driver for attracting knowledge-based firms to the location and provide better synergies between the ones already located in Lyngby-Taarbæk. As highlighted by Claus Nielsen, University Director at DTU and Chairman of the CKUD Board, common difficulties faced by local organisations were put at the forefront of the initial process. For example, many organisations had difficulties with the inclusion of expats in the local society either because housing facilitates were lacking or institutions for children were insufficient. In sum, there were some common factors pushing the stakeholders towards

each other. From the beginning, the place brand management has been centred on a membership association established on financial contributions (P2_Arends). This structure has continued and each member pays a fee per year according to their number of employees. In addition, the membership association takes a dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement as it is open to anyone wishing to participate. As commented by Caroline Arends, CEO of the CKUD Secretariat, everyone is invited to join the community and, thereby, figure out what joint value can steam from the participation. Furthermore, the label as strategic organisation and, thereby, the function as place brand manager was located at a secretariat. Currently, this secretariat has four employees and a number of external consultants (P2_Arends). Furthermore, the secretariat plans to hire more in the future through internships and specific project coordinators. An important part of the secretariat's work revolves around the profiling of CKUD, communicative efforts, strategy development and implementation as well as meetings with potential members. Currently, the budget is 3 million based on memberships fees from stakeholders. This is extended by fundraising for specific projects as they are developed. Thus, the secretariat functions as a strong focal entity for the place brand management which allows it to take on the task of developing "relationships with stakeholders" as highlighted by stakeholder theory (Freeman et al. 2004; Rowley 1997).

Another interesting feature of CKUD is that it revolves around different networks under the CKUD umbrella-brand (P2_Hansen; P2_Maimann; P2_Reinicke). Currently, seven networks exist: Climate and Green Technology, Internationalisation, Entrepreneurship, Urban Planning and Trade, Communication, SMEs and School and Education. These networks function as the access point for the many different stakeholders in Lyngby-Taarbæk and each network has one or two coordinators (P2_Reinicke). The networks arrange meetings 2-4 times per year and the coordinators are responsible for planning and facilitating the meetings as well as having the primary contact with the CKUD secretariat. Sabrina Hansen, HR Consultant at Visma Denmark, and Kristian Maimann, Head of Communications at Lyngby Boldklub, both highlight that they spend around 10-15 hours per month as part of their network membership. The networks are, thus, a major part of the stakeholders work with the overall place branding. In these networks, stakeholders can become a part of the local community, support the local community and network with like-minded (P2_Hansen). In this regard, the networks are the operational basis for the CKUD umbrella-brand. It provides an access point for the stakeholders, as the overall brand becomes more concrete in relation to the stakeholders' own place perceptions and needs. Interestingly, this has also allowed the peripheral stakeholder Lyngby Boldklub to join the place brand even though many do not think of a soccer club as a knowledge-based firm (P2_Maimann). The structural framework of CKUD provides concrete sub-brands for each target group still working under the umbrella brand (Dinnie 2011; Zenker & Braun 2010). This signals a dynamic place brand management approach with broad stakeholder engagement as an ongoing activity (Clarkson 1995; Savage et al. 1991).

In all, it is interesting how Bornholm – BGI and Lyngby-Taarbæk – CKUD differ with regards to the structure of their place brand management. BGI has no formal structure for stakeholder engagement while CKUD from the start has implemented a membership association and sub-networks for each target-group. Now, as BGI is being reconfigured, there is wish to establish a focal entity which can function as place brand manager and a wish to engage more stakeholders (i.e. citizens). In this regard, it is noticeable that BGI has had a narrow focus in their stakeholder outlook while CKUD actually has pursued a broader stakeholder inclusion and actually succeeded with it. This is strongly exemplified in Lyngby Boldklub taking part in the place brand. Lyngby Boldklub has 1200 members (P2_Maimann) and it could be argued that its membership of CKUD provide a voice for a broad range of citizens. It could, therefore, be questioned whether BGI has "*represented a narrow range of local interests*" (Stubbs & Warnaby 2015) and not been open to others with legitimate interests (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Mitchell et al. 1997). However, it should be noted that the BGI stakeholders within the green energy sector has benefitted greatly from the place brand, as their rather informal cooperation has increased significantly.

3.2 Stakeholder Characteristics

When the BGI interviewees highlight the stakeholder groups, it is noticeable that all mention the stakeholders within the green energy sector as the ones being strongly associated with the place brand (P1_Jensen; P1_Thornthon; P1_Westh). Furthermore, the three interviewed stakeholders who are involved in BGI associate themselves with the brand because of their work with sustainable or green energy. Business Center Bornholm works with a project on strategic energy planning (P1_Romberg), Co-Creative works with sustainable innovations programs (P1_Jensen) and Greenabout A/S works with electric shared cars (P1_Boesen). All of these stakeholders are a part of BGI because their core business areas are centred on sustainable and green energy. Actually, Greenabout A/S is a result of BGI, as the firm is built on BGI's aim to make Bornholm an exploratory for green technology and one of the founders are the former BGI brand ambassador at Business Center Bornholm. Per Martin-Boesen, CEO of Greenabout A/S, states that the geniality of BGI is that it is formulated in such a way that everyone can use it. There is no top-down control, it is a broad strategy while still having concrete goals to be reached and firms can relate to it and choose which concrete goals to work with. All in all, these stakeholders highlight the energy sector actors as the most important stakeholders in BGI. In addition, it should be noted that the former BGI brand ambassador, Lene Grønning, is highlighted as a major driver. Working at Business Center Bornholm, she pushed BGI forward and personified the place brand (P1_Boesen; P1_Romberg). It is highlighted that when she left Business Center Bornholm, there was no one to continue the work. Perhaps, this could explain why there has been shifting strategic organisations which is highlighted as one major problem (P1_Boesen; P1_Jensen). As highlighted by both place branding and stakeholder theory, there is a need for some kind of focal entity or leadership (Ford 2011; Kavaratzis 2013; Palmer 1998) which seeks to develop and manage relationships.

Savage et al. (1991) states that stakeholder theory is about "*overseeing relationships that are critical to an organisation's success*". It is important to address stakeholder expectations and develop relationships enabling sharing of value (Clarkson 1995; Freeman et al. 2004; Rowley 1997; Wolfe & Putler 2002). In this regard, it is noticeable that the interviewed peripheral stakeholder is not a part of BGI. Destination Bornholm is the place's tourism association comprising the entire tourism sector and a wide range of local businesses. Its overall aim is to increase tourism at the place and communicate the place to many different international markets. Furthermore, it provides project management resources for local collaborative ventures and takes part in political work with regards to the tourism sector (Destination Bornholm 2015; P1_Thornthon). Tourism is the place's second largest industry at the place (P1_Thornthon) and actually highlighted in one of the four cornerstones of BGI (Business Center Bornholm 2013). However, Destination Bornholm has not been a part of BGI (P1_Thornthon) even though some of the involved stakeholders highlight it as an important actor with regards to the overall branding of the place (P1_Boesen; P1_Jensen). In fact, Destination Bornholm has its own tourism branding strategy for the place. Dorthe Lind Thornton, Head of Marketing at Destination Bornholm, states that the organisation has not worked with BGI because the place brand has no relevance for their ultimate consumer. It is centred on the green energy sector and this is difficult to align with the place product offered to tourists. It should be noted that Thornton highlight BGI as being highly successful within that particular stakeholder group but it is difficult to develop a place brand comprising the entire place. With this in mind, it could be argued that a stakeholder with salience (Mitchell et al. 1997) is left out. Destination Bornholm both has power and legitimacy through its association with the entire tourism sector of the place and their resources. The urgency attribute is more difficult to ascribe to the organisation but perhaps the lack of this – conscious or unconscious – has resulted in its non-participation. Referring to Savage et al. (1991), the place brand management of BGI has not succeeded in transforming a less favourable stakeholder relationship to a more favourable one. Destination Bornholm could be labelled as a mixed-blessing stakeholder, as it is high on potential for either cooperation or threat. It comprises the second largest industry at the place and shares the aim of branding the place internationally. However, it works with a parallel branding strategy. In this regard, it is interesting that the strategic organisation actually highlights the need to integrate the tourism sector more in the reconfiguration of BGI (P1_Westh) which could diminish the potential for threat.

