



Top Ten Reasons for Korean Students to Come to Finland for Exchange: Stories and experiences of the Korean exchange students' time in Finland

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The purpose of this thesis is to promote the student exchange between South Korea and Finland. This thesis was done in cooperation with Laurea University of Applied Sciences. The results of this thesis can be used for improving the exchange program of Laurea UAS.

The theoretical framework for this thesis is student exchange, student mobility between Finland and Korea, internationalisation, exchange policies of Laurea UAS and Korean universities, Korean culture and its various aspects, and culture shock.

The methods that were used in this thesis were both qualitative and quantitative research. There were many data collection methods used for this thesis. A semi-structured theme interview was conducted for five South Korean students who came to exchange to Finland in the years 2015-2018. An e-mail interview was conducted for two Laurea University of Applied Sciences teachers. An online questionnaire was conducted for 68 South Korean students who came to exchange to Finland in the years 2015-2018. 17 of the 68 students answered the survey.

The main results that were obtained were the experiences and stories of the South Korean students' time in Finland. Also analysis of the reasons for South Korean students to come to Finland were made. Educational system, safety and security, Finnish sauna, a lot of free time, non-hierarchical society & equality, level of English skills, culture, Finnish people, nature and peaceful environment are the top ten reasons.

Keywords: student exchange, internationalisation, South Korea, Finland

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1 Introduction

This study tells about South Korean exchange students' time and experiences in Finland. It explains why they came to Finland and how was their time in Finland. The interviewees make a lot of comparisons between Finland and South Korea, both in educational aspects and society. They tell what kind of difficulties and culture shocks they encountered in Finland and what was the best in Finland.

For my study I conducted five semi-structured theme interviews for South Korean exchange students who came to exchange to Finland during the years 2015-2018. I also conducted an online survey for a larger amount of South Korean students who came to exchange to Finland in the years 2015-2018. I interviewed two of Laurea University of Applied Sciences teachers about their experiences with South Korean students.

The theoretical framework I used for this thesis are of student exchange, internationalisation, exchange policies of Laurea University of Applied Sciences and South Korean universities, Korean culture, and culture shock.

My research methods used were both qualitative and quantitative research. I used three different data collection methods, a semi-structured theme interview, an online survey and an e-mail interview.

My research question can already be seen from the title of my thesis: For what reasons should Korean students come to Finland for exchange. My purpose was to find out why Korean students should come specifically to Finland for their exchange.

2 Background and purpose of the study

The background for this thesis developed from the interest towards international exchange and its influence on the students. I got interested because in 2017 I went for exchange to South Korea myself. The exchange had a huge influence on me.

My tutor teacher suggested me this topic because she saw I was very interested in South Korea and international exchange. She told me it could be used in order to promote the exchange between the two countries. I got really excited about the topic.

The objective and purpose of this thesis is to promote the exchange between South Korea and Finland. I was told by Laurea that there are not enough exchange students coming from South Korea to Finland and that they want to increase the exchange between the two countries. They want more Finnish people to go to South Korea and more Korean students to come to Finland.

It is very interesting to see how much positive impact an exchange can have on a person. At first one would think that exchange is only traveling and fun, but it's more than that. During exchange you can develop your skills a lot and gain personal growth.

3 Theoretical framework

In the following chapters I will go through the theoretical framework related to my thesis. My theoretical framework consists of student exchange, student mobility between Finland and Korea, internationalisation both in general and in Laurea and Korean higher education, exchange policies of Laurea and Korean universities, Korean culture and its various aspects, and culture shock.

3.1 Student exchange

Student exchange is the period a student carries out as a part of their studies in an institution abroad. It usually occurs between partner institutions and lasts most commonly for one semester or one academical year. A student can either apply for exchange themselves or through their home institution. After the exchange program period the student returns to complete their studies in their home institution (Opiskele ulkomailta n.d.; Maaillalle n.d.).

Doing a university degree abroad is a globally expanding phenomenon. Especially Asian students tend to educate themselves abroad. Universities recruit foreign students actively. Also in Finland foreign degree students are regarded important in order to make university education internationalized (CIMO a 2017, 1).

Certain requirements are usually needed to be met in order to leave for exchange. Usually a student has to be over 18 years old in order to leave for exchange, so those students who study in a high school or a vocational school have a better chance to leave for exchange during their 2nd and 3rd year. For university students the requirements usually include having one to three years of study and a certain amount of credits. The key principle in student exchange is that university students who take part in the exchange program get their study periods abroad fully approved as a part of their degree. This is why the purpose is not to carry out additional courses but to carry out courses that are part of the student's curriculum and related to their degree (Opiskele ulkomailta n.d. ; Lehtinen 2011, 11).

The benefits of an exchange are the development of language skills, cultural understanding and professional development. Internationalisation competences are becoming more and more essential in working life (Laurea b n.d. ; Laurea c n.d.).

3.2 Student mobility between Finland and Korea

In 2016 in Finnish universities there were over 21 000 foreign students. In Universities of Applied Sciences there were 9867 students from abroad and in universities there were 11 194

foreign students. The majority of foreign students who came to Finland came from outside EU/ETA area. The most students came from Asia, with the amount of 45 % of the students. The number of Asian students coming to Finland has grown during last years (CIMO a 2017, 2-3).

For 2017 autumn studies there were less foreign students applying than a year before. There were 6 % less students applying for Universities of Applied Sciences, making it about 8400 foreign students who applied. For universities there were about 8000 students who applied which was 32 % less than a year before. 35 % of the foreign students who applied were from Asia, them being the majority of the students who applied. However, the number of Asian students who applied was less than in the previous year (CIMO a 2017, 6).

South Korea and Finland have both become more interested towards each other's cultures. This can be seen as a growth in the amount of student exchanges between the countries. The student exchange between Korea and Finland has tremendously grown and developed in the past 10 years. The relations between the two countries are great and during the past years grown even closer (Suomen suurlähetystö a 2015; Suomen suurlähetystö b 2017).

According to CIMO (2017), the significance of South Korea on student mobility has increased in the last 10 years. In 2015 there were 256 students from Finland who went for exchange to South Korea. There were 270 students from South Korea who came to exchange in Finland in 2015. In the year 2016 there were 261 university students from Finland who left to South Korea for exchange. There were 301 university students from South Korea who came to Finland for exchange in 2016 (CIMO b n.d. 3-4 ; CIMO c n.d.).

In 2017 South Korea ranked as the 11th most popular exchange destination amongst students from Finland. There were 271 Finnish students who went for exchange to South Korea. In 2017 288 South Korean students came to Finland for exchange. They ranked as 10th country on the list of how many students came to Finland from each country (CIMO d n.d.).

3.3 Exchange policies in Laurea and Korean universities

This chapter tells about the exchange policies in Laurea University of Applied Sciences and the exchange policies of Laurea's two partner universities from South Korea, Dongguk University and Yeungnam University.

There are six campuses in Laurea University of Applied Sciences that are located in the Greater Helsinki Region. Laurea provides educational services in four study fields. Exchange students can choose studies from the English degree programmes and also for the Finnish degree programmes since they offer some English taught studies (Laurea a n.d.).

Exchange students have the possibility to study at Laurea for either autumn or spring semester or even for the whole academic year. Traineeships are also possible to be arranged for the students who are from Laurea partner universities and in the social services or health care field. There are organised orientations for incoming exchange students in the beginning of the autumn and spring semesters (Laurea a n.d.).

In order to come for exchange to Laurea a student has to be nominated for student exchange by their home institution until exact deadlines. After nomination the student has to apply for exchange before the application deadline. In order to study or do a traineeship in Laurea a student has to have a good command of English. The recommendation for English skills is level B2 in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Laurea a n.d.).

In order for Laurea students to go for exchange the requirement for them is to study for one year. They have a possibility to choose from different exchange programs and partner universities to go for exchange and also find their own exchange place and do the exchange as a free mover exchange (Laurea b n.d.).

In order to apply for exchange to Dongguk University a student should first visit their international office at their home university and find out whether it's possible to apply for Dongguk University from their home university. If it's possible then the student should submit the necessary documents to the international office at their home university. After getting nomination by e-mail Dongguk University are being sent the necessary documents. The confirmation for exchange is made within two months from the student application (Dongguk University a n.d.).

Also students from Dongguk University's non-partner universities can come for exchange to Dongguk University. The requirement for that is that the student is enrolled in an undergraduate degree seeking program and completed one semester. The student can apply by sending necessary documents by mail. The documents include application form, official transcript, copy of passport, 2 passport sized photos, motivation letter, affidavit of support. Also certificate of account balance of sponsor or applicant or scholar certificate is required, since it is needed to prove that the student has financial stability for the exchange period (Dongguk University b n.d.).

Dongguk University students who want to go for exchange can choose three universities to apply for. The requirements for applying for exchange varies depending on each university. Dongguk University has various partner universities and they provide the list for the students who want to go for exchange on their webpage with all the necessary information about the requirements and such (Dongguk University c 2018).

Yeungnam University is recruiting exchange students twice a year, in May and November. If a student wants to apply for the exchange program for spring semester, they have to apply by November and if they want to apply for exchange program for the autumn semester, they have to apply by May. Students can stay for one semester or one academical year for exchange (Yeungnam University a n.d.).

In order to apply to Yeungnam University the home university should nominate the student first. After that the student applies through online. The student's home university should send the required documents to Yeungnam University. The required documents include online application print out, certificate of enrolment, academic transcript and copy of passport (Yeungnam University a n.d.).

In Yeungnam University outbound students are required English test certificate and motivation letter in order to go abroad for exchange. In order to leave for exchange they must first study for 4 semesters in their home university. Yeungnam University has various partner universities. A student who wants to go for exchange can choose from the list of universities that is a partner university related to their major. The student can apply for 2 different universities (Yeungnam University b n.d.).

3.4 Internationalisation

"Intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society". - Commonly accepted working definition for internationalisation by Jane Knight (European Parliament 2015, 29).

Internationalisation of higher education is quite a recent phenomenon but as a concept it is very varied as well as broad. In the last 30 years European programmes for research and education have been aiming for a more strategic and broader approach to the European higher education's internationalisation. The globalisation of economies and societies has influenced the internationalisation of higher education (European Parliament 2015, 27).

To advance the internationalisation of higher education in universities it is important to have the key element which is the presence of an institutional policy or strategy. In Europe 61 % of the institutions have an internationalisation policy in place which is a larger amount compared to other regions (European Parliament 2015, 62).

Academic partnerships are an essential part of internationalisation. They exist between a broad range of stakeholders, for example between universities or departments or universities and governments. When universities are working together internationally, the activities usually cover one or more of the following: student and/or staff exchange, research co-

operation, joint curriculum development, joint or double degrees, short course programmes, benchmarking, delivery of transnational education, joint bids for international projects, and development projects in a third country (European Parliament 2015, 53).

In the internationalisation policies and programmes of higher education there are two key components that constantly evolve and become more and more intertwined. One is internationalisation abroad and the other one is internationalisation at home (European Parliament 2015, 45).

Internationalisation at home should be fostered to students who are unable to study or work abroad. These students should be given the opportunity to gain a university education that is internationalised at their home university in order for them to develop similar employability skills as those students who gain them when they are studying abroad (Jones & Brown 2007, 133).

3.4.1 Internationalisation in Laurea

In Laurea University of Applied Sciences somewhat of 460 students go for exchange or traineeship to a foreign country annually. About 400 exchange students from other countries come to study in Laurea every year (Laurea c n.d.). Internationalisation programs have been in Laurea for over 20 years (Ylikoski et al. 2018, 3).

Internationalisation is an essential part of the competence of any professional. The requirements are that in today's working environment the professional expertise must include an understanding of different cultures and international knowledge. Laurea aims to provide students education that will give them competence which is competitive both in Finland and foreign countries (Laurea c n.d.).

The internationalisation vision of Laurea UAS is to internationalise the Finnish society, to improve multiculturalism and generate the best possible international competence. Laurea is developing their learning environment and research, development and innovation environment towards international cooperation. Laurea puts effort on growing the international business and to enhance the international competence of their students, staff and partners in a versatile way in all of their activities. This is in order to make internationalisation a natural part of daily life in Laurea and to enable the understanding of diversity and globally sustainable behaviour. Internationalisation is supposed to be part of everyday and it can't consist of separate actions and traveling, even though these factors can be still considered meaningful. Because of digitalization and expanding cooperation with network internationality is part of everyday activities and daily life (Ylikoski et al. 2018, 2-3).

Laurea has various ways to improve and advance the internationalisation. The central objectives of Laurea's internationalisation program are the following:

- Your university: Internationality is part of every Laurea UAS student's professional competence and a natural part of improving the civics. Every Laurea student has excellent internationality skills that are based on globally sustainable development.
- University that is integrated with working life: International cooperation with working life is the right of every Laurea student and a staff member and it is equally in reach of everyone regarding the qualifications of sustainable development.
- University of entrepreneur: Path for international entrepreneuring is available for every Laurea student. Laurea is encouraging its staff to participate in Laurea's business in accordance with the entrepreneuring principles. Laurea produces service that supports the business of entrepreneurs.
- International University of Applied Sciences: Laurea is doing international research, development and innovation activities. The primary base of these activities is to be of benefit for the civil society, enterprises, public sector and third sector both in Finland and globally.
- University that serves the area: All of the actions that happen in Laurea that are related to education, research, development and innovation and business include the element of global competence that supports the needs of Laurea's area of operation. Laurea is advancing internationality together with the area's organizations and civil society.
- Responsible university: Responsibility is part of all of the actions of Laurea. All of the actions are in accordance with sustainable development. UN Agenda 2030 has set objectives for economically, socially, ecologically and culturally sustainable development. These objectives are the fundamental competence of every Laurea professional and graduate in order to secure the planet's living conditions in the future.
- University that appreciates the human: Internationality is a natural part of being a member of Laurea and Laurea's foundation of values. Laurea is supporting the openness of the society, cultural diversity and respecting the diversity (Ylikoski et al. 2018, 9-10).

Tight cooperation between students, working life and Laurea's teaching and research, development and innovation activities is emphasized in Laurea's actions. The majority of Laurea's internationalisation activities are related to the students (Ylikoski et al. 2018, 4-5).

3.4.2 Internationalisation in higher education in South Korea

Internationalisation policy was adopted to Korean higher education in order to improve education and the quality of research in Korean institutions. It also allowed the competition at international level with colleges and universities (Kim 2010, ii).

The term *Segyehwa* is the Korean word for both internationalisation and globalization and it was announced in 1995 by then President of South Korea Kim Young Sam. He wanted *Segyehwa* to be a central governmental policy in his administration and it has since then been a major trend in Korean higher education. The term *Segyehwa* also represents the pursuit of excellence, improvement of quality and the enhancement of national competences. As embedded in all sectors of Korean society, it can also be seen in the education (Kim 2010, 1).

Internationalisation can be seen in Korean universities as the curriculums offering many English courses and in the increased student exchanges. Many universities have also restructured their administrative units and established a new office in order to include the growth in international affairs (Kim 2010, 2).

3.5 Korean culture

Korea's culture and its values and ideals are based on the Confucianism. It is a value system set up by the philosopher Confucius (551-479 B.C.) that's purpose is to bring harmony to the people's lives in communities such as the family, the village, and the state. Confucianism is a doctrine with strong social ethics. Besides setting up rules for daily living, Confucianism also defines behavioural norms and morals. Confucianism puts emphasis on the family continuity and the connections that are between ancestors and descendants (Clark 2000, 30-31).

There are four basic virtues outlined by Confucius that shape Korean values and ideals. The virtues are loyalty, respect for your elderly and parents, benevolence, and righteousness. Confucius also advocated five types of relationships that are based on a strict hierarchy. First kind of relationship is ruler to people where the idea is that the ruler of the country must promise to devote themselves to better the lives of their people in exchange for the absolute loyalty from his subjects. The second is the relationship between husband and wife. In husband to wife type of relationship the husband rules his wife like a lord rules this people. Wives have to be faithful and obedient and in exchange a husband has to provide for the needs of his wife. Third type of relationship is parent to child. This means that children should never question or disobey their parent's wishes. Parents have an obligation to care and educate their children and so in return children must always show respect and love for their parents and care for them when they get older. The fourth kind of relationship is older to younger. The idea is that age is linked with wisdom, so elders should be always treated with respect and consideration, not only inside the family but also within the relationships in business life. The fifth relationship type is friend to friend, which means that friends should

be loyal to each other and willing. Being dishonest towards friends is condemnable and punishable deed (Keating & Kim 2009, 14-15).

Besides Confucian set of values, Korean people are greatly influenced by the concepts of han and kibun. Han means the energies and frustrations that are pent-up and developed in the human psyche under conditions of hardship and extreme oppression. There are various kinds of han, and there are different reasons for experiencing it which depends on the person's background. One type of han stems from foreign occupation, other from social immobility, some from sexual discriminations, family feuds, and there are still many who suffer from crushing poverty. South Koreans have had the freedom to control their destinies only in the recent history. That freedom has helped in releasing a lot of pent-up han energy. Kibun is a type of ethic that prioritizes good will and harmony. Due to kibun Koreans will always try to be friendly and good-natured so that they could avoid tense situations. For example, they may withhold from telling bad news until the evening so that they could avoid ruining someone's day. Because of kibun, Korean business people are required to be very formal and polite even when a problem is occurring (Keating & Kim 2009, 15-16).

Korea was before called *land of the morning calm* but now it's adopted the term *dynamic Korea* referring to the metropolitan life in major cities of Korea. Korea is one of the densest countries in the world so it's hard not to notice the crowdedness in Korean cities. Traffic jams occur daily even though the roads are modern and well-maintained (Vegdahl & Hur 2012, 3-4).

Koreans have a strong national pride which means they value the accomplishments, language, history and the rich and enduring cultural traditions of their country. This pride allows Koreans to have a positive and strong identity of their own culture and share it to foreigners. Even though Koreans regularly criticise and discuss negatively about their own society, they don't like talking about these factors to foreigners until they know and trust and them (Vegdahl & Hur 2012, 30-31).

Strong Korean values are family and friends. For all Koreans a family has an important role in their lives and there's a lot of closeness, loyalty and responsibility that a Korean has towards their family. Family members share each other's joys and sorrows. It is typical to worry about family member's problems as much as of your own and rejoice when a member of the family accomplishes something. Even though nowadays the structure and roles of family are in constant change, many Koreans continue have many obligations inside the family and they share a close and intimate relationship (Vegdahl & Hur 2012, 31).

Korean people really value their relationships with friends, even to the point that for foreigners the energy and time that Koreans spend and devote to their friendships may seem a bit over the top. A lot of Koreans gather monthly to meet with their groups of friends.

Nourishing these relationships is not just for fun but there is also a useful side in managing them: they can be useful in finding out about business and educational opportunities, in securing job for oneself or a family member, and other challenges in life. The responsibilities that Koreans feel towards friends might feel a bit of a burden to them but they still couldn't imagine neglecting them (Vegdahl & Hur 2012, 31).

