



Finnish Education Services to Developing Nations

Market Entry Considerations and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

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Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Global Education services commission the bachelor's thesis. The thesis discusses Finnish education services export to developing nations and the market entry considerations and challenges.

The research aims to understand the risks and challenges of exporting Finnish education services to developing countries and the appropriate market entry modes. The concept of blue ocean strategy and multiple market entry strategies by different export entities will be introduced and discussed to motivate future research possibilities. The research in the future could be the author's own master's thesis.

The purpose is to understand the problems that may occur when expanding Finnish education and education services export in developing countries. The themes discovered in the findings display social and cultural differences, bureaucratic challenges, and the future market space. Research questions are The different market entry modes and the challenges of exporting Finnish education export.

The methods used in the research are interviews and literary resources. The analysis is performed using qualitative data collection methods, and an inductive approach is applied to the findings. The analysis findings were then coded to answer the research questions.

Asia, Africa, and South America are discussed in specific given the nature of the findings, but the research in its entirety focuses on developing countries as a whole. The findings indicate a lot to be learned on the Finnish education export due to the maturity of Finland in education export and Globalization. Closer observation indicates the challenges to overcome and optimistic outlook for Finnish education services.

Key words: education services, market entry modes, strategy, finnish education, globalization

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GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|--|
| EU | European Union |
| EEA | European Economic area |
| EUR | Euro |
| FDI | Foreign direct investment |
| HE | Higher education |
| IDP | International education specialists |
| OECD | The Organisation for Economic Co- operation and Development |
| PISA | Programme for International Student Assessment |
| TAMK | Tampere University of Applied Sci- ences |
| U.K | United Kingdom |
| U.S | United States |
| WTO | World Trade organization |

1 INTRODUCTION

Aims of the research stem from a need for export in the Finnish education community to expand the ethos and quality of Finnish education globally. Education export comes in various forms, but for the study, the researched places focus on Finnish education institutes and companies delivering Finnish education principles abroad and recruiting students to study in Finland.

The thesis focuses on Finnish education, market entry modes, and Globalization—the theories on globalization and market entry modes are in coherence with exporting Finnish education to developing countries. Globalization is currently at its peak; exchanging intellectual resources has become a very fluid process. Education has been a profit-seeking business ever since we began paying for the service to increase educational value. Higher education with tuition fees creates an opportunity for Finnish education exporters to maximize the impact on developing countries.

Finland has lately been a country that other nations had looked up to when it came to education. The country's free education system has always been a shock to people from nations where education is a commodity, a luxury. In Finland, education is one of the fundamental rights every person has.

Education in the country has been structured in such a way that it helps build learning and understanding. Higher education in Finland had always been free up until autumn 2017. The introduction of tuition fees changed the position of higher education institutions in the international education market. Given this new change, it became essential to monitor the number of international students (Non-EU/EEA students) in this unique situation. Institutions would need to have proper strategies to compete with the large red water industry of education services. The red water industry is a concept from the blue ocean strategy that aims to create a new market space without the fear of cutthroat competition. (Opetushallitus, 2018)

During the two-month mobility period for practical learning, this topic had personally stood out. Firsthand experiences as an international trainee to a Finnish education company in India shed light on the contrast in culture and economic background of both countries. Despite these differences, the findings and observations indicate there is high demand for Finnish education.

According to the Finnish national agency for education, most students applying to study a degree program in Finland were Non-EU/EEA nationals, ranging from Russia to Nepal. Business Administration studies lead at 25% with Forestry and Agriculture studies at 1%. Students apply to different degrees hailing from other parts of the world, with the most international students from Asia. (Opetushallitus, 2018.)

1.1 Significance and goals

The research attributes and significance of selecting the topic are disclosed in this chapter.

The purpose of the study introduces the research questions that form the research and serve as practical problems. The solution to the research questions is developed from the data collection and analysis. The thesis structure is briefly explained at the end of the chapter.

1.2 Topic significance

During autumn 2017, Finnish higher education institutions began charging for their education, a service that had once been free of cost to foreign nationals had evolved into a paid service. Tuition fee introduction had its shortcomings in the beginning. This period also saw a decline in the number of international students completing their degrees to the end. It cannot be proven if any of this had a relation with the introduction of tuition fees. During the same year, applications to master's degree programs had seen the most decline at 37%.

Although according to data sources by Vipunen- Education statistic Finland, this decline did not last for too long. The government's decision to charge fees reflected during autumn 2018, when the number of applicants had started increasing. Compared to 2016, the last year of free education, a significant rise of applicants was observed in 2018. (Vipunen Education Statistics FINLAND.2017)

Applicants applying to a program leading to a degree certification ranged from various continents. The following table will highlight the percentage of how many applicants applied from the different continents. The nationality of a large number of students is unknown, which affects the figures in the table.

Table 1. Comparison of continents

| Continent | Applicant % |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Asia | 43% |
| Africa | 29% |
| Europe | 23% |
| Other nationalities | 5% |

Given the statistics in Table 1, it can be observed that Finland has a strong presence with its applicants outside the EU. Researching strategies and understanding majority markets while targeting developing nations could be ideal in setting a long-term presence in these countries. The education export business is a harsh one, with companies constantly searching for new strategies to compete in a profit-based industry. The findings indicate the effect the risks have on the export itself, making the business entry difficult. Exporting Finnish education services in competition-free waters and working beyond competing could be a key in leaving a long-term presence. Given the value of Finnish education, there is no telling how far it can go.

In a tough competition, value is something that is deemed long-lasting. Longevity and product quality have always been the bedrock of market entry. Currently, Finnish education is of great value to its buyers. In the long run, this quality of education will drive customer behavior. Buyer behavior has its way of determining prospects of selling education services to developing countries where higher education is a significant investment. (Kim and Mauborgne 2017, 87)

1.3 Purpose of the study and research questions

The purpose of this study is to understand and learn about the appropriate modes of entry to establish a market presence in developing countries on the precipice of rapid development. The emerging economies of developing countries and willingness to invest in paid education offer an excellent environment to introduce Finnish education. The goals are to understand and analyze the Finnish higher education market needs in developing countries and to know the ideal mode of entry to establish operations and scale.

The thesis aims to understand different market entry modes and strategies used by different Finnish exporters- Higher education institutes, consulting companies using theories of globalization, market entry strategy, and empirical findings. Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Global Education Services commissions this research.

Research questions are chosen and narrowed down to the following two questions. Literature and empirical findings are used to answer the research questions in the analysis section.

1. What are the risks and challenges of Finnish education export to developing countries?
2. Which is the appropriate market entry mode to help Finnish education export succeed?

The research paper will assess the risks and challenges of exporting intellectual services by education institutes, consulting companies, and individuals passionate about promoting the Finnish education system.

The study will answer the appropriate market entry mode for education export and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of existing market entry modes. The discussions that stem from the research questions are the market entry strategies, market space, and the future of Finnish education in retrospect to interview findings.

When education is sold to a customer, it is not just a degree that is sold. It also includes complimentary efforts such as employment post-graduation, bureaucracy, integration into a new society, and student acquisition of knowledge overseas. The abovementioned elements will be explained in the theoretical framework and the findings chapter to highlight the relevance and importance of the future of Finnish education.

1.4 Structure

This thesis is an academic study consisting of four main chapters: theoretical framework, methodology, and analysis results. The framework will study different theories and concepts on the Globalization of education, different market entry modes, challenges, and the necessary strategy to enter a developing nation in the conception of new market space. The methodology chapter discusses the data collection methods and approaches used to analyze the literature review, interviews, and secondary data that apply to the concepts of the study. The analysis part aims to answer the research questions, and a conclusion is made in the final chapter of the study.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concepts will focus on a few theories on globalization: market entry modes and appropriate market strategies to penetrate foreign waters, creating a new market space.

The entire concept of a paid education is quite the strange one to the Finnish education system. The study would like to explore aspects of Finnish education and analyse what would be the correct mode to approach this service.

2.1 Globalization

Before 2017, higher education was fee-free in Finland; this had then been a long-term tradition that stems from the belief that it was a public good, providing social services that had been earned through taxation. At the beginning of this millen- nia, there seems to be criticism towards why the country will need to consider private funding. The idea of fee-free education is tempting, but when this is ex- tended to non-taxpayers who come to study outside the EU, there is a need for student contribution to a certain level. (OECD 2003, 222.)

The Finnish government imposed tuition fees on non- EU/EEA nationals who wish to study and live in Finland to guarantee long-term success. In the 2003 OECD research, there is doubt if the government can handle the education sector that was then multiplying and progressing quite strongly. The current landscape gives us more opportunity to grow and expand while maintaining the quality and prestige of Finnish Education. For example, in 2000, there were signs that higher education was severely underfunded. (OECD 2003, 222).

The study focuses on critical concepts of internationalization given the evolving landscape of Finnish education. A few decades ago, there was a taboo on charg- ing fees for higher education, but it is a paid service that offers intellectual goods. Multiple forces are abiding and structuring the landscape of globalization con- stantly. The financial, social, and economic integration of different countries is a massive aspect of globalization. Interchanging resources between transitioning

and developed nations while inventing new forms of global networks is what A-J Soja describes as globalization (Michael Roe.2013, 201).

According to Foskett and Maringe (2013, 2), internationalization is a phenomenon that compliments globalization. In the context of education export, individuals pursuing higher education abroad are a direct result of internationalization. Globalization then is nurtured further when student mobility triggers the need for recruiting international talent. The mutual dependence of the concepts of globalization and internationalization will be discussed by applying them to the export of Finnish education services.

Globalization is a phenomenon that has been consistent for the last few decades. This chapter will mainly focus on the theory of globalization with respect to high education export. The research uses an inductive approach by categorizing themes in findings. Discussions break down the political, economic, and social impact on Finnish education export caused by globalization.

2.1.1 Finland and Globalization

Finland is structurally in an excellent position to benefit from globalization and its internationalization to the economy. While education as a commodity is a new concept to the country, it can succeed. Finland's openness to international trade, the country's high education level, and social stability opens different opportunities utilizing globalization.