At Lyngby-Taarbæk, Caroline Arends states that CKUD is open to everyone located in Lyngby-Taarbæk municipality. As mentioned, the place brand management is very dynamic in its approach to stakeholder engagement. However, both the secretariat (strategic organisation) and stakeholders highlight DTU, local educational institutions, the municipality and larger firms (especially Microsoft) as the most important stakeholders (P2_Arends; P2_Nielsen; P2_Hansen; P2_Maimann). Having these organisations as an integral part of CKUD is highly benefitting for the place brand. Interestingly, Microsoft is currently relocating their

entire Danish organisation to Lyngby-Taarbæk because of the CKUD brand (Trolle 2014) and is already labelled as a strong stakeholder in the place brand. This is based on the fact that they already participate in different networks (P2_Maimann). These stakeholders form the foundation of the place brand. While acknowledging these stakeholders as highly important, as some of them are the initial members of the association, CKUD has a broader view on stakeholders. From the beginning, stakeholders have acknowledged that it should not be a municipal undertaking both that it should be embedded through financial and in-kind contributions from a diverse range of local organisations (P2_Nielsen). With this in mind, the place brand management becomes a continuous mobilisation exercise (P2_Nielsen) involving even more local organisations. As Caroline Arends states; "*members and potential members are the most important element*". The core focus is on how to create joint value in the community and include stakeholder who are essential for this, as highlighted by both Claus Nielsen, University Director at DTU and Chairman of the Board as well as by Tina Reinicke, Climate Coordinator at Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality and Coordinator of the Network on Climate and Green Technology. Interestingly, the peripheral stakeholder interviewed (Lyngby Boldklub) also sees the joint value creation as a major reason for joining CKUD. Membership of the association enables the stakeholder to make use of other stakeholders' resources which else would not have been available. Stakeholders come together in order to create a unique location where everybody benefits from the joint value creation. For example, Lyngby Boldklub held an event for potential sponsors with the participation of DTU, CKUD secretariat and the vice mayor. This is only possible if all parties acknowledge that everybody should contribute to the joint value creation in order to get something in return (P2_Maimann), as highlighted by discussions on co-creation (Payne et al. 2009; Sheehan et al. 2007; Warnaby & Medway 2015).

As mentioned, CKUD is primarily aiming at developing a knowledge- and university city (Otzen 2014). This requires a wide range of stakeholder taking part in the place brand management and their access points are the diverse networks. In spite of these networks having concrete themes, they also have a dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement. For example, the network on Climate and Green Technology is about to be reconfigured and become more focused (P2_Reinicke). The networks, thus, continuously develop along with its members' perspectives and place wants. However, Tina Reinicke also experiences that sometimes the network has difficulties with a too broad stakeholder group with differing interests. This has created a need to reconfigure it. Still, the main benefit of networks is that stakeholders easily can access each other's resources (P2_Reinicke) and all stakeholders are important. The stakeholders are also diverse in their degree of participation. The core stakeholders participate in meetings every time while others participate more randomly. All are though categorised as important and Tina Reinicke experiences an increased interest for participating in the network. As Sabrina Hansen, states; "*we would like to contribute more to the others members of the network*". This wish to contribute is significant across all interviewed stakeholders even with

regards to the peripheral stakeholder (P2_Maimann). As mentioned, Lyngby Boldklub has recently joined the place brand management and has given CKUD extensive coverage in their new local magazine "Kongeblå" (Lyngby Boldklub 2015). Kristian Maimann states that every organisation has a common interest in making CKUD a positive experience. Lyngby Boldklub sees the place brand as something which can be used to create reciprocal relationships. It can use the values of CKUD to verbalise how the soccer club builds their approach to educating soccer players on knowledge and knowhow. Thus, CKUD creates value for Lyngby Boldklub while Lyngby Boldklub provides the place brand with a more diverse voice (P2_Maimann). In this regard, a peripheral stakeholder has been moved towards a more favourable relationship, as highlighted by Savage et al. (1991). It is difficult to ascribe if Lyngby Boldklub possesses power and urgency attributes (Mitchel et al. 1997). However, their legitimacy cannot be questioned as the soccer club is highly involved in the local community and is the most exposed organisation in the daily press among organisations in Lyngby-Taarbæk (P2_Maimann). Having this place stakeholder as a member, therefore, signifies that CKUD has a very broad definition of stakeholders (Greenwood 2001).

Altogether, Bornholm – BGI and Lyngby-Taarbæk - CKUD differ with regards to their stakeholder definitions. It is evident that BGI has not been able to extend the brand beyond the green energy sector and has problems with the inclusion of peripheral stakeholders. Contrary, CKUD has managed to go beyond the initial stakeholder groups. Thus, it could be argued that BGI has a narrow stakeholder view while CKUD has a broader and more dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement (Mitchel et al. 1997). In this regard, it is important to question whether this has affected the success of the different place brand management structures which will be further outlined in section 3.6. However, it is already highlighted that BGI lacks embeddedness among citizens and the tourism sector. Thus, stakeholders with legitimate interests in the place brand are excluded. With this in mind, it can be questioned whether the place's stakeholders are collectively producing the place (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013) and if the place brand management lacks the basic assumption that all stakeholders are of intrinsic value (Donaldson & Preston 1995). Contrary to this, CKUD offers broader access points for their diverse stakeholders through their use of sub-brands for each network and shows a more dynamic and including approach.

3.3 Involvement

With regards to BGI, it is evident that the green energy sector has been the most involved stakeholder group in the place brand management. These stakeholders have initiated a common project by themselves and their cooperation is strong (P1_Westh). Involvement from other stakeholders has been non-existing. As mentioned, BGI has not been embedded among citizens but Allan West, Labour Market Chief at the Regional Municipality of Bornholm, further highlights that BGI has not been embedded among political officials. Officials acknowledge BGI but have not supported it fully. Thereby, political support has been

limited and BGI has not been a joint municipal project. Allan Westh states that the dynamics among the green energy stakeholders have somehow legitimised not pushing for engagement among other stakeholders. This is further outlined by Fredrik Romberg, CEO at Business Center Bornholm, who states that there is a need to organise BGI in a way that engages citizens and that the municipality should take a stronger part in measuring the results. Business Center Bornholm has spent their time on the green energy sector and to make BGI internationally known. Other stakeholders also highlight the need for stronger political involvement (P1_Boesen; P1_Jensen). In fact, Søren Femmer Jensen, CEO at Co-Creative, states that his involvement has become very limited compared to a high degree of involvement earlier. In spite of this, he continues to communicate BGI at conferences and believes that other involved stakeholders continue to use it when they are attending conferences, meetings and the like. His involvement is, however, dependent on the municipality's reconfiguration of BGI. Interestingly, Søren Femmer Jensen states that he has interacted with other stakeholders but this has primarily been on project basis. This is further outlined by Per-Martin Boesen who states that the actors are joined by common interests and frustrations and not because of a formalised collaborative structure. This signifies that involving stakeholders have not been done in a structured way and has been left to the stakeholders themselves. Per-Martin Boesen outlines that when the place branding strategy had been made, no active process followed and the strategy was just there. Then you could pick the parts you wanted. Although it is important that stakeholders are the ones collectively producing the brand (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Zenker & Petersen 2014) and communicating the place (Kavaratzis 2004), it is questionable if BGI lacks a focal place brand manager (Kavaratzis 2013), lacks to consider all stakeholders (Merrilees et al. 2012) and lacks to acknowledge that place brand management is a "*multi-stakeholder approach, harnessing the skills, experience, and resources of those in public, private and voluntary sectors* (Hanna & Rowley 2012). As Zenker and Erfgen (2014) states "*stakeholders feel more committed ad loyal to a brand if they have been involved in the construction of the brand, because during their involvement they can influence the content of the brand*" and it seems that the green energy sector has been mostly involved in this process. Thereby, these stakeholders feel more committed to the brand. Furthermore, it is interesting that the political support has been lacking, when the municipality itself was an initiator of the place brand. It is also interesting that the peripheral stakeholder interviewed is not at all involved. Destination Bornholm is highly involved with many different stakeholders such as amusements, attractions, local businesses and firms providing transportation to the island (P1_Thornthon).

At CKUD, Caroline Arends outlines that the secretariat experiences a high level of involvement among stakeholders. She points out that different degrees of involvement exist across the stakeholders; something also highlighted by Tina Reinicke. This is described in positive terms, as it takes into consideration the stakeholders' different resources (i.e. limited expenditure of time) and reasons to participate. As mentioned by Donaldson and Preston (1995), stakeholder theory does not imply that all stakeholders should be equally

involved all the time. In fact, this allows place stakeholders to engage more on their own terms which could be argued leads to stronger satisfaction. All stakeholders agree that they all have their own interests for being involved in CKUD (P2_Nielsen; P2_Hansen; P2_Maimann; P2_Reinicke). For example, DTU has interests with regards to creating thriving developments in the business sector of the local community (P2_Nielsen), the municipality has interests with regards to reaching their CO2-reduction goals in 2020 (P2_Reinicke), Visma Denmark is interested in more cooperation with other local stakeholders (P2_Hansen) and Lyngby Boldklub wants to be regarded as a professional and modern soccer club (P2_Maimann). However, they all agree that their own interests are aligned with their wish to contribute to common interests. These contributions mainly take place in the different networks (Lyngby-Taarbæk Vidensby 2015). For example, DTU staff members are coordinators for different networks (P2_Nielsen) and are highly involved through this. All interviewees agree that stakeholders' own interests should form the basis for their involvement. Involvement in the networks is, thus, a way of creating a synergy across these interests (P2_Reinicke). The networks enable stakeholders to work intimately with each other on the basis of knowledge sharing and network creation. As Tina Reinicke states; "*the most important feature is that you get to know new people across sectors and because of this people are more likely to use each other in other contexts*". Members are interested in knowing what others can do, what they can contribute with themselves and how these two elements can lead to better results than would have been the case without the collaboration.