According to Confucian values, emotions must be controlled in public. That's why Koreans don't strongly express their feelings when in public places. However, emotions can be shown freely when Korean people are with their friends and close family members. When Koreans share their feelings, both positive and negative, they're commonly displayed with passion. Usually people of higher status tend to show negative feelings more freely than people with lower status. Korean people are extremely kind towards those they know, and also express a lot of warmth, loyalty and thoughtfulness to their friends. Treating their family members, work partners and friends with gifts and meals is common for Koreans (Vegdahl & Hur 2012, 31-32).

For Koreans it is important to respect and care for the elderly. This aspect is a strong Confucian value. Koreans value the knowledge and experience of their elderly. Korean parents and grandparents have a strong influence on the decisions of Korean youth (Vegdahl & Hur, 38).

Other characteristics that Korean have are diligence, modesty and sense of humour. Koreans are very hard working and put extreme effort in the things they consider important. Korean people tend to be very modest since they value humility. They don't really like boasting about their accomplishments and don't appreciate if someone is bragging about themselves. In spite of Koreans being controlled, patient and diligent, most of them have a witty sense of humour. This feature helps them to deal with hardships and make fun of difficult situations (Vegdahl & Hur 32-34).

3.5.1 Competitive culture in Korea

In Korea a person can increase their social status only in one way which is through education. This results in the huge pressure that young people have in order to do well in their studies and finally get admitted to the best and most prestigious schools. The top three universities in Korea are called with the acronym SKY, which comes from Seoul National University, Korea University and Yonsei University. Getting into Seoul National University is especially great, since it is run by the government, so having the university's diploma is a guarantee of a promising government or business career (Keating & Kim 2009, 16; The Economist 2013).

The entrance examinations are what Koreans call education fever. Education could be described to be a national obsession in Korea. The education is very serious business in Korea,

which can be seen from that in every neighbourhood can be found cram schools and many stores that sell school supplies and textbooks. Even adults continue to study in order to advance their education (Seth 2002, 1).

There is an intense competitive culture in Korean education and the entrance examinations. Long hours of study and strict discipline in Korean schools are daily. Koreans usually refer to the competitive examinations with the term examination mania. It can also be referred with the term examination hell. In Korea it has been a major effect in shaping the educational system and society. The whole schooling system is based on getting prepared for the entrance examinations (Seth 2002).

This kind of system has been greatly criticized by both the officials and public. In spite of the criticism the system hasn't experienced changes. It's so deeply engraved into Korean history that it's hard to change the old ways. Seth (2002) argues that South Korea has indeed become the most exam-obsessed society in the world (Seth 2002, 4-5).

Korean people have a habit of comparing people to each other. They put a high value to one's status. In classes Korean students are ranked openly which enables the comparing. This causes even more pressure to perform better in the studies since everyone can see each other's failure and success so easily (Forefront 2017).

Korean youth call their country *Hell Joseon* or *Hell Chosun*. These terms comes from that they think the youth think their country is like hell and Joseon and Chosun refer to Joseon and Chosun dynasties in Korea. The terms were invented in 2015 and they also reflect the feudal dynasties' issues with inequality (The Diplomat 2017 ; Korea Herald 2017).

3.5.2 Korean youth culture

Korean youth represent best the "fast-forward embrace of the future" of South Korea. Korean youngsters really fancy the various high-tech gadgets that are of the latest models and have a very unconventional and creative sense of fashion. Seoul's fashionable youth have become trendsetters not just in Korea but all around in Asia (Visit Seoul 2016).

Ewha, Sinchon and Hongdae in are the central areas for youth culture in Seoul. In these areas people can experience the energetic and vibrant youth culture. All of the areas are near the famous university campuses of Seoul. In the neighbourhood of Ewha is located the elite women's university Ewha Womans University which's abbreviation is Edae, referring to Ewha daehakyo (Ewha University). Hongdae is an abbreviation for Hongik University, the famous university that's near the popular streets of Hongdae area. Sinchon is near the prestigious Yonsei University, that's one of the top three SKY universities (Visit Seoul 2016).

South Korean youth and popular culture has gained extraordinary popularity around the world during the past few years. This phenomenon is referred as with the term 'Hallyu', which can be translated to Korean wave. Besides just the popular culture of Korea such as K-pop (Korean pop music) and Korean dramas, Hallyu nowadays covers all parts of Korean culture since Korea has become a very big craze worldwide (Korea n.d.).

In order to balance the Korean 'work hard culture', they also know how to play hard. Korean people have developed a play culture, which consists of many different activities and places where they can let go of their stress. They have many arcade halls, rooms for smashing and letting out rage, computer and video games rooms, etc. Especially popular are the noraebang karaoke rooms. Not only youth enjoy these free time activities but they're also popular with adults (Quartz 2017).

The Korean youth culture also has its dark side. Many Korean youngsters have a severe addiction with online gaming. Actually South Korea is one of the few countries that has a major social problem with youngsters' online gaming. The addicted youth are neglecting study and job and even refusing to get out of their rooms. The government has tried to control the problem but online game addicts are still on the rise (World Trade Press 2010, 10).

3.5.3 Women in Korea

For centuries Korean women have been victims of major discrimination. The general status of women has gotten a lot better since the old days when Confucian ideals ruled woman's place to inside the four walls of her home. Since Korea is becoming more and more globalized and adapting Western values, a lot of changes are happening. Due to the changes more and more women are becoming more independent (World Trade Press 2010, 12, 15).

In 1948 South Korean Constitution granted equal rights for both women and men, including the right to vote. Korean women have the right to drive cars and are entitled to ownership and inheritance of property and assets. In Korea there are laws that prohibit gender-based discrimination and this has raised the number of women who work. Many Korean women are victims to violence. Domestic abuse and rape continue to be a major problem in Korea's society. Women have the right to initiate a divorce and lay claim to custody of her children. However, women can't register her children in her own family registry, not even after a divorce. The children are always registered in the father's family registry (Keating & Kim 2009, 41 ; World Trade Press 2010, 28-29).

Even though Korea has equal rights for both men and female, there are still major issues with gender inequality. Because Korean society lives by the Confucian values that are deeply rooted in the culture it's still very male-dominated. In Asian countries Korea has the biggest

difference in the pay gap between genders. Men still get paid much more than women, over 30 % more than the women get paid. Korea also has the least number of women bosses compared to other Asian countries. Mostly men are employed for the senior-level positions (World Trade Press 2010, 12 ; Keating & Kim 2009, 42).

There are a lot of Korean women who are well-educated from prestigious universities, but because of the society is favouring men, the women can't find a lot of jobs in Korean companies that would be in accordance to their competence and ambitions. That's why many of them go work for foreign companies where they can put their skills in good use (Keating & Kim 2009, 41-42).

Many women nowadays prefer to invest in their careers than having a family, even though in Korea having and caring for family is still expected of women. In Korea it's typical that when a woman has a child they stop working and focus on caring for their family. Nowadays this is changing and also mothers go to work and leave their child to day care centers. Even though the government is aiming to provide good facilities for the day centers, still majority of women resign after having a child (World Trade Press 2010, 12 ; Keating & Kim 42).

Korean women have more and more roles as an important part of Korean society. There are many women working in almost all sectors of the economy, such as banks, service enterprises, textiles, and electronics. There is still a lot of discrimination towards women in the work field, which is trying to steer them to only work in more female-dominated careers such as nurses. Korean government is trying to improve the women's position by encouraging them to start their own businesses. This has increased the amount of businesses run by women (World Trade Press 2010, 12, 27).

The positions of women are dictated a lot by their social class. Urban middle class women stay more at home but they still have a good education and they make a lot of the decisions at their home. On the contrary working-class women usually work more but this is also due to that they need to earn for the sake of the family's economic situation. Working women have less decision-making power at their households (World Trade Press 2010, 28).

In South Korea still quite many families are practising arranged marriages, but most women can choose their own partner. Many women plan to have children later in their life, first focusing on their studies and work. Even though infertility is still a severe social stigma, people have slowly started to accept the decision of women who wish to remain childless. In case of an abortion a woman has to ask for the consent of her husband for it (World Trade Press 2010, 28-29).

3.6 Culture shock

Culture shock is the feeling of uncertainty and confusion that a person might encounter when they are being exposed to a foreign culture or environment without sufficient preparation. It sometimes might include feelings of anxiety (Merriam Webster n.d.).

There are four stages of emotional reactions when encountering a new culture. First one is the 'honeymoon', that includes the reactions with positive emotions such as euphoria, enchantment, fascination, and enthusiasm at the first stage of the trip. The second one is the crisis, that consists of all the negative feelings such as inadequacy, frustration, anxiety and anger. The third part is the recovery, which includes the crisis resolution and the learning of culture. The final stage is adjustment, that consists of "reflecting enjoyment of and functional competence in the new environment" (Oberg 1960, cited in Ward et al. 2001, 81).

Exchange students experience the same kind of problems that are common to other travellers, them being language skills, prejudice, discrimination, loneliness and homesickness. Exchange students may also have pressure because of their role as a 'foreign ambassador' of their home country. Besides these problems, they usually experience troubles that are the same as the local students have, such as identity issues, challenges in academic life, and the stress that comes when transitioning to a new school (Furnham & Bochner 1986, cited in Ward et al. 2001, 153-155).

4 Research methodology & data collection

In this section I will go through my research methods, and data collection and analysis methods. For my study I conducted a semi-structured theme interview for five Korean students from the years 2015-2018, an e-mail interview for two Laurea University of Applied Sciences teachers, and an online survey for 68 Korean students from the years 2015-2018 from which 17 answered. I will also go through the ethics and reliability of the study and the implementation of my research.

4.1 Qualitative and quantitative research

Qualitative research is used to obtain an understanding of underlying reasons, motivations and opinions. Qualitative research can be used to provide insights into the problem or as a help to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. There are a variety of qualitative data collection methods that either use unstructured or semi-structured techniques. Most common methods that are used are focus groups, individual interviews, and observations (DeFranzo 2011). Hammersley (2012) states that qualitative research is a flexible and inductive method, and that relatively unstructured data are used. Qualitative research enables researchers to study what's normally happening in the real world instead of

researching what is occurring under experimental conditions. The analysis of data is verbal rather than statistical.

Quantitative research is used to quantify the problem by generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics, and it can be used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables and generalize results from a bigger sample population. Measurable data is used to formulate facts and uncover patterns in research in quantitative research. Quantitative data collection methods are more structured than the data collection methods for qualitative research, and the methods include many forms of surveys, such as online surveys, paper surveys, mobile surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, online polls, and systematic observations (DeFranzo 2011). According to Hammersley (2012), quantitative research commits to the following aspects: hypothesis-testing, use of numerical data, procedural objectivity, generalization, identifying systematic patterns of association, and controlling variables.

Usually people tend to separate qualitative and quantitative research methods and go rather for qualitative study. However, these methods can be mixed and used together and the thought about that has clearly increased during the last years. There are various ways one can use these methods together in a study (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2015, 21, 29).

4.2 Semi-structured theme interview

Gillham (2005) argues that the semi-structured interview is the most important way to conduct a research interview and states that it's because of the interview is flexible but balanced by its structure, and because of the quality of the data that is obtained through a semi-structured interview.

In the context of semi-structured interviewing, the term 'semi-structured' is implying that while doing the interview, the following criteria are met: same questions are asked from all of the interviewees, the kind and form of questions go through a process of development in order to ensure their topic focus, and that for each interview approximately the same interview time is allowed. The latter factors are the elements of common structure, whereas the less structured elements are the following: questions are open and probes are used when the interviewer judges that there is more to be disclosed during the interview (Gillham 2005, 70).

According to Gillham (2005), the conduct of the interview in semi-structured interviewing can be thought of in five stages. First one is the preparation phase, that begins before the interview takes place, and second is the initial contact phase. Third stage is the orientation phase where the researcher is pointing the interviewee in the direction they want them to go.

Fourth phase is the substantive phase, which is the interview's central core and the main empirical focus for analysis. Fifth stage is the closure phase.

Preparation phase is when the interviewer begins recruiting their interviewees. It is important for the interviewer to make sure that people know what the research is about and that they understand what is required of them. Informing them about these factors helps in the conduct of one's research, because it makes it more efficient. The efficiency extends to also consult the convenience of the interviewees and ensure things such as that the time and place of the interview are suitable for the interviewee and that they have a clear idea of the likely length of the interview and perhaps remind them that you will want to record the interview. This kind of efficiency tells the interviewees that you take them into consideration and that you are doing the research seriously and also take the interviewees seriously (Gillham 2005, 70, 76).

Gillham (2005) states that the initial contact phase includes social and informational elements. These are to correctly introduce yourself to the interviewee and details such as asking the interviewee whether their journey to the interview went well and whether they want some refreshments.

Orientation phase is about explaining the interview. It is the part where the already provided information is amplified. It's necessary in order to steer the interviewee into the interview and face-to-face it is easier to provide much more detail than in written details. This part also allows the interviewees to ask questions. The primary task at this point is to explain not just about the purposes of the interview but about the whole research. It is also necessary to explain the reason why recording the interview is needed to do. The interviewer may also explain how they do the analysis and also touch on the confidentiality issues, in order to check whether the interviewee would want to be anonymous. It is also important to test out the tape-recorder's recording quality, even if it's been checked before, in order to avoid the stress caused by trying to make a transcription of a lousily recorded interview (Gillham 2005, 78).

The last stage of the interview is the closure phase. Gillham (2005) states that the importance of that stage varies accordingly to the structure of the interview. Because the interviewees "may have 'lost sight'" of what has and what has not been covered during a semi-structured interview, it is sometimes good to summarize the interview in the end with them and ask them if there's something they'd like to add. This can be done both in appreciation for the contribution of the interviewees and also for the possibility to obtain more valuable material to the research.

4.3 E-mail interview

The e-mail interview is an interview conducted by e-mail. It is a convenient method to use when the respondent has a too busy schedule to have a face-to-face interview or when they live in another city or country, since it gives an instant access to worldwide communication. E-mail interview is also convenient when a person doesn't want to participate in a face-to-face or a telephone interview, since it's less intimate than the more traditional interview techniques. Conducting an e-mail interview gives the interviewee possibility to participate from a distance and in their own time. That is why it can be considered less intrusive (Gillham 2005, 107-108, 112).

E-mail interview is great way to obtain minor facts and details, for example a person's date of birth or occupation. A lot of people respond to e-mails faster than to conventional letters or answering machine messages. E-mail interview also enables the researcher to receive a written answer so a transcription is not required to make, and the answer is also received much faster than through traditional mail (Gillham 2005, 108, 112).

4.4 Online survey

Survey is a research method that is used for data collection from a group of respondents that is pre-defined. It is used in order to gain information and insights for varied range of topics. Surveys have different purposes and there are various ways to carry them out depending on the objectives to be achieved and the methodology that is chosen (QuestionPro n.d.).

A *quantitative survey* is a survey type which is designed to produce numerical data, and it proceeds by measuring variables. A quantitative survey is concerned with the relationship between variables, so it not only aims to describe variables and how they are distributed, but also to study how the variables are related to each other. A *qualitative survey* is a type of survey that does not normally produce quantitative or numerical data. In a qualitative survey people answer to open-ended questions in words and then usually researchers proceed to analyse the responds without transforming the words into numbers (Punch 2003, 1-3). In my survey I combined both of these survey types.

A survey can contain various types of questions. One type of questions are open-ended questions, that enable answers that are unlimited. Checklists provide a list of choices and the respondent is asked to check those that apply in the asked situation. One question type are two-way questions, that ask between two things, e.g. yes and no. Multiple-choice questions have many possible answers, and the respondent should choose the one that is most applicable to them. Ranking scales ask the participant to rank a list of items (Phillips & Stawarski 2008, 2).

Completely electronic surveys are the fastest growing form of surveying. The electronic surveys rely on e-mail contacts to obtain responses through web. Internet is especially attractive because of speed, low cost, and economies of scale. Due to the fact that people have become more accustomed to complete variety of daily activities online they have become also more receptive to complete surveys online, and this can be used for the benefit of researchers. Online survey allows responses to be gathered in a very short amount of time from a large variety of respondents. The questionnaires can also be conducted at a low cost, especially if an e-mail is the only form of communication with the respondents. Large amounts of surveys can be completed in a single day and the results can be available for review and analysis immediately. Because of these reasons the use of online surveys continues to grow (Dillman et al. 2014, 301-303).

Most online questionnaires are based on a browser, meaning that the respondents interact with the questionnaire through their web browser such as Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, or Safari. The online survey is made up of either an internet page or series of internet pages that contain survey questions. Respondents are given the URL and by using that they can access the survey through their computers or mobile phones through Internet. Researchers send requests, usually by e-mail, but also by mail or telephone, to the respondents and provide the link or URL for the online survey. Respondents either click on the URL or enter it into their browser's address bar. The responses of the respondents can be reviewed from the survey software and they are stored on the server's database (Dillman et al. 2014, 303).

In order to conduct a web survey, a researcher can either program the survey by themselves and create the databases from scratch, or they can use a pre-existing software, which mostly provide quite simple point-and-click interfaces. For those who can't program from scratch or who prefer other options have a wide variety of software options to choose from. There are four aspects that are important to consider when picking from available software programs. First one is design flexibility and difficulty. In most survey software programs there are provided question templates that can be used. In some of the programs the template can't be customized whereas in some the template design can be edited. In some programs the template must be used as is, but other programs allow the surveyor to alter the underlying programming to customize the design. It is important to see through all the features that a program is offering before selecting one. The second aspect is control over the data. Some of the software programs only allow to collect and store them on the server of the software company, whereas others allow the data to be collected and stored on the researcher's servers. Some also provide both options. Researcher should take in mind the issues that this raises some ethical considerations of how secure the data are and exactly who has access. These issues need to be considered carefully before promising confidentiality or anonymity to respondents. The third is data access and reporting. Some programs are limiting the analysis to simple frequencies and cross tabulations. Other programs provide raw data sets that can

be analyzed however the researcher wants. Some of the software programs offer a variety of automated monitoring and reporting features. These make it easier to track progress and quickly look at results. The fourth aspect is cost which underlies all these dimensions. The different software packages can cost tens of thousands of dollars per year whereas others are for free. Usually the design flexibility required to conduct a good online survey is more expensive (Dillman et al. 2014, 304-305).

One of the already existing software systems is Google Forms which is a free program offered by Google. I used Google Forms for creating my survey, since it was simple to use. You can create a Google Form through the website forms.google.com. By clicking 'Blank' you can create a new form and create your survey. Once your survey is ready you can send it to your respondents to collect their responses (Google n.d.).