Despite the economic and social stability, many challenges in place hinder globalization. When factoring in the higher education exports, having more student mobility to Finland is not the only important thing, but furthering internationalization by stopping brain leakage is necessary.

Maringe and Foskett discuss and introduce seven different propositions on the global Higher Education system. These propositions will be discussed and applied to the higher education of Finland. Further discussions will include the challenges these propositions bring and how that hinders Finnish education as an export. (Foskett and Maringe. 2013, 2-6)

It is essential to understand the landscape of higher education globally to understand how globalization as a theory is applicable.

2.1.2 Foskett and Maringe propositions

The following chapters will graze these propositions and interpret them in relevance to the research topic. The propositions are as follows.

Diversity

Acceptance that each Higher education system is homogenous and respect the country's local policies, economy, and culture. The criteria or yardstick used to measure a success of an institution depends on the land. (Foskett and Maringe. 2013, 2)

In Finland, equality is a fundamental right. The non-discrimination act prohibits discrimination on gender, age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics. (Ministry of Justice, Finland, Non-Discrimination Act 21/2004)

The legal perspective of diversity allows for an integrated society without room for bias but the cultural perspective a different subject. The attitudes of Finnish citizens towards diversity can be circumstantial and geographical. Southern areas of the country are densely populated compared to the north. This factor influences diversity because densely populated regions offer more opportunities for work and integration into society. Addressing the inclusion of ethnic and cultural groups remains a problematic area. According to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the efforts made for discrimination have had a limited impact on immigrants and the discrimination they face. (ECRI, 2002) An explanation for the situation mentioned above is the exposure of the Finnish community to minorities and the homogenous nature in language and culture. (Smale and Björkman, 2011, 74)

Barriers in the global education market

Higher education has become a tradeable service and commodity, but many economic, legal, and political barriers still exist.

Economic, legal, and political barriers can be seen as a challenge for Finland when exporting education as a service. When exporting education as a service to non-EU nations, there are many obstacles such as residence permits (legal and political), financial support (economic), and internationalisation. These barriers are explained in detail in the analysis section of the thesis.

Brain leakage and higher education

Brain leakage is an issue for Finland if integration is not prioritized. Lack of integration and diversity leads to individuals choosing another country to work and contribute intellectual resources. The labour market of Finland is an issue due to the demographics of the country's ageing population. Finland needs more immigrants to come to study and choose to continue living in the country. According to the Financial Times (2007, 6), 9000 000 employees will leave the workforce, 25% are past 65. The population of foreign-born citizens in Finland was 6.4% in 2019, and efforts are continuously made to integrate immigrants into the community. The number of foreign-born nationals living in Finland has doubled compared to 2006, where the population of foreign-born citizens was under 3%. (Statistics Finland. 2008, 2019)

Influence of international organizations

WTO and OECD have been encouraging countries to promote lesser restrictions in the mobility and sharing of knowledge. Finnish educational institutions soon will no longer function autonomously but collaborate with external and private entities who can help promote the education services. (Foskett and Maringe. 2013. 3,4)

Knowledge-based economy and higher education

The importance of higher education grows and creates more demand in countries of export and import. The world is progressing towards a more knowledge-based economy facilitated by high skilled workers.

Finland must move past its existing international strategies and work towards co-operation with developing nations. Finland is already a latecomer as is, given we only recently have started charging monetary funds in exchange for education. (Aiginger, Okko, Ylä-Anttila. 2009, 131). The Lisbon project (2000) has influenced Finnish Higher Education by introducing the agenda to make Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world (Nokkala, 2007).

The Finnish knowledge economy has progressed and grown at its own accord and different stages. The reformation period in the '60s had an impact on Finland's reformation in education and research. The reformation period is followed by immense technological advancement. Finland plunged into recession in the '90s, and with the start of globalization, a new era of knowledge economy was born. (Halme, Lindy and Piirainen. 2014, 47)

Finnish education has played a significant role in the country's knowledge economy and has been received well globally. The main ingredient to create a knowledge-based economy is education, and Finland's success lies in its highly educated population. A highly educated population poses a risk in employment due to highly educated individuals and limited working positions. Finland's international recognition in education began when the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results were announced in the 2000s. The Finnish knowledge economy is built on learning principles, equal opportunities, mentality toward lifelong learning, and the education system that facilitates this mentality towards education. (Halme, Lindy and Piirainen. 2014, 77, 78)

Global competition

Developed nations across the world are investing more in human capital and implementing new strategies. One of these strategies has been mentioned in the previous propositions, creating a more fluid open-door policy for education migrants. An open-door approach means developing more opportunities, increasing financial support, and commercializing international hires.

To compete globally, Finland must strengthen the process of internationalization locally. The thesis will explore this further by applying the blue ocean strategy. The significance of ranking has always existed in education, and even though Finnish education is not competitive, the first PISA results place Finland on the map. (Portnoi. 2014, 14)

The competitors in higher education have looked up to the Finnish education system to learn and implement the knowledge into their development. Finland is a social welfare state and offers individuals an opportunity to attain the quality education and contribute to the economy. The Finnish cultural norms believe that every individual has the right to higher education regardless of gender, economic background, ethnicity, or nationality. Every province in Finland has a university and has been developed equally to offer its citizens equal opportunities to grow and learn. (Portnoi. 2014. 48,49)

Global citizenship

Proposing that we use global citizenship to create a framework that fosters internationalization in the graduates the institution releases into the economy. There has not been enough research on graduate attributes on how they contribute to the internationalization of the economy.

Globalization is an ongoing process, and it should produce enough chances for internationalization. If this does not happen or happen fast enough, then there is a big chance of brain drainage in Finland. (Foskett and Maringe. 2013, 4)

The challenge to global citizenship is undocumented immigrants and expensive tuition fees. Finland is new to globalization, and this applies to global citizenship as well. Tuition fees are a relatively new concept, and in comparison to other European countries, Finland's international exposure has been growing recently. The challenge posing to Finnish global citizenship is lack of qualified job opportunities, language barriers, and integration. The abovementioned challenges correlate to Finland's baby steps in both globalization and education export. Regional and national initiatives are being made to integrate individuals into the community and awareness in the local community about different cultures and languages.

2.1.3 Statistics on student mobility

The research mainly draws discussions and understanding on the mobility of international degree students to Finland, facilitating globalization to Finland. It is to be noted that despite the introduction of fees in autumn 2017 on international degree students, the mobility of students from Asia has increased.

Higher education degree students

This chapter uses the sources in Figure 1 to highlight student mobility to and from Finland. Internationalization and globalization complement factors that exist in universities due to the homogenous character of education, i.e., space for individuals to grow and partake in the pool of global knowledge with shared resources and students. (Fosket and Maringe. 2013, 25)

The figure shows the mobility of students from Finland moving to study abroad, which benefits the local community in internationalization. An internationalized community can offer an excellent harbour for students from different backgrounds to learn in Finland. The ERASMUS Mundus program has strengthened the international links within Higher education by creating an opportunity for teachers and students to share knowledge. ERASMUS has offered students and universities a chance to expand into a global and knowledge-based society. (OECD. 2004, 110)

According to Figure 1 from the Vipunen database, in 2018, 5895-degree students originated from Asia. (Vipunen, 2018). In Asia-Pacific, it is understood that a foreign education constitutes opportunities and global knowledge on business and labour migration benefits. (OECD.2004, 150, 151)

Figure 1. shows the migration of students towards Finland, with the majority from Asian countries. This pattern of globalization directly influences Finnish universities and the economy, which proceeds to trigger internationalization with students living in Finland and contributing to its economy.

Further local, political, and economic advances need to be made to commercialize international hire as IDP International (International education specialists) in Australia has been doing. (World Education News and Reviews. 2009.)

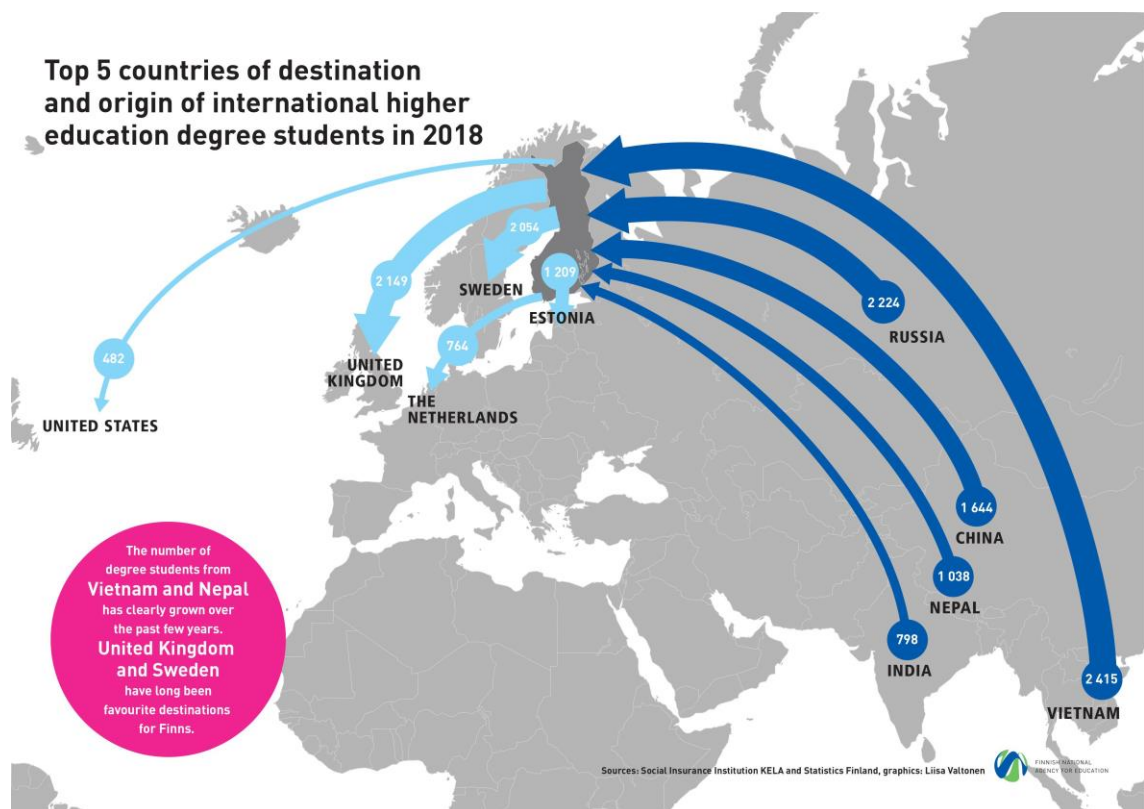


Figure 1. Top 5 countries of destination and origin of international higher education degree students in 2018.