The key aspect of becoming involved is the possibility for networking with other stakeholders (P2_Hansen; P2_Maimann). This is also outlined by the strategic organization, as new evaluations show that the contact with other stakeholders is a key feature of CKUD (P2_Arends). In the networks, diverse stakeholders can work with challenges facing them all (P2_Hansen) and involve themselves in the local community. Actually, Visma Denmark wishes to be even more involved either through hosting of meetings or contributing with more people from the organization. This is also outlined by the peripheral stakeholder. As mentioned, Lyngby Boldklub is a very new member of CKUD and, right now, the organization does not contribute very much (P2_Maimann). However, the stakeholder outlines that somehow it already provides something unique to CKUD. Firstly, "*it is an organisation working on the basis of people's passion*" (P2_Maimann) which means that it contributes by being a highly locally embedded stakeholder which many people are in touch with in their daily life. Thus, it could be argued that it provides a voice for dispersed citizens something which is often very difficult in place branding (Eshuis et al. 2013; Zenker 2013). Secondly, it provides a different array of media which come in contact with many different people because they have a natural interest in everything with Lyngby Boldklub as sender (P2_Maimann). Interestingly, both the strategic organisation (P2_Arends) and DTU (P2_Nielsen) highlight the recent involvement of Lyngby Boldklub. Kristian Maimann states that Lyngby Boldklub wishes to verbalise CKUD more in their daily work and through that show that they are involved. Right now, no one probably sees Lyngby Boldklub as an important

part of CKUD (P2_Maimann) but it sees itself as an important member making a difference, for example, through the newly released magazine "Kongeblå". As mentioned by other stakeholders, Lyngby Boldklub also hopes to become more involved with other stakeholders who the organisation usually only meets in a strictly business context (P2_Maimann). Once again, the networking features are essential and Kristian Maimann actually highlight that many of the other stakeholders find it interesting that a peripheral stakeholder such as Lyngby Boldklub is part of CKUD. This focus on building relationships is evident across both place branding theory (Braun et al. 2013; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013) and stakeholder theory (Freeman et al. 2004; Savage et al. 1991). In these relationships, stakeholders bring their own place wants and perspectives in order to align them with others and, thereby, create a common ground for the place brand.

Overall, it is evident that involvement of stakeholders is essential for place brand management. Stakeholder involvement in BGI has been limited to the green energy sector. There is a general agreement that the degree of interaction between these stakeholders has been high while keeping in mind that one interviewee states that his involvement has been project based. However, involvement of other place stakeholders is non-existent and this questions whether BGI actually is an encompassing place brand (Stubbs and Warnaby 2015). Contrary, CKUD experiences a high degree of involvement across very diverse stakeholder groups. Different interests are acknowledged but also that a common ground is beneficial for everyone. This provides a starting point which motivates stakeholders to participate as they consecutively can discover which joint value can be created from contributing with their perspectives on the place. In this regard, involvement is a reciprocal co-creation process (Payne et al. 2009). Thereby, CKUD tries to put stakeholders' diverse perspectives on the place at the forefront of the branding effort (Zenker & Petersen 2014; Zenker & Seigis 2012).

3.4 Influence

BGI's strategic organisation states that there has been no risk with regards to allowing the green energy stakeholders to push their agenda (P1_Westh). They have initiated many projects and their influence on the place brand has been immense. However, Allan Westh still questions the political ownership of the brand. As the municipal council has the authority to decide upon place development plans, it should integrate BGI in their daily decision-making. Furthermore, a more diverse set of stakeholders should have been able to influence officials and seek influence where it was relevant for them (P1_Westh). Interestingly, he describes that the future BGI should be regarded as an umbrella-brand and somehow stakeholder buy-in should take place in networks. For example, he highlights the interests of city associations, local development associations, athletic associations and trade organisations. These stakeholder groups should be able to influence concerns which are relevant to them (P1_Westh). This could somehow resemble the structure of CKUD and thus the features of the brand architecture concept with sub-brands (Dinnie 2011; Zenker &

Braun 2010). In this regard, it is also noticeable that the strategic organisation outlines a shift to an outlook where more diverse stakeholder groups' perceptions and place wants need to play a larger role in influencing the place brand.

Business Center Bornholm verbalises the current BGI as a business centred strategy (P1_Romberg). But even within the green energy sector, different degrees of stakeholder influence have been obvious. Some stakeholders within that sector is not ready for a green switch-over and does not feel that BGI has anything to do with their core business. They have their own interests with regards to increased competitiveness and productivity which has been difficult to align with BGI in its current form (P1_Romberg). Therefore, it can be argued that even within the green energy sector some stakeholders have been more influencing than others. For example, Greenabout A/S is an outcome of BGI and, therefore, fits perfectly with the core elements of the place brand (P1_Boesen). Per-Martin Boesen highlights that the strength of BGI is that he can pick the elements he needs while still maintaining control of his own company. Influence is then about pursuing own interests under the BGI umbrella-brand. In addition, Søren Femmer Jensen, CO-Creative, addresses the crucial connection between his firm and BGI. His firm works with "*circular economy on a small scale*" and Bornholm provides that environment (P1_Jensen). It is important for him that the place maintains its work towards becoming a green and sustainable island. If this is not the case, he questions his professional and personal commitment to the place (P1_Jensen).

Dorthe Lind Thornton, Destination Bornholm, states that the tourism sector wants a place brand which they can take ownership of. A place brand that encompasses the entire place but BGI has not been able to do this. Therefore, Destination Bornholm does not seek influence on BGI, as it has no relevance for tourism stakeholders (P1_Thornthon). Seeking influence is then also related to how relevant the issue is to a particular stakeholder. This refers to Mitchell et al.'s notion of urgency (1997) but also the division between primary and secondary stakeholder groups (Clarkson 1995). It could be argued that the stakeholders in the green energy sector are primary while stakeholders in the tourism sector are secondary. These two groups differ in their relevance for the focal entity but Clarkson (1995) highlights that both groups need to be taken into consideration. In fact, place brand management theory demands that stakeholder engagement should not be limited to narrow interests and all stakeholders should co-create the place (Hanna & Rowley 2012; Stubbs & Warnaby 2015; Zenker & Seigis 2012).

With regards to CKUD, all interviewees agree that the stakeholders are the ones influencing the place brand. The board has the overall control and is comprised of members from the different stakeholder categories. However, the board is only orientated about projects and does not decide whether the project should take place unless it does not fit into CKUD (P2_Arends). Caroline Arends highlights that the composition of the board is the only restrictions in CKUD, as it is based on the size of each stakeholder category. For example,

the category "Businesses" takes most of the seats at the board, as this category contributes with most of the financial resources. The composition of the board is dynamic. Members of the board have naturally changed during the first three years and it is possible that the criteria for getting seats will change in the future. The composition complies with the association's members which supports its legitimacy (P2_Arends). Furthermore, an annual general meeting is held where an overall plan for each year is decided upon with the participation of all members. Influence is centred on the dialogue between members and the place brand managers. The structure of CKUD is highlighted as the strength according to Caroline Arends as no stakeholder has total control over the place brand. It is not driven or financed solely by the municipality, educational institutions or businesses but by the common interests between them. This is also addressed by Claus Nielsen, DTU, and Tina Reinicke, Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality. As Claus Nielsen states; "*the association has to be built on equal amount of consensus and progress in order to avoid that stakeholders push their own interests or leave the association*". This is further supported by the membership fees, as stakeholders – once they have paid the fee – would like to get something in return and, therefore, also contribute in the networks. The main operational work is taking place in the networks (P2_Arends; P2_Hansen; P2_Nielsen; P2_Reinicke) and it is through the networks that stakeholder use their influence. As earlier outlined, it is acknowledged that each stakeholder has its own interests and that each stakeholder "*expects something*" (P2_Reinicke). But this is not used to influence other stakeholders but rather place interests are put forward to be discussed in the networks. Trough this, stakeholders can influence their joint understanding of the place and push for collective action. The secretariat can then support the projects by outlining how to get financial support to the working as a facilitator (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). In this regard, place stakeholders have strong influence on the development of the place brand but this influence is seen as a sharing exercise. As Sabrina Hansen, Visma Denmark, states; "*we have no specific needs and wants written down as we are more interested in meeting people across the networks*". The networks are a perfect setting to initiate something together (P2_Hansen).

The peripheral stakeholder, Lyngby Boldklub, states that it has limited degree of influence right now as a natural consequence of being a newly member of the association. However, Kristian Maimann states that he can provide input and that in the long term the degree of influence will increase. For example, he believes that the new magazine can become a broader medium for CKUD and not just a Lyngby Boldklub product. Interestingly, he highlights that CKUD has an influence on the brand of Lyngby Boldklub. It builds the stakeholder's reputation as a professional soccer club moving away from earlier notions of light-minded business methods (P2_Maimann). The place brand and the stakeholder, thus, influence each other. The CKUD place brand management is very much about the conversation between stakeholders (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013) and their shared perceptions of the place (Warnaby et al. 2015; Zenker & Petersen 2014). Thus, the notion of influencing the place brand is about aligning self-interests with collective action and through

that somehow affirm the collective identity (Crane & Ruebottom 2011; Rowley & Moldoveanu 2003). In this regard, the place brand management relies on establishing a structure pushing for stakeholder interaction.