4.5 Data collection & analysis

In interview data collection the first thing to do after figuring out which type of interview will be used to collect the data is to develop the questions to be asked. The questions should be clear and easy to answer. After coming up with the questions, a researcher should test the interview on a small number of interviewees. This is in order to test the design of the interview. After testing it is important to prepare oneself for doing the interview. It is important for the interviewer to have the basic core skills to interview, these consisting of active listening, asking probing questions, and collecting and summarizing the data. The next part is providing clear instruction to the interviewees. It's important to ensure that the interviewees understand the reason for the interview conducted and for what the collected data will be used. The interview's expectations, conditions and rules should also be gone through with the interviewee. After this, the interviews should be scheduled. They should be conducted according to a plan that is predetermined (Phillips & Stawarski 2008, 24-25).

For the interviews I used a data analysis method called thematic analysis. In this method the researcher can edit the interview transcript and reorder it in order to make a clear narrative out of the interview. The researcher can divide the interview into sub-themes (Gillham 2005, 130).

For the survey data collection, the important principles are to keep control of the data collection process as much as it is possible and while keeping the response rates as high as is possible, to maximise the quality of the data collected. There are six general steps to doing this. First one is choosing the method to administer the survey. This does not only involve how to distribute the survey but also how to collect it after it's completed. The second step is to develop a detailed plan to distribute and collect the survey. The third step is deciding how access to the sample will be negotiated and how the respondents approached. Fourth step is to write a cover letter for the survey. The cover letter should include the following things:

what the research is about, who is conducting it and why, for what use the information collected will be used, how the respondents have been selected, confidentiality and anonymity, and instructions to complete and return the survey. Fifth part is deciding the methods and dates of distribution, methods and dates for collection, follow-up procedures and the date for the end of the data collection. For the sixth part it is to pay attention to response rates, especially if data are collected by a self-administered survey. It is important to take the response rate in mind in steps 1-5 (Punch 2003, 62).

There are seven steps in analysing quantitative survey data. First one is proofreading completed surveys and deciding what to do about missing data and unclear or ambiguous responses. The second step is entering the proofread data into the computer for analysis. The third one is carrying out a psychometric analysis. The fourth step is aggregating item responses into variables according to the conceptual map behind the survey. The fifth one is doing a descriptive analysis of all the main variables. The sixth step is investigating the relationships between the variables. As a last step is investigating the joint relationships between the variables. This is done according to the research questions (Punch 2003, 63-64).

4.6 Ethics and reliability of the study

The first ethical question of the study is the purpose of the study. One should observe the purpose from the point of view of how the study is going to improve the researched situation. It is important to create a plan for the study. The plan includes having a consent from the interviewees, ensure reliability and consider the possible consequences that may occur to the interviewees. During the interview situation itself the reliability of the information given by the interviewee is examined and it's important to consider the consequences to the interviewee what the interview may cause, for example stress. During analysis of the content the ethical questions are about how deeply and critically the interviews may be. After the interview it is important to do the transcript of the interview to follow very closely the original interview and things said by the interviewee. The researcher's ethical responsibility is to give such information that is as authentic and as reliable as possible. When reporting the interviews it is important to take in consideration the confidentiality and the consequences that the published report has for each the interviewees as the groups or institutions related to them (Kvale 1996, cited in Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2015, 20).

According to Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2015), in a study that is targeted at people the most important ethical principles are consent based on information, reliability, consequences and privacy. It is important to inform the interviewee about the content and purpose of the interview and ask for their consent for doing the interview.

The reliability of the interview material depends on its quality. If only part of the interviewees are interviewed or if the recordings are of bad quality, or if the transcriptions

have different rules in the beginning and in the end, the interview material can't be defined as reliable. In order to pursue quality it is important to plan the interview in advance and make a good interview frame. It's a high benefit to make the questions as open as possible. You can never overemphasize the fact that theme interview is not just about presenting the main theme (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2015, 184-185).

4.7 Implementing the research

Coming up with my interviewee candidates was particularly easy since during my study years in Laurea I had met many exchange students from South Korea. I had become acquainted with them through school programs and free time. I wanted to pick students from different semesters and academical years. All of the students that I interviewed were in exchange in Laurea in the years 2015-2018. Also I was considering the factors that the students had been in different campuses (Tikkurila & Leppävaara) in Finland and they were from different Korean universities.

I had many options to choose from so I was prepared to ask other people if my first choices wouldn't want to participate in interviewing. I contacted my candidates through social media and Kakaotalk, the messenger app that most Koreans mainly use. I made sure to inform my interviewees of the purpose of the study and asked for their consent to use their real name in my thesis.

Fortunately everyone I asked was very willing to participate and they were very excited to help me. I was very happy about that and am grateful to my interviewees since they really helped me a lot in conducting the research. I conducted one of my interviews in my home in Helsinki and the rest in South Korea. The interviews were successful and I got great material. I recorded the interviews with my smart phone and created the transcriptions from the recordings.

For conducting the survey, I contacted the International Office of Laurea University of Applied Sciences for giving me the e-mail addresses. However a staff member of the office suggested I would send her the survey and the appropriate information related to the research. That was in order to conduct the research in an ethical way. I sent her the online survey and cover letter that informed the students of the research. She sent the survey to 68 students who had done or were doing their exchange in Finland. Only 17 people responded to the survey but I was happy to get at least some data.

My teacher suggested to me that I would also interview her and another Laurea UAS teacher, since they know so much about the international students. I thought it was a great idea, so we agreed to a meeting together. I was supposed to meet with my teachers and have a discussion with them about Korean students, but I caught a flu and couldn't attend the

meeting with them. I couldn't organize another meeting because I was just leaving to my trip to South Korea so instead I prepared an e-mail interview questions for them. I sent it through an e-mail and my teachers replied to it.

5 Results

In this section I will go through my research results. First is the results from the semi-structured interviews I did with five Korean students from years 2015-2018. Second is the interview with the two Laurea UAS teachers. Third part is survey results of the 17 of 68 students who answered to the survey, also with the feedback from my working life partner Laurea.

5.1 Background information of the interviewees

My first interviewee was Student 1 who is 27 years old. His major is English Language and Literature and home university Yeungnam University in Daegu. His stay in Finland was for one year from 2017 August to 2018 August.

The second student that I interviewed was Student 2 who is 24 years old. She's double majoring in Buddhism and Social Welfare in Dongguk University, Seoul. Her stay in Finland was for four months from August to December in 2017.

My third interviewee was 23 years old Student 3. She is a Dongguk University student majoring in Business Management. She came to Finland in the autumn semester of 2016 and stayed for six months.

The fourth person I interviewed is Student 4 who is 27 years old. He is majoring in Accounting in Dongguk University. Student 4 came to Finland in 2016 and stayed for one semester, 4 months in total.

Last interviewee was Student 5 who is 23 years old. Her home university is Yeungnam University and major is International Business and Commerce. She came to Finland in 2015 autumn semester and studied as an exchange for two semesters. After her exchange period she stayed in Finland for work and travel for the duration of 9 months.

5.2 Interviewees' reasons to come to Finland

All the interviewees shared the same reason to come to Finland, which was Finland's educational system. For Student 1, this was the only reason whereas others listed also other reasons. Other reasons were mainly public safety and the level of English skills in Finland.

"It was because of the education system. Not only in Korea but in most of the countries, the purpose of students is getting a good grade on test, and especially this tendency is raging as

fire in Korea.” Student 1 told that one day he saw a documentary video about Finnish education. In the documentary it said that Finnish people don’t want this competitiveness in their education system and try to educate students differently. The documentary told that in the Finnish education system the students are educated with cooperation between the students. Because of that, Student 1 decided he wants to come to Finland for exchange.

Student 2 listed several reasons for choosing Finland besides the education system. She said she likes Finland’s education method, because in Korea there many teaching methods only aimed at delivering major knowledge whereas in Finland there are many classes where students discuss and exchange opinions and issues. Her second reason was Finland’s developed social welfare policies. Related to her major, she wanted to learn more about these policies. Third reason she stated was that she heard that public safety in Finland was really good. For her last reason she told that she wanted to learn more about Europe. Koreans mainly travel around Western Europe, and also Student 2 had been there before. Coming to Finland was her third time in Europe and she chose Northern Europe this time because she was fascinated about it and wanted to learn more about the culture and society.

For Student 3 there were also many reasons to choose Finland. She told that she heard that Finns can speak English very well, so she wanted to learn English conversation skills. While considering where to go for her exchange she heard about the problems with terrorism in European countries, so she wanted to choose a country that has social safety. She found out about Finnish educational system by also watching a documentary. She became fascinated about the system and wanted to experience that kind of educational system.

When asking Student 4 why he chose Finland, he stated that discussing that might be long. He told that first he considered between America or Europe and decided Europe because price for education is cheaper than in America. Because he wanted to improve his language skills so that’s why he wanted to go to Northern Europe, because he heard Northern Europeans are quite good at English. He picked Finland because Koreans have a fantasy about living in Finland, because of its education and standard of living. He told that he saw about five documentaries about Finnish culture or education system.

Student 5 first stated that she had no reason and she just chose Finland because it was quite far from Korea. However, she mentions that she got interested once she got to know that Finland is really famous for its quality education policies and welfare policies. She also got intrigued about experiencing the individualistic culture of Finland.

5.3 Living in Finland

Student 1 wanted to stay in Finland for a year because he stated that in order for him to feel the entire vibe of Finland and know about Finnish education system well, it would be the best

to live there for a year. During his stay in Finland he moved three times around Helsinki. The first place Student 1 stayed at was in Huopalahti, and the second place was in Viikki, and the third place was in Puotila. Student 1 told that they were all good places to live but very expensive compared to the apartment that he lived in Korea. He told that when he was in Korea, he paid about 300 euros per month for an apartment but in Finland he had to pay more than twice that much for an apartment of the same condition.

Student 2 found an apartment through a Facebook page. She couldn't get an apartment from HOAS, since the system with HOAS is first come, first serve, so all the apartments were already gone. Her apartment was in Oulunkylä, Helsinki, and during her stay she didn't encounter any problems and felt her stay there was very safe. The only inconvenience was that she had no elevator in her apartment so on her arrival day she had to carry heavy luggage up the stairs. Also, she accidentally broke the washing machine in her apartment because she didn't know how to use it since Korean and Finnish washing machines are different and had to pay for its repair.

Student 3 stayed in a HOAS apartment in Kilo, Espoo. She shared it with another exchange student who was also from Dongguk University and told she made friends with her. The apartment was close to the train station and just one stop away from her campus in Leppävaara, so it was a very convenient place for her to stay. She told her apartment was nice because it was very clean and had all the necessary things in it, e.g. utensils and pots. She said the only thing she bought there was a rice cooker. However, she thought the apartment was a bit expensive, around 330 euros, but she mentioned it was still cheaper than in Korea. She stated it was very hard to get an apartment from HOAS. Many of her friends didn't get a HOAS apartment, even though they had applied for it already in May. Student 3 said she herself applied for it in April.

Student 4 stayed also in a HOAS apartment, but his was in Kamppi, Helsinki. He took a train to his school that was in Leppävaara. He lived with a Spanish flatmate and became very close with him. Student 4 told that when he prepared to go to Finland, he heard it's quite hard and competitive to get an apartment from HOAS, so it's good to look for the house early before going to Finland. That's why he and his friends applied for the apartments early on. Student 4 said he didn't have any problems during his stay except for using the key, because in Korea people use a code to get in the apartment rather than a key.

When Student 5 was an exchange student she didn't need to get an apartment through HOAS because Lohja campus had their own student dormitory. After her exchange period she got an apartment in Espoo from HOAS. She said it's comfortable that HOAS has their own apartments for exchange students. Student 5 told that she once broke her apartment's door and HOAS fixed it in almost in seven days and she was very pleased with how fast they took care of it.

The only problems that she encountered were that her apartment was not very clean and that her neighbours were very loud and having a party almost every day. However, Student 5 said that she didn't bother to deal with that and just let the neighbours have their fun.

Student 1 tells that the only problem he encountered when using the public transportation was with using the metro. He told that he had to take a M1 metro, but he couldn't differentiate between the M1 or M2 metros, there wasn't any letter to show which one is which. He said he just took a metro and hoped it would go to the right place. Otherwise the public transportation was quite simple and intuitive to use for him.

Student 2 said that the public transportation system in Finland was very similar to Korean system, and the metro and train line were simple. She could always Google the details for traveling. Student 3 and Student 4 also felt the public transportation is very easy, because exchange students got an HSL transportation card, which is easy to use in the capital area. Student 3 mentions that Google map helped her so much with traveling.

None of the students except for Student 5 got a Finnish bank account. Student 2 told that she read a blog posting about that it's hard to get a bank account when staying only for few months, so she used her own card. Student 3 also used her own card as well as Student 4 and Student 1. Student 4 only used the bank service for transferring money to HOAS and told he got good service in the bank.

For Student 5 using metro and train was okay, but she hoped they would have had English speaking announcements. In Korea the announcements are in English, Japanese, Chinese and Korean, so Student 5 said it would be convenient to have English announcements in Finland as well. Student 5 told that using the bus is terrible because she never knew where she had to get off. She missed her stop many times because she was so confused where she was and then she had to start to use GPS in order to know where she was going.

Student 5 stated that she could get a bank account because she stayed in Finland for longer than a year, but that it is indeed hard to get one if you stay for a shorter time like one semester. She told that it wasn't very easy to deal with the bank, and because she's a foreigner she wasn't allowed to access her bank account online, which was very inconvenient. Student 5 also told that the banking system is so different in Finland compared to Korea, so for her it was a little bit hard to get used to it. She told that when you're using Otto ATM to check the balance, the bank is charging for that, whereas in Korea the bank doesn't. She told that she usually used the PayPal and her own credit card.

5.3.1 Impressions of Finnish people and culture

Student 1 tells that Finnish people are very polite, but usually they are just polite because they have to be polite. He said that in Korea if a person is polite, they are usually also kind,

but in Finland people are usually polite but politeness doesn't always go hand in hand with kindness like in Korea. He also compared Finnish people to Japanese people, saying that Finns are a little bit like Japanese, who are quiet, peaceful, and polite. However, he then proceeded to mention that there's a big difference between Japanese and Finnish, which for him is diversity and equality.

"Even though most of the Finnish people believe in Christianity, it's not that uncommon to see women wearing hijab in Finland. I think that's possible because Finnish people try to embrace and respect the people who are different from them." Student 1 also told that in Korea if someone was wearing a hijab, people would stare at her and Korean people wouldn't try to embrace it, they would just think it's kind of uncomfortable because that person is different and unfamiliar to them. He thought that the diversity and multiculturalism he could see in Finland was a very positive thing for him.

Student 2's impression was that on the surface, Finnish people are a bit shy and introverted. She told that once she gets close to Finnish people, they're really hospitable, kind and friendly. She said that Finns enjoy nature and silence and think that spending a lot of time with family is very important. Student 2 also mentioned that during her stay in Finland she didn't experience racism, which was very positive.

Student 3 told that before she came to Finland she heard that Finns need their own personal space, which appeared to be true. However, for her it seemed nice, because she felt that they respect others. She also mentioned that she didn't experience any racism in Finland unlike in some other countries. Student 3 told that Finnish people helped her a lot, e.g. getting to a place she wanted to go. She described Finnish people to be very helpful and polite. She said that it's not that easy to approach and become friends with Finnish people, because they don't do small talk. However, she still made some Finnish friends, and told that they helped each other a lot. Student 3 told that she lost her bag in a metro once, but her friends luckily could help her get it back. She told that also her tutor from Laurea helped her a lot. On her arrival day to Finland, Student 3 got a bit lost, but her tutor helped her to find to her place.

Student 4 described Finnish people to be very kind. He said that in Finland everyone is very kind and that he saw many drunken people, but even they were not bothering him. He told that Finnish people speak English fluently, even the older people. He could approach people easily and made a lot of friends. Student 4 said that he had heard that Finnish people are very shy, but he didn't really think so. Every Finnish person seemed to be extroverted for him, and it was surprising. He told that: *"Even Finnish said 'We are very shy' so I expected yeah they are very shy, maybe, but... my friends, Finnish friends are not that shy, they are very open minded and they're very... treated us well..."*

Student 5 told that many of her Korean friends didn't really like Finland because they found it too boring and peaceful compared to Korea. She said that her friends weren't willing to stay in Finland, that they were only willing to visit Finland, but they didn't want to live in Finland because of the environment and the people. She explained that her friends felt that Finnish people are too introverted and it's hard to make Finnish friends. Her friends didn't like the individualist culture. Student 5 told that she herself fit well in the Finnish society and for her it was very peaceful, and people were so nice. She told that a very good thing about Finnish society is that it doesn't force individuals to be extrovert. She explained that in Korea if you don't go out and hang out with your friends when they ask you to they don't really understand why you want to spend your own 'me time'. She told that in Finland people respect the decision to have your own time.

5.3.2 Hardest part of living in Finland

Student 1 told that the hardest was that he didn't have any person who he could rely on. He had to do things that were unfamiliar and new to him, e.g. getting a house, moving into a new apartment, buying a travel card in HSL office, going to a hospital etc., all on his own, and he sometimes felt burdened and exhausted due to that. He thought he would bother people if he asked for their help and he also felt that no-one really even tried to offer any help. He explained that they just handed him what he had to do and expected him to do it on his own. He wished he would have gotten some instructions about how to deal with those various things.

For Student 2 the worst thing about Finland that she couldn't get a lot of sunlight, so she was getting depressed. She said she never suffered of that in Korea, because in Korea even in the winter there's sunlight for the whole day. She said the winter is too long and so dark. Also, for her it was hard to wake up for 8.30 am class, since in Korea 9 am is the earliest class. 8.30 am was too early for her and she wasn't used to it.

Student 3 also experienced the same thing with the sunlight. She said that November was okay, but in December she couldn't feel the sunshine for a month and she started to feel depressed and had to take vitamin D. "When the sunshine comes out I followed it, "Oh there's sunshine!" " She also mentioned that the weather's too cold. "I lived in Finland in autumn and winter. In winter there snowed like seven days and 10 days, and then melted and then snowing again." She told that transportation got delayed so much, so it was hard to go to school. Student 3 also mentioned that because there was no Korean market, she had to make all the food herself, since the Korean restaurant was too expensive for her. She said it's hard to go to eat outside because it's too expensive, and that she usually went to have lunch outside, but not dinner.

For Student 4 definitely the worst part was the coldness. He told that he prepared well for the winter with warm clothes, but it still wasn't enough, and it was worse than he expected. He also suffered because he couldn't get much sunlight, he felt a little bit gloomy and depressed due to that. However, he mentioned that the weather problem was the only bad thing in Finland.

Student 5 stated that she didn't experience racism in Finland, but she could sense obvious discrimination. She explained that because she was an Asian, a foreigner, it was hard to get a job. She mentioned that it's always really hard to get a job as a foreigner in any country, but she felt like it was especially difficult in Finland, especially if you want an office job or a job in marketing etc. She said she could get a job in Finland because they were recruiting someone who can speak Korean for the job she got from Tallink Silja.