International mobility

This chapter discusses the international mobility from and to Finland using Figure 2 and Figure 3 from Vipunen during 2010-2019. Figure 2 highlights international mobility periods of students living and studying in Finland over three months. The statistics focus on all international mobility periods and not specifically on any specific continent or nation.

International mobility periods (over 3 months) of students in Finnish higher education institutions 2010-2019

(Source: Vipunen)

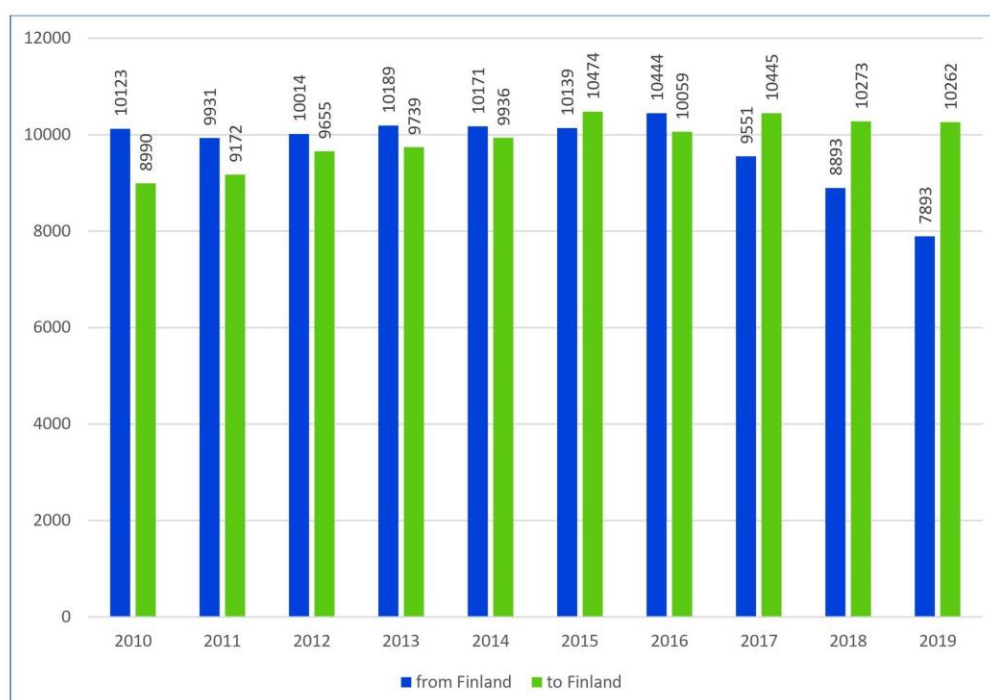


Figure 2. International mobility periods (over three months) of students in Finnish education institutes (Vipunen)

International mobility periods (over 3 months) of students in Finnish higher education institutions 2010-2019, universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS) separately

(Source: Vipunen)

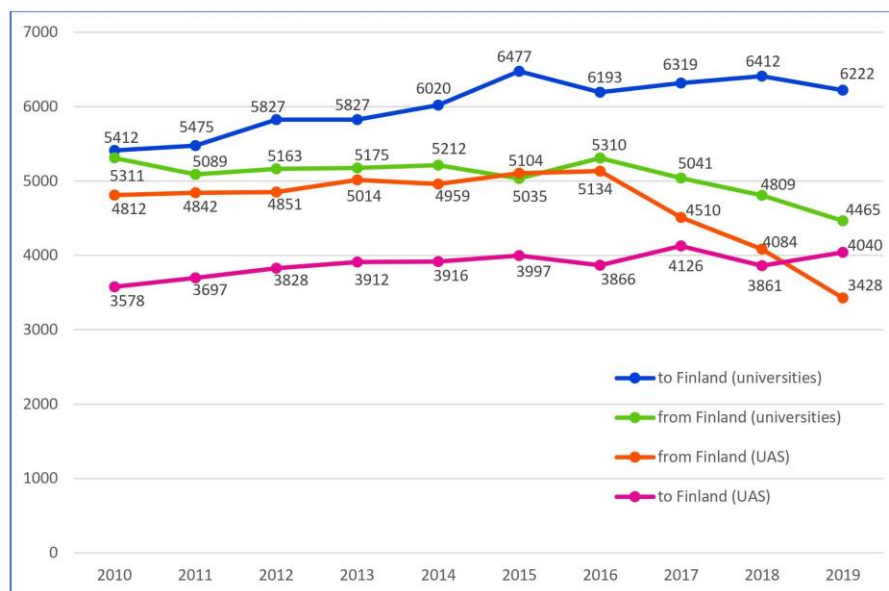


Figure 1. International mobility periods (over three months) of students in Finnish higher education institutions 2010-2019, universities and universities of applied sciences (Vipunen)

Figure 3 highlights in specific the student mobility from and to UAS or university. Universities facilitate global research, and master's degree programs in Finnish universities do not require work experience like the universities of applied sciences. Mandatory work experience may affect students who have completed their bachelor's and wish to immediately pursue a master's degree. See Table 2.

Table 2. Master's degree international students in Finnish higher education institutes

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Master's degree international students in Finnish universities (2019) | 1650 students |
| Master's degree international students in Finnish university of applied sciences (2019) | 795 students |

(Vipunen. 2019)

International degree students in higher education institutions

The research in Figure 4, 4% of students are international degree students, a 0.4% increase compared to 2017. The growth is attractive because tuition fees were introduced in 2017, and clearly, that policy has not affected student mobility.

The data available is until the year 2018, and there is a possibility that the pandemic situation caused by 2019nCov may have affected student mobility during early spring 2020. The figures on how the pandemic has affected student mobility are not available.

Regardless of the pandemic Finnish higher education institutions have adopted distance learning; students can apply and study at a Finnish institute. The lack of physical presence in Finland does affect internationalization on both student's and universities' ends. The integration into the Finnish community through a higher education place becomes lacking in distant learning.

Lastly, the increase in Finnish students in higher education institutions abroad is to be noted. The rise has been consistent, indicating Finland's participation towards a global mindset and facilitating the knowledge-based economy.

See Figure 4. Below on page 22.



Figure 4. Kela statistics Finland (Vipunen)

2.2 Market entry modes

Since the time man set sail to discover new lands, he has constantly aimed to find the best route to penetrate a new market. The same theory applies to our society today. Every new market has its own identity, and this research will try to understand what market entry strategy works best for education services.

There have been multiple materials and research on market entry modes fitting for specific types of industries. The study would reflect on those methods used in the past and why specific entry modes would be successful. Below there is a brief example of the points the study would like to focus on.

During the early 1900s in England, when trade was constantly evolving, entering international markets had taken various forms. Specific organizations at the time had a more integrated operation where retailing had blended within the broader operational structures. On the other hand, some companies separated their domestic trading from that of international trade. An example of such a company is Harrods, whose South American business remained as its entity. In addition to the abovementioned modes of entry, the other retailers adopted a more flexible approach to establishing themselves by working through other companies in the international market. This study will try to inculcate some of those principles while working on finding a suitable entry mode. The entry mode of Harrods is fascinating because it can root itself with a solid local base and grow organically. (Nicholas. 2011,542)

The chapter on market entry strategy will discuss different entry modes, the relevance to higher education export, and how it can help Finnish Education Services enter the Indian market using theories of Globalization.

The objective is to narrow down the modes that would be best suited to sell and promote Finnish education to developing countries. The most known foreign entry modes are direct export, indirect export, and production in the home country. (Carter., 1997, 121)

According to Agarwal and Ramaswami (1992), a market entry strategy is influenced by financial and intellectual assets, market potential, and organizational efficiencies. The theory will focus on the usability of the market entry strategy or multiple strategies in market entry potential, sustainability, and the apparent risks and benefits.

Further discussions include entry strategies preferred by the service sector and research into which suits the education service sector best using Czinkota and Ronkainen's (2011) findings.

The WTO framework for services trade will be used partially while discussing different market entry modes. See Figure 5.