Both Bornholm – BGI and Lyngby-Taarbæk – CKUD have stakeholders trying to influence the place brand management. However, BGI is primarily influenced by a narrow set of stakeholders which very specific reasons for participating. CKUD stakeholders also have their own specific reasons for participating but their influence is more based on a collective mindset and on a much broader composition. Actually, the current degree of influence by green energy stakeholders on BGI is based on the initial outlook seeing them as the well-structured stakeholders able to use the place brand. Then, the stakeholders are actually only using initial legitimacy to continue influencing the place brand. In this regard, the place brand management has failed to involve other stakeholders even though the place brand is built on three other cornerstones. Contrary, the networks under the CKUD umbrella-brand is functioning as sharing mechanisms where stakeholders' influence each other through networking. Through this, the place brand management is to a larger extent about sharing perceptions of the place among diverse stakeholders.

3.5 Commitment

Commitment to BGI has two issues of concern with regards to the place's stakeholders. Firstly, Allan Westh, the Regional Municipality of Bornholm, outlines that some stakeholders are committed to the notion of a green and sustainable island without thinking about BGI as such. As part of the reconfiguration is the aim to make stakeholders more aware of their integrated connection. This also means that access points for stakeholders should be made clear, for instance, both for local agricultural stakeholders and local businesses (P1_Westh). This refers to earlier mentioned notions on sub-brands. Secondly, the place stakeholders' degree of commitment differs. This touches upon the different views on the success of BGI. All interviewees state that BGI experience a high level of commitment within the green energy sector stakeholders. As Fredrik Romberg, Business Center Bornholm, states; "*the level of commitment is different according to which stakeholders are asked*". BGI experience immense support externally within the green energy sector, at universities and by international actors (P1_Romberg). Everybody in these circles knows what BGI is. Per-Martin Boesen, Greenabout A/S, supports this by stating that BGI has a strong potential internationally because even though nobody knows about Bornholm, everybody knows about BGI. However, Per-Martin Boesen also highlights that BGI is not at all embedded internally and he, especially, highlights the limited political support. His commitment to (and communication of) BGI is primarily a part of his work outside Bornholm. Actually, he finds this development rather problematic. As he is born at Bornholm, his attachment to the island is very strong but more and more of his business is taking place outside the place. Primarily, because BGI has not had enough political support resulting in a lack of internal projects pushing the BGI agenda (P1_Boesen). This is further expressed by Søren Femmer Jensen, Co-Creative, who outlines that for

BGI to really push internal developments a broader support is needed. He states that an ambitious place brand management would have sought to include more than the green energy sector stakeholders and, for example, he highlights the paradox of pursuing a sustainable and green island without even including local agricultural stakeholders. Thus, he highlights the importance of the same stakeholder group as mentioned by the strategic organisation. Furthermore, he addresses how the nature of Bornholm is not even a part of BGI even though it is a major asset of the place and that citizens have major difficulties with taking ownership of the place brand (P1_Jensen). Interestingly, Søren Femmer Jensen's commitment to the place is rather limited, as his commitment is to a greater extent tied to BGI, contrary to that of Per-Martin Boesen. Thus, somehow the reasons for committing to BGI differ within the included stakeholder group. Fredrik Romberg also states that even though many local businesses are committed to the place brand, there is still a large amount not committed at all. Once again, this refers to the theoretical propositions describing how different interests and place wants of stakeholders underlie their participation in and commitment to a place brand. As argued, commitment to a place brand should primarily be based on the "*collective place identity*" (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013) and a "*meaningful link between the self-concept and the identification target*" (Zenker & Braun 2015). These features have an immense effect on stakeholders' willingness to stay at the place and, for example, it is interesting that Co-Creative possibly will have no reason to stay at the place, if BGI is not an embedded part of the place. In addition, the peripheral stakeholder has not been motivated to take part in BGI even though it was outlined as a place brand engaging the tourism sector. Thus, the stakeholder's commitment is non-existing. Destination Bornholm is tied immensely to the place, as it encompasses a large amount of local stakeholder interests. For example, it works with the place's nature and scenery which Søren Femmer Jensen argues needs to be addressed in a reconfiguration of BGI. It should be noted that Dorthe Lind Thornton, Destination Bornholm, actually wants to take part in BGI, if the reconfiguration can integrate their ultimate consumer. Commitment is, thus, highly tied to concrete access points for stakeholders referring to the brand architecture concept (Dinnie 2011; Zenker & Braun 2010).

Describing the degree of commitment to CKUD depends on which stakeholder is addressed (P2_Arends). For example, the strategic organisation outlines that the municipality shows a large degree of commitment by always integrating CKUD into their political work and DTU is highly committed through their involvement in the networks. This can be compared to Claus Nielsen, DTU, expressing that his organisation feels highly committed to the place brand and the place. The level of commitment is very much tied to how integrated CKUD is within the individual organisation (P2_Arends). As she points out; "*CKUD should support the individual stakeholders' own brand*". The stakeholders should be able to use what they find relevant and use it in their context. This is discussed very much in the network on Communication. It gathers professionals from different communication departments across all the stakeholders who discuss the integration of CKUD communication with individual stakeholder communication. This should motivate stakeholders to commit

themselves to CKUD (P2_Arends). The key aspect of commitment is, thus, how to align stakeholder's own brands with the collective place brand. This is also outlined by Sabrina Hansen, Visma Denmark, when she states that her organisation has a wish to implement their marketing department more in their work with CKUD. Visma Denmark would very much like to show more commitment to CKUD. She also outlines that the organisation (and particularly the CEO) is very proud of being a part of CKUD. Thus, the commitment is an important issue for the top management. This refers back to Caroline Arends highlighting the importance of integrating CKUD deeply in stakeholders' own organisation. Sabrina Hansen also outlines that they show commitment by, for example, using other local stakeholders' facilities for events. By this, she expresses that commitment to a place brand is very much about taking actively part in the local community and building relationships with other stakeholders. Actually, if Visma Denmark uses other local stakeholders, it is often someone met through the participation in CKUD and, especially, through the networks. Tina Reinicke, Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality, also expresses that commitment evolves from the networking features of CKUD. The stakeholders become committed to the place brand through their collective work centred on common goals and interests. The networks provide the setting where stakeholders can commit themselves to a theme and through that become more involved with other actors with an interest in the same theme. This is also how the peripheral stakeholder, Lyngby Boldklub, has taken a part in CKUD. As Kristian Maimann states; "*Lyngby Boldklub is immensely tied to the place Lyngby-Taarbæk but its attachment to CKUD is increasing significantly as its participation in the network on Communication is taking shape*". Actually, the peripheral stakeholder is considering using advertising space on its football shirts to communicate CKUD. Kristian Maimann states that they would like to signal the attachment. The commitment is strongly centred on the belief that CKUD and Lyngby Boldklub prolong each other (P2_Maimann). There is a common view on cultural life, living and athletics. As Kristian Maimann states; "*Lyngby Boldklub is well-known for its development of talents built on know-how and knowledge which can easily be related to CKUD*". Therefore, the peripheral stakeholder has taken the step to take part in CKUD on its own premises.

The secretariat's role in the place brand management is strongly focused on the work of including more stakeholders in the place brand. Claus Nielsen, DTU, and Sabrina Hansen, Visma Denmark, expresses great satisfaction with the secretariat's commitment to this role. Claus Nielsen states that CKUD is dependent on a strong and well-run secretariat which is able to manage different stakeholders and decide on different decision procedures. This refers to Frooman's notion that stakeholders theory is "*about managing potential conflict stemming from divergent interests*" (1999: 193) and shows that a focal entity is highly important in place brand management. Interestingly, Sabrina Hansen also highlights that the efficiency and strong commitment of the secretariat has a correlated positive impact on her own organisation's commitment. The degree of commitment is, thus, highly related to issues concerning stakeholders' identification with the brand (Zenker & Petersen 2014) through the alignment of stakeholder perceptions (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009)

and interests (Donaldson & Preston 1995) in a collective place identity (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Rowley & Moldoveanu 2003).

In all, both Bornholm - BGI and Lyngby-Taarbæk – CKUD experience a difference in the degree of commitment across stakeholders. Once again, the concerns with BGI are that no one beyond the initial stakeholder group feels committed to the brand. However, it is also highlighted that stakeholder commitment within the green energy sector is diverse and that commitment is derived from different outlooks. Place brand management needs to cater to these different levels of commitment. At CKUD, commitment is a dynamic process evolving with the stakeholders' involvement with each other. In this regard, commitment is more about committing to other stakeholders and their interests than committing to an abstract umbrella place brand. More concrete sub-brands become the access point for many stakeholders commitment. The degrees of commitment, thus, differ at BGI and CKUD because the later takes a much more dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement. This dynamic approach could be similar to Clarkson's notion that stakeholder groups as dynamic entities, as their interests in an organisation's activities develop through the "*past, present or future*" (1995: 106).

