

# Productising Finnish Education for Export: The Barriers and Enablers of Internationalisation

## A Multiple Case Study: Fifteen Members of Future Learning Finland

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Walid El Cheikh

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# **Productising Finnish Education for Export: The Barriers and Enablers of Internationalisation**

A Multiple Case Study: Fifteen Members of Future Learning Finland

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Master's Thesis

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## ABSTRACT OF MASTER'S THESIS

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### Abstract

The recent Finnish policies have encouraged higher education institutions to export education abroad and, indeed, Finland has entered into a new period of change. The country is sitting on an excellent educational system encompassing many challenges and opportunities, which this thesis is aiming to unravel. The main objective of this study is to investigate the barriers to and enablers for internationalisation in universities, polytechnics and vocational education and training schools in Finland. The study was assigned by Future Learning Finland, part of FinPro, to create a sustainable and profitable education export strategy for Finland. The study took a holistic approach to productising Finnish education for export with the aim of inspiring future thesis topics.

The research is qualitative and interpretative. Twenty participants involved in the education export activities in Finland were interviewed. Among them, there were three universities, seven polytechnics, three vocational institutes, three companies, the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland and the National Union of University and Polytechnic students. The interviewed members were managers, directors, senior advisors, experts, senior lecturers and coordinators, mostly in the field of education or international business. The data from the interviews forms the empirical data of this study. Phenomenological research approach and methods were used to gather and interpret the empirical data. In particular, the author used the experts' direct quotes to categorise the barriers and enablers into 215 SWOT elements. Using the TOWS Matrix, four strategies were formulated by matching the Strengths and Weaknesses parts with the Opportunities and Threats.

This thesis has numerous findings. Firstly, different stakeholders have different definitions and visions of education export. Secondly, the Finnish education is an excellent product but the process of selling it is complex, requiring extensive human and financial resources. Thirdly, business networks and personal contacts play an important role when exporting educational services, in particular, the need to forge meaningful partnerships and approach the right markets. Fourthly, the attitude towards education export in Finland is both negative and positive, the latter showcasing the Finnish exporters' motivation to succeed in the internationalisation of Finnish education. Finally, the customers are the most important element when productising and internationalising education, and Finnish exporters should focus on building and delivering products that meet customers' needs and expectations.

The conclusion from the findings indicates that Finland has know-how strengths, as well as, weaknesses on a national level, however on an individual level the skills and capabilities to productise and/or internationalise are scattered around different organisations. This means that Finland as a whole has the potential to perform education export activities but each organisation alone will struggle, if not fail, to successfully sell its services abroad. Thus, there is a great need in Finland to work in consortiums or a cluster before expanding internationally. As a result, the author recommends four strategies that form "The Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export", proposing a new perspective regarding productisation as a process. Productising educational services in Finland has been previously perceived as building and packaging services into products, but in today's reality it should be more about producing what the customer wants and needs in a way that these products/services are sellable and most importantly profitable.

**Keywords** Finnish Education, Barriers, Enablers, Internationalisation, Productisation, SWOT Analysis

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Helsinki, September 2015

Walid O. El Cheikh

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
TABLE OF CONTENTS	
LIST OF FIGURES	
LIST OF TABLES	
LISTS OF ABBREVIATIONS	

<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Background</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 Finnish Education</b>	<b>3</b>
1.2.1 The Finnish Education System	3
1.2.2 Vocational Education and Training	4
1.2.3 Polytechnics	4
1.2.4 Universities	5
<b>1.3 Students</b>	<b>5</b>
1.3.1 The Situation in Finland	5
1.3.2 The Situation in the World	7
<b>1.4 Funding Education in Finland</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.5 Research Objectives and Research Question</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.6 Structure of the Study</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.7 Terminology</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.1 Productisation</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1.1 The Meaning of Productisation	12
2.1.2 The Characteristics of Productisation	14
2.1.3 Productisation and Marketing	15
<b>2.2 Internationalisation</b>	<b>18</b>
2.2.1 The Development of Internationalisation in Finland	18
2.2.2 Factors Explaining Internationalisation	20
2.2.3 Internationalisation Entry Modes	21
2.2.4 Dimensions and Theories of Internationalisation	23
2.2.5 Internationalisation of Finnish Education	26
2.2.6 The Challenges of Internationalisation	28
2.2.7 Reasons to Internationalise	31
<b>3 METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>3.1 Philosophical Approach</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>3.2 Research Method and Methodology</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.3 Future Learning Finland</b>	<b>37</b>
3.3.1 Overview	38
3.3.2 Selecting Cases	39
<b>3.4 Data Collection</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.5 Data Analysis</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>4.1 Key Findings</b>	<b>46</b>

4.1.1	Different Stakeholders for Education Export	46
4.1.2	Different Definitions of Education Export	49
4.1.3	Different Visions of Education Export	50
4.1.4	The Complexity of the Selling Process	52
4.1.5	The Excellence of Finnish Education as a Product/Service	53
4.1.6	The Education Export Network Matrix	55
4.1.7	The Market's Perspective	61
4.1.8	Attitudes towards Education Export: Positive and Negative	63
4.1.9	The Customer's Perspective	66
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Conclusions from Findings</b>	<b>70</b>
4.2.1	The Education Export Know-How in Finland	70
4.2.2	The Enablers and Barriers of Finnish Education Export	73
<b>5</b>	<b>DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Strategy: Internal EE</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Strategy: One Finland</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Strategy: ASM</b>	<b>81</b>
5.3.1	Awareness	81
5.3.2	Selling	83
5.3.3	Marketing	84
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Strategy: EE Boom</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>The Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Limitations and Future Research</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>101</b>
	Appendix 1: Interview Questions	101
	Appendix 2: SWOT Elements	103
	Appendix 3: Examples of Finnish Education Export Products	107
	Appendix 4: Examples of Markets / Countries / Projects / References	108
	Appendix 5: Organisation, Interviewee, Date, Time, Duration and Place (Interviews)	110
	Appendix 6: Background info from Interviewed UNIs, AMKs and VETs	111
	Appendix 7: Interviewees' Backgrounds	112
	Appendix 8: Examples of Programmes, Courses, Facilities and Projects	115
	Appendix 9: Examples of Foreign Students' Nationalities from Interviews	116
	Appendix 10: List of Universities and Polytechnics in Finland	117
	Appendix 11: Examples of Future Research Topics	118

## LIST OF FIGURES

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Figure 1: Education System in Finland	3
Figure 2: Thesis Structure	11
Figure 3: Link between Marketing Evolution and Productisation Characteristics	15
Figure 4: The Constituents of the Marketing Mix – 7Ps (Booms and Bitner, 1981)	17
Figure 5: Factors Explaining Internationalisation (Luostarinen, 1997, P.7)	21
Figure 6: Entry Mode Choice Framework (Driscoll, 2005)	23
Figure 7: Dimensions of Internationalisation (Luostarinen, 1994)	23
Figure 8: Choices of the Philosophical Approach	33
Figure 9: The Abductive Research Process in General (Kovacs & Spens, 2005)	34
Figure 10: The Abductive Research Process in this Thesis	35
Figure 11: Methodological Choices	36
Figure 12: TOWS Matrix from SWOT Analysis	44
Figure 13: Dynamics of TOWS Analysis	45
Figure 14: The Education Export Selling Process	52
Figure 15: The Finnish Education Export Network Matrix	55
Figure 16: Customers' Perspective in Finnish Education Export	66
Figure 17: TOWS Matrix and Four Strategies for Exporting Finnish Education	77
Figure 18: The Components of ASM Strategy	81
Figure 19: The Relationship between VET, AMK and UNI	86
Figure 20: The Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export	87
Figure 21: Three Phases of Exporting Finnish Education	88

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## LIST OF TABLES

---

Table 1: Foreign Degree Students in Finnish Higher Education by Field of Study, 2011	6
Table 2: Global Flow of Tertiary Level Students (2012)	8
Table 3: Current expenditure on regular education system by type of expenditure 2013	9
Table 4: Terminology used in the thesis	12
Table 5: Characteristics of Productisation Summarised (Harkonen et al., 2015)	14
Table 6: Useful Tools and Methods for Connecting Productisation and Marketing	18
Table 7: Internationalisation Order of Different Fields of Business in Finnish Economy	19
Table 8: Internationalisation Process of Finnish Industries	20
Table 9: International Stages at the Company Level	20
Table 10: Entry Modes in International Markets	22
Table 11: Reasons to Choose Finnish Education	27
Table 12: Motives for Internationalisation	31
Table 13: Choosing the Right Research Strategy	37
Table 14: Selected Members	39
Table 15: Education Export Main Stakeholders in Finland	47
Table 16: Quotes about Stakeholders	48
Table 17: Quotes about Different Definitions of Education Export	50
Table 18: Quotes about Different Visions of Education Export	51
Table 19: Quotes about the Selling Process	53
Table 20: Quotes about Finnish Education as a Product/Service	54
Table 21: Quotes about Partnerships and Consortiums	56
Table 22: Quotes about Organisational and Regional Level Networks	56
Table 23: Quotes about National Level Networks	58
Table 24: Quotes about International Network Elements	59
Table 25: Quotes about Personal Contacts	60
Table 26: Quotes about the Demand	61
Table 27: Quotes about Finding Markets	62
Table 28: Quotes about Approaching Markets	63
Table 29: Quotes about Positive Attitudes	64
Table 30: Quotes about Negative Attitudes	65
Table 31: Quotes about Trust, Time and Payment – The Customer’s Perspective	67
Table 32: Quotes about Cultural Differences – The Customer’s Perspective	68
Table 33: Quotes about Difficult Demands – The Customer’s Perspective	69
Table 34: Quotes about Difficult Administrative Processes – The Customer’s Perspective	69
Table 35: Know-how on National and Individual/Organisational Levels	70
Table 36: Know-How Strengths on National Level	72
Table 37: Know-How Weaknesses on National Level	72
Table 38: Know-how strengths and weaknesses on individual/organisational level	73
Table 39: SWOT Elements Summarised	74
Table 40: Internal EE Strategy	79
Table 41: One Finland Strategy	80
Table 42: ASM Strategy – Awareness	82
Table 43: ASM Strategy – Selling	83
Table 44: ASM Strategy - Marketing	84
Table 45: ASM Strategy – EE Boom	86

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>UAS/AMK</b>	University of Applied Sciences/Polytechnic/Ammattikorkeakoulu (in Finnish)
<b>VET</b>	Vocational and Educational Training
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational and Educational Training
<b>UNI</b>	University
<b>EE</b>	Education Export
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education
<b>HEIs</b>	Higher Education Institutions
<b>B2C</b>	Business to Consumer
<b>B2B</b>	Business to Business
<b>B2G</b>	Business to Government
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>FLF</b>	Future Learning Finland
<b>Ely-Centres</b>	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
<b>Tekes</b>	The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation
<b>SYL</b>	The National Union of University Students in Finland
<b>SAMOK</b>	The National Union of University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EEA</b>	European Economic Area
<b>AEE</b>	Aalto Executive Education
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the author presents the introduction to the topic of education export, as well as, the research objective and thesis structure.

## 1.1 Background

The recent Finnish policies have encouraged Finnish higher education institutions (HEIs) to export education and, indeed, Finland has entered into a new period of change. There are several ways to export education. The first option is to attract international students to study in Finland. Secondly, HEIs can establish offshore campuses and/or offer distance-learning courses (Cai, Hölttä, & Lindholm). Finally, educational organisations can provide consultancy services (Teichler, 2005).

The dominance of the traditional student mobility, in particular full-time foreign students studying abroad, is decreasing, giving way to “offshore” education, which is defined as “taking a degree or other post-secondary courses offered by a foreign university without leaving their home country” (OECD, 2004, p. 3). UNESCO (2007, p.9) has another terminology, “cross-border” education, which is defined as “the educational service going to the students across national borders, instead of the student going to the service overseas”. International education is perceived as a revenue generator for HEIs (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009). The underlined assumptions to this market approach have two justifications. Firstly, education is perceived as a mean to boost economy since Finland needs alternative sectors that generate employment and income after Nokia’s downfall. Secondly, good quality education is in high demand around the world (Elonen, 2010). The demand for Finnish education is indeed growing, and Finland should benefit from selling it.

According to Pasi Sahlberg, the expert of Finnish Education and the author of *Finnish Lessons*, most people are still associating Finland with Nokia, yet in the eyes of the Finnish diplomats education is the “Next Big Thing” in Finland. Sahlberg also compares Nokia’s

development from a rubber company to a telecommunication giant to the development of the education system in Finland. He highlights the similarities of how Nokia and education transformed in a relatively short period of time from a small phenomenon to a worldwide sensation. He also draws on the main challenges that led to Nokia's downfall, i.e. competition and leadership. He warns that these exact challenges, as well as the inability to build a joint and inspiring vision for the future of Finnish education, will lead to trouble. While Nokia in 2009 spent USD 8.5 billion on its own research and development, the Finnish education will not have the same resources to renew its systems and generate revenues. In 2010, the Government decided that Finnish know-how in education should be adopted as a new export product in the country. As a result, it established the coordinating programme called "Future Learning Finland (FLF)" with the task of promoting Finnish education on international markets and facilitating Finnish educational institutions to export education services. One of FLF's aims was to build a cluster of educational expertise.

The cluster is needed since Finland and Finnish education exporters are small compared to other established players in the international market, and together as a cluster they could flourish worldwide. A corresponding model has been previously used in the promotion of export in the business sector (Cai, Hölttä & Lindholm), for example in telecommunication, ICT and gaming. The cluster was seen as a base for the national efforts to export Finnish know-how in the field of education (Cai, Hölttä & Lindholm). Now, after almost five years of operations, FLF is reviewing the current education export environment in Finland and preparing to draft a renewed and improved internationalisation strategy, after falling behind on creating the mentioned cluster.

One of the many initiatives to evaluate the current national environment and the education export activities of FLF's members, was assigning this thesis, which will focus on three main themes: 1) barriers to internationalisation, 2) enablers of education export and 3) strategies to overcome the barriers and exploit the enablers. These themes were investigated focusing on higher education institutions (HEIs) and vocational education and training (VET).

## 1.2 Finnish Education

In this section, the Finnish education system is presented, focusing on vocational institutions, polytechnics and universities.

### 1.2.1 The Finnish Education System

The Finnish education system is composed of 1) basic education (comprehensive school) for the whole age group, preceded by one year of voluntary pre-primary education, 2) upper secondary education, comprising general education and vocational education and training – vocational qualifications and further and specialist qualifications – and 3) higher education, provided by universities and polytechnics (see Figure 1). Decisions on the contents of legislation on education and research are made by the Parliament based on government proposals. The Government and the Ministry of Education and Culture, as part of it, are responsible for preparing and implementing education and science policy (Ministry of Education & Culture, 2015).

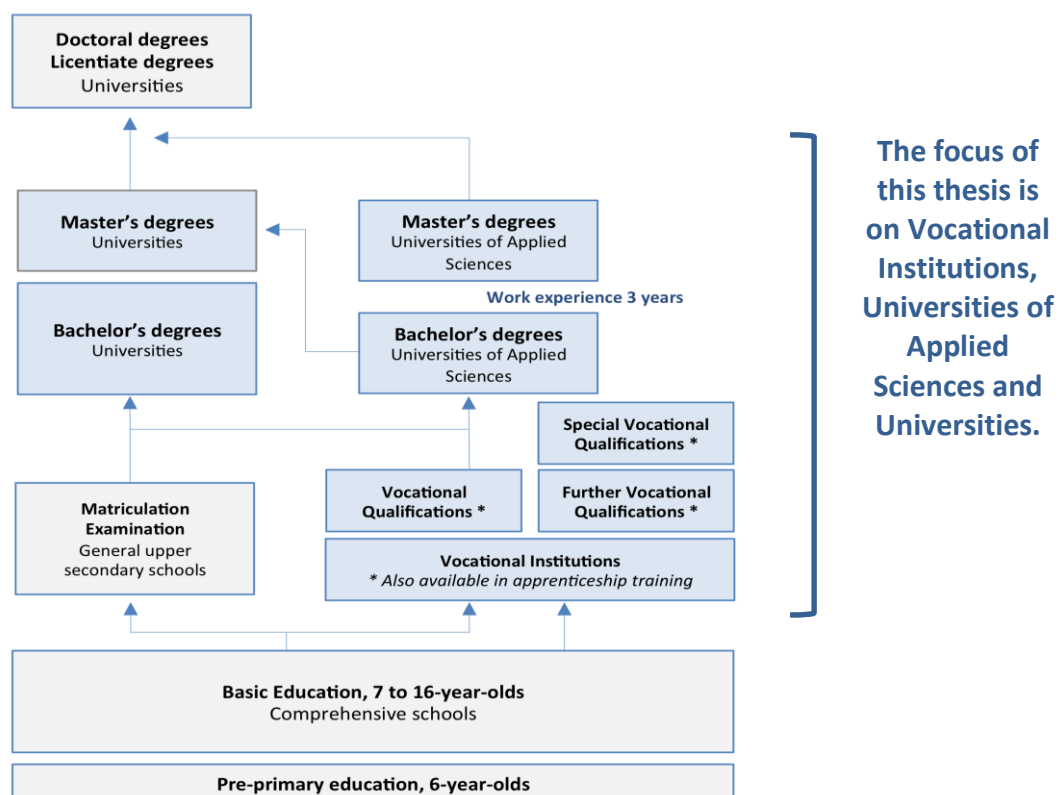


Figure 1: Education System in Finland

### 1.2.2 Vocational Education and Training

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions offer training for vocational qualifications, and further and specialist qualifications, which are primarily intended for mature students. The scope of vocational qualification is three years of study and each qualification includes at least half a year of on-the-job learning in workplaces. Vocational Education and Training can be completed in the form of school-based training or apprenticeship training. Competence-based qualifications provide adults a flexible way to enhance and maintain their vocational skills. The aim of VET is to improve the skills of the work force, to respond to the skill requirements in the world of work, and to support lifelong learning. There are 119 study programmes leading to 53 different vocational qualifications confirmed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The number of further and specialist qualifications, which are taken as competence-based qualifications, is 305. A VET provider may be a local authority, a municipal training consortium, a foundation or other registered association, or a state company. They are responsible for organising training in their areas, for matching provision with local labour market needs, and for devising curricula based on the core curricula and requirements. They also decide independently what kind of institutions or units they run. There are around 210 VET providers in Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015).

### 1.2.3 Polytechnics

Polytechnics (ammattikorkeakoulu in Finnish or “AMK”), also known as University of Applied Sciences, are multi-field regional institutions focusing on contacts with working life and on regional development. They offer a higher education qualification and practical professional skills. They train professionals in response to labour market needs and conduct R&D, which supports instruction, and promotes regional development in particular.

The system of polytechnics is fairly new, dating back to 1991-1992. From the year 2000, all AMKs were working on a permanent basis, while the polytechnic Master's programmes was put in place in 2005, and expected to grow in the coming years. This means that Finland is working on introducing a number of new unique and specialised Master's

degree programmes in addition to the ones that already exist (see Appendix 8). The polytechnic degree studies is generally 3.5-4 years of full-time study, which includes practical on-the-job learning. The polytechnic Master's takes 1.5-2 years, and is equivalent to a university Master's degree, but students need to have at least three years of working experience before applying. Polytechnics are municipal or private institutions, which are authorised by the government. There are altogether 24 AMKs in Finland (check Appendix 10). Both AMK and VET are available in the following fields: Humanities and Education, Culture, Social Sciences, Business and Administration, Natural Sciences, Technology, Communication and Transport, Natural Resources and the Environment, Social Services, Health and Sport and Tourism, Catering and Domestic Services (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015).

#### 1.2.4 Universities

At universities students can study for Bachelor's and Master's degrees and scientific or artistic postgraduate degrees, which are the licentiate and the doctorate degrees. The mission of universities is to conduct scientific research and to provide instruction and postgraduate education based on it. Under the new Universities Act, which was passed by Parliament in June 2009, Finnish universities are independent corporations under public law or foundations under private law (Foundations Act). There are 14 universities in Finland, in addition to the National Defence University. Polytechnics and universities offer more than 300 degree programmes in English (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015).

### 1.3 Students

In this section, the author presents the situation of students in Finland and the world, regarding the topic of education export.

#### 1.3.1 The Situation in Finland

In 2014, there were 313,600 VET students, 130,000 polytechnic students, and 163,800 university students in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2014). In 2013, the number of

international students in full-degree programmes was 19,740 (9,500 in AMKs and 10,240 in universities) and around 77% of these students were from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) (Statistics Finland, 2014). From 2009, the remarkable 40% increase of foreign students in Finnish HEIs is a result of consistent and systematic investments in their recruitment, which was part of the Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions (2009), released by the Ministry of Education and Culture. One of the objectives was to have 20,000 foreign students in Finland by 2015, an objective that was reached successfully. HEIs have been encouraged to recruit students from abroad, and the number of degrees taken by foreign students has been among the funding criteria for higher education. They have also worked to provide designated services to international students.

Foreign degree students come to Finland mostly from Asia (41 %) and Europe (40%), with the latter's proportion decreasing in the last years while an increase in the portion of foreign degree students from Asia and Africa has been evident. Russia and China topped the statistics, together reaching 24 % of the total number of foreign students in Finland. On the whole, the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) appear to be interested in Finland as a study destination, as well as students from Vietnam, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Ethiopia. It seems that students are attracted to Finland firstly, as a result of the development cooperation, secondly, due to the availability of English degree programmes, thirdly, the reputation of Finnish Education (e.g. PISA results), and finally, the tuition-free education.

**Table 1: Foreign Degree Students in Finnish Higher Education by Field of Study, 2011, %**

<b>Tourism, Catering and Domestic Services</b>	4.9%	<b>Humanities and education</b>	6.1%
<b>Social Services, Health and Sport</b>	10.0%	<b>Culture</b>	6.1%
<b>Natural Resources and the Environment</b>	2.4%	<b>Social Sciences, Business and Administration</b>	26.7%
<b>Technology, Transport, and Communication</b>	32.4%	<b>Natural Sciences</b>	11.3%

Table 1 shows that foreign degree students in Finnish higher education mostly opt for two fields of study: technology, communication and transport; and social sciences, business and administration.

International mobility of students and teachers is an essential part of international development of education. Finnish educational institutions have many opportunities for international cooperation, including 1) The Centre for International Mobility (“CIMO”), which supports internationalisation and mobility across all levels from pre-primary to higher education and even exchange programmes of civil service; 2) European Cooperation such as student and teacher mobility and cooperation between educational institutions and the Copenhagen Process that enhances the quality and attraction of vocational education and promotes mobility among vocational students and graduates; and 3) Nordic Cooperation working together in matters relating to research, education and culture in areas such as education from pre-primary to upper secondary education and training; higher education; adult and liberal education; languages and; information and communications technology (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015).

### 1.3.2 The Situation in the World

In 2011, around 4.3 million students were studying outside their home country (CIMO, 2013), representing almost four times the number from 1980s. Asia provided the biggest student flows, particularly China, India and Korea. Most students head to such OECD countries as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, France and Canada, which receive almost half of all students studying abroad. In Australia alone, there were 453,532 foreign students in 2014, of which 216,971 in HEIs and 98,264 in VETs (Australian Government, 2015a), contributing to \$15.7 billion in revenues. Students from China, India, Vietnam and South Korea contributed to almost half of that revenue. Educational services are Australia’s largest services export, leading the Recreational Travel Services by almost \$2 billion, and over \$10 billion the rest of the top five industries (Australian Government, 2015b).

Unfortunately, the share of foreign degree students in Finland is below the OECD average (CIMO, 2013) since the education export activities are a relatively new phenomenon in the country. Australia, on the other hand, began educating international students in 1950s, and has followed a consistent and strategic internationalisation plan. Firstly, it implemented governmental scholarships, The Colombo Plan launched in 1951 for aid to East and Southeast Asia. Then, it opened doors to international students and engaged in active



recruitment activities to increase revenues and boost universities' finances. The vision for Australia's economic future was created and tied to the Asia-Pacific region, which was also encouraged by the industrialisation and rapid growth of Asian middle-class demographic. The final step was to establish branch campuses in developing countries (Whitwell, 2012). According to Hawthorne (2007), the growth of Australian education export can be also credited to immigration policy changes in 1999 that helped students to come to the country and settle down after graduating from universities. More information related to the number of international students, their destination and host countries, regions hosting the largest number of mobile students and countries/territories having more students studying abroad than at home are presented in the table 2 below. The details will not be covered in this paper.

**Table 2: Global Flow of Tertiary Level Students 2012** (Source: UNESCO, 2015)

<b>Total number of students in 2012</b>	▪ 4 million	<b>In 2000</b>	▪ 2 million
<b>Top 10 destination countries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ United States (740482 - 18%)</li> <li>▪ 427686 United Kingdom (11%)</li> <li>▪ 271399 France (7%)</li> <li>▪ 249588 Australia (6%)</li> <li>▪ 206986 Germany (5%)</li> <li>▪ 173627 Russian Federation (4%)</li> <li>▪ 150617 Japan (4%)</li> <li>▪ 120960 Canada (3%)</li> <li>▪ 88979 China (2%)</li> <li>▪ 77732 Italy (2%)</li> </ul>	<b>Regions that host the largest number of mobile students:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ North America &amp; Western Europe (57%)</li> <li>▪ East Asia and the Pacific (20%)</li> <li>▪ Central and Eastern Europe (10%)</li> </ul>
(Number & Percentage of students)			
<b>Top 10 countries of origin of mobile students:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ China (694,400)</li> <li>▪ India (189,500)</li> <li>▪ Republic of Korea (123,700)</li> <li>▪ Germany (117,600)</li> <li>▪ Saudi Arabia (62,500)</li> <li>▪ France (62,400)</li> <li>▪ United States (58,100)</li> <li>▪ Malaysia (55,600)</li> <li>▪ Viet Nam (53,800)</li> <li>▪ Iran (51,600)</li> </ul>	<b>Countries and territories that have more students studying abroad than at home:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Andorra</li> <li>▪ Anguilla</li> <li>▪ Bermuda</li> <li>▪ Liechtenstein</li> <li>▪ Luxembourg</li> <li>▪ Montserrat</li> <li>▪ Seychelles</li> <li>▪ Turks and Caicos Islands</li> </ul>
(Number of students studying abroad)			

In 2012, England introduced new tuition fees that are likely to be the highest for public and state-dependent private institutions in the developed world. In 2011, the average tuition in England was at USD 4,980 (≈EUR 4500), which was above the level charged in any type of university in almost all European countries, but below the average levied at independent private institutions in the United States (EUR 15,430), Japan (EUR 7,180) and Korea (EUR 8,435) (OECD, 2013).

## 1.4 Funding Education in Finland

While fees in private institutions (e.g. in the United States, England, Australia and Japan) are much higher than in the public sector, education in Finland is free at all levels from pre-primary to higher education. Adult education is the only form of education that may require payment (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015). According to Statistics Finland, the expenditure on the regular education system totalled EUR 12.3 billion in 2013.

**Table 3: Current expenditure on regular education system by type of expenditure 2013**

Type of Expenditure	EUR Million	%
Pre-primary education	347	2.8
Upper secondary general education	4,492	36.6
Apprenticeship training	737	6.0
University education and research	1,752	14.3
Administration	154	1.3
Comprehensive school education	912	7.4
Vocational education	2,341	19.1
Polytechnic education	483	3.9
Other education	229	1.9
Financial aid for students	832	6.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12 278</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In total, funding in 2013 was EUR 4.5 billion for comprehensive school education; EUR 3.2 billion for higher education; EUR 2.3 billion for universities; EUR 912 million for polytechnics and; EUR 1.8 billion for vocational education. In 2010 Finland invested 6.3 % of its GDP on education, while the average OECD countries invested 6%. Universities receive funding from the state and also do external fundraising. With the Ministry of Education and Culture, the university agrees on operational and qualitative targets, which provide the basis for the resources needed. Polytechnics are funded by the government and local authorities and also have external sources of funding. Core funding provided by the government is based on unit costs per student, project funding and performance-based funding (OECD, 2015).

## 1.5 Research Objectives and Research Question

This thesis has many different objective levels; there are many points of views to cover and mention in one microscopic study. The author's view is to contribute to the tasks assigned

by Future Learning Finland, and, in particular, to deliver a fresh perspective on the enablers and barriers with regard to education export in Finland. Naturally, the author has also taken into consideration the FLF's interest regarding the paper, which is to understand the current environment in Finland and the point of views of different players in the field. There are many current debates in Finland on how to approach education export as a topic from different stakeholders' perspective, in particular, the role of vocational institutes, polytechnics and universities. Each of those has different processes and approaches to internationalisation as they have different offering for the customers. Undoubtedly, some organisations have similarities and complementary offerings, but the individual objective of each group tends to be different, requiring different processes. It is very important to cover the opinions of these abovementioned actors, as well as, the points of views of the ministries, students' organisations and foreign stakeholders. For the ministries, their concern is about establishing Finnish education export services abroad and support internationalisation of Finnish educational firms. For them the thesis could explain the roles of the different stakeholders. On the other hand, Students' organisations could learn about the intentions of the Finnish education exporters, in particular the notions related to students, tuition fees and ideas for educational development. Finally, to foreign stakeholders this thesis will explain briefly the activities of the Finnish education exporters. Consequently, the objectives of this study are varying depending on the target audience, except that the author's primary goal is to observe and understand the education export activities in Finland from a holistic perspective focusing on answering the below research question (RQ).

**RQ: How can Finland productise and sell its education abroad?**

- RQ1a: What are the barriers and enablers for internationalisation in universities, polytechnics and vocational schools in Finland?
- RQ1b: How to create a sustainable and profitable education export strategy for Finland?

From the holistic approach, the author seeks to inspire other students to pursue future thesis topics from different fields of studies such as international business, marketing, finance, entrepreneurship, design, engineering (product development, prototyping, processes) and academia.

## 1.6 Structure of the Study

Apart from the references and appendices, this thesis has six chapters (Figure 2):

- Chapter 1 tackles the introduction to the topic of education export in Finland.
- Chapter 2 presents the literature about productisation and internationalisation.
- Chapter 3 describes the research approach, methods, methodology and design.
- Chapter 4 presents the key findings and the conclusions behind them.
- Chapter 5 discusses about the recommendations and strategies.
- Chapter 6 presents the Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export

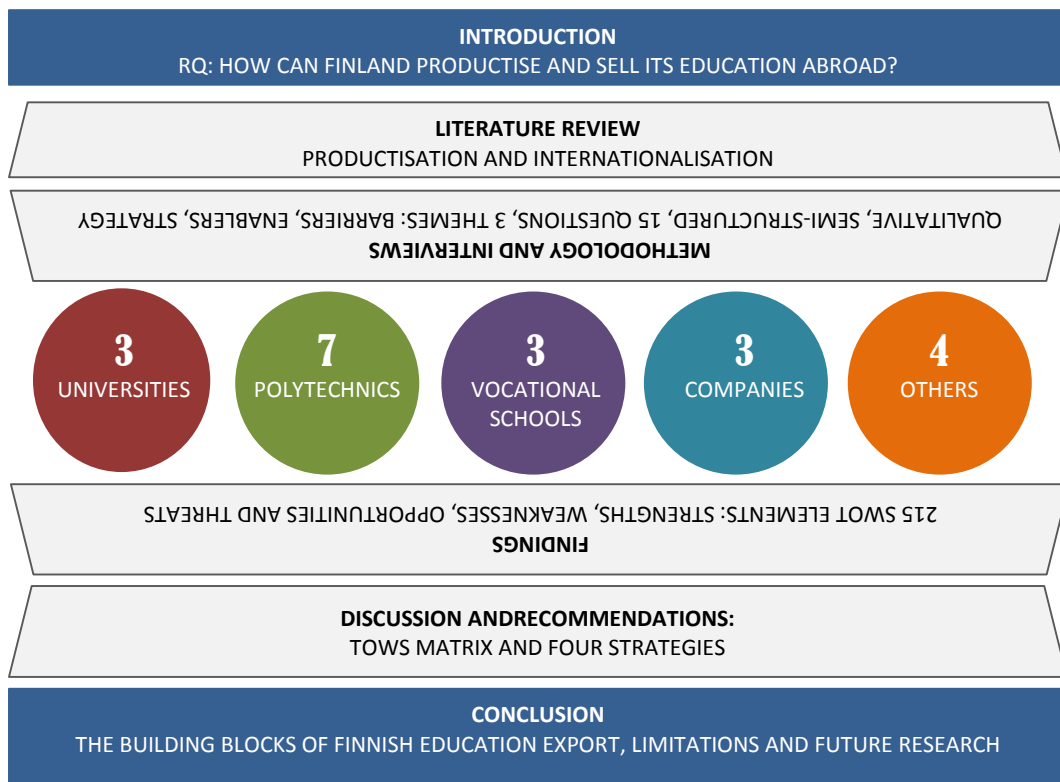


Figure 2: Thesis Structure

## 1.7 Terminology

Table 4 explains the meaning behind the key terminologies used in this thesis.

