CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS MULTICULTURALISM
Case Study: Dynamo Campus

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Abstract
Education is no longer seen as just gaining knowledge but more as gaining knowledge that will enable individuals to deepen their understanding of the world and to recognize the roles they play in the world. Learning environments are undergoing transformations that will help them be more flexible and acknowledge the needs of the society, students and education institutions.

The study was assigned by JAMK University of Applied Sciences, and the objective was to investigate the factors that contribute to a multicultural learning environment .The School of Business and Service Management Dynamo campus was chosen as the case for the study.

A qualitative research method was applied to this study with semi-structured interviews as the main tool of data collection. The participants of the interviews were composed of teachers, students, a professor from Jyväskylä University and the Development Manager of JAMK University of Applied Sciences.

The results revealed that thorough multicultural training is needed for teachers especially in an international setting. Furthermore, there is a need to transform teaching spaces into motivational spaces where students can interact with their peers and share information. The students suggested more flexible social spaces that would create community-like meeting spaces where students can interact informally and get to know each other. In addition, more colorful furniture was suggested by the students in order create a warm feeling and a flexible space for the students.

In conclusion, educational institutions are on the edge of different changes which means that learning will no longer be teacher-oriented but student-oriented. In addition to these changes educational leaders will have to redefine their policies to ensure they meet the needs of diverse students.

Keywords
Learning environment, globalization, multiculturalism, multicultural education, internationalization, pedagogy, physical space, social space

Miscellaneous

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1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization encompasses a wide array of perspectives all which have one thing in common; to harmonize communities and enhance communication from one culture to the other. Agarwal (2009, 221-) states that the impacts of globalizations can be seen in all facets of the society. Educational institutions have been subjected to diverse changes as a result of rapid technological changes. Traditional methods of working and learning have been challenged due to competition on an international basis. Educational systems must therefore be characterized by acquiring knowledge that has the capacity to match the challenges that come with change and uncertainty as well as equip students for a competitive and technologically-driven society.

Likewise, learning environments have shifted from just being spaces where learners walk in and out to acquire knowledge, to places of networking and interacting with students and teachers. As the thesis will illustrate, many discussions concerning globalization suggest that globalization is a phenomenon that affects the education system, political system, the economy and the community.

This thesis research was requested by the Head of Department of School of Business and Service Management in a quest to investigate the main factors that contribute to a multicultural learning environment. The topic of the thesis came about as a topic of interest to the author, after realizing the lack of interaction especially between Finnish and international student, as a result the author's supervisor provided the author with more insight s on the topic and also offered suggestions to explore and combine different topics. Dynamo Campus of JAMK University of Applied Sciences was selected as the case study for this study topic as a suggestion from the Head of Programme and the author's thesis tutor in a quest to investigate factors that contribute to a multicultural learning environment as well as the author's interest in the field of multicultural learning environments.

The research study focused on learning environments and multicultural education in order to come up with concrete conclusions of what a multicultural learning environment is made up of.

This thesis used benchmarks of other educational institutions in order to identify underlying physical elements that can be adopted by Dynamo Campus. In addition, case study research analysis will be used to critically the chosen contexts in Dynamo Campus. Qualitative research method will be used for this research due to its nature to uncover deep insights on situations. The significance of this research is based on the impact that globalization has had on educational institutions and how educational institutions can move forward, while accommodating these changes in a way that benefits their institutions. The main research question for this study will investigate whether the learning environment of JAMK's Dynamo Campus supports multiculturalism.

The relevance of this research thesis lies in the effects of globalization and the challenges that are faced by educational institutions in the face of cultural diversity and how to manage it.

2 MULTICULTURALISM

The process of globalization has resulted in distances being condensed, ease of interaction and interconnection as well as cooperation between nations. Globalization has also meant that the speed with which goods and people move is faster and physical locations are no longer seen as barriers of communication as the internet allows people to connect. The use of English as the standard language of communication has also been a characteristic of globalization. Furthermore, movement of people for business, leisure and education is on the rise as a result of globalization. Likewise, emergence of visa-free entrance and abolishment of boarders has resulted in free movement of people which in some cases has had negative effects such as terrorism. (Eriksen 2007, 7-9)

Eriksen (1997, 10) and Sotshangane (2002,223) have firmly stated that globalization does not naturally led to harmonization of cultures, rather(Sotshangane 2007,223) globalization creates room for mutual tolerance of cultures and allows different cultures to express themselves in their own unique ways.