3.6 Success and Satisfaction

The success measurements of BGI are very much dependent on the stakeholder outlook (P1_Jensen; P1_Romberg; P1_Thornthon; P1_Westh). BGI is internationally known (P1_Jensen; P1_Boesen) within the green energy sector and when addressing the specific goals set forward in the initial project plan (2007-2014), all these goals have been fulfilled (P1_Boesen; P1_Westh). Allan Westh states that he was actually quite surprised when he saw the list with fulfilled goals which has made his attitude towards BGI more positive. "*Many things have happened but the problem is that much of it has not been verbalised as being brought on by BGI*", he states. In this lays the foundational problem. The ordinary citizen of Bornholm is not at all included and, therefore, regards BGI as a failure (P1_Westh). In addition, other place stakeholders have not been included: for example, the agricultural sector (P1_Jensen) or the tourism sector (P1_Thornthon). However, Allan Westh states the BGI has pushed a development which would not have happened without it but it still needs to be fully unfolded. There is a political understanding of this with regards to the current reconfiguration. Fredrik Romberg, Business Center Bornholm, further outlines the difference in success measurement by stating that he regards BGI as a success across the green energy stakeholders. In spite of this, he also states that he has realised that for the place brand to attain further success it needs to achieve more political support and the municipality needs to take stronger strategic responsibility. Business Center Bornholm spent a large amount of time pushing BGI internationally and this has been successful (P1_Boesen; P1_Romberg) but broader internal support is lacking. Interestingly, Fredrik Romberg also states that BGI needs to become more implemented within the green energy sector stakeholders than it is now.

Right now, it is rather project based and to become a "lived brand" it needs to be embedded within the core business of the stakeholders. This has not been reached yet. In this regard, both the Regional Municipality and Business Center Bornholm agree that success measurements should include how broadly the place brand is embedded and how integrated the place brand is with stakeholder interests. These success measurements resemble Zenker and Braun's (2010) notions of identification and satisfaction. For example, identification has to do with the degree of integration of the place brand with stakeholders' interests while satisfaction can be hindered by a narrow stakeholder view.

Noticeably, there is a disagreement on the degree of success across the interviewed stakeholders. Per-Martin Boesen, Greenabout A/S, states that BGI is a success because of its international foothold and its creation of jobs at the place. He refers to his firm and others firms being an outcome of BGI which has created jobs. However, he also states that the success of BGI is about to lose momentum as a result of lacking political support. The reconfiguration should have been initiated earlier in order to become a continuous process. Somehow, the political support has only acknowledged the success of BGI after the initial phase has ended while acknowledgment during was limited. This can be compared to the earlier mentioned statement by Allan Westh on the fulfilment of specific goals. Following this, Søren Femmer Jensen, Co-Creative, states that he is not at all satisfied. The overall brand is a good platform but dynamic place brand management has been lacking and the amount of resources has not been appropriate. In addition, he thinks that the municipality has measured success incorrectly. He states that the amount of jobs created by BGI is not sufficient but also that BGI has been used too much as a business strategy. Once again, the narrow focus is questioned. This is further expressed by the peripheral stakeholder, as Dorthe Lind Thornton states that the place brand has no relevance for their ultimate customer. As a peripheral stakeholder, Destination Bornholm would have wished for a stronger leadership in BGI. This leadership could have provided guidance on how to implement BGI across more stakeholders and practically show how each stakeholder can use the place brand in accordance with own interests. It could be argued that this refers to the importance of having a focal entity (Stubbs & Warnaby 2015; Palmer 1998). Furthermore, she questions whether BGI actually caused the developments among the green industry stakeholders or if these developments were caused by general developments on sustainability in society. Thus, the success measurement of BGI is very much tied to each stakeholder's own outlook and interests. However, there also seems to be an agreement that for place brand management to be successful there is a need to include the satisfaction and identification of all place stakeholders (Zenker & Seigis 2012) and not only a narrow group referring to the intrinsic value of all stakeholder (Donaldson & Preston 1995). This shows that stakeholder perceptions are the most important element of place brand management, as these are the ones measuring the place brand's functional and emotional value (Virgo & De Chernatony 2006).

The strategic organisation of CKUD (P2_Arends) states that the place brand management is successful and all interviewed stakeholders agree with this (P2_Hansen; P2_Nielsen; P2_Reinicke). Even the peripheral stakeholder (P2_Maimann) highlights the success of a place brand which is has only recently joined. Caroline Arends, CKUD secretariat, states that the success lays in the dynamic work with the networks but also that the difficulties arise from working with networks. It is very difficult to work cross many different stakeholders. It requires strong skills within networking, listening and collaboration (P2_Arends). A key element is to understand that every single stakeholder has its own individual stake in it and you need to talk to everybody to know all the stakes. Successful place brand management is, thus, a difficult balancing act with regards to aligning stakes and not pushing a too narrow agenda. Therefore, the success of CKUD lays in its ability to provide access points for each stakeholder through the secretariat's support to dialogue creation and its network facilitating role. This is backed by the interviewed stakeholders who all express great satisfaction with the work of the secretariat (P2_Hansen; P2_Maimann; P2_Nielsen; P2_Reinicke). Claus Nielsen, DTU, especially expresses satisfaction with the secretariat's work on including more and more stakeholders. Caroline Arends states that the place has many stakeholders with diverse perceptions. These perceptions need to be addressed and integrated into the place brand management. Even those perceptions which differ with the direction taken by CKUD should be addressed (P2_Arends). Once again, this highlights that the place brand management of CKUD takes a dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement (Clarkson 1995; Greenwood 2001; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013) considering many different (and even contradictory) perceptions (Zenker & Petersen 2014). This resembles Frooman's notion that stakeholder theory is "*about managing potential conflict stemming from divergent interests*" (1999: 193).

Interestingly, the degree of social networking among stakeholders is labelled as an important success measurement in CKUD. Caroline Arends highlight that she experiences that stakeholders are positive and happy when they attend network meeting and events. In addition, they are eager to contribute with ideas and in-kind resources (P2_Arends). She highlights that CKUD has not experienced defection of members other than four members leaving because of relocation to another place. Furthermore, she expresses that political support for CKUD has been strong and continuous. In fact, all stakeholders highlight the continuous political supports as a major element for success. Even though Lyngby-Taarbæk has experienced a major change in the political landscape recently, the support for CKUD remained unchanged (P2_Maimann; P2_Reinicke). The place brand management has been able to operate in a stable political environment. The place brand management has been acknowledged as a long-term commitment, as highlighted by the theoretical propositions. Again, this shows how the social benefits play a key part in success measurement. The networking of stakeholders is highlighted as the most crucial element which then leads to economic improvements. Claus Nielsen, DTU, states that CKUD has exceeded his expectations. It has pushed a positive development across stakeholders not addressed before. In addition, he expresses excitement about

having 60 members willing to contributing financially and socially. The place brand management is, thus, about taking collective action and creating joint value on the basis of each stakeholder's individual perceptions (Zenker 2011; Hanna & Rowley 2012). Actually, Claus Nielsen expresses that the problems along the way has not caused that many problems: "*It has been a good learning experience to know what cannot be done and what can be done in collaboration*". This can be compared to Tine Reinicke's statement about the redefinition of her network. Right now, that particular network is about to be redefined to maintain a common goal. This shows that the social aspects of CKUD are dynamic and develop along stakeholders' increasing interaction. Therefore, Tina Reinicke also states that a success measurement for her is not that the secretariat is satisfied with the place brand management. Success measurements should be defined according to stakeholders. However, she points out that the CKUD secretariat has developed to become more professional and has taken more responsibility in supporting the networks. This has helped the networks to flourish. Thereby, she highlights that the contact with other place stakeholders are an immense part of the place brand management's success. On top of this, comes the economic improvements when, for example, Microsoft relocates to Lyngby-Taarbæk and brings along a large amount of people and jobs. Sabrina Hansen, Visma Denmark, is very satisfied with the place brand management. It is a strong all-around package which the stakeholder is proud to be a part of. She states that continuous stakeholder engagement and the degree of identification with the place brand across stakeholders is important.

The peripheral stakeholder is very satisfied with the place brand management (P2_Maimann). Lyngby Boldklub chose to take part in CKUD because the place brand took an active step away from "the sleeping commercial town". Kristian Maimann states that the success is based on the secretariat's work on informing all place stakeholders about what is going on: "*It is the correct combination of people and method*", as he states. This refers to issues of leadership and formal stakeholder engagement structure. This combination has led to CKUD being embedded in stakeholders' organisations. As he states; "*it is the stakeholders that communicate the place brand in their daily work*". CKUD has managed to create brand ambassadors across many diverse stakeholders including himself adds Kristian Maimann. He further outlines that CKUD has been successful because it has pushed a change of attitude. People are starting to talk with each other and this is an important success measurement. On top of this, comes the relocation of larger firms to Lyngby-Taarbæk which in the future will push economic improvements (P2_Maimann). Measuring success is about the satisfaction and identification across stakeholders (Zenker & Braun 2015; Zenker & Seigis 2012) and the place brand management in CKUD aims to create these effects by catering to the interests and perceptions of all place stakeholders through the use of networks centred on sub-brands (Zenker & Braun 2010). The interviewed stakeholders express that the interaction with each other is a very important benefit caused by the place brand. By this, the place brand management becomes a community configuration tool (Eshuis &

Braun 2012; Klijn & Edwards 2013) aligning stakeholder interests in co-creating the place brand (Payne et al. 2009).