**Table 4: Terminology used in the thesis**

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<b>Productisation</b>	The process of analysing the needs of current and potential customers in order to design products, or services to satisfy their needs.
<b>Education</b>	The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university.
<b>Tertiary Education</b>	The educational level following the completion of a school providing a secondary education.
<b>Internationalisation</b>	The process of increasing involvement of enterprises in international markets.
<b>Export</b>	A product or service sold abroad.
<b>Education Export</b>	Educational services, training and consultancy sold abroad.
<b>Barriers</b>	Anything that restrains or obstructs progress, access, etc. (e.g. Trade Barrier).
<b>Enablers</b>	A person or a thing that makes something possible.
<b>Product</b>	Something that is made or grown to be sold or used
<b>Service</b>	Intangible products such as accounting, banking, cleaning, consultancy, education, insurance, expertise, medical treatment or transportation.
<b>Cluster (in Business)</b>	A geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field.
<b>Consortium</b>	An association of two or more individuals, companies, organisations or governments (or any combination of these entities) with the objective of participating in a common activity or pooling their resources for achieving a common goal.
<b>Co-creation</b>	Different parties jointly producing a mutually valued outcome.

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## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the literature review of the study is presented in two sections: 1) productisation and 2) internationalisation.

### 2.1 Productisation

In this section, the emphasis is on understanding the meaning and characteristics of productisation and the ways it could be further utilised in the analysis of the findings.

#### 2.1.1 The Meaning of Productisation

Productisation is “... the process of analysing the needs of current and potential customers in order to design products, or services to satisfy their needs. The productisation process includes the design of a product, including services, and the ability to produce it” (Flamholtz, 1995). A product can be tangible or intangible or it may constitute both

elements, thus it is important to understand that productisation can be “the process of defining products” (Danson et al., 2005), “the packaging of a service offering as a predefined series of modules, or a unified offering to the clients” (Leon and Davies, 2008) and/or the “development of systemic, scalable and replicable service offerings” (Chattopadhyay, 2012). According to Harkonen et al. (2015), the traditional way of understanding a product is by manufacturing it while a service can also be a ‘product’ that is provided to take care of customers’ needs without transferring the ownership of a tangible asset. Service has the nature of being abstract and intangible. Thus, having services productised means that they “...have become so well defined that the service component has in effect been productised” (Heaslip, 2013), developed into a proper ‘product’ (Banhazi et al., 2012), delivered more efficiently (Cusumano, 2008) or used to translate the abstract service and its creation into concrete exchangeable objects and controllable processes (Jaakkola, 2011).

Jaakkola (2011) explains the three key practices involved in the productisation as: “specifying and standardising, tangibilising and concretising, and systemising and standardising processes and methods”. It can also mean that productising is about “turning technology into an object, a product” (Cornelissen et al., 2012) and/or to give more tangible features for the service (Salmi et al., 2008). Moreover, in education, the concept of productisation could mean “transforming research and knowledge into products, a part of value creation” (Florice and Miller, 2003) and/or creating new goods and services from research and development results (Sharif, 2012). In the opinion of Valminen & Toivonen (2012) “productisation contributes to the competitiveness and efficiency, and facilitates the development of customer understanding”. Elbertsen and Van Reekum (2008) complement that productising is to make into “a standard commodity or complete package”. According to Parantainen (2007, 9), productising makes the expertise and know-how sellable, marketable and easily deliverable to markets. It is a way to systemise services, their development and realisation to reach success in international markets (Jaakkola, Orava & Varjonen 2009, 3). As a conclusion, “productisation is the process of analysing a need, defining and combining suitable elements, tangible and intangible, into a product-like object, which is standardised, repeatable and comprehensible. Productisation activities cover activities needed for a product to be ready commercially, so it can be produced, delivered, sold, purchased, used (Harkonen et al., 2015), and profited from (Sipilä 1999).

### 2.1.2 The Characteristics of Productisation

According to Parantainen (2007, 25-28), there are seven ways to avoid failures when productising; an organisation should firstly, expose its expertise, i.e. never hide what the company can do, secondly, know its customer, thirdly, believe in the productisation process and its benefits, fourthly, focus on customer's needs and not waste time on irrelevant technical matters, fifthly, understand customer's point of view, sixthly, produce and deliver what the customer needs at present time, i.e. the right time, and, finally, allocate the right resources and budgets to the productisation process. It is at the heart of productisation to address various challenges, including inefficient production of services and the difficulties of perceiving the service offering by the company's customers and employees (Jaakkola, 2011) and to facilitates the development of customer understanding (Valminen and Toivonen, 2012).

According to Harkonen et al. (2015), "productisation has typical characteristics, many of which refer to the challenge of describing and explaining complex, often abstract offerings and the ability to produce them, either via means of manufacturing, a system for service provision or a combination of the two. Productisation supports diversification by making the process of analysing needs and defining and combining suitable elements into product-like objects more efficient". These characteristics are summarised in the Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Characteristics of Productisation Summarised (Harkonen et al., 2015)**

Recognised characteristics	Productisation of			
	Product	Service	Software	Technology
A process / development phase	x	x	x	x
Standardisation / systemisation / better definition / reproducibility	x	x	x	
Making tangible	x	x	x	
Making something marketable / saleable / ready commercially	x	x	x	x
Value creation	x	x	x	x
Improving customer understanding / demonstrating value		x	x	
Packaging to a form suitable for customers		x	x	
Defining offering based on needs	x	x	x	x
At the frontiers of technological knowledge				x

### 2.1.3 Productisation and Marketing

Harkonen et al. (2015), in their article titled “ Productisation: A review and research agenda”, reviewed 338 articles and categorized them into four groups: 1) productisation of products (33.1%), 2) productisation of services (24.6%), 3) productisation of software (21.3%) and 4) productisation of technology (21%). The exhaustive literature dates back to 1994 indicating that the phenomenon of productisation is a fairly new area to study. Out of 338 articles, 109 were published between 2005 and 2009 and 134 articles between 2010-2014.

The authors noticed that productisation was involved in many different fields such as product development, product management, commercialisation, manufacturing, operations managements, organisation, customers, and particularly, marketing. The role of marketing is discussed in terms of managing various aspects between the customer and the company (Moorman and Rust, 1999). It is interesting to notice that the concept of productisation has originated from the marketing field and now it encompasses activities from the initial product idea to commercialisation with customer focus (Nagy, 2013).

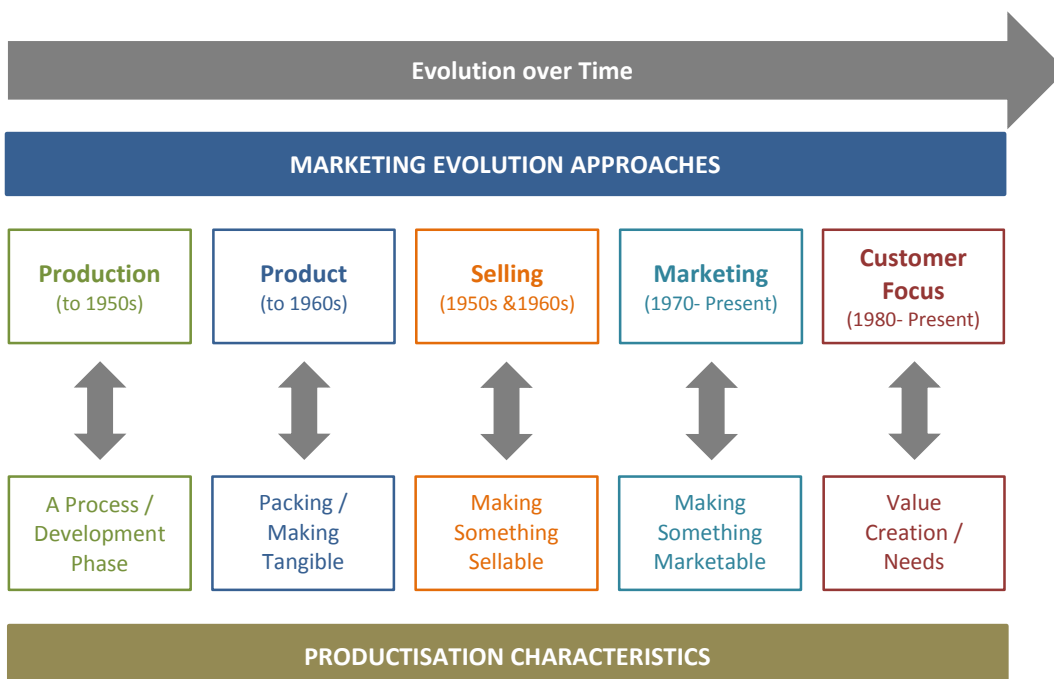


Figure 3: Link between Marketing Evolution and Productisation Characteristics

As an observation, Figure 3 shows some similarities and/or complementarities between the characteristics of productisation and the different marketing evolution approaches



including Production, Product, Selling, Marketing and Customer-Orientation approaches.

The purpose of marketing has changed dramatically in the last 65 years. After World War II, firms had mass production technology, better transportation, communication facilities, greater financial resources and more sophisticated human resources management (Mallen, 1975). Production is the oldest phenomenon in business, focusing on improving manufacturing processes. Consumers preferred to buy products that were widely available and inexpensive (Adcock, Halborg, & Ross, 2001). Consequently, the focus was on products instead of markets, and companies adopted organisational forms centred on products (Sloan, 1963) to meet the numerous customers' needs. Standardisation of products at reasonable prices intensified the competition as regional and local marketers became fully integrated into a unified market system. Mass production coupled with mass distribution and communication created a mass consumption society, and the focus of marketing activities was on promoting, pricing and distributing products for the mass market (Jagdish, et al. 2000). When production increased, the sales' oriented companies began to gain popularity, having primary objectives to firstly, make the product, and, secondly, sell it to the target markets.

In the 1950s, the marketing concept was first recognised as more firms entered the market, resulting in the increase in product variety and rendering mass-market techniques less effective. McKitterick (1957), Borch (1957), and Keith (1960) highlighted the importance of looking at markets rather than products, which was then adopted and explained further by Kotler (1967) in the 1960s. Through segmentation, Smith (1965) suggested a more logical and detailed adjustment of product and marketing efforts to consumers and/or user requirements. Consequently, this shift from a product orientation to the marketing concept led to many changes in marketing thought and practice.

Eventually, the customer-centric marketing replaced the product- and segment-centric marketing as a way to effectively and efficiently serve customers and consumers (Jagdish, et al. 2000). The essence of marketing was to anticipate the behaviour of customers and competitors, giving organisations a competitive advantage (Ashley and Morrison 1997). The customer-centric marketing focuses on understanding and satisfying individual consumers and customers' needs, wants and resources rather than those of mass markets or market segments (Jagdish, et al. 2000). Marketers evaluate each customer individually to

determine whether to serve that customer directly or via a third party and whether to create an offering that customises the products and/or some other element(s) of the marketing mix or standardise the offering.

The marketing mix is another concept to bear in mind when productising, particularly when determining a product or brand's offer. It is normally linked with the four Ps (4Ps): Price, Product, Promotion and Place created by McCarthy (1964). However, in service marketing three new elements (Seven Ps or 7Ps) must be considered as well, i.e. Personnel, Physical Facilities and Process Management (Booms & Bitner, 1981). The 7Ps model is a tool and a practical framework that companies can use to set objectives, conduct a SWOT analysis and undertake competitive analysis. It is an efficient way to evaluate an existing business and to identify the appropriate approaches to strategic marketing (Chaffey et al., 2009). In the Figure 4 below the constituents of the 7Ps elements are presented (Booms and Bitner, 1981).

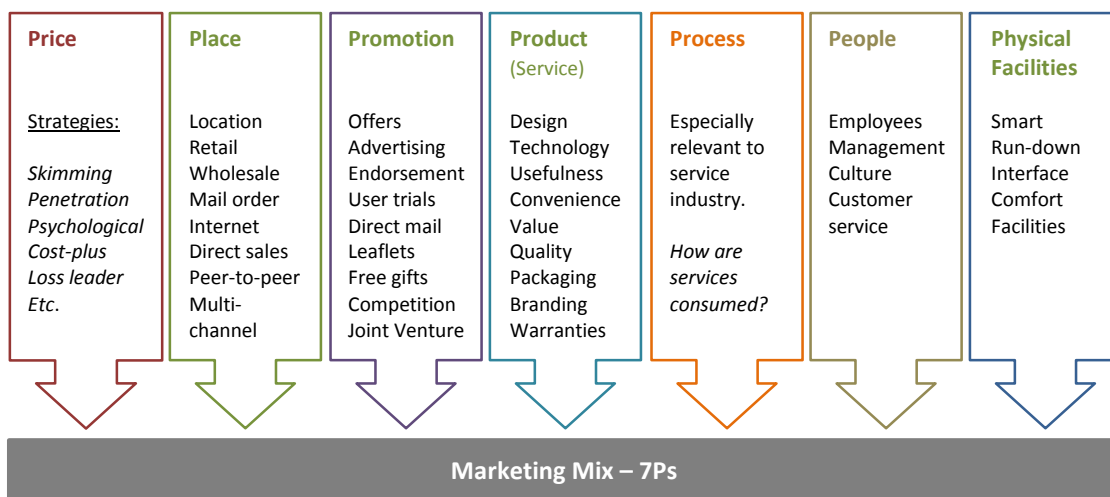


Figure 4: The Constituents of the Marketing Mix – 7Ps (Booms and Bitner, 1981)

The authors mention that ‘products’ require some design, technological and packaging consideration while the ‘pricing’ and ‘promotional’ strategies can vary. The ‘place’ is where the products are consumed, managed or operated (e.g. wholesale, via internet or direct sales), while the ‘process’ is essentially relevant to understand how services are consumed and delivered. Furthermore, the ‘people’ element embodies the notions of employees, managers, customer service and the organisational culture, and finally, the ‘physical facilities’ represent the different areas – visible and hidden from customers.

The marketing mix strategies seek to maximise the “effective efficiency” of marketing actions (Sheth and Sisodia, 1995), and may be beneficial for productisation, in particular when used at a customer level. There are more tools and methods related to product development, productisation and marketing which are listed in the Table 6 below. Some examples are the Design Thinking Approach when prototyping (Brown, 2008), the Business Model Canvas when linking customers to business models (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010), the Value Canvas for analysing gains and pains of customers (Osterwalder et al., 2015) and Lean Entrepreneurship when developing the Minimum Viable Product (Blank, 2013).

**Table 6: Useful Tools and Methods for Connecting Productisation and Marketing**

Design Thinking	Business Model Canvas	Value Proposition Canvas
Business Plan	Rapid Productisation	Lean Entrepreneurship

## 2.2 Internationalisation

In this section of the literature review, the main point is to reconcile with the history, factors, entry modes and dimensions of internationalisation and link them to the challenges and reasons for Finnish Education Export.

### 2.2.1 The development of internationalisation in Finland

According to Oxford English Dictionary, internationalisation is “the action or process of making something international in character, composition, or scope”. Thus, it is the process of increasing involvement in international operations across borders (Welch and Luostarinen, 1988). It is also a step-by-step process of international business development whereby a firm becomes increasingly committed to, and involved in, international business operations through specific products in selected markets (Luostarinen, 1994). According to Rasmussen et al., (2000) the factors that lead to a more accelerated internationalisation are: new market conditions, increased specialisation demanding larger markets and quick spread of innovations, i.e. technological developments in the areas of production, transportation and communication, and more elaborate capabilities of people, i.e. more mobile personnel and increased knowledge about foreign cultures and markets.

In the 1960s and 1970s the well-known slogan within Finnish industries was ‘export or die’. In the 1980s the slogan became ‘internationalise or die’, and in the 1990s it has changed into the form of ‘globalise or die’ (Luostarinen, 1994). In Finland, internationalisation can be analysed at many levels (Luostarinen, 1970): Country Level, Industry Level, and Firm Level.

**Country Level.** According to Luostarinen (1994), Finland’s export and international business activities consisted of the manufacturing sector until the 1960s, until moving towards the construction side in the 1970s, internationalising Finnish services in the second half of 1970s and entering the retail and wholesale business in the early 1990s (Table 7). The Finnish service companies started internationalising because they needed to ‘follow their customers’ abroad, which presented an opportunity pull and a threat push. If Finnish service firms had stayed at home, they would have lost both the new foreign demand and the existing domestic demand to their international competitors.

**Table 7: Internationalisation Order of Different Fields of Business in Finnish Economy**

Order	Field of Business to be Internationalised
I	Manufacturing Industry (1850-)
II	Construction Industry (1970-)
III	Service Industry (1975-) (Except shipping and forwarding)
IV	Retail Business and Service Business (1980-)

**Industry Level.** According to Luostarinen (1994), forest and metal industries were the main export operations in Finland until the 1960s. Then, the textile, clothing, leather shoes, electrical, plastic and other industries entered foreign markets. In the 1970s, the industrial firms, which had started their internationalisation through traditional exports, entered a new stage of internationalisation, i.e. a foreign operations stage. In addition to indirect and direct exporting, they started to use other, more efficient, modes of doing business abroad such as licensing, subcontracting, contract manufacturing, partial projecting, turn-key projects as well as different types of subsidiary operations. In the 1980s, the international stage was reached due to the increasing use of different types of foreign operations, which created new challenges (e.g. localisation of domestic procedures and processes). Finally, the globalisation stage, where firms needed larger markets, as the European markets were not enough for all the internationalising firms, began in the 1990s (Table 8).

**Table 8: Internationalisation Process of Finnish Industries**

Order	Internationalisation Stages of Industries	
I	1860 – 1960	Traditional export stage – forest and metal industry
II	1960 – 1970	New export stage – other industries
III	1970 – 1980	Foreign operation stage
IV	1980 – 1990	International stage
V	1990 -	Globalisation stage

**Company Level.** According to Luostarinen (1994), the first internationalisation operation mode used by Finnish firms between the 1960s and the 1990s was exporting, followed by the sales subsidiary stage. After licensing, subcontracting or contract manufacturing, firms finally moved to the production subsidiary stage (Table 9).

**Table 9: International Stages at the Company Level**

Order	Internationalisation stages of manufacturing
I	Export operation stage
II	Foreign sales subsidiary stage
III	Licensing, contract manufacturing and/or subcontracting stage
IV	Foreign production subsidiary stage

### 2.2.2 Factors Explaining Internationalisation

According to Luostarinen (1979), the three important domestic factors acting as push forces for the internationalisation of Finnish firms are small size, openness and peripheric location of the domestic market (Figure 5). In addition, the host country based macro factors form an international pull force, in particular the large size and reciprocal openness are the two distinct forces for Finnish firms. Finland's domestic market is one of the smallest in developed countries, thus it is easier for Finnish firms to reach a certain volume of sales in large foreign markets than in its small domestic market. Furthermore, the company-specific advantages act as micro-based pull forces, including economies of scale, specialisation, global alternatives and integration. The integration advantages are mainly available for companies having advanced to more mature stages of internationalisation. On the other hand, global forces facilitate the internationalisation processes by offering an environment, which is more and more positive for the international growth of the company. Domestic push forces are pressuring the company to go abroad, and simultaneously, international pull forces are drawing the company to internationalisation. These strong push and pull forces are not necessarily enough unless the company is able to

recognise and identify the advantages it would gain through internationalisation. That is why the company-specific advantages form the final motivational basis, which makes the company willing to start the process.

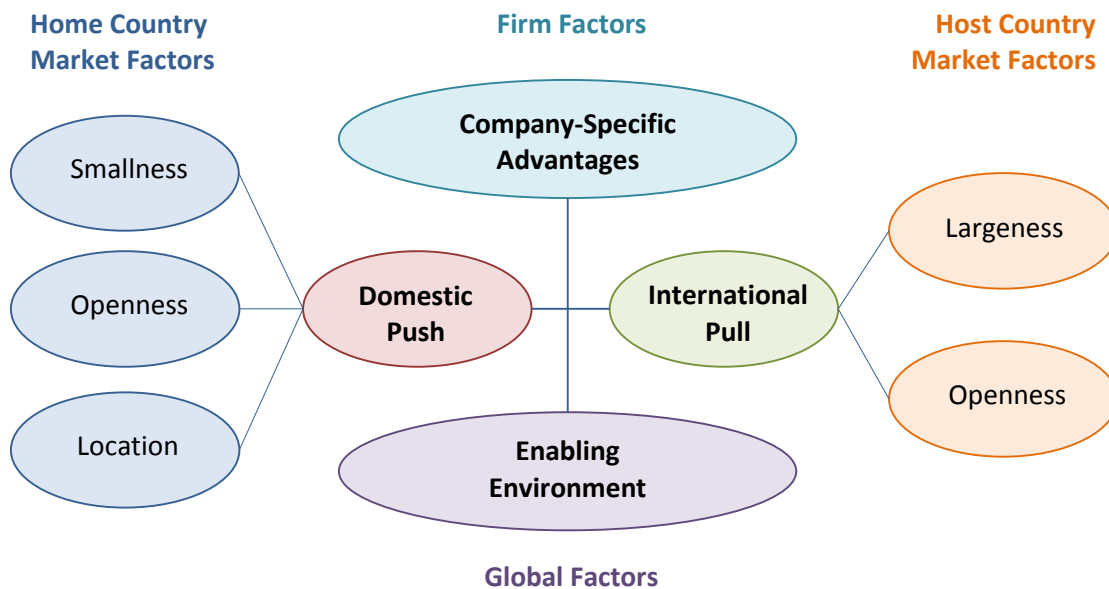


Figure 5: Factors Explaining Internationalisation (Luostarinen, 1997, P.7)

### 2.2.3 Internationalisation Entry Modes

Table 10 shows the different entry-mode possibilities in international markets: Export Mode, Intermediate Mode and Hierarchical Mode. There are direct, indirect and cooperative export mode options, which are characterised by low control and risk as well as high flexibility. According to Bennett & Blythe (2002), exporting means to manufacture a product (or productise a service) in one country and selling it in another and/or the marketing and selling of goods abroad. It is the most common, well-established and widely used method for reaching the market outside the company's home country. The Intermediate Entry Mode includes several options such as Licensing, Franchising, Management Contract, International Subcontracting or Joint Venture. It is characterised by sharing control and risk and splitting ownership, while the Hierarchical mode is characterised by partial or full ownership, where control and risk are high and flexibility is low. 'Merger and Acquisition' or 'Green Field', i.e. buy or build, are two examples of the Hierarchical mode.

**Table 10: Entry Modes in International Markets**

<b>Export Mode</b>  Low Control Low Risk High Flexibility	<b>Direct Export</b> The company sells directly to an importer from a foreign country.
	<b>Indirect Export</b> The company sells to a middleman from the destination country
	<b>Cooperative Export</b> The company involves collaborative agreements with others firms to produce products to export seeking economies of scales because of 1) size of the local market, 2) inadequacy of the management or 3) lack of marketing sources.
<b>Intermediate Entry Mode</b>  Shared Control Shared Risk Split Ownership	<b>Licensing</b> The home firm gives the right to the firm abroad to use its technology in return for payment, establishing local presence without capital investment.
	<b>Franchising</b> The franchisee company gives the permission to the franchisor company the right to explore exclusively and under certain conditions, a product/service, a name or a registered brand, or a technology within a certain area. It also offers support e.g. training, advertising, material etc.
	<b>Management Contract</b> An agreement through which a company guarantee the total or partial creation of an economic unit in a foreign country, afterwards giving away their management.
	<b>International subcontracting</b> The subcontractor orders subcontracted products or services based in pre-established specifications.
	<b>Joint Ventures:</b> Several firms join to create a new business entity, legally separated and distinct from headquarters
<b>Hierarchical Entry Mode</b>  High Control High Risk Low Flexibility	<b>Merger or Acquisition</b> A company merges with or buys another company - partial or full ownership.
	<b>Green Field</b> A company builds its facilities from scratch or acquires facilities.

Driscoll (1995) explains the factors influencing the entry mode choices that are affected by a diverse range of situational influences and moderating variables. The situational influences include firm factors and environmental factors. The firm factors are the competitive advantages, experience and strategic considerations while the environmental factors describe the demand and competition, political and economic conditions and sociocultural factors. Moreover, the governmental policies and regulations, the corporate policies and the firm size are part of the moderating variables. The firm and environmental factors affect the desired mode characteristics, i.e., the level of control, risk, resources and flexibility. The moderating variables affect the final mode of entry to be chosen (Figure 6).

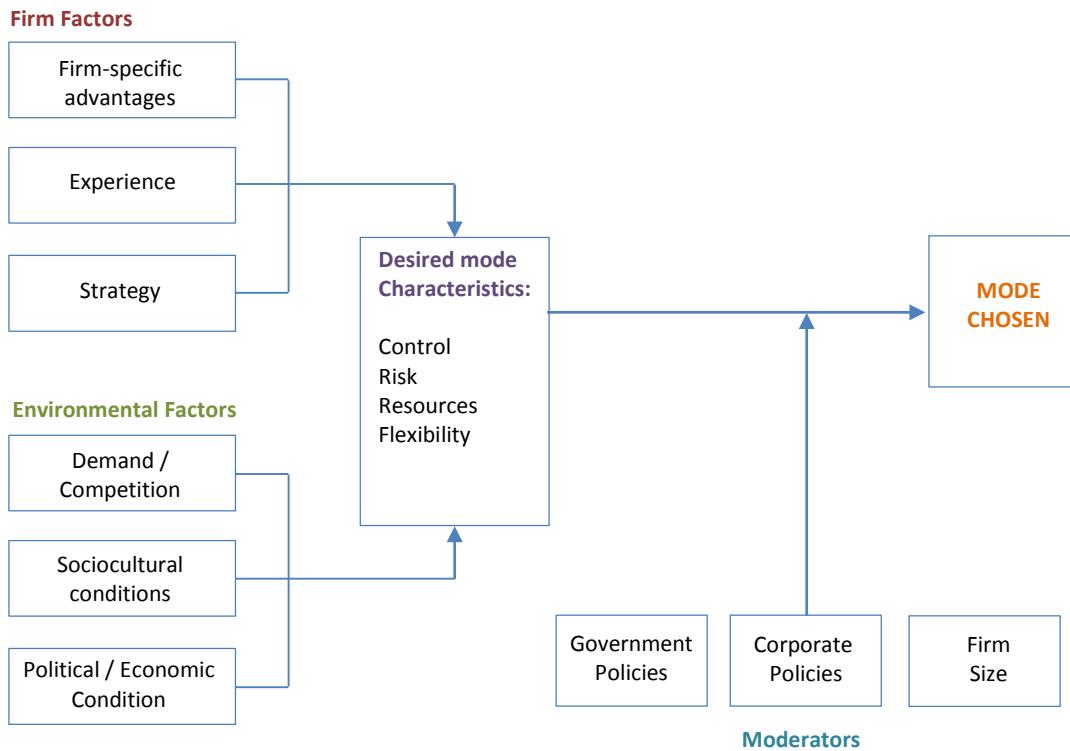


Figure 6: Entry Mode Choice Framework (Driscoll, 2005)

#### 2.2.4 Dimensions and Theories of Internationalisation

Figure 7 presents the dimensions of internationalisation using the ‘Product’, ‘Operation’ and ‘Market’ (POM) Concept used by Luostarinen (1979 & 1994).

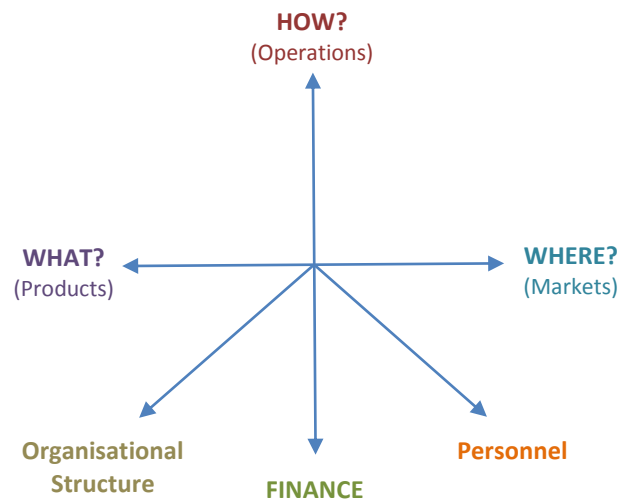


Figure 7: Dimensions of Internationalisation (Luostarinen, 1994)



While the organisational structure, finance and personnel are also used to measure the degree of internationalisation of the firm; the product strategy for internationalisation is developed through the following steps: goods, services, systems and know-how. The operation strategy is mainly about the entry mode choices, while the market strategy followed the Stage Theory of Internationalisation or the Uppsala Model.

The dimensions of internationalisation helped to narrow down the relevant internationalisation theories that could assist this study. The chosen theories will not be explained in detail but will be used as a reference for understanding the process of internationalisation of Finnish education export. These theories are: Transaction Cost Analysis (TCA) Model, The Eclectic Paradigm, Uppsala Internationalisation Model, and Network Model.

**Transaction Cost Analysis.** Coase (1939) founded the Transaction Cost Analysis (TCA) model focusing on the costs of entering into transactions, i.e., a firm should decide whether to internalise or externalise when entering a foreign market. Internalisation means that the firm will establish its own subsidiary, while externalisation means that it will conduct business through some form of collaboration with an external partner. Knowing that firms are exposed to irrecoverable entry costs or transaction costs in international markets (McNaughton, 2002), it is absolutely necessary to analyse the characteristics of a transaction in order to decide on the most efficient governance mode – mainly to minimise the transaction costs and reduce market failure (Dunning, 1988).

**The Eclectic Paradigm.** Dunning (1988), mentions that the entry-mode option is influenced by three advantages: 1) Ownership advantages (O), 2) Location advantage (L) and 3) Internalisation advantage (I). The OLI-Model for universities can be further explained: ‘Ownership’ advantages can be the products/service mix, facilities, programmes, and courses; ‘Location’ advantages refer to the market potential (e.g. demand for Finnish Education by foreign buyers and international students); and ‘Internalisation’ advantages are about the assets, valuable resources and skills such as human resource, knowledge and know-how that can be utilised as a competitive advantage. Therefore, by applying Dunning’s (1988) theory in the education export perspective, HEIs should consider the “OLI” advantages before investing abroad.

**Uppsala Model.** According Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) the decisions of internationalisation are affected by two challenges: 1) the lack of knowledge and 2) the psychological and geographical distances. Firms pursue locations that are relatively close to headquarters and then move to distant markets, ensuring a continuous learning process. The knowledge gathered from the experience and actions in a certain foreign market is seen as a fundamental factor for the continuation of the process, in which the company carries out its internationalisation by investing resources in a gradual and incremental way. Once the firm's experience grows in a particular foreign market, the commitment intensifies. These firms seek to avoid risks and learn from the experience. It is an essential part to predict the internationalisation process of a firm when using the Uppsala model (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977) i.e. what happens first, next and after in terms of resources, knowledge and commitment. It normally follows four chronological steps:

- Step 1: No regular export activities (sporadic export).
- Step 2: Export via independent representative (export mode).
- Step 3: Establishment of a foreign sales subsidiary.
- Step 4: Foreign production/manufacturing. (Hollensen, 2007)

**Network Model.** Internationalisation in networks means that firms have different relationships, not only with customers but also with other actors in the environment. (Mattsson & Johanson, 2006). Firms develop business relationships using networks in other countries through international extension, penetration or integration (Johanson & Mattsson, 1988). These relationships develop gradually when firms interact and make stronger commitments (Anderson, 1993). They use their network to gain access to resources, to improve their strategic positions, to learn new skills, or to gain legitimacy (Gulati, 1995). Unlike the Uppsala model, the network approach seeks to internationalise right from the start, i.e., to enter distant markets right away, to penetrate multiple countries at once, to build joint-ventures without previous experience; thus the firms no longer develop their international activities in incremental stages (Aspelund et al., 2007). These firms look for partners that complement their own capabilities in order to sell, thus personal relationships are essential for a network to foster trust (Mattsson & Johanson, 2006) and gain a good reputation (Sahay, 2003). These networks cannot survive by themselves; the members bring value when they interact, influencing the relationships and the internationalisation process (Autio et al., 2000).