With the accelerated movement of people due to tourism, student exchange programs, search for better opportunities and global economic changes, the emergence of ethnic societies is now increasing as people of different backgrounds come together. The term multiculturalism is widely used by policy makers and international organizations and one that has varying definitions. Invision (2010, 2) defines multiculturalism as "a set of beliefs, attitudes, theories, norms, practices and policies that seek to provide public recognition of and support for accommodation of non-dominant ethno-cultural groups". In this definition, multiculturalism is used to refer to the programs and policies that are

designed to deal with cultural diverse societies. In a demographic description, however, an ethnically or racially diverse society is considered to be multicultural. (Inglis 1996, 16)

Rosado (1997) defines multiculturalism as:

> "a set of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the society or organization".

This definition acknowledges the core issues related to multiculturalism. What can be drawn from this definition is that recognizing that there is diversity in the culture is the first step towards fostering mutual respect of different cultures while upholding each culture's integrity with the same social value. All cultural behaviors and cultural expressions should be given equal acknowledgement. Likewise, everyone's ways of cultural expression should be valued and not rejected just because they differ from the other person's cultural expression. Culturally diverse groups should be empowered and given support. In multicultural societies, different cultures should be allowed to practice their traditions as long as they do not interfere with other cultures doing the same. This also means that different cultures have the opportunity to express their identity and cultural practices (Rosado, 1997)

It has been urged that, however, that the idea of multiculturalism causes friction between the natives of a country and the new comers, the immigrants. This has sometimes led to violent conflicts and hate crimes being committed. In the United Kingdom for example immigrants and refugees were seen a danger to the society. The idea of cohesion was seen as a threat to the existing society (Rex & Singh 2003, 13-15). However, Inglis (1996, 32) has stated that the inability of cultures to co-exist has brought awareness to decision makers on the need to create policies that promote harmony among members diverse cultures for mutual tolerance.

Rex and Singh (2003, 15), also argue that multiculturalism should not only be used as a basis for policies and laws to be adhered to but as a policy that recognizes cultures as different from each other and uses these differences to find a common ground that caters for all individuals. Again, conflicts present in the society due to the presence of diverse cultures should be drivers of acquiring compromise.

2.1 Educational migration

"Migration refers to the movement of people from one settlement to another". Migration can be divided into two parts; Forced and voluntary migration. Forced migration occurs when refugees and asylum seekers flee their own countries as a result of war or fear of persecution in the hands of their own government. Voluntary migration on the other hand can be as a result of the need to look for better opportunities in other countries. Migration is increasingly turning into a habitual phenomenon. With the cultural and economic changes taking place globally, the search for the better opportunities is also rising simultaneously. The need for nations to rely on each other has prompted migration and interdependence of nations. Besides, the flow of people and goods without restrictions has also intensified as well as the occurrences happening in one nation having an effect on other nations which are far away in terms of the geographical area. Mobility has far more than anything been influenced by improvements in transportation and communication (Valtonen 2009, 1-5).

Valtonen (2009, 3) has further explained that many European countries are now faced with the inevitable challenge of an ageing population; subsequently immigration is being considered as a way of tackling this problem. According to Koivukangas (2003, 8), the population of baby boomers is declining and will continue to decline at a fast pace. This therefore means that there will be a high number of retirees who will be in need of care and whose jobs will need to be replaced. Much of the needed labor force will be out-

sourced from other countries hence an immigration policy that supports integration and minorities will need to be put in place.

Recruitment of international students in educational institutions is one of the main characteristics for creating cultural diversity in schools. The number of international students seeking education in higher education institutions reached a peak of 3.3 million as of 2008 from 0.8million students that had been recorded in 1975. Globalization has been acknowledged as the contributor of this growth. (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012, Highlights from Education at a glance, 2010). According to Study Finland, there were 14,000 international students studying in Finland in 2009 in both universities and universities of applied sciences. OECD has also estimated that between 17-33% of all international students choose to stay in the host country and find employment after their graduation.

Varghese (2009, 13) in his article Globalization, economic crisis and national strategies for higher education, noted that with increased liberation and emerging multi-national corporations, students, especially from developing countries prefer to seek higher education in foreign universities, correspondingly, these multi-national corporations recruit to a large extent, students that have been awarded foreign degrees as they are deemed to be more internationally experienced. The academic attractiveness of an education system in the area of research and development also play a huge role in helping students choose a foreign education institution. Students from developing countries who seek education in foreign countries are likely to be more valuable in the labor market upon their return back to their home countries and even more valued when the degree is attained from a world-wide recognized institution.