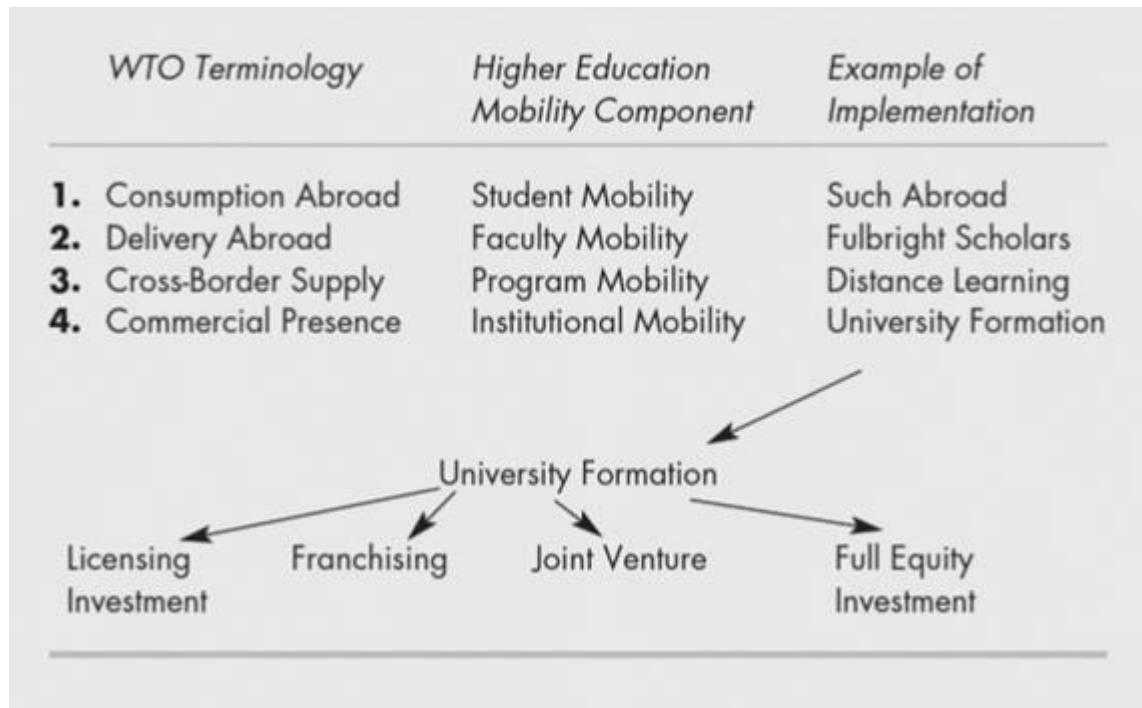


Figure 5. The WTO framework for services trade (Czinkota and Ronkainen. 2009)

2.2.1 Exporting

Exporting is considered one of the most primary and straightforward means while expanding to a foreign country. Institutions can further choose if they want to export directly or indirectly.

Exporting simply means the service originates from the home country and is marketed and sold to the target nation. Finnish education is solely a product and creation of the country, and therefore the main form of market entry is selling the existing service to the higher education market abroad. (Carter. 1997)

The transaction through which products and services are sold differentiate direct and indirect export. When a business is new to the industry or market of the foreign country, indirect exports help set operations with the help of a local entity such as an agent, vendor, who receives commissions. This method skips the barriers formed by indirect export and lack of market research.

Direct exports are mainly about building trust with the client or market abroad. It requires proper market research, enough resources to learn the market, sending employees to the field, and an overall understanding of the target country's landscape. It allows the exporter to understand their customers' needs and structure and develop their product/service based on experience. (Glowik. 2016, 157)

2.2.2 Licensing

Licensing is defined as a mode where the institution in the home country agrees to collaborate with a local company and allows them to use the trademark, the know-how, and other attributes.

Finland has multiple education consulting companies; choosing licensing as an entry mode would mean that the consulting company in the export country can use the marketing and trademark to generate student mobility to Finland. According to Albaum (2005, 254), positioning a company in international investments and using licensing to further develop investments in other markets can lead to permanent equity investment. Although this form of export can dilute the quality of education Finland stands for, Finnish education cannot be duplicated. The Finnish mentality towards education stems from it being a welfare state and a knowledge-based economy. The trademark of Finnish education could allow implementing the practices, but there is no one size fits all.

2.2.3 Franchising

Franchising is a form of licensing but with some key differences. In franchising, the parent company allows the designated entity to conduct business in a specific manner. The problem with international franchising is the risk of intellectual property and loss of the parent company's trademark. In addition, the legal issues of the target country might hinder the freedom of the leading company to implement Finnish education and the practices freely. (Rosado-Serrano. Dikova. 2018)

According to Doherty (2002, 34), franchising is an agreement and a relationship where both parties have responsibilities; they must execute to make the arrangement work. Both franchisor and franchisee benefit from the deal, given they follow a pre-agreed set of requisites that maintains a brand image and is true to the product/service.

If a Finnish education export company were to franchise, the integrity and purpose of the service would stay true given the agreement made.

2.2.4 Management contracts

Management contracts are a risk-free method of market entry into a foreign country. In this mode, a company uses its personnel and staff to assist a company in the target foreign country for a specific period and fee. The management of the firm transfers knowledge and trains the recipients while gaining expertise in the foreign markets.

The training allows the target firm to receive new information and strengthen its local presence. At the same time, the operating team on the ground gains research for the export firm to improve their presence abroad. In countries where the local government has strict restrictions on foreign investors, this is an excellent Finnish education consulting firm and institute to penetrate the target nation. The training can be commissioned for a specific period and as long as the agreement states. After the training, it could be essential to keep the communication going with the recipient firm to avoid risks of the firm becoming a competitor to the leading firm. (Glowik. 2016. 167, 168)

2.2.5 Joint venture

Joint ventures can be defined as a company in which ownership is shared between more than one company that shares ownership and control. Sole ventures are a complicated matter with foreign governments, given the difference in policies.

An example could be few independent Finnish education institutes, a local company, and another third party in the target nation to manufacture a service that recruits students to Finland. An equal joint venture is when each party contributes half of the amount of equity, causing them to share managerial control, risk, and earnings. (Glowik. 2016, 172.)

According to Paul Beaumish, joint venture as a market entry mode is often observed when entering a market in developing countries. (Beaumish. 2012,2)

2.2.6 Foreign direct investment

Foreign direct investment is direct ownership and is defined as an investment made to acquire lasting interest in the enterprise operating outside the local economy. (Larimore. H. 2008, 8)

FDI can give the company a competitive advantage in the target country, but this requires a high level of capital to make the investment that gives the home company control in the target nation. This mode of entry is far too expensive and advanced for the export of Finnish education services.

Education in Finland is primarily under the government, which means the target country's international policies may affect this undertaking. Regardless more and more institutions are owned by foundations as well.

2.2.7 Advantages and disadvantages of market entry modes

The following table compares the different entry modes that can be used for education export to developing countries. The advantages and disadvantages are collected from literary sources used in the above short chapters.

Table 3. Advantages and disadvantages of market entry modes

| MARKET ENTRY MODE | ADVANTAGES | DISADVANTAGES |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Exporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is risk-free and maintains the integrity of the service. - Both direct and indirect forms of market entry can work for education export as a service. - education as export is a well-known industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The legal and political barriers that emerge when dealing with a new country outside EU laws and legislation. - lack of research and knowledge of the target country. - lack of target market's knowledge on Finnish education and competition. |
| Licensing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easy to enter - can promote the institution's name and trademark - building an external presence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of control over the educational institute. - quality of Finnish education lies within the overall structure: the policies, law, and individuals. Licensing would only dilute the quality. |

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Franchising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - risk-free - low cost for higher education institutes . - ability to enter different markets in the same region. - trust from the target country. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - insider competition within different companies under the franchise - lack of coordination between branches. - conflicts between the franchisor and franchisee due to lack of communication - riskier than export because the franchisor depends on the franchisee's data and information. |
| Management contracting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the ability to learn the target market and conduct research. -providing valuable insights and creating improvements to the operations of the target country. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no profitability because if Finnish education trains individuals abroad only for a short- time frame, it does not necessarily guarantee student mobility. - lack of control because the importer is in charge. - existing threat of grooming competition - intellectual property rights - possibility that export country personnel are not aware of the target nation's culture. |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>Joint venture</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shared risks, capital, profits - independent entity - assimilation of different sources of information. - trust from the local government when the partner company is local. - can cope with evolving market trends. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conflicts between the involved parties. -cultural differences - high risk compared to franchising and export. - risk of liability - harder to manage - conflict between partners can lead to dissolving the venture. |
| <p>Foreign direct investment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competitive advantage - institution grasps a large amount of knowledge that can further help advance bases. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - requires enormous capital. - more extensive research and understanding of the target market - risk of conflicts - high risk - legal procedures - needs a successful foundation. |

2.3 Blue ocean strategy

This short chapter will summarize why the Blue Ocean strategy is applicable for this study and why a competitive strategy will not offer long-term customer satisfaction. The chapter presents two contradictory forms of market strategy and applies the blue ocean strategy as an applicable method and principle for Finnish education export.

Using the findings of W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne (2005), this chapter will analyze the possibilities of applying the blue ocean strategy using the six path frameworks to Finnish education export.

2.3.1 What is the blue ocean strategy?

The blue ocean strategy envisions the market with two types of oceans: blue and red oceans. Blue oceans represent the non-existent markets, and red oceans the existing markets. The analogy of the red and blue oceans is further explained in the upcoming chapters.

Blue oceans represent the untapped potential, possibility of demand creation, and opportunity for sustainable growth. Finnish education as a paid commodity is a recent event. This phenomenon of charging tuition fees has allowed many new Finnish companies to enter the market to sell Finnish education; as a degree, a concept, a service. The education market has existed for many years, and the competition is rigid. Finnish education offers its customers a fresh idea of education fueled by the Finnish mentalities of education; education is for anyone who wishes to seek it. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005. 4,5)

Finland is a fresh market, and the fact that the country is taking baby steps in Globalization and education export makes it a fertile land for opportunities and growth alike. Blue oceans represent the strategic thinking that diverts from competition-based and focuses on a new strategy that offers value and no limitations. Finland's technological advances have provided companies opportunities to products an array of services and products. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005,7)

2.3.2 The analogy of blue waters

Diving into the untapped market space happens to be the very example of a blue ocean strategy. These blue waters contain growth and the ability to innovate while bearing in mind the customer's needs. Exporting Finnish education to transitioning nations brings its set of challenges and risks. The education industry is one of the biggest industries in Asian countries, with competition spanning across continents. (Kim and Mauborgne.2005,4)

2.3.3 The analogy of red waters

According to W. Chan Kim, the analogy of red waters represents the industries on the current plane of existence. The blue waters represent the unknown, non-existent market. Red oceans stand for many of today's enterprises, where competition is cutthroat. In such industries, customer satisfaction is not long-term unless companies create a proper strategy and conduct market research to tailor products/services that benefit the customer. The competitive market is constantly occupied, and there is demand for a specific need for boundaries and rules. These boundaries limit innovation and opportunity for long-term organic growth.