### 2.2.5 Internationalisation of Finnish Education

Internationalisation has long been among the key aims of the Finnish science and higher education policy as well as at the core of higher education institutions' own strategies (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009). For decades, the link between education and economic growth has been widely studied and investments in education have had positive effects as it helps individuals and nations to develop themselves further (OECD, 2012). In fact, the competitiveness of Finnish labour requires a well-functioning educational system (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009). Barro (1996) points out that education, and especially quality education, are contributors to economic growth. Furthermore, it is also mentioned in both the Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009-2015 (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009) and the Finnish Education Export Strategy (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2010), that only quality would bring success. In addition to quality, the reputation of HEIs is very important and may be identified via international rankings, students' awareness and information available on public media (Marginson, 2006).

Long-term investments in higher education and research and development activities have led to a rise in the level of Finnish higher education institutions and research as well as to an increase in international cooperation. Finland has been ranked high in international education, research, technology and innovation activity comparisons, indeed, it has been viewed as one of the most successful examples in the world in developing information society (Castells & Himanen, 2002) and a national innovation system (Ahlbäck, 2005). The complex functions and interactions among various actors such as governments, companies, universities and research organisations and institutes, as well as governmental policies and social norms are the constituents of the innovation systems, HEIs considered one of the most critical actors in the chain (Mowery & Sampat, 2004). Finnish universities contributed to the development of Nokia (Pillay, 2010), providing comprehensive know-how, unquestionable scientific and practical knowledge, human capital and resources. Thus, HEIs could be considered as the main contributor to the development of the innovation society and the technological advancement in Finland.

Table 11 presents the main reasons for choosing Finnish Education. It is evident that Finland has a number of strengths for exporting its education. Firstly, Finland has excellent

education and research tracks, mainly being on top (e.g. PISA, Aalto Executive Education, research achievements and excellence in HEIs).

**Table 11: Reasons to Choose Finnish Education** (Source: List borrowed from AEE website)

<b>Finnish Executive Education in the Top 1%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aalto University Executive Education ranked 48th globally in the Financial Times Executive Education overall ranking in 2014, putting it within the top one per cent of executive educator providers. The FT ranking includes only the top 50 of the approximately 4,000 institutes worldwide.</li> <li>The Aalto Executive MBA program ranked 83rd globally, one of only 100 EMBA programs out of 3,000 or so offered worldwide included in the FT index. It is the best Nordic program, and its participants have the best Nordic salary trend.</li> </ul>
<b>Research Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland has the highest number of researchers per capita in the world, publishes a high number of research articles relative to the population, and is ranked among the best in the amount of funding given to tertiary institutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Finnish Higher Education Among the Best in World</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PIAAC 2013, the largest survey of adult skills, showed that Finnish adults rank second in the OECD in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving, and live in a technology rich environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Finland and PISA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland has been at the top of the international Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for several years. PISA assesses to what extent students aged 15 have acquired knowledge and skills that are essential for full participation in society and the variation in these skills over time.</li> <li>According to the results of PISA 2012, Finland came in sixth place among the OECD countries in mathematics, third in literacy and second in science. Finland remains the best in literacy and science among the European countries.</li> </ul>
<b>In the top Four for Innovativeness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland was fourth in the Global Innovation Index 2014. The Index, published by INSEAD eLab and the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva, ranks 142 countries on the basis of their innovation capability and results. Source: Global Innovation Index, July 2014</li> </ul>
<b>In the Top Three for Competitiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland was number three in the World Economic Forum's 2012 Global Competitiveness Report.</li> </ul>
<b>Second in Cleantech</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland ranked second in the Global Cleantech Innovation Index published by WWF and Cleantech Group; 40 countries were evaluated using 15 indicators related to the creation, commercialisation and growth of cleantech start-ups.</li> </ul>
<b>A top European Eco-innovator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland is second in the European Eco-Innovator Index, which is based on education, research, product development and knowledge-intensive business and industry. Source</li> </ul>
<b>The Highest Quality Export Products in the EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland is one of the top countries in the EU for quality of export products. The top position is not a "one company effect", the distribution of quality rank shows that a large range of Finnish export products have high quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Among the Top Ten Countries to do Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland was ranked as the 9th best country in which to do business in 2014–2018 in The Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Country Forecast ranks.</li> </ul>
<b>Second in the World for Human Capital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland is second in the world in terms of human capital according to the World Economic Forum, based on indicators such as education, wellbeing and employability.</li> </ul>
<b>Fourth Most Reputable Country</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2014, Finland was ranked fourth in "The World's Most Reputable Countries" by The Reputation Institute (5th annual Country RepTrak) and was the biggest gainer in the top 10.</li> </ul>

Finland is in the top four for innovativeness (Global Innovation Index, 2014), in the top three for competitiveness (Schwab, & Sala-i-Martin, 2011) and the second in CleanTech (Parad et al., 2014). The country has the highest quality export products in Europe (Vandenbussche, 2014). In addition, Finland has a business environment that supports success and it is among the top ten countries to do business in (Business, 2014). Also, it is the second in human capital (World Economic Forum, 2015) and fourth most reputable

country according to Forbes (2014). Finally, According to Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, Finland is among the countries with the highest quality of life in the world.

### 2.2.6 The Challenges of Internationalisation

Education export in Finland is a challenging process; the switch from the traditional Nordic model towards the market-oriented approach is one of the many difficulties. According to a study interviewing actors involved in education export from Finland by Cai, Hölttä and Kivistö (in press, 2010), Finnish HEIs in general have not been ready for exporting education, stating the following five challenges: 1) lack of experience and knowledge in marketing, 2) insufficient motivation and commitment, 3) lack of national coordination, 4) lack of networks in exporting education, and 5) need for a clear vision for education export. In addition, Finland's most prominent challenge related to exporting education is linked to a legislation setting certain restrictions on selling degree programmes inside and outside the country, resulting in the inability to establish campuses abroad and sell certificates. The other noticeable obstacle is the relatively small amount of resources to conduct proper export activities (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010). There is an on-going debate related to the introduction of tuition fees for non-EEA students. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2009) sees it as an instrument to increase international attractiveness of HEIs and as a way to develop the export education as a service trade. On the other hand, the majority of politicians so far have been of the opinion that the fees will be counter-productive to internationalisation, firstly, because foreign students will stop coming to Finland if fees are introduced, and secondly, because fees will not become a major source of revenue (Helsingin Sanomat, 2007). Finally, students are concerned that applying tuition fees for international students will open doors to tuition fees to everyone in Finland (National Union of University Students in Finland, 2009). International students will not generate enough revenue until there is a substantial amount of foreign students compared to the total student population in Finland (Aarrevaara, Dobson, & Elander, 2009, p. 101). Thus, the student unions emphasise the importance of finding alternative solutions to charging fees to attract students to Finland, and look for other ways to improve the level of internationalisation in the country, i.e. keep the current international students and increase their numbers rather than risk losing them.

There have been few attempts to sell Finnish degree programmes via On-Demand Education (Tilaukoulutus in Finnish) and Trial-Based-Fees. According to the Universities Act (1997/645) and the Polytechnics Act (2003/351), Finnish HEIs are allowed to sell degree programmes but only to a third party (i.e. business to business transactions) and not directly to students. In 2010, based on the new Universities Act (558/2009) and the Polytechnics Act (2003/351), Finnish HEIs were allowed, for a five years trial period, to test tuition fees on some Master's programmes, with the condition that these organisations provide scholarships for students who are not able to pay for education. This scholarship model is highly influenced by the strong equity principle that dominates the Nordic values.

According to Cai, Hölttä, & Lindholm, one of the ideas to generate revenue from education export was to establish offshore campuses, but, once again, the Finnish legislation prohibits tuition fees abroad. Moreover, offshore education may service the needs of Finnish industries when Finnish companies abroad will require more competent and local employees. In 2014, Finnish companies based in China invested EUR 10 billion (Embassy of Finland, Beijing, 2015). These firms grew from 300 companies in 2011 to 400 in 2014, (Heimonen, 2011) employing more than 30,000 employees (Helsingin Sanomat, 2011). The involvement of Finnish higher education provision abroad may facilitate training of the local labour force in line with the needs of Finnish companies. The expectation from education export, with campuses abroad, and with the idea of educating international students and charging tuition fees, represent a lesser conflict but requires the HEIs to learn ways to cooperate and understand local markets (Cai, Hölttä, & Lindholm). In addition, one of the challenges for polytechnics in Finland is to recruit master's degree students who do not have three years work experience (Siikanen, 2014).

The HEIs and VETs in Finland encounter similar challenges as small and medium-sized enterprise encounter in their internationalising processes. In a summary of the findings based on the report undertaken in 2007-2008 by the OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, Lloyd-Reason, Ibeh, & Deprey (2009) list the top ten barriers for SMEs internationalisation:

1. Shortage of working capital to finance exports
2. Identifying foreign business opportunities
3. Limited information to locate/analyse markets

4. Inability to contact potential overseas customers
5. Obtaining reliable foreign representation
6. Lack of managerial time to deal with internationalisation
7. Inadequate quantity of and/or untrained personnel for internationalisation
8. Difficulty in matching competitors' prices
9. Lack of home government assistance/incentives
10. Excessive transportation costs

Ojala and Tyrväinen (2007) claim that Finland's main challenges are linked to the shortage of working capital to finance exports and the lack of managerial time, skills and knowledge. Vahlne and Wiedersheim-Paul (1973) add the notion of psychic distance, which is associated with country-based diversities and dissimilarities such as linguistic differences and translation difficulty; cultural factors – societal norms, level of individualism or collectivism, values and customs; economic situation – existing trading links, infrastructure, local conditions, competition and investor confidence and political and legal systems – government stability and risk of instability, import tariffs, legal protection and taxation levels.

In Australia and UK, students, when choosing a study place in HEIs, are more influenced by prestige (ranking) than the quality of teaching and student services (James, Baldwin, & McInnis, 1999). In addition, studies on Chinese students' behaviour by Lu, Mavondo, & Qiu (2009), show that Chinese students are extremely sensitive to the reputation and status of the universities where they applied. These types of increasingly influential university rankings associated with 'marketised' education provide a real threat to quality processes (Editorial, 2008) and lead to student consumerism and disengagement (Ng and Forbes, 2009). Thus, the challenge for Finland here is that, apart from the University of Helsinki that is the most known and has the highest ranking, almost all other Finnish HEIs are relatively small and new to the market, comparing to the top universities worldwide. The size, wealth and history play an important factor in the reputation of universities; also the ranking is influenced by the quantity of research and its excellence rather than educational quality (Javalgi, & Grossman, 2014).

## 2.2.7 Reasons to Internationalise

Table 12 presents the main motivations for internationalisation, which are related to profitability, market growth or positioning, market factors at home and abroad (push and pull), unique product(s) or set of skills (manager’s international experience, firm’s capabilities) and networks – social ties, personal contacts, relationships. The list is collected and summarised by Lloyd-Reason, Ibeh, & Deprey (2009) from various literature sources, serving as a reference in this study.

**Table 12: Motives for Internationalisation**

Motives	Author	Motives	Author
<b>Market Growth</b>	EFIC, (2008)	<b>Profits</b>	Barnes et al. (2006)
	Orser et al. (2008)		Reynolds (2007)
	Stoian (2006)		Stoian, (2006)
	Rundh (2007)		UPS (2007)
	Barnes et al. (2006)		
	Reynolds (2007)		
<b>Market position; knowledge and relationship search</b>	Kocker and Buhl (2007)	<b>Firm size, age, experience</b>	Orser et al. (2008) Lopez (2007)
<b>Social networks/ties</b>	Camara & Simoes (2008)	<b>Managers’ previous international experience</b>	Lopez (2007)
	Stoian (2006)		Stoian (2006)
			Rundh (2007)
<b>Unique product or technology</b>	Rundh (2007)	<b>To reduce dependence on a single or smaller number of markets</b>	Reynolds, 2007
<b>Limited domestic market</b>	Orser et al. (2008)	<b>Market Size</b>	Barnes et al. (2006)
	Rundh (2007)		

According to Knight and De Wit (1995), there are four groups of reasons for a university to internationalise, namely 1) social and cultural, 2) political, 3) academic and 4) economic reasons. Firstly, issues of national cultural identity, intercultural understanding, citizenship development, and social and community development form the sociocultural dimensions. Secondly, foreign policy, national security, technical assistance, peace and mutual understanding and national and regional identity, construct the political reasons. Thirdly, growth and competitiveness, labour markets and financial incentives are part of the economic reasons. Finally, the international dimension of research, teaching and academia, institution building, profile and status (ranking), quality and development and standards are part of the academic category (Knight, 2003). To improve the understanding behind the rationale for university internationalisation, Knight (2003) added two new categories: the national and institutional perspective. At the heart of the national



perspective lays the human resource development, strategic alliance, commercial trade, nation building and sociocultural development, while the institutional perspective embodies the notions of international branding and profiling, income generation, student and staff development, strategic alliances and knowledge products.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

The methodology chapter presents the philosophical approach and research methods and methodology and describes the processes of selecting the cases and data collection and analysis.

#### **3.1 Philosophical Approach**

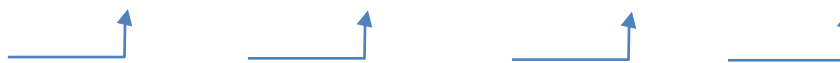
Future Learning Finland (FLF) funds this thesis, which has been guided by the practicalities and timetables of the FLF's representative Ms. Eeva Nuutinen. Thus, there were expectations and promises regarding the timetable and future publications, which needed to be considered when constructing the research approach and design. The author had preconceived ideas about the research topic based on the literature but he also had to consider the needs of the case company, as it is managerial-oriented research (Gummesson, 2000). Nevertheless, the author chose freely the research approach that best suited the research questions (Saunders et al. 2007, 132).

The data is observed, gathered and analysed in order to fulfil the main objective of the study, which is to develop an understanding of how the Finnish universities, polytechnics and vocational institutes may sell their products and services abroad. The main issues that are examined by the research problem are answered via the opinions and experience of experts and practitioners in the fields. Using empirical enquiry to establish theoretical clarity about the meaning and activities of education export in Finland with the aid of FLF members can be considered as a social action i.e. a social science. This kind of research cannot be separated from its reality, i.e. doing international business, and it would be difficult to accomplish by taking a natural science/positivist approach. The ontological

assumption of this thesis is that research into social actions takes place in authentic situations, which means that reality and research cannot be separated, and is therefore inevitably subjective (Saunders et al. 2007, 108). Hence, the epistemology behind this study is interpretivism (Figure 8), and the author interprets situations and social roles with his own set of meanings (Saunders et al. 2007).

### The Choices of This Study

<b>Starting point:</b> Social scientist in social science	<b>Ontological assumption:</b> the research takes place in reality, <b>subjectivism</b>	<b>Epistemological assumption:</b> The researcher will interpret situations with her own set of meanings – <b>interpretivism</b>	<b>Philosophical tradition:</b> Phenomenology & hermeneutics	<b>Approach:</b> Abductive with systematic creativity between theory and empiria
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### Other options

Natural scientist in natural science	<b>Objectivism:</b> the researcher and the reality are separate	<b>Positivism Realism:</b> the researcher can interpret situations objectively without interference from his own set of meanings	Ethnomenology	Inductive Deductive
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Figure 8: Choices of the philosophical approach

In this thesis, the philosophical tradition is widely phenomenological, and the main objective is to understand the world in which the community and its members tell their own stories to gather their perceptions of the encounters in the community (Shankar et al. 2001). In phenomenology, the researcher seeks to understand reality by exploring the way people experience it. Thus, in this study, the author attempts to understand the reality and the current state of the education export in Finland through the views of the participants. A researcher adopting phenomenology and hermeneutics analyses not only the words in interviews but also gestures, hesitations and other possible clues in order to interpret reality (Saunders et al. 2007). Hermeneutics involves a broad interpretation of reality, taking into consideration earlier activities and experience that seem relevant in understanding a phenomenon, which in this study is export of education (Gummesson, 2000).

The thesis adopts the abductive approach with the objective to discover new things – other variables and other relationships (Dubois & Gadde 2002). It is similar to multiple methods (Saunders et al. 2007, 119), to mixed methods (Creswell 2014, 68), and to systematic combining (Dubois & Gadde 2002), yet different from the combination of deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive approaches focus on developing propositions from

existing theory and make them testable in the real world, while inductive approaches rely on “Grounded Theory” (Glaser & Strauss 1967), where theory is systematically generated from data. The core idea of the abductive approach is that the researcher moves between the theoretical and empirical worlds and accepts the incompleteness of thoughts, taking non-linear approaches throughout the research to deepen both theoretical and empirical understanding (Dubois & Gadde 2002). The abductive approach attempts to understand the theory to gain pre-understanding and to generate a conceptual framework, which constitutes the foundation of the study and can lead to understanding the phenomenon in a new way (Kovacs & Spens 2005).

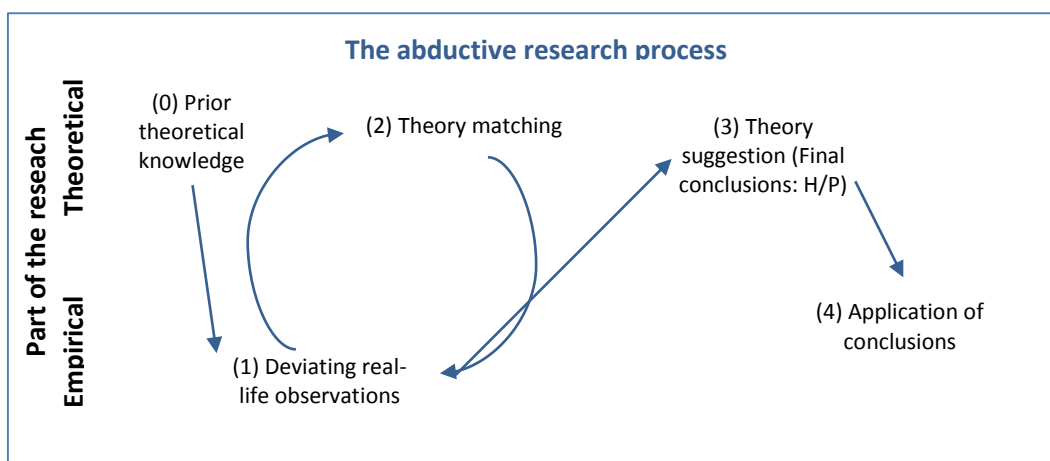


Figure 9: The Abductive Research Process in General (Kovacs & Spens, 2005).

This thesis began with some preconceptions and exploration of the literature, which helped in formulating the interview questions. The second phase was to conduct the interviews (real-life observation), which happened simultaneously while exploring the theoretical knowledge. In addition, this second phase was part of the creative process (Kovacs & Spens 2005) of systematic combining (Dubois & Gadde 2002), in which the current theory is used to understand the empirical phenomenon (here, productisation and internationalisation of Finnish education) and the empirical phenomenon is used to understand the theory (see figure 10), leading to the “Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export”. The third step embodied the descriptive study and recommendation design by reviewing the latest literature in the field. Thus, this thesis moved between the theoretical and empirical worlds and accepted the incompleteness of thoughts, taking a non-linear approach throughout in order to deepen both the theoretical and empirical understandings of the notion of Finnish education export (Dubois & Gadde 2002).

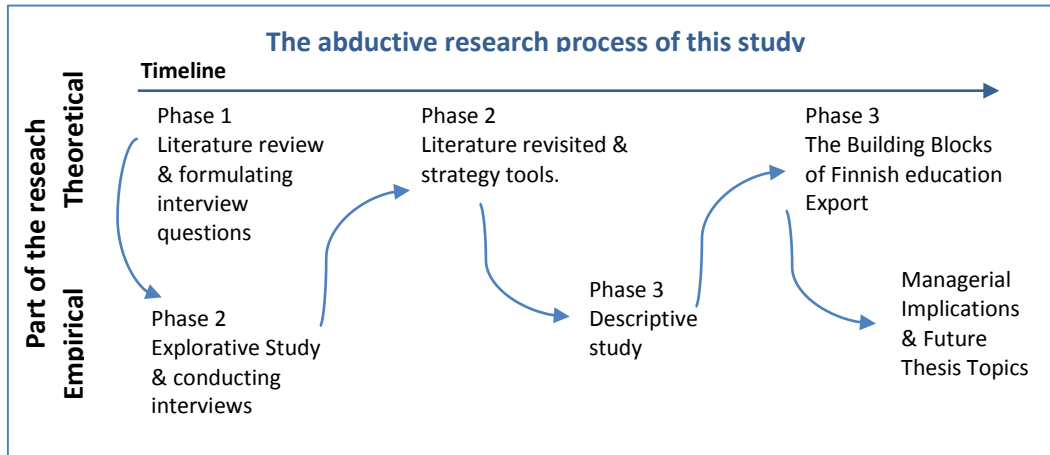


Figure 10: The Abductive Research Process in this Thesis

### 3.2 Research Method and Methodology

The empirical section of this study is a qualitative interview-based multiple case study on fifteen members of Future Learning Finland (FLF) involved in the education export activities in Finland. The method is useful for providing answers to research questions that are complex, and aim at a holistic understanding of the issue studied (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). According to Merriam (2009:13), “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences”. The nature of the study is looking for answers, as well as reasons and meanings of the phenomenon of exporting Finnish education.

In addition, the thesis seeks to understand the ways to overcome barriers of internationalisation, to exploit what Finland has as enabling factors and to create a sustainable and profitable education export strategy. Thus, it is difficult to conduct such study in only numerical terms. According to Amaratunga et al. (2002), quantitative method relies heavily on numbers, uses standardised measurements to clarify testable hypotheses and find differentiating characteristics, or empirical barriers while the qualitative method is particularly suitable when the aim of the research is to define, analyse and build an understanding of culture, social behaviours or other issues. In addition, a qualitative method aims to take into consideration the differences between people (Amaratunga et al., 2002). Qualitative research is often seen as an opposite to quantitative research, as well as

a method delivering better understanding of issues remaining unclear in quantitative studies. In addition, quantitative research cannot deal with the social and cultural constructions of its own variables (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, p. 4). Choosing the qualitative research, that is dependent on availability of data, was undoubtedly a right choice due to the limited amount of information available on the topic of education export in the current literature, and the limited number of experts available for interviews in Finland.

The research methodology is based on the philosophical approach and involves decisions regarding strategy, method and timeline (Figure 11). According to Saunders et al. (2007, 133), there are different strategic options, including case study, action research, grounded theory and ethnography; and three main purposes of enquiry: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Consequently, the topic of education export in Finland appears to be unstructured and limited theoretically and empirically, which led the author to use the exploratory research design in the first part of the empirical enquiry. The objective was to better understand the current environment and status of education export in Finland.

**The Choice of This Study**

<b>The purpose of enquiry:</b> Exploratory & Descriptive	<b>Strategy:</b> Case Study	<b>Method:</b> Semi-Structured Interview	<b>Timeline:</b> Cross sectional study
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**Other options**

Explanatory	Grounded theory Ethnography Action research	Structured interview In-depth interview Focus groups Quantitative survey/questionnaire	Longitudinal
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Figure 11: Methodological choices

The knowledge obtained in the exploratory research made it possible to synthesise empirical findings, understand the current environment regarding education export activities in Finland, and to define research questions more coherently. Using the descriptive research as a second phase of the study was a natural approach to deepen understanding of education export (Saunders et al. 2007).

Case studies appear to be an optimal choice for a research strategy for the three reasons presented by Yin (2009): 1) the form of research questions, 2) the required control of

behavioural events and 3) the focus on contemporary not historical events (Table 13). As a noticeable first result, the thesis is obviously of an exploratory nature aiming to answer mainly “How” and “Why” research questions. Moreover, the author himself has no actual control over the phenomenon that is being studied. Finally, the focus of the research is on contemporary event or phenomenon as the attempt is to create a strategy for education export in the present time, while historical events would only be used in the literature part of this study. Moreover, the case study approach is applied in various circumstances in order to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political and related phenomena (Yin, 2014, p. 4). The approach is popular and used in many fields, including business, allowing the researcher to emphasise on a specific ‘case’, yet still maintain holistic and realistic perspectives of different issues, such as organisational and managerial processes. Additionally, Eisenhardt (1989) adds that the case study research strategy places and emphasis on understanding the dynamics occurring within single environments. Finally, according to Piekkari & Welch 2011 the case study method is a key research strategy in international business research, which makes it an ideal method for this study.

**Table 13: Choosing the Right Research Strategy**

<b>METHOD</b> <small>(Source: Yin 2009, p.8)</small>	<b>Form of Research Question (1)</b>	<b>Requires Control of Behavioural Events? (2)</b>	<b>Focuses on Current Events? (3)</b>
<b>Experiment</b>	How, why?	Yes	Yes
<b>Survey</b>	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes
<b>Archival Analysis</b>	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes/No
<b>History</b>	How, why?	No	No
<b>Case Study</b>	How, why?	No	Yes

### 3.3 FUTURE LEARNING FINLAND

In this section, the author presents the case company, Future Learning Finland, and the interviewed members.

### 3.3.1 Overview

Future Learning Finland (FLF) is a national export programme, offering Finnish educational know-how and learning solutions globally. It has 70 members, bringing together the top players from the fields of education and learning, including private companies, vocational institutions, universities and polytechnics. The initiative is powered by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Finland. FLF has three main objectives: 1) to speed up the growth of Finnish education business globally, 2) to deepen the current market presence, and 3) to increase awareness of the Finnish training solutions and sales in key target markets. FLF is part of Finpro, formerly the Finnish Export Council and Finnish Foreign Trade Association founded by Finnish companies in 1919 with the purpose of promoting Finnish export. Today, Finpro's objective is to successfully grow and commercialise Finnish companies and technologies globally. While Finpro partners with all Finnish companies, much of its energies are targeted at small and medium sized companies (SMEs). Finpro's activities are funded in part by the Finnish government, and partly through fee-for-services and membership fees (Hiltunen, 2011).

FLF's Mission is to speed up its members' business goals at international education business markets and facilitate the development of education business as an important sector for Finland. Its vision for 2018 is to offer solutions for educational excellence, with Finland appreciated as one of the world's leading providers of innovative training solutions. FLF's strategic tasks are: 1) identifying business opportunities and translating it into profitable business, 2) opening new markets and boosting long-term commercial business abroad, 3) networking and clustering on national and international levels and 4) building and developing a brand of education business.

FLF's focus themes during 2014-2015 are on 1) sales clusters, i.e. establishing an EduTech sales cluster and channel and forming of a vocational education cluster; 2) market entries emphasising the creation of a demo for the road-show service and opening new markets; 3) deepening the presence at key markets, i.e. establishing export partner groups, particularly in China and the Gulf region; and 4) visits, including tailor-made customer, investor and media.

### 3.3.2 Selecting Cases

In a classic case study, a case can be an organisation, an event, a program, a process, a country or a relationship between two entities (Keränen, 2011). Choosing the case must derive from the research questions, thus the data collection should primarily answer to two sub-questions, namely “What are the barriers and enablers for internationalisation in universities, polytechnics and vocational schools in Finland (RQ1a), and how to create a sustainable and profitable education exports strategy for Finland (RQ1b)?

The design of this research follows the procedures of a holistic multiple-case study (Yin, 2009). Looking at the sub-question RQ1a, the thesis focuses particularly on educational institutes. Thus, at the beginning the author only contacted universities, polytechnics and vocational institutes. Afterwards, Ms. Nuutinen assisted in narrowing down the contact list based on availability, level of activeness and accessibility of the FLF members. She also recommended interviewing Sanoma PLC (Oyj) and EduCluster Finland Ltd. (Oy), which the author agreed upon. Eventually, during the interviews, the participants mentioned the need to acquire the points of views of governmental bodies, student organisations and Aalto Executive Education, the latter being the only established education export player in Finland. Following the abductive approach, the author decided to interview the suggested cases. As a summary, educational institutes are the focal point of research; they are the priority in the eyes of the researcher answering mostly to sub-question RQ1a. The companies and other participants constituted the support groups; their opinions and experiences were considered as guidelines to follow, answering to sub-question RQ1b. Together, they created “The Building Blocks for Education Export in Finland”.

**Table 14: Selected Members**

<p><b>UNIVERSITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ University of Helsinki</li> <li>▪ University of Tampere*</li> <li>▪ University of Turku*</li> </ul> <p><b>POLYTECHNICS (UAS/AMK)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Häme (HAMK)</li> <li>▪ Haaga-Helia (AMK)</li> <li>▪ Jyväskylä (JAMK)</li> <li>▪ Lahti (LAMK)</li> <li>▪ Laurea (AMK)</li> <li>▪ Tampere (TAMK)</li> <li>▪ Turku (AMK)</li> </ul>	<p><b>VOCATIONAL INSTITUTES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Omnia</li> <li>▪ Tampere Adult Education Centre (TAKK)</li> <li>▪ Jyväskylä Educational Consortium (JEC)</li> </ul> <p><b>COMPANIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sanoma (Digital &amp; Software)</li> <li>▪ EduCluster Finland (Marketing &amp; Sales)</li> <li>▪ Finland University* (Marketing &amp; Sales)</li> </ul> <p><b>OTHER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Ministry of Education (Government)</li> <li>▪ TEKES (Government)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The National Union of University Students (SYL)</li> <li>▪ The National Union of Polytechnic Students (SAMOK)</li> <li>▪ Aalto Executive Education (AEE)</li> </ul>
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The members have been contacted via email and phone calls and asked to participate in an one-hour personal interview as well as answer background questions in a written format (Questions can be found in Appendix 1).

Appendix 6 shows the apparent differences between universities, polytechnics and vocational institutes merely in size, i.e. the number of employees and students. This also describes the way each group operates, namely universities having different faculties and departments, polytechnics having various campuses and specialised degree programmes and vocational schools having youth and adult education in various forms including daily courses, workshops, apprenticeship training, professional development, building competences and other. Most educational institutes that were interviewed are located in the southern parts of Finland, in the cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Lahti and Hämeenlinna. Other educational institutes considered as potential interviewees were located in Tampere, Turku and Jyväskylä. Therefore, when selecting the cases, the author had to consider the accessibility, in particular the way to reach those cities via public transport. For example, Tampere and Jyväskylä are on the same train routes; hence those cities were reasonable reachable within one trip.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

Yin (2003) mentions six possible types of data for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artefacts. In this study, three of the suggested types were used: documents, interviews and observation. The multiple source of evidence is known as triangulation, which Cresswell (2002, 280) defines as the “process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in descriptions and themes in qualitative research”. According to Cresswell, triangulation adds to the reliability and accuracy of the study – explaining the reasoning behind adopting several data collection methods. Triangulation is a key characteristic of case study research capable of enriching results (Gillham, 2005).

Both primary and secondary data were utilised to obtain the research results. The first phase in this study utilised documentation as a secondary data, starting from the time when the author signed the contract with FLF on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014. It provided broad

coverage of information about past events in detail and it is considered to be a complementary data collection method to interviews (Yin, 2003). The first phase of the study primarily involved online research, particularly websites of the interviewed companies, articles related to education export, news, reports (e.g. annual reports), and articles. The online environment added an incredible diversity and richness in terms of qualitative data to the study (Belk, Kozinets & Fischer, 2013), and clarity in terms of detail and information. The study began by exploring the initial literature review focusing on education in Finland, export of education as a topic, and internationalisation and productisation as focus areas. Luostarinen's factors explaining internationalisation and the dimensions of internationalisation, along with Booms and Bitner's (1981) constituents of the marketing mix (7Ps), helped in drafting the parameters of the interview questions (Appendix 1). In addition, the secondary data sources contributed to the collection of the missing background information that was not acquired during the interviews.