Varghese (2009, 8-13) also adds that knowledge and skills being acquired are now needed for the competitive global market hence immense changes can be seen in the education sector. Moreover, competition between universities has shifted from competition between public and private universities on a national level to competition between national and trans-national universities. Studying in foreign education institutions has also

been argued to be more profitable and in the long run also meets the needs of a global labor market as well domestic.

2.2 Role of education in "learning to live together"

The report to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization titled, International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century: Learning: The Treasure Within (1998, 91-94) states that education provides measures that can be used by all individuals to adapt in different environments. Traditional ways of learning lay an emphasis on the teacher who is seen as the expert hence making education more teacher-centered rather than shifting the focus to the student who ultimately should be the focus. Likewise, there should be interaction between the teacher and the student as opposed to the student playing the role of a passive listener to whom information is passed down. It is the duty of the teachers to ensure that education impacts the students in a way that makes the students curious as well as examine carefully how the changing world systems such as the family, the school, country and the world have an influence on their values.

The report (1998, 93) also adds that education is the key to creating interconnection between individuals. Education creates an atmosphere in which individuals can socialize and show respect for cultural differences despite how different their practices might seem for the host members in the society. Education should be a way to fight every kind of exclusion in the society by engaging students in activities that promote cooperation and teaching students how to adopt perspectives of other different cultural backgrounds.

Daniel (2001, 265-266) notes that "education plays a not-insignificant part in how societies transmit and shape beliefs, perceptions and understandings regarding many aspects of our lives". Education should be used to create a distinction between the information that the media transmits and what teachers teach their students. Furthermore, educations can be a tool to counterbalance the messages that are available in the society and

in the media. Likewise, integration cannot only be achieved by education, but the society must also be encouraged to participate in this task in order to support harmony, mutual respect and understanding of different cultures. Needless to say, the report to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization titled, International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century: Learning: The Treasure Within (1998, 61-67) emphasizes that education should be able to prepare students for their role in the society, in cultural activities as well encourage working together of all people. On the other hand, while still upholding the importance of integrating societies, individual rights must be respected and personal growth encouraged.

2.3 Multicultural education and Finnish education system

The Finnish Education System is comprised of nine years of basic education, upper secondary education, made up of vocational and general education, and higher education which is provided by a university or a polytechnic also known as a university of applied sciences. The Finnish Higher Education System is divided into two models; universities that offer scientific research opportunities and universities of applied sciences that offer research and development opportunities (Ministry of Education and Culture, Education System in Finland, 2012).

Multicultural education is a term used to describe an inclusive approach that schools apply in order to ensure that education is "about all people and for all people". It is an approach that is extensive in the school culture, curriculum, learning environment as well as the physical environment. Multicultural education has also been described as "a way of looking at the world", this means that multicultural education cannot just be seen as a set of policies but a reflective way of thinking that is learned in classrooms and applied to everyday situations. Nonetheless, it has often been thought that multicultural education is only for schools that have minority students in terms of ethnicity, however,

the goal of multicultural education is to enrich all students despite their cultural background. Furthermore, multicultural education should be able to educate students on their role on a global level that goes beyond their specific culture. (Bode & Nieto, 2008, 52-60)

In a study conducted at Tukkiharju Institute of Social Care, by Clarke, Kris in 2004, aimed at investigating the impact of the introduction of a multicultural vocational social care education that was aimed at attracting immigrants to the institution, it was revealed that, in the 1990s, the term multiculturalism was used in the Finnish education system synonymously as having English speaking teachers. With the growing number of immigrants that were moving to Finland especially during the great recession, educational institutions had to act quickly and find a way to integrate the immigrants in the Finnish education system as well as in the Finnish society. However, multiculturalism was still a concept that was new to the Finnish society with less studies conducted on the discourse, it proved to be even more difficult for educational planners. The inadequate information on multiculturalism created animosity between immigrants and the local people. Likewise, cultural terms were only vaguely used to refer to what seemed to be harmonious interaction that would only be achieved through multicultural education.

The study concluded that educational institutions needed to proactively involve immigrants in the development of a multicultural integration plan in order to learn about what immigrants needed and how they lived their lives. Furthermore, the absence of a clear educational curriculum that reflected on the cultural diversity was lacking in the institute and hence Finnish students and immigrants alike did not find multicultural education as enriching. The study suggested that teachers receive cultural competence training in order for them to be able to offer courses that would reflect on the diverse nature of the students that were in question as well as raise awareness to the Finnish students on the global changes that were taking place.