Given the prestige and quality of Finnish education, wading through red waters would cost Finland the essential attributes that shape their education system due to the nature of boundaries and competition in red waters.

Most blue waters are created within an existing red water industry, in this case, the education industry. For Finnish education to sustain its education's quality and high-performance rate, the industry needs to go beyond cutthroat competition and unethical manoeuvres to succeed. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005, 5).

2.3.4 Six path frameworks

Finland is a small country in terms of population and workforce compared to the competition in education export such as the U.S, U.K, and Australia. In developing nations, the abovementioned competitors are also on the top destinations a

high school graduate would study. Despite the popularity of the countries mentioned above as a top destination, Finland has a unique selling proposition, i.e., the quality of education and the opportunities offered by the welfare state with a population of 5.5 million. (Statistics Finland 2018)

Table 4 shows the percentage (%) of the world's international students hosted by each country, and they sum up 72% of the world's international students. The table is to indicate the competition in terms of countries hosting the most international students.

Table 4. International students hosted by country

| COUNTRY | % INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HOSTED |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| U. S | 20 |
| U. K | 13 |
| Germany | 8 |
| France | 8 |
| Australia | 7 |
| China | 7 |
| Canada | 5 |
| Japan | 4 |

(Foskett and Maringe. 2013, 5)

Kim and Mauborgne (2005) created the six path framework to reconstruct market realities and decipher clear patterns that help create blue ocean industries. The six paths in the framework question the traditional competitive tactics used by companies. The six frameworks can be applied to multiple industries and in this research will be applied to Finnish education export. Companies trap themselves in a competitive market by doing the following:

1. Defining their industry and work on excelling within one sector.
2. Look at industries through specific strategic groups
3. Focus on limited buyer groups within the industry
4. Maximizing service value within limitations of industry
5. Lack of balance in functional or emotional appeal

6. Adapting to incoming trends instead of shaping them.

Finnish education industry can reconstruct market realities. The principles of Finnish education can be applied to different forms of education export; without sole dependency on student mobility. Companies dealing with education export can expand beyond student recruitment and branch out to introducing Finnish education mentality to developing countries. The future of Finnish education is shaped by the country's principles on education and not external trends. The possibilities of envisioning a new market space are endless for Finnish education export in the upcoming years. (Kim and Mauborgne.2005,49-79)

This chapter aims not to compare successful countries in education export and Finland but to go beyond the basic principles of competing and discuss if the six-path framework can be applied to find an even better solution.

The analysis part of the thesis applies the principles of the blue ocean strategy to choose the appropriate market entry mode for Finnish education services to developing countries.

Industry

This path discusses how to focus on an array of alternative industries and not just one narrow path. The idea is to be intuitive in the approach made while exporting the services or products. Applying this approach to Finnish education services means focusing on the core value and the various ways the core can be shaped and formulated to solve multiple problems.

Looking across the industry can mean exporting the quality of the education and not marketing just the institute or brand. It can mean using the resources to create innovative solutions in education technology, expand via new channels, and expand the market through various industries. In terms of competition, there would be none given the existing quality and humility of Finnish education. (Kim and Mauborgne.2005, 49-55)

The questions being raised on education export within borders on quality has been a continuous one. There have been discussions about education export trends that will affect the overall higher education quality and what that means for the institutions. Finland has a fairground, so to speak, in terms of quality, and given we approach export keeping in mind our value; we can keep it from diluting. (OECD 2004)

Strategic groups

This path complements the previous chapter that concluded with quality as a value. Looking across strategic groups asks the simple question of the customer trading up to a better alternative to what they already know. Strategic groups within industries focus on a limited number of groups, i.e., students willing to pay a large sum for higher education. To create a new market space beyond specific strategic groups is to understand the value offered to consumers instead of price and performance. Quality-driven strategies and focus on value elements that influence higher education are considered in this path of the framework. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005, 56)

In comparison to higher education to alternatives like the U.S, where a student pays a large sum to study in an institution, handle personal expenses, and in addition to a poorly constructed welfare system, Finland has a better grounding. There is no logical reasoning behind why Finland as a destination or Finland as an exporter of quality education would not be a better option than competitors. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005, 57-60)

The following table shows education export earnings from international students. The fees charged in Finland for the quality offered surpasses most offerings in competing countries. The tuition fees in Finnish higher education institutes vary between 4000EUR and 18000EUR. (The Finnish National Agency for Education. 2019).

Table 5. is applicable in this situation due to the comparative nature of this path of the framework. Total service exports refer to the country's international export, and the percentage represents education export. Comparison of competitors is

included to highlight the profit-making nature of higher education. Export earnings of the United States and the United Kingdom are the highest because higher education is a profit-seeking business.

Competitors of Finland in education focus on price and performance by competing on student mobility and how the university is the best. Finland received recognition through the first PISA results in 2003. The education ethos of Finland relies on lifelong learning, research, development, lifelong learning, internationalization, and the importance of quality monitoring. (OECD 2003)

Table 5. Export earnings from foreign students

| | 1989 | | 1997 | | 2001 | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| | USD million | % of total service exports | USD million | % of total service exports | USD million | % of total service exports |
| Australia | 584 | 6.6 | 2 190 | 11.8 | 2145 | 13.1 |
| Canada | 530 | 3.0 | 595 | 1.9 | 727 | 2.0 |
| Mexico | - | - | 52 | 0.5 | 31 | 0.2 |
| New Zealand | - | - | 280 | 6.6 | 353 | 8.1 |
| Poland | - | - | 16 | 0.2 | - | - |
| United Kingdom | 2 214 | 4.5 | 4 080 | 4.3 | 11 141 | - |
| United States | 4 575 | 4.4 | 8 346 | 3.5 | 11 490 | 4.2 |
| Greece | | - | - | - | 124 | 0.6 |
| Italy | | - | - | - | 1 186 | 2.1 |

Source: OECD statistics on trade in services; IMF data for Italy and the United States in 2001, and for Poland in 1997. the Office for National Statistics for the United Kingdom in 1997; Johnes (2004) for the United Kingdom in 2001-02.

Buyer groups

This path mainly focuses on fighting the conventional methods. The focus is mainly on the obvious buyer, the parents of the youth deciding which degree to pursue.

Finnish education institutes target their students, but what if the student's family was also factored in when targeting the group. In most developing countries, a student pursues higher education immediately after high school, and given their age group and financial dependence; the parents ultimately make the final decision.

According to OECD, despite the massive yearly budget of EUR 136 million EU has for international mobility, independent funding is prevalent. It also applies to Intereuropean mobility through the Erasmus program, where 44% of the primary source of income for the students came from family.

An assurance on the quality of education and the country's safety is reassuring elements when approaching the indirect buyer: the parent. The approach, of course, mainly applies to higher education as an export. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005, 61-65)

Scope of complimentary service offerings

This chapter is about eliminating the pain points. When a student is admitted to a Finnish university, the process is still an ongoing one. The student proceeds to graduation, aims to find a suitable work placement, and contributing to society with their mentality of a global citizen.

Global citizenship is briefly discussed in chapter 2.1.2. Foskett and Maringe propositions on global higher education system. Education exporting, marketing, and selling are essential, but the processes that come before and after are just as important. (Kim and Mauborgne. 2005, 65,69)

The following are some existing complementary solutions that exist and that can be improved and made more prominent.

- Companies are creating solutions for international student prospects to make the study application.
- Education consulting firms offer guidance on the immigration processes in Finland.

- Postgraduate work placement programs are funded by the government and executed by private and public institutions.

Furthermore, focusing on the aftermath of education export can also minimize brain drain and maximize the resources spent on the graduate/student. Many different factors affect an individual's decision to remain in the country of graduation: matters related to visa, possibilities of work in other European countries, countries with lesser language barriers, and work opportunities at home country. (OECD, 2004,165)

An example offered by the OECD is the government-sponsored students in Malaysia, bumiputra that secures a high return rate than its privately funded students. Non-EU nationals paying for higher education in Finland is a relatively new concept. There have been efforts to create scholarships and career programs; these efforts also need to be made consistently for post-graduation to avoid brain drain in Finland.

Functional or emotional appeal

The path focuses on whether a product or service is a functional or emotional one. Education as export is a bit if but practically, it is more functional. There must be a balance between these contradictory appeals; when a service only appeals emotionally but has no functionality, it can be seen as taking advantage of the vulnerability.

The functional appeal of higher education is that it is an important decision an individual makes that shapes the next few decades of their life; it must be a well-thought-out decision. At the same time, the emotional appeal of living in a happy environment, contributing to a society that gives back, looks satisfying. The emotional appeal makes Finnish education an attractive higher education option when deciding one's future.

Chapter 2.1.3 Statistics on student mobility highlight the majority of student traffic from Asia. Table 6 and Table 7 discuss Finnish education's functional and emotional appeal applied to higher education demand in Asia. The results from the

OECD, Internationalisation and Trade, Opportunities, and Challenges, emphasize Finnish education's functional and emotional appeal. (OECD. 2004,156-158).

Table 6. The functional appeal of Finnish education: cross border education

| FUNCTIONAL APPEAL | FINNISH EDUCATION OFFER |
|---|---|
| Educational and social advancement beyond the nation's confinements | Quality education |
| The varied range of programs | Finland has 13 universities and 22 universities of applied sciences with over 400 programs for students to pick from. |
| Economic gain | Living in Finland and contributing to its economy is also about receiving back. The high taxation is what finances the reason it is the happiest country in the world. |
| Learning | According to PISA, Finland comes on top when it comes to the best educational system in the world. |
| Lack of quality education in the origin country | *the statement above applies to the functional appeal* |
| Opportunities available offshore | The opportunity to work while studying, geographical location, EU member state, mobility between EU states |
| Opportunity to find work | Employment opportunities post-graduation is an ongoing project and effort by the Finnish Ministry of labour to hire more immigrants unemployed in Finland. In addition, internationalization through Higher education is creating more opportunities for immigrants. |

Table 7. The emotional appeal of Finnish education: cross border education

| EMOTIONAL APPEAL | FINNISH EDUCATION OFFER |
|---|---|
| The desire for individual betterment | Finnish society does not have a specific age when it is appropriate to study. Individual betterment is welcome in all forms. |
| Families investing in their child's education | Finnis education is an investment that goes beyond the degree. Finland's stability, social welfare, equality offer an array of opportunities. |
| Social status | In Finland, every person is equal; Finland is 4 th in the EU on the gender quality index. |
| Cultural motivations | Finnish culture is welcoming to all, and there is little to no discrimination. |
| Freedom | Finland ranks second in the World Press Freedom Index (2021) |

OECD 2004. Internationalization and trade in higher education: opportunities and challenges.

