

# **Foreign Entrepreneurship in Finland**



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ABSTRACT

This research topic is a part of a project named Go Strong conducted by HAMK University of Applied Sciences. The research focuses on finding the underlying factors which influence the decision of foreigners to become an entrepreneur in Finland. The second focal point is to find out the chosen fields of establishment as well as the reasons why immigrants choose those fields.

The research method for this thesis is a qualitative method which uses semi-structured interviews. There are two interview groups: foreigner entrepreneurs and business or entrepreneurial experts, and they were asked different sets of questions. The responses were collated to provide a better acknowledgement of the topic.

To start off with, the result answered one of the most important questions: that push factors are the main reasons for foreigners to decide to establish a business in Finland. Pull factors work as supporting determinants to construct the whole phenomenon. In addition, the outcomes show how personal it is in every case. Secondly, small to medium businesses, especially restaurants or personal services are usually chosen by foreigners in Finland. There are different reasons to explain why they choose these businesses; however, it is assumed that there is no universal restriction to reveal why. It is also recommended that foreign entrepreneurs should take step by step action from having the business idea to the fully establishment of a business in a foreign country.

This total research has given more understanding on a topic which needed more attention. In the end, the decision to become an entrepreneur in a foreign country as Finland is really critical to see how foreigners feel and act when they want to start their own business in an outside country.

**Keywords** Foreigners, entrepreneurship, decision to become entrepreneur.

**Pages** 40 pages including appendices 01 pages

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background information

Entrepreneurship has been an interesting topic along the developing process of the business world. The phenomenon of starting a new business has started since human-being knew how to sell or trade their goods in the early stage of the civilization. Through the development timeline of the world economy, economists realize that entrepreneurship plays a significant role in shaping the economic scenario among all countries around the world. It is observable that governments worldwide have paid attention to attracting the boosting dynamic of entrepreneurship in their own country. Many governments focus on the stimulation of entrepreneurship in their countries because these establishments not only bring economic benefits for the nation but also social contribution. Julien and Cadieux stressed on the definition of entrepreneurship in a sense that the activities of business creation or development should bring both the achievement of earning the economic value of the enterprise and bigger aims of serving the national and multinational beneficial enhancement. (Julien & Cadieux 2010; Boutillier & Uzunidis 2016, 19.)

The relationship between entrepreneurship and national value, has shown to have a mutual impact on each other, therefore, entrepreneurship has been an important topic for any government developing program.

This theme of this thesis focuses on the case country: Finland and the foreign entrepreneurial activities in Finland. Like many other governments, the Finnish government has to deal with the foreign entrepreneurship matter as foreigners come to Finland and intend to establish their own business here. In fact, one special characteristic of entrepreneurship in a country is that it is not restrained by the citizenship or nationality of the entrepreneurs. In other words, both national residents and foreigners who reside in that territory, have similar chance of being an entrepreneur. There has been both scrutiny and proactive steps from the Finnish governments to develop this special entrepreneurship into the Finnish market. In another scenario, foreigners who come to Finland are raising the trend of establishing a business in Finland. According to an article in [Foreignersinfinland.fi](http://Foreignersinfinland.fi) of Mae N., the collected information in the article mentioned that foreign-background business had increased 9% during 2013-2016. In addition, these businesses had contributed for 3.5 billion euros in net sales and generated about 30,000 jobs.(Mae 2019.)

The contemporary situation is supporting and motivating foreign entrepreneurs to take further steps into the Finnish market and make changes as well as a positive influence for the economic context of this country. In addition, foreign-born entrepreneurs are taking active steps to

get involve in bringing new business perspectives in different business segments to Finland. Therefore, it is quite optimistic in the current situation of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland.

The author of this thesis has noticed that in this special field of business, foreign entrepreneurship, there has been diverse cases. Although this is a frequently mentioned topic in any governmental or economic context, little knowledge or experimental research has been handled profoundly. It would be a great opportunity to touch this relevant topic and reveal the insight of foreign entrepreneurship, especially in the case of the Finnish market. Therefore, the author intends to carry out a more in-depth analysis to unveil the covered layers of this matter.

## 1.2 Assigning company

Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) is a multidisciplinary higher education institution in southern Finland. Some brief information about the case company is: HAMK has seven campuses located in different cities in the southern part of Finland; approximately 7200 students are conducting their degrees education in this institution; 625 highly qualified teachers and staffs are employed to support the educational and operational purposes of the institution; and finally, there are 31 degree programs offered to the attendances, of which 5 degree education qualifications choose English as the main teaching language. HAMK is an international-oriented educational institution. HAMK arranges courses for both Finnish and foreign students. As mentioned in the institution's webpage, they have been providing degree programs for foreign students from 70 nationalities. In addition to the viable criteria of international-oriented education, HAMK brings to its students the knowledge and awareness of global perspectives during the teaching activities. Consequently, HAMK offers the global job market excellent well-trained graduated applicants. (Häme University of Applied Sciences.)

In addition, according the given information in the institution's public website, HAMK also contributes to different business sectors and public needs by providing various researches and development projects. Much of this research and projects are constituted by the collective effort from the mentorship of teachers and students. Therefore, these activities create the chance for profound learning experience for the students and solve the different needs for the targeted groups.

Häme University of Applied Sciences is implementing a project titled the Go Strong Project to support a European research and development purpose. The Go Strong Project is funded by Central Finland ELY (ESR) with the budget of €198,944 euros to support all the stages of the project in the timeline for approximately two years from 1.9.2018 to 29.2.2020. The project focuses on various target groups of students especially those who have received education in the city of Valkeakoski. Those targeted groups

of students are: HAMK's Valkeakoski's foreign degree students, students at Tietotie High School and Valkeakoski Vocational and Adult Education College. The Go Strong Project's background which has been stated according to HAMK's website is that the project is executed with the expectation of strengthening the ecosystem of educational institutions, regional authorities, business organizations and companies and foreign students. Moreover, it is believed that foreign students will be the greatest force for internationalization of the Valkeakoski municipality and for the development of micro and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). Lastly, the project should enhance the relationship between the hosting institutions and companies in the surrounding region. (Häme University of Applied Sciences.)

The institution claims that the purpose of the project is to incrementally boost the opportunity for foreign students to get into working life in Finland. This project involves different types of research in different fields to gather and concentrate a proper view about the current situation. From that situational analysis, researchers and project managers will come up with better solutions for the above purpose of the project.

This thesis will focus on the foreign entrepreneurship which does not directly relate to the original case of increasing foreign student employment in Finland but indirectly it gives an overview to consider whether the career path as a foreign entrepreneur in Finland is a possible choice. For that reason, this thesis is considered as a part of the Go Strong Project of Häme University of Applied Sciences. The author has the responsibility to develop this research under his own choices and researches. Later, this thesis will be presented and become a valuable supportive research for the Go Strong Project.

### **1.3 Research Question and Objectives**

This thesis explores the current situation of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland by providing a general view of the visibility of foreign enterprises established in Finland. Beside the exploration of the foreign entrepreneurial activities in Finland as a business phenomenon, this thesis centralizes this topic into a narrower understanding of the business areas that foreign entrepreneurs usually prefer to start their business in Finland.

The desired research outcome of this thesis should be able to accomplish the following main research questions:

- What are the factors that determine the decision to become an entrepreneur of a foreigner in Finland?
- What are the business segments that foreign entrepreneurs usually establish in Finland and the underlying reasons why they target those segments?

There are certain objectives which the author of this thesis intends to achieve at the end of the thesis writing process:

- Understand the theoretical basis drivers of the foreign entrepreneurship and the underlying factors affecting the establishment of the foreigner-owned enterprises in Finland.
- Successfully conduct market research based on the current foreign entrepreneurs in Finland. The outcome of the market research should be able to distinguish and clarify the situation of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland.
- An intensive analysis with the gathered information through qualitative market research. Therefore, the business phenomenon is characterized, and the research question is answered by the author.

## **2 THEORY AND EXISTING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

### **2.1 Entrepreneurship**

#### **2.1.1 Entrepreneurship**

“Entrepreneurship” is a well-known business term in a contemporary situation. So, what exactly is the definition of the term “Entrepreneurship” and who are considered as entrepreneurs?

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, an “entrepreneur” is a person who earns financial benefits by establishing or operating a business especially when they undertake the potential risks of failure to perform the business or economic loss on their own (Hornby, Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2010).

In the book “Entrepreneurship Development” published by Himalaya Publishing House, the authors had collected some comprehensive definitions from famous economists to explain the word “entrepreneur”. (Gordon & Natarajan & Arora 2009, 2.)

- Jean-Baptiste Say, a French economist, said that “The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield.” (J.B. Say 1800)
- Richard Cantillon pointed out that those who engaged in economic activity are entrepreneurs



- Quesnay emphasized the input of personal intelligence and wealth in making a business profitably.
- Webster differentiated an entrepreneur as knowing to assume risks and be able to manage the business entity.
- Peter Drucker provided a point that entrepreneurs are striving for changes to find upcoming opportunities by utilizing an innovative mind.
- Dewing claimed that the function of an entrepreneur is to convert ideas into business.