The primary data collection method for the study was semi-structured interviews that followed a loose thematic guide that enabled a great degree of flexibility for the interviewee to talk about his/her own understandings, perceptions, ideas and desires regarding education export. The interview was not considered a report of how things are, but an active mode of putting together a plausible version of reality (Svensson, 2009). It was extremely important to let the interviewees convey their own experiences with their own words as much as possible (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008 pp.48), and to acknowledge them as the experts in telling their own story (Thompson et al. 1989).

In this study, the interviewees hold titles such as managers, directors, senior advisors, experts, senior lectures and coordinators, mostly in the field of education and/or international business (See Appendix 7). Together, they have over sixty years of experience in education export activities. In such positions, discourse regarding exporting education is part of their everyday work; the conversations produced during the interviews can to some extent be considered a recreation of the managers' talk with their employees, customers (Jaakkola, 2011) or partners. The interview situation was one of those situations where the manager recreates an aspect of his/her organisational reality (Jaakkola, 2011; Svensson, 2009), acting as a carrier of practices. These individuals enact practices not only in terms of behavior but also in terms of routinized ways of understanding, knowing how, and desiring (Jaakkola, 2011). These mental activities are not qualities of the individual,

but elements of a practice in which the individual participates (Jaakkola, 2011; Reckwitz, 2002). These communicated practices form the essential material for the data to be analysed. In other words, the interviewees' experiences related to education export were transmitted into direct quotes that were used in answering the research questions RQ1a (barriers and enablers) and RQ1b (Strategy).

The first interview was on 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 and the last one on 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2015, lasting almost two months. The shortest was 46 minutes and the longest 90 minutes (Appendix 5). The researcher travelled to five different cities to meet and interview the experts. In Turku, Tampere and Jyväskylä, he had to book accommodation and long-distance trains as two or more interviews were scheduled in different cities on the successive days. Finally, two out of the twenty interviews had to be scheduled via Skype conference calls; the first one (Ms. Gustaffson) from Tampere University, joined the interview that was happening in Turku (with Mr. Pulkkinen). The second one had to be scheduled virtually due to last minute arrangements.

During the interviews, the author had to observe the interviewees' reactions and feelings towards particular questions in order to stimulate better answers. According to Belk et al. (2013), interviews, along with observations and participant observation, form the core data collection activities of qualitative research. The questions are the same to all participants but the structure of the interview and the sequence of the questions asked may vary depending on the interview; thus it is typical for a semi-structured interview that the questions asked raise also follow-up questions or further discussion on the topic (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2009).

All interviews were recorded, transcribed, coded and analysed using English as a language. Knowing that English is not the participants' mother tongue, the author promised them the chance to update and/or improve their own quotes before publishing the thesis. This means that after the transcription, the author sent each interviewee their quotes for revision before analysing the results. These quotes were eventually used in the thesis in an anonymous way, simply because the content presented sensitive material that was too valuable to omit due to confidentiality issues. In other words, the quotations used in this thesis will not show the name of the participants nor the organisations they work in.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Analysing data is the heart of building theory from case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989), making it the most important part of the study. Rubin & Rubin (2012, p. 190) add that the analysis process enables researchers to gravitate gradually from the raw interview data to clear and reliable answers to the research questions. Before transcribing, the author went back to the literature review for the second time to prepare a mechanism for data analysis. While the initial theoretical part has focused on understanding the problem behind the research, namely selling Finnish education abroad, the second part of the literature preoccupies on resolving the issues, i.e. creating the strategies. Using the abductive approach in this case was justified because the author had the perception of the whole process backwards, that is thinking from the beginning about the mechanism of utilising the data from the interviews towards formulating a strategy. What was noticeable is that different educational institutes are in different phases of development, linking to a particular productisation characteristic (mentioned in section 2.1.2). The “Eureka moment” happened when Mr. Nieminen from Lahti University of Applied Sciences mentioned that most universities (AMKs and UNIs) in Finland are “still at the first stage” (the production-oriented approach) of the marketing development and that they should be pushed towards marketing, selling and customer’s oriented approaches. Luckily, Mr. Nieminen’s interview was the second and the author mentioned it to all other participants to acquire their perception on the topic.

The first step of documenting the interviews was to write down word-by-word everything that was said by the interviewees and the researcher. It took on average twenty hours to document one hour of audio, lasting around 400 hours to subscribe all recordings. The second step was to separate the background information from the quotes and other data. The third step was to send all of the 520 quotes to the participants and receive the edited versions from them, as mentioned above. The fourth step of the transcription was to categorise the revised quotes and other data into three categories: Barriers, Enablers and Recommendations – or ideas for strategies. It was evident that there were two types of barriers and enablers: external and internal to the organisation. Thus, the idea of using SWOT Analysis to categorise quotes was an ideal fit for this study as:

- Strengths can be considered as internal enabling factors

- Weaknesses can be considered as internal barriers
- Opportunities can be considered as external enabling factors
- Threats can be considered as external barriers

According to Jobber (2007, p. 47-48), the use of SWOT analysis' elements – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – can organise the findings or results in a project. From these findings, conclusions can be drawn on how to use strengths, transform weaknesses into strengths, benefit from future opportunities and stay away from possible threats. In total, there were 215 SWOT Elements (Appendix 2), which were compared and contrasted with the literature review and research questions. There were a number of similarities and differences, as well as novel discoveries about the current issues in exporting Finnish education abroad. The fifth step of the analysis contemplated the strategic planning phase and embraced the TOWS Matrix to formulate four strategies from the SWOT elements (Figure 12).

<b>TOWS MATRIX &amp; 4 STRATEGIES</b>	<b>STRENGTHS</b> 1. Strengths' Element 2. Strengths' Element 3. Strengths' Element 4. Strengths' Element	<b>WEAKNESSES</b> 1) Weaknesses' Element 2) Weaknesses' Element 3) Weaknesses' Element 4) Weaknesses' Element
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> 1. Opportunities' elements 2. Opportunities' elements 3. Opportunities' elements 4. Opportunities' elements	SO: Maxi-Maxi Strategy <b>STRATEGY A</b> Using "Strengths" to maximise "Opportunities"	WO: Mini-Maxi Strategy <b>STRATEGY C</b> Minimise "Weaknesses" by taking advantage of "Opportunities"
<b>THREATS</b> 1. Threat's Elements 2. Threat's Elements 3. Threat's Elements 4. Threat's Elements	ST: Maxi-Mini Strategy <b>STRATEGY B</b> Using "Strengths" to minimise "Threats"	WT: Mini-Mini Strategy <b>STRATEGY D</b> Minimise "Weaknesses" and avoid "Threats"

Figure 12: TOWS Matrix from SWOT Analysis

The final step of the analysis process was to assign each strategy to a phase of the marketing development philosophy and to create the Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export. Bearing in mind that different organisations belong to different stages of internationalisation, productisation and education export activities, the author wanted to offer recommendations on individual and collective levels. On collective level, the strategies would assist the organisations over successive periods of time, not only in the current environment or situation. In other words, the TOWS Matrix coupled with the

Marketing Evolution and Productisation Characteristics may help in creating a universal method for organisations engaged in education export activities in Finland from the day they start until reaching maturity in international markets. The external and internal environments are dynamic; some factors change over time while others change very little. Because of the dynamics in the environment, the strategy designer must Prepare several TOWS Matrixes at different points in time, as shown in Figure 13. Thus, one may start with a TOWS analysis of the past, continue with an analysis of the present, and, perhaps most important, focus on different time periods in the future (Weihrich, 1982). Bearing in mind the marketing development phase, the TOWS dynamics progress in this thesis will have the following order:

- 1) Strategy for Production Oriented Phase as a starting point i.e. using strengths to maximise opportunities.
- 2) Strategy for Product Oriented Phase as a second step i.e. using strengths to minimise threats.
- 3) Strategy for Marketing/Selling Oriented Phase as a third step i.e. minimising weaknesses by taking advantages of opportunities.
- 4) Strategy for Customer Oriented Phase as a fourth step i.e. minimising weaknesses and avoiding threats.

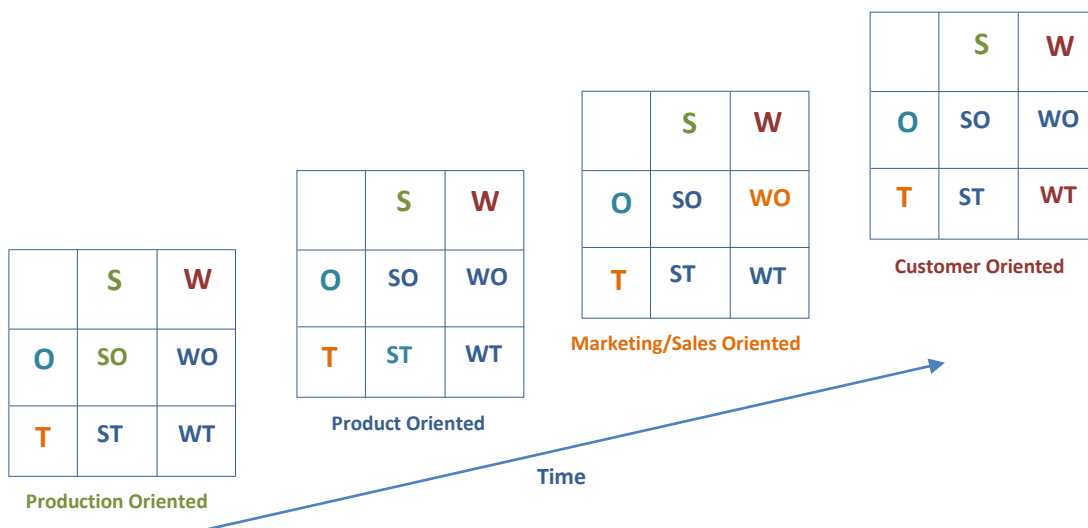


Figure 13: Dynamics of TOWS Analysis

The TOWS Matrix in this study serves as a conceptual framework for future research on the combination of external factors and those internal to the enterprise, and the strategies based on these variables. Equally important, the TOWS Matrix forces managers to analyse

the situation of their company and to develop strategies, tactics, and actions for the effective and efficient attainment of its organisational objectives and its mission. Hence, they can also reflect on the 215 SWOT elements presented in this thesis and create more appropriate strategies for their individual and current issues.

## 4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

In this section, the author presents the empirical findings and their conclusions.

### 4.1 Key Findings

This thesis has numerous findings. Firstly, different stakeholders have different definitions and visions of education export. Secondly, the Finnish education is an excellent product but the process of selling it is complex, requiring extensive human and financial resources. Thirdly, business networks and personal contacts play an important role when exporting educational services, in particular, the need to forge meaningful partnerships and approach the right markets. Fourthly, the attitude towards education export in Finland is both negative and positive, the latter showcasing the Finnish exporters' motivation to succeed in the internationalisation of Finnish education. Finally, the customers are the most important element when productising and internationalising, and Finnish exporters must focus on building and delivering products that meet customers' needs and expectations.

#### 4.1.1 Different Stakeholders for Education Export

In Finland, different stakeholders are involved in the process of exporting education, operating in different manners (Table 15). For example, UNIs focus on the scientific excellence and research, AMKs on the practical learning and apprenticeships and VETs on the lifelong learning and training. Software companies focus on creating scalable services, mainly born global concepts. Marketing and sales companies focus on acquiring sales, networking and partnerships.

**Table 15: Education Export Main Stakeholders in Finland**

UNIVERSITIES	POLYTECHNICS	VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ranking / Accreditation</li> <li>▪ Faculties / Students</li> <li>▪ Academic Research</li> <li>▪ Funded by Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alike &amp; Interconnected</li> <li>▪ Specialised Degrees</li> <li>▪ Practical Learning Approach</li> <li>▪ Funded by Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Life-Long Learning / K80</li> <li>▪ Youth / Adult Education</li> <li>▪ Multi-Field Institution</li> <li>▪ Municipality / Foundation etc.</li> </ul>	
COMPANIES		OTHER	
<b>Marketing / Sales</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finding markets/partners</li> <li>▪ Admin / Operations</li> <li>▪ Networking</li> </ul>	<b>Digital / Software</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scalability / Profitability</li> <li>▪ Internationalisation</li> <li>▪ Flexible / Agile Dev.</li> </ul>	<b>Ministry / Team Finland</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public Servants + Time</li> <li>▪ Pro Education Export</li> <li>▪ Clear Indication / Info</li> </ul>	<b>Students' Organisations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Active + Strong Values</li> <li>▪ Feel Excluded from EE</li> <li>▪ Open to Ideas &amp; Solutions</li> </ul>

The governmental bodies push the education export agenda but lack the time and resources for proper implementation of education export activities. Despite the fact that resources for exporting education are scarce, the Finnish government demands clear instructions and financial planning from educational institutions before funding their internationalisation operations, whereas, HEIs and VETs attribute their insufficient performance to the lack of support and finances from the government. The dilemma seems to be caused by lack of communication between different parties, creating confusion and exclusion among the stakeholders. For example, student organisations feel that they are excluded from important discussions and planning procedures regarding export of education. In Finland, student organisations have strong unions that support students' rights, including international students. Traditionally, these student unions have been playing a crucial part in the elections in Finland, supporting different political parties. Thus, it is evident that education exporters have perspicuously missed out on including (and also benefiting) from students' organisations, and students in general.

According to the interviewees (Appendix 7), there are many challenges education export stakeholders are facing in Finland, such as the lack of "One Story" among all stakeholders; the different roles of UNIs, AMKs and VETs; the difficulty to cooperate between different stakeholders; and the fact that not everyone is seeing the real potential behind education export (Table 16).



**Table 16: Quotes about Stakeholders**

<p><b>The lack of “One Story” among all stakeholders</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All of us know that Finland is number one at PISA, and besides PISA and according to some surveys concerning innovation capacity of nations where Finland was second. What we have not done is that we are not explaining why this is related to our education system. We have a lack of these kinds of stories; individuals tell these stories but not officials and we need all stakeholders in education export to tell these same stories everywhere ... we need that urgently and that includes all embassies in all countries and key persons in ministries who receive foreign visitors every week. If they would tell the same story, that would be very beneficial. If we tell different stories about Education Export, it will be very confusing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The different roles of universities, AMKs and VETs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Universities have three main tasks: 1) to run degree programmes, 2) to provide services nationally and 3) to run different kind of research, development and innovation projects.</li> <li>▪ One of the enablers is that we have unquestionable scientific excellence.</li> <li>▪ We need international post-graduate students to excel in research. So professors thought that if they can teach them, they could pick the best students to come to Helsinki to work with them.</li> <li>▪ In my opinion, AMKs benefit from their practical approach to education giving them a small advantage while some of our products had to go through a more extensive pipeline production because they are more on the academic level. We had to figure out how to apply or combine the practical uses of our research.</li> <li>▪ The offering in AMKs is somewhat similar...but AMKs have different cultures.</li> <li>▪ VETs should sell K80 (or K65) as a concept, it is about life-long-learning for adults and everyone who wants to come back to study or continue studying or study something new. Someone who wants to do short courses, educate herself or learn a new trade.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The difficulty to cooperate between different stakeholders</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are too small; we need to do it together.</li> <li>▪ There are already some connections; some of them are cooperating and they have started much earlier than others. So they have been in the market for some time and some of us have started a bit later. And when the National Strategy for Education Export was published, people were thinking about these things (working together) but not in a systematic way ... there were not a lot of resources for education export. That’s why we are now in different phases.</li> <li>▪ It is easier said than done</li> </ul>
<p><b>Not everyone seeing the real potential behind education export.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student organisations and different political parties, acting as lobbyists, are against enabling the tuition fees but they don’t see the potential behind it.</li> </ul>

According to the interviewees, it is not enough to be good at PISA results or rank high in different indexes. Finland should work on creating stories to link the country’s performance and success to its excellent education. This is currently missing. The different roles of educational institutions create friction among these institutions; even though VETs, AMKs and UNIs seem to have complimentary products i.e. they complete each other’s offering to customers. VETs offer a long list of practical and pedagogical courses and qualifications for young and adult students, AMKs contribute to the practical higher education learning and UNIs have the academic and research possibilities. Finnish exporters cannot operate individually on a global scale due to the smallness of Finland as a country. In fact, managers need to work together in consortiums or a cluster, not only to sell Finnish education, but also to explain the benefits of exporting it to each other as well as the other stakeholders, e.g. student organisations and the government. So far, communication seems to be the main challenge among the stakeholders, particularly the way to explain the benefits of education export as well as the economic and social reasons

behind changing the current legislation and implementing tuition fees in Finland and abroad, e.g. offshore campuses.

#### 4.1.2 Different Definitions of Education Export

There are many definitions of education export among the different stakeholders in Finland (Table 17). Firstly, Finnish educational institutions cannot sell degree programmes, thus the current issue is not about attracting foreign students to study in Finland, nor having offshore campuses. Indeed, there is not an easy way to clearly describe what Finland is selling. The first important condition to define is the ‘business’ behind education export, i.e. having a customer that pays for educational services. In the past, there have been many difficulties to understand the concept of education export in Finland, and differentiate it from R&D projects, international cooperation or development projects. Nowadays, Finns have understood, but perhaps not yet accepted, that education export is a business. In fact, exporters are looking for international customers who will pay for Finnish educational services in order to cover the deficits of the budgets cuts from the government and generate additional income. These services may be training, consulting, know-how deals, or combination of two or more. For example, Finland has been involved in developing the educational system or educational reform in foreign countries, capacity building in schools and supporting regional development. These projects create value for customers in terms of improving the level of education in the host countries, creating wealth and contribution to social wellbeing. Thus, the Finnish way of exporting education considers the wellbeing and sustainability of societies while equally focusing on collaborative learning. Indeed, Finns believe that selling education is not only about making money but also about changing the world and learning throughout the process of exporting education. The only drawback, so far, has been that Finnish stakeholders lack the “Big Vision” behind exporting education as a one cluster.

**Table 17: Quotes about Different Definitions of Education Export**

<b>Education Export is different in Finland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education export in Finland doesn't mean selling Master's and Bachelor's.</li> </ul>
<b>Defining education export in Finland is not easy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a wide term; there have been many different definitions through time.</li> <li>... difficult to make a difference between an R&amp;D project and education export.</li> <li>... difficult to understand the concept of education export</li> <li>People seem to be having many different concepts ... it is not the 1) interest in Finnish education ... 2) international cooperation ... or 3) development projects ... but it is about customers with money i.e. selling</li> </ul>
<b>Education export in Finland is a business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A business where we have a customer that pays ... and in return the customer gets educational services. Not that we get money from EU to do a project or we would support it with some money. It is something that has to be sold to somebody in return of money. So it is not free and it is not supported.</li> <li>Selling training, education and consulting in such a way that it creates for us and for the customer added value</li> <li>... also selling the experts' services in order to develop the educational system in different forms and in different countries.</li> <li>Education export means we do business because funding is decreasing and most likely the national sources will decrease in the following years</li> <li>We are exporting and selling all the knowledge that we have, everything we have in our schools can be productised: our teaching, research and other projects as well.</li> <li>Education Export doesn't only mean that we go there but it can be that customers will come to Finland to check our hospitals/kindergartens etc.</li> <li>We want it to be a profitable business ... it is a very important part of our internationalisation process, capacity building, developing our own learning, and also to support regional development and impact from education export. We also see it as an important way to build our brand and to be recognised internationally.</li> <li>The main purpose of exporting is to find new growth revenues abroad because the domestic markets are relatively flat.</li> </ul>
<b>Education export in Finland is also about wellbeing and sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is working for the wellbeing and sustainability of societies.</li> <li>Education Export is doing business and saving the world in the same time.</li> </ul>
<b>Education export in Finland is about collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our view of education export is educational collaboration. We work things together; we give something we get something and so forth. It is not only money; we need to learn something</li> </ul>
<b>The big vision is lacking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We get a lot of different answers about what it is. We lack this "Big Vision" and how everyone fits in together and we should have one big vision where we all fit in together.</li> </ul>

### 4.1.3 Different Visions of Education Export

Different players have different visions of education export in Finland (Table 18). Firstly, two organisations did not have a separate vision for education export since they are restructuring their current organisation. Secondly, short-term visions embodied the notion of productisation, networks and networking, markets, business models, profitability, internationalisation and learning. Thirdly, the medium-term visions envisioned having a lucrative business, building campuses abroad, collaborating with other players on bigger projects, increasing profitability and scaling business models. Scaling the education

business seems to be the natural approach, i.e. to expand operations and involve partners and customers in the value creation process.

**Table 18: Quotes about Different Visions of Education Export**

<b>No vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the moment we do not have vision and mission statements defined for education export, it will be formulated once the new strategy is confirmed.</li> </ul>
<b>Short-term vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producing and testing different ideas, markets and products</li> <li>We have developed our networks and products from stage one to the next stage.</li> <li>It has to be profitable in money or to be worthy our time and efforts which mean finding and acquiring partners, networks and contacts</li> <li>The international operations and education export activities are established: setting clear strategic targets i.e. to know what we want, which markets to focus on.</li> <li>To add export of education (services) to the operations in order to increase our income and learning and to raise the level of internationalisation in a meaningful and sustainable way</li> </ul>
<b>Medium-term vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It should be a lucrative business.</li> <li>Our vision is to have two or three campuses abroad</li> <li>I would like to see us having a satellite somewhere with some other AMKs</li> <li>We would need to have a strong scalable model that we can turn into 10 and 100 million Euros. We need to build on larger projects rather than small projects here and there.</li> <li>We would like to be one of the leading organisations in vocational education and training.</li> <li>Education export is making enough money that it is contributing back to the university. Researcher will get money to travel, to hire research assistants; new doctors will get career paths through education export</li> <li>I envision us to find new models for running bigger projects using the TVET system in other countries with our partners</li> <li>In terms of money, we should triple our turnover in the next couple of years.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-term vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Getting additional income, learning and experience from selected countries on the international market</li> <li>The big vision is to develop strong TVET systems that will enable jobs for people; we call it education for work in Finland and abroad.</li> <li>If we can sell degrees, I would see more students and groups coming to Finland, XAMK’s and YAMK’s Master programmes run in Z country. I don’t see a market for one individual player; we have to combine our forces and do things together.</li> <li>This is maybe like in the ten-year plan; it is a huge market if we ever get to sell degrees. It is going to make our offering even stronger because students will be eligible to study anywhere in Europe. Imagine if we can offer this golden ticket.</li> <li>To support the strategy of the university to get to the top and that it will be involved in global social responsibility. “The best in the world, the best for the world”</li> </ul>

Obviously, more sales will lead to more profits. Finally, the long-term visions discussed the notion of selling degree programmes, the implementation of strong TVET systems and joint Master’s programmes abroad as well as the notion of global social responsibility. The philosophical approach of “being the best in the world, the best for the world” is, indeed, a strong vision and message to send to the world about the Finnish education export intentions.

#### 4.1.4 The Complexity of the Selling Process

Selling Finnish education abroad has seven major steps: 1) knowing the core product, 2) meeting and discussing with the client, 3) identifying client's needs and/or wants, 4) pricing and negotiating, 5) customising the core product, 6) delivering the product and 7) receiving the payment. Steps 2,3 and 4 normally happen abroad and steps 1, 5 and 7 occur in Finland. Delivering the products can happen either in Finland with students coming in or abroad with experts flying out.

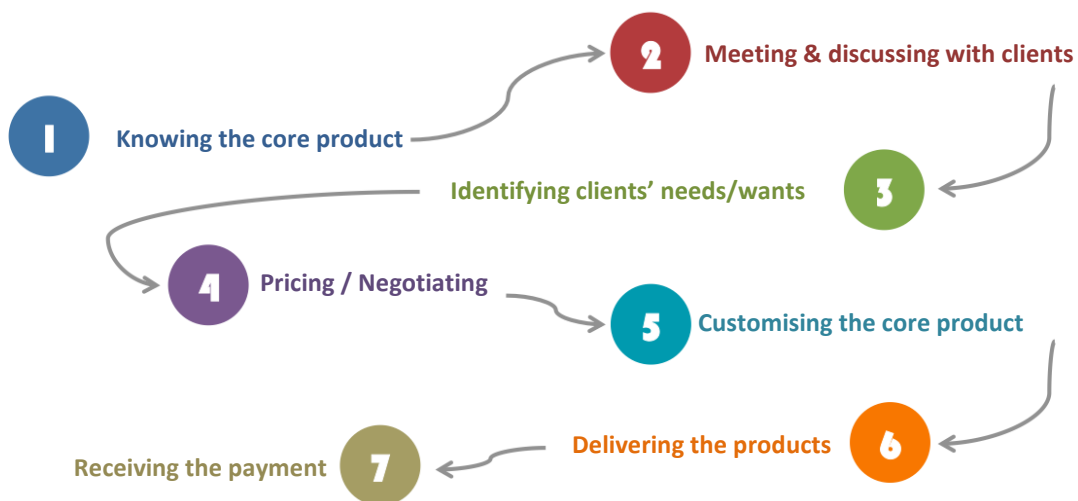


Figure 14: The Education Export Selling Process

It is crucial to understand the selling process in order to acquire the right attitude, find the right people, gain the right skills and create the right organisations for exporting Finnish education. The right attitude is to be alert, humble, entrepreneurial and hardworking. The right people are the experts who are interested in selling, multi-talented, culturally savvy and knowledgeable about educational products. Experts, preferably with an experience as educators or lecturers, from Finland as well as abroad, are needed for exporting Finnish education. These experts are required to have the following skills: 1) the ability to meet and network with people, 2) the capacity to sell educational products in person and 3) the talent of storytelling. Meeting the key customers, delivering a compelling story (or elevator pitch), and closing deals in person seem to be the main criteria for a successful selling (Table 19).

**Table 19: Quotes about the Selling Process**

<b>Acquire the right attitude for sales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is typical in Finland to do a sales pitch and wait for the buyer to come back with an offer ... It is about the attitude ... and our culture.</li> <li>▪ It is related to entrepreneurial skills and the ability to link both worlds: academia and sales.</li> <li>▪ We need to be alert, discuss with the customers and try to be creative when offering solutions.</li> <li>▪ Once again, we have to go back to being this humble nation that understands that if you want to make money, you have to work hard.</li> <li>▪ Within the next few years, one of the main challenges will be whether education could be sold or not. The costs of delivering it are high.</li> </ul>
<b>Finding the right people to sell education export</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are very interested in selling</li> <li>▪ One of the successes is that we have located the right person to do the right things.</li> <li>▪ We need to find experts from other countries also not only from Finland.</li> <li>▪ We want to have people who 1) are multi-talented, 2) have cultural know-how, 3) know how to sell the right Finnish educational products and 4) need to know what they are talking about. They need to be an expert in education, more or less.</li> </ul>
<b>Being an educator sells</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In educational service ... you have to be an educator and have the feeling of education. That's why for some organisations in this business it is very difficult to sell because they are not educators. They are not passionate educators ... it is important to know what education means and what kind of value it brings to the customer.</li> <li>▪ You have to have a wide understanding and you have to show that you belong to this field</li> <li>▪ You need to have expertise in selling a product and you need to know really well the educational sector, methodologies and the concept behind what is Finnish knowledge or the Finnish way of learning. The pedagogical innovations are really hard to explain and sell if you don't know what they are and if you don't know the Finnish approach to pedagogy and learning</li> <li>▪ Education is a very broad field and I feel comfortable selling it because I have been a teacher in junior high, elementary school, in AMK and universities for over 15 years ...</li> </ul>
<b>Networking skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The selling part is easy and I never considered myself a salesperson. This is what happens: "I meet these awesome people around the world and then I share my vision with them focusing on the developing countries and I ask them: "Wouldn't it be awesome if we could build you a VET system that is the best in the world?"</li> <li>▪ I personally don't believe in the traditional salesperson approach in this education business. We need to build close relationships ... network with everyone involved in education export ... and meet key people, especially in the Arabic world and China</li> </ul>
<b>Storytelling skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is all about a convincing story you tell in one, two or three minutes and then refer to your website. The website has to be in condition so they can check you out and see your references.</li> </ul>
<b>Selling-in-person skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You cannot sell on international markets by email. We have to be there, we have to be present.</li> <li>▪ You have to be a sales person. You have to know how to discuss with the customer, read the customer and do small talk and all the classical things that any international salesman is doing. That's part of the game and you have to be very fluent in your sales speech and elevator pitch.</li> <li>▪ If you would ask me why Finland is having a recession, I would give you the answer: because of the lack of the elevator pitch and lack of sales skills.</li> <li>▪ I would not send abroad the best professional who is the best nursing teacher to sell the Nursing Programme. I would send someone who is a professional in selling. When it starts getting closer and we have to bring the professionals to discuss, we send them.</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.5 The Excellence of Finnish Education as a Product/Service

Finnish Education is excellent encompassing many characteristics for becoming a successful export product (Table 20). First of all, it is unique “the Ferrari of Education”, possessing many specialised features. Secondly, the knowledge, experience, research and innovation can be easily productised. Thirdly, the productisation focus is on the methodology of teaching and pedagogical issues (i.e. not marketing or business courses).

These services can be customised, localised, and tailor-made to fit into different cultures. Foreign countries would like to know about the Finnish way of running vocational education and training, the way skills’ demonstration and recognition of prior learning are managed, and the way industries and companies work together within the system. In addition, international buyers seek to learn how Finns build their syllabus in VETs, AMKs and UNIs.

**Table 20: Quotes about Finnish Education as a Product/Service**

<b>Uniqueness, specialisation, knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Ferrari of education.</li> <li>▪ We all have our specialties.</li> <li>▪ We are productising our knowledge, experience, research, development and innovation from different schools.</li> <li>▪ We are selling very unique services, which are modified to be suited the culture of the country where we sell it.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus, Customisation, Flexibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Finland, it always has to do with the methodology of teaching and the pedagogical issues. We don’t sell marketing or finance courses ... we can sell courses where we can show them how to teach marketing or finance in a modern way. This is where we are absolutely the top in the world.</li> <li>▪ What we offer is the courses we already have here (in Finland) but they are always tailored and localised to meet the needs of the clients.</li> <li>▪ In the beginning, we saw the value in teacher training and other smaller projects but then we realised that countries would like to know about how we run vocational education and training, how we do skills demonstration and recognition of prior learning, how we work with industries and companies together within the system and how we build our syllabus in schools. These are the things they are not able to do and we can productise for them.</li> <li>▪ Products and Prices are tailor made each time.</li> <li>▪ We don’t have products on the shelf.</li> <li>▪ It is always about packaging and redesigning to a certain extent, which has to be done because no two markets are the same.</li> </ul>
<b>Business Models, Clearness, Languages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have two business models: 1) staff training for the companies that is building the skills and competences in a certain field and 2) developing the education system for governments, municipalities or authorities that is developing the vocational education, teacher competences, curriculum design or cooperation with local companies</li> <li>▪ I think we still have to learn about our different business models and decide whether we send our experts abroad, bring groups to Finland, train the trainers or sell certificates.</li> <li>▪ There are clear products that we can sell today</li> <li>▪ In Colombia we teach in Spanish because we have Spanish-speaking experts. In X, they are doing things in French. We have a couple of Portuguese speaking teachers. We are thinking about offering education in Chinese by employing Chinese people. Then, in the Gulf we know a pool of Arabic speakers.</li> </ul>
<b>Complexity, Co-Creation, Wholeness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “These educational services are not a physical product</li> <li>▪ In other words productising is made based on both needs of the clients and our identified strengths. This strategy has worked well for us and I believe that in a long run it produces scalable concepts and products.</li> <li>▪ Each of our clients is unique and we do not sell standardised products. So, we go abroad, meet people and discuss. Then, we come back and do the offering. We talk to different schools (partners) and productise.</li> <li>▪ We are sharing a lot of information and we are discussing that we can offer a whole chain of education services from preschool, high school and to the university level (FinwayLearning)</li> <li>▪ We are looking for sustainable and long-term customers with products that can create a scalable business and profits</li> </ul>

The business models for selling Finnish education abroad are different from customer to another, i.e. each market may require specialised features depending on customers’ needs.

Sometimes, to productise Finnish education means to translate the services into different languages, and other times it may require localisation or customisation. Finally, as education is not a physical product, the particular emphasis is on the process of co-creating the product with the client, i.e. Finnish exporters are required to share information with partners and clients, and discuss about the different constituents of the product with different stakeholders.

#### 4.1.6 The Education Export Network Matrix

The Finnish Education Export Network Matrix has four levels: 1) Organisational, 2) Regional, 3) National and 4) International. These levels are interconnected and interrelated due to the nature of internationalisation of education export and the need for partnerships, consortiums and personal relationships (Figure 15).