Time

This final chapter on the six path frameworks discusses building a non-competitive arena by looking across time and being intuitive on how trends will change the value and affect the export structure.

A generic approach in red ocean companies would be adapting to the changes as they come without trying to predict trends. Here is a fictitious example of blue and red ocean approaches in directions.

Competitive: observing the competition, discover an innovative way of learning, and place all efforts on replicating it.

Intuitive: trend prediction by looking across time and understanding that education technology in Finland has high potential. The potential is created by combining the quality of education and innovative landscape.

The path of looking across time refers to looking at the current value and the potential value that Finnish education can create. A successful product/service needs to have a problem-solution fit, and that is how a service can stay viable in the long run.

Finnish education will continue to exist, and the question is how we keep the need for Finnish education alive outside the borders.

The final chapter of the thesis discusses conceiving a new market space for Finnish education using the results from the research methodology. Defining a clear strategy and critical focus on value innovation is a practice that can result in successful export. (Kim and Mauborgne.2005, 75,79)

3 METHODOLOGY

The working method and data collection process in the research will be briefly summarized in this chapter.

3.1 Research approach

Qualitative research captures and documents underlying themes that quantitative methods cannot do. Interaction with the study participants allows for broader understanding and receives a more comprehensive answer to the research questions. The qualitative approach was chosen for the thesis due to the nature of the data collected, interviews, and findings. The data collected and analyzed documents different human perspectives relevant to Finnish education services to developing nations. The research objective was to gather multiple perspectives on Finnish education as export to developing countries; therefore, it was qualitative. Qualitative research observes and interviews participants as part of the research process. (Saldana. 2011. 3-4)

The thesis gathers multiple perspectives and does not rely on a single point of view; this can be observed in the findings. Themes are collected from the interviews and categorized to offer a deeper insight into Finnish education export. The methodology relies on collecting and recording information from interviews simultaneously to familiarize with the data—recording and transcribing interviews allowed for accumulating a large amount of data that benefits the study. The process of analyzing the interviews was immersive to observe the themes and place them into categories—furthermore, the opportunity to re-observe the data allowed for new insights to be formed. (Leavy. 2014,17,36)

Qualitative research allows the author to be the primary tool in data collection and allows more room for evaluating the results from the interviews. The broad concept of education services benefits from qualitative research as it combines opinions from both the data collector and the participant. (Saldana. 2011, 31-32.)

The research evolves according to the progression of the results; new insights from findings influence the conclusion and answer to the problems. Qualitative

research observes and interviews participants as part of the research process. (Saldana. 2011. 23,24)

3.2 Data collection method

The objective is to collect data through theories, literary sources, and interviewing participants.

The methods used for collecting data in qualitative research include the mechanical requirements to execute the process. The main instrument is the researcher and the observations, intuition, and responses he/she can extract. This research uses interviewing participants as the practical format of the data collection to answer the research questions.

Most qualitative research studies mainly rely on interviewing participants because it is a straightforward way of documenting an individual's perspectives, experiences, attitudes, and motivations. (Saldana. 2011,32)

The questions for the interview were formulated from the research questions and were designed to be broad in introspect to allow participants to discuss the matter further freely. The interview plan was semi-structured for the participants. The participants were representatives from education companies, consulting companies, education institutes, and private persons with high expertise in education export. The participants specialize in different roles from the following regions: India, South America, Turkey, and China.

The questions in Appendix 1. interview guide were sent ahead of time for the participants to be prepared. The interviews were conducted over video calls and phone calls. During the interviews, the participants were asked to share their opinions on some key topics that frame the globalization theory and market entry modes in Finnish education.

3.3 Data analysis

The qualitative research outcomes are infinite, and so are the ways of conducting analysis. Data is analyzed throughout the process of data collection, and new insights and learnings influence analysis.

The analysis aims to observe various patterns, connect relevant groups and place them into specific categories. Observing various patterns leads to a straightforward solution and answers to the significant concepts at the beginning of the research. (Saldana. 2011,90-93)

The research applies thematic analysis to the qualitative data by drawing similarities and patterns between the responses by the interview participants and cross-referring them with the theories from the literature.

Thematic analysis is collecting a varied set of data and capturing the ideas that lie beneath the surface. Thematic analysis is flexible for the qualitative researcher as it allows to deal with interpretative frameworks that arise from interactions with participants and can answer different research questions. (Liamputtong. 2019, 844-848).

An inductive approach is adopted to the data analysis as the researcher uses partial knowledge about a phenomenon and expands upwards towards a theory. The data collected from the interviews explore underlying themes that are familiarized and classified to draw a definitive answer to the research questions. The analysis process starts with collecting raw data, familiarizing it, forming concepts and themes by comparing the similarities and differences of the findings. The goal of the analysis is to summarize the categories and themes to highlight potential theoretical relationships. (Kyngäs. 2019, 5,14)

The research is qualitative; therefore, the answers were collected into excel documents, namely ALPHA and BETA. Both documents had two sheets each: one for each research question.

ALPHA collected multiple relevant participant answers to the sheets to see if they answered the research questions from Chapter 1.3, and BETA further narrowed down the answers to be ready for analysis. The responses were colour-coded in ALPHA and categorized into themes. The main themes were then copied to BETA.

The findings in BETA are coded by colour and split into three distinct themes that pose a challenge and risk to education export. It is to be noted that the goal is not to eradicate any of these elements but to find better solutions and create awareness.

4 ANALYSIS

This chapter will display the findings and the process of categorizing and placing them into themes while focusing on how the findings answer the research questions. Chapter 3.3 gives an insight into the methodology as to how the findings are evaluated.

Participants were chosen from the Finnish education industry: education institutes, education exporters, education pioneers, and professionals. The participants are anonymous to maintain their privacy and allow more room to discuss and ponder the subjects.

The interview questions were created based on the research questions and the theoretical framework. The questions were semi-structured and mailed to the participants to answer. Below is a table of the participants and how the interview was conducted.

TABLE 8. Interview participants

| No. | Background | Method |
|---------------|--|----------------------|
| Participant 1 | Educations Solutions company (Turkey) | Email and phone call |
| Participant 2 | Education consulting company (India) | Email and video call |
| Participant 3 | Finnish Higher Education Institute (Finland) | Email and video call |
| Participant 4 | Finnish education practitioner (China) | Email and video call |
| Participant 5 | International research-based organization | Email and video call |
| Participant 6 | Finnish Higher Education Institute (Finland) | Email and video call |
| Participant 7 | Company X | Email |
| Participant 8 | Finnish education institute | Email |

The pattern is clear; more interviews were done by email and video call, enabling rich data collection. Email interviewees were offered a series of eleven structured questions and asked to answer them. Participant 1 agreed to a phone call and discussed the matters.

Interviews conducted on video calls were approximately 30 minutes to one hour long. The participants consented to be recorded. Post-interview, the interview data were familiarised by logging and transcribing them. Given the questions' direct yet broad nature, the answers yielded several answers and perspectives to the research questions.

The analysis splits the themes into individual chapters by order of priority that will answer the research questions.

4.1 Risks and challenges

This chapter will share the findings of the analysis to answer the below research question. 85% of the respondents responded to the culture of the export country being a challenge.

- What are the risks and challenges of Finnish education export to developing countries?

4.1.1 Culture and society

This section will summarise the various challenges and risks posed by the target countries' culture and society. Cultural aspects are mostly language and the business mentality. The findings aim to offer insight into the potential challenges and how the study can potentially learn about new markets.

The responses have a significant perspective and opinion on culture and society. All the education exporters understand the risks and challenges, but given the diversity of their target country, the responses slightly different but maintain the underlying principles. The analysis will discuss risks and challenges by further

categorizing them into five categories. The answers were ranked based on priorities and similarities in response to the findings.

Forgery and Illegal activities

Market research and trustworthy relationships play an essential part in accessing and evaluating challenges such as forgery and illegal activities. The issues arising in education export during student recruitment activities that pose a challenge are forgery of documents to get accepted into study programs.

From the perspective of education export companies, the risk is corruption and illegal activities in international areas, and companies need to be cautious in municipal and local deals.

Diversity

When recruiting students to study in Finland, there are issues regarding the diversity and culture in Finland. Students worry if they will not have a diverse community in Finland, and it is a risk many students, especially from India, are unwilling to take, which is a challenge.

Finnish education importers are concerned that Finnish education exporters only target a few countries and affect diversity in Finland and Finnish Universities.

Lack of motivation from export country

Finnish education export to developing countries requires a level of mutual willingness to impact and change. Finnish education in China is deemed challenging due to the local mentality towards education reform. The target audience lacks the desire to change, which affects education export.

The lack of trust in Finnish education implementors in the target country affects the export of intellectual services. Micromanagement and restrictions on teachers prohibit them from cultivating new ideas, innovating and implementing Finnish learnings.

The restrictive curriculum of developing countries and obstacles with a lack of motivation to change poses a risk to Finnish education export. The basic myths of education hinder the introduction and implementation of Finnish practices.

Language

Language affects education export because it affects the ability to communicate and build relationships locally. The stark contrast of language paired with the mentality can affect the approachability of a country. The reasoning for the language being a challenge is when English as a lingua franca does not suffice anymore.