The above explanations give a more profound understanding of how to identify an entrepreneur in the business world. And the connection between entrepreneur and entrepreneurship binds one another in a way that an entrepreneur is the person who runs the business and entrepreneurship is view as the functional activities, or also as a state of mind which an entrepreneur should have to run a business.

Howard.H. Stevenson and J. Carlos. Jarillo (1990) mentioned in their study "A Paradigm for Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Management" that entrepreneurship is about transforming opportunities into business without paying attention to the resources available for an entrepreneur. Opportunities here mean taking the chances that are desirable in the future situation where the entrepreneur can actually convert into a profitable business. "Taking the chances" illustrates the capability of an entrepreneur to be able to use the skills, knowledge, and the existing resources to recognize the needs of the market and develop the model to provide the needs. The authors indicated that the attitude of trying to find a way is a typical identical trait of an entrepreneur.

Based on the above explanation, entrepreneurship is defined in this thesis as the activities of creating or developing a business which might generate new value for the current market. The entrepreneurs represent those who are risk-takers, dare-to-do, self-believers, innovative to think about the new needs, and able to sustain the business on their own responsibility. On the other hand, being an entrepreneur has been accepted as a special career path for those who dare to strive for success by following the way of being his or her own's employee.

Finally, in this thesis, the definition of entrepreneurship is determined in an approach that entrepreneurship has a mutual relationship with the national background. In the early part of the thesis introduction, the two authors: Julien & Cadieux emphasized the economic value of entrepreneurship on a tremendously larger scale of the national and multinational level. Therefore, the activities of entrepreneurship should also be viewed in diversified layers to understand the underlying motivation and relationship between these layers.

### 2.1.2 Entrepreneurship based theories

Entrepreneurship has certain based theories that tremendously affect the development of the entrepreneurial activity. According to Simpeh in his publication about entrepreneurship theories, there are 6 determinants which have been identified to be able to have a closer look into the field of entrepreneurship, these theories are economic entrepreneurship theories, resource-based theories, psychological theories, sociological and anthropological theories, and opportunity-based theories. These main theme theories encompass also smaller elements; however, in this thesis, the author just provides the common views and complains on these theories so that it creates a connection to the foreign entrepreneurship determinants in the later part.

- Economic entrepreneurship theories

Economic factors have played huge influence on entrepreneurial activities. In this economic theme, there are three influential theories: Classical theory, neo-classical theory and Austrian Market Process. They have significant distinctive arguments on the production and distribution of goods or in trade-off topic or the emphasis of the entrepreneur itself can make an influence on the market. (Kwabena & Simpeh 2011, 1-2.)

These theories show different needs which vary from the capital investment, availability of resources for production, labour issues to the openness of the market, government economic policies, economic chances, etc. (Gordon & Natarajan & Arora 2009, 22-23).

These elements might have divergent effects on entrepreneurial activities. Beside these based theories, it is not difficult to consider the fact that entrepreneurship and economic situation have a strong relationship to one another. As economic situation is positive, entrepreneurship during that period grows, and vice versa.

- Resource-based theories

Resource-based theories indicate the three big groups of resource that any entrepreneur must pay attention during their business operation. Financial, social network and human capital theory are the centres of these resource-based theories (Aldrich 1999; Kwabena & Simpeh 2011, 5).

Financial elements show not only the capability of an entrepreneur to handle his/her business operation, but it also assesses the opportunity that an entrepreneur can quickly reach the available resources like land, labour, capital, technologies, information, etc. On some cases when the business has just been established, financial capability determines the pace of establishment of the business to the market and the survivability at the early stage.

Social network shapes the connection in the business world. Entrepreneurs must pay attention to their relationship with the outer parts (other entrepreneurs, distribution partners, customers, future partners, etc.). By gaining such cooperating relationship, the business will operate better and possibly gain many advantages.

Lastly, human capital usually associates with labour exploitation. Gary Becker, an American economist, developed this theory to highlight the investment in education and training of the labour force to bring better economic advantage for the business. (Becker 1994, 16-17.)

Based on the above theory of human capital, labour force should be noted as a crucial factor. Furthermore, it is not just the emphasis on labour education and training, an entrepreneur should prepare him/herself a good educational background and understanding of his/her own business model as well as the market. He/she should achieve certain sets of skill in order to build a business.

- Psychological theories

Psychological theories based on the personal factors of an entrepreneur which might have a specific degree of impact into the business. It is likely to be viewed that individual traits possess the distinctive identification of one entrepreneur to a normal business player but also diverse in the way the businesses are established and influenced.

Among which theories would be chosen for justifying as the basis of psychological theme, personality traits theory could be the core components for entrepreneurial ability. In order to discuss the comprehensive group of personal characteristics of an entrepreneur, Praszkie and Nowak (2012) had collected several research points of view from many scholars such as Aldrich and Zimmer, Chell, Rauch and Frese. The two authors authenticated in their book that: there is no consistent group of personal traits which can provide a universal recognition on the entrepreneurship.

Some of the idiosyncrasies to be listed are; trust and optimism, cooperation, strong social networks, ability to cope with adversity, moderate risk-taker, creativity and innovation, etc. Among various traits discussed, there are some exclusive traits which have been justified to reflect the uniqueness of the entrepreneurial traits. Here are two of them: highly achievement-orientated, internal locus of control. (Praszkie & Nowak 2012, 111-114.)

McClelland (1961), the author of the book "The Achieving Society" mentioned three main motivators for human-being: Need for Achievement, Need for Power and Need for Affiliation. By comparing these needs to the personal trait of an entrepreneur, it is straightforward to understand that entrepreneurship strongly pursues the great need for

Achievement motive. As mentioned in the above text, starting a business or being an entrepreneur is a burdensome procedure; however, the entrepreneur should overcome difficulties, feel comfortable with ambiguity, spend restless effort, and always desire for success. Those are the spiritual recognition of the high need for achievement.

Julian Rotter- the developer of the concept of Locus of Control, pointed out that people are either living “inside out” or “outside in”. Briefly discuss these two terms, people who live “inside-out” usually have narcissistic, egocentric, self-centred and do become the boss of their own life. On the other hand, people who live “outside-in” are usually spineless, opinionless or simply they are just easily driven by the external factors. Based on the above assumption, an entrepreneur can be determined by having an internal locus of control. (Clawson 2009, 8.)

- Sociological-anthropological theories

The sociological approach is an alternative way to determine the entrepreneurial personality. Reynolds (1991) wrote in his article that social contexts play an essential role in shaping the entrepreneurship. He also classified that there are 4 types of social context which could value the entrepreneurial opportunities: Life Course stage, Social Network and Embeddedness, Ethnic Identification, and Population Ecology.

Anthropological theories focus on examining the community and humanity since the word “anthropological” means the study of the human race, especially of its origins, development, customs and beliefs (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2010).

Hence these anthropological theories explain the differences between one person to another because mankind is developed based on differences. Entrepreneurship is influenced by these theories undoubtedly in a way that each entrepreneur is also dissimilar in the way their “anthropological” factors differentiate.

- Opportunity-based theories

In this last group of theories, the relationship between entrepreneurship-change-opportunity has been clarified. Peter Drucker (1985), the builder of these theories, mentioned that entrepreneurs themselves cannot create changes; however, they can discover the possibilities that changes are created to bring the business into the light. Therefore, these theories emphasize the ability of an entrepreneur to identify the changing drivers. Being able to see the underlying drivers will help the entrepreneurs to bring more values to their business.

### 2.1.3 General steps for establishing an enterprise

Generally assuming, there are different opinions from various business researchers about entrepreneurial process. For that reason, the author of this thesis would like to compare two models from Timmons and from Barringer & Ireland.

- The Timmons Model of Entrepreneurial Process

The below figure demonstrates the Timmons Model of Entrepreneurial Process.

Figure 1. The Timmons Model of the Entrepreneurial Process (Timmons & Spinelli 2009)