There is a general agreement that success measurement depends on stakeholder perceptions of the place brand management. At BGI, the interviewees have different notions of success. For example, the strategic organisation outlines that BGI lacks to be embedded broader internally while some stakeholders within the green energy sector expresses satisfaction with the place brand management. In this regard, it is noticeably that the place brand is centred on a very narrow stakeholder group and the peripheral stakeholder cannot identify with the place brand. At CKUD, success comes down to the increasing interaction between place stakeholders. The social networking is labelled as the most important success criterion for the place brand management (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Palmer 1998). The place brand develops dynamically as more and more stakeholders are included and this enables a broader set of stakeholders to identify with the place brand. Therefore, the peripheral stakeholder also expresses immense satisfaction with the place brand management. Success measurements, thus, revolves around the stakeholders' individual identification with the place brand.

Chapter 4: Discussion and Conclusion

The following chapter centres on a discussion of the analysed empirical findings outlined in chapter three. It will be structured around the hypotheses put forward in chapter two and are, thus, focused on aligning the theoretical propositions with the empirical data in a systematic way. Through this, it will argue for the alignment of place branding and stakeholder theory. After this, limitations of the thesis will be addressed. These discussions will enable a conclusion of the thesis based on the research question introduced in the beginning of the paper.

4.1 Discussion

4.1.1. *Hypothesis 1: Having a formal stakeholder engagement and place brand management structure can help to avoid a narrow stakeholder focus.*

It is evident that Bornholm – BGI experiences too narrow stakeholder engagement, as all interviewees express that the place brand mainly engages stakeholders from the green energy sector and lacks to engage broader stakeholder groups such as citizens, the tourism sector, the agricultural sector and even political authorities. It is also outlined that BGI can only reach further success if it is embedded broader among all these diverse place stakeholders. Contrary, Lyngby-Taarbæk – CKUD has a much broader stakeholder engagement signified in a continuous mobilisation of diverse stakeholders and, especially, in the inclusion of the peripheral stakeholder. The place brand management has succeeded in moving beyond the initial stakeholders. From this, it can be argued that BGI does not adhere to the foundational notions of place brand management which express that no single entity has "*total control over the success of the place*" (Stubbs & Warnaby 2015) and lacks to acknowledge stakeholder theory's core assumption that the interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value (Donaldson & Preston 1995). BGI adheres to a narrow stakeholder view (Mitchell et al. 1997) while CKUD adheres to a broad stakeholder view as coined by Freeman (1984). BGI's narrow stakeholder view has been a result of limited resources and capabilities to deal with less-established stakeholders (P1_Romberg; P1_Westh) which Mitchell et al. (1997) argues is often the reason for a narrow stakeholder view. In contrast, CKUD has from the beginning sought a broad stakeholder view mainly through the stakeholder engagement effort done by the secretariat. Thus, the place brand management has been centred on a continuous effort to engage stakeholders and the place stakeholders highlight this as a major benefit. The secretariat has been able to pursue a dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement as a result of the firm structural framework built up around the membership association. This formal structure has provided a stable basis both through the financial resources (membership fees) and the in-kind resources delivered by place stakeholders. BGI has had no formal structure for stakeholder engagement and, actually, it can be argued that it has had no formal place brand management structure at all. Once the place brand was developed, no particular active process followed (P1_Boesen; P1_Thornthon) and the initial stakeholders

could take the parts they needed to continue their collaborative work within the green energy sector. With a non-existing place brand management, BGI has failed to develop relationships and create communities enabling sharing of value (Freeman et al. 2004) or as some of the interviewees express it; BGI has not created enough jobs at the place and is losing momentum among stakeholders. Interestingly, BGI's reconfiguration incorporates notions of a secretariat and more concrete access points for all place stakeholders (P1_Westh). This resembles the CKUD place brand management structure and signifies that a formal stakeholder engagement and place brand management structure is essential for maintaining a broad and dynamic stakeholder view. Thereby, hypothesis one is supported.

4.1.2 *Hypothesis 2: A broad and dynamic stakeholder view has a positive effect on stakeholder engagement and place brand management.*

Both BGI and CKUD have both been initiated by a smaller group of stakeholders sharing commonalities and difficulties but have developed differently with regards to engaging broader stakeholder groups in the place brand management. BGI has not evolved from the rather narrow green energy sector stakeholders while CKUD has engaged stakeholders beyond the initial focus on knowledge-based firms. The reason for this is that CKUD is centred on the belief that place brand management is about managing stakeholders that have a legitimate stake in the organisation's activities (Ford 2011; Hill & Jones 1992). As place stakeholders all have perceptions on the place and, thereby, stakes in it (Warnaby et al. 2015; Sheehan et al. 2007), all of these stakeholders deserve attention. Even those stakeholders who do not currently support the place brand are addressed (P2_Arends). The place brand management at BGI has lacked this assumption signified in the statement that "*the dynamics among the green energy stakeholder have somehow legitimised not pushing for engagement among other stakeholders*" (P1_Westh). Now, when success measurements of BGI are being carried out, a critical stakeholder group, namely political officials, is showing a limited support for BGI. Referring to Freeman's notion of a stakeholder as "*any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by, the achievement of the organization's objectives*" (1984: 46) and Savage et al.'s focus on "*overseeing relationships that are critical to an organisation's success*" (1991: 62), it is evident that the narrow and static stakeholder view has affected the place brand management negatively. It could of course be argued that BGI has had a broad and dynamic stakeholder view, as four cornerstones are outlined in the official material on BGI (Business Center Bornholm 2013). However, as some interviewed stakeholders argue (P1_Boesen; P1_Jensen; P1_Romberg), the place brand has been used primarily as a business strategy. In this regard, it can somehow be questioned whether the place brand ever was intended to go beyond the initial group of stakeholders. Bearing in mind that BGI interviewees have many different notions of the place brand's success contrary to CKUD interviewees who collectively express great satisfaction with the place brand, it is arguably preferred to pursue a broad and dynamic stakeholder view from the start. Therefore, place brand management somehow blurs stakeholder theory's notion of primary and secondary stakeholder groups

(Clarkson 1995; Savage et al. 1991), as all place stakeholders deserve attention based on their individual contribution to the collective social identity (Crane & Ruebottom 2011; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). This also means that place brand management operates in a social environment which cannot be understood from a narrow and rational point of view. Thus, stakeholder engagement needs to begin with a broad and dynamic outlook. In this respect, it is important to question whether a too broad view will lead to a blurred place brand which is actually highlighted by one of the interviewed stakeholders (P2_Reinicke). To overcome this, place brand management needs a formal structure to continuously address the common aim of stakeholders and reconfigure according to this. For example, CKUD provides this by both having a focal secretariat, a board and focal coordinators in each network. With a formal structure in place, a broad and dynamic stakeholder view has a positive effect on stakeholder engagement and place brand management supporting hypothesis two.

4.1.3 *Hypothesis 3: Seeing stakeholder engagement as a goal in itself has a positive effect on the co-creation of the place brand.*

Place brand management needs to focus on the perceptions and needs of stakeholders (Zenker & Seigis 2012), as they are the ones with legitimate stakes (Klijn et al 2012; Mitchell et al. 1997; Savage et al. 1991) in the place and, thereby, the ones collectively producing the place (Eshuis et al. 2013; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). In this regard, place branding theory adheres to stakeholder theory's normative core of ascribing intrinsic value to each stakeholder. Thus, co-creation of the place and the place brand comes down to the "*network of associations in the minds of individual persons*" (Zenker 2011) and place brand management involves these persons' (or stakeholders') "*active involvement and interaction with their supplier in every aspect, from product design to product consumption*" (Payne et al. 2009). CKUD has been centred on the aim to increase the synergies between stakeholders and establish value-creating networks between them. The umbrella-brand has been used as a common starting-point. Through this, stakeholders have been able to co-create the place by delivering their own resources in the networks while also buying-in to other stakeholders' resources. In addition, stakeholder engagement has been continuous because the place brand management is seen as a stakeholder mobilisation effort (P2_Arends; P2_Nielsen). Thereby, stakeholder engagement becomes the core of the place branding effort. Members and potential members of the association are a major concern for the secretariat. In all, it is evident that CKUD sees stakeholder engagement as a goal in itself which the interviewed stakeholders also highlight as a major success criterion for the place brand management. Contrary, BGI has failed to put stakeholder engagement at the forefront of the place brand management and no continuous effort has been pursued. This has diminished the overall satisfaction with the place brand and its management among the interviewed. Somehow, stakeholder engagement has been limited to the initial phase of the place brand management and, thus, used as a means to push those stakeholders' agenda. This is further outlined when some interviewees highlight that broader stakeholder support for the

place brand is lacking and, especially, when the peripheral stakeholder with immense involvement in the place is pursuing a parallel strategy on its own (P1_Thornthon). This has surely diminished the degree of co-creation even though stakeholders within the green energy sector have increased their informal collaboration. Stakeholder engagement in place brand management is an ongoing activity with a clear reference to Clarkson's description of stakeholders as dynamic entities with interests that develop through "*the past, present or future*" (1995: 106). The reconfiguration of BGI is, actually, taking this into account when outlining that the stakeholder engagement and networking among dispersed stakeholders should be more in focus. Thereby, BGI is moving towards the understanding of stakeholder engagement in the place brand management of CKUD. Co-creation of the place brand will benefit from having this foundational assumption about stakeholder engagement and this supports hypothesis three.