To tackle the language barrier, companies and institutions alike hire staff with a local background to navigate the areas of business that require building relationships. Choosing a country based on communication hurdles is an approach used by most respondents. For example, choosing Kenya as a market given the population speaks English and is an excellent market compared to Morocco, where French is spoken.

Cultural sensitivity and political awareness

The final category in risks and challenges in culture and society is cultural sensitivity and political awareness. Finnish exporters in India face the problem of an opinion being formed by the receiving crowd based on the physical attributes of Finnish exporters. Export operations are affected when the client's main focus becomes what the exporter wears and speaks, not the services offered .ie. Finnish education.

There is a challenge to maintain the political awareness of Finnish exporters when entering countries in conflict with another country. Additionally, when offering teacher training, grouping participants accordingly to avoid conflict caused by national conflicts. Education export requires awareness and knowledge of what is happening in the country of export.

To conclude, the challenges and risks posing Finnish education export can be targeted by understanding and learning more about the market in the country, immersing in the culture, and building strong local relationships.

4.1.2 Bureaucracy

This chapter focuses on the current legal and political barriers faced by the education exporters of Finnish education. The challenge stems from both ends: the Finnish bureaucracy and the target country's bureaucracy. The research aims to be functional and focus on Finnish bureaucracy's local issues to offer insights into matters faced by export countries.

The concerns are equally shared between the interview responses, with 85% facing bureaucracy and legal barriers. The findings will be classified into Finnish immigration services, the Finnish government, and international governments.

Finnish Immigration services

Most respondents share a similar attitude and opinion on the Finnish immigration service. Finnish immigration service has granted student visas at a slow pace, affecting the motivation to apply to Finnish education institutes. Word of mouth plays a huge role in countries like India, and learning that the visa process takes time can affect student mobility.

Challenges such as forgery and corruption also affect the visa granting process because heavy vetting is necessary that can also affect average students applying.

The Finnish immigration service does not allow northern Iraq's teachers to obtain visas to visit Finland for short-term training. The prohibition poses a challenge because the Finnish institute cannot send their staff to Iraq either. It affects education export because teachers are involved and knowledge exchange to be implemented in Iraq is a form of Finnish education export.

Finnish immigration services are a challenge that can be solved by hiring more workforce to handle visa processing and vetting of documents to check their eligibility.

Finnish Government

Most of the participants discuss the challenge faced by the Finnish government. The government's risk-averse approach and cautiousness have left much uncertainty in export matters and room left for interpretation. The Finnish government's decisions are not fast enough for operations.

The remainder of the respondents states that the government is quite often unsure of what they want. The direct result of not knowing what the government wants results from Finland being new to education export.

Every respondent agrees on the fact that Finnish education export has barely begun and is taking baby steps. There is a long way to go, and the themes in Chapter 4.1.3 future solutions and new market space, the future of education export will discuss these things.

Foreign Governments and Conflict

The institutions face their fair share of challenges from the export country's bureaucracy and political challenges. The terrain of export countries poses different challenges such as:

1. Countries with ongoing civil war
2. Countries where national entities cannot directly pay the exporter
3. Border conflict areas

The abovementioned challenges are rugged terrains for education export. Still, at the same time, it offers an understanding to education exporters of areas to avoid and tread lightly when penetrating new markets. Globalization is at the peak, but it is a complex internal conflict between and within countries and regions.

Certifications

Respondents from Finnish universities state the need for companies to approach educational institutes to offer official certifications eventually. Another response highlight using technology as a tool to provide digital certificates to companies. The challenge in this theme reflects the Finnish government not authorizing the Finnish curriculum for export; the approval is given, but the certifications backing authorization to export the Finnish curriculum is not offered. Companies need to visit Finnish education institutes for this certification.

4.1.3 Future and new market space

This chapter will use the final theme to offer a potential solution to the challenges faced by the future of Finnish education.

57% of the respondents discuss the possible future of higher education from their expertise in the field. This theme was collected as challenges initially but did not fit the box of a fundamental challenge. The theme resulted in an epiphany; these can be viewed as requests and needs faced by education exporters to further facilitate the research for future purposes.

The themes will be categorized into problem/solution series and explained further:

Problems

There are mixed views on the future of higher education from the respondents. There is uncertainty on how higher education institutes will evolve in education export without proper resources and professional background of staff in selling.

Student perspectives shared by the respondents are opportunities for employment and integration into the society that can affect student mobility and intention to stay in the country.

Solutions

Universities of applied sciences such as Tampere University of Applied Sciences are confident that education export is the future and constantly targets new countries. Universities are non-profit organizations and are in an excellent position to take risks and iterate. The universities have the necessary support to help them succeed. Additionally, education export has helped staff at higher education institutes get internationalized, and this works in favour of Finnish education export and globalization.

Finnish education companies have support from the Finnish education institutes and the Finnish government to succeed. Universities develop their service further by accommodating the best talents from different countries and offer education export companies official certifications.

Finland has an innovative understanding of the gaming industry and knowledge in the education sector. Combining both elements of gaming and knowledge offers scalable business opportunities that can benefit export. Innovation and technology help penetrate a new market easily and benefits both universities and education export companies alike.

Education institutes are willing to hire more talents to help facilitate education export and have initiated local operations that boost employment activities within the community.

Institutions such as Tampere University of Applied Sciences have started programs to bring nursing students to Finland. There are similar projects in the future, such as the nursing program that facilitates education export and internationalization. The future of Finnish education depends on vast networks and connections that help create rich market data and intellectual exchanges.

This chapter has summarised the risks and challenges faced by Finnish education exporters to developing countries, and the findings will be summarised in Table 9. below.

Table 9. Risks and Challenges of education export

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Culture and society | Forgery and illegal activities |
| | Diversity |
| | Lack of willingness to change |
| | Language |
| | Cultural sensitivity and political awareness |
| Bureaucracy | Finnish Immigration services |
| | Finnish Government |
| | Foreign governments and conflict |
| | Certifications |
| Future and new market space | Collaborations between companies and institutes |
| | Hiring new talents |
| | Boosting internationalization through initiative locally |
| | Education technology |

Table 9. shows the findings in order of the larger themes and the sub-themes used to answer the research question.

- What are the risks and challenges of Finnish education export to developing countries?

The significant findings are broken down into smaller elements in Table 9. to offer insight for education export companies and educational institutes, the multiple perspectives on what attributes to risks and challenges.

4.2 Market entry

This chapter aims to answer the following research question:

- Which is the appropriate market entry mode to help Finnish education export succeed?

The chapter is practical and will discuss different market strategies used by various study participants and narrow the market entry mode. The market entry modes referred to in the theoretical framework in chapter 2.2 Market entry modes are as follows:

1. Export (Direct and indirect)
2. Licensing
3. Franchising
4. Management contracts
5. Joint venture
6. Foreign direct investment

The market entry mode preferred by respondents of the study was Exporting. Chapter 4.2.1 will break down the types of export selected by the education exporters and why specific market entry mode was chosen. Chapter 4.2.2 discusses various entry strategies chosen by education companies and institutes.

4.2.1 Entry modes

Different market entry modes are discussed in theory, and the findings indicate a preference for a specific market entry mode: Exporting (direct and indirect). This chapter will summarise the market entry modes used to target countries and establish the business.

The chapter is broken down into industries and services provided and what market entry mode is used. The reasoning for the format is to offer diversity due to the findings: 100% of respondents use export as an entry mode. The examples provided results from the findings: 14% of respondents use direct export and indirect export. 71.4% of respondent companies use both export methods.

Education consulting companies

Consulting companies targeting Turkey use direct and indirect export because the company cannot participate in public bidding, so a proxy company and representative need to be used. Additionally, the company also operates as direct export and represents Finnish operatives in Turkey. The company also works as a middle man between Finnish education export companies and universities' clients overseas.

In India, education consulting companies use both direct and indirect export. When students apply direct export directly through the company, indirect export when local agents and education counsellors in India help procure potential students.

Finnish higher education

Finnish higher education does not use means such as franchising. The institute relies on direct export. One of the respondents has been working on an export case requiring a foundation or non-benefit organization in the target country that serves as a middleman. It is primarily using direct export because the institute does not have staff working outside the university. There are exceptions where a case is presented by a mediator between the client and the educational institute. It can be considered as a form of indirect export.

Many education institutes' cases come directly from the client, but there are exceptions when an agency is used or a local company.

Teacher training programs

In the specific case from a respondent active in China, multiple agencies were used to export teacher training and classify it as indirect export. There is a local agency in Finland and another local agency in China. The case is specific and does not convey that all education export to China is indirect. There can be many market entry modes, but for this case, the sample is small.

Teacher training in some countries has innovatively designed products for further learning. Respondent's company has developed a SISU box with learning materials to help teachers implement their teachings in Finland.

School development companies

28% of the companies in the findings engage in school development programs. Companies use both methods of export: direct and indirect. A direct export method is used when the company has a good network of collaborators known in the market. At times company collaborates with a third-party connection that sells the product/ service on the company's behalf.

Companies contact clients using a direct export mode and sales representatives that procure potential clients, an indirect export form. The company generates new leads using networks and partners. Clients who are interested in the company's offerings contact them directly.

Table 10. Market entry modes and industry preference

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Direct export and indirect export | Consulting companies |
| | University student recruitments |
| | Student mobility |
| | School development companies |
| Indirect export | Teacher training programs |
| Direct export | University student recruitments |

Table 10. shows the findings of preferred market entry mode by company and service provided. The market entry mode chosen by most is direct and indirect export because it complements the nature of the product, intangible Finnish education solution, and services. Methods such as franchising or joint venture work

for a profit-based business, but Finland and its people govern Finnish education. The education system is based on shared principles, values and maximizing the impact it creates.

4.2.2 Entry strategies

Market entry is understanding the market, the market's need, tailoring specific solutions, and acknowledging that one size fits all does not work in practice with education exports to developing countries. This chapter discusses the findings on strategies and tactics used by Finnish education exporters when entering a new market.