The situation has since seen drastic changes as government bodies have actively joined in the internationalization of educational institutions as well as an attempt to integrate

immigrants in their institutions. There has been an urgent need for education institutions to internationalize and reform their curricula to fit international standards.

Korn (2002, 1) states that a multicultural curriculum is "a celebration of diversity". In this respect, all students in the school should feel validated and included in the school system as well as a connection to the institution's policies, values and vision. In multicultural education settings, culturally diverse students need to be introduced to the host institution in a way that enriches the students' knowledge on the new culture. Even though each student has a different way of getting accustomed to a new culture, it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that all the students comfortably adapt to the new culture. Nieto & Bode (2008, 134) also add that, pedagogy plays a crucial role in educating students on multicultural issues and hence the need to develop a curriculum that helps students achieve a more critical perspective by including experiences and cultures of other students in vital.

According to Gay (1998, 17), the main concepts for multicultural education lie under the following guidelines:

- Encourage mutual respect for all cultures, acknowledgement and significance in educational programs.

- Create academic practices and processes that are compatible to those of immigrant groups and host cultures. It is not enough to rely only on the curriculum to create multicultural education, to a certain degree, diverse approaches for example the organization of classrooms, available material for learning as well as performance barometers also require a diverse approach based on integration and inclusivity of cultural diversity

- Provide equal opportunities for all students to achieve their academic goals in their field of study.

- Develop a diverse curriculum to include experiences of home cultures as well as ethnic cultures.

- Provide students with experiences that create a feeling of interconnectedness for all members and enable students to feel as part of the society as well as empathize with members of other societies.

- Offer a wide array of skills and knowledge that can be applied to different situations as well as enable different ethnic groups to function in different settings.

School leaders need to acknowledge the need for diverse learning techniques for ethnically diverse student groups. In addition, school leaders must recognize that they are the creators of the vision, mission and values for the school hence it is important for them to develop strategic plans that ensure that their institution's image represent multicultural education in all aspects. Nonetheless, teachers, school administrators and students must all demonstrate cultural competence as well as respect and tolerance for all cultures. Education institutions have to now undergo a transformative process, whereby process and practices must be improved and critically analyzed in order to create a foundation for cultural diversity. Furthermore, not only should multicultural education be implemented in school, but school leaders have to undergo thorough training and acquire professional skills for this kind of transformation (Gay, 1999, 17-20).

2.4 Internationalization of higher education institutions in Finland

The term internationalization refers to "activities of higher education institutions, often supported or framed by multilateral agreements or programs to expand their reach over national boarders". In most educational institutions, internationalization is characterized by activities that include foreign students, a diversified curriculum, partnering with institutions in other countries and networking activities with partner institutions in order to utilize available resources as well as enable students and teachers to have an international experience. On another level, student exchange programs, collective development agreements, teachers and students' mobility as well as unique programs made exclusively for foreign students are also regarded as components of internationalization. Nevertheless, not all educational institutions that meet these criterions are considered to have an international higher education, an integration process that is deeply rooted in teaching methods, research and development as well as quality assurance is a prerequisite for internationalizing higher education institutions (Van Damme, 2001, 416-417).

Furthermore, competitiveness among higher education institutions has made internationalization a key strategy in these institutions. Foskett and Maringe (2010) contend that globalization and rapid developments in technology and emergence of innovation processes have led higher education institutions to rethink their strategies as well as transform their process to become more international in order to attract students from different countries while aiming to create a platform for internationalization in their education institutions.

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture adopted the strategy "2009-2015 Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions" that would be implemented in order to attain maximum internationalization among Finnish higher education institutions as well as to develop an attractive multicultural environment where the society plays a role in global issues. The main goals of the strategy are to reform the current

strategies of higher education institutions in Finland in order to create a competitive atmosphere where students strive for excellence as well as tap into the opportunities that have been created by globalization. Hindrances to fully making internationalization a success have been acknowledged in the strategy among them being the high number of higher education degree holders that are moving out of Finland as compared to those moving into Finland. Even though, however, Finland has been internationally ranked as a high performing country especially in the field of research, technology and innovation, the gaps in internationalization can still be seen. There are still very few non-Finnish researchers, experts and teachers with a foreign background among the staff of higher education institutions.