4.1.4 *Hypothesis 4: Having a central entity functioning as a network facilitator has a positive effect on stakeholder engagement.*

Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) argue that the notion of a central entity in stakeholder theory is difficult to align with place branding theory. However, both BGI and CKUD interviewees highlight the need for leadership in the place brand management. BGI stakeholders note that when the BGI brand ambassador left the strategic organisation (Business Center Bornholm), a major driver was missing. Furthermore, it is highlighted that the municipality should have a stronger part in pushing the place brand. In addition, the peripheral stakeholder outlines that a stronger leadership would have had a positive effect on stakeholder engagement and even stakeholder identification with the brand, as a focal entity could have been helpful in aligning the place brand with stakeholder brands. On top of this, the strategic organisation states that the reconfiguration of BGI will probably seek to establish a secretariat (P1_Westh). This secretariat should be working as a network facilitator and, thereby, support stakeholders in their collective "conversation" on the place brand (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). This resembles the place brand management structure of CKUD which is centred on the work of a secretariat highly involved in engagement of stakeholders and network creation. The secretariat further provides communicative and in-kind resources. At CKUD, this has enabled a broader commitment across more diverse place stakeholders and all of the interviewees describe a strong satisfaction with the work of the secretariat. In addition, it is interesting that having a focal entity independent from other stakeholders has allowed the place brand management to continue even though Lyngby-Taarbæk experienced a rather large change in the political landscape. The focal entity, thus, supports the place brand as a long-term investment. All in all, it is evident that CKUD experiences a larger degree of stakeholder engagement than BGI primarily driven by the central entities' continuous work with stakeholder engagement. The secretariat is a moderator of relationships (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Mitchell et al. 1997; Palmer 1998) providing leadership for aligning diverse stakeholder interests supported by the focal coordinators in each network. It could, however, be questioned whether the focal entity needs to be an

independent organisation. This refers to the discussion on whether managers should be seen as stakeholders themselves with subjective attitudes which could have an effect on the management of relationships (Eshuis et al. 2013; Greenwood 2001; Mitchell et al. 1997). Namely, CKUD interviewees highlight that a major reason for the success of the place brand management is the fact that centrality is not ascribed to one single stakeholder. The independent secretariat is, thus, located within the network of stakeholder relationships (Rowley & Moldoveanu 2003). In this regard, it is also interesting if the BGI stakeholders actually want the municipality to play a larger role or if they in fact ask for general stronger leadership which could be more efficiently ascribed to an independent central entity. In this regard, the call for stronger political support is mainly concerned with the municipality's role as a place stakeholder and not as a strategic organisation. It is, therefore, essential for stakeholder engagement that the place brand management has a central entity functioning as a moderator of relationships. Hypothesis four is, thus, supported.

4.1.5 *Hypothesis 5: Making use of the brand architecture concept with sub-brands for each target group increases stakeholder engagement and place brand legitimacy.*

Place brands are "*a network of associations in the consumer's mind based on the visual, verbal and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design*" (Zenker & Braun 2015) following Keller's customer-based brand equity (1993). As argued, the value of a place brand is primarily located in the mind of the consumer, or the stakeholders, and not at the hands of the producer (Hanna & Rowley 2012). Thus, place stakeholders' buy-in to the place brand is a central node in the place brand management, as they are the ones delivering resources to and perceptions of the place. This will in turn lead to place brand legitimacy and continuity, as the place brand will be based on their collective understanding of the place and develop according to their interests. Stakeholder buy-in comes down to the alignment of the place brand with each stakeholder's own brand which can be difficult across a place's many diverse stakeholders (Dinnie 2011; Zenker & Braun 2010). BGI has failed to do this as a result of a place brand which primarily caters to one single stakeholder group and that other groups cannot relate to (P1_Jensen; P1_Romberg; P1_Westh). It is highlighted that place stakeholders lack access points for becoming a part of the place brand management (P1_Thornthon; P1_Westh). In this regard, the place brand, as defined by Zenker and Braun (2015), has been based on a very narrow perception of the place. Contrary, CKUD experiences a broader and larger amount of stakeholder buy-in to the place brand even though the initial discussions on a place brand were similar at the two places. CKUD has managed to move beyond the initial stakeholder groups, especially, signified in the inclusion of Lyngby Boldklub. All interviewees outline that the successful stakeholder engagement primarily is a result of the formal structure with networks centred on specific themes for each stakeholder group. For example, this has enabled the peripheral stakeholder to take part in the place brand through the network on Communication. In the networks, stakeholders can meet with like-minded (P2_Hansen) and commit

themselves to a theme that suits their own organisation's needs and wants under the overall CKUD place brand. This has a strong resemblance with the brand architecture concept. The place stakeholder engage with the sub-themes, or sub-brands, which they feel recognise their own place perceptions and needs. This is then used to support the CKUD umbrella-brand. This has resulted in a broader stakeholder engagement than was the case with BGI. The broader stakeholder engagement has an immense impact on the place brand's degree of legitimacy. As argued by stakeholder theory, stakeholder management deals with the alignment of legitimate stakeholders with the objectives of the organisation (Clarkson 1995; Freeman 1984). This will legitimise the actions of the organisation (Donaldson & Preston 1995). In place brand management, all place stakeholders collectively produce the place brand (Crane & Ruebottom 2011; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Zenker & Petersen 2014) and, thereby, legitimacy increases when a place stakeholder relationship is moved "*from a less favourable one to a more favourable one*" (Savage et al. 1991). CKUD enables this by the use of the brand architecture concept, as each stakeholder has a concrete access point that caters to its own interests. Similarly, the reconfiguration of BGI is taking this into account. The strategic organisation states that clearer and easier access points should be provided for many more stakeholders (P1_Westh). Through this, there is a hope that more stakeholders will be able to identify with the place brand and take part in it. Only then can the place brand legitimacy increase. It is, therefore, evident that individual access points, delivered through sub-brands, are essential for stakeholder engagement and place brand legitimacy supporting hypothesis five.

4.1.6 *Hypothesis 6: A high degree of interaction between stakeholders has a positive effect on the measurements of success in place brand management.*

The two places, BGI and CKUD, generally show that success measurements are highly dependent on the outlook. However, while BGI interviewees are very different in their assessment of success, CKUD interviewees are collectively stating that the place brand management is successful. In addition, BGI interviewees focus very much on the lack of job creation, contrary to CKUD interviewees' focus on the social networking caused by the place brand. As argued throughout the thesis, BGI's lack of broader stakeholder engagement has limited interaction and collaboration to a narrow stakeholder group. Within this group, interaction has, however, been rather project based (P1_Jensen) and informal. Furthermore, there are different levels of commitment within those stakeholders (P1_Romberg; P1_Westh). The interviewees outline that this as a result of a lacking dynamic approach to network building, as no active process followed when the place brand was formally initiated (P1_Boesen; P2_Hansen). Thereby, the initial stakeholders have neither developed stronger relationships with each other nor broader relationships with other place stakeholders. The place brand management has not been able to push a development where stakeholders can buy-in to others stakeholders' resources (Hanna & Rowley 2012; Merrilees et al. 2012) and there has been no attempt to manage "*potential conflict stemming from divergent interests*" (Frooman 1999: 193).

Stakeholder interaction has not been the main focus of the place brand management. This contradicts Palmer's findings that place stakeholders join place branding efforts for "*the social benefits of networking with other people*" (1998: 199). The interaction between stakeholders is crucial for place brand management's success because place stakeholders will often assess success according to the strength and number of relationships created through the conversation on the place brand. In this regard, the success measurements of BGI has been to narrow and too focused on hard economic aspects such as number of jobs created. The success measurements have not addressed social improvements which are more important to the stakeholders and, thereby, the success measurements have not been tied to all emotional and functional needs (Virgo & De Chernatony 2006) of stakeholders. Some of the interviewees acknowledge this and, as the strategic organisation states, the needs of stakeholders should be addressed more in the reconfiguration of BGI. Contrary, CKUD experiences a high degree of satisfaction and, at the same time, a high level of interaction between dispersed stakeholders. The interviewed stakeholders highlight that the social benefits play a key part in their success measurement of CKUD. The increasing contact with other place stakeholders is mentioned by all interviewees as their reason both for joining the membership association and expressing satisfaction with the place brand management. Furthermore, the stakeholders highlight that the strategic organisation's dynamic work with including potential stakeholders and ability to facilitate networks are an essential strength of the place brand management. Through strong skills within networking, listening and collaboration (P2_Arends), the central entity builds relationships by moving peripheral stakeholders closer to the place brand which, then, supports place brand legitimacy and provide additional resources to the joint value creation. The interaction is then referred to as the conversation between stakeholders and the place (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013) which communicate the place identity (Zenker & Petersen 2014). Through this, stakeholders can identify with the collectively produced place brand and, thereby the degree of satisfaction will increase. Thereby, a main aim of place brand management adheres to stakeholder theory's notion that managers must develop relationships and create communities enabling sharing of value (Freeman et al. 2004). In these communities, a high level of interaction will have a positive effect on the measurement of success providing support for hypothesis six.