<b>Organisational Level</b> Education Export Staff Experts / Teachers / Other Staff Students (Finland)/ Alumni (Finland) Leadership / Management	Alliances Consortiums Expert Pool (Unemployed)	<b>National Level</b> Ministries / Parliament Team Finland FLF / FinPro
Partners (Business/Education/Governments) Intermediaries EU Chambers of Commerce Mobility/Exchange (Staff / Students) Alumni (Abroad) /Expert Pool (Abroad)	<b>AMKs            VETs            UNIs</b>	Ely-Centres / Tekes Businesses EduCluster / Finland University / FCG Other educational bodies Consortiums (Regional/ National) Embassies (Abroad and in Finland)
<b>International Level</b> Client: Government/ministries (Host Country) Client: Business/Other (Host Country) Finnish Embassies (Abroad) Dev. Banks/Intern. Org/UN	Finnish Companies (Finland / Abroad) Consortiums (Finland / Abroad) Embassies	<b>Regional Level</b> Local Businesses Municipalities Consortiums

Figure 15: The Finnish Education Export Network Matrix

**Partnerships and consortiums** are needed on all levels. Finland is a small country, in which all players involved in exporting education should work together in consortiums or as a cluster. These consortiums are the only way to succeed in selling Finnish education abroad, according to several interviewees. The main benefits of working together are the opportunities for bigger deals, larger scale and complimentary expertise and know-how. In a successful cluster, partners need to have a common vision, the ability to “think big” and the drive to achieve results. By working together, partners may improve the product offering to customers (Table 21).



**Table 21: Quotes about Partnerships and Consortiums**

<b>Partnerships and Consortiums</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I think that to work in consortiums is the only way we can be successful in education export.</li> <li>▪ ... Where the partners share the same bigger vision and strive to achieve it.</li> <li>▪ Finland is small. We need to push consortiums to go for big deals; we need to work together.</li> <li>▪ We work with our partners because they are complimentary to our offering; we need them ... some might have something that we don't have.</li> <li>▪ We have pre-partnerships with some organisations and there is already a network of five AMKs focusing on teacher training so we check who wants to participate.</li> </ul>
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**On the Organisational Level,** the main players in the network include education export staff, experts, students, Alumni in Finland and abroad and partners, i.e. educational institutes, business partners and governments. Naturally, students are the main element in the network, represented as users (consumers) and/or buyers. Alumni networks seem to be under-developed/discussed in Finland, as only one participant mentioned the Alumni's role in exporting Finnish education. Graduates promote HEIs abroad and manage to acquire leads by describing their experiences in studying at those educational institutes. In addition to the importance of Alumni, Finnish organisations focus on having interconnected networks of VETs, AMKs, UNIs and experts across all educational levels and in different municipalities. They believe that it is important to involve the whole chain of educational institutes to find experts (e.g. teachers), who deliver the educational services abroad.

**Regional Level.** For educational institutes, the regional network provides a place to train students, support educational activities, fund projects and offer a learning platform for R&D operations. Local companies, industries and different funds and associations constitute the regional network (Table 22).

**Table 22: Quotes about Organisational and Regional Level Networks**

<b>Organisational Level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Our network in Finland is large: vocational education providers, polytechnics, experts across all school levels and etc. We also have the experts from the municipal side working in our projects, which again looks at education from a different angle. What we really try to do is grab all of our networks to find experts for our education export projects.</li> <li>▪ We also have 9000 alumni worldwide ... One invaluable thing for us is the Alumni Network because they know our brand, our quality and our programmes ... so we get leads through them.</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local companies are our partners because we train our students a lot at actual working places, and therefore we have very close connections to the local industry and operators in general.</li> <li>▪ Our region has been a forerunner and we have had regional support in order to build education export services ... develop our internal systems within our organisation ... in the same time, it helped us to define our strengths from the point of view global markets.</li> <li>▪ We also have partnership agreements with Finnish companies especially with technology companies that have a platform to provide eLearning course or content providers</li> </ul>

**National Level.** The main players on the national level include mostly governmental bodies: ministries, Team Finland, FLF/FinPro, Ely-Centres and Tekes; businesses and companies involved in education export; and other actors in the education field. Their activities are conducted in Finland and abroad.

*In Finland*, the government's role is to encourage education export activities by arranging ministerial visits and increasing country branding. FLF's particular tasks are to boost internationalisation and to put pressure on decision makers, the parliament and lobbyists. In addition, FLF arranges networking sessions for their members, inspiring cooperation, collaboration and partnerships. Companies, on the other hand, are adopting two different roles: 'initiators' and 'followers'. The initiators' role is to productise, market and sell Finnish education abroad, and to build networks, i.e. to create meaningful partnerships. According to the 'initiators', VETs and HEIs should focus on teaching and delivering educational services abroad, while they focus on the selling and networking. The followers' role, on the other hand, is to be a reliable partner on a national level, which means that other HEIs and VETs will consider them (the followers) regarding projects abroad. According to the 'followers', they signal to the consortium their expertise in delivering the products (Step 6 in the selling process).

*Abroad*, ministerial delegations organised by the ministries, Team Finland and FLF, have been the most important activity for selling Finnish education. These visits opened doors to the right international buyers, acquired the necessary credibility in the eyes of the customers and developed long-term relationships. Almost every participant mentioned the importance of participating in the ministerial visits when starting education business in a foreign country. The Finnish government has done a remarkable effort in convincing international buyers of the Finnish Education excellence, as well as some Finnish Ambassadors representing Finland in foreign countries. Ambassadors have played an important role in promoting and selling Finnish education. According to several interviewees, the role of Finnish Ambassadors, as salesmen, should substantially increase (Table 23).

**Table 23: Quotes about National Level Networks**

	<p><b>In Finland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Important players in Finland are ministry of education, foreign ministry and ministers. This is such a new business in Finland and we need to have it around the world.</li> <li>▪ Team Finland (TF) is a network that is coordinated by the Prime Minister’s office and each ministry; education and culture, employment and economy and international affairs has a coordinator. We are working on intensifying the international cooperation and country branding and attract investments and export to Finland.</li> <li>▪ FLF has been giving leads ... and trying to put pressure on the decision makers, parliament and lobbyists ... they have been learning and we are all learning. Thinking about the Anglo-Saxons countries who have been doing this for decades and we have just started.</li> <li>▪ We also need the local players and our ambassadors are the key players. If I could change their role a little bit, it would be more towards a salesman.</li> <li>▪ We (EduCluster) see ourselves as a Finnish Hub and we want to be the contracting party because we know how to do it. We work with our partners in Finland, normally a university or polytechnic ... and we want that the experts will worry only about their professions i.e. teaching or educating.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Level</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are a very sought out partner in Finland ... from the start one of the main strategies we had for Education Export was that we want to be the number one partner in Finland. So, we don’t do any activities that destroy this home market; we didn’t want to take a stand against anyone. We work with everyone who wants to work with us.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Abroad</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finnish Government has done a remarkable work in convincing international buyers of the Finnish Education excellence.</li> <li>▪ Ministerial delegations, they are door openers ... it automatically means that we are taken seriously ... because it is very hard to get a meeting in a ministry abroad.</li> <li>▪ Looking at how we built our networks, quite many of our contacts came from Ministry Visits. These visits have been the door openers to our main markets.</li> <li>▪ I was with the ministry in country X; I have been in many visits for education export. Now, I am currently going with the Ambassador to Asia to visit big Finnish firms. That is something that I have to thank Future Learning Finland and FinPro for organising.</li> <li>▪ In one country, the Finnish Ambassador has been super helpful ... he spread the word ... gave us contacts and basically opened many doors for us.</li> </ul>

**International.** The most important international network elements include the international contracts, the local partners, the development banks and United Nations and foreign governments and ministries (Table 24).

**International Contracts.** HEIs and VETs have a long list of international agreements with educational organisations, aiming at promoting student and staff mobility, R&D exchange and other projects. In particular, Finnish educational institutes have hundreds of organisations as partners. In some cases, these partners have become customers and/or allies towards a project in a third country. Unlike the majority of the world’s HEIs selling degree programmes, Finnish HEIs are forced to sell educational services due to the restrictions set by the legislation in Finland. In other words, most foreign educational institutes do not have the incentives to sell services as they charge tuition fees from students, both domestic and international. As a result, Finnish exporters strive searching for innovative business models and ways to enter new markets.

**Table 24: Quotes about International Network Elements**

<p><b>International Contracts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On our webpages, there are 200 partner universities</li> <li>▪ We have a huge list of partners: old, new and present that are in our communication channel.</li> <li>▪ Also, we have some other partners that we met last summer during a conference.</li> <li>▪ The factor that helped in acquiring customers is the international contracts that we already have, about 254 organisations around the world.</li> <li>▪ In the beginning it started with R&amp;D cooperation with some universities. Now they are sending their teachers to us. Then, we have a local cooperation in China based on these kinds of things and they send some of their teachers here. These are the cases where R&amp;D expanded to education export.</li> <li>▪ Some partners become allies towards a third country e.g. working with people from Denmark to build something in Africa or some of them have some money to buy education from overseas and they buy it from us.</li> <li>▪ Not all of our partners abroad have this kind of drive to sell because they have tuition fees. They don't need to increase sales like we do because of the new financial model from the government in Finland and budget cuts.</li> <li>▪ Since 2012, we are members of EU Chamber of Commerce in country X. They arranged 20 visits to universities. I stayed two weeks and visited these universities. They opened doors. We paid an annual fee about 500 Euros and they phoned these 20+ universities and arranged meetings. I had one local person with me in all visits.</li> </ul>
<p><b>A Local Partner</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A local partner ... can be 1) a university, 2) an institute or school or 3) a commercial partner ... all of them are required to do marketing and sales ... some of them provide facilities, classrooms, faculty or content but they all operate under our brand.</li> <li>▪ We have contracts with foreign companies that are strong in certain areas ... in the consultancy business; it is a reasonable strategy to have different types of networks and partnerships.</li> <li>▪ We need partnerships with local companies that market our services and keep relationships with clients ... in most countries where we operate there is a need to have a local presence.</li> <li>▪ We have to find the right partner who understands the market really well and also understands what we can and what we cannot do.</li> <li>▪ One way to do it is to find such partners that have their own companies there; we arrange to pay them fees if they find a contract for us. The second option is to have a person employed by us. The third option is to have as partners a group of Finish Education Exporters who are regular visitors in target countries; we will have an office/address; 150 days in a year we will have somebody there.</li> <li>▪ The local partner is very important to get the localisation right.</li> <li>▪ You have to have such partners that are interested in buying something to begin with ... and they are not always universities. Often they are private companies or organisations who believe they can bring a bit of added value for themselves – usually money.</li> <li>▪ International partners have different roles than the customer but sometimes they are mixed. For example, in China the only customer is also our partner ... we don't want to get involved directly at this point with the final clients because that will include so much administration work and difficulties in collecting money.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Development Banks and United Nations.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All these regions (Africa, Asia, Latin American) have development banks with lists of projects. They send emails about big governmental projects with big funding. In all these projects, there is a capacity building element: building a school, waste management plan and consultancy.</li> <li>▪ There are a couple of consultancy companies abroad that are participating in big biddings in millions of Euros for projects with the World Bank. We should sell ourselves to these consultants and be their sub-contractors. It is easier to go somewhere with someone than alone.</li> <li>▪ They (UN) are buying services for USD 60-70 Billion on a yearly basis; part of that is for educational services. It is a huge market; I have registered us there. This is quite new to us; this information is only two months old. That is something that Finnish schools are not doing ... at least not yet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Governments and ministries</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are partnering with local governments.</li> <li>▪ Governments, ministries (... and also regional development companies) are the most important partners in global education business.</li> <li>▪ In all the countries where we are, they are the direct target group because they can affect right away. In Arabic countries, they are the one that let you in or out. You can do little things with private universities, but if you want to open big doors, if you want to get in big, that's what you do.</li> <li>▪ Having a good relationship with the government and ministries and having their support is very crucial. All in all, having good partnerships with different types of organisations and cross various sectors is the only sustainable way forward</li> </ul>

*A Local Partner* can be a university, an institute, a school, or a commercial partner. It can also be a company that is strong in a certain field of expertise, for example technology, marketing or sales. Having the right partners is crucial in order to get the localisation right, to promote Finnish educational services abroad and to keep relationships with international clients. The role of international partners differs from the role of the customer, except in rare situations when the partner is as well a customer. The local partners need to have their own company. They should also know the market and understand the needs of Finnish exporters. The alternative to having a foreign partner is to recruit employees from Finland who will travel and do business abroad. Establish an office and engaging in networking activities in the foreign country is the third option.

*The Development Banks and United Nations* are the game-changers in the education export business for Finland, as they normally involve projects worth millions of Euros. Only one participant mentioned that they are pursuing projects offered by the Development Banks or United Nations, and other Finnish exporters should follow. The Development Banks examples are: The World Bank, African/Asian and Latina American Development Banks.

*Governments and ministries* are the most important partners in global education business. They are the door openers for large projects. Therefore, it is crucial to build strong and lasting relationships with foreign governments and ministries. For example in Arabic countries, they are the ones that let you in or out of a deal.

**Personal Contacts** are the heart and soul of doing education export business. Having individual and business networks, contacts and connections makes it extremely convenient to find leads and close deals. With proper references or recommendations, Finnish exporters may acquire immediate trust and credibility during discussions and negotiations (Table 25).

**Table 25: Quotes about Personal Contacts**

<b>Personal Contacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In this kind of business, it is very important to have individual contacts and connections ... because you already have the trust there ... and we know the person and the culture.</li> <li>▪ Reputation and networks are very important ... the networks are huge ... that is the key in this business i.e. your networks and partnerships. Basically, in most of those networks, we are there and always try to make enough noise to make sure people don't forget us.</li> </ul>
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### 4.1.7 The Market's Perspective

The Finnish education is in demand worldwide, yet finding and approaching the right markets have been the most prominent challenges for internationalisation.

**Demand.** Appendix 4 shows a list of projects and references of Finnish educational products and services sold around the world, demonstrating that education from Finland is, indeed, in demand. In particular, the demand for VET and AMK systems are growing as they both produce a practical workforce.

**Table 26: Quotes about the Demand**

<b>Demand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ There is a demand for Finnish education</li><li>▪ The demand is for primary education and vocational education and training globally</li><li>▪ The challenges of VET are really global. When we look at VET currently, most countries are working on their VET systems and trying to make them better.</li><li>▪ China is now investing heavily in VET; their problem is that the student's who are graduating from vocational schools their skills and competences do not match the needs of the companies.</li><li>▪ The world is lacking practical higher education and now they've found out that the AMK system is very unique and it is producing students who are practical. Companies can use them better than students who are graduating from scientific universities.</li><li>▪ Everyone in the world is switching towards 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.</li><li>▪ In Asia, they want to have a European degree.</li><li>▪ The developing countries are investing more and more into education because they see it as the solution to get out of poverty.</li><li>▪ It is an enabling factor to realise how huge the demand and global potential is out there and what an awesome system we have here in Finland that we can turn anywhere</li></ul>
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It appears that countries such as China and Brazil, are investing heavily into education since their graduates are lacking the necessary skills and competences that industries need (Table 26). In addition, some developing countries see education as a solution to get out of poverty. For them, the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning seems to be a good investment in the future for the development of their economy and society as a whole. For example, China is investing in its education reform and renewing their educational systems. They are contemplating the way Finland created its curriculums and educational systems. Also, Chinese students seek European degrees more than before.

**Finding Markets** is not difficult since the whole world, excluding Europe, can be considered as a market for exporting Finnish education. Yet, Finland cannot target every market in the world since selling is a complex and expensive process, particularly when resources are scarce. Thus, the hardest decision for exporters is to find those niche markets

that are accessible, available and profitable. The emerging markets, the developing countries or the markets where Finnish education does not disrupt the local education seem to be the best fit for exporting Finnish education. In order to be successful in those markets, interviewees recommend that managers must do their homework before internationalising, employ the right people from Finland or abroad, investigate the real potential of the targeted markets, and find local partners who know the local markets (Table 27).

**Table 27: Quotes about Finding Markets**

<b>Finding Markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finding the markets is not so difficult because all the world is our market except the EU</li> <li>▪ You cannot do education export in all markets and we need to understand that as well. If after six months in a market we don't get anything meaningful even though from outside the market it looks promising ... if it doesn't happen, there might be a message in that ... this is not a good market ... get out of it ... or do something else.</li> <li>▪ To be honest, finding customers is not an issue. I am not saying it is easy but you go talk to people or you appoint someone to help you, a consultant or someone who knows the market. You can always do your own desk study. You go there ... you start meeting people ... it may take one week, one month or one year to get your first meaningful contact.</li> <li>▪ At the moment, the hardest decision is where to go because the world is so full of needs and you can't go everywhere. This is one of the issues we are discussing everyday: should we go to this market? Should we go to that market? Where to put our limited resources?</li> <li>▪ It is been a learning curve figuring out what the markets are and how different markets function. We have been testing few things out, learning from different challenges and it is still on going.</li> <li>▪ We have been really good at entering emerging markets because rationally speaking we wouldn't have a chance if we go to the United States. They have Harvard and Stanford.</li> <li>▪ The best market is where it does not disrupt local education; for example if they don't have enough nurses or teachers or if they don't have the systems to produce a world-class education.</li> </ul>
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**Approaching a market** can be problematic due to a number of barriers to internationalisation such as competition, the complex selling process, the psychic distance, language issues, and expenses (e.g. labour, travel and admin). A proper market analysis is needed in order to investigate the feasibility of the products in the selected markets. The important matters to cover in the analysis are the size and potential of the market, the identity of the buyer (governments, businesses, municipalities or consumers), the structure of the education system in the country, the languages used in education, the local culture and religion and the stakeholders involved in education. Managers need to make a calculated decision whether to enter those particular markets or to look for alternatives, and then approach markets from many different channels, for example official visits, sales personnel, previous references and contacts, conferences and guest lectures. It is about being consistent and persistent in finding the right contacts and engaging in export activities. It can be assumed that approaching new markets successfully is due to a

combination of factors: focus, strategy, consistency and luck, i.e. being in the right place at the right time (Table 28).

**Table 28: Quotes about Approaching Markets**

<b>Approaching Markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All the markets are difficult because the main education markets are highly competitive.</li> <li>▪ Even in Finland, selling is always difficult; there is no easy money. And if you go abroad, it is double or triple times difficult because you have the distance, the language issues and travel expenses.</li> <li>▪ We (Tekes) are expecting that they (institutions) understand the local markets and make clear choices about what to focus on.</li> <li>▪ We didn't get any money from the government ... we just went there ... did our homework ... found the right partners ... did the agreements ... and sold our services</li> <li>▪ What we do when we study a market is ask ourselves: Is there a possibility to apply our sources of competitive edge in this market? So, if there is a clear stop that we cannot go there ... then we don't go. As long as there is a possibility for commercial activities to operate in an open and transparent way ... then we go for it ... if not, we don't.</li> <li>▪ We need to do our homework starting by analysing the market: 1) how many people are there, 2) what are the demographics, 3) what is the spending on education, 4) who pays: is it parents? Governments? Businesses? Municipalities? 5) What is the structure of the schooling system, 6) how many languages? 7) How many religions? 8) What are the key players? We make the initial choice if it is promising, then we go there and start digging.</li> <li>▪ In some markets, they are interested in health and wellbeing and others are interested in engineering. It depends on the contacts and the connections that we have abroad. Of course, we start with products that the customers are interested in.</li> <li>▪ You have to approach the markets from many lines: 1) official visits, 2) sales personnel, 3) references, 4) conferences and 5) guest lecturing. For the educational sector, this is very important</li> <li>▪ The UNESCO Mobile Learning week, it is important to go there, it is important to have a presentation there, and at the same time it is a golden opportunity to go and network with the people who work in different countries trying to solve the issues. So when we present, we present solutions and when we network we meet the people and start discussing. I think that's our golden angle being in the right place, with the right people, talking their language and solving their problems.</li> <li>▪ Doing the education export is a combination of focus and strategy, luck and coincidence and contacts. Maybe someone meets someone in a seminar, they keep in touch and then they get a request from them. In Iran for example, they knew us from one professor ... and they approached us. So, sometimes we approach a market, sometimes someone approaches us and sometimes someone recommends us. At times, we also get requests from particular markets where we are not interested because of our strategy and focus. So we decline their offer.</li> </ul>
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#### 4.1.8 Attitudes towards Education Export: Positive and Negative

The topic of education export in Finland embodies both negative and positive attitudes. The most interesting and unexpected positive attitudes are the notions of passion, seriousness, and humbleness (Table 29).



**Table 29: Quotes about Positive Attitudes**

<p><b>Passion, seriousness and humbleness attitudes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We can't do this work unless we are passionate and we want to change the world with education.</li> <li>▪ If someone is passionate about something, she will have the knowledge, she will find the networks and she will do everything to finalise this project.</li> <li>▪ Passionate teachers don't count the hours; they want to do it because it is interesting and fun.</li> <li>▪ Finns don't joke with education ... we are very serious with the educational issues.</li> <li>▪ Brazilian professors came here and after one or two weeks one doctor, a very intelligent person, came to me and said: "I have realised that you are serious, you really want to change our attitude, you really want to do this, you want to teach us, you are not joking and you are not just taking our money. He added: Your product is actually the "seriousness". We thought we are coming to Finland to party. You are keeping us here full days every week and you are asking us to do homework.</li> <li>▪ In the beginning, there was this illusion that when we open our markets, there will be queues and long lines of customers because we are so wanted. Once again, we have to go back to being this humble nation that understands that if you want to make money, you have to work hard.</li> <li>▪ We have to be humble.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Motivation, hard work, innovativeness, flexibility and just-do-it attitudes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We made a clear decision on the strategic level whether we want to be involved in education export or not. The statement was clear that we would be involved. That means we are motivated and committed from the top management level.</li> <li>▪ It is the innovative attitude that we could bring to develop modern and sophisticated methods of learning.</li> <li>▪ Are we really taking this (EE) seriously? 2) Is it a long-term thing? 3) Are we willing to take some risk? 4) And also resource it properly so we can have the big money at some point of time. It is very important that our top management is involved in building the connections and trust. It is important to think about how to involve the embassies, authorities and ministries. So, there need to be some work on many different levels.</li> <li>▪ If we accept to work with a client, we need to be flexible</li> <li>▪ In Finland, the discussion is that if only someone showed us some leads or good contacts ... but if you are really into this ... it is not a hurdle ... you do your homework, you find the right people in Finland and abroad and you do your best.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Willingness to learn, Pro-Cooperation in Finland</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Finland, it is a question of survival in the long run ... we demand new sorts of attitude ... we cannot sell wood products till the end of days or mobile phones ... we cannot sell just products ... we have to sell services also.</li> <li>▪ Nowadays, we understand much better and clearer that we need to make networks and partnerships. Someone will lead, someone will partner and what matters is that we need to have a crystal-clear offering to the customer.</li> <li>▪ My biggest wish is for us to cooperate and specialise in Finland ... like I said the scalability is a problem ... if we have five universities doing the same thing ... we can join forces and do it together.</li> <li>▪ We need one another; we are all too small to tackle the big markets in a serious way.</li> <li>▪ So far, we have been lucky because we have very motivated experts who are willing to work abroad. If we do not have enough experts, we would need to have partners from Finland.</li> <li>▪ We should find the right partner in Finland who has already done education export and collaborate with them.</li> <li>▪ It would be good if there would be big deals and we could do them together because I think everybody is lacking resources and doing the small business alone.</li> <li>▪ If we get more schools in Finland to join projects, that means we will have the capacity to take on larger projects ... we need more experts to join projects in the future and build larger products together.</li> <li>▪ I am really glad to see that in teacher training the universities are finally finding each other because we have realised that none of us could do it alone.</li> </ul>

Finns take education seriously and they do not consider it a joke or an easy way to make money. They care about delivering results, educating people and changing the world. They are also learning to be more humble towards the way they approach the selling process. The other criteria such as motivation, hard work, innovativeness, flexibility and just-do-it attitudes are obviously required for any endeavour, particularly in business. It is a

promising sign that Finns are willing to learn more about education export as a phenomenon in the country and that they are vouching for cooperation, a sense of a community, by building partnerships and consortiums.

On the negative side, it appears that mistrust, jealousy, not-sharing information and competing attitudes are the most hindering factors for education export (Table 30).

**Table 30: Quotes about Negative Attitudes**

<b>Mistrust, jealousy, not-sharing information and competing attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is so much mistrust among Finnish players ...in the past, there has been very small deals ...but someone has taken something like 10000 €, stole a deal, competing over small deals.</li> <li>▪ There are good side and bad sides when it comes to competing against each other but we all have specialties that the others do not.</li> <li>▪ It is an obstacle that organisations don't want to share information or leads with the network ... and sometimes the ball is too big for them to grab</li> </ul>
<b>Fear of change, risk-avoiding, self-confidence issues and do-it-alone attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The main barrier for Finland is that we are looking too much on the barriers.</li> <li>▪ I think we are looking too much on the challenges and barriers instead of seeing the opportunities.</li> <li>▪ Quoting Marco Steinberg in a session in Sitra: "You know guys, all the other countries see the possibilities that they have. Finland and Finnish people see only the obstacles and the risks"</li> <li>▪ In the education business, we (Finns) think about risks. Instead, we should have the vision and what we actually can do. Let's all of us get together. Let's be happy and get all the businesses from the world. When we start with the risks, we cannot see the big picture ... this is challenge number one.</li> <li>▪ The barriers are the attitude of some experts, the certain amount of fear and that Finns are not so proud of their knowledge. We need to somehow help them to understand that we are good at what we are doing and this is worth selling outside.</li> <li>▪ You have to believe in yourself, you have to believe that you are good in something and whatever it is you have to believe that you are the best.</li> </ul>
<b>Teachers don't sell, education export is not-a-business/not-a-priority attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There was some resistance among the teachers</li> <li>▪ People still cannot tolerate education export as a business ... they come from different backgrounds.</li> <li>▪ Some of the professors and deans have very strict arguments against doing education export because it is not the core of their business ... they need to decide on what is the education part and what is the business part.</li> <li>▪ Our experts are quite often thinking their role is to lecture our students and not selling consultancy for money. Consultancy is not in their contract.</li> <li>▪ The capacity of our teachers is 100%. So whenever something extra pops up, nobody is really keen to accept it automatically: first you have to sell it to the client and then you need to sell it within your organisation also.</li> <li>▪ A big challenge is that many people at our universities would like to continue working as it has always been done ... it is largely attitude, among other reasons. It is life at universities and educational institutions; it has been good and easy for a long time because the government gave us money.</li> <li>▪ It is hard to explain sometimes that the education around the world is not free and that we would be able to get some money out of it. It will be beneficial for us now and for the future. So we need to start doing education export in order to have some money that we could use to improve our organisation because in the future there might be so that our government will not be giving us so much money.</li> </ul>

Coupled with fear of change, risk-avoidance, self-confidence issues and do-it-alone attitudes makes up a recipe for failure, particularly since education export is still not considered a "business" nor a priority in most educational institutes in Finland. Teachers still lack the attitude – and perhaps the skills and competences – towards selling. Managers, on the other hand, seem to struggle in finding resource for the productisation

and internationalisation activities. Hence, the main barrier for exporting Finnish education seems to be the fact that Finnish stakeholders are thinking too much about the barriers of internationalisation. Managers have just begun taking more risks, understanding the global potential and considering the opportunities worldwide. According to several interviewees, the process of selling education abroad should start, firstly, by believing in the Finnish product and the Finnish skills, and secondly, by being open-minded to the whole concept of internationalisation of Finnish education.

#### 4.1.9 The Customer's Perspective

Considering the customers' perspective in education export is as important as productising, marketing and selling. Customers present six major challenges to selling Finnish education abroad (Figure 16). The first step is to build trust, which takes time. Secondly, getting paid for the educational services can be problematic when customers do not pay on time. Thirdly, cultural differences and languages are needed when localising, customising or adapting Finnish products to foreign markets. For that, Finnish educational exporters are expected to respect these cultural differences, listen to customers' needs and engage in open discussions about the products and services with the clients and partners.

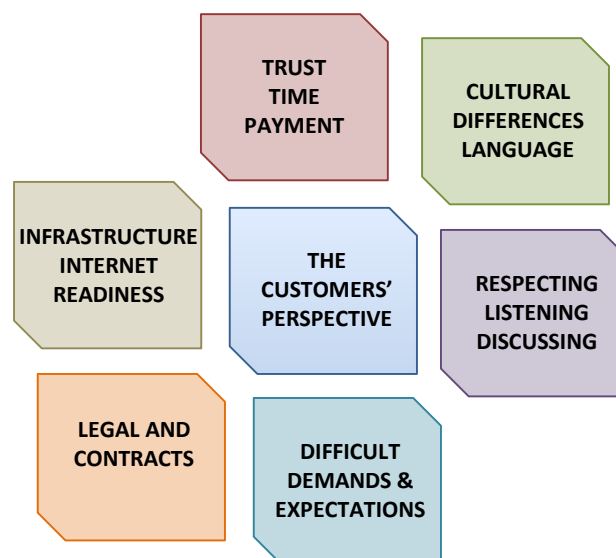


Figure 16: Customers' Perspective in Finnish Education Export

In a way, Finns must anticipate customers' needs before meeting them in order to avoid misunderstandings. Fourthly, customers from different backgrounds and cultures can ask difficult questions or place demands they expect to be satisfied in unusual circumstances, and Finnish exporters must adapt to these particular circumstances by delivering a comprehensive service customers expect. The fifth element in the customer dimension is the legal aspect (e.g. contracts and agreements). For example, doing business in the Arab world might require the knowledge of Islamic laws. The sixth challenge reviews the readiness of the infrastructure (e.g. Internet, facilities and equipment), which may decide whether Finnish education can be sold in a country or not.

Finnish exporters still struggle to develop relationships with international customers, as Finland is still unknown in the education market. The process of gaining trust is extremely slow, lasting months or years to materialise (Table 31).

**Table 31: Quotes about Trust, Time and Payment – The Customer's Perspective**

<b>Trust, time, payment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It took us four years to have products that the customers want and to get into the situation where they trust us.</li> <li>▪ ... to develop the relations to such a state that we can start talking about business.</li> <li>▪ ... because we are still unknown in the market.</li> <li>▪ In some parts of the world, the process of gaining the trust is very slow. So, we have been relying on our old networks and connections, which is a good thing.</li> <li>▪ When we try to find new customers, it takes time.</li> <li>▪ ... they want to understand what we can offer and they cannot believe that we can actually make the national reform.</li> <li>▪ ... in one case I had to travel eight times ... small companies cannot afford this.</li> <li>▪ We have to make sure we get the money and in the past we have had bad experiences. In the past, we have had some difficulties and we didn't take the money upfront. In some markets, they have different perceptions of deadlines and time. It is about the different cultural meaning of time.</li> <li>▪ One group have already gone home when the money came in (too late).</li> </ul>
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In one example, the interviewee had to travel eight times to the destination before closing one deal. Customers want to understand the Finnish offering and believe that Finnish education can deliver the results they seek. Previously, some foreign buyers have had bad experiences with exporters, which is still affecting the way they perceive educational services from abroad. Finally, cultural differences have caused several challenges when doing business abroad, for example receiving payments. Finnish exporters have learned to make strict agreement to receive payments on time.

Finnish exporters recognise the need to study foreign cultures when doing international business. To them, understanding cultural differences might help in building better

products and services for the clients. Finns also believe that different markets require different approaches. Thus, flexibility is essential for selling Finnish educational services, in particular the language aspect. For example, in China people mostly speak Chinese, thus services must be translated or adapted to meet the local requirements. Over the past five years, Finns have learned to listen carefully and discuss openly with clients in order to understand their needs and desires and convey trustworthiness and credibility (Table 32).