Student 5 also experienced that some men and even some women were looking down on the Asians, thinking they were from a poor country. She mentioned that Korea has higher GDP than Finland and Korea is actually richer country than Finland. She told about her experiences with ignorance like this: *"So once they were asking me like 'Oh my god, so in Korea everyone has smartphone? So all the passengers from Korea, they're like super rich because they could travel here, right?' I'm like... I'm not that rich, I'm not even close to rich, and I'm here, I study here... And I think that's kind of like one of the racism. They don't even have a sense of racism, they just make a joke like 'ching ching chong' and they think it's a joke and they don't know it's racism. And that's really bad and some, some boys, they think Asian girls are really easy and I think that's because there's so many Vietnamese. So many girls from Thailand, Vietnam. And they're coming to Finland... just marrying for the money stuff, and I think that's like a part of the reason why because they they see the Asian girls being like that."*

Student 5 said that it's really annoying that these people are thinking that Asians are lower than them. She stated that in her opinion these people don't think like every culture has something to appreciate. She mentioned that not everyone is bad like that, but there were many very ignorant people. She hoped that Finnish government could organize some cultural courses about Asian countries and listed more instances she had experienced ignorance, such as people wondering if she had got a plastic surgery because of her good skin, or if her Mom has as big eyes as her. She commented that Asians can have big eyes and some people don't seem to know that. Some people were even surprised that her English skills were so good and how she could work and study in Finland. Student 5 added: *"They just don't think Asian girl can be cool... And not everyone is like this, just a part of them... Anyways, I mean I know so many good Finnish people, so many good Finnish people... In general, they are kinda blinded about Asia."*

5.3.3 Best of Finland

The best part of living in Finland for Student 1 was the entire vibe of the country, the quietness and peacefulness. He referred to his Finnish teacher who said that in Finland there's the saying that 'silence cures you' and he said he really agrees with that. Student 1 said that Finland's peaceful and quiet environment makes him calm and helps him to be himself.

Student 1's fondest memory of Finland was when he visited Vantaa international school as a part of his school project. He told about his experience like this: *"As I came to Finland for wanting to feel the education system directly, after I arrived in here, I proceeded a project called the analysis between Finnish and Korean education systems. And for the project, I went to a field trip to Vantaa international school where I could interview quite a few teachers and audit many classes. That's my favourite memory in Finland."*

Student 1 told that the visit really made him understand Finnish educational system. He told that he was really surprised by the fact that many of the students weren't concentrated on the class. He had thought that Finnish students are really earnest and willing to learn, because for him, so it was so different from what he had expected. He was very shocked about that many of the students were just distracted and discussed about that with two of the teachers at the school. The teachers explained to him that they just allow the students do what they want, because that way they learn to become responsible for what they do. If they don't pay attention during the class, they can't learn. That way, they learn to be responsible for their actions. For Student 1, this sounded incredible. He told it was a great experience. He told the teachers wouldn't do that in Korea, because they just command their students to pay attention and sometimes even beat them if the students don't obey. He commented that the experience really made him understand what a teacher should be like.

For Student 2 the best part in Finland was that Finland's infrastructure is good. She stated that Finland's public security is good and that she never experienced difficulty using public transportation. She mentioned that it was good that exchange students could also go to the health care center when they're sick.

Student 2's best memory from Finland is when she organized a multicultural day in Laurea University with her Finnish and Korean friends. After that she and the other Korean students were invited to the Finnish friends' home to celebrate Finland's Independence Day. Student 2 told that they spent such a great time together. *"Last year was 100th anniversary of independence of Finland, so we enjoyed the firework. And since Korea was also independent of Japan, so it was quite meaningful for me..."* She told she could feel pride over Finland's independence on that day because it made her think of the independence of Korea.

Student 3 told that she actually really liked to live in Finland, because it's very calm there. She said that in Korea everything is very busy and crowded, but in Finland it's possible to feel the nature, the forest and lake, and it's very quiet. She said it's good for her mental health to be outside of the city.

For Student 3 the best part of Finland was the Christmas market. She explained that in Korea there's no Christmas market like in Finland, that Koreans are just hanging out with friends, not with family. She told that she could really feel the Christmas spirit from other culture. In Korea Christmas is more for couples, whereas in Finland it's more warm time to spend with family and friends. Student 3 had a Christmas party with her friends and told that she really liked all the Christmas sweets in Finland, such as glögi, star pastries and gingerbread cookies.

Student 4 told that the best in Finland was that it was very easy to travel to other countries. There were many ways he could travel elsewhere; ferry, train and plane. Traveling from and in Finland was very easy and he could go to many countries during his stay. Student 4 also said that in Finland he could relax because there's no rush in Finland. He told it was so peaceful that he didn't even hear cars tooting even though he was living in the middle of a city. It was unlike in Seoul. He had a lot of time to think on his own and so much free time. He told that he never felt homesick and perfectly adapted to Finland.

Student 4's fondest memory from Finland was Finnish sauna. He told that he and his friends had sauna in a HOAS facility and that while having sauna they went outside in the cold just wearing underwear. He described that the balance of cold and the heat was very great. Student 4 told that he and his friends wanted to jump into the lake in the winter after sauna too, but unfortunately, they couldn't do that. He told that he saw a documentary program about Finland where some Finnish people had sauna and went avanto swimming. When he saw that he really wanted to try it. He said that the next time he comes to Finland he will definitely do it. He also listed other things that he loves about Finland and they were calm, relaxed and peaceful environment and nature, the forest and lakes, and the Nuuksio National Park. He enjoyed walking in the park and breathing fresh air.

For Student 5 the best in Finland was that she could freely express herself. She said that she felt free, because people in Korea judge her and her style. She told that in Finland she could wear whatever she want, and people didn't mind. She told that men in Finland are more respectful and she didn't get sexually harassed, unlike in Korea. She told in Finland she felt freer and more relaxed and even when somebody would bump into her on the street she would just apologize and keep going. She said if the same thing would happen in Korea she would be very annoyed about that, because in Korea she's feeling very tense. She explained because Helsinki isn't as busy as the big cities in Korea such as Seoul or Daegu, so people are more relaxed there and she was, too. Student 5 also listed many things that she likes about

Finland, e.g. fresh air, fresh water, the design items, like products from Iittala and Marimekko. She commented that there are so many things that she likes about Finland, though food is horrible. She added that she loves salmon and smoked salmon, though, and loves the salad culture in Finland, too.

Student 5 also told that she loved the Finnish sauna. She explained that Korean sauna is different from Finnish sauna, because Finnish sauna is a dry sauna and Koreans have more like a wet sauna. She added also that Finnish are having a party with sauna and Koreans really don't because in Korea it's more like just relaxation and only in the public, like a spa. She told that she was invited to a sauna party in front of the lake, where they had sauna and then dived into the lake. They also had BBQ. She said that she really loved it and loved the Finnish summer, but unfortunately never had a chance to celebrate Juhannus because she was working during that time. The same happened with Vappu, so Student 5 said that she really wants to celebrate it the next time she comes to Finland. Student 5 told that she loves the winter too, and for her the snow is so gorgeous. The winter in Finland is so different compared to Korean winter, the weather is drier in Finland than in Korea so the snow is different. She described the snow: *"When I first saw the snow in Finland, I was like what... is this?? I took the photos, like 1000 of photos and videos, I loved it, because it's dry, it looks like sugar powder... when it's snowing hard... you can see this particle of snow... snowflake... it was my first time to see snowflake ever in my whole life... I loved that. And when it's snowing very hard and there's a streetlight you can see the shadow of the snow. I still have a video of it, I just love it."* She also told that she's happy that she fits in the Finnish society and culture and told that she's never been a big city person, so she likes the size of Helsinki and it's perfect for her.

5.3.4 Culture shock

Student 1 told that he didn't experience much of a culture shock, but that there were features that were interesting to me. One of those features was that Finnish people really care about their privacy, and when they want to touch someone they ask if they can touch. He told that in Korea, it's normal to touch one another, it's just a way to show friendliness. He explained that Finnish people have a distance between each other, like a personal space and they really take it seriously and protect it.

For Student 2 there were so many things that were a culture shock for her. First one that she told about was seeing so many fathers with the baby strollers. She was amazed that men were pushing the strollers during the day, because in Korea it's mostly the mothers. The second was that in the trains people sat separated from each other and Student 2 wondered "Why do they do that?!" She told that she thought it's because the winter is so long and her teacher had told her that for vacation many Finns are going to a cottage in a forest, just enjoying the nature. She told that she realized Finns want to have their own space without being disturbed

by others. Third culture shock that Student 2 told about was equality. She explained about the differences in Finland and Korea: *"(In Finland) We don't have to call 'professor Tuula'... Just call 'Tuula'. But Korea is based on Confucian culture so we think age is very important, so if you are just one year older than me, I have to be polite. So... (In Korea) I should say 'Professor Tuula' not 'Tuula'..."*

The fourth culture shock that Student 2 experienced was that Finns like to drink alcohol like Koreans. When she went to Tallinn, she could see many Finns on the cruise who had bought a lot of alcoholic drinks. The fifth shock was that when crossing the crosswalk the cars allowed the pedestrian to pass first. She explained that in Korea the drivers don't do that, and if you are passing the crosswalk and don't be careful, you could be hit by a car. The sixth culture shock was that in Finland you could drink tap water. Student 2 told that in Korea you can also drink tap water but many people buy water or use water purifier just to be sure. She told in Western Europe you can't drink the tap water, so she said that in Finland it was really refreshing to be able to drink straight from the tap. The seventh culture shock that Student 2 experienced was the different medical system. In Korea there is no health care center. Instead Koreans go to a private hospital or a general hospital depending on their need. She thought the Finnish health care center was more efficient. She didn't need to go there for treatment herself but visited there during her class.

Student 3 also got a culture shock when she saw so many fathers playing with their kids. She was so surprised to see many parents in the noon playing with their kids, which was so different from Korea, since there the work hours are usually 9-18 or 9-19. She also commented there are so many playgrounds for kids and said that the social system with raising a child is very good, much better than in Korea. Student 3 told that she was bothered because in Finland people could smoke everywhere, like at the train station and on the streets. In Korea it's only allowed smoke in the smoking areas. She commented that it's bad because the kids are exposed to the cigarette smoke.

Student 4 told that he felt so envious of Finland because he saw many girls playing soccer. He told that to him it's quite strange, because in Korea girls usually don't want to play outside. He thought that it's a very serious problem in education in Korea that they don't recommend kids to go outside. He told that boys like playing soccer, but the girls don't want to do physical activities outside. In Finland 70 % of the people who he saw playing soccer were girls and for him it was great. He told Korean have physical education classes but they're mostly inside and there are so few of them and people mostly focus on studying other things. Student 4 really wished that in Korea they would encourage children to go outside to play, too.

For Student 5 the biggest culture shock was the nudity in public. She saw many shirtless men on the street in the summer time and told that wouldn't happen in Korea. Another culture

shock that she mentioned was that everything is too analog, because she had to use a key instead of the code to open the door. She told that the bidet shower in the toilet was very old-fashioned compared to Korea where they have machine in the toilet that even cleans itself. She told that she felt so bad for the young teenagers who were hanging out in the mall. Student 5 told that in Korea they have so many places for youngsters to spend time in, such as game halls, karaoke, cafés where you can play some console games, read comics etc. She suggested that there should be some culture activities for Finnish kids as well. She said that a good thing about Finland is that there is a really good social infrastructure like library, where you can use a printer and even a 3D printer. She told that library was the place where she saw the future of Finland.

5.4 Education

In this chapter the students tell about their experiences and opinions related to education. I asked them about the differences between Korean and Finnish education and how did they like the education in Laurea.

Student 1 stated that if a person comes to Finland as an exchange student it means they're a really good student, since going into exchange requires very good grades. He told he the Finnish way to learn was better for him and that the Finnish teachers are very helpful because they guide him with what he wants to learn, whereas in Korea you just have to focus on what the teachers are teaching. Student 1 stated that the courses that he took in Finland and the courses that he took in Korea were not actually all that different. He explained that in both countries the courses ask about his opinion, make him discuss about the solution to the problem and then make a presentation about what he has learnt during his research, usually made with a group. He stated that the difference between Korea and Finland hides in the attitudes of the teachers. Student 1 explained that in Korea most of the professors are not nice to the students and they think their main reason of being in university is to research their major and delve into it. He told that when trying to discuss about his future job with his tutor professor, the professor told him that it's not a thing she should be concerned about. She told Student 1 to go to the department that takes care of students' employment instead. He told that for him the most envious aspect about Finnish education system is that the teachers really care for their students. He told that most of the teachers that he met in Finland were really committed to their students and they tried hard to be of help to fulfil the potential of the students.

Student 2 told that her teachers were really kind and that they were not bossy. She told that she was so impressed that the teachers talked with their students and listened to their opinions. Student 2 said that sometimes discussion class was difficult for her, but it was so fresh for her in a good way. She could learn many issues in various countries and hear many different viewpoints. She explained that sometimes she was confused what is the conclusion

to the question in the discussion class, but there wasn't always a clear answer and she needed some time to get used to it. For her it was such a new experience and she really liked it. Student 2 told that Koreans mostly do rote learning and that they don't really have discussion classes. She told she really liked the discussion class because it was very interesting to share her opinions with other people and to find solution rather than to just memorize things. She told she learns better that way.

Student 3 told that she was surprised because sometimes in Finland there are three teachers in one class. She said that in Korea in a class there are so many students but only one professor. She told that in Finland her teachers helped her a lot, since at first it was really hard for her to approach the subject during the class because her English skills were not that sufficient then. Her teachers took time to explain about the subject to her. She told that she could also get feedback from her teachers and discuss with them. She told that the courses in Finland match well with what she wants to learn and what is related to her major. She told she really enjoyed the courses and could learn so much. She told that she took a very interesting course called Business Game which was about the economic system. In the course the students should take care of a simulated country and decide what they want to build and produce. She also had another course where they did a project working with a real Finnish company. She told in Korea they don't have any courses like these and that these courses very helpful for her learning. Student 3 explained that because Laurea is a University of Applied Sciences the teaching is more practical compared to Korean University. She told that in Korea studying is more theoretical and you have to mostly study a book and then take tests. She told it's a bit boring compared to Finland where if she wants to know about something she can discuss about it with a teacher or then experience about it through a project. She told that she prefers Finnish education, because in Korea is just about the book and about memorizing everything. She told that the course she took about service innovation helped her so much because through it she could have a chance to experience real company culture. Through that project she could meet the company employees and discuss with them about Finnish company culture, and she could apply that information later in her internship in Korea which was about the business of Finland.

Student 4 told that he had many interesting courses to choose from. He also took the Business Game course and he told it was very impressive for him because in the course there was a simulation game where he could learn about the full process of business such as marketing, financing, investment, production, etc. He thought it was great that he could study while playing games. In Korea he never experienced that kind of a game combined with studying. It made him learn a lot easier and commented that it was the best course he had ever taken. He told that he had seen a documentary of Finnish education where he saw many children playing a game and they learn through the games. He said he really wants to import that kind of system to Korea and told that Koreans are actually trying to combine game and studying as

well. He told that in Finland teachers really take care of students' problems and explained that he had a course where the professor took care of a problem he and his group members encountered in his group work. They had people in the group who were not doing anything for the group work so one of Student 4's group members complained about that to the teacher who then changed the group members. He told that he felt the teacher was really taking care of them.

Student 5 told that at first it was hard for her to get used to the Finnish way of education. She explained that in Finnish education system the teachers give students some homework and by doing the homework you learn, whereas in Korea, the teachers teach during the class and then they are testing the students' skill. Student 5 told that in Korea students are not learning by themselves but rather the teachers are teaching and the students are just taking it in. That is the difference between Finland and Korea. Student 5 was so confused at first about how she is supposed to learn but once she learnt how to study in Finnish way, she told that everything got much better and easier. She suggested that school should give some instruction for the exchange students from Asia. She wished the teachers would tell the students that they are not teaching them all from A to Z, but instead the students have to study it themselves. She wished the teachers would emphasize to the students that if they have questions, they can always come to ask them. She stated that she was really confused and didn't even know if she was allowed to ask any questions. Once she got used to the Finnish system, she thought it was a very great system compared to Korean system. She told that she really liked her course where she was doing a project with Finnish companies and said that that kind of business project course is not common at all in Korea. She told she also liked her other courses and learned many things.

When asked about the other differences between Korean and Finnish education systems, Student 5 stated that they're very different. She stated that Finnish is better but added that in some few ways Korea is just a little bit better. She said that she doesn't like that Korean society pushes the students to be the same, but that the good thing about that is that it gives everyone the basic knowledge about everything. However, she stated that at the same time it's a really bad thing, too. Finnish students can learn what they want to learn, e.g. languages. In Korea students don't have time for that so they just learn what they're taught about. Student 5 thought that in Korea the basic education level might be a little bit higher than in other countries. However, she stated that in Korea it's really hard for the students to be good at something and added that with Finnish education it's easier to be more creative. Student 5 explained how the Korean evaluating system works: *"When you evaluate the grade... it goes like... You have 95 A, and 85 B, 75 C... We are comparing each other, it's like so competitive. We consider each other like competitors. So it's really hard to be making good friends because we consider each other competitors. As 75 is still good, but we get C."*

She stated this kind of system is killing the students' self-esteem. She told that Koreans don't focus on finding what an individual is good at unlike Finnish.

Student 5 stated that the biggest difference between Finland and Korea is that in Finland there's a vocational school and you don't have to go to university to be something to get a job. She explained that in Korea if you go to a vocational school or University of Applied Sciences people will think of you to be a bit of a loser and told that in Korea if a person is not good at studying people will call them a loser and tell them that they should just go to vocational school or University of Applied Sciences.

5.5 Exchange program and development suggestions

I asked the students whether they participated in the exchange program activities offered by Laurea University of Applied Sciences. I also asked them if they had anything they would have wanted to experience or know more about in Finland and whether there was something they would have wanted to include in the Laurea's exchange program.

Only Student 2 and Student 5 participated in the activities of the exchange program. Student 1 told that he didn't want to participate in them because he doesn't want to be around with people who are not his friends. Student 3 and Student 4 went to the trips with their friends on their own. Student 3 told she couldn't participate to the trips because they were at the same time as she had to do her project. However, she heard good feedback about the program from her friends that the program was well organized and it was cheap. Student 4 told it was cheaper for him to organize the trips on his own, but he told he wished he would have gone with the exchange program group because he and his friends missed seeing Aurora Borealis in Lapland. He said that the next time he will go with a tour company.

Student 2 told that she really loved the Santa Claus Village. They stayed at a cottage with her friends and cooked there together and just enjoy. She told she could feel the beauty of nature. Student 5 participated in the LOB party and the Summer end party. She told those parties were good but that it's really different from Korean way of partying. She stated that European way of partying is really boring for her, because it's just mostly about going crazy and getting drunk. She still thought that it's really good to have that kind of events for students because it's an opportunity opportunity for students to network and learn about each other.