4.1.7 *Hypotheses 7: Deriving place brand legitimacy from the collective place identity will increase identification and satisfaction with the place brand.*

As argued extensively throughout the thesis, place stakeholders are the ones collectively producing the brand with place brand managers as facilitators (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2014) and, thereby, place stakeholders need to be put at the forefront of success measurement (Stubbs & Warnaby 2015; Zenker 2011; Zenker & Braun 2015). Across the two cases, it is evident that BGI has catered to a narrow stakeholder group while CKUD has experienced a broader stakeholder engagement. In addition, the CKUD secretariat also tries to involve place stakeholders who, currently, do not agree with direction of the place brand management (P2_Arends)

and has successfully involved a peripheral stakeholder (P2_Maimann). Thereby, CKUD has a broader and stronger foundation, as diverse stakeholders are able to join the value creation and provide their place perceptions and needs. Place brand legitimacy stems from this dynamic creation of relationships. As highlighted by the CKUD interviewees, place brand legitimacy derives from the degree of integration of the place brand with stakeholders' own organisation and brand. The core of the place brand management is centred on aligning individual stakeholder interests with collective interests adhering to stakeholder theory's notion of addressing stakeholder expectations and act accordingly (Rowley 1997). Therefore, using the brand architecture concept with sub-brands for each stakeholder group is important (Zenker & Braun 2010) in order to develop a collective place identity (Crane & Ruebottom 2011; Rowley & Moldoveanu 2003) which provides the place brand. Place stakeholders commit to a place brand, if it caters to their own place perceptions and needs and the concrete sub-brands are more likely to satisfy these. Therefore, CKUD experiences a higher degree of identification and satisfaction with the place umbrella-brand than is the case with BGI. Furthermore, CKUD caters more to the stakeholders' identification with the brand by focusing more on the relationship building between stakeholders. As argued, the success measurements are more based on the social improvements – the interaction between stakeholders – than on economic improvements. This interaction is the main aim of stakeholders' engagement in the place brand. Thereby, the stakeholders' naturally become more satisfied with the place brand. This also provides a stronger voice for the collective place identity, as the conversation on the place brand strengthens as relationships between stakeholders evolve. Through this, the degree of identification develops accordingly and, thereby, also satisfaction. BGI has not experienced this development, as the place brand management lacks to put stakeholders at the forefront of the place branding effort. Even the involved stakeholders have decreasing degree of commitment (P1_Boesen; P1_Jensen), as they experience no active development of the place brand. Interestingly, the lack of broader relationships is outlined as a major concern whether it is addressing lacking political support or other important place stakeholders. Once again, this highlights that place brand management is a continuous stakeholder engagement process (Clarkson 1995; Zenker & Erfgen 2014) which should lead to satisfaction among stakeholders (Zenker & Braun 2015). Interestingly, one of the BGI interviewees states that his willingness to stay at the place is decreasing concurrently with the place brand management's decreasing significance at the place (P1_Jensen). It is only those stakeholders that are immensely tied to the place who express willingness to stay. Contrary, CKUD interviewees express a strong willingness to stay at the place even though some of them have only recently relocated to the place (P2_Hansen). Furthermore, they often outline that they are caring for the place by engaging with other stakeholders and using local resources to become part of the community. Being part of a network has enabled place stakeholders to meet like-minded which then increases their identification with the place brand. Thus, these measurements are of high importance to place brand management, as the continued development of the place brand rests on whether place stakeholders engage with it and each other. Thus, hypothesis seven is supported.

4.2 Limitations

Even though the thesis' results should be reliable and valid as argued in the methodological part, some limitations do exist. The thesis' solid methodological use of remedies from the case study research design should allow for analytical generalisations (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009) but the analytical part of the thesis is mainly based on ten qualitative interviews from two Danish municipalities. Consequently, these interviews form the basis for the thesis' general view of effective place brand management and these two cases might not be fully representative for all. Even though these two cases are strategically chosen, the inclusion of more cases would have increased the reliability and validity of the study (Andersen 2006: Yin 1998). In this regard, it is noticeable that Bornholm – BGI is only moving towards a reconfiguration of their place brand management. A third case already working with a formal place brand management structure could, for example, have supported the argumentation further.

The thesis' exclusive foundation on qualitative research has implications for the results. Qualitative studies demands that the researcher is critical towards the material and the methodology in order to avoid biased results (Andersen 2006). For example, the thesis has used the concept of triangulation to prevent this (Yin 1998). However, the theoretical propositions stemming from place branding and stakeholder theory have pushed a certain understanding of effective place brand management and this can have affected the empirical research and findings. With this in mind, the researcher has tried to be critical throughout the explorative study as part of the iterative process. Furthermore, the study could have been combined with quantitative data in order to obtain knowledge on, for example, how citizens of the two places relate to the brands or how well they know the brands. This would have extended the understanding of how well the place brands are embedded in the local community and contribute to the discussions on success measurements. However, this is beyond the scope of this thesis, as it mainly seeks to investigate qualitative perceptions among stakeholders. As argued earlier, these stakeholders were strategically chosen in order to avoid biased research.

4.3 Conclusion

The thesis has investigated how stakeholders are engaged in Danish municipalities' place brand management and assessed how this influences the effectiveness of the place brand management. It has done this by in-depth explorations of two distinct municipalities on the basis of seven hypotheses constructed from an elaborated review of place branding and stakeholder literature. After a comparative analysis of the two cases, the seven hypotheses have been discussed and supported. Thereby, the thesis can conclude the following:
Firstly, the two municipalities are moving towards the same formal structures with regards to their place brand management. Effective place brand management is highly dependent on a formal structure, a broad

and dynamic stakeholder view, seeing stakeholder engagement as a goal in itself and having a focal entity functioning as a moderator of relationships. Place one is taking all these assumptions into account in their current reconfiguration of the place brand management, as it is acknowledged that the place brand can only obtain further success through these. Place two already works on the basis of these assumptions and experiences a high degree of success and satisfaction among a diverse set of stakeholders. Thus, stakeholder engagement has an immense effect on the effectiveness of place brand management. In this regard, the thesis has provided insights for the alignment of place branding theory and stakeholder theory. The two theoretical strands stems from the fundamental belief that all stakeholders are of intrinsic value and, therefore, share many similarities. Thus, place brand management is very much about the engagement and management of stakeholders' place perceptions and needs. Hereby, stakeholder theory can inform place branding on how to align place stakeholders under the same umbrella-brand. It is only through this that place brand management can reach legitimacy and become effective.

Secondly, the thesis has argued that effective place brand management can only be carried out if stakeholders are put at the forefront of the practice. The success of the place brand management is highly dependent on the place stakeholders' identification and satisfaction with the place brand. As exemplified at place two, the individual stakeholder's satisfaction is tied to their individual identification with the collective place brand. Thereby, place brand management comes down to aligning individual interests with collective interests. At place one, this alignment has been limited and confined to a narrow stakeholder groups and, therefore, the place brand management experiences low satisfaction. However, there is an acknowledgment that more stakeholders should be able to identify with the place brand. In this regard, the thesis supports the re-shifting of focus to a more customer-oriented strategy in place branding. Effective place brand management relies on establishing individual access points for place stakeholders through the brand architecture concept, pushing the interaction among place stakeholders and, thereby, deriving place brand legitimacy from the collective place identity. These features should have an effect on stakeholders' willingness to stay at a place and their care for the place which in turn has an effect on their perceptions of success of the place brand management. These effects can only be reached if stakeholders' place perceptions and needs are seen as the most important part of place brand management.

In all, it is evident that stakeholder engagement is a vital part of effective place brand management. At place one, it is highlighted that a narrow stakeholder engagement have resulted in limited success while, at place two, a broad stakeholder engagement has resulted in a successful place brand management. Thus, the thesis supports the re-shifting of focus to a customer-oriented strategy in place brand management which aims to satisfy the needs and demands of place stakeholders through the brand architecture concept. By using concrete sub-brands to align place brand perceptions of diverse stakeholders, places should experience an increased identification and satisfaction with the umbrella-brand among its many diverse stakeholder groups.

4.4 Future Implications and Research

The thesis has sought to continue the alignment of place branding theory and stakeholder theory. Through this, the seven supported hypotheses offer concrete recommendations for effective place brand management with regards to stakeholder engagement. It is acknowledged that the thesis did not set out to develop concrete recommendations for place brand management, as it is an explorative study of the subject. However, the analysed and discussed insights could inform practitioners in their work with place branding and move the practice towards higher effectiveness. Namely, its argumentation for the use of concrete sub-brands under the umbrella-brand with a focal managing entity and the high relevance of relationship building among place stakeholders provides practitioners with well-grounded knowledge on the structural elements of place brand management. In addition, the alignment of the two theoretical strands contributes to theory building on place brand management. By having constructed seven hypotheses based on an elaborate literature review, the thesis provides concrete starting points to be tested at other places. Thereby, the thesis offers an integrated take on effective place brand management as called for by theorists. In this regard, it is argued that place branding theory can be informed by stakeholder theory and that this will substantiate the theoretical argumentation for stakeholder buy-in as the most crucial part of place brand management.

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