The respondents' answers are split into categories of different strategies used to enter a new market. The following sub-themes show similar strategies and practices adopted by respondents active in export in multiple continents.

Market analysis and research

57% of the respondents conduct an initial market analysis before penetrating a new market and country. Comprehensive market analysis is created, and the target market is focused based on the company's strengths.

In India, areas high on international education exports were targeted. The education market in India that were targeted are Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Hyderabad. Later, the company targeted smaller regions of India and expanded to Tier 2, Tier 3 cities.

In other countries, international education companies have started organizing a conference in the target country to learn more about the market and see if the export is perceived as a practical market.

Strategic recruitments

Finnish higher education institutes have individuals dedicated to the universities that specifically target countries and visit the countries to promote Finnish education.

Tampere University of Applied Sciences has strategically hired people skilled in the local language, culture of target countries with focus areas are in China and Asia, Africa, the MENA region, and Latin America.

The education institutes' main goal is to hire skilled individuals who know the terrains and landscape before entering the market.

Solution-based strategy

The companies in India target areas and cities that can afford and require higher education services. Instead of starting with market research, one respondent company aims to locate one requirement or problem faced in the target country and create a solution while garnering the trust and faith of the local community. An example of a solution-based strategy is creating a SISU box teaching package for teachers who participated in Finnish pre-school training but did not know how to implement these new practices. The box contained materials, certifications, and tools to implement the learnings.

Networks and connections

42% of respondents state the importance of building local connections in the country company's want to target. Building personal relationships penetrate the market fast, and insider knowledge is gained. New environments require a local agent and representative because education export relies on building strong relationships.

Companies that mainly target private school owners and investors trust local sales representatives and build good networks in the target countries. In Africa, education institutes are more likely to enter a new market if an existing partner in

that region finds an opportunity and can arrange the initial processes. The business culture in Kenya and Egypt requires building personal relationships in addition to business.

Table 11. Market entry strategies used by respondents.

| Strategies | Reasoning |
|------------------------------|---|
| Market analysis and research | Used by 57% of respondents |
| Strategic recruitments | The preferred approach of Finnish education institutes |
| Solution-based strategy | Used to solve a significant issue in a target country and gain trust |
| Networks and connections | A crucial part of market entry in new terrains; building a solid and trustworthy relationship with local partners |

Table 11. summarises the different approaches made by companies and education exporters when entering a new market. The main takeaway from Table 11. above is market analysis and building solid relationships locally in the target country.

Chapter 4.2 Market entry answers the research question:

- Which is the appropriate market entry mode to help Finnish education export succeed?

The market entry mode beneficial to Finnish education export is Indirect and Direct export. Indirect and direct export allow Finnish exporters to build local presence using agents and build trust directly—the strategies in Table 10. are used to emphasize export choices.

4.3 A Finnish education export and import case: Nursing programs

The findings from the research collected responses on problems and solutions concerning Nursing programs offered by Finnish educational institutes.

These findings will be presented as a case study to higher education export and import. The summary emphasizes the potential of Finnish education exporters tapping into specific export service/product needs and maximizing on that.

There is not only demand for higher education and education services; there is demand for specific products, education programs, training, and services. An example is the SISU box from Chapter. 42.2 Entry strategies. The company notices a demand for learning materials to implement locally and supplies SISU Finnish preschool boxes.

This chapter uses the format of supply and demand to share findings and present the case example.

Demand

In India, there is emphasized demand and need from clients for more hospitality programs and nursing programs. The programs have not been made available, according to one respondent. For India, Finnish exporters can identify programs in demand among Indian students and tap into that market.

The data collection yielded another response on nursing during discussions on Finland's need for more workforce and international talents. An example was offered regarding the current situation in Nursing; in 20 years, there is a possibility Finland does not have professionals in nursing.

The Finnish need for nurses in the workforce posed an opportunistic possibility; India wants and needs a specific product, and Finland needs more healthcare workers. Supply is missing, and it will be discussed below. There is no one particular strategy to enter a new country, but the market is of supply and demand with education export.

Supply

The biggest project a respondent from Tampere University of Applied Sciences has been working on is tailoring nursing programs to different countries, specifically Kenya. The department realized a year ago that this is a requirement and demand they could satisfy. Currently, there are twenty-five students from Kenya studying nursing at Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

Another project is in motion with Indonesia, where individuals pay a considerable sum to study nursing in U.K or Australia. In Finland, there is a demand for more nurses, and education is not a profit-based business. The individuals who look for nursing have opportunities to learn and work for Finnish healthcare.

Discussions have been made with local Finnish hospitals and health care providers who are willing to accept nursing students into practical training and hope to hire the students after graduation.

This chapter mainly emphasizes the importance of tapping into markets in Finland that needs a specific workforce. The student traffic to Finland, when strategically executed, works as a tool to solve economic issues Finland faces.

5 CONCLUSION

The research offered multiple insights from different literary works on education export and practical perspectives from participants focusing on different countries. The research question will be answered in this chapter, and the possibility for future research is discussed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the risks and challenges of Finnish education export to developing countries?
2. Which is the appropriate market entry mode to help Finnish education export succeed?

5.1 Risks and challenges of education export

The subject of risks and challenges is broad and relies on what is perceived as a risk. Finnish education export to developing countries is considered a challenge in this research because of the differences in language, society, and culture. Finnish language, culture, and way of working are naturally different from India, Turkey, China, Latin American countries, and African countries.

The key takeaway from the risks and challenges of education export is understanding how the target market functions and embracing change to make room for innovation. The principle of education is very different in each country and is influenced by many specific practices. Introducing a new practice that has been proved better to these countries needs meticulous approaches. To negate the target countries principles and education system is to lose the customer entirely. The opportunity here is to understand, collaborate and learn new ways to work efficiently towards a future where education is an achievable commodity shared and learned.

The borders cause the bureaucratic challenges in place by multiple governments. The bureaucratic challenge will continue to exist, but the landscape of globalization is changing. The operations between countries are growing more global-minded, creating more room for education export to grow.

Meanwhile, education exporters understand the complexity of specific regions and the importance of respecting the boundaries in place and establishing operations in areas benefiting the company and Finland.

The challenges from Finnish bureaucracy need to be improved. The best way to approach this issue is to hire more talents and professionals to create a streamlined system of evaluating applications, have a shorter processing time frame, and avoid delays that affect both students and companies alike in education export.

Finnish education system benefits from the internationalization process tremendously. Internationalization allows for more education community members to adopt a more global-minded way of thinking. The challenges faced by the future of Finnish education have potential solutions within the export challenges. Universities have the support and confidence of the government and are capable of taking risks and entering new markets. There is a willingness to hire more talents and expand export operations.

Additionally, the funding instruments are shrinking for higher education universities, and more and more institutes are starting to export their services. Education export is vital for the future of Finland in terms of globalization and internationalization. Employment post-graduation is a challenge, but there are programs initiate to tackle these issues. One of the programs currently active in the city of Tampere is the talent boost program. This program aims to attract international talents to Finland, maximize international experts in Finland, and create an inclusive working life for international skills. More local international programs can offer opportunities to learn and understand different possible markets and cultures.

Lastly, education technology offers Finnish exporters scalable opportunities which can help penetrate a new market easily. Finnish gaming and Finnish education can be utilized, offering business opportunities to create virtual classrooms and e-learning materials in a growing business sector globally. Education technology can put Finnish education ahead of its competitors. There are currently over 300 education technology companies in Finland expected to grow in the next few years. An example of a company that uses education and technology is Zoan Oy. Their expertise lies in innovative technology and virtual reality; recently, they have been working with education and have re-created grade five of Finnish primary school in virtual reality.

5.2 Appropriate market entry mode

The research evaluated multiple market entry modes in the theoretical framework and has concluded that Direct and Indirect export is the appropriate market entry mode for education services.

In countries where the local environment is complicated to understand to Finnish exporters, having local representatives and agents help build a strong brand locally. Finnish higher education exporter uses direct export mostly because they are a government-funded entity. Companies can create a scalable business in comparison by collaborating with local agents, partners, and associations.

Market entry modes such as licensing and franchising cannot be applied to Finnish education due to the nature of Finnish education. Finnish education is cultivated in Finnish soil, and the country's social welfare state makes education what it is today. Franchising would be admitting that one size fits all, and Finnish education can be implemented by replicating and inserting into any country.

The principles and willingness to innovate and evolve are the governing elements of Finnish educations.

5.3 Limitations and further research

The pandemic situation posed limitations on the research. The methodology of the research had a possibility of expanding the participant pool further. The communication methods had to be done online, and there was no possibility of conducting fieldwork that could contribute to the research further.

Finnish education as export is a new concept in terms of scalability and profit. There is a lot to be learned on the subject, and Finland is in the starting stages of globalization and education export. The newness in education export allows for multiple research possibilities and testing new practices to understand what works for Finland and what works for the Finnish companies.

Education technology was an initial research question for the thesis. Halfway into the research process, it was understood that education technology is a more prominent subject and needs to be researched separately. Finland understands education and the understanding of technology. Finland is an innovation platform in Europe and can offer scalable opportunities to education companies by combining the two elements.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1.

Interview Guide

1. What do you feel is the starting point to realize that Finnish Education can be exported as a service?
2. In the sense of competitive advantage, what is something that Finnish education offers that another country cannot?
3. When expanding globally and into transitioning nations, what has been your biggest challenge so far? – language, culture, society.
4. How has your company adapted to the change brought forth by a new market?
5. What have the political and legal barriers been like in general with Education export?
6. What is your company's main target group, and have you been received well?
7. What does the future of Finnish education export look like to you? Is it good?
8. Do you use direct means of export or does your service flow through a local channel in the country of export?
9. What do you think of Finnish education services penetrating the Indian peninsula or do you already have operations there? - are they a viable market?
10. What market entry strategies do you employ when deciding to penetrate a new country?
11. What risks are you willing to take and how far can you go in turbulent terrains?