Student 1 wished that the exchange program would encourage exchange students to proceed with their own project courses about things that they can only do in Finland. In his opinion the present exchange program is too focused on traveling and having a foreign friend, so he wished there would have been more educational aspects in the program, since it's an exchange *student* program, not exchange tourist or traveller program.

Student 1 told that he really wished he could have visited Finnish universities and interview their teachers. He had made an analysis about Finnish education system so he wanted to learn more. Unfortunately he couldn't do that because he tried to reach the professors from the universities but none of them replied to him. He explained that he wanted to know about the elitism that is related to prestigious universities such as Helsinki, Aalto, and Eastern Finland university. He also mentioned that he really wanted to experience the Finnish cottage life and to see how it's like to live without electricity, since normally people are always exposed to electricity.

Student 2 felt there was nothing missing from the exchange program, but she only had a complaint about waking up so early for the classes. She wished the 8.30 am classes would have been 9.00 am like normally in Korea, and she explained it was especially hard in the winter time when the Sun still wasn't up in the morning. She said that she thought it was still night when she woke up to the dark mornings. Student 2 also would have wanted to know about the social welfare policies in Finland, such as pension or maternity leave. She explained that the lectures mostly focused on practical things.

Student 3 suggested there could have been more dates for the exchange program trips because she couldn't participate in them because she had to work on her school project assignment. Student 3 told that she heard that there are several internship programs related to Finnish companies, but the exchange students were not really informed about them. She wished the students would be given more information about that. She also mentioned that the social security system is a bit slow, slower than in Korea. I should get the residence number. I got in November. I couldn't get a visa for internship. I couldn't extend my visa. They should give more options and information to exchange students.

Student 4 would have wanted to visit elementary, middle and high schools because he wanted to see how they learn there. He told that that usually in the documentaries about Finnish education they show younger students rather than university students. He suggested that Laurea could organize a project about it, and since many Korean teachers visited Finland to learn about the Finnish education system, there's already that kind of tour program existing. He told it would be great if it could be applied for the university students. He also told that he wished reserving physical facility was easier. He told that he tried to reserve a tennis court so he could play tennis there, but he couldn't because the reserve system was so difficult to use. Student 4 hoped Laurea would have more possibilities for physical activities for the exchange students and a simple registration system to book the facilities.

Student 5 suggested Laurea to have a program that where exchange students can spend time with native people. She explained that the situation now was that Europeans hanged out with Europeans and Asians hanged out with Asians, and she commented it to be a bit boring. She

said that she didn't have any other complaints about the exchange program and proceeded to tell that when she was in Finland, she could learn more in one year than during her two and a half year studies in Korea. Student 5 told, however, that some Koreans didn't have good as good experience in Finland. She said there were three people who came to Laurea after her from the same university as her. She told that one man couldn't settle down in Finland so he just left back to Korea. Student 5 explained that she think it's more about if the culture, society and atmosphere are fitting you or not, and stated that fortunately for her it fit her. She told that for her Finland feels like it's her second home.

Student 5 told that she wanted to work in Finland because she wanted to better understand the society, and she explained that because during her time in Finland she never really missed Korea, but only Korean food, she was starting to think that she might actually want to live in Finland. She got a job as a Korean guide in Tallink Silja and really liked her job. Student 5 thought because she worked in Finland, she got a better understanding of Finland. She said if she had left Finland after her exchange program, she would have wanted to understand more.

Student 5 told about her friends who hated Finland because it was so boring there. According to them there was nothing to look at, nothing to play with, nothing to like. She told that she realized that her friends don't have information about Finland and neither did she. She explained that there are a lot of places in Finland and listed places like Cafe Regatta, small shops in Punavuori, and Porvoo. She stated that the problem is that her friends didn't know about them, because they don't have information about it. Student 5 explained that that's why all they go are just Stockmann street, The Helsinki Cathedral, and the Esplanadi street and Kauppatori, because they don't know about more. She told that they had a Finnish culture course, but during the course they only learnt about Kauppatori, Fazer chocolate, Helsinki Cathedral, the statues in front of Stockmann and the Christmas market. She explained there are so much more than that in Finland, like sauna, lakes, Punavuori design streets, Kallio district, Linnanmäki, etc. She thought the lack of information where to go or to visit gives this idea to exchange student that Finland is boring. Student 5 suggested that the exchange students should be given more information about Finland and its culture.

5.6 Competence gained from exchange

Student 1 told that as he had to do all things on his own, he became more independent. He stated that because of that he thinks he could adapt to any foreign country all by himself, even though it still could be hard. He also improved his English skills.

Student 2 also became more independent because before Finland she didn't really do a lot of things on her own. She searched information about Finland by herself through internet and prepared for the interview. She told that when she became more and more independent and

whenever she decided about something she felt that she was really living her life. She really enjoyed being independent and living on her own because in Korea she's living with her parents and told that sometimes she misses living on her own. Student 2 also improved her English skills and told that before when she had a conversation with her foreign friends she sometimes felt really confused what they were saying because they were they talking really fast. She told that in order to discuss with them better she wanted to learn more English so she watched English class videos on YouTube where she learnt new expressions and more English. She told that becoming more independent and improving her language skills will be very meaningful for her life.

Student 3 also improved her English skills and told that she learnt to speak better with foreigners. She said that before she went to Finland she was nervous to talk to foreigners but during her exchange she could improve her skills talking in English and she got more confidence to talk with foreign people. She also told that before she felt afraid to go other countries because she had no experience then, but after the exchange she thought that she could go everywhere. Student 3 told that she got more confident because of the exchange. She also told that thanks to the experience in Finland she could get an internship in Korea related to Finland. She also explained because she learnt about business in Finland and about the general Finnish culture she can talk easily with Finnish people like buyers in her future job in business field. She also mentioned that she got more independent because it was her first time away from her family.

Student 4 told that he had so much free time in Finland that he could have a lot of time for thinking. He was thinking what he should do in the future, what he's going to be like, what kind of person he wants to be. He had a lot of philosophical questions and did a lot of self-reflection. He got an idea that he wanted to do start up in Korea, so he designed his item in Finland and actually did start-up in Korea for one year. He created an educational IT program that was inspired by the Business Game course. Student 4 told that people should have more spare time to think and told that Finland woke up his creativity. He told that he saw many Finnish people who want to make their own start up and for him it was very impressive. He explained that Korean students don't want to make their own company because it's very hard to survive. Student 4 told he also learned to better communicate with people from other countries. He stated that getting multicultural experience and competence was better than language improvement. Student 4 said that one of the reasons he chose Europe instead of US was because there are many nations and you can communicate with people from various countries.

Student 5 told that because of coming to Finland she got to know that there are always better options for her to choose from. She said that if she had never come in Finland but instead went to Paris or Spain as an exchange student, she probably wouldn't want to live in Europe.

She told that she has bad memories from Korea and really wants to live in Finland now, and told it was lucky she went there and fit in the Finnish society. She told that Finland is giving her meaning in life. Student 5 told that what she learnt skill-wise was that she knew nothing about marketing before, but through the courses and project in Finland she had she learnt about marketing and got really into it. She wants to take Master's degree to learn more about marketing and she wants to work in marketing field. Student 5 told that personality-wise she learnt that she can choose what she wants and not follow the mainstream. She told that she feels that she obtained some of the Finnish strength, *sisu*.

5.7 Why to come to Finland

When asked why Korean students should come to Finland for exchange, Student 1 stated that because of the equality and non-hierarchical society of Finland. He explained about Korean society: *"Korea is such a hierarchical society that when they meet someone in person, first, they ask about their age because if they are older than they are, they have to be polite and obedient to them."* He said that in Finland the age doesn't matter and everybody is equal regardless of your sex, age, wealth, and status. He thought that it's possible because Finnish people really cherish the equality as a value. He stated that in order for Korean students to experience the equal and non-hierarchical society it is really worth to come to Finland.

For Student 2, one of the reasons why to come to Finland is because it's the hometown of a sauna. Other reason was that in Finland you can enjoy the nature and peaceful atmosphere. She said that the cost of living is cheaper compared to Norway. She also stated as reasons that Finnish people are really kind and friendly and that Finland's infrastructure is quite well developed. She told that she couldn't feel any difficulty living in Finland, comparing it to Seoul: *"Seoul is really... crowded and everything is really fast. So sometimes I feel so really exhausted but... Finland is really quiet and peaceful."*

Student 3 stated that a good reason to come to Finland is because the social security there is very safe. She stated that it's better than any other country. She told that Finnish people are very nice and they can speak English very well. She could improve her English skills a lot. She also stated as one of the reasons because the educational system is very good, and not like in Korea. In Finland it's possible to learn in a practical way. She also told that she heard that other exchange student countries are just for a trip and hanging out with other people and explained that Finland is more about education. She stated that if you want to learn more about your major and educational things in a practical way then you should go Finland. Student 3 also compared her experiences from other countries to her experiences in Finland: *"... People are very nice. There's no racism... I felt kind of racism in France and... England. Finnish people are very nice... Because it's very important to Asian people... I want to feel safe when I'm studying in there."* Student 3 stated that after her exchange period in Finland

she's actually considering doing the Bachelor's degree in Finland. She stated that it's because Finland's education and the system are very nice.

Student 4 stated that if you go to Finland you can have free time three or four times more than in Korea. He said it's good because there's a lot of time to think and time to reflect yourself. He also said that in Finland you could meet many people from many different countries and improve your language skills. He also added, referring to the fantasy that Koreans have about living in Finland: *"And you could say I've been to Finland, when you're back to Korea."*

Student 5 stated as her reasons that Finnish people speak English, Finland has a beautiful environment, and in order to learn the Finnish strength 'suomalainen sisu'. She stated: *"I don't know, you can go to Paris, you can go to Netherlands... you can go to Spain, but you can visit there, you will not want to live there."* She also said as one of her reasons Finland's good education system.

5.8 Teachers' viewpoint

In order to get a wider perspective on Korean students' time in Finland, I interviewed two of Laurea University of Applied Sciences teachers. They deal a lot with international students so they've had a lot of experience and discussions with Korean students.

The teachers told that Korean students ask them for help mainly for issues that are related to academic matters, such as courses, curriculums, schedules, etc. They told that many students encounter problems with the different education systems between Korea and Finland. They told that the teaching and learning in Finland varies a lot from Korea and explained about it: *"Students are required to be more proactive and self-oriented at Laurea and it seems that most Korean students are used to having things told to them - do this, do that, whereas in Finnish UAS studies you are required to be more independent and take charge of your own studies"*. They told that the students discuss these educational differences with them in class and tutoring sessions.

The teachers tell that the Korean students tend to be shy at first just like most other students. However, they learn quite quickly that Finnish teachers are less formal. The teachers hope that this makes the students feel that they are easy to approach. They stated that after few weeks, the students start asking a lot of questions and they become very communicative.

One of the teachers told that in order to understand Korean culture better she's watching many Korean related films and documents to better understand the culture of Korea and Korean life style and also their values and modern-day challenges. When asked what she knows about Korean culture she told that: *"My personal knowledge of Korea is based on*

student encounters and the previously mentioned documents and films, both those related to modern life and history. I have also seen the fascination related to youth culture with Kpop etc. during my travels to Bhutan, where Korean youth culture has a very strong influence.”

The teachers told that the Korean students tell a lot about their culture and its pros and cons during class discussions and personal tutoring.

The teachers told that for a lot of Asian students, including Koreans, some of the reasons to go for exchange to Finland is a chance to learn more about themselves and feel freedom. It is also a good chance to see the world before they go back to their home countries and work hard there and are too busy to have holidays.

When asked whether the students have problems with housing, the teachers told that housing matters seem to have been fine. However, they mentioned that they probably don't hear everything about issues related to housing, since those matters must be discussed more amongst the students and HOAS members.

The teachers told that some of the Korean students have experienced home sickness sometimes, but mostly instead of missing their home the students don't actually want to go back to their home. The teachers explained that the students feel a great freedom when they're in Finland and they're afraid that when they go back to their home countries they feel that they must let go of that freedom. They told that even though Finnish and Korean culture have major differences, many Korean students have only experienced mostly positive culture shock. The positive culture shock has come from the possibility to do their studies in a more innovative and free way and focusing on things that they really find interesting.

When asked about whether Korean students have experienced loneliness, the teachers told that they don't know whether some students have experienced it but mentioned that many Korean students usually want to be alone during their exchange since it's not a thing they can experience a lot back in Korea. They stated that: *“... students have mentioned that they WANT to be alone - that is something they have not experienced back home, so being alone is not any negative loneliness for these students, rather a positive me-time to focus on one's needs and thoughts.”*

The teachers emphasized freedom to be both the best and also most challenging part for Koreans in Finland. Some students have a hard time because they don't have all the details for the studying and because they're in charge of their own studies. However, at the same time freedom is also very refreshing to the students. The teachers told that for the first time in their life the students can do things in their own way and do new things that they haven't been able or allowed to do back in Korea. In Finland they can experience an educational atmosphere where they don't have to constantly compete between each other but have time and space for personal growth and development. They told that the students are able to find

their true strength. The teachers stated that the students have told that one of the best things in Finland is: “... *this aspect of freedom and a chance to be heard and appreciated for your knowledge and skills, without the fear of extreme competition against other students.*”

The teachers told that they have gotten a lot of positive feedback about the exchange program during and after the exchange from the students. They stated that for many students the exchange has been life changing and think that Korean students have really enjoyed their time in Finland. They told that the best feedback they have gotten from Korean students is: “*Their smiles when they leave Laurea and are full of hopes to change their lives and even to bring some new educational ideas and innovations to their Korean culture.*”

The teachers told that they love the Korean students' commitment to studies, and “their deep thinking minds and their academic orientation”. The most rewarding experience for the teachers is when they see the students daring to be bold and expressing their thoughts and creative ideas more and more during their exchange. When asked what the most memorable encounter with Korean students is, they stated: “*There are many but definitely the feeling when a student feels enough trust to deeply open up about such cultural aspects and challenges that she or he might have never dared to talk to anybody before.*”

The teachers told that reasons why Korean students should do their exchange in Finland is because Finnish educational system offers them a chance to see the world from a very different perspective. In Laurea the students can also experience the innovative Learning by Developing based teaching and learning which the teachers hoped will give the students a lot that they can take home. They also stated that after seeing the personal growth and how the students have developed after their exchange period, they told that it's worth also just for the creativity, self-confidence and professional development that can be gained through the exchange.

5.9 The survey results

In this chapter, I look at the results of the online survey. I conducted the online survey for 68 students who came for exchange to Laurea UAS in the years 2015-2018. 17 of 68 students answered to the survey. I asked them about their experiences in Finland and what kind of competence they gained.

First step I did in order to start my survey data analysis was proofreading the gathered data and inspecting it for any ambiguous responses. I removed some of the responses for this research, since they were inconsistent with some of the other responses. The ninth question for the survey was ‘9. Do you think coming to Finland for exchange was a good choice or would you have preferred some other country?’, for which all of the respondents replied that coming to Finland for exchange was a good choice for them. Still two of the respondents had

put a response to the follow-up question “10. If you chose Finland wasn't a good choice, why do you think so?”. The other’s response was “*all of things is expensive, food, traffic, etc.*” and the other one’s “*WEATHER IS TOO...DARK*”. The other inconsistency was that all of the respondents replied to the question “23. Did you participate in the exchange program activities?” that they participated in them, but one of the respondents had put a response to the follow-up question “25. If no, why didn't you participate?”. Their response to it was “*cost, distance between lohja and helsinki*”. Even though these responses were inconsistent with the respondents’ other responses, they still work as answers for the questions 10 and 25. However, for clarity I removed the responses for questions 10. and 25. for this survey research. There was also a response for question “26. Is there something you would have wanted to experience or know more about?” that I didn’t understand. It was “*Experience stay in coach*”. I decided to remove it too from the research.

The survey questions can be found in Appendix 3. The qualitative answers for the survey can be found in Appendix 4.

5.9.1 Respondents’ background information

The first five questions give background information about the respondents. The information is about their gender, age, home university, major and the semester or semesters that they had their exchange in Laurea University of Applied Sciences.

The Figure 1 below illustrates the gender distribution amongst the respondents. There were more female respondents than male. There were nine respondents who were female and seven male respondents. There was one respondent who preferred not to tell their gender.

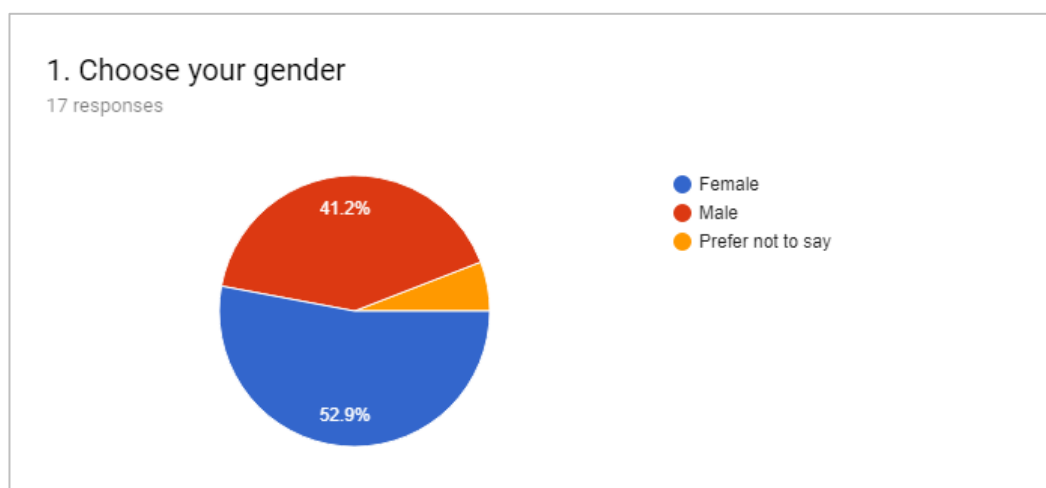


FIGURE 1. The gender of the respondents

The following graph Figure 2 tells the distribution of the respondents’ age. I asked them to tell their Korean age for clarity. Korean age means it’s one year older than Western age,

because in Korea when a person is born they think they're already one-year old (korea4expats 2011). The respondents were mainly in mid-twenties, but there was one respondent who was over 30 years old. The majority of the respondents were 24-25 years old.