**Table 32: Quotes about Cultural Differences – The Customer’s Perspective**

<p><b>Cultural differences, language</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If we are selling education services to other cultures, we need to educate ourselves internally about those other cultures.</li> <li>▪ When you are building something, language and cultural awareness are very important</li> <li>▪ If we have twenty nurses coming to Finland for two weeks, we have to think about the cultural context ... we have to jump into our customer’s shoes and think like they do and provide the best possible learning environment to support their learning ... and the best experience in order for them to come back again</li> <li>▪ What works in Finland doesn’t necessarily work in China, Qatar or Brazil. We need to be very careful in choosing what is our source of competitive edge and make it flexible enough so it would work in other countries. We always try to make it useful and meaningful for the client.</li> <li>▪ In China, one definite obstacle is the “language”. The Chinese mostly speak their own language, their English skills are very poor and we don’t speak much Chinese either. It is a big barrier and we could get more if we could speak Chinese.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Respecting, listening, discussing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are developing our offering all the time based on the discussion we have with customers.</li> <li>▪ We are constantly listening to the market needs.</li> <li>▪ You can’t finalise the productisation in Finland before you have been talking to them (clients), understand their challenges and understand their context.</li> <li>▪ We have to really listen to what our customers are saying. It is not explicit most of the times, but implicit. We need to read between the lines, consider every situation and discover what they are lacking. Sometimes, customers don’t know what they want.</li> <li>▪ We talk a lot about the Finnish system, the education, the industries, sometimes even about music and everything. We show them examples, talk about teacher education and tell about vocational qualification that our teachers have. We explain the comparisons between their systems and ours</li> </ul>

Customers define what they want in the education business. In some particular situations, they might demand quicker reactions, ask difficult questions and require excessive attention, presenting many challenges for Finnish educational providers. For example, the Omani group that came to Finland during Ramadan were expecting to have meals at 01:00 am. They were also asking about the whereabouts of Halal shops in the middle of Finland and enquired about several different issues related to their stay. Being a newcomer in a destination, it is normal to seek guidance from travel guides or tourist information points. However, HEIs and VETs do not yet have the resources to provide touristic services, and they seem to be stretched every time they sell a study visit for students from abroad. One interviewee mentioned that she has not had a summer holiday in two years, which shows an astonishing level of dedication to succeed in exporting education (Table 33).

**Table 33: Quotes about Difficult Demands – The Customer’s Perspective**

<b>Difficult demands &amp; Expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The customers define what they want</li> <li>▪ We have stretched ourselves to our limits when it was a Ramadan for the students; they didn’t eat or drink for many weeks. We had to organise with the hotel lunches, dinners, breakfasts even at 1:00 am. They wanted to have their meals at that time.</li> <li>▪ I didn’t have summer holidays for two years now because the students were here ... They called every single day ... it was very difficult but it also means I am passionate about this and I want this to work. It is a huge sacrifice and it is normal ... either we work together or we don’t work together. And if we want this cases from abroad closed, we have to sacrifice things.</li> <li>▪ Sometimes the customers demand quicker reactions and we cannot start in the middle of June for example and they cannot wait until September before something happens.</li> <li>▪ If we bring people for the summer school ... it would be wise to offer them a holistic programme having entertainment, presenting Finnish culture, nature, berries, food, music ... within those summer weeks we could sell them the whole Finland.</li> </ul>
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Before closing a deal abroad, Finnish exporters have to fill paperwork and sign contracts. They are required to know about different legal systems (e.g. Islamic Law), which make it difficult to price educational services. Moreover, Finnish exporters find themselves unable to sell educational products due to infrastructure or technological unavailability (Table 34).

**Table 34: Quotes about Difficult Administrative Processes – The Customer’s Perspective**

<b>Legal &amp; contracts.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is so challenging to write contracts, offer contracts, wait for payment ... each one is a different process, a hard process.</li> <li>▪ You never know what kind of expertise you need, what type of paperwork to fill, how much lawyer help you need etc.</li> <li>▪ We don’t have a lawyer who deals with contracts.</li> <li>▪ We are dealing with Arabic countries: Islamic Laws. This is certainly something I am not familiar with and I have been involved in this for two years and doing contracts with them is very challenging.</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure, Internet, readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are two things that slow us down abroad: 1) it has to do with technological infrastructure, you need to have a certain amount of schools equipped and connected and that is a big issue ... and 2) the level of teachers’ skills, if they don’t have the skills to use our solutions, the governments will buy our products but they wont be able to apply them.</li> <li>▪ Open Online courses don’t work in Country X; they do not have the infrastructure or the capabilities to participate in online courses. Same thing in Country Y, people don’t consider online courses as education. It is totally different to go to these countries</li> <li>▪ Governments change after election, when they change everything else changes, civil servants change, ministers change and we need to start again from the beginning</li> <li>▪ I waited two months for a visa to Saudi Arabia</li> </ul>

The readiness to install and adopt the “Finnish Way of Learning” may require a good Internet connection, well-equipped classrooms and specialised facilities. In some cases, the level of teachers’ skills in the foreign countries does not allow them to fully utilise the material from the Finnish educational system. Teachers in the host country may require additional training to utilise the Finnish methods. The final challenge to mention is the political aspect, for example acquiring a visa to visit a particular country and/or governmental amendments that affect agreements signed previously with Finnish exporters.

Finnish HEIs and VETs must understand and overcome the challenges presented by the international customers, in order to successfully export education.

## 4.2 Conclusions from Findings

In this section, the author presents the conclusions from findings, which include the notion of know-how on a national and individual levels and the list of barriers and enablers of Finnish education.

### 4.2.1 The Education Export Know-How in Finland

Every participant mentioned that Finnish education is excellent, while also agreeing that it will not sell itself. There is a great amount of work to be done on the organisational, regional, national and international level. One essential observation was that interviewees had different sets of skills and know-how regarding education export. This clearly shows that on a national level, there are know-how strengths and weaknesses, however, on an individual level the skills and capabilities to productise and/or internationalise are scattered around different organisations. This means that Finland as a whole has the potential to perform education export activities but each organisation alone will struggle, if not fail, to successfully sell its services abroad.

**Table 35: KNOW-HOW on National and Individual/Organisational Levels**

<b>Strengths</b> <small>Present on national level in-house or outsourcing possibilities.</small>	<b>Strengths or Weaknesses</b> <small>Present in one or more organisations but not in all i.e. when lacking it is considered a weakness</small>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <small>Present on national level i.e. it is a common weakness for all organisations</small>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experience in Teaching</li> <li>▪ Experience in International Environment</li> <li>▪ Finding the core products</li> <li>▪ Productising, packaging, customisation</li> <li>▪ Doing Business on different levels: (B2C), B2B &amp; B2G</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business Know-how/ Selling</li> <li>▪ Internationalisation</li> <li>▪ Finding the right markets</li> <li>▪ Finding the right partners</li> <li>▪ Seeing the potential/big picture</li> <li>▪ Contracts, agreement &amp; payment</li> <li>▪ Understanding customers, needs &amp; cultural differences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education is a complex product / service</li> <li>▪ Lack of one national mission/vision/story</li> <li>▪ Lack of understanding of how to form consortiums and working together</li> </ul>

Table 35 shows that on the national level strengths are either acquired within the organisation (in-house) or outsourced, and weaknesses are common for all organisations. Finally, on the individual level, each organisation has its own weaknesses and/or strengths.

Finland has a long list of strengths and weaknesses when it comes to education export know-how. The main observation is that the country, as a whole, has certain strengths to embrace and weaknesses to overcome. At the same time, the stakeholders have their own internal strengths and weaknesses on the individual and organisational level. This means that some institutions may have the know-how about a particular skill, competence or knowledge while falling behind in doing something else. For example, one organisation is good at selling but lacks the business model or internationalisation know-how. Another institute excels when productising but falls behind in marketing, and so on. Most importantly, these skills, competences and knowledge can be harnessed on the regional, national and international levels by creating educational clusters or meaningful consortiums, i.e. by working together.

**Know-how strengths on national level.** Finnish educational institutes have a long experience in teaching as there are many Bachelor and Master's degree programmes taught in English (Appendix 8). In addition to their international R&D projects and knowledge exchange programmes, they have a wide range of references abroad (Appendix 4). Hence, Finns have an extensive international experience in education. Coupled with the product excellence, it appears that Finnish exporters do not lack the knowledge to find the core products, competitive edge or expertise when productising educational services and creating offerings to clients. The process of productisation consumes lots of resources and requires tons of commitment. Thus, Finnish exporters need to identify these different skills and competences on a collective level (i.e. on national level), in order to work together. They need to take advantage of the positive attitude in Finland, the market potential and the opportunities from the existing networks. It is not enough to know how to productise, package, customise and localise products for export. So far, Finns have proved that they can produce educational services that can be sold to businesses, governments or consumers in foreign countries. This was mainly achieved due to the availability of the raw resources (or material) from the world-class research in universities, the multi-field organisations in polytechnics and vocational schools. The last missing piece of the puzzle is to create meaningful consortiums or clusters (Table 36).



**Table 36: Know-How Strengths on National Level**

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<p><b>Know-how Strengths in Finland</b></p> <p>(National Level)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Our team is very international.</li><li>▪ We have a group of experts who have been teaching students in English in an international environment and culture.</li><li>▪ The resources are available; there are universities doing a world-class research, which produce the capacity and capability to productise its knowledge and know-how.</li><li>▪ ... We have so called raw material for the productisation process in a sense that there is endless years of experience within the universities.</li><li>▪ We have the knowledge and expertise but it needs to go through a pipeline production.</li><li>▪ We need to be aware of our key competences ... where we have a world-class know-how.</li><li>▪ Our competitive edge is that we understand the market, we customise and we do a complex service to enhance the learning outcomes.</li><li>▪ We need to understand what we are selling i.e. the components of the solution and after that we really need to find the right partners in Finland and abroad.</li><li>▪ The customers define what they want ... we have the products, we have the knowledge and if we don't have the knowledge we can buy it out.</li><li>▪ We know our strengths and what we can do but then we always plan based on clients' needs.</li></ul>
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**Know-how weaknesses on national level.** Selling educational products abroad is a complex game. It is extremely difficult to achieve the necessary scalability and profitability from a small country such as Finland. There seems to be a genuine lack of understanding towards forming meaningful and efficient consortiums and to working together in one cluster. On a national level, there should be a unified mission, vision and story engaging all the stakeholders involved in the education export activities in Finland and abroad (See quotes in Table 37).

**Table 37: Know-How Weaknesses on National Level**

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<p><b>Know-how Weaknesses in Finland</b></p> <p>(National Level)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Education is a complex game ... there might be obstacles going to specific markets ...</li><li>▪ In some schools – without mentioning any names – they invest a lot of money to build the education export business and they will spend years trying to make up the losses they've made ... and from our experience, you don't do that ... what we do is stick to our expertise ... we go to expert conferences and seminars, we present the work we do – we have visibility - ... and that raises interest and gives us credibility in the eyes of the international market, which makes the selling easier.</li><li>▪ One of our customers told us that our offer is too expensive and this is because our salaries and standard of living is really high in Finland. It is not enough to productise and sell. It is about how to make profit from selling products because they cost a lot of money to produce, find the right markets, customise the offering and deliver the service.</li><li>▪ We lack this "Big Vision" and how everyone fits in together and we should have one big vision where we all fit in together.</li></ul>
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**Know-how strengths and/or weaknesses on individual/organisational level.** The list of know-how Finnish organisations have regarding education export is long, including 1) business know-how, 2) selling skills, 3) internationalisation, 4) finding the right markets, 5) finding the right partners in Finland and/or abroad, 6) dealing with distance, 7) seeing the potential and the big picture behind education export, 8) dealing with contracts, agreements, paperwork and payments and 9) understanding customer's needs and/or

cultural differences. Some organisations have experts who speak foreign languages such as Chinese, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian or Portuguese. Others have experts with international backgrounds and experiences, by working and living abroad. In addition, the entrepreneurial spirit is a widely noticeable characteristic in the education exporters field. However, it is extremely rare that one person or organisation possesses all of the skills, capabilities or know-how needed to export educational services, explaining the reason that everyone is vouching for partnerships and consortiums in Finland. It would appear that by working together, Finnish exporters could become stronger, smarter and more knowledgeable about selling their educational services abroad (Table 38).

**Table 38: Know-how strengths and weaknesses on individual/organisational level**

<p><b>Strengths or Weaknesses in Finnish HEIs and VETs</b></p> <p>(Individual Level)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the education sector, there is some lack of business know-how.</li> <li>▪ There are people who             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ... don't understand the business behind education export.</li> <li>○ ... whose task is to get new business.</li> <li>○ ... who speak Arabic, Chinese, French, Spanish, Portuguese etc.</li> <li>○ ... who are very good at packaging products.</li> <li>○ ... who take care of finalising proposals with us, making papers, describing our offering, updating information and marketing materials</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ I have been living abroad for seven years in my life.</li> <li>▪ I think entrepreneurial people will want to have education export on their CVs.</li> <li>▪ I need someone who can help me make the products look really good.</li> <li>▪ We read, we meet people, visit embassies and so on. We are always prepared.</li> <li>▪ We are a big organisation and within our organisation we have an international team; education export responsibilities are part of that team. When I need help drafting proposals ... there are certain people that I can turn to who can help me ... producing information for the proposal ... packaging ... or finalising something.</li> <li>▪ We have been able to turn into a good profitable business without spending huge amounts of money ... so it's been sustainable i.e. making profits from the objectives we set.</li> <li>▪ It is very important that we have these business models because I am thinking that many education exporters in Finland don't have a proper business model for education export.</li> <li>▪ We can also recruit experts outside.</li> </ul>
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#### 4.2.2 The Enablers and Barriers of Finnish Education Export

Appendix 2 presents the 215 SWOT elements that constitute the enablers and barriers of exporting Finnish education and Table 39 summarises the most important parts frequently mentioned by the interviewees.

The enabling factors encompass the internal strengths and external opportunities, and the barriers include the internal weaknesses and external threats. Strengths and weaknesses

have notions related to the organisation, attitude and Finland as a country (i.e. strengths and weaknesses on national level). Opportunities and threats have notions related to the market and governmental bodies. The evident Strength that Finland has is in its product, while the opportunity is in its network. The evident threats seem to be on the customer level, and all the weaknesses seem to be on individual and organisational levels. It is fair to assume that organisations could resolve most of their weaknesses, apart from the legislation, by working together in consortiums or a cluster in Finland.

**Table 39: SWOT Elements Summarised**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Education Excellence/PISA (National Level)	Lack of Funding (National Level)
Organisation/Stakeholders (International/National levels)	Legislation / Tuition Fees (National Level)
Productisation & Products (Product Level)	Competition vs. Cooperation (National Level)
Know-How & Knowledge (Organisational / National levels)	Lack of Incentives (National Level)
Leadership / Management (Organisational Level)	Scalability / Profitability (Product Level)
Positive Attitudes (Attitude Level)	Negative Attitudes (Attitude Level)
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Networks & Partners (Network Level)	Client/Host Country Barriers (Customer Level)
Economy / Layoffs / Push (National/Government Levels)	Lack of Support (Government Level)
FinPro / FLF / Team Finland (National/Government Level)	Communication / Systems (Government Level)
Demand (Market Level)	Foreign Competition (Market Level)
References / Projects (Market Level)	Political Issues (Market/Government Level)
Investments in Education (Market Level)	Finding Markets (Market Level)

The organisational strengths include the notions of the Finnish brand in education and as a country, the ranking of Finnish HEIs and VETs, the mission and vision of different stakeholders, the students, the of role education export, funding, know-how, human resources (expert pool), leadership and management. For example, having a clear mission and vision for education export denotes a strong sense of leadership within the organisation. These organisations seem to take internationalisation seriously by properly funding and supporting productisation, marketing, sales and export activities. The strengths related to product, attitude and Finland as a country have been discussed in the previous sections (4.1.5, 4.16 and 4.1.8).

The organisational weaknesses include lack of particular human resources (experts, motivation, dedication, know-how) and lack of funding and know-how (e.g. lack of business know-how, business models, internationalisation). Weaknesses on a national level include the notions related to the high cost of life in Finland, the legislation, the smallness of Finland, the issues of trust and credibility of Finnish educational services (being new in

the market) and the lack of incentives, a common story and unity among all stakeholders. The weaknesses related to the attitude level have been discussed in the section 4.1.8.

The opportunities from markets include the demand for Finnish education, the references and the ways to approach markets. The opportunities from governmental bodies include the notions of the roles of the ministries, Team Finland, FLF and FinPro in the education export. The network opportunities describe the constituents of “The Education Export Network Matrix”.

The threats related to the international customers include the notions of pricing, contracts, closing deals, trust, expectation, cultural differences, skills and infrastructure issues in foreign countries. The threats related to the governmental bodies include mainly the notions related to the lack of support and funding for the Finnish educational institutions, the lack of experienced employees in foreign embassies who should be promoting and selling Finnish education and the out-dated communication systems. Finally, the role of the government in the education export activities should be clearly defined in Finland as to 1) setup the foundations for education export in Finland, 2) support productisation and internationalisation and 3) build credibility for Finnish exporters abroad.

## **5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This thesis has unravelled the barriers to and enablers for exporting Finnish education by connecting the literature review to the empirical findings. The theoretical part mainly covered the topics of productisation and internationalisation, while findings gathered together the opinions, thoughts and experiences of practitioners in the field of education export. In Finland, productising education has been previously perceived as building and packaging services into products, but in today’s reality it is more about producing what the customer needs, in a way that these products are sellable and, most importantly, profitable.

On a global scale, meeting customers’ expectations has many challenges due to the numerous differences in opinions, definitions, visions and approaches that the Finnish stakeholders have towards education export (Sections 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3). In addition,

there are several other challenges arising from the market and customer's perspectives (Sections 4.1.7 and 4.1.9). When thinking about how to sell Finnish education abroad, the author recommends that managers follow the marketing development phases, from production and product approaches, to marketing, selling and customer oriented approaches. These phases help in 1) organising the processes of building useful products, 2) creating adequate offerings to customers, 3) raising sufficient awareness about Finnish educational services, 4) profiting from an organised selling process, 5) utilising cost-effective marketing campaigns, and, finally 6) building a sustainable export business. Consequently, in order to export Finnish education, managers must concentrate on building systematic and organised processes, focusing on customers' needs. Having an excellent educational product alone is not enough, in fact, according to several interviewees, involving the customer in the process of selling education abroad is the only way forward.

Looking at the development of internationalisation in Finland, the author recommends that Finnish exporters pay attention to the different levels present in the education export business: country, industry and firm levels (Luostarinen, 1994). Thus, managers should see education export as a sequential process, not only as a function of product development, service packaging or marketing and selling. Managers need to develop the education export business as an industry, by looking at the long-term benefits, the same way they developed from manufacturing and construction to selling services (Table 7). On the country level, education business is a born global business i.e. it can be produced and delivered worldwide, but exporters must pay attention to selecting the right markets and customers (Sections 4.1.7 and 4.1.9). On the firm level, Finnish exporters need to consider their strengths and weaknesses and study the most optimal entry mode options presented in the sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4.

In particular, the author recommends finding the balance between the two contradicting approaches to internationalisation: the Stage Model and the Network approaches. The former suggests that firms must internationalise gradually and systematically (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977) while the latter advises companies to enter distant markets right away, to penetrate multiple countries at once and to build joint-ventures without previous experience (Aspelund et al., 2007). In this thesis, educational institutes are not presented with a universal method to choosing the right internationalisation approach, apart from Driscoll's Framework (Figure 6). However, the author suggests four strategies for exporting Finnish

education, which are based on the literature review and empirical findings. The theoretical part helped in explaining and defining the concepts of productisation and internationalisation, and identifying the key dimensions and factors related to the barriers to and enabling factors for exporting Finnish education. The interviewees, who are experts in the field of education export in Finland (Appendix 7), helped to collect the 215 SWOT elements. Eventually, in order to combine the theoretical part to the empirical findings, the author used the TOWS Matrix to create four strategies, from the key SWOT elements (Table 39).

Figure 17 shows these four strategies: 1) Internal EE, 2) One Finland, 3) ASM and 4) EE Boom. In addition, Figure 17 shows the logic behind creating these strategies by combining elements from the SWOT Analysis: Strengths and Opportunities (SO), Strengths and Threats (ST), Weaknesses and Opportunities (WO) and Weaknesses and Threats (WT). Each strategy aims at minimising barriers to (weaknesses or threats) and maximising enablers for (strengths or opportunities) internationalisation of Finnish education. The strategies are grouped on four different levels 1) organisational, 2) national, 3) international and 4) customer focus.

<b>TOWS MATRIX &amp; Four STRATEGIES</b>	<b>STRENGTHS</b> 1. Education Excellence 2. Productisation & Products 3. Know-How & Knowledge 4. Positive Attitude	<b>WEAKNESSES</b> 1. Scalability & Profitability 2. Competition vs. Cooperation 3. Legislation / Tuition Fees 4. Negative Attitude
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> 1. Demand / References 2. Investment in EE 3. Network & Partners 4. FinPro / FLF / TF	SO: Maxi-Maxi Strategy <b>INTERNAL EE</b> Using "Strengths" to maximise "Opportunities" (Organisational Level)	WO: Mini-Maxi Strategy <b>ASM-STRATEGY</b> Min. "Weaknesses" by taking advantage of "Opportunities" (International Level)
<b>THREATS</b> 1. Communication System 2. Finding Markets / Competition 3. Client/Host country Barriers 4. Lack of Support	ST: Maxi-Mini Strategy <b>ONE FINLAND</b> Using "Strengths" to minimise "Threats" (National Level)	WT: Mini-Mini Strategy <b>EE BOOM</b> Minimize "Weaknesses" and avoid "Threats" (Customer Focus)

Figure 17: TOWS Matrix and Four Strategies for Exporting Finnish Education

## 5.1 Strategy: Internal EE

Internal EE (Education Export) strategy considers using the strengths of Finnish education excellence and the productisation know-how to maximise the opportunities of the global demand for Finnish education (Table 40). Internal EE should be implemented on the organisational level, having the following objectives: 1) identifying the key strengths within the organisation and the core products that can be productised and exported, 2) co-creating within the organisation the right strategies and 3) discussing about the responsibilities within the educational institute.

Firstly, the planning starts on the managerial level by deciding whether to be involved in the education export business. Once committed to the cause, the management should provide the necessary resources (human and finances), and set targets and budgets for EE. Secondly, a clear strategic plan should be drafted mentioning the mission, vision, objectives and incentives regarding EE. Thirdly, the author recommends having a dedicated EE team, or an organisation, that has clear roles, tasks and positive attitudes such as motivation, belief, passion and seriousness.

In addition, a ‘Flying Faculty’, a team of experts within the organisation interested in EE activities, is needed to implement and deliver projects acquired on a short notice. The ‘Flying Faculty’ team is a standby group of experts that is always willing to participate in projects, but which is not part of the main EE Team. Managers together with the teams should decide on the products and the pricing policies before engaging in EE activities abroad. HEIs and VETs should know the products’ core strengths and competences, as well as the competitive advantages of their offerings.

Moreover, organisations must decide on what needs to be customised, modified and localised within the product features to fit in the international markets. When deciding on pricing policies, exporters must consider the complex EE selling process (point 4.1.4), productise in a way that there are fixed and customisable elements within the products and aim at making profits. At this stage of planning, the Transaction Cost Analysis and the Eclectic Model (OLI) are good examples to reflect upon when deciding on the entry modes i.e. to internalise or externalise. Fourthly, the author recommends that managers start the

consortium planning in the earliest stages of productisation, making it part of the process of defining products (Harkonen et al. 2015). Selecting the right partners from Finland will determine the successfulness of the export business, as partners could become strategic allies having similar objectives. They might also bring with them additional skills and/or know-how, expand the product range and/or develop the capacity for delivering education export services. Finally, the author recommends involving students in Internal EE processes and discussions. For example, manager could assign to students particular projects, thesis work and workshops related to education export activities. In addition, students may produce research and development reports regarding markets, customers and cross-cultural planning or create EE Clubs, in which they discuss among themselves and with the EE managers about the current trends in global education.

**Table 40: Internal EE Strategy**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
Identifying key strengths and core products, co-creating within the organisation the right strategies and discussing about the responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Management</b> should decide whether to be involved in EE or not, commit with human and financial resources and set the budgets and targets.</li> <li>▪ <b>Strategic Plan</b> should be drafted including clear mission, vision, objectives and incentives for EE.</li> <li>▪ <b>EE Team</b> should be assigned with a clear organisation, roles, tasks and positive attitude (motivation, belief, passion, seriousness, etc.).</li> <li>▪ <b>Flying Faculty 1.0:</b> check who else is interested within the organisation to do education export activities. This group is not part of EE Team, but on standby.</li> <li>▪ <b>Product:</b> decide on the core strengths and competences (competitive advantages) and check what needs to be customised, modified etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Pricing:</b> productise in a way that there are fixed and customisable elements within the product and bear in mind profitability when pricing</li> <li>▪ <b>Consortiums:</b> decide on whom to work with based on the strategic plan (objectives), EE Team (know-how), Faculty (capacity) and/or product.</li> <li>▪ <b>Students 1.0:</b> consider involving students in EE e.g. via EE Clubs, thesis, projects, discussions, workshops, student union activities etc.</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Strategy: One Finland

One Finland strategy considers using all the strengths of Finnish Education to minimise the threats of global competition, the barriers of internationalisation and the challenges set by customers (Table 41). One Finland should be implemented on a national level, as a cluster or in consortiums. Firstly, all stakeholders must vouch for having a common vision, exchanging know-how and networks and working together to acquire customers.

From the empirical findings and theories (e.g. Gulati, 1995; Mattsson & Johanson, 2006; Aspelund et al., 2007; Sahay, 2003), it is clear that networks create competitive advantages



over competitors, help in gaining access to resources and learning new skills, improve strategic positions and increase legitimacy. Secondly, the process of working together must start by assigning roles and responsibilities within the consortium or cluster, i.e. who is leading and who is following. In addition, there should be clear and detailed agreements that include the incentives and the contribution of each member of the consortium. Thirdly, all the members of the consortium/cluster must work on creating a national EE vision, by agreeing on a consistent guideline for exporting Finnish education. Fourthly, the author recommends having a dedicated communication system for everyone to share information, leads, tips, ideas and resources. The system would help everyone if the cost of marketing, sales, travelling, networking and administration were divided. Finally, by working together stronger communities are built for exporting Finnish education. As a community, managers may better explain the benefits of exporting education to all stakeholders, in particular to those who yet fail to see the big picture.

In addition, it would be easier to create funding proposals for the government, produce marketing material and, in general, ask for the right kind of support. By having more members, Finnish exporters can harness greater influence on current legislative matters and lobbyists, for example against budgets cuts and for tuition fees, financial support and establishing campuses abroad. Thus, the main benefits for having a cluster are to acquire complimentary capabilities, expertise, know-how and resources; to showcase the potential of EE in Finland on national and international levels; to build relationships; and to harness greater influence as a community.

**Table 41: One Finland Strategy**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
<p><b>Working together for a common vision, exchanging know-how, networks and leads and creating competitive advantages over competitors (together)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Roles:</b> decide on who leads/follows, responsibilities within the consortiums or agreements, duration of projects and contribution.</li> <li>▪ <b>One Vision/Story:</b> create a national EE Vision on national/consortium level and agree on a consistent message/story to tell everywhere</li> <li>▪ <b>One Channel:</b> create a dedicated communication channel for all stakeholders to share information, leads, tips and ideas</li> <li>▪ <b>Sharing resources:</b> divide costs of marketing, sales, networking, travelling, and administrative costs e.g. lawyers, payments, etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Benefits:</b> explain the benefits behind working together e.g. acquiring complimentary expertise, know-how, resources; showcasing the potential of EE in Finland on national and international levels; easing the work of FLF/Ministry/Team Finland; strengthening the reason behind public support/funding/material for EE; influencing lobbyists with more members, stronger numbers and facts; belonging to a group.</li> </ul>

### 5.3 Strategy: ASM

ASM strategy is a three step incremental process consisting of, firstly, raising awareness, secondly, selling, and, thirdly, marketing (Figure 18). The strategy is inspired by the Stage Model of Internationalisation, in which Finnish exporters gradually increase commitment after learning about markets and taking advantage of their own capabilities.



Figure 18: The Components of ASM Strategy

The ASM strategy considers minimising weaknesses related to scalability, profitability and competition by taking advantage of the opportunities portrayed by Finnish Education (e.g. demand, networks, partners and Finnish governmental bodies: FinPro, FLF and Team Finland). ASM strategy should be implemented on an international level, having three interconnected but diverse roles for penetrating different markets, acquiring customers and expanding the reach of Finnish educational exports. Firstly, the Awareness strategy considers taking advantage of the existing networks and partners and focusing on building trust and credibility in the eyes of the stakeholders. Secondly, the Selling strategy focuses on creating, training and unleashing a dedicated sales force in strategic markets. Finally, the last step emphasises the importance of acquiring new markets and customers via focused and strategic marketing campaigns.

#### 5.3.1 Awareness

To raise awareness of Finnish education abroad, managers have several possibilities (Table 42). Firstly, they could leverage on the existing networks, as every organisation in Finland has hundreds of partnerships, including R&D and academic relationships, business cooperation, and ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ agreements (Appendix 6). Exporters could reach these organisations via emails, newsletters, social media and/or phone, and send them proposals for projects.

The main objective here is to benefit from Finland’s current reputation without major investments. Secondly, managers could develop Alumni networks, nationally and internationally, to communicate with graduates, and perhaps even build stronger relationships with past and current students by offering internship and work opportunities in the education export field. Students could have placements or work positions in strategic locations, and in return write reports about their experiences. Thirdly, Finnish exporters could build trust and credibility by involving new promotional methods such as social media, public relations and blogs. Finland must learn how to use stories as well as figures and facts in their promotional material, i.e. creating meaningful messages to showcase the potential behind Finnish education. Messages should include information related to past and current references and projects and recent success stories from Finland. Fourthly, managers could benefit from organising events and exhibitions involving all stakeholders in the process of raising awareness of exporting Finnish education, particularly events engaging businesses, students and media. Events such as Slush have proven that Finland is an influential stage for entrepreneurship, in particular the start-up scene. Slush developed from a 300-person event to become one of the leading events of its kind in the world, hosting fourteen thousand participants in 2014. Among the guests, there were influential investors, businessmen, governmental bodies, media, and entrepreneurs from over 70 different countries (Slush, 2015). These guests visited Finland to explore the wonders of Finnish entrepreneurial scene, to network and to take advantage of investment opportunities. Initially, it was university students who created the Slush event, thus Finnish exporters could encourage students to create similar happenings under the education export umbrella, for example EE Slush events showcasing Finnish education on the world map.

**Table 42: ASM Strategy - Awareness**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
Utilising existing networks and partners as a 1 <sup>st</sup> step of exporting education and focusing on building trust and credibility in the eyes of the stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Existing networks:</b> leverage on existing relationships, cooperation and partnership. Send emails/newsletters/offers to existing contacts.</li> <li>▪ <b>Trust &amp; Credibility:</b> leverage on Finland’s reputation/image/brand, showcase existing references/clients, have a strong and consistent story</li> <li>▪ <b>Students 2.0:</b> create a national Alumni network to reconnect with students; help in internships/jobs in strategic markets e.g. Embassies</li> <li>▪ <b>Events &amp; Exhibitions in Finland:</b> EE Slush, invite organisation/governments/key players to exclusive visits, organise national fairs</li> <li>▪ <b>Media:</b> engage in PR via website, blogs, social media, and releases to explain the benefits of EE to everyone in Finland and the world</li> <li>▪ <b>Market research:</b> do the homework, study the markets, test which one are potential cheaply and quickly and invest on it properly.</li> </ul>

### 5.3.2 Selling

To sell educational services, managers have several possibilities (Table 43). Firstly, they may approach the markets from many different channels such as the official ministerial delegations, country visits, sales personnel, references, conferences and guest lectures. Secondly, managers could expand the ‘Flying Faculty’ concept by recruiting experts from abroad. For example, Aalto Executive Education has 900 experts, from Finland and abroad, in their pool. Thirdly, managers must focus on creating a sales force dedicated to selling Finnish education. These salesmen must find the right partners abroad; partners that will understand the local markets and customers. Fourthly, Finnish exporters could engage in active networking activities focused on selling, emphasising the importance of meeting key buyers, listening carefully to customers’ needs, discussing about the ways Finland can help these buyers/customers, and showcasing the Finnish Way of Learning. At this stage of the export activities, managers must focus on profitability and scalability by utilising innovative business models and targeting the most suitable clients. One efficient way is to work together with other managers from Finland, to sell each other abroad, to be open-minded and to think about the long-term benefits of working in consortiums or a cluster. Finally, managers must not forget “the Complex Selling Process” (Section 4.1.4) and the “Customer’s Perspectives” (Section 4.1.9) when exporting education.