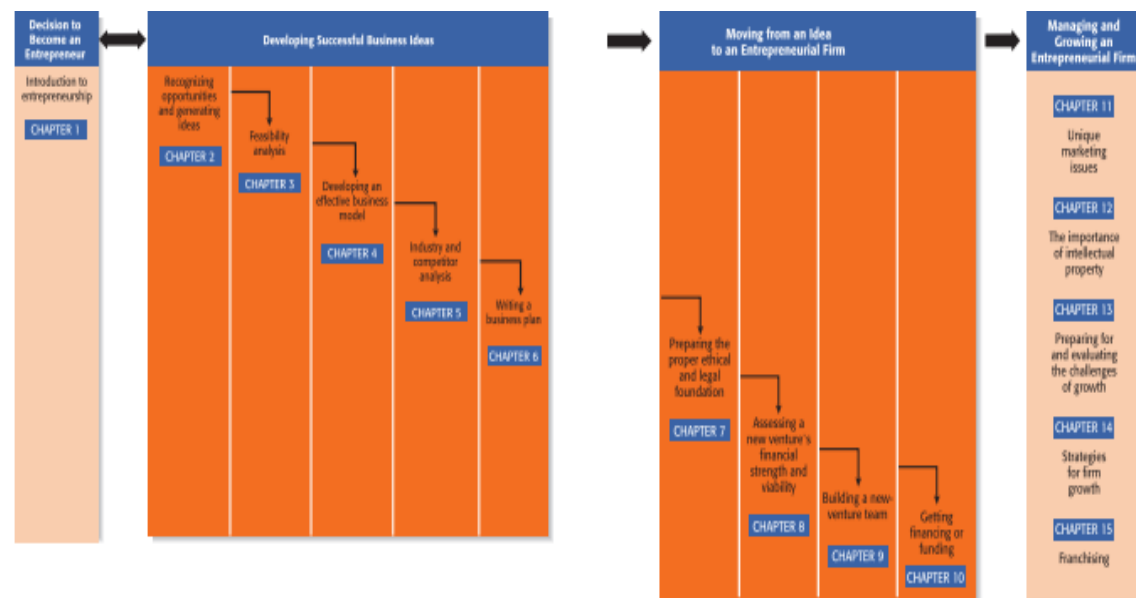


Timmons (2009) argued that Opportunity is the main driver for any entrepreneurial process to create successful ventures. The process starts with the opportunity, not with other elements. On top of that, opportunity determines the shape, size and depth of the resources needed and team. On the other hands, the founder's role is to sustain the venture's balance by improving fit and filling the business plan gaps, encouraging the ambiguity as well as uncertainty acceptance of the team to stimulate creativity and projecting the leadership to connect the team with the available resources. At the end of this model, the essential aspect of sustainability describes the "underlying foundation" of such business creation should accentuate the value of the environment, community and society.

- The Barringer & Ireland Entrepreneurial Process Model

This model has been determined to consist of 4 systematic steps which will be shortly explained in the below figure.

Figure 2. Basic Model of the Entrepreneurial Process (Barringer & Ireland 2010, 48-49)



The first step from the two authors' model reflectively mentions about the "Decision to Become an Entrepreneur". If a person wants to start his entrepreneurial path; first, he/she should define and recognize him/herself as an entrepreneur with entrepreneurial characteristics. And finally, the personal reasons that trigger the decision to become an entrepreneur in each person.

"Developing Successful Business Idea" is listed as the second step in this model. In this step, there are 5 actions that should be done which are: recognizing opportunities and generating ideas, feasibility analysis, writing a business plan, industry and competitor analysis, and developing an effective business model. These actions must be accomplished respectively to provide an excellent business idea for the third step of the entrepreneurial process model. The purposes of this second step are to create a business idea which can differentiate from competitors and bring opportunities for establishing the model in the market. The two creators also emphasize the importance of writing a business plan to be able to see more compact aspects of the model. And lastly, developing a successful business model requires an entrepreneur to plan how to use the available resources, maintain the relationship with the shareholders and sustain the business.

Among the first and second step, there can be a possibility that after a business idea is prompted, a person might become an entrepreneur to implement that business idea.

The third step is "Moving from an Idea to an Entrepreneurial Firm". This step includes several actions: preparing the proper ethical and legal

foundation, assessing a new venture's financial strength and viability, building a new-venture team, getting financing or funding. These actions are conducted to ensure that the new enterprise is established legally in the right ownership form and has financially and viably operation. The last action of this step highlights the importance of raising investment capital during the establishment of the firm.

The last hierarchical step after establishing a firm is to manage and grow it. In this step, various topics have to be covered such as marketing, utilizing and protecting intellectual property, facing challenges of growth, developing strategies to grow and considering the franchising issues.

- Comparison between the two models

The Timmons model shows interrelated determinants of opportunity, entrepreneur, resource and team. The model centralizes on the opportunity which structures the other relationships and defines the chance that the business can be established or not. The entrepreneur has the duty to maintain the triangle relationship of Opportunity- Team-Resources to carry out the business as well as driving it to further development.

On the other hand, the Barringer & Ireland Entrepreneurial Process Model is somehow generating the systematic procedure on designing a business model from mentally preparation to idea development to establishing a business firm and maintain the business. In this model, finding an opportunity is one of the crucial steps which is considered as one big difference between the two models. The other elements from the Timmons model: Team and Resources have been indirectly mentioned in the Barringer & Ireland through the steps. There is no centre element in the Barringer & Ireland Model. Each step should be well prepared respectively to move to the next step and the entrepreneur should be able to carry out each step carefully.

The author of this thesis suggests that the second model "Barringer & Ireland Entrepreneurial Process Model" is more practical in nowadays situation than the Timmons model. The reason is that the second model provides a suggestion on what an entrepreneur should do to build a business. However, the first model could be centric for the first two steps of the second model because it helps defines the opportunity and the entrepreneur's duties. The combination of both models could bring a better understanding of the entrepreneurial process as well as helping the entrepreneur map out the state of progress.

In addition to this comparison between the two models and how foreign entrepreneurs perceive their behavior towards the establishment of the business. There will be analysis in the research part which can be used to link with this comparison.

## 2.2 Foreign entrepreneurship

### 2.2.1 Foreign entrepreneurship definition

Foreign entrepreneurship has a similar term of “immigrant entrepreneurship”. In a large majority of articles and journals, immigrant entrepreneurship is a more referable term to be used due to the comparison of native entrepreneurs and those who pursue a different nationality but trying to establish the business in another nation. In this thesis, both terms have similar meaning when mentioned.

Foreign entrepreneurship is not an unfamiliar term in the contemporary world economy. Based on different definitions of the term “Foreign entrepreneurship”, this term is explained as the settlement of business of an entrepreneur in a foreign country to search for economic benefits from the contemporary market situation. (Butler & Greene 1997; Vinogradov 2008; Dalhammar 2004)

The social trend of migration to another country is a normal phenomenon nowadays. In addition, the megatrend of globalization and global mobility have encouraged people to migrate outside their country of origin and establish their new life in the new destination country easier than before as it had reached 258 million migrants in 2017. (Stroud, Jones & Brien 2018)

Consequently, the effect of such trends has brought a remarkable immigrant inflow to every country. As the following impact of the increase of immigrants, there is a possible increase in the number of those who choose being an entrepreneur as a career option to cover their expenses. To sum up, the author believes that foreign entrepreneurship is a noticeably on-going trend in many countries.

One significant notice in this thesis regarding to the term “foreign entrepreneur” is that the author also considers this term in the case that the person who has a foreign background previously but holds Finnish citizenship at the moment. This is because of the fact that many foreigners have worked or proved the eligibility of their businesses and earned the right to become a Finnish citizen. The author intends to look into this specific case because many foreign entrepreneurs have strived for a way to maintain their living in Finland.

### 2.2.2 Foreign entrepreneurship determinants

Push and pull factors are examined as foreign entrepreneurship determinants. Push and pull are actually quite familiar terms of a theoretical base for this case. There have been many researches on the push and pull factors which affect entrepreneurship in general and of



immigration intention. However, in the case of foreign entrepreneurship, the push and pull factors involve as great determinants for the intention to establish a business of a foreigner.

From one earlier literature view about the relationship between self-employment and unemployment, both theoretical factors are perceived to contribute great value for the above finding. There have been theoretical arguments which support the case that positive prosperity-pull factors and negative recession-push factors link to the relationship between self-employment and unemployment. (Dawson & Henley 2012, 700.)

Later on, in the following part of the thesis, the author will authenticate such connection throughout the research analysis.

Push factors are those which have negative impacts on one person's experience or perception about the economic context and drive them to become an entrepreneur. The decision to become self-employment is the result of facing undesirable labour market conditions of the foreigners which reduce the desire to find paid employment and increases the impulsiveness of being an entrepreneur. (Hart & Mickiewicz 2016; Clark & Drinkwater 2000; Storey 1982; Storey & Johnson 1987.)

In the book "The Economics of Entrepreneurship", Parker (2009) considers that there are underlying push factors so called "blocked mobility" which impulse a foreigner to become an entrepreneur in another country. Here are some situations known as "blocked mobility": trouble in paid employment, language or cultural difficulties, discrimination in the workplace as a worker is from another countries, non-validated foreign qualifications or required experiences, lack of legal right to work. These situations are the reason that "push" foreigner to the self-employment path. (Parker 2009, 176).

One the other hand, the pull factors are preferable situation or condition which generate the incentives and inspire the entrepreneurial activities to be happened. In comparison to the push factors, foreigners volunteer to become entrepreneurs in immigrant country because they might see the opportunities to shine. Parker (2009) points out that immigrants are self-selected risk-takers which have the choice to influence their own life by finding a chance in a foreign country. The push factors are supposed to relate to the opportunities that immigrant entrepreneurs can identify and develop (Hart & Mickiewicz 2016, 10).

Both types of factors have tremendous influences on the decision to become an entrepreneur. In addition, the above-mentioned establishment of business type and business concept are also built based on the above factors.

Foreign entrepreneurship case is not an exception from the push and pull factors. “What are the underlying drivers of immigrant entrepreneurship?” is the question and two factors are the answers. Consequently, the two terms “Push and Pull factors” will play a crucial role in setting up the immigrant entrepreneurship. The following research path will emphasize the necessity of these two factors on studying the business fields which foreign entrepreneurs usually choose to establish.