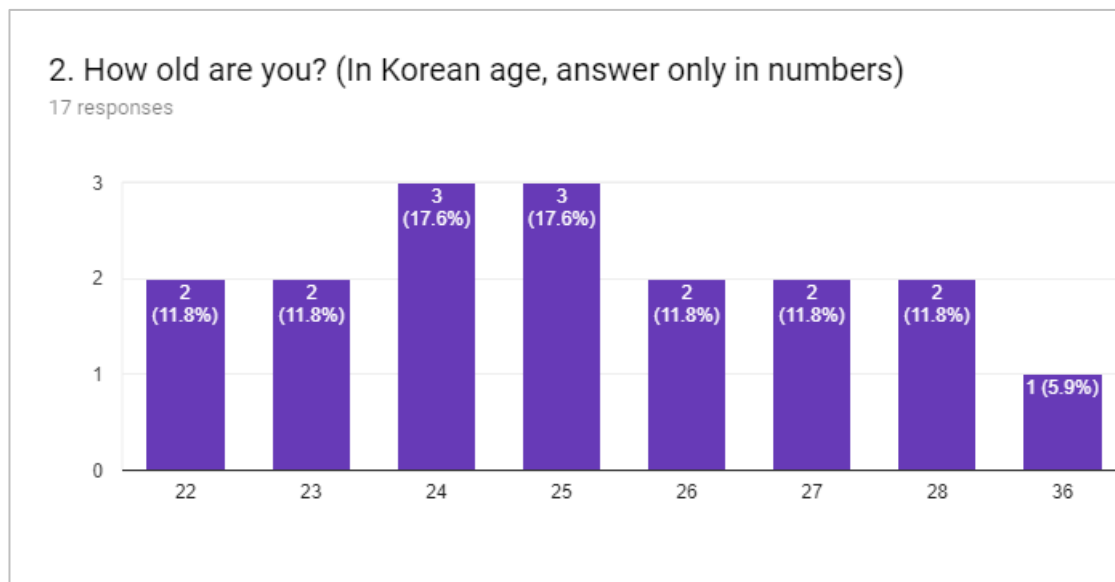


FIGURE 2. The age of the respondents

The below Figure 3 illustrates information about the respondents' home university. The majority of the respondents were from Dongguk University. There were nine students from Dongguk University who responded. Six of the respondents were from Yeungnam University. There were only two respondents from Konkuk University.

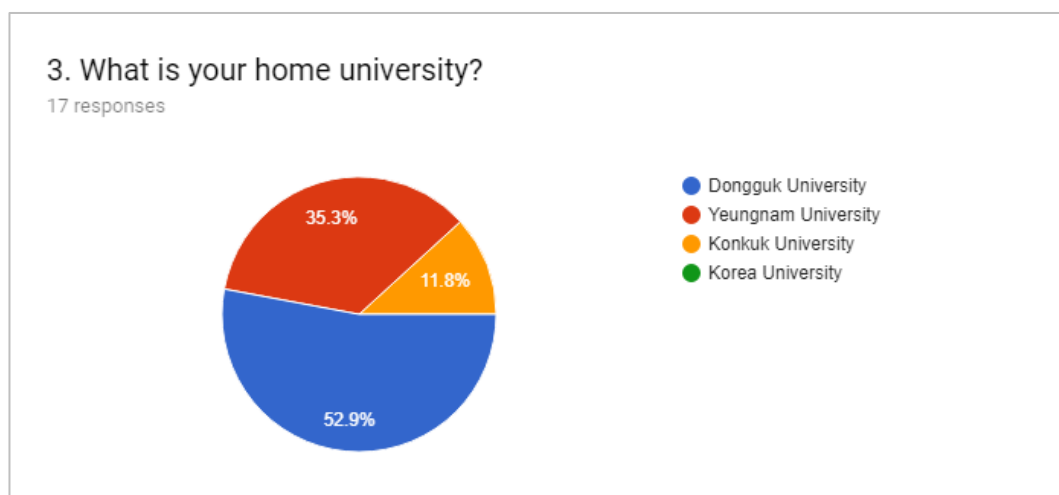


FIGURE 3. The home university of the respondents

The following Figure 4. shows the respondents' majors. Majority of the students are majoring in Business field, varying with responses "*Business*", "*Business administration*", "*Business*

management” and *“fashion and business management”*. There were also three majors related to business, *“ACCOUNTING”*, *“International trade”* and *“Economics”*. In total there 11 were respondents majoring in business related major. One respondent was English & English literature student, one majoring in *“mathematics education”* and one in *“Food&Nutrition”*. The rest three were Social services students.

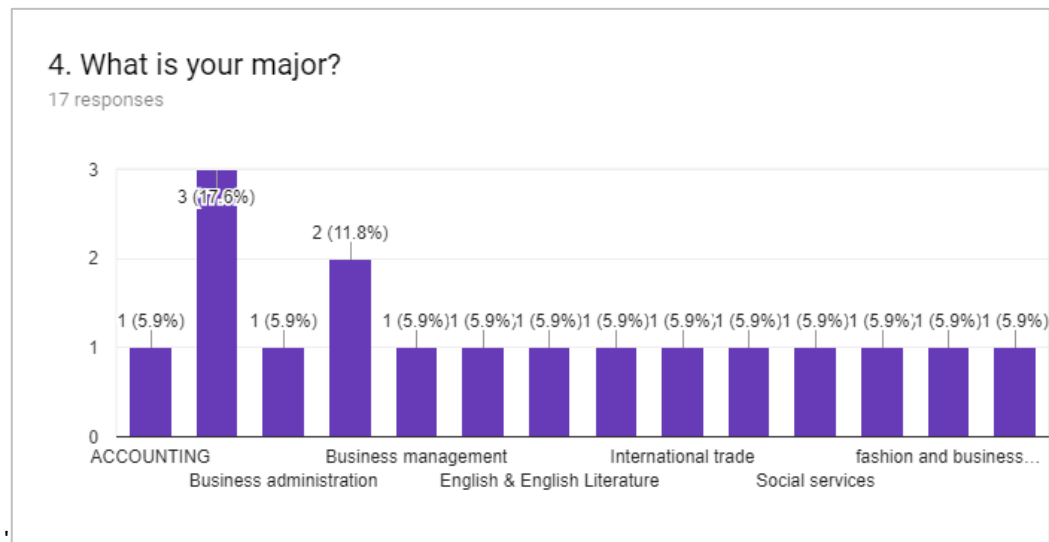


FIGURE 4. The major of the respondents

The below graph Figure 5. illustrates the semester and/or year the respondents were in Laurea. There were zero respondents for the Spring 2015 semester. Majority of the respondents were currently studying in Laurea in Autumn 2018. They must have been the most willing to participate in the survey because of their current studies in Laurea. The next most active were exchange students who were in Laurea for the Autumn 2016 semester.

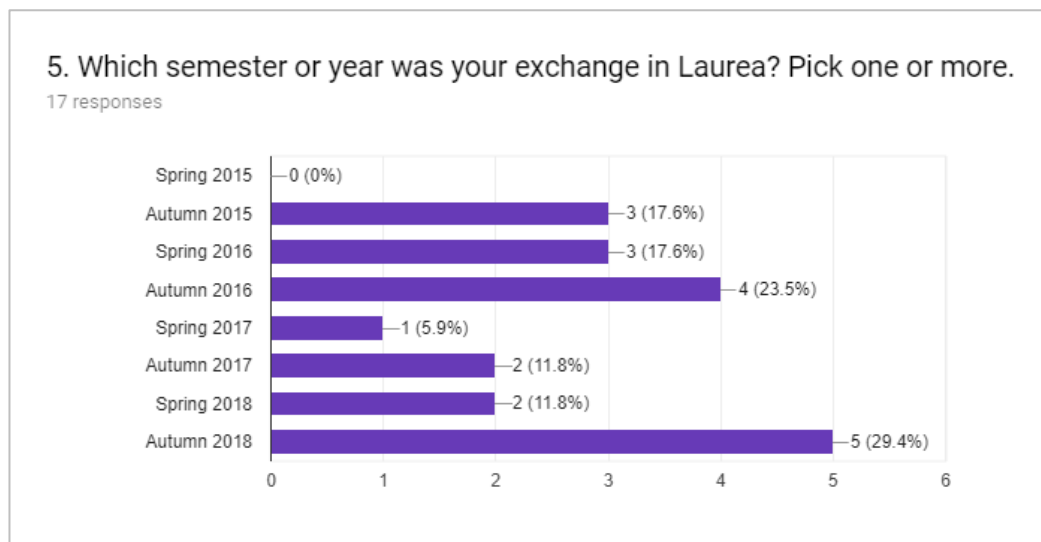


FIGURE 5. The semester or year the respondents had their exchange in Laurea University of Applied Sciences.

5.9.2 Reasons to come to Finland and time in Finland

The below graph shows what was the respondents' reason to come to Finland. I had put four answers which were Education system, Recommendation from a friend, Safety and security of the country, Cultural aspects. For majority the reason was education system, 15 respondents in total. The next biggest reason was Safety and security of the country. Six respondents had got a recommendation from a friend. There were only two respondents who came to Finland for its cultural aspects. There was one respondents who told in their own words that there's "Less korean in Fin". Other respondent told in their own words because of "Laborer's right level". One of the respondents told in their own words "It's personal reason. Finland is famous for 'Social service'. And my major is 'social service'." For one of the respondents the reason was because of English practice.



FIGURE 6. The respondents' reasons to come to study to Finland

The following graph illustrates what the respondents thought was the best part in studying in Laurea. Majority thought that having a lot of free time and educational aspect were the best in their studies, for both 11 responses in total. The next biggest aspect they liked in studying in Laurea was professors, seven answers in total. There were four responses that friends were the best part in Laurea. There were two answers from the respondents in their own words. The other told that the culture was the best part in studying in Laurea. The other one told: "Tutor as well. My tutor is so kind. When I came to Fin, she picked up me. When I go back to Korea, I had a lot of luggage. She helped me. /During travel, she took my luggage. I got a lot of help from her!"

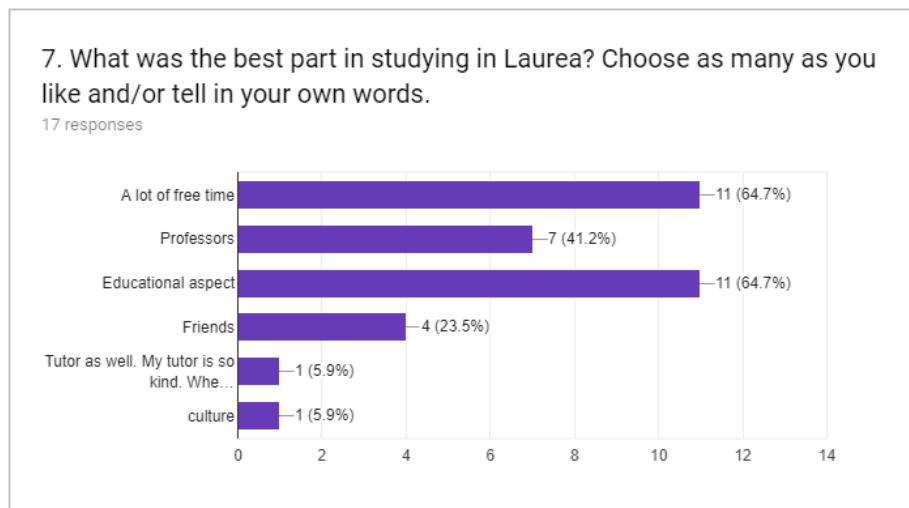


FIGURE 7. The respondents' answers for the best part to study to in Laurea

The below graph shows what the respondents thought was the best part in living in Finland. Majority thought the best part to be the amount of free time they had, there were 11 responses in total for that. The second best was culture, eight answers in total. The next comes friends, six answers in total, then school with three answers. One of the respondents wrote: *“Security. I came home at 3 a.m. and it was really safe./People. People were so kind and good at English. So I was easy to communicate with them, / Nature, Compared to Korea, the air is so clean. While I live in Finland, I think I was healthier”*. One told that quiet environment was the best and one wrote: *“kind people and good at speaking english(easy to communication)”*. One of the respondents that the air was much fresher than in Korea and one of them liked the design and modern art gallery the best. One of them wrote: *“I loved sauna in my hoas and never ending sunshine on the summer:) also fresh air.”*

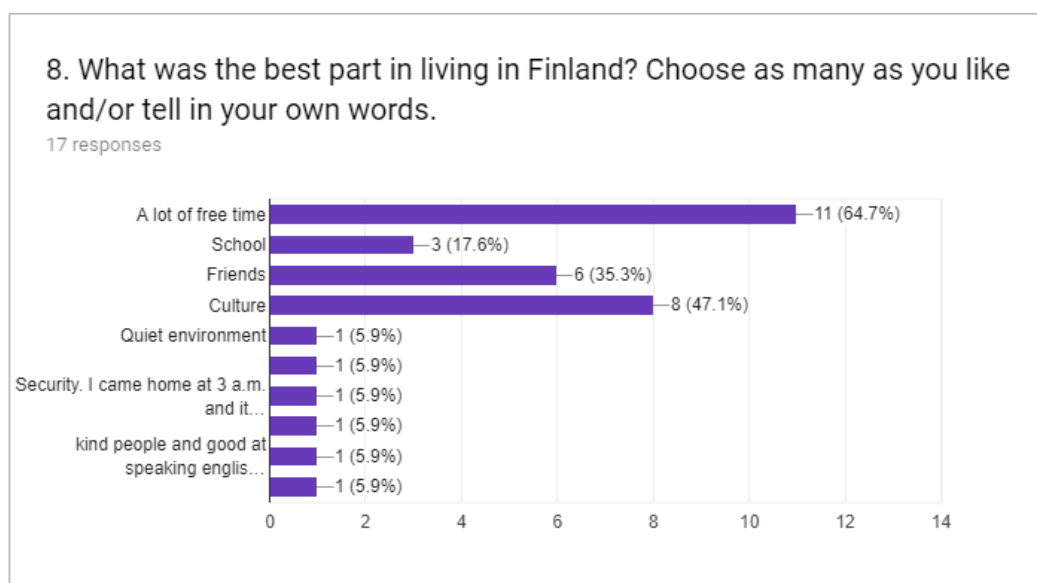


FIGURE 8. The respondents' answers to what was the best part in living in Finland

The following graph shows the respondents' opinion whether coming to Finland for exchange was a good choice for them. All of the respondents thought so.

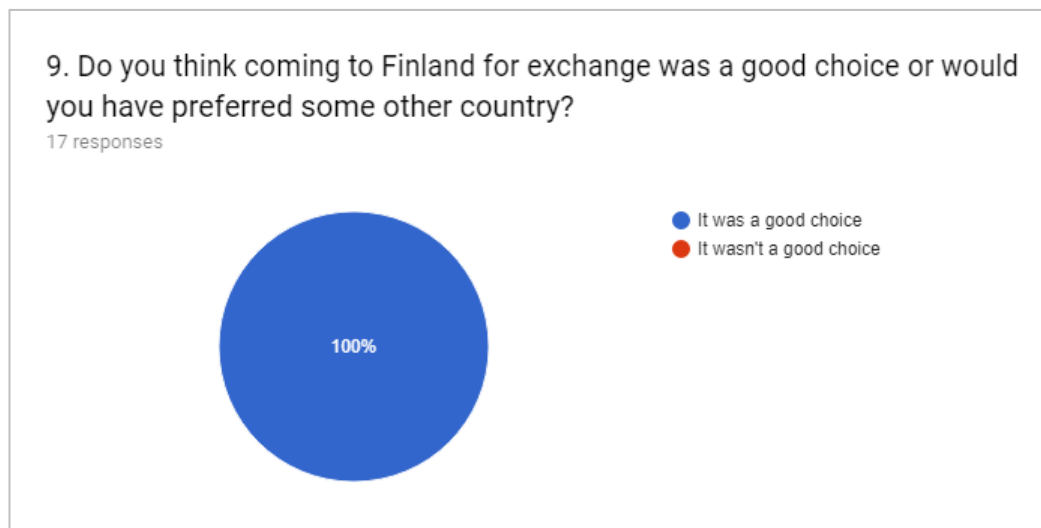


FIGURE 9. Respondents' opinion whether coming to Finland was a good choice or if they preferred some other country

5.9.3 Competence gained from the exchange

I wanted to research what kind of competence the students gained through their exchange period. I added questions that asked them to consider the skills and development they possibly gained through their exchange.

The following chart Figure 10 shows how useful the respondents thought the exchange to be in their studies. Majority of the respondent chose the second highest ranking, seven people in total. Six respondents chose the highest ranking. There was only one who chose the second lowest ranking and three respondents who chose the average ranking. According to this chart the perceived usefulness is very good.

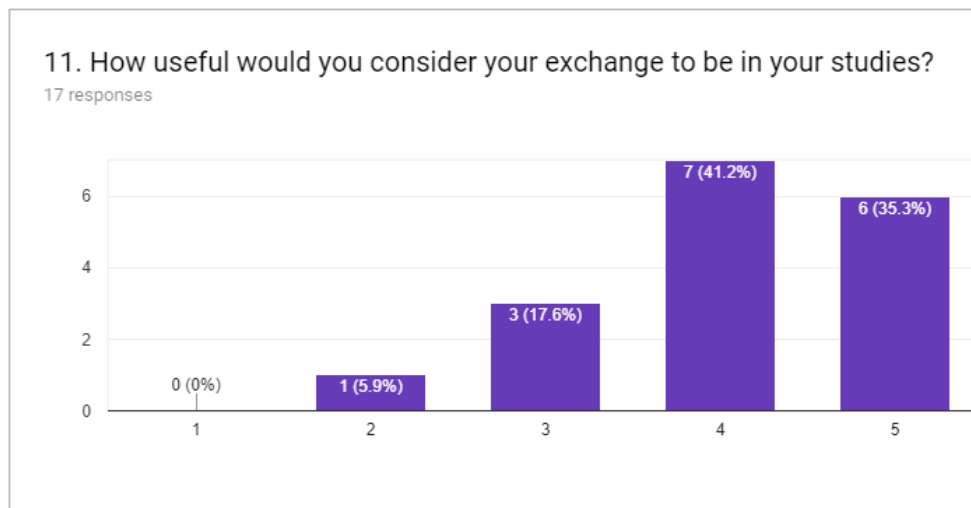


FIGURE 10. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be in the studies of the respondents

The below chart Figure 11. illustrates how useful the respondents considered the exchange to be in their working life. The majority chose the second highest ranking, seven respondents in total. There were five answers in the highest ranking, four in the average ranking and only one in second lowest ranking. According to this chart the exchange was useful for the students' working life.