**Table 43: ASM Strategy - Selling**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
<p>Creating, training and unleashing in the markets a dedicated sales force</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Approaching the Market:</b> approach markets from many lines e.g. official visits, sales personnel, references, conferences, guest lectures etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Flying Faculty 2.0:</b> consider recruiting a network of expert pool not only from Finland but also abroad, and retain them on standby status.</li> <li>▪ <b>Local Presence:</b> find the right partners who will know your organisation and the local markets.</li> <li>▪ <b>Networking 1.0:</b> engage in networking activities while keeping in mind the selling and following strategic plan, mission, vision and objectives.</li> <li>▪ <b>Profitability:</b> focus on making money (not only with pricing) but also via scale and scope e.g. better clients, innovative business models.</li> <li>▪ <b>Scalability:</b> good clients, innovative business models.</li> <li>▪ <b>Cooperation 1.0:</b> sell together / sell each other / be open minded about the long-term benefits of working together.</li> </ul>

### 5.3.3 Marketing

To market Finnish education, managers have several possibilities (Table 44). Firstly, managers could prepare a thorough benchmark analysis to learn from the top exporters in education such as Australia, England, France, Germany and the United States. Secondly, before investing in major marketing campaigns, the author recommends to contact the European Chamber of Commerce, United Nations and Development Banks. These organisations could open doors to finding potential and long-term clients. Thirdly, managers must actively participate in networking events to expand their contacts and connections in the education export field. For example, managers could visit international exhibitions where they might meet potential clients and partners. In addition, leveraging on student and staff mobility could create a strong “Word-of-Mouth” marketing opportunities.

**Table 44: ASM Strategy - Marketing**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
Acquiring new leads via focused and strategic marketing campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Benchmark:</b> study how others (e.g. UK, Australia, USA etc.) are doing EE before planning, investing and executing marketing campaigns.</li> <li>▪ <b>New Channels:</b> try to promote your organisation and Finland via new channels e.g. EU Chamber of Commerce, UN and Development Banks.</li> <li>▪ <b>Networking 2.0:</b> expand networks/contacts/connections, attend international exhibitions, leverage on student/staff mobility.</li> <li>▪ <b>Strategic Campaigns:</b> start with the message, then select market by country/region/continent/area, consider further cooperation (2.0)</li> </ul>

Finally, managers should prepare proper marketing campaigns having strong and consistent messages across all channels and reaching all stakeholders. Categorising and prioritising the most important markets first could help managers to allocate the proper resources, human and finances, for the localisation process (the Market’s Perspective, section 4.1.7).

## 5.4 Strategy: EE BOOM

EE Boom strategy considers minimising the most noticeable weaknesses of exporting Finnish education abroad, such as current legislation, tuition fees, competition and negative attitudes, as well as avoiding internal and external threats. For example, global competition, the barriers to internationalisation and the challenges set by customers are among the external threats, while the lack of resources and support from the government

and the out-dated communication systems are part of the internal threats for exporting Finnish education. EE Boom should be implemented on the customer level. Principally, HEIs and VETs must focus on the customers' needs to achieve scalability and profitability in different markets. The number of students studying abroad (Table 2), the revenues from international students (e.g.\$15.7 billion in Australia in 2014) and the average tuition fees in HEIs (point 1.3.2) indicate that worldwide demand for education export is targeted at the sale of degree programmes. The obvious business model meeting the customers' needs (students) is to offer them degree programmes and receive tuition fees in return. Consequently, Finland needs to adapt its current legislation by allowing HEIs and VETs to collect tuition fees and/or establish offshore campuses. According to several interviewees, the business models behind selling training services and consultancy are not scalable or profitable, as the demand for these types of services is not evident and requires further investigation.

The author recommends to take advantage of the current opportunities and exploit the possibilities of selling Finnish educational services, consultancy and degree programmes simultaneously, as the benefits from selling qualifications can generate considerable revenues. Additional revenues to Finnish educational providers may resolve their economic difficulties and the governmental budget cuts to HEIs and VETs. Secondly, managers need to create solid internationalisation plans, establish centralised services for operations and create dedicated network management systems. This next step in the EE Boom strategy prepares Finnish exporters to penetrate international markets more efficiently and with less cost. Thirdly, the author recommends focusing on the VET and AMK systems as countries such as China, Russia and India are currently investing in practical education. Figure 19 shows the relationship between VET, AMK and UNI. VET graduates can apply to AMKs and receive practical higher education, which is comprised of specialised Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. AMK's Bachelor graduates need to acquire three years work experience before applying for a Master's in AMK, but they can apply to Master's programmes in UNIs straight away. UNI and AMK students can participate in "Life Long Learning" courses offered by VETs.

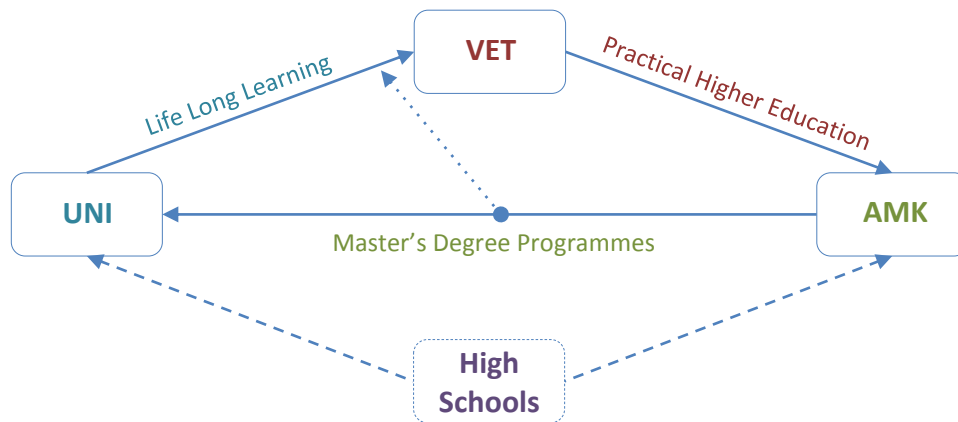


Figure 19: The Relationship between VET, AMK and UNI

The number of students pursuing VET qualifications is increasing around the world, (Australian Government, 2015a), indicating that the future potential of the VET-AMK-UNI system will increase as well. Finnish VETs can become the gate-openers for students from the developing countries to study in Europe by either coming to Finland or completing courses in overseas campuses. Finland must ensure the quality of the education by establishing appropriate accreditations.

**Table 45: EE Boom Strategy**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
<b>Focusing on customers' needs, scalability and profitability in existing and new markets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Customer Needs:</b> qualifications and selling degrees programmes abroad (the need to change the current legislation to charge for tuition fees at least abroad – if not Finland)</li> <li>▪ <b>Expansion:</b> create solid internationalisation strategies, campuses abroad (alone or together with other organisations), centralised systems for admin, legal, payment, communication, booking, CRM, references etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Networking 3.0:</b> create a dedicated network management system</li> <li>▪ <b>VET-AMK-UNI Relationship:</b> VET graduates go to AMK, AMK Bachelors go to do Master's in UNI and UNI/AMK students or Alumni can do Life Long Learning Courses.</li> <li>▪ <b>Finland as a bridge to higher education:</b> offering the opportunity for students from developing countries to study in HEIs in Europe by offering accredited VET qualifications.</li> </ul>

## 6 CONCLUSION

### 6.1 The Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export

The four strategies, Internal EE, One Finland, ASM and EE Boom, constitute the “Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export” (Figure 20). These strategies connect the literature review to the empirical findings, in particular the link between marketing

evolution and productisation characteristics (Figure 3) and the relevance of the internationalisation part (in section 2.2) to the SWOT elements (Appendix 2). Each strategy is assigned to a phase of the marketing evolution. The Internal EE strategy corresponds to the Production Oriented Approach, in which firms concentrate on internal development and productisation. The One Finland strategy corresponds to the Product Oriented Approach, in which Finnish exporters focus on working together, creating competitive advantages over foreign competitors and having quality educational products in the global market. The ASM Strategy corresponds to the Marketing/Selling Oriented Approach, in which firms first raise awareness and then engage in selling and marketing activities. Finally, the EE Boom strategy corresponds to the Customer Oriented Approach, in which firms focus on the customers' needs, particularly the need to establish the VET-AMK-UNI system by selling degree programmes in Finland or by creating offshore campuses.



Figure 20: The Building Blocks of Finnish Education Export

Figure 20 demonstrates that the strategy blocks represent the foundation for exporting Finnish Education. The first steps, Internal EE, One Finland and ASM, are the fundamental steps to accomplish before considering scalability and profitability, i.e. without them the EE Boom strategy may not be efficient or effective. Exporting Finnish education is, indeed, a sequential step-by-step process, in which each individual strategy block can be



used separately for a particular situation of education export. For example, the author recommends Internal EE strategy for organisations beginning the productisation process, One Finland for exporters having completed the internal preparations within their organisations and ready to partner with other firms, and ASM for firms that are expanding. This process of exporting Finnish education includes three major phases that organisations will face: Attitude Phase, Trust Building Phase and Working Together Phase (Figure 21).

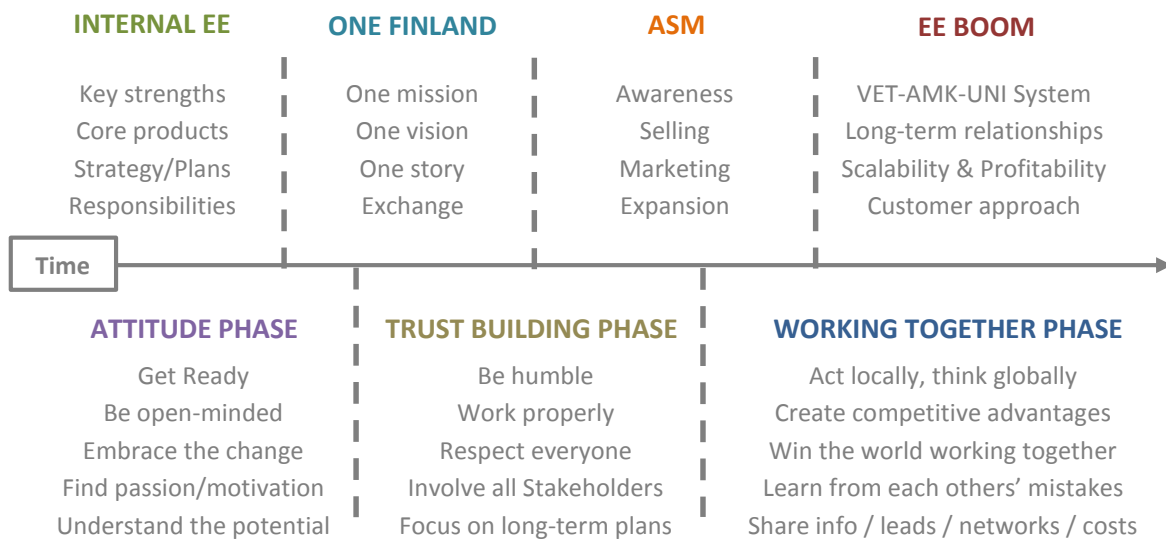


Figure 21: Three Phases – Attitude, Trust Building and Working Together

**The Attitude Phase** occurs during the whole Internal EE block and at the beginning of One Finland strategy. Managers prepare for the changes in the organisational structure and operations, in particular the productisation activities. They need to adopt an open-minded approach to the different new processes and embrace the change regarding the new export operations within the organisation. Finding passionate and motivated people who understand the potential behind engaging in education export activities is the next crucial step in building a successful education export business. The Attitude Phase is probably the most difficult phase for Finnish exporters since it disrupts the usual ways they are used to operate and brings new responsibilities to the organisation. For example, teachers will be required to become salespersons, experts will be required to teach abroad, new positions will be created (e.g. EE managers), organisational charts will be updated to include global education services, and, finally budgets need to be allocated to cover expenses. Realistically speaking, without the successful achievement of this Attitude Phase, organisations will struggle, if not fail, to export education.

**The Trust Building Phase** occurs during the second part of the One Finland strategy and the initial part of the ASM strategy. This phase is important to define the members of the consortium or cluster i.e. where everyone belongs, what each member has to offer and how they can all fit together. Each organisation alone needs to demonstrate commitment and motivation by being humble towards the integration process, respecting everyone's opinions and working properly to export Finnish education. Finland needs to transcend trustworthiness on two dimensions: domestic and foreign. Firstly, managers need to convince all stakeholders in Finland on the benefits of exporting education. They also need to build the infrastructure for a sustainable and long-term education export business to receive the support and funding from public and private sectors. Secondly, Finns have to convince overseas customers to buy the Finnish education, which mostly requires managers to overcome the barriers to exporting education, presented in this thesis. Thus, building trust needs to become a continuous and consistent long-term plan for managers.

**The Working Together Phase** takes place during the second part of the One Finland strategy and during EE Boom strategy, and encompasses several recommendations. Firstly, managers must act locally but think globally, in particular by working together from Finland and having a worldwide education export business. Secondly, managers need to create competitive advantages to overcome internationalisation barriers, mainly from the customer and market perspectives. Finns need to build better products and offer quality services to acquire a strong position in the global education market. Thirdly, managers have to share information regarding customers and networks to reduce the costs of sales and marketing. By working together, managers will benefit on many levels and will also avoid crucial risks. Each organisation in Finland has had its own challenges abroad, and everyone in the cluster will be learning from each other's mistakes and failures. Thus, the potential from exploiting all the benefits and avoiding all the risks from working together seems to bring greater value than working alone. The question that remains in this thesis is

*“How can managers build a strong consortium or cluster to sell Finnish education abroad?”*

The answer rests within the Finnish stakeholders themselves and the steps they will take in the near future regarding education export as an industry on national and international levels.

## 6.2 Limitations and Future Research

The first limitation in this thesis is the English language, which was used during the interviews but is not the native tongue of the interviewer or the interviewees. It presented a challenge for the author when analysing the audio recordings, as well as to the participants when expressing their thoughts and opinions. In addition, one-hour interviews per participant were not enough to cover the enormous topic of education export. According to the Ministry of Education in Finland (2007), global education research is a wide topic and requires a multidisciplinary and future-oriented approach.

As all research, research into global education needs to be a long-term, systematic, varied, interdisciplinary and source-critical endeavour. Thus, this thesis cannot realistically cover the whole subject, solve all the problems and contribute to every situation regarding education export in Finland. The study contemplated the unique approach to exporting education from Finland that is not based on selling degree programmes. Thus, the first major limitation in this thesis is the scarcity of the theoretical background behind the Finnish education export model. In addition, the thesis does not intend to produce a comprehensive and all-inclusive marketing, internationalisation or productisation plans, but to cover the main relevant topics that could answer the research question.

Furthermore, the study will not engage in an in-depth analysis of business models or business networks, even though there would be the need to further explain the topics of cooperation, partnerships, consortiums and alliances. Future research topics could answer to the limitations regarding the theoretical background or future in-depths studies. The exhaustive data that was gathered by the author from the interviews, including the 520 quotes, 215 SWOT elements and other background information, could be used in future thesis topics. The same data applied on different methodologies and strategies can produce further results. For example, using the same SWOT elements but crossing different parts in the TOWS Matrix will formulate different strategies. Future researchers can select topics from the limitation section, the exhaustive data, as well as from the nine key findings and their conclusions. Otherwise, they could select one of the topics that the author recommends in Appendix 11.

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## 8 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Interview Questions

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#### I. BACKGROUND

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##### 1. Interviewee

- 1.1. **Full Name\***:
- 1.2. **Title\***:
- 1.3. **Role\***: describe briefly your role in Education Export (EE) at ORG
- 1.4. **Years of experience\***:
  - 1.4.1. In Education Export in general: (e.g. 1 year, 3.5 years)
  - 1.4.2. Your current position at ORG:

##### 2. Organisation/Institute/Company's Name (ORG)

- 2.1. **Total number of employees\***: How many people are working at ORG?
- 2.2. **Organisational chart\***: Please provide a reference of ORG's chart.
- 2.3. **Number of Students (2014/2015) (#)**
  - 2.3.1. **Finland\***: How many students are from Finland?
  - 2.3.2. **Abroad\***: How many international students are enrolled in ORG?
  - 2.3.3. **Nationalities\***: where are the international students from (top 10 countries)?
- 2.4. **Network**:
  - 2.4.1. **Number of partner universities\***: (please give examples)
  - 2.4.2. **Number of other partners\***: Governments, companies, NGOs, etc. (please give examples)
  - 2.4.3. **Programmes in English\***: provide the list of programmes taught in English. (#)

#### II. THE OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION EXPORT AT ORG

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##### 3. Education Export Team

- 3.1. **Number of employees in the Education Export Team (EET)\***: How many employees are in the EET?
- 3.2. **Roles of the EET's members\***: what are the different roles of EET's employees? (e.g. admin, expert, training, sales, marketing etc.)
- 3.3. **EE Organisational chart\***: Please provide a reference of EET organisational chart.

##### 4. Education Export Operations at ORG

###### 4.1. Defining Education Export (EE) at ORG

- 4.1.1. **Mission\***: What is the mission statement regarding ORG's EE?
- 4.1.2. **Vision\***: What are the short/medium/long-term visions of ORG's EE?
- 4.1.3. **Objectives\***: What are the main objectives regarding ORG's EE?
- 4.2. **Products / Services**:
  - 4.2.1. **Currently\***: what are the concepts that you are selling at the moment?
  - 4.2.2. **Upcoming\***: what are the concepts that could be sold in the near future?
  - 4.2.3. **Un-productised\***: Is there any concepts that could be developed further?
- 4.3. **Education Export experience\***: How many months/years have been ORG involved in EE? When did the operations really begin for ORG?
- 4.4. **Education Export Projects\***
  - 4.4.1. **Current project(s) / Past project (s)** – please use this format:
    - A) Location / Market / Country: (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Gulf Region)
    - B) Brief Description (e.g. Training 500 nurses, curriculum design)
    - C) The date it started:
    - D) The date it will end:
    - E) Revenue / outcome (e.g. Euro 4 million):
  - F) **Appendix Material\***: if possible, please share some example of contracts or agreements with a client, project description, packaged offers, sketches or any information that could be relevant for the paper that I will put in appendices.

#### II. THE RESOURCES / ENABLING FACTORS FOR EDUCATION EXPORT AT ORG

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##### 5. Products / Services Enabling Factors

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**5.1. Thinking about the Products / Services that your organisation currently have ready for export, what are the resources / enabling factors that contributed to productising them?**

5.1.1. Are these resources available among other organisations in Finland? (#)

5.1.2. Which organisation (Universities, UAS, VET, etc.) are they? And what are the resources that your both organisations have? (#)

5.1.3. Are there any resources / enabling factors that only your organisation possesses? Please give examples. (#)

**5.2. Regarding the current, upcoming and un-productised concepts, what would be the resources / enabling factors that could help in productising and exporting Finnish Education abroad?**

**5.3. Taking Aalto Design Factory as an example, what are the unique facilities / premises / machinery / equipment that could be productised or help in exporting products / services in your organisation? Please give examples.**

**6. Markets / Customers Enabling Factors:**

What resources / enabling factors helped (or would help) in finding and/or acquiring markets / customers?

**7. Other Enabling Factors:**

Are there any other resources / enabling factors that are worth mentioning?

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### III. THE BARRIERS FOR EXPORTING FINNISH EDUCATION AT ORG

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**8. Products / Services Barriers:**

What challenges / barriers prevented or made it difficult to productise or package your products / services?

**9. Markets / Customers Barriers:**

What challenges / barriers prevented or made it difficult to find and/or reach a particular market / customer?

**10. Other Barriers:**

Are there any other challenges / barriers that are worth mentioning?

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### IV. RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPORTING FINNISH EDUCATION

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**11. Products / Services Recommendations:**

Thinking about the current and past projects at ORG, what are / have been the most successful strategies / approaches to productise your education and sell it abroad?

**12. Markets / Customers Recommendations:**

Thinking about the current and past projects at ORG, what are / have been the most successful strategies / approaches to find and reach the markets and acquire customers?

**13. Other Recommendations:**

Are there any other recommendations that are worth mentioning?

- 
- Section I & II marked with a (\*) are submitted in a written format.
  - Questions marked with (#) are addressed only for educational institutes (e.g. universities) and not to be answered by companies.
-

## Appendix 2: SWOT Elements

### STRENGTHS

#### Organisational Level

1. **Brand:** The brand/reputation/image of the institution
2. **Accreditation/Ranking:** Having triple accreditation, high ranking or equivalent
3. **Mission/Objectives:** having a clear mission and objectives for education export
4. **Vision:** having a clear and/or strong vision

#### Students:

5. Having international students from all over the world
6. Having a number of students graduating each year = capability
7. International post-graduate students (UNIs)

#### Role of VETs / AMKs / UNIs:

8. Having a multi-field institution / Multidisciplinary courses
9. Having different fields of education, Bachelor/Masters programmes in English
10. Top notch professors / Educators and expertise
11. Universities Have unquestionable scientific excellence (UNIs)
12. Youth / Adult education / Lifelong Learning / K80 (VETs)
13. Having a practical approach to learning / BSc & MSc. (AMKs)

#### Funding:

14. Funding from the government to run the educational services in Finland (AMK/Uni)
15. Funded by municipalities (VET)
16. Funded by regional support (VET)
17. Having an annual budget dedicated for education export activities
18. Other sources of funding e.g. from research, publications, company projects etc.

#### Internationalisation know-how:

19. Finding the right partners
20. Understanding cultural differences
21. Experience in education export activities
22. International experience: working/living abroad
23. Experience in different types of methods/modes of internationalisation
24. Experience in particular markets: Gulf, Africa, Asia, South America, China, Europe ... etc.
25. Having different types of partnerships: Agents, sales/marketing partnerships etc.

#### Other Know-How

26. Sales capabilities
27. Ability to find the right people for the job
28. Doing business on many levels: B2C, B2B and B2G
29. Experience in marketing and sales
30. Capability and capacity to productise products/services
31. Ability to do a thorough market research
32. Ability to do contracts and agreements
33. Business Model Know-how
34. Understanding customers' needs
35. Experience in management
36. Experience in co-creation of services
37. Experience in teaching students in English language
38. Experience in teaching in an international environment
39. Experience in teaching in multidisciplinary teams
40. Finding the source of competitive edge in products/services

### WEAKNESSES

#### Organisational Level

##### Human Resources

83. Not enough experts / personnel to deliver the products/services
84. Difficulty in finding motivated people within the organisation
85. Having only one person working on education export activities vs. dedicated team
86. Lack of legal know-how e.g. contracts, agreements and legal services
87. Not having someone who can help in design and packaging

##### Funding

88. Cutting budgets leading to staff layoffs
89. Lack of funding from the government for education export activities

##### Know-How

90. Lack of business know-how
91. Education is complex products
92. Difficulty to find the right markets
93. Selling is an obstacle / Lack of selling skills
94. Difficulty to explain the offering to clients
95. Difficulty to find the right partners abroad
96. Lack of one common mission and vision among all players
97. Not seeing the potential and big picture behind education export
98. Lack of understanding behind the need of doing education export
99. Lack of understanding of how to form consortiums of VETs, AMKs and Universities.
100. Lack of competitor analysis / market research

##### Business Models

101. Lack of profitable, innovative and scalable business models
102. Scalability and profitability of educational products / services
103. Inability to see the potential from opening campuses outside Finland (Legislation)

##### Restructuring

104. New organisation takes time to develop (short-term)
105. Not having a clear organisation for education export
106. **Definition of Education Export:** Difficulty to understand the concept of education export
107. **Leadership/management:** The need to involve top management in education export

#### National Level – Finland

108. **Expensiveness:** High cost of living and salaries in Finland

##### Legislation:

109. Inability to sell degree programmes in Finland and abroad
110. Students and political parties acting as lobbyists against enabling tuition fees
111. Concerning teacher's positions, labour unions and employment contracts



#### Human Resources / Expert Pool

41. Having a clear organisational chart for education export
42. Having a dedicated individuals/team for Education Export activities
43. Internal/in-house support e.g. Design, legal, marketing departments
44. Having a pool of international teachers/instructors/experts in Finland
45. Having a pool of international teachers and instructors internationally
46. Experts/Teachers are given resources to do education export activities
47. The possibility to outsource, hire or do project-based-contracts with experts.
48. Delegation members (Experts) from the same culture, speaking the language

#### Leadership / Management:

49. Leaders/Managers deciding on being involved in education export
50. Having people with strong background, experience and knowledge
51. Having shareholders/owners/leaders who support Education Export
52. Having leaders/managers taken strong position to implement tuition fees

#### National Level – Finland

53. **PISA:** Finns scoring high in PISA
54. **Finland's Image/Brand:** Finland has a good reputation, image and brand around the world
55. **Nokia/Inventions:** Nokia's brand and the patents available & other Finnish inventions/innovations
56. **Finnish Economy:** One of the richest countries and most stable societies in the world

#### Attitude Level

57. **Humbleness:** being humble and not arrogant
58. **Just-Do-it:** we just went there (to the market)
59. **Motivation:** having a motivated team/individuals
60. **Hard work:** selling is not easy> requires hard work
61. **Passion:** to make education export work in Finland
62. **Flexibility:** having experts who are willing to do things differently
63. **Willingness:** to learn, to be flexible or being positive about education export
64. **Innovative:** creating innovative, modern and sophisticated methods of learning
65. **Cooperation in Finland:** The ability, willingness and possibility to work with others
66. **Seriousness:** taking education export seriously – teaching, selling, commitment, investment etc.
67. **Teamwork:** working as a team
68. **Culture:** cultural awareness and development

#### Product Level

69. **Focus:** Knowing and focusing on the core/key products/services
70. **Uniqueness:** having unique products/services
71. **Customisation:** Ability to customise or tailor-make

#### Smallness:

112. Finland is a small market
113. Internal competition in Finland
114. One player is too small for a big project

#### Credibility

115. Need to build trust with clients
116. Need to have credibility/accreditation systems in place
117. Need to take advantage of the positive reputation in Finland

#### Incentives

118. Lack of incentives to do education export
119. Demand and Push to internationalise prevented by legislation
120. Absence of a clear rewarding/compensation system or benefits for doing EE

#### Excluding Players

121. The fact that student organisations are excluded
122. Lack of knowledge about each other (stakeholders) in Finland
123. The fact that VETs are excluded from the National Education Export Strategy

#### Story

124. Lack of a common story among stakeholders in education export
125. Confusion from having many different stories about education export in the eye of the client

#### Attitude Level

126. **Risk-Avoiders:** Finns look too much on risks/barriers vs. opportunities
127. **Fear/Resistance:** some experts/deans are against doing education export or change
128. **Not-Sharing:** not sharing information or leads
129. **Do-it-alone:** lack of unity vs. working together
130. **Competing:** Finnish players competing on small deals vs. working together on big deals

#### Jealousy

131. Who gets the deal/credits vs. working together
132. Who leads vs. who follows

#### Not-a-business

133. Education export is not considered as a business
134. Selling education export vs. teaching role

135. **Priority:** Education export is not a priority

136. **Motivation:** Difficulty in finding motivated expert

137. **Mistrust:** among Finnish players

<p>products/services/solutions</p> <p>72. <b>Specialisation:</b> Having a range of specialised products</p> <p>73. <b>Knowledge:</b> knowing which products to do and which not to do</p> <p>74. <b>Clearness:</b> having a clear list of products/services</p> <p>75. <b>Degrees in English:</b> Availability of Bachelor and Master's degree programmes in English</p> <p>76. <b>Languages:</b> Experts who speak foreign languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, Spanish, Russian...</p> <p>77. <b>Facilities:</b> availability of unique facilities, equipment, tools or premises that can be productised</p> <p>78. <b>Flexibility:</b> make a product/service flexible enough to work in other countries</p> <p>79. <b>Complexity:</b> doing a complex/difficult to copy product/service for the clients</p> <p>80. <b>Business Models:</b> having proven business models from previous projects/markets</p> <p>81. <b>Co-Creation:</b> Ability to co-create products/services with others (e.g. clients)</p> <p>82. <b>Wholeness:</b> Offering a whole chain of education (Finwaylearning)</p>	<p>138. <b>Laziness:</b> towards more responsibility</p> <p>139. <b>Self-confidence:</b> Finns are not so proud of their knowledge</p>
<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">OPPORTUNITIES</h2> <h3 style="color: #0070C0;">Network Level</h3> <p><b>Educational Partners:</b></p> <p>140. Having a number of partner universities/polytechnics/other schools</p> <p>141. Doing conferences internationally</p> <p>142. International research cooperation</p> <p><b>Personal Contacts</b></p> <p>143. Top management's connections</p> <p>144. International teachers' connections</p> <p>145. Contacts as colleagues working abroad</p> <p>146. Contacts from conference/seminar</p> <p><b>Business partners:</b></p> <p>147. Finnish companies abroad e.g. Kone</p> <p>148. That know the clients in the host country</p> <p>149. That know the situation in the host country</p> <p>150. That is sharing responsibility and ownership</p> <p>151. That is doing marketing and sales in Finland and abroad</p> <p>152. Possibility to have partnerships with Finnish companies e.g. Technology/content providers</p> <p>153. <b>Alumni Network:</b> Having large Alumni network worldwide</p> <p>154. <b>Pre-existing Network:</b> Having an existing network nationally and internationally</p> <p><b>Governments:</b></p> <p>155. Connections in ministries, embassies and governmental bodies</p> <p>156. Getting access to the right people: decision makers, network openers or influencers</p> <p>157. <b>Regional support:</b> support and funding to build education export services</p> <p><b>Consortiums:</b></p> <p>158. Forming and working in consortiums</p> <p>159. Sharing/exchanging information, costs and know-how</p> <p>160. Being a sought partner</p> <p>161. <b>International organisations:</b> keeping in touch with development banks, UN and similar</p>	<h2 style="color: #D9534F;">THREATS</h2> <h3 style="color: #D9534F;">Customer Level</h3> <p><b>Pricing</b></p> <p>177. Pricing needs to be done before building the product vs. profitability</p> <p>178. Different pricing models in different countries/markets</p> <p><b>Contracts</b></p> <p>179. The need to have solid contracts with clients/partners</p> <p>180. The need to find reliable people in the host country</p> <p><b>Closing Deals</b></p> <p>181. Long time to close a deal</p> <p>182. Difficulty in international payments e.g. Russia</p> <p>183. The need to renew contracts with new governments (B2G)</p> <p><b>Trust</b></p> <p>184. Customers need to trust and believe before committing</p> <p>185. Previous bad experiences with others educational service providers</p> <p><b>Expectation</b></p> <p>186. Every project is different</p> <p>187. Unknown which expertise are needed: legal, contracting, pricing etc.</p> <p>188. Customers define what they want</p> <p>189. customers needs vs. delivery</p> <p>190. Difficult demands e.g. Visits during the summer</p> <p><b>Cultural differences</b></p> <p>191. Not respecting cultural differences</p> <p>192. Language as a communication mean for doing business e.g. selling</p> <p>193. Need to translate the service into a foreign language</p> <p>194. Gender challenges in particular markets e.g. women as teachers or sales persons</p> <p>195. Perception of time in different cultures</p> <p><b>Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>196. Access to internet</p> <p>197. The level of the infrastructure in the host-country to accommodate the Finnish-Way-of-Learning</p> <p><b>Skills</b></p> <p>198. The level of teachers' skills in the host country</p>

162. **Layoffs:** availability of unemployed export pool / push to change in attitude

### Governmental Level

#### FinPro/FLF:

- 163. Arranging and participating in visits abroad
- 164. Customers take us seriously in official delegations

#### Ministries/Team Finland:

- 165. As support group
- 166. Providing accreditation
- 167. As door openers in foreign markets
- 168. Proposing the tuition fees for non-EEA students

### Market Level

- 169. **References:** having references / projects
- 170. **EU Projects:** having a project(s) with EU
- 171. **Development Banks:** having a project(s) with a Development Bank
- 172. **Investments in Education:** some countries/markets are investing heavily in education
- 173. **Chamber of Commerce:** being members of EU Chamber of Commerce in the host country
- 174. **Entering Emerging Markets:** potential/demand for Finnish Education in emerging markets