### **3 RESEARCH ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1 Research Method**

There will be two different sets of questionnaires for two classified groups. Semi-structured interviews are heavily carried out and it is the only method to be used in the research phase. One group is the foreign entrepreneurs who are doing their business in Finland and one other group includes experts and business municipal officer. The aim of separating two target groups works in a way that the responses from business experts will help to justify the information gathered from the foreign entrepreneurs.

Due to the lack of time and limited access, the author can only execute this thesis in a quite small scale. Sampling technique is selected to reflect the population in larger scope.

It is explainable why qualitative data analysis is chosen for this thesis. First, the answers from respondents are not related to any numerical assessment or standardized data. Ghauri and Grønhaug (2002) claim some characteristics of qualitative data which are: based on meaning expressed, included non-standardized data which compels researcher to interpret into different categories, conceptualization is utilized to do the analysis. In addition, the answers are predicted to be diversified because of individual difference. Secondly, the massive information derived from responders will be carefully analysed and interpreted into important and valuable information to uncover the phenomena of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland. Last but not least, the emphasis on understanding the underlying factors from the answers is significantly crucial to identify the phenomena in this case. The below figure will be used to be the main outline for this research and analysis.

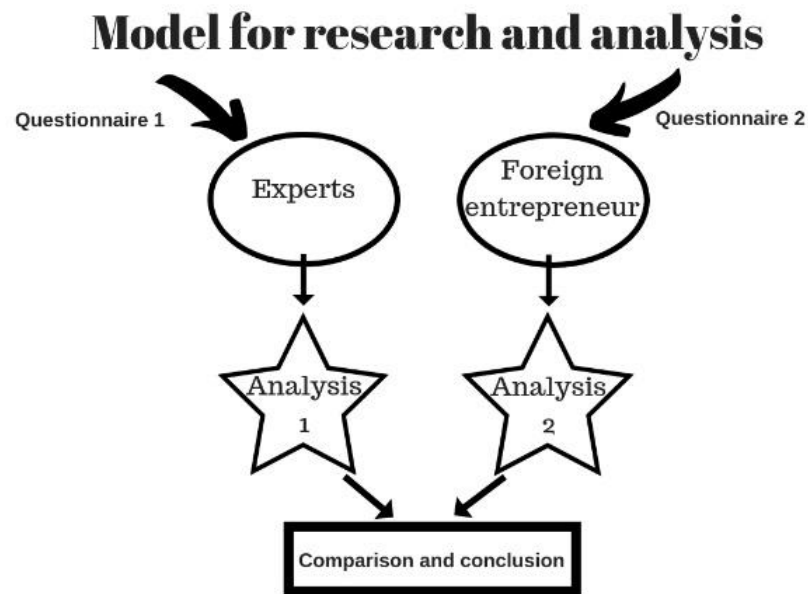


Figure 3. Outline for research and analysis in this thesis (designed by the author)

This research analysis helps uncover the above research question and give better understanding on the area of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland.

### 3.2 Questionnaire design for two targeted groups & information of the groups

#### 3.2.1 Questionnaire design for experts group

Six main questions have been planned for the interview with the experts. These questions focus on answering the research questions of the most established fields of business in Finland and which factors contribute to such establishment. The below questions are designed to make a general assessment of this research. In addition, these questions are arranged systematically to review the opinions as well as connect the previous questions with the following ones. Consequently, after the interview, the author will be able to sketch a preliminary picture of this case.

Q1: What is the current situation of Foreign Entrepreneurship in Finland?

Q2: Which are the fields do you think that foreign entrepreneurs usually establish in Finland?

Q3: Why are these fields usually frequently established by foreigners?

Q4: What drive those foreigners to establish their business here?

Q5: What do they need to successfully establish a business here in Finland?

Q6: How do you see the future of Foreign Entrepreneurship cases in Finland?

In this set of questions, question number 2,3 and 4 are marked as vitally important for studying this research case. These three questions will be asked to reveal the phenomena behind foreign entrepreneurship in Finland by showing the fields of business and the drivers. The third questions should be able to identify some distinctive reasons. Continuously to the fourth question, the interrogator specified the theoretical knowledge of push and pull factors in foreign entrepreneurship. The fourth question should be answered in a way that the opinions of responders focus on the two mentioned theoretical factors. The researcher contemplates that there must be a difference in the result of the third and fourth question. Such difference must be presented in the fourth question's result in a more profound manner.

Other questions are formed to give more meaning to the matter of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland. Moreover, during the discussion time with experts, there were additional questions that had been discussed which came along the main ones.

### 3.2.2 Information about the business and entrepreneurship experts.

The author of this thesis had conducted interviews with three experts:

- Vesa Varho- Business Advisor from the City of Valkeakoski.
- Jukka Huilla- Ensimetri's entrepreneurial advisor for Akaa, Valkeakoski and Urjala region. From his provided information, he has been working with a foreign entrepreneur from over 40 countries in the world and consulted more than 100 different cases during the period of 2005-2018.
- And Mirza Sagdati – Founder of Red Brick Accelerator. He is a foreigner, graduated from a Finnish university and has great contribution in changing the start-up environment in the Tampere region.

These experts have particular knowledge and experiences when dealing with the entrepreneurship topic. Two of them, Jukka Huilla and Mirza Sagdati, are involving in many entrepreneurial mentorships and advising services for entrepreneurs in Finland. During their working period, they have been dealing with foreigners by providing support in different business aspects. And finally, based on the above factors, they are trustable interviewees to analyse the topic of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland.

### 3.2.3 Questionnaire design for foreign entrepreneurs group

The author has planned eleven questions for the interview with the foreign entrepreneurs residing in Finland. There are two parts separated in the interview form: one part is about personal related questions (3 questions)

and the other part is about business-related questions (8 questions). In the second part, two specific questions are focused: “How do you come up with the idea that you would establish a business in Finland?”, and “What were the main factors that drove you to be in this business in Finland?” These questions focus directly on answering the second research question of the determinants for making entrepreneurial activities in Finland from the angle of an immigrant. During the interview timeline, the researcher also mentioned about the push and pull theory with a short explanation so that the interviewees would carefully consider his/her personal motivations based on the two factors. In addition, based on the face-to-face interviews plus additional questions about their feeling about doing business in Finland, the researcher had recorded extra valuable information which can reflect the research case to a greater degree.

Noticeably, these interviews had been conducted after finishing the previous interviews with the experts; consequently, the researcher might be able to assess the practical reviews from foreign entrepreneurs and the preliminary assumption from the experts to provide the appropriate comparison on this topic.

#### 3.2.4 Information about the targeted foreign-origin business owners

There are 4 foreign-origin business owners from who the researcher got the information for his thesis research. The researcher has acknowledged that the number of targeted interviewees is quite small; however, he has been able to analyse the phenomenon out of these interviews because of the interactive characteristic of the research method.

There are some noticeable points from the targeted group. Firstly, all of the interviewees are doing their business in the city of Tampere, Finland. Furthermore, all of the interviewed owners are operating their business under small scale, privately owned, few employees or the owner runs the business alone, limited customer groups, the business concept is quite simple, and expansion chance is restrained. Secondly, this group includes immigrant entrepreneurs who have been residing in Finland for a long time, most of them have already pursued Finnish citizenship. Last but not least, there are differences between every case due to their experiences, business model, their purposes and their motivations. This brings to this thesis analysis a diversified case.

## 4 ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Study based on conducted interviews with entrepreneurial experts in Finland

#### 4.1.1 Interview result for experts group

The general assumption from the interviews is that there are similar replies from both experts in most of the questions. They provided the same opinions in imperative key points which might bring value to the understanding of the phenomena of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland.

- The first question “What is the current situation of Foreign Entrepreneurship in Finland?”

Within the first question, both experts expressed a positive view on the current situation of entrepreneurship in Finland in general and foreign entrepreneurship in a smaller scale. They notice a growing trend in a foreign-origin entrepreneur in Finland. Based on both experts’ view, the author has recognized some social trends which prompt the growth in foreign entrepreneurship. One of the trends is the population ageing circumstance in Finnish society leads to a huge need in foreign workforce as well as foreign entrepreneurs. They would likely contribute to the tax system in Finland. Another trend mentioned has positively shown why more foreigners want to establish their business in Finland is that the attitude toward foreigners and using the services or products provided by them has changed progressively. Finnish customers nowadays have familiarized themselves using English during business activities. Vesa Varho claimed that the goodwill from Finnish customers to help foreign business owners and acceptance of foreign-based business in Finnish market had gained more chance for foreign entrepreneurship here. One next trend which was mentioned from the above part is the support from government and available entrepreneurial consulting service. An example might show this case, the Finnish government has recently taken actions in introducing a new form of start-up resident permit for foreign entrepreneurs in April 2018. Finnish government aims at reducing the difficulties in entering the Finnish market for foreign entrepreneurs especially potential start-up business and boosting economic growth and employment. (Yle 2018; Ministry of the Interior 2017.)