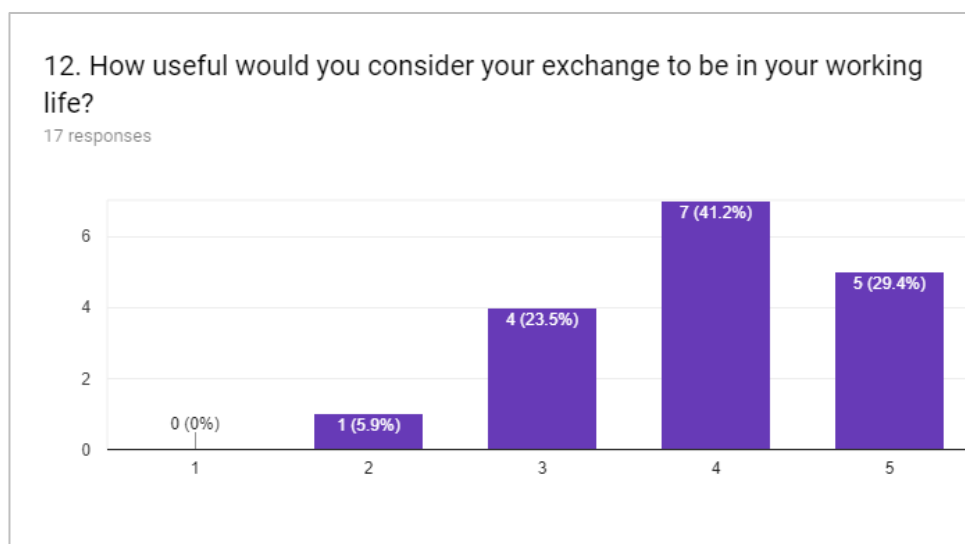


FIGURE 11. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be in the working life of the respondents

The following chart shows how useful the respondents considered the exchange to be in improving their English skills. Majority chose the second highest ranking, with seven respondents in total. There were six respondents who picked the highest rating. Only one chose the second lowest ranking and three picked the average rating.

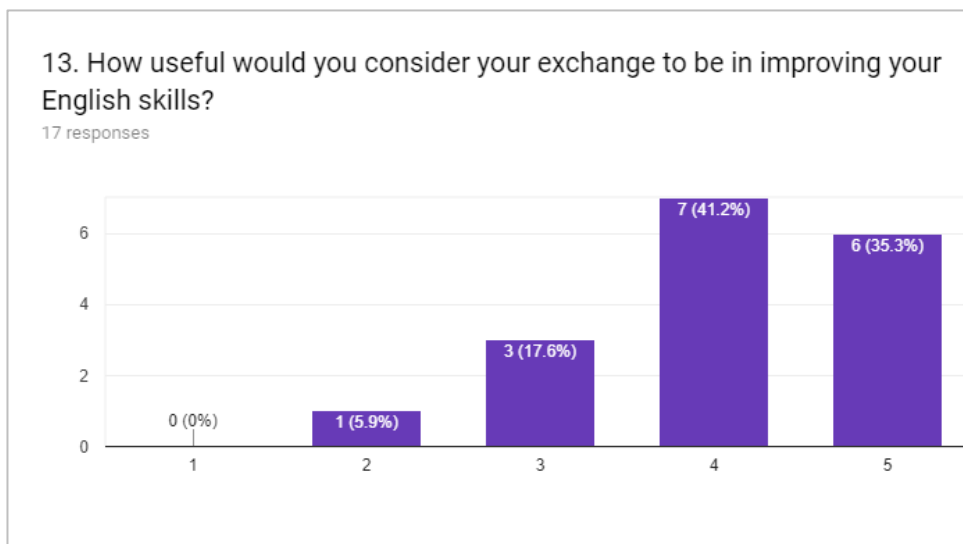


FIGURE 12. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be in improving the respondents' English skills

The below chart shows how useful the respondents considered the exchange to be in terms of adapting to new environments and situations and acquiring independence. Majority chose the highest ranking, 14 people in total. Only one respondent chose the second lowest ranking and two chose the second highest ranking.

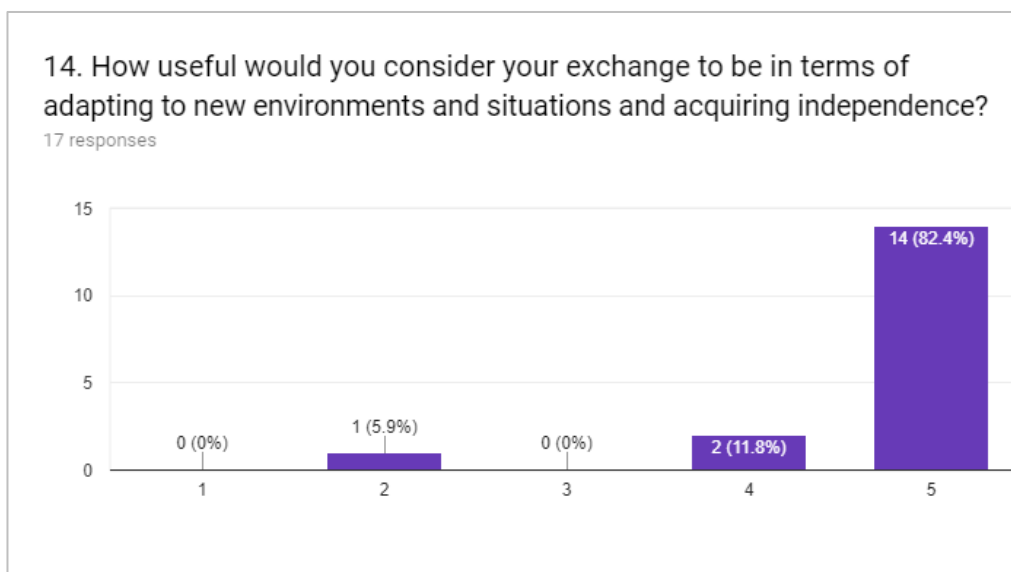


FIGURE 13. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be in terms of adapting to new environments and situations and acquiring independence to the respondents

The following chart illustrates how useful the respondents considered their exchange to be for their personal growth. Majority thought the exchange to be very useful, with eight responses for the highest ranking and seven responses for the next highest ranking. There were only two responses for the average rank.

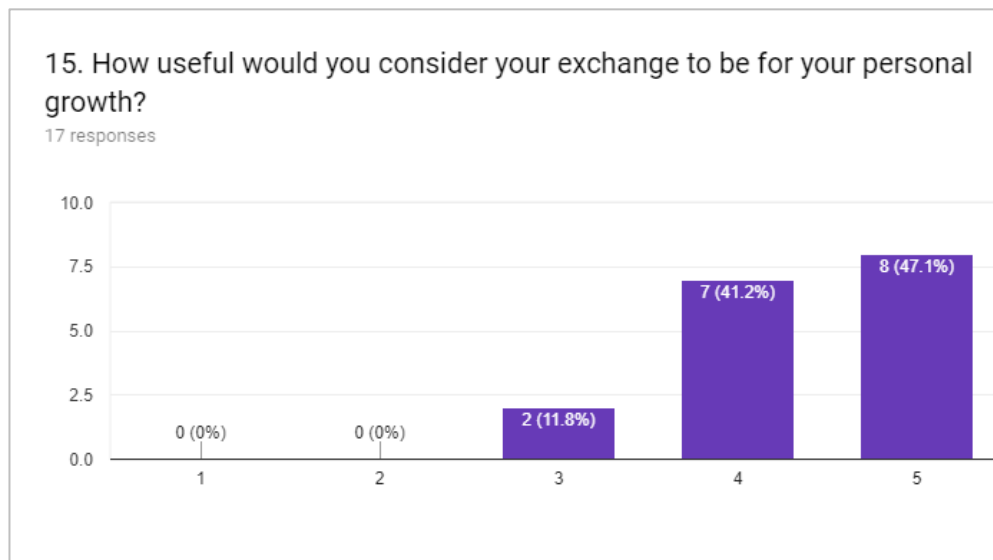


FIGURE 14. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be for the personal growth of the respondents

The following chart shows how useful the respondents considered their exchange to be in terms of acquiring multicultural competence. There were same answers as for the latter chart. Majority thought it was very useful and only two respondents chose the average ranking.

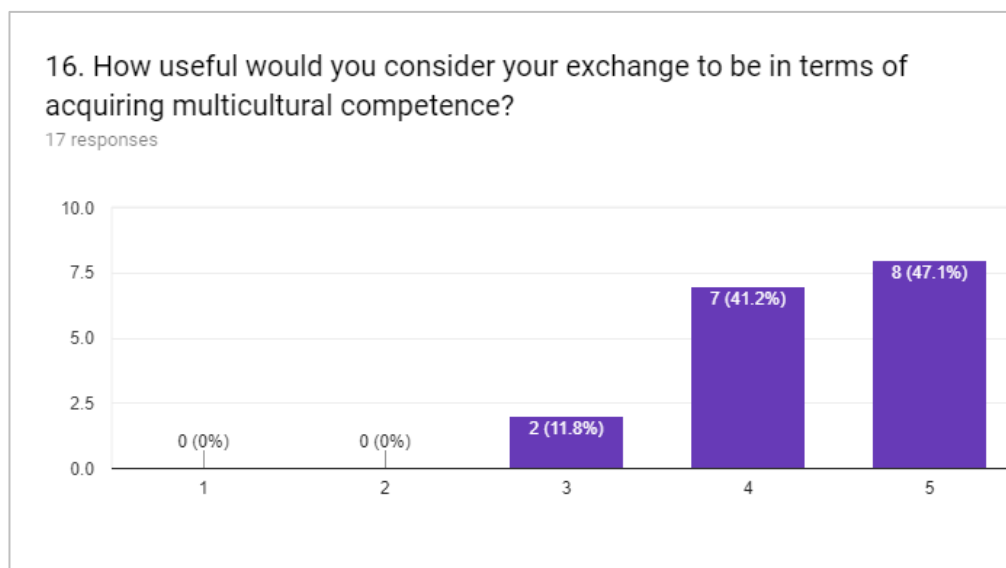


FIGURE 15. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be in terms of acquiring multicultural competence for the respondents

The following chart illustrates how useful the respondents considered the exchange to be for their communication skills. Majority chose the second highest ranking for the perceived usefulness, seven respondents in total. Six people chose the highest ranking and four respondents chose the average ranking.



FIGURE 16. The perceived usefulness of the exchange to be for the respondents' communication skills

5.9.4 Experiences of Laurea

The next part focuses on the respondents' opinion on the educational aspects in Laurea. These aspects include opinion on the general education, the perceived usefulness of the courses and how much freedom the respondents had in choosing their courses.

The below chart illustrates how much the respondents liked Laurea's education. Majority chose the highest ranking, eight respondents in total. There were five people who chose the second highest ranking. There were two respondents who chose the average ranking. Two of the respondents didn't like the education a lot since they chose the second lowest ranking. However majority liked the education.

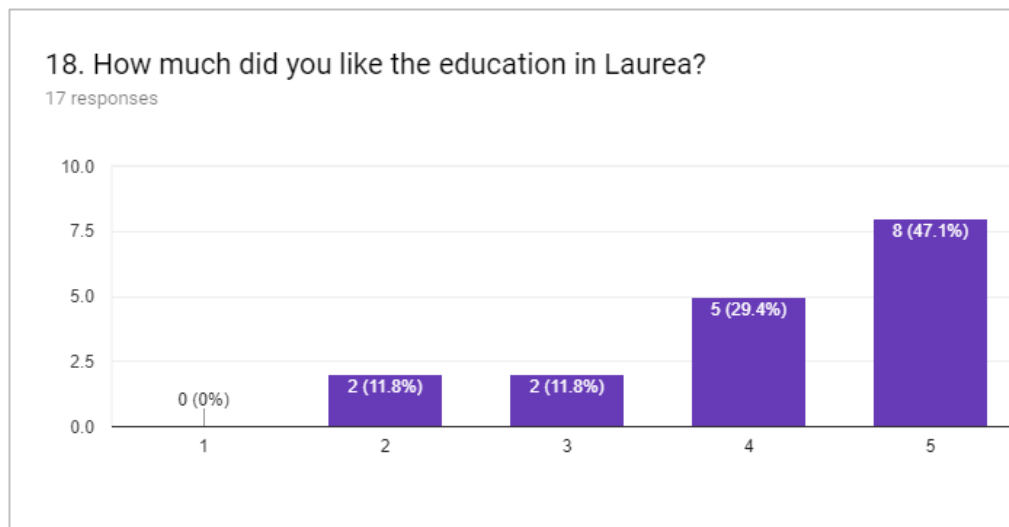


FIGURE 17. How much the respondents like the education in Laurea

The below chart shows the respondents' opinion on how useful the courses were for them in Laurea. Majority chose the average ranking, six people in total. There were five respondents for both the highest and second highest ranking. There was one respondent who felt the courses were not that useful to them. According to this chart the courses in Laurea are relatively useful.

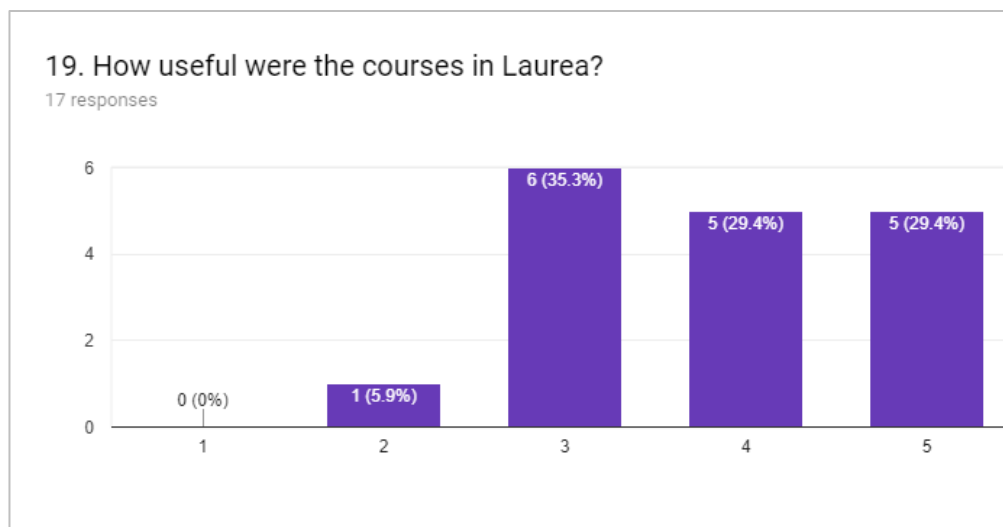


FIGURE 18. How useful the respondents thought the courses in Laurea to be

The below chart illustrates how much freedom the respondents had in choosing their courses in Laurea. Majority thought they had a lot of freedom since there were nine people who chose the highest ranking. There were five people who chose the average ranking and two who chose the second highest ranking. There was only one respondent who didn't have a lot of

freedom in choosing their courses. According to this chart most of the students seemed to have a good amount of freedom in choosing their courses.

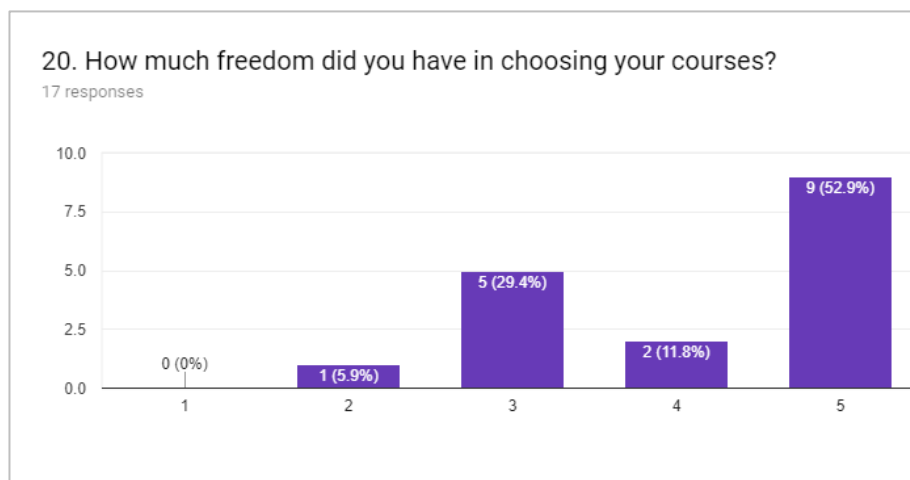


FIGURE 19. How much freedom the respondents thought they had in choosing their courses in Laurea

5.9.5 Problems that occurred

The following graph Figure 20. illustrates what kind of difficulties the respondents encountered during their stay in Finland. Majority of the respondents encountered problems with the weather, 10 people in total. The next biggest problem they suffered of was loneliness, with five responses to that. Four respondents had problems with their accommodation. One of the respondents answered that they didn't encounter any problems. One of the respondents told in their own words that they had problems shopping in a grocery store. One of them told in their own words that they had problems because of the different culture from Asia. One of the respondents told in their own words that they encountered difficulties with communication and one with financing themselves. One of the respondents told that they missed Korean food. One told: *"I had to pay the money by burning the dorm floor. It was difficult with a completely different system from Korea. Korea only has to pay for the fixed time. In Finland, the time the operator took the dormitory key, the time it takes to fix it, and the value of the material were taken into account. I had a lot of money than I thought, so I was embarrassed."* One of the respondents wrote: *"Banking transfer problem in cash Hoas lent"*.



FIGURE 20. What kind of difficulties the respondents encountered during their stay in Finland

The below chart Figure 21. describes how easy the respondents thought it was to get help for problems when they needed it. Majority of the respondents chose the average ranking, six respondents in total. Five people chose the second highest ranking. There were three respondents who chose the highest ranking and the second lowest rating. According to this chart, getting help is relatively easy, but there were still many students that thought it wasn't quite easy.

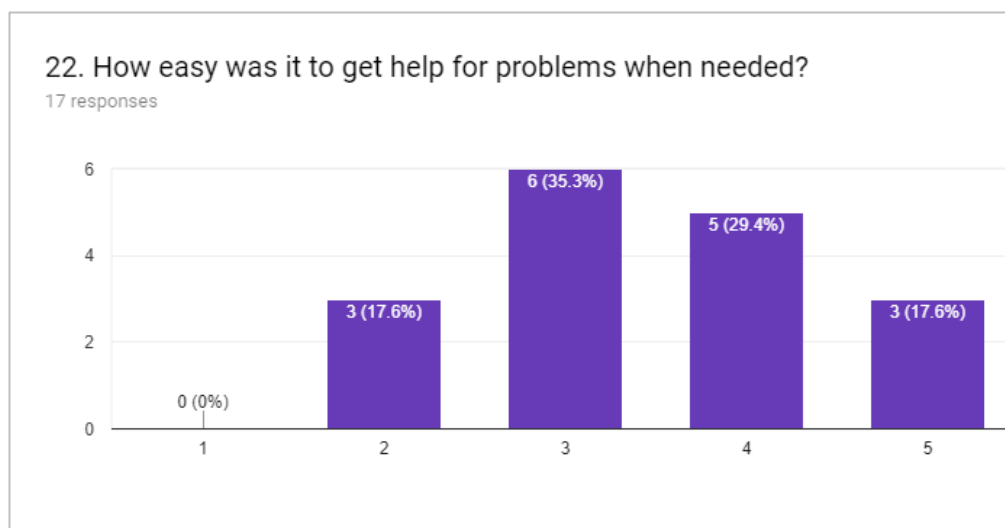


FIGURE 21. The respondents' perception of how easy it was to get help to their problems when needed

5.9.6 Exchange program

In the following graph is illustrated whether the respondents participated in the exchange program activities. All of the 17 respondents participated in them.