#### Demand:

- 175. There is a demand for Finnish Education
- 176. Demand for AMK/VET for the labour market abroad

199. The ability to learn in the Finnish-Way-of-Learning

### Governmental Level – Finland

#### Support

- 200. Lack of skilled people in foreign embassies
- 201. Lack of support from the government for internationalisation activities
- 202. Slow to understand their role (government) in education export

#### Communication

- 203. Out-dated communication systems between different stakeholders e.g. Ministry-AMK
- 204. The need to know about visits and important matters before hand
- 205. The need to have better marketing material from ministries > credibility abroad

### Market Level

#### Competition:

- 206. The main educational markets are highly competitive
- 207. Dual competition from Finnish players and international ones
- 208. Customers gets hundreds of bids and they choose the best offer

#### Political issues:

- 209. Bribery
- 210. Political instability
- 211. Customers cannot travel to Finland
- 212. Experts from Finland cannot travel abroad (Visa)
- 213. Changing governments = need for new contracts

#### Focus

- 214. It takes a long time to learn about different markets
- 215. Difficult to focus and prioritise on the right markets vs. spending resources going everywhere

## Appendix 3: Examples of Finnish Education Export Products

### Overview

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21 <sup>st</sup> century educators	Training of trainers' package	Summer School
Visits and short courses	Innovation pedagogy	Innovation Camp
Industrial mentoring	Productising RDI projects	Consultancy
MBA	Hospitality & Tourism	Metal Industry
School on Demand (in Finnish Tilaukoulutus)	Trainings to companies and other organisations	Vocational teacher education / training

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(Summary list borrowed from EduCluster Finland's website [www.educlusterfinland.fi](http://www.educlusterfinland.fi))

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#### REFORMS: Supporting education system reforms

- Expert cooperation in designing and implementing the reform processes on a day-to-day basis
  - Coaching and facilitation in development processes
  - Up-skilling and capacity building of key personnel
  - Pilot process in selected schools / school districts to test new approaches derived from the Finnish best practices
  - Cascade and dissemination processes (further roll-out, further training, dissemination activities)
- 

#### QUALITY: Create the best performing schools

- Student-centred perspectives to education
  - Pedagogical skills and didactics for teachers to provide the best learning results
  - Encouraging assessment and evaluation practices
  - Curriculum development to meet the needs of students
  - School safety
  - Educational leadership and management
  - Special education
  - Home-school collaboration
- 

#### TRAINING: Enabling professional development through coaching and training programmes

- Short-term PD programmes delivered either in local settings or in Finland
  - Residential training processes in Finland (up to 3 months)
  - On-the-job embedded long-term studies (e.g. 60 ECTS) leading to a diploma certificate awarded by a Finnish university
- 

#### SKILLS: Increasing employability through vocational and higher education (VET)

- Curriculum and training mode development process in a VET school together with working life representatives.
  - Integrated training process for upgrading teachers' skills in substance knowledge and pedagogical methods.
  - Developing special themes in the VET operational capacity, e.g. entrepreneurship, guidance and counselling, recognition of prior learning, and personalised learning paths
- 

#### INSIGHTS: Providing insights on education in Finland

- Exploring the Finnish educational success through Finnish expert knowledge - Top-level experts will provide the participants with the core information of the Finnish education system, as well as case studies of educational reform processes in both system and school level.
  - Observing Finnish education in practice - During the school visits participants have an opportunity to meet Finnish students and observe the teacher in their daily work. The Journey offers also an insight to Finnish pedagogical approaches, learning environments, and learning materials.
  - Reflecting on and conceptualising lessons learnt - In facilitated reflection workshops, the participants will discuss and reflect both the experiences and observations on a personal basis
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## Appendix 4: Examples of Markets / Countries / Projects / References

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### ASIA

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- **Afghanistan:** Consultant Services for Curricular and Academic Development Activities for the National Institute of Management and Administration
- **China:**
  - Development training programme, Chinese vocational teacher in Finland, 3 weeks
  - Vocational Teacher Training
  - Opened Centre for VET in Shanghai, Omnia, HH, EduCluster, JAO
  - China-Finland-Nursing School, helped Chinese universities to upgrade their programme.
  - Joint Nursing Education Programme with Beihua University
  - Tools for inspiring student-centred learning in classrooms
- **India:** A feasibility study, started April 2014, on-going until the end of 2015
- **Indonesia:** starting our operations
- **Iran:** One of AEE's partners
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Support to the Kyrgyz Education Sector | 2010 – 2013
- **Laos:** Strengthening Higher Education | 2010 – 2015
- **Nepal:** Basic and Primary Education Sub-Sector Development Programme
- **Oman:** Innovation Camp, 3 summers: 2012-14, 30 students coming to Finland.
- **Qatar:**
  - How to use iPads in education, 5 schools, one week traveling from school to school.
  - Establish the Qatar-Finland International School in Doha ([link](#))
- **Saudi Arabia:**
  - Excellence in Vocational Teaching – 3-month intensive training programme in Finland
  - Partnership Programme for Creation of Centre of Excellence in Education and Innovation | SAFEA
- **South Korea:** ≈ 4500 MBA alumni, Aalto Executive Education
- **Turkmenistan:** Supporting the Modernisation of the Education Sector | 2010 - 2012
- **UAE:**
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education.
  - The Secrets of the Finnish Success – Intensive one week study programme for Zayed University students
- **Uzbekistan:** Social Partnership in Education and Training
- **Vietnam:** Lower Secondary Education for the most disadvantaged regions project | 2009 – 2010

### SOUTH AMERICA

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- **Brazil:**
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education, Brazilian teachers coming to Finland
  - Vocational Teacher Education Schools
- **Chile:**
  - Educational Management & Leadership
  - Learning Journey to Finland
  - Pilot project for Forestry Machine operator training
- **Colombia:** a vocational teacher education project with a local government.
- **Peru:** Building teacher education, with Catholic University (partner), client = Government

### EUROPE

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- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:**
    - General Education Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Establishment of a State Agency for Education | 2008 -2009
    - Institutional and Capacity Building of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) Education System | 2006 – 2008
    - Finnish Cooperation in the Education Sector of Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - **Croatia:**
    - Adult Learning
    - Implementation of new curricula
-

- 
- Opening Access to Education and Employment opportunities for the Roma national minority in Croatia
  - **Kosovo:**
    - Strengthening inside K12 sector.
    - Finnish Support to the Education Development of Education Sector | 2003 - 2008
    - Institutional Support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology | 2009 – 2010
    - Finnish Support for Inclusive Education in Kosovo | 2011 - 2013
  - **Montenegro:** Finland’s Support to the Development of Education Sector in Montenegro | 2005 - 2008
  - **Poland:** European Union Lifelong Learning Programme Comenius Regio
  - **Romania:**
    - Access to education for Disadvantaged Groups
    - Training and advice for further development of the TVET sector
  - **Russia:**
    - Different types of training for educational institutes and companies
    - Integration of Pre-School and Primary School Aged Children with Special Needs to Mainstream Schools and Society
  - **Serbia:** Serbian Teacher Education Project | 2002 – 2005
  - **Spain:** real life projects part of vocational education and training, few to six months projects.

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## AFRICA

- **Botswana:** a project concerning the hospitality industry, establishing a school in Botswana.
- **Egypt:** Reforming the Technical and Vocational Education and Training System | 2008 – 2011
- **Ethiopia:** Special Needs Education Program in Ethiopia | 2008 - 2012
- **Morocco:** Developing Content and Language Integrated Learning
- **Mozambique:** Education Sector Support Programme | 1997 – 2002
- **Nigeria:** How to create the World's Best Performing Schools?
- **Tanzania:**
  - Finnish Support to the Development of Special Needs and Inclusive Education in Tanzania | 2007 – 2009
  - Founding of the Dar es Salaam Institute for Sustainable Development **Tunisia:** entrepreneurial learning, (with the African Dev. Bank), two ministries as beneficiaries.
- **Zambia:** Education Sector Support Programme | 2000 – 2004

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*\* NB: This list is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive; it serves only as an example of the type of projects or references and the markets that the author has collected from the interviews.*

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## Appendix 5: Organisation, Interviewee, Date, Time, Duration and Place (Interviews)

ORGANISATIONS	INTERVIEWEE	DATE	TIME	DURATION	PLACE OF INTERVIEW
<b>Universities (UNI)</b>					
• University of Helsinki	Kirsi Kettula	24.03.2015	13:00 – 14:00	70 minutes	Helsinki
• University of Tampere (FinUni)	Mirka Gustaffson	12.03.2015	15:00 – 16:17	67 minutes	Skype * (Joined Mr. Pulkkinen’s interview)
• University of Turku (FinUni)	Jukka Pulkkinen	12.03.2015	15:00 – 16:17	67 minutes	Turku (with Ms. Gustaffson via Skype)
<b>University of Applied Sciences (UAS)</b>					
• Häme	Vesa Parkkonen	11.03.2015	12:00 – 13:02	62 minutes	Helsinki
• Haaga-Helia	Pasi Halmari	16.03.2015	10:00 – 11:20	80 minutes	Helsinki
• Jyväskylä	Timo Junttunen	18.03.2015	14:00 – 15:03	63 minutes	Jyväskylä
• Lahti	Juhani Nieminen	09.03.2015	11:00 – 12:07	67 minutes	Lahti
• Laurea	Krista Keränen	10.03.2015	13:00 – 14:06	66 minutes	Espoo
• Tampere	Carita Prokki	17.03.2015	15:00 – 16:16	76 minutes	Tampere
• Turku	Taru Kakko	13.03.2015	10:30 – 11:37	67 minutes	Turku
<b>Vocational Education and Training (VET)</b>					
• Omnia	Satu Järvinen	07.04.2015	11:00 – 11:47	47 minutes	Espoo
• Tampere Adult Education Centre	Ulla Virtanen / Päivi Puutiö	17.03.2015	12:00 – 13:12	72 minutes	Tampere
• Jyväskylä Educational Consortium	Kirsi Koivunen	07.04.2015	13:00 – 13:59	59 minutes	Skype
<b>Companies</b>					
• Sanoma Oyj. (Plc)	Jyri Ahti	10.03.2015	09:00 – 09:59	59 minutes	Helsinki
• EduCluster Finland Oy. (Ltd.)	Jan-Markus Holm	18.03.2015	11:00 – 12:12	72 minutes	Jyväskylä
• Finland University (FinUni)	(Above)	(Above)	(Above)	(Above)	(Above)
<b>Other</b>					
• The Ministry of Education	Jaana Palojärvi	13.04.2015	10:00 – 10:46	46 minutes	Helsinki
• Tekes – the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation	Suvi Sundqvist	18.02.2015	14:00 – 15:15	75 minutes	Espoo
• Student Unions – SYL & SAMOK	Janne Hälinen	13.04.2015	14:00 – 15:30	90 minutes	Helsinki
• Aalto Executive Education (AEE)	Miia Viitanen	14.04.2015	14:00 – 14:01	61 minutes	Helsinki

## Appendix 6: Background info from Interviewed UNIs, AMKs and VETs

ORGANISATIONS	STUDENTS <sup>1</sup>	EMPLOYEES <sup>2</sup>	EE TEAM STAFF <sup>3</sup>	EDU PARTNERS <sup>4</sup>	WEBSITE
<b>Universities (UNI)</b>					
• University of Helsinki	36500	9000	1 FT / 10 INV	500+	<a href="http://www.helsinki.fi">www.helsinki.fi</a>
• University of Tampere <sup>5</sup>	23322	2000	4 FT (FINUNI)	200+	<a href="http://www.uta.fi">www.uta.fi</a>
• University of Turku	20090	3500	4 FT (FINUNI)	200+	<a href="http://www.utu.fi">www.utu.fi</a>
<b>Polytechnics / University of Applied Sciences (UAS)</b>					
• Häme	6841	700	2 FT / 5 INV	150+	<a href="http://www.hamk.fi">www.hamk.fi</a>
• Haaga-Helia	10183	668	3 FT / 2 PT	200+	<a href="http://www.haaga-helia.fi">www.haaga-helia.fi</a>
• Jyväskylä	7100	700	1 FT / 5 PT / 10 INV	300+	<a href="http://www.jamk.fi">www.jamk.fi</a>
• Lahti	5034	380	1 FT / 10 INV	190	<a href="http://www.lamk.fi">www.lamk.fi</a>
• Laurea	7611	500	3 PT	254	<a href="http://www.laurea.fi">www.laurea.fi</a>
• Tampere	9495	850	4 (2 FT/2PT)	300+	<a href="http://www.tamk.fi">www.tamk.fi</a>
• Turku	9299	700	4 (2 FT/2PT)	200	<a href="http://www.turkuamk.fi">www.turkuamk.fi</a>
<b>Vocational Education and Training (VET)</b>					
• Omnia	40000 <sup>6</sup>	850	5 (2 FT/3PT)	300+	<a href="http://www.omnia.fi">www.omnia.fi</a>
• Tampere Adult Education Centre	15000 <sup>7</sup>	300	11 (INV)	150+	<a href="http://www.takk.fi">www.takk.fi</a>
• Jyväskylä Educational Consortium	22000	1220	1 FT / 1 PT	100+ <sup>8</sup>	<a href="http://www.jao.fi">www.jao.fi</a>

<sup>1</sup> Source: [http://www.stat.fi/til/akop/2014/02/akop\\_2014\\_02\\_2014-11-14\\_tau\\_003\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/akop/2014/02/akop_2014_02_2014-11-14_tau_003_en.html)

<sup>2</sup> Various sources online: e.g. annual reports, welcome guides, websites, interviews,

<sup>3</sup> FT: Full-time workers; PT: Part-time workers; INV: EE responsibilities are added to daily tasks

<sup>4</sup> Source: thesis interviews

<sup>5</sup> Source: <http://www.uta.fi/english/about/nutshell.html>

<sup>6</sup> In vocational education apr. 11 000, General upper secondary education, Liberal adult education (Source: [www.omnia.fi](http://www.omnia.fi))

<sup>7</sup> Total yearly: 15000; on daily basis: 4000 i.e. including short courses and/or training

<sup>8</sup> JEC operates under EduCluster Finland Oy. (EduCluster's partners are our partners)



## Appendix 7: Interviewees' Backgrounds

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### Kirsi Kettula – Helsinki University

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Title:	Head of Transnational Education (Since January 2014, 1 year 7 months)
Role:	TBD (New organisation)
EE:	4 years (previously at Aalto University e.g. Aalto – Tongji Collaboration)
Specialty:	Project Management, D.Sc. Forest Economics and Marketing
Notes:	Previous experience also included part-time teacher (since 1992, 23 years), researcher (3 years) and Financial expert (6 years)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/kirsi-kettula/65/7b4/8bb">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/kirsi-kettula/65/7b4/8bb</a>

### Mirka Gustafsson – University of Tampere & Finland University

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Title:	Coordinator of Transnational Education (since October 2013, 1 years 10 months), Key Account Manager (since April 2014, 1 year 4 months)
Role:	Facilitate the university's operations with and within Finland University
EE:	Since January 2012, 3 years 7 months
Specialty:	Selling, networking, Science Advisor
Notes:	Other: Senior officer at the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland (6months)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/mirka-gustafsson/38/760/204">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/mirka-gustafsson/38/760/204</a>

### Jukka Pulkkinen – University of Turku & Finland University

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Title:	Coordinator of Education Export (since October 2013, 1 years 10 months), Key Account Manager (since April 2014, 1 year 4 months)
Role:	Facilitate the university's operations with and within Finland University
EE:	Since October 2013, 1 years 10 months
Specialty:	Selling, Productisation, Project Management
Notes:	Other: Manager at Elektrobitt (16 months), System Designer at Ericsson (10 years)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/jukka-pulkkinen/11/a0b/90">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/jukka-pulkkinen/11/a0b/90</a>

### Jyri Ahti – Sanoma

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Title:	Chief Strategy Officer (Since 2008 , 7 years)
Role:	In charge of M&A, corporate relations and position Sanoma in the Finish Ecosystem in regards to Education Export
EE:	Since 2011 (4 years)
Specialty:	Strategy, M&As, Business Publishing & Education
Notes:	Previous positions included Senior VP at Sanoma WSOY (2000-2007), Head Söderström Osakeyhtiö (1995-1997)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/jyri-ahti/10/837/19">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/jyri-ahti/10/837/19</a>

### Miia Viitanen – Aalto Executive Education

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Title:	Director, New Ventures (Since January 2013, 2 years 7 months)
Role:	Education Management
EE:	Since January 2013, 2 years 7 months
Specialty:	Business development (1y, 8m), Portfolio management (7y, 4m), Analyst (1y, 8m)
Notes:	Other experience included: different positions in Physical Education, Sports & Event Management and Wellness & Fitness as a Freelancer (7 years)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/pub/miia-viitanen/4/84b/209">https://www.linkedin.com/pub/miia-viitanen/4/84b/209</a>

### Vesa Parkkonen – HAMK & FUAS

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Title:	Senior Lecturer at HAMK (since August 2013, 2 years), Marketing Manager & International Sales at FUAS (since August 2012, 3 years)
Role:	Marketing & Sales
EE:	Since August 2008, 7 years
Specialty:	Marketing, Selling, Networking
Notes:	Other: been in HAMK since August 2008 (7 years), as a Senior Lecturer in Professional Guidance Counselling and Vocational Teacher Education, Marketing Manager for International Sales; and also Training Manager – Programmes in Energy Sector (2007-2008); Senior Lecturer in Laurea (2000-2007) and University of Vaasa (1998-2000).
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/vesa-parkkonen/43/7b7/370">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/vesa-parkkonen/43/7b7/370</a>

### **Timo Junttunen – JAMK**

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Title:	Director of Global Education Services, Head of Education Export (since March 2013, 2 years 5 months)
Role:	Responsible for developing international service business and JAMK's capacity for international commerce as well as managing relations with business partners and clients. Leadership activities include e.g. supporting and controlling work of experts. Management duties cover coordination of internal development and project portfolio.
EE:	Since March 2010, 5 years 10 months
Specialty:	Business models, partnerships, leadership
Notes:	Previously: Expert in International Education Business (2010-2013), Managing Director at UniServices Ltd. (2004-2010), R&D Manager at JAMK (2000 – 2005), EU Coordinator and trainer in EU/Project Management (1996-1997)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/timo-juntunen/1b/937/58b">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/timo-juntunen/1b/937/58b</a>

### **Juhani Nieminen – LAMK**

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Title:	PhD, Senior Advisor, Adjunct Professor (Since November 2006, 8 years 9 months)
Role:	Develop International Business Relations, Independent Specialist, and innovator.
EE:	Full-time 2 years and 3 months, part-time 3 years before.
Specialty:	Internationalisation, Export, Teacher Training.
Notes:	Previously: 15 years experience in Vocation and Education Training, adult and youth, teacher training, lecturer at Laurea and projects.
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/juhani-nieminen/7/829/351">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/juhani-nieminen/7/829/351</a>

### **Pasi Halmari – Haaga-Helia AMK**

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Title:	Programme Manager, Export of Education (since October 2011, 3 years 10 months)
Role:	Sales person, Export of Finnish higher education to Southeast Asia.
EE:	Since 2009, 6 years
Specialty:	Internationalisation, International markets, Southeast Asia.
Notes:	Previously: eMBA Program Manager (2008-2011), Senior Lecturer at Haaga-Helia (2005-2008), Senior Lecturer at Yrkeshögskolan Sydväst (1998-2004), Assistant Professor at Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration (1990-1997).
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/pasi-halmari/7/aa1/859">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/pasi-halmari/7/aa1/859</a>

### **Krista Keränen – Laurea AMK**

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Title:	Director, Research, Development and Innovation in Service Business (Since June 2014, 1 year 2 months)
Role:	Lead & manage the development of Education Export
EE:	Since June 2014, 1 year 2 months
Specialty:	Entrepreneurship, PhD: Service Science, Service Marketing & Management, Service Design, Service Innovation, Engineering.
Notes:	Previously: Entrepreneur & CEO at Vision Factory Ltd. (2010 – present), Board Member at TechVilla (June 2014 – present), Project Manager/Doctoral Researcher at Laurea AMK and University of Cambridge (2010-2014), Entrepreneur & CEO at Juhlapalvelu Gourmande Ltd. (1991 – 2010), Development Manager at Laurea (2008-2010) and Senior Lecturer at Laurea (2001-2008)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/krista-keränen/4/b2/469">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/krista-keränen/4/b2/469</a>

### **Carita Prokki – TAMK**

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Title:	Head of Global Education (Since 2013, 2 years)
Role:	Lead the Global Education, Selling, Productisation
EE:	Since 2011, 4 years
Specialty:	Passion for Education, Business Development, Management, and Senior Lecturer
Notes:	Senior Lecturer at TAMK since 1998 (17 years), Director Business Department at TAMK (1999 – 2010), Director Global Education at TAMK (2013 – 2013, less than a year)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/carita-prokki/2/585/47a">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/carita-prokki/2/585/47a</a>

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### Taru Kakko – Turku AMK

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Title:	Lecturer; Business Development, Education (since August 2012, 3 years)
Role:	Developing and selling global education services in business and engineering
EE:	Since August 2012, 1 year full-time (no teaching) otherwise part-time
Specialty:	Business, Management, International Experience: China, Singapore and Hong Kong.
Notes:	Previously: Manager Operator Collaboration at Nokia (Nov, 2010 – Apr, 2012), Manager Care Sales Support at Nokia (Jan 2006 – Dec 2006), Development Manager E-Care (2000-2006), Sales Support Manager Nokia in China (1997), Volume Planning Supervisor Nokia in Singapore (1996-1997) and Procurement Officer Nokia in Honk Kong (1995-1996).
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/taru-kakko/2/605/64b">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/taru-kakko/2/605/64b</a>

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### Satu Järvinen – Omnia

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Title:	Expert, Education Partnerships (since oct. 2013, 1 year 10 months)
Role:	Build and manage capacity building projects outside Finland
EE:	4 years (previously in Haaga-Helia)
Specialty:	Digital Learning, Speaks French, Networking, Selling, VET/TVET
Notes:	Producer, Digital learning at InnoOmnia (2011 – present); Coordinator, Export of Education at Haaga-Helia AMK (Sep 2011 – Dec 2011), Development Specialist at Haaga-Helia AMK (2005-2011) and other positions e.g. training, marketing & sales assistant and trainee at Ericsson.
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/in/satujarvinen">https://fi.linkedin.com/in/satujarvinen</a>

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### Ulla Virtanen – TAKK

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Title:	International Advisor (since October 2012, 3 years 10 months)
Role:	Advising, communication, networking, meetings, FLF workshops, productisation, selling, student mobility & education export
EE:	Since October 2012, 3 years 10 months
Specialty:	Speaks Chinese, training, student mobility, VET
Notes:	At TAKK since 1997 dealing with international activities, international education, VET student mobility, and training coordination.
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/ulla-virtanen/3a/987/790">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/ulla-virtanen/3a/987/790</a>

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### Päivi Puutiö – TAKK

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Title:	Manager of Project Activities, Project Director (since 2003, 12 years 7 months)
Role:	Project Management Locally and Internationally, Forecasting and Innovation. <a href="#">Years</a>
EE:	Since 2010
Specialty:	Management and International Activities
Note:	At TAKK since 1997
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/päivi-puutio/71/62/452">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/päivi-puutio/71/62/452</a>

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### Kirsi Koivunen – Jyväskylä Educational Consortium (JEC)

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Title:	Project Manager (Since January 2012, 3 years),
Role:	Coordination of education export activities and developing high quality education and expert services to global markets.
EE:	Since 2010, 5 years
Specialty:	Project Management, EU- and project management training programmes, VET
Notes:	Teacher in Project Cycle Management/International Coordinator at JEC (1998-2012), Research and Teaching Assistant at University of Tampere (1996-1997, 9 months), Research Assistant at University of Joensuu (1996, 8 months)
Linkedin:	<a href="https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/kirsi-koivunen/17/2a0/968">https://fi.linkedin.com/pub/kirsi-koivunen/17/2a0/968</a>

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### Other Interviewees

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Jaana Palojärvi:	Director for International Relation, Ministry of Education and Culture - Finland
Suvi Sundqvist	Learning Solutions Programme Manager at Tekes
Janne Hälinen	Board Member, international educational politics, education export, and development co-operation, National Union of University Students in Finland

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## Appendix 8: Examples of Programmes, Courses, Facilities and Projects

### Degree Programmes – Bachelor’s

#### Social & Health Care

- Nursing
- Social Services

#### Business & Management

- International Business
- International Logistics
- Business Information Technology
- Business Management
- Restaurant Entrepreneurship
- Security Management
- International Sales and Marketing
- Hospitality, Tourism and Experience Mgt
- Multilingual Management Assistants
- Sports and Leisure Management
- Tourism

#### Engineering

- Energy and Environmental Engineering
- Construction Engineering
- Electrical and Automation Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering & Production Technology
- Cyber Security

#### Design & Arts

- Media & Arts

### Degree Programmes – Master’s

#### Health Care

- Social and Health Care Development and Management
- Global Development and Management in Health care Services

#### Business & Management

- International Project Management
- International Business Management
- Management and Economy in the International Forest Sector
- Security management
- Information systems
- Business Management and Entrepreneurship
- Communication Management
- Tourism
- Sports Development and Management

#### Engineering

- Information Technology
- Environmental Technology
- Information and Communication Technology

#### Design & Arts

- Screenwriting
- Service Innovation and Design
- Culture and Arts, Leadership and Service Design

### INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Innopedia (Turku AMK)
- ProAcademy (TAMK)
- Startup School (Haaga-Helia)
- Restaurant Entrepreneurship (Laurea)
- InnoOmnia (Omnia)

### FACILITIES

- Professional kitchens (Haaga-Helia, Laurea)
- Vierumäki Sports Campus (Haaga-Helia)
- Visit Porvoo Campus (Haaga-Helia)
- Aalto Design Factory (Aalto University)

### EXAMPLES IN VETS

- Electric Grid Programme
- Waste Management Trainer’s training
- Industrial Mentoring
- Information Technology in Education
- Apprenticeship training and youth workshops
- Lifelong learning paths for adults
- Professional development programs
- Basic/Specialist Vocational training
- Tailor made courses
- High school studies: matriculation certificate
- General education
- Building competence in ICT

### OTHER

- Megatronics Cluster Projects (LAMK)
- Business Academy – real case projects done to companies by students
- Virtual courses / eLearning / Online Courses (Unproductised, but possible)
- Palmenia (University of Helsinki)
- ICT and learning environment
- Mobility and development projects with international partners
- Development and coordination of international capacity building projects

*\*NB: The list includes some examples from places interviewed by the author. It is not a comprehensive list of all programmes, courses, facilities and projects. It also excludes the different faculties in universities.*

## Appendix 9: Examples of Foreign Students' Nationalities from Interviews

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### Europe

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Estonia	Russia	Germany	United Kingdom	Austria
Spain	Latvia	France	The Netherlands	Sweden
Italy	Greece	Poland	Romania	Albania
Bulgaria	Norway	Serbia	Czech Republic	Ireland
Croatia	Lithuania	Ukraine	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Portugal
Hungary	Slovakia	Turkey	Switzerland	Iceland
Denmark	Belgium			

### Asia

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Vietnam	Nepal	Pakistan	Bangladesh	India
China	Iran	Philippines	Indonesia	Japan
Afghanistan	Azerbaijan	South Korea	Sri Lanka	Lebanon

### Africa

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Kenya	Cameron	Ghana	Ethiopia	Tanzania
Zambia	Somalia	Niger	Uganda	Egypt
Kongo	Eretria	South Africa	Ivory Cost	Sierra Leone
Sudan				

### South America

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Brazil	Chile	Argentina
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### North America

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USA	Canada	Mexico
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### Oceania

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Australia	New Zealand
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\* The list is not comprehensive and represents the information mentioned in the interviews i.e. there might be other students from different nationalities studying in Finland, which was not mentioned by the interviewees.

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## Appendix 10: List of Universities and Polytechnics in Finland

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Universities	Polytechnics
Aalto University	Arcada Polytechnic
Hanken School of Economics	Centria Polytechnic
Lappeenranta University of Technology	Diaconia Polytechnic
Tampere University of Technology	HAAGA-HELIA Polytechnic
University of Helsinki	Humanities Polytechnic
University of Eastern Finland	Häme University of Applied Sciences
University of the Arts Helsinki	Jyväskylä Polytechnic
University of Jyväskylä	Kajaani Polytechnic
University of Lapland	Karelia Polytechnic
University of Oulu	Kymenlaakso Polytechnic
University of Tampere	Lahti Polytechnic
University of Turku	Lapland Polytechnic
University of Vaasa	Laurea Polytechnic
Åbo Akademi University	Metropolia Polytechnic
	Mikkeli Polytechnic
Also	Novia Polytechnic
	Oulu Polytechnic
National Defence College	Saimaa Polytechnic
	Satakunta Polytechnic
	Savonia Polytechnic
	Seinäjoki Polytechnic
	Tampere Polytechnic
	Turku Polytechnic
	Vaasa Polytechnic

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## Appendix 11: Examples of Future Research Topics

<b>Stakeholders and Consortiums/Cluster</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the Finnish education export consortiums/clusters? How do they fit together and how should they operate?</li> <li>▪ How can Finland create a successful VET-AMK-UNI system for exporting education?</li> <li>▪ How to communicate the benefits of exporting Finnish education to all stakeholders? (Investigating the benefits of education export on different levels: organisational, regional, national, international, global and also on cluster level)</li> </ul>
<b>Reinventing the Finnish Education Export Selling Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How could Finnish education exporters build trust and gain credibility with customers abroad?</li> <li>▪ How might Finland co-create educational services with foreign clients?</li> <li>▪ How might Finland improve the selling process of the educational services abroad?</li> <li>▪ What are the top needs of different markets regarding Finnish education?</li> </ul>
<b>Education Export Organisations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the responsibilities and obligations of the members in an organisation involved in education export in Finland? Who is in charge? Who is selling/delivering the products?</li> </ul>
<b>The Education Export Networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How can Finland create a cluster to produce and export educational products and services abroad? What are the requirements in Finland and abroad? Who should be involved?</li> </ul>
<b>The Market Perspective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How can Finland categorise the world map of education export markets? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are the top 3-5 markets/customers to acquire?</li> <li>○ What are the characteristics of the markets/customers? (Big/Small, difficult/easy)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ How to build a framework for approaching particular educational export markets?</li> </ul>
<b>Attitude</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How can Finland create a positive culture towards exporting its education abroad?</li> <li>▪ What are the characteristics of the next generation teachers in Finland? (Teaching vs. selling)</li> </ul>
<b>Know-How</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How to leverage on the existing education export know-how in Finland? How to benefit from this knowledge? Who is involved in the process?</li> <li>▪ How to link the success of Finnish education to its economic, social and political performances? Unravelling the benefits of an excellent education system.</li> <li>▪ How to productise a particular know-how from a Finnish HEI? (E.g. Productising Finnish Entrepreneurial Education at Universities of Applied Sciences)</li> </ul>
<b>Flying Faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How can an organisation create a successful "Flying Faculty" for education export?</li> <li>▪ What are the characteristics of the "Flying Faculty" members?</li> </ul>
<b>Funding / Finance</b> (Exploring the Funding Options for Education Export)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How to identify the different funding options for Finnish education export activities on organisational, regional, national and international levels? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Who will fund the activities?</li> <li>○ What are the Sums?</li> <li>○ How to implement the funding strategies?</li> <li>○ How much return-on-investment will it yield?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Internationalisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the internationalisation theories that could help managers in selling Finnish education abroad? (Stage Model, Network Approach, Entry modes etc.)</li> <li>▪ How can Finland create a lean internationalisation strategy for selling education abroad?</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How can managers create successful marketing campaigns for exporting Finnish education? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are the benchmark countries to analyse? (UK, Australia, USA etc.)</li> <li>○ Where to start and how?</li> <li>○ How much to invest?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Productisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How could Finnish education exporters develop educational products and make them available, sellable and profitable abroad?</li> <li>▪ What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Finnish education as a product? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How to build efficient organisations for export?</li> <li>○ How to find the core products / services?</li> <li>○ How to develop these products to suit different markets? (Engineering)</li> <li>○ How to design the processes of productisation? (Design and Engineering)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>