In Finland, the business and entrepreneurial ecosystem has provided entrepreneurs a great support for the development of entrepreneurial firms. There are government-based services like Finnerva, TE- office, Business Finland, Uusyrityskeskus. The business ecosystem also includes other professional fields such as legal, accounting and auditing financing, taxation, insurance, banking, permit and license. Besides government-based or public services that any entrepreneur can get in touch with, private consulting companies also a great source of help to bring a

business idea to reality. This business and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Finland is proved to be efficient, high-qualified and continuously improved. Foreign entrepreneurs are guaranteed to receive support when they capitalize the available services.

Lastly, the author perceives an ongoing trend which is viewed as a great outcome of Finnish education and training. Foreign students from Finnish institutions start to establish their business in Finland after their graduation. Jukka Huilla mentioned in the interview that many foreign background students were his clients. They needed consult from Ensimetri's entrepreneurial advisor to bring their business concept into the Finnish market.

- The second question "Which are the fields do you think that foreign entrepreneurs usually establish in Finland?"

Both experts replied this question that "restaurant" is among the most establish foreign-owned business in Finland. Usually, the owners come from Turkey, some Mediterranean countries or Asia. Contemporarily, it is not unusual to have a restaurant which is owned by a foreigner. In big cities like Helsinki or Tampere, there is even competition between various foreigner-owned restaurants which makes this industry become attractive and dynamic. One expert explained that this phenomenon could be the result of applying one's culture experience into a business in another country. In this case, food traditional culture is said to be the easiest knowledge resource to bring from one country background to another. Consequently, a foreign entrepreneur utilizes specific knowledge about his/her traditional cuisine and bring it into the Finnish food industry.

The service sector is also mentioned in the interview process as a large field where foreigners can perform their business in Finland. Talking about the service sector, there are actually many services offered by foreigners in Finland. Some of the representative businesses are barbershop, beauty services and cleaning services. These businesses are small, and the services offered are narrow and difficult to expand. On the other hand, these businesses are usually operated based on the skills and knowledge of the owners in particular fields plus an entrepreneurial mind to be the service providers.

During the discussion with Vesa Varho, he pointed out one field which is quite astonishing to the researcher. Construction is one big theme which foreign entrepreneurs can establish. He also explained that Finnish construction provides services vary into different level from low-basic to high-qualified service. Higher ranked service has been dominated by long traditional companies in the industry. And foreign-based construction companies can mostly join the low-basic service sector.

The scale of these foreign-based companies is in fact, rather small and the market competitiveness is low too. In general, both experts admitted that the productivity level of these companies is not high. That is why these business fields are not usually established by foreigners in Finland.

All in all, it is confirmed that the restaurant business is the main field that foreign entrepreneurs usually establish. Following fields can be service and construction.

- The third question “Why are these fields usually frequently established by foreigners?”

The connection with the country of origin is among the main factors that affect the reasons why these fields are chosen by foreign business owners.

Mr Jukka Huilla told that the connection with people from the same country who were residing in Finland influenced the mindset of foreign entrepreneurs. He pointed out the case that Turkish entrepreneurs had a strong connection with their acquaintances and relatives in Finland, especially when their connection has already been doing business here. Many Turkish restaurant owners come to Finland with help and shared experiences from previous restaurant owners who came here before or it can be said that foregoers are critical information resource for newcomers in the industry.

The situation which was mentioned in the interview is called “ethnic entrepreneurship”, a part of the “immigrant entrepreneurship” concept. “Ethnic entrepreneurship” is mentioned in the case that a foreign entrepreneur may have some connections with the community of people having the same national background or migration experience. (Waldinger, Ward, & Aldrich 1990; Vinogradov 2008).

After viewing the response from interviewed experts, the author has collated the answer to the previous literature review and found that the above-described case has a specific theoretical term called “Ethnic resource”. Using the connection with people from the country of origin is one form of utilizing social networks in business. There are many advantages after receiving help from the ethnic group to which a foreign entrepreneur belongs. The owner might gain knowledge on how to acquire capital, expand business contacts, receive business performing experiences as well as labour resources. Therefore, such fields like restaurants or small service providers, ethnic networks would bring significant values for the establishment of new business since the owner is not familiar to the new business environment. (Forsander 2002, 123.)

One point which both experts pointed out for this interview question is that self-employment is driven because of many obstacles which many foreign entrepreneurs faced. The most struggling obstacle for foreigners is



to get employed into Finnish companies. According to a research on Foreign-born unemployment of OECD, the latest data on 2017 shows that Finland was listed as having a high rate of the unemployed foreign-born person (15.8 percent). This rate appears to be high among European countries and also in global scale. Because of the difficulty in getting hired, foreigners choose to establish their own businesses to have a place in society or simply to afford their living in Finland. Furthermore, to some extent, many foreigners pursue low professional profile with the lack of skills and Finnish language. That is why choosing such industries as restaurant or private services are easier to start when foreigners think about establishing a business in Finland.

In comparison between the popularly established fields and start-ups, Mirza Sagdati mentioned from his experience that the reason why so little people had decided to involve in innovation fields of start-up is because of the intense competition happening in Finland in technology fields. Consequently, traditional business fields like restaurant and small services are more commonly chosen by foreigners. Even though there has been a dense portion of small businesses like the restaurant of personal services, especially in big cities; foreigners still want to open a similar business in the nearby area. One expert explained this phenomenon that there were two ways to think; one was "If there is no one there, my business must be there" and the other was "If everyone is there, my business should join there too".

In the end of this question, the interviewees concluded that the above points of view are not critical for all cases. Ethnic connection and obstacles for employment hold a large proportion on the cases in order to answer the third question; however, there are various grounds which has been affected by personal purposes.

- The fourth question "What drive those foreigners to establish their business here?"

In the previous part of this thesis, the writer mentioned about the two theoretical factors as determinants for foreigners to establish a business which are "Push factors" and "Pull factors". The answer for this question obviously emphasizes that "Push factors" hold a momentous majority in term of entrepreneurial drivers for migrant business owners in Finland. All the experts clarified that foreigners are pushed by different reasons to become an entrepreneur in Finland, and there is such a small portion that "Pull factors" appear in this case.

In the early part of theoretical review, push and pull factors are said to have strong connection with the decision to become self-employed or entrepreneur. Throughout the research conducted, the experts revealed that push factors generated the negative situations that foreigners in Finland might have to find a way out by becoming an

entrepreneur. Among all the push factors, difficulty in employment in Finland represents the central circumstance which leads to the decision to own personal business. Jukka Huilla replied to this question that without income and a job, survivability brought people to make entrepreneurial actions. In addition to the same matter, Vesa Varho discussed that the foreign owners had to earn money with the purpose of getting a better living standard. Mirza Sagdati, in his comment for this question, he said that desperation and hunger drove foreigners to become entrepreneurs. Based on these comments, it is clarified from the experts' standpoint that push factors have played an important role in shaping the motivation of foreigners to become entrepreneurs in Finland.

Although the push factors dominate the situation in most of the cases, pull factors also contribute as part of the reasons for becoming a foreign entrepreneur in Finland. From the experts' claims, there are various grounds which prompt the delight of immigrants to own a business in Finland. These grounds bring multi-dimensional perspectives to the investigation of pull factors representing in this thesis research.

Mirza mentioned that self-accomplishment, finding the promising results, taking control of all things and making something out of nothing were generally psychological traits which were seen from an entrepreneur. Noticeably, based on the answer of Mirza and the upper written part about "Psychological theories"; the author has recognized the interrelation between pull factors and personal motivations.

Jukka Huilla commented that family reason to some foreign entrepreneurs, especially for those whose spouses are Finnish origin, brought a strong sense of motivation to integrate themselves to the society. This pull perspective is believed by the author to have a correlation to the majority of small and medium scale business found by foreigners in Finland. This is because many immigrants started their business with the purpose of covering their available time when coming to Finland as well as practicing Finnish or integrating to new environments. Furthermore, they would likely to receive a lot of help from their Finnish spouses and also the spouses contribute as main earning for the family at the beginning. In that case, running a small business will fulfil their purpose. In conclusion for this perspective, such a positive attitude from immigrants are encouraged and motivated to integrate to the society is a typical example of pull factor determinant.

Additionally, in Jukka's reply on this question, he said that pull factors would connect to the new technology and new opportunity in high-tech development fields. The author agrees on the fact that innovation fields are still open for change makers; therefore, pull factor here can be the urge to exploit new market needs or new business innovation. However, in the extension of this perspective, the researcher wants to view in a broader scenario (not limited only to the innovation or technology fields) that pull

factors apply also for foreigner who wants to find new opportunities in their preferable market.

Despite there were many positive pull reasons listed throughout the answers of the experts, all of them had the same confirmation that in the case of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland, push factors were the main driver. Foreigners seem to face multiple difficulties during the time they are residing in Finland which can lead to a decision to start their own business. Continuously, Mirza clarified that many entrepreneurs only saw the beautiful sides of being on their own and dreamed at the successful outcomes, but they did not usually see the hardship journey of being an entrepreneur and the person who claws out of difficulties might have the highest motivation. As a conclusion for this imperative question, from the experts' point of view, push factors are main determinants for foreign-born people to become an entrepreneur in Finland.

- The fifth question "What do they need to successfully establish a business here in Finland?"

In this question, the experts gave many opinions on how a foreign entrepreneur can successfully establish his/her business in Finland. The author has acknowledged some points which are quite basic; however, they are noticeably important to the success of a business.