Additionally, with less foreign students in Finnish higher education institutions, internationalization cannot be fully realized and on the other hand, the employability level of foreign students who choose to complete their degrees in Finland is very low. The strategy has also stated that the lack of attention paid to the teaching of Finnish language and culture increasingly hinders integration between immigrants and the natives. Räsänen (1998, 33) elaborates that possession of language skills is a requirement needed in order for one to obtain cultural competence.

With the acknowledgement of the above hindrances, among many others, the strategy has formed policies that must be incorporated in Finnish higher education institutions in order to promote internationalization. Higher education institutions are the key players in internationalization as they are the main promoters of diversity in the society, networking especially among international groups and the production of innovative and competent citizens. Higher education institutions always led the way for the society to become more culturally diverse. Foskett and Maringe (2010,23) reinforce this point by adding that, higher education institutions are not merely generators of knowledge for the society but should be more like partners with other companies that together they can focus knowledge to create value for the society.

Finnish higher education institutions are competing for the same talented students as other universities worldwide and hence having a competitive edge is key in in order to survive in the competitive world of education. Finland's success in the Programme for International Student Assessment has (PISA) has put Finland in the limelight especially in the field of education and hence attracted researchers and other interested parties to Finland. This therefore calls for immediate action to internationalize higher education institutions. The strategy plans to reform higher education institutions on order for them to accommodate internationalization. This will include planning the curriculum in way that reflects international competence. Furthermore, with the increasing number of immigrants, support services will also need to be reinforced. Counseling services for students who move to Finland will be offered in order to cater for their needs. (Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009–2015)

The strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions also aims at increasing mobility of teachers, researchers and students in order to accrue the competence needed to work in an international environment. Student mobility has been the most known form of internationalization, international students are also becoming part the moving groups as it proves to becoming more and more significant. Education plays a major role in migration among young people and is becoming a popular trend as young people seek better opportunities in other countries. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD, (International Migration: The human face of globalization 2009), offering study places to foreign students help foster international understanding between the two countries as well as understanding between today's rising culturally diverse societies.

3 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

3.1 Definitions of learning environments

Over the years, different definitions of learning environments have emerged. Most of these definitions give a reflection of fundamentals of a learning environment while trying to incorporate elements that add value to the leaners study life. Furthermore, these definitions give the various perspectives and in depth insights of learning environments challenging educational institutions to actively engage in practices that support the students' life.

The scope of learning environments has seen remarkable evolution, diversification and influence as a result of globalization over the last two decades. The term "new learning environments" was enacted in the late 90s. The term "new" signified prominent changes that shifted the way traditional educational institutions thought about learning environments alongside the challenges that came with the rapid technological advancement and influences from the media. The new learning environments also meant that educational institutions had to keep up with what was expected of them in terms of internationalization and taking advantage of the available technological solutions. Pohjonen (1997), defined learning environments as an entity that enables students to experience opportunities and continued study. In addition he points out this new learning environments are flexible in nature in terms of "place, time, method and right to study".

Pohjonen's definition of learning environments clearly shows the infancy of learning environments in the late 1990's and how learning environments research had not yet evolved as much they have now. However, the common denominator from Pohjonen's definition which is the main goal of most scholars in learning environments, is the fact that the aim learning environments is to acknowledge the needs of the learners, institutions and the community at large.

According to Wilson (1995, 27), a learning environment includes two aspects: the learner and "place" or "space" where learning takes places. Tangible elements like classrooms, books and other resources are also included in the learning environment. This definition clearly focuses on the space and place in which learning takes place and also incorporates elements that are included in these physical spaces. This definition further explains that, for effective learning to take place, students should be given "room to explore and determine goals and learning activities". It could therefore be argued that learning has shifted from a control-driven experience to one that is flexibility-driven especially on the students' side. The author also lays emphasis on the fact that library resources and access to technological are not only constituents of higher education but should be provided with proper support and guidance for the students.

The learning environment of a school contributes a lot to establishing whether students are motivated to learn or not. It affects to all students whether at the university level or elementary level. The author noted that several publications have used the word "school climate" to mean "learning environment". The words "school climate" has been found in most publications that relate to secondary and elementary schools. Freiberg and Stein (1999, 22) have defined school climate as the heart and soul of school citing that in order for students and teachers to love the school, they have to feel worthy, dignified and important. In contrast, Freiberg and Stein's definition has not detailed what a learning environment entails but has brought out the psychological aspect of the learning environments which in many cases is considered as a primary criterion for learning environments.