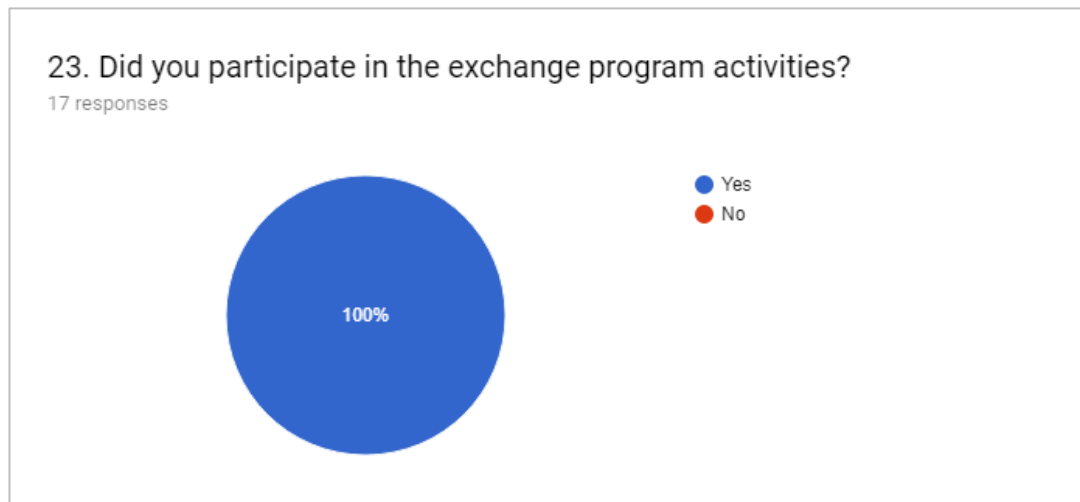


FIGURE 22. The respondents' participation in the exchange program activities

The following chart shows how much the respondents liked the exchange program activities. The majority of the respondents picked the second highest ranking, seven respondents in total. Five people chose the average rating. There were three respondents who really enjoyed the activities since they chose the highest ranking. Two respondents didn't like the activities a lot because they chose the second lowest ranking.

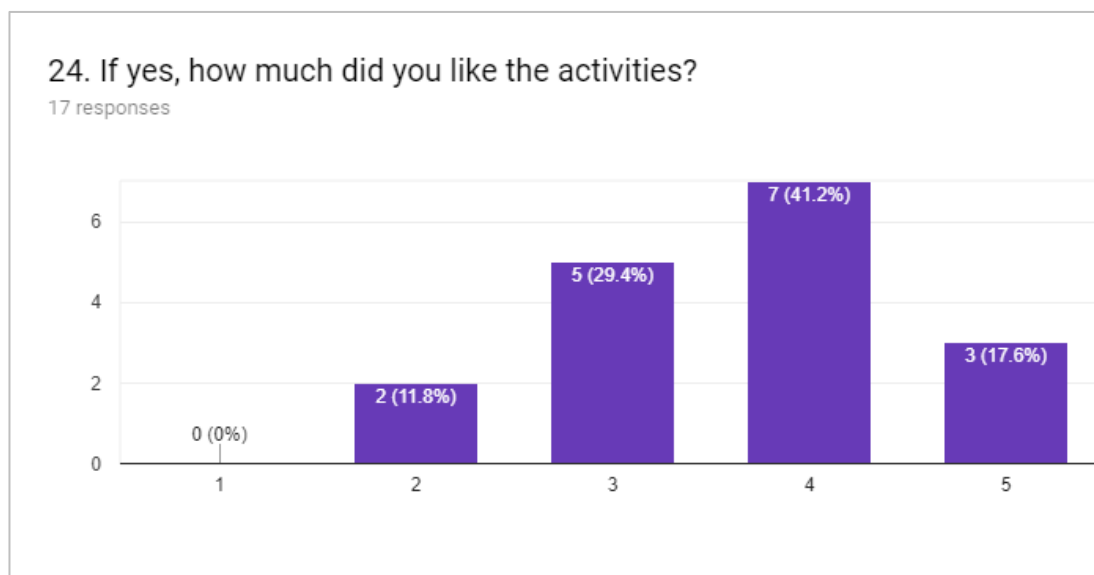


FIGURE 23. How much the respondents liked the exchange activities

5.9.7 The experiences and feedback of the respondents and the feedback from the working life partner Laurea

I asked the survey participants whether there was something they would have wanted to know or experience more about. One of them told that they would have wanted to work in Finland as a part time job worker. One of the respondents said that they would have wanted to meet Finnish friends. One of them would have wanted to experience and know about actual corporate culture, like through an internship.

I asked the survey participants to list top 3 reasons for Korean students to come to Finland. There were 14 responses in total which was great since almost all of the survey participants responded. There were eight respondents who answered the educational system. There were six responses that mentioned the safety and security. One of the respondents stated that in Finland you can enjoy winter and Christmas season. Few of the respondents mentioned the cultural aspects and nature, such as Lapland and Aurora Borealis. One of the respondents said that the low population rate in Finland is good since it makes the metro system simpler. Few respondents mentioned Finnish people and the level of English skills. Some respondents said relaxed and peaceful environment and studies.

For the last question I asked the participants to give feedback and say anything that comes to mind about Finland. They had a lot of experiences similar to the students who interviewed, about the freedom in education and non-hierarchical culture at school. They told they had good experiences with the education and their teachers. One of the respondents told that she felt very happy because some Finns expected her to talk Finnish. She explained that they didn't have prejudices towards her which she felt appreciative of. She also told about the flexibility of the teachers in Laurea. She told that she was shocked because she saw many people smoking on the streets, even a mother with a baby stroller. Many told they had great time in Finland and were very grateful for their time in there.

The feedback I got from my working life partner Laurea UAS about my thesis is the following: "The feedback from Laurea as a working life partner was positive and according to the International Coordinators, the results and the thesis as a whole can be used when further planning the student exchanges with Korean partners. Also, the material can be used in exchange infos and when promoting international co-operation and overall exchange with Korea. In addition, it gives further ideas how to improve the international programme offered for Korean exchange students in Finland."

6 Discussion

When reviewing and analysing all these materials from the interviewees and the survey results together, the recurring thing that appears as the best aspect of Finland is definitely the Finnish educational system. Many of the students praised the system, the level of

education and the teachers. The non-hierarchical and non-competitive environment in Finnish educational culture is clearly refreshing and freeing for the students. They also have a lot of freedom in their studies and get to be innovative and creative. The practicality of University of Applied Sciences and Laurea's Learning by Developing based education are also new and great experiences for them.

The second thing that arised is the good safety and security of Finland. Finland is a very safe country and even a bit secluded. It's so small compared to many other European countries with big capitals that are under a lot of terrorism threats. Finland doesn't really attract much attention since it's so neutral and small country which makes it very safe and secure.

Thanks to the size and the low population of Finland it's also very peaceful and not crowded at all. Only sometimes in Helsinki centre you could experience some rush, but it's nothing compared to the actual big cities. In my opinion, Helsinki is an ideal city for those who love both city life and nature. You don't have to go far to enjoy the nature since it's everywhere in Finland.

Many students also mentioned the kindness of Finnish people. They also felt safe and comfortable since they could speak English with them so easily. Many of them mentioned that they didn't experience racism in Finland. In Finland there's a lot of multiculturality and equality which is very different compared to Korea. This kind of environment is very new and great for the students.

Majority of the students really appreciated the amount of the free time they could have in Finland. In contrast to Korea, Finland is a very relaxed country. The educational system allows the students to have more freedom, since there is not that huge need for competition in Finland unlike in Korea.

Even though many students had problems with the Finnish weather in the winter time when it's cold and dark, still surprisingly many enjoyed winter. I think Christmas time being a time with friends and family is really warming and new for them, since in Korea Christmas is more of a couples' thing. I'm happy that so many could find warmth even in the cold and dark winter time.

Also to my surprise Finnish sauna was much fancied by the students. I would have thought it's a normal thing for Koreans since they have their own sauna but like Student 5 stated it's a different kind of sauna from what Finns have. Also the Finnish sauna culture is way more different from Korea, where it's more of a spa type of enjoyment. Koreans have jjimjilbangs which are public saunas. In Korea it's not typical to have your own sauna, unlike in Finland where many people have either their own sauna or a sauna in their apartment building. Finnish people use sauna not only for relaxation but also for having parties.

For me conducting this study was a great experience. I learnt so many new things about Korean culture myself too. I was often touched to hear how much the Korean students enjoyed their time in Finland. I'm very happy that so many found their place in Finland. I really hope more and more Koreans would come to Finland for having a time of relaxation. I personally love Korean culture but I'm definitely well aware, even more now than before thanks to this thesis, about the problems of Korean society. I hope many of these students who came to Finland will benefit of it a lot and could somehow use it for the good of their country.

Regarding possible future topics for research it could be studied about what kind of impact having a lot of free time has on a student when they're used to having much less free time. The contrast between hectic Korea and peaceful Finland is huge and it would be interesting to ponder more on that matter. Also the differences between the study systems in Korea and Finland would be a good research topic as well.

7 Top Ten Reasons to Come to Finland for Exchange



1. Educational system



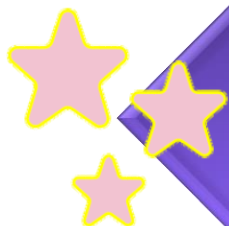
2. A lot of free time



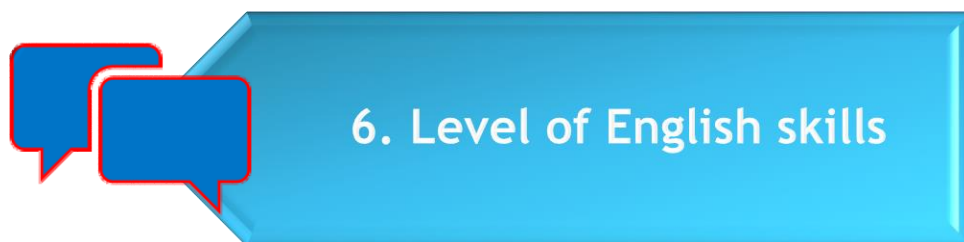
3. Safety and security



4. Nature



5. Culture



7. Peaceful environment



8. Finnish people



9. Finnish sauna



10. Non-hierarchical society
and equality

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Appendix 1: Questions for the interviewees

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your major and your home university?
4. Why did you choose to come to Finland for exchange?
5. When did you come to Finland?
6. How long was your stay in Finland?
7. Where did you stay in Finland? How was your accommodation like? Was it hard getting an accommodation? Did you experience any problems during your stay in your accommodation?
8. How did you feel Finnish culture was?
9. Was it easy adapting to Finnish public transportation/bank system/etc.?
10. How did you feel Finnish education is like compared to Korean education?
11. How did you feel about the teachers and the courses offered?
12. Did you experience culture shock?
13. What was the hardest part of living in Finland?
14. What was the best part of living in Finland?
15. What is your fondest memory of Finland?
16. What do you think you gained from your exchange experience (what kind of skills, competence)? How do you think you can utilize and benefit from that in your life?
17. Did you participate in the activities of the exchange program? If so, how did you like them?
18. What do you think was missing from the exchange program?
19. Is there something you would have wanted to know or experience more about?
20. Why do you think Korean students should come to Finland for exchange?

Appendix 2: Questions for the teachers

1. What kind of help do Korean students ask from you?
2. What kind of difficulties the students have encountered in their studies at Laurea?
3. Did the students discuss the differences between Finnish and Korean education with you?
4. Is it easy to approach Korean students? What do you do in order to approach Korean students easier and understand their culture better?
5. Have the Korean students told you about their life in Korea and any problems or good things related to it?
6. Have they discussed their culture with you? What do you know about Korean culture?
7. Have the students told about their reasons to come to Finland?
8. Have the students had issues with their housing?
9. Have the students ever told you about their home sickness?
10. Have the students ever mentioned about experiencing culture shock?
11. Have the students ever experienced loneliness?
12. What do you think is the hardest part of being in Finland for Koreans?
13. What do you think is the best part of being in Finland for Koreans?
14. What is the most memorable encounter with a Korean student for you?
15. Do you think Korean students have enjoyed their time in Finland?
16. Have the students told what has been the best experiences and things in their studies and in their life in Finland?
17. Have the students ever given feedback about the exchange program to you?
18. What is the best feedback you have gotten from Korean students?
19. Why do you think Korean students should come to Finland for their exchange?
20. What is the most rewarding experience when dealing with Korean students?

Appendix 3: Survey for Laurea UAS' Korean exchange students

Survey for Laurea UAS' Korean exchange students

Thank you for taking this survey. It will be a great help for my thesis.

*Required

1. Choose your gender *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

2. How old are you? (In Korean age, answer only in numbers) *

Your answer _____

3. What is your home university? *

- Dongguk University
- Yeungnam University
- Konkuk University
- Korea University
- Other: _____

4. What is your major? *

Your answer _____

5. Which semester or year was your exchange in Laurea? Pick one or more. *

- Spring 2015
- Autumn 2015
- Spring 2016
- Autumn 2016
- Spring 2017
- Autumn 2017
- Spring 2018
- Autumn 2018

6. What was your reason to come to study to Finland? Choose as many as you like and/or tell in your own words. *

- Education system
- Recommendation from a friend
- Safety and security of the country
- Cultural aspects
- Other: _____

7. What was the best part in studying in Laurea? Choose as many as you like and/or tell in your own words. *

- A lot of free time
- Professors
- Educational aspect
- Friends
- Other: _____

8. What was the best part in living in Finland? Choose as many as you like and/or tell in your own words. *

- A lot of free time
- School
- Friends
- Culture
- Other: _____

9. Do you think coming to Finland for exchange was a good choice or would you have preferred some other country? *

- It was a good choice
- It wasn't a good choice

10. If you chose Finland wasn't a good choice, why do you think so?

Your answer _____

Choose the most fitting option.

11. How useful would you consider your exchange to be in your studies? *

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

12. How useful would you consider your exchange to be in your working life? *

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

13. How useful would you consider your exchange to be in improving your English skills? *

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

14. How useful would you consider your exchange to be in terms of adapting to new environments and situations and acquiring independence? *

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

15. How useful would you consider your exchange to be for your personal growth? *

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

21. What kind of difficulties did you encounter during your stay in Finland? Choose as many as you like and/or tell in your own words. *

Problems with accommodation

Weather

Loneliness

I didn't encounter any problems

Other: _____

22. How easy was it to get help for problems when needed? *

1 2 3 4 5

Not easy at all Very easy

23. Did you participate in the exchange program activities? *

Yes

No

24. If yes, how much did you like the activities?

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all Very much

25. If no, why didn't you participate?

Your answer

26. Is there something you would have wanted to experience or know more about?

Your answer

27. List top 3 reasons for Korean students to come to Finland.

Your answer

28. Do you have any feedback or anything else to say about your exchange and time in Finland? For example tell your best memory of Finland, your impression of the teachers and education, etc.

Your answer

Appendix 4: The responses for the survey's qualitative questions

26. Is there something you would have wanted to experience or know more about? (6 responses)

Work in here as a part time job worker

Not much

Meeting Finnish friend

actual corporate(organizational) culture if it is possible, like a internship

nothing

Experience stay in coach

27. List top 3 reasons for Korean students to come to Finland. (14 responses)

Educational system, safe environment, enjoying winter and christmas season

nature, cultural things, safe

1. welfare 2. Educational environment 3. New culture; There has been a lot of interest in Finland since '어서와 한국은 처음이지?' since it was first broadcast in Korea last year.

1. Low population late (No hell subway) 2. Easy to communicate with international students
3. Easy to access the information by the Facebook

1. Many activities about Winter (e.x Lapland trip) 2. Kindness of people 3. Many people who can speak english

new experience , cause it's just northern europe even Finland! ♥ , study system

education system, relaxed studying life, landscape

Peaceful, High level English skill

Education, Safety, Experience such as Aurora

system, people, safety

Location in europe, safety , education

SAFETY, ECONOMICAL SUPPORT, LANGUAGE

Education, good professors, accommodation

Education, security, mysterious(far from asia><)

28. Do you have any feedback or anything else to say about your exchange and time in Finland? For example tell your best memory of Finland, your impression of the teachers and education, etc. (10 responses)

Teachers give to students a lot of freedom. For example they don't underline what they think important, and they make student find their own interest field in that subject

I was so surprised that there's no hierarchy between students and professors. Maybe it is common in western culture. But for me, it was new.

1. Finnish people asked me the way in Finnish. Even though I'm Korean(foreigner, asian girl). There was such a thing about once a month. I appreciated them. Without any prejudice about me, they recognized me as Finnish on the grounds that I'm in Finland. 2. A friend did not take the final exams cuz he went to France for trip. When he returned to Finland, it was after the class had ended. As soon as the class ended, the teacher had a vacation for about a month. When the teacher came back, the friend could take the exam. This is something you can not imagine in Korea. Korean Students will complain that it's unfair. He had more than a month and had more chances to study so he could get good grades. In Finland, it was impressive that the professor and students understood the situation of the students and the professor cherished his/her time. 3. In Finland, I saw people walking around the street smoking. Actually, I was shocked when I saw my mother who is smoking while strolling a baby stroller.

I want you to get help from me. I love finland!!!! Everything in Finland was great. Finland is my second home!


Horizontal relationship with teachers, lots of free time! it was huge differences between Korea! I always live with gratitude for Finland also Laurea. so Thanks a lot. always miss that time

I love this education system. Really good. But I am assigned to lohja, far from helsinki. So, I don't have many chance to improve english skill and here is any class to learn finnish.

Project course was great to improve communication skills and make paper. However, it was hard to understand the process of it. More explain would be needed.

Very kind teachers , tutors

BUSINESS GAME IS SUPER GREAT!

It was amazing experience for me. And I already miss that times 

I would like to say just do it:) thank you it was lovely experience

Appendix 5: Cover letter for the survey

Dear Former Exchange Student of Laurea,

I am making my thesis of Korean exchange students' experiences in Finland. My thesis is named Top Ten Reasons for Korean students to come to Finland for exchange: Stories and experiences of the Korean exchange students' time in Finland. It would be a great help if you could take part in the survey I've created.

I'm conducting the survey for Korean students who came to exchange to Laurea in the years 2015-2018. The results of the survey are used in my thesis. The purpose of my thesis is to improve the exchange program in Laurea University of Applied Sciences and also to promote the exchange between South Korea and Finland. It would be great if you could be part of this.

The survey is completely anonymous and will only take about 5-10 minutes. The survey will be open until 21st of October so I hope you would have time to reply before then.

Here is the link for the survey: <https://goo.gl/forms/WQpH6kLHtPciU88x1>

Thank you for taking your time reading this.

Have a great day!

Best Regards

Ms. Lea Matula

Student of Laurea University of Applied Sciences