First of all, the owner (regardless of background origin) should consider the core factor: business idea, to assess the possibility of success when he/she starts to do the business. Based on Jukka Huilla's comment on this matter, the owner should view different factors at the beginning stage such as his ability, the availability of the resource, networks, what does the business offer to the customer, the needs of the market. Moreover, one important factor is that, the owner should keep in mind the reason why his/her business is worth to be on the market. Especially in the case of foreign owners, they also need to think about the motives for running their businesses in Finland because such motives might affect their business in the long-run period. Jukka said "First, a business idea that clearly focuses the needs in the market and a very competitive way to fulfil that needs. And then, step by step, to plan how to get the business into life." Accordingly, there should be an appropriate plan to transform the idea into a potential business. Hence, it is encapsulated that a successful business is earned by a well-executed preparation procedure from the business idea step.

Subsequently, a foreign business owner might need extra support when he/she starts with a plan to establish a business in Finland. As common sense, in any context, a person who comes from another country and wants to conduct business in a second country might probably face many difficulties during that journey. For that reason, the interviewed experts proposed foreign entrepreneurs to look for help from helping

organizations. They suggested that immigrant entrepreneurs should follow the instructions of professional advisors and act progressively to ensure every move is correctly done. In practical application, both native Finnish and foreign entrepreneurs can utilize the support of entrepreneurial services in Finland; however, on this case, the author wants to encourage foreign entrepreneurial minds to contact for guidance which would relieve the pressure of “solving everything alone” in a new environment and reduce the undesirable mistakes during the establishment process.

The thesis author discussed with Jukka and Vesa about his earlier discussion of models of the entrepreneurial process (The Timmons Model and The Barringer & Ireland Entrepreneurial Process Model). Both experts emphasized the keyword “Step by step” which means recognizing the opportunities is not the centric matter of establishing a business. They suggested fulfilling the whole process is preferable. In addition, the researcher perceives that from the perspective of the experts, they view the establishment of a business is a journey and entrepreneurship is not just about seeing the opportunities and possessing ideas. As mentioned in the above part when the author compared the two models, the two models can reinforce one another. Seeing the opportunities can be the first move for any entrepreneur to start their journey. During the journey, an entrepreneur should gradually progress his/her business establishment based on the instruction of the helping organizations, such action helps to ensure the successful business.

Besides the cautious business planning and following the process of business establishment, throughout the interviews, the researcher also received some suggestions that can contribute directly to the success of a foreign-owned business. Vesa Varho highlighted the importance of understanding the Finnish business culture, knowledge of the country. The business requirements such as rules or regulations had also been mentioned in his answer. Foreign entrepreneurs should pay attention to these critical values if they want to have a successful business in Finland. And lastly, in Vesa’s comment, he recommended that a business person should know how to bring more customer by marketing, utilize the social network, and simply try to run the business well. Basically, this suggestion is preferred to the capability of an owner to carry the business activities. All of these actions will boost the chance to the success of a foreign-owned business in Finland.

- The sixth question “How do you see the future of Foreign Entrepreneurship cases in Finland?”

The future scenario is predicted positively from the viewpoints of experts. It is believed that the amount of foreign entrepreneurs will increase due to many changes in the current context of Finland. As Finnish government is trying to replenish more foreign human resource into Finnish society due to the decline of working-age Finnish-origin population, the number of

immigrant entrepreneur will also rise as a result of the incoming foreign population. In addition, changing world-context in the future such as Brexit will probably attract or push foreigners from EU countries to come to Finland. Furthermore, from the above parts of this thesis, the author has mentioned multiple sources of helping service for entrepreneur in Finland; therefore, the differences between native Finnish and foreign entrepreneurs in Finland is smaller (according to Vesa Varho's reply). The author also shows the expectation that foreigners will pay more attention to the Finnish market as well as on the other hand, the Finnish government and the current market will be more open to accept foreign-based business.

#### 4.1.2 Short conclusion after the interview with experts

The above analysis of six questions relating to the topic of foreign entrepreneurship discussed through the lens of business experts has several key noticed. The utmost confirmation is that restaurant or food service is the most established field of business in Finland by foreigners. Following the restaurant industry, personal small service providers are also chosen as a good entrepreneurial path for immigrant owners. Second noticeable point focuses on the affecting factors which make the above industries become so viable for immigrant entrepreneurs to establish. The analysis proposes ethnic resources, employment difficulties, easier market entry as the behind reasons those small (or medium) scale businesses to be in Finland. For the underlying factors that influence the decision to become an entrepreneur in Finland, the experts confirmed that push factors contributed to a large majority of cases. However, pull factors were also considered to be included as part of the reasons. In the later part of the analysis, the experts suggested that there should be a well-prepared execution of the business from the idea creation step to the final establishment. The foreign entrepreneurs are welcome to ask for advices from government-owned support services. And lastly, when discussing the contemporary situation, a positive feeling toward this matter was expressed from the experts. There are promising signals such as an increasing number of immigrant entrepreneurs, the government takes active steps, Finnish society structure changes and changing the attitude from consumers. In addition, the future term is hoped to be brighter with advantageous changes for an immigrant person to make a self-employment career in Finland.

### 4.2 Study based on conducted interviews with foreign entrepreneurs in Finland

#### 4.2.1 Interview results

In general assumption, the outcome of this part is assessed to be a success for the continuous research of the author. The author is able to view the case of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland in a totally new standpoint

than what were mentioned by the experts. What is more, there was additional information provided by the foreign entrepreneurs from their preceding experience which could be used to develop more analysis on this thesis.

The author has combined the answer of four foreign entrepreneurs in the below table.

	Interviewer 1	Interviewer 2	Interviewer 3	Interviewer 4
Country of origin	Vietnam	Bulgaria	Afghanistan	China
First reason to Finland	Family	Work reason	Refugee	Family
Have done any entrepreneurial activities before establishing a business here?	Yes	Yes	No	Some experience
Business field	Food service	Beauty studio	Restaurant	Food shop
Product/service offer	Prepare cooked Vietnamese food	Offer various beauty services for (mostly) women	Offer Fresh Italian cuisine	Sell food products from different Asian countries
How long have the business been established?	Two years	For many years after graduated from pedicure school.	One and a half month	Five years
How do you come up with the idea that you would establish a business in Finland?	Love to work to communicate with people. Want to introduce Vietnamese dishes.	Easily to establish and get in business. First investment is low. Education for doing business is low required. Risk is low.	Passion to make fresh Italian food with the ingredients imported from Italy.	Find no competitor, and so many Asian people living in the nearby area.
The main factors that drove you to be in this business in Finland	<b>Push:</b> Difficulties in life in Finland. Language barrier. Hard to find workplace.	<b>Push:</b> Cannot find any decent job with same education.	<b>Push:</b> No other option. Only be able to work and study. Face lots of difficulties.	<b>Push:</b> No experience in the Finnish market. Lack of money.

	<b>Pull:</b> Willing to integrate with the society and new environment. Do the work as wanted. Can do spirit.  (Push > Pull)	<b>Pull:</b> Love to be free. Enjoy the process of improving the business.  (Push > Pull)	<b>Pull:</b> Love to do a business of your own.  (Push > Pull)	<b>Pull:</b> Enjoy customer service and communicate with customer. Want to be an entrepreneur as a full-time job. Find out the opportunity. (Pull> Push)
What were needed to establish your business?	Personal fund Government support Language	Personal fund. Education to be entrepreneur. Student loan	Personal fund Receive no help Product	Personal fund Government support. Language Good place to start business. Product Spouse support.
Your thinking about the journey to establish a business in Finland	Neither too difficult nor to easy.	Very hard to establish and to keep the business alive	Very hard journey to be able to establish the business	It is a challenge from 0 to the current stage.
Expectation in future term	Used to think about expansion but not enough capital money as well as personal capability. If there is more available capital, the owner will absolutely expand.	Quite negative: due to taxation matter, the owner did not plan to expand further. Will shut down the business if finding out new way.	Expand the business, looking for new customers, become a brand and move to better location.	The store grows bigger, with more variety of products but now, the owner wants to be sure that the business will not fall easily.

Table 1. Summarized answer from the foreign entrepreneurs.

The personal question set displays some markable points. The researcher selectively chose four interviewees from four different nationalities (Vietnamese, Bulgarian, Afghan and Chinese) operating also in four distinctive businesses. They first came to Finland with different purposes; two of the interviewees went to Finland with family reason, one responded that he was a refugee when first moved to Finland because of the chaotic situation in his country, and the last person was a contractual worker at the beginning. All of the interviewed individuals lost or changed their previous social status from their home countries and when they came to Finland, they had to accept another status. At least one of the entrepreneurs came to Finland with an extremely unpleasant circumstance as a refugee and for all of them, achieving a better social status in a new part of their life is desirable. As a result of that thinking, becoming an entrepreneur is a viable option to reach higher social status.

Another recognizable point from these cases is that most of the foreign entrepreneurs had previous entrepreneurial experiences before they ran their current business here. One of the owners possesses the entrepreneurial-oriented mindset and she has tried to establish several businesses in different fields before running the current one. The Asian store owner had somewhat entrepreneurial experiences because she used to help run her family business in her home country. And although the Italian restaurant owner did not do any entrepreneurial activities before, he used to work in a similar restaurant in Finland and learned how to do business from there. In a literature review of Akee, Jaeger and Tatsiramos (2007) in their publication "The Persistence of Self-Employment Across Borders: New Evidence on Legal Immigrants to the United States"; they found evidence that previous self-employment experience from a home country affected the self-employment decision in the current country. From such literature review and from the researching cases, the researcher acknowledges that there is a connection between previous experience in entrepreneurship of an immigrant entrepreneur and the decision to establish a business in a foreign destination.

Throughout the discussion, the question "How do you come up with the idea that you would establish a business in Finland?". There are two groups of opinion which are classified based on the answers of four interviewees. The first group contains the passion to bring extraordinary values from home country to the migrant country. In this case, two of the interviewees want to bring their traditional cuisines to serve the Finnish market. On the other hand, the second group discusses the recognition of chances in the market. The beauty salon owner saw the key figures of her industry: easy to get in, low investment, low risk, only need to have specific skills, business education is not highly required. In a different angle, the Asian store owner shared that she recognized the opportunity when there were many Asians living in the nearby area plus not even one single Asian shop was opened at that time. During the time analysing this question, it is quite difficult to find a general assumption between all four cases in the



perspective that the owner's skills or knowledge in the industry lead to the idea to establish a business because only two responders said to have pre-skills in the business. On top of that, the "individual" element determines the differences in the idea of each foreigner, each entrepreneur might adopt personal reasons on why his/her business should be on the market. This question is only utilized to see the outlining factors which lead to the decision to start a business by foreigners in Finland.

The previous question is related to the generation of a business idea by bringing unique values to the business or recognizing the opportunities on the market. The next question heavily focuses on understanding the core matters (push and pull factors) through the realistic lens of foreign entrepreneurs in Finland. Initially, after all the conducted interviews, it is found that in most of the cases, push factors are responsible for making more effect on the decision to establish a business than pull factors. What was disclosed by the four interviewees as push factors closely match to the theoretical review in the upper part of this thesis. When discussing with the interviewees, the researcher received upsetting views through their interaction on the answers. Some responders mentioned that becoming an entrepreneur here to them is "the only option" or "what life pushed to become". Many entrepreneurial journeys started with anxiety, and depressions due to the difficulties in life of an immigrant. Among all the reasons, the hardship in getting a job was mentioned multiple times by three out of four responds. Many of them used to be employed in Finland; however, they were not satisfied with the job or the job did not match the qualification. Consequently, the employment issue in a migrant country leads as the highest underlying factor that drives foreigner to make a decisive move to become an entrepreneur.

Although push factors are argued to have a critical effect on foreign entrepreneurship, pull factors should also be put on the scale in this case. The researcher has collected a wide range of replies from the four entrepreneurs about their positive incentives to own a business in Finland. The incentives appear between all the cases are sorted in three main categories: willingness to integrate to the Finnish society, individual reasons and opportunity-based reasons. The first incentive is a new finding for this research. Ojaluoma (2019), in her recent research on the topic of "Entrepreneurship supporting female immigrants' integration into Finnish society" authenticated that becoming an entrepreneur was perceived as a way to integrate into the society. This research reaffirms that such incentive is actually viable in the foreign entrepreneur community. When discussing about the pull reasons, many shared that they had wanted to construct the thing of their own and faced challenges, held the freedom of being own boss or enjoyed working in customer service segment. Even though the first incentive group relates to the immigrant status, the second group holds account for individual characteristic of an entrepreneurial mindset. And the last group of positive incentive is about the recognition of business opportunity in the market. This group is simple

to explain; if someone observes an opportunity in the market, he/she will want to open a business based on that chance. Between these three pull factor groups, the individual self-motivation appeared in all cases.

The purpose of the question “What was needed to establish your business?” is to understand the resources needed and whether there was any support provided. On top of all the listed points, the personal fund was reported in all four cases. In these cases, the immigrant entrepreneurs were supposed to invest a great deal of capital money into their business. Following the personal fund, government support was mentioned several times through all the interviews. Government contributes to provide helping services which entrepreneurs can contact and receive supports. There are certain reported figures which are TE-office’s entrepreneurship training, Finnish language course, start-up grants. According to TE-office, a start-up grant is provided to new entrepreneurs to encourage the businesses as well as enhancing the employment. During the maximum period of 12 months, an amount of fund is given to new entrepreneurs as secure income. (TE-office.)

However, in some cases, the owner received no help from any sources and walked alone through the whole settling journey. Besides the above two figures, a careful preparation for the business is necessary to settle a business in Finland. Depends on the business field, there should be appropriate preparation. For example, in restaurant or food services, food product and location are important factors; in the retail industry, product quality and range need to be taken care of. In the end, this question is only designed to draft a closer picture on the journey of a foreign entrepreneur in Finland.

The two last questions target more on the intuitive sides of the topic of immigrant entrepreneurship in Finland. Most of the responders claimed that they had gone through a really tough journey from zero to the current state. It is believed that they have achieved their own success by passing through all the difficulties and be able to maintain their business in Finland.

In contrast to the struggling stage to keep the business alive, it is quite motivating to hear about the expansion plan of two interviewees which shows a positive development in their business. In one case, the owner said that she would expand her business in the future time when she is able to get more capital money; but at the moment, she is happy with her current business. And the last person who seemed to be quite sceptical in her business as she had downsized her business and would possibly close in term of better-earning solution. She explained that high taxation rate and low level of law system for small entrepreneur were main reasons for her scepticism. Throughout these two last research questions, it is found that the settlement of business in Finland by foreigners is a challenging path; however, after being able to adapt to the market, they will grow

stronger and see the brighter side of being an entrepreneur in a migrant country.

#### 4.2.2 Short conclusion after the interview with foreign entrepreneurs

The analysis of this part has given a better understanding on the topic of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland based on the realistic opinions of the immigrant ones. Some findings which were concluded from these cases actually help to understand the behaviours of foreign owners here. First of all, it is suggested that there is somewhat a connection between immigrant entrepreneurship with previous entrepreneurial experiences. Next considerable point concerns the outlining factors as defined as the reasons to come up with the business idea of one immigrant entrepreneur. The analysis of the targeted group divides that outlining factors into two categories: the idea comes from the willingness to contribute special cultural value to make business in the new country, and idea comes from the recognition of chances in the market. Later on, the analysis, a deeper layer of causing factors was examined and once again push and pull factors were mentioned. Based on the lens of foreign entrepreneurs, push factors are more than pull ones which prove that immigrant has had a difficult journey to become an entrepreneur in Finland. Employment issues are the main push factors from the analysis. However, the analysis also brings a closer look at pull factors in a multifaceted view as the willingness to integrate to the society, individual self-motivation and opportunity-based reasons. Additionally, the foreign owners said that personal fund, the government supports, and good preparation steps will increase the successful chance of the business establishment. And lastly, even though the journey seems to be tricky for all four entrepreneurs, most of them see the brighter sides of their business afterwards.

#### 4.3 Conclusion based on the aligned views from both interviewed groups

The final step of this research model involves a comparison between two sources of replies from two targeted groups. In general assessment, there is no contrast between the standpoint of the business and entrepreneurial experts and foreign entrepreneurs in Finland. The hypothesis of the first group reflects on the realistic confirmation of the second group. Therefore, the authenticated element of this research is ensured.

One of the most repeated matters in this thesis, the push and pull factors, finally comes to the conclusion. At the end of the research, push factors have been declared that it has such a forceful impact on the determinant of establishing a business in Finland. In most cases, the complication of possessing an immigrant status and facing hardship in Finland result in the resolution of becoming an entrepreneur in the new destination. However, pull factors via the second group's cases raise the awareness that every foreigner might perceive positive motivations in order to feel that settling

business in Finland is a great choice. The above analysis has proved that positive motivations come from inner self-factors as well as environmental elements. In the end, despite the fact that push factors can dominate the situation, both determinants happen in one entrepreneur's experience.

Throughout the research reviews, the structure of settling a business from the beginning starts from having a business idea and decision to become an entrepreneur, then it is important to follow step by step instruction from advisors to successfully launch a business. The key emphasis here in the case of foreign entrepreneurs is that they usually do not know the system in Finland; therefore, they need serious guidance to be able to build their own business and they must prepare for that procedure respectively. Both interviewed groups showed that immigrant owners should follow certain track to carry on their business to reduce the hardship of unacquainted environment.

Foreigners might experience different ways to determine why they chose those business fields to be established in Finland. However, experts might expose those reasons in different angles. Immigrants choose their business based on the recognition of chance in the market and the unique values which they pursue from their own cultures and experiences. On the other side, business experts promoted that ethnic resources, difficulties in life and easy market entry were the reasons why small businesses like restaurant or personal services had been chosen by immigrants. The responses showed a discreate argument from both groups; nonetheless, the idea is that there is no universal right explanation for the reason why foreigners usually choose particular businesses and every case is depended on personal purposes as well.

The above summary is all the recognized comparison between foreign entrepreneurs and business/entrepreneurial experts. There are not so many distinctions from two views and both views support the clarification of this research.

## **5 AUTHOR'S PROPOSED MODEL AFTER THE RESEARCH ANALYSIS**

The proposed model is sketched by using the Ice-berg theory of Ernest Hemingway. The Ice-berg theory interprets the context that only a part of a case is observable just like the upper surface of an iceberg. The underlying part of an iceberg is usually unseen from normal view; in the same way of metaphorizing, there are always uncovered stories buried or hidden and cannot be identified easily. The sinking layers always contribute as the foundation and the powerful driver for the case. (Farooq. From Academia)

During the process of understanding the foreign entrepreneurship case in Finland, the author has noticed identical points of this case and the Ice-berg theories. Therefore, the following model has been sketched based on the Ice-berg theories.

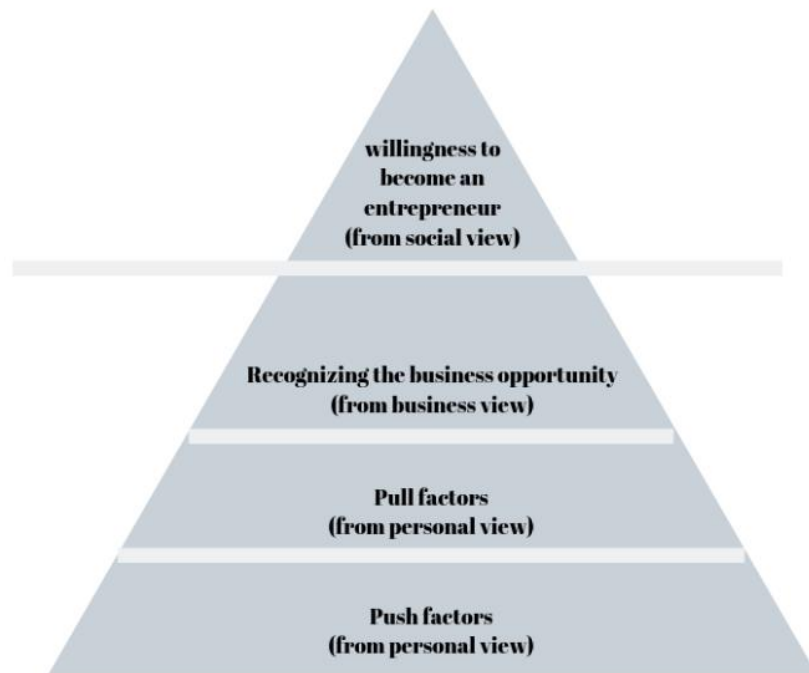


Figure 4. Model to understand decision to become an entrepreneur of an foreigner (based on Iceberg model)

The designed model focuses on analysing four layers of entrepreneurship motivation of a Foreigner in Finland. The four layers are classified into three unique standpoints: the social view, the business view and the personal view. The visible part of the Entrepreneurship iceberg is the “Willingness to become an entrepreneur” based on the social view. From a social perspective, the decision to become an entrepreneur starts from the mindset that a person wants to build a business on his/her own. It commonly follows with a positive feeling of pride to be an entrepreneur, especially a foreigner as an entrepreneur.

The next layer “Recognizing business opportunity” is realized through the business view. This layer is just right below the water surface because the outsiders cannot see such motivations completely. It is hidden from general view. However, if this case is viewed from the business angle, the motivations to become a foreign entrepreneur are shaped by the awareness of chances in the market. This layer interprets a logical process that the decision to become an entrepreneur starts when a person realizes a chance in the market and run a business based on that chance.

From the third layer, all the motivational factors are buried inside the thought of an entrepreneur. These factors reflect the unspoken mental reasons from the view of an entrepreneur. It is impossible to see the rooted layers from the social and business standpoint. The only way to understand these layers is through direct discussion with each case entrepreneur. The third layer concerns internal motivations which are directly constructed by the positive-pull feelings of an entrepreneur. Even though these pull factors are personalized, they have a touching effect on the decision to become an entrepreneur of an immigrant person.

And from the deepest layer of this entrepreneurial iceberg, the push factors represent for the furthest part to reach. From the beginning to the end of every interview, push factors were mentioned frequently and many foreign entrepreneurs expressed sadness and sorrow or depression across the process. In addition to that, push factors are usually the interior reason for immigrant entrepreneurs to start a business in Finland as in their perception, being able to maintain their living in Finland has already been a difficult journey. Consequently, it is concluded that the transformational factor and the foundation of the entrepreneurial motivation of foreigner is negative/push factors.

In conclusion, this entrepreneurial viewpoint model shows different angles of how the decision to become an entrepreneur, especially for immigrants, is constructed. The model introduced viewpoints from social, from business and from self-individual of an entrepreneur. The iceberg structure of this model explains the accessibility in knowing the underlying reasons for becoming an entrepreneur in a foreign country. The deeper the layer is, the harder it is to understand the buried reasons.

## **6 LIMITATION AND CONCLUSION**

### **6.1 Limitation**

The first and most challenging limitation which concerns to this thesis is the low level of interviewed foreign entrepreneurs. It is admitted that the interviewed groups were not diverse enough in many aspects such as in their industries, in motivations, and in their views. During the thesis, various cases had been mentioned like the case of Turkish restaurant owners, technology start-ups or immigrant-owned construction companies; however, these cases have not been examined from the real opinions of foreign interviewees. This lack of interviewee results in the shortage of input information for a more profound understanding of the phenomenon of foreign entrepreneurship. Therefore, the research analysis is only reviewed according to the replies of the available interviewees.

There are objective and subjective reasons to explain such limitation during the researching process. The main objective reason is because of the incapability of carrying such a big theme like foreign entrepreneurship in Finland. It is impossible for researching a special and open topic within the limited time and expertise knowledge of the writer. In addition, individual work is impossible to carry the qualitative research of multiple groups. It was quite difficult at first because there was no reply from a few foreign entrepreneurs when they were contacted by email. The subjective reasons must include the difficulty in contacting the interviewees due to narrow personal network and the inappropriate research strategies. It took the researcher a significant amount of time to contact and receive responses from foreign entrepreneurs as it was considered rude just to come to the business places and interview them.

Even though the research was conducted on a small scale, the outcomes acquired from both interviewed groups are enough at this level to provide a better understanding on the research topic. In addition, the final assumption on this thesis will be based on the response of all the interviewees.

## 6.2 Conclusion

To conclude this thesis work, first of all, the alignment of views from two interview groups has clarified the case phenomenon; therefore, there has been a success in targeting and solving the research questions.

For the main question concerning the determination of the decision to become an entrepreneur of a foreigner in Finland, the conducted work has pointed out the importance of self-related factors which are affected by push and pull constituents. The analysis has given a better understanding on the reality of foreign entrepreneurship in Finland, foreign-born business owners usually face many difficulties in their life. Of course, there are positive factors which lead to the decision to become an entrepreneur in Finland; however, throughout all discussion, the result still remains on the idea that negative or depressing state of feelings strongly push the immigrants to be the business owner in Finnish market. For the special case of foreigner in Finland, push motivation would be the centre and the grass-root reasons to decide to be an entrepreneur.

For the second main research question “What are the business segments that foreign entrepreneurs usually establish in Finland and the underlying reasons why they target those segments?”, the investigation reveals that small and medium business such as restaurants or personal services are mostly chosen to be established. Bigger, required more skills and knowledges, and more challenging business fields are less chosen by immigrant ones in Finland. There has been different perspectives to explain why these fields are chosen but not others. In the end, there is not a single explanation as every case happens in a unique way. Each

foreign entrepreneurs might possess different reasons for his/her chosen business.

Finally, it is worth to invest time and effort in contributing into a topic which has not been studying that much, especially in the case of Finnish entrepreneurial environment. Learning about foreigners and about how their entrepreneurship track development in a different country should be paid more attention, and from that, the governments or academic analyst would be able to sketch and provide more support for the immigrant groups. The author expresses a positive expectation that there would be more awareness in this special topic.



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## Appendix 1

## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL EXPERTS

Q: What is the current situation of Foreign Entrepreneurship in Finland?

Q: Which are the fields do you think that foreign entrepreneurs usually establish in Finland?

Q: Why are these fields usually frequently established by foreigners?

Q: What drive those foreigners to establish their business here?

Q: What do they need to successfully establish a business here in Finland?

Q: How do you see the future of Foreign Entrepreneurship cases in Finland?

## Appendix 2

## APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURS IN FINLAND

## \*Personal information

Q1: Where are you from?

Q2: What was the first reason for you to come to Finland? (Student, Asylum, Working, Family, etc.?)

Q3: Have you done any entrepreneurial activities before you establish a business here?

## \*Business related question

Q: What is your business about?

Q: How long have your business been established?

Q: What kind of product or service that your business provides?

Q: How do you come up with the idea that you would establish a business in Finland?

Q: What were the main factors that drove you to be in this business in Finland?

Q: What were needed to establish your business? (Resources, help, etc?)

Q: How do you think about your journey to establish a business in Finland?

Q: What do you expect in the future term?