Fraser (1998, 3), in the Learning Environments Research journal has described learning environment as "the social, psychological and pedagogical contexts in which learning occurs and which affect students' achievement and attitude." This definition gives a holistic picture of the components that make up learning environments. The journal also goes further to include web-based learning environments such as multimedia. School

trips and excursions have also been included in this definition as part of a learning environment.

The most profound elements in this definition have all been mentioned and hence this definition will be adhered to throughout the thesis. This definition suggests that learning environments are no longer traditional in nature but have evolved into places that engage students to learn taking into consideration the place where the learning takes place and how it takes place. The author further reveals that the built environment of a school including the structure and architectural design of the classrooms is part of the larger entity of learning environments.

Fraser's (1998, 3) definition best unveils the nature of learning environments and the contexts that combined in an effective way, make up a healthy learning environment. Subsequently, this thesis paper will divide learning environments into the following contexts include:

- Pedagogical contexts
- Physical contexts
- Social contexts

The learning environments theories that have been presented all have basic similar features of what a learning environment should constitute. Learning environments should:

- enable students experience learning in different situations and places
- make learners inquiring hence want to know more
- be flexible for the learner and not control-driven
- support social interaction
- enable learners to have a sense of belonging
- acknowledge the needs of the learner
- add value to the learners' life

3.2 The role of pedagogy in multiculturalism

Although learning environments are undergoing predominant changes in the physical contexts, ways of learning have also paralleled these physical contexts.

According to Burman, Koivunen, Kuittinen, Luukannel, Manninen, Passi and Särkkä (2007,18-21), Educational institutions have to develop practices that support the most effective and natural way of learning. Learning environments, from an academic point of view have to emphasize the students' own initiative in actively participating in the studies. Burman et al(2007) have outlined the following ways in which educational institutions can enhance learning using strategies that focus on lifelong learning; use of mentors to guide students during their studies. shifting the focus of learning to student-centered and actively engaging students in the building of their knowledge rather than the students being only receivers of the knowledge and ensuring that structures and materials that support learning are provided for students to allow the students to practice and experiment with different experiences.

Rosebrough and Leverette (2010, 19-20), have defined pedagogy as the art of fulfilling the needs of a person by acknowledging education as a science and by affirming that the aim of teaching is to help students become self-fulfilled through acquisition of knowledge. Emphasis has been placed on the teacher-student dynamic which has seen different changes over the years. The roles of teachers are changing as learning is no longer one-way but instead learning from each other. Teachers are now seen as facilitators and guides to students unlike the traditional role of teachers being the only ones owning information. Teachers are encouraged to be assertive in their teaching and to realize that in addition to imparting knowledge to the students, they also act as mentors to the students.

The report to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization titled, International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century: Learning: The Treas-

ure Within (1998, 85-97), outlined four pillars of knowledge that give an overall view on how educational institutions can transform their educational systems. These pillars provide a realistic representation of how educators can offer each individual with learning opportunities that can be applied in day-to-day challenges of the rapidly changing world. The report also emphasizes on the necessity of adapting learning practices to encompass a wide view of discovering, exploring and cultivating creativity on each individual

- Learning to know; this type of learning serves individuals with a wide knowledge pertaining to what is expected of an individual in society. It also challenges makes the learner to become more curious intellectually and also motivates the learner to make their own independent judgments based on their experiences. Subsequently, educational institutions must strive to provide current models and approaches especially during the early stages of the individual's education. This helps the learner to develop curiosity and want to learn more from an early age.

- Learning to do; this 2nd pillar of learning to a large extent can be seen predominantly in vocational schools. Technical institutions also fall under this category. This means that in addition to acquiring skills for a specific job, learning should also be aimed at offering skills that can be applied to a wide range of situations, notably, unexpected occurrences, team work and initiative and a willingness to refresh skills in order to maintain a competitive edge.

- Learning to live together: this principle highlights the importance of raising awareness to the leaner on the diversity in the world and hence correlation of all humans. In addition, education should be aimed at helping individuals to know oneself in order to understand others and be able to create an understanding of another's feelings and actions. This can be done by teaching young people to embrace other people's viewpoints especially people from different ethnic backgrounds. In contrast, human behavior tends to naturally discriminate people who do not share the same qualities as they do, therefore it is important

that educators engage students in cultural activities which would provide a basis for working together.

- Learning to be: the aim of this type of learning is to develop the core values of a human being. A sense of identity and sense of belonging is formed at this stage. Learning to be seeks to enable an individual to realize his/her potential as a human being as well as develop core values that guide him/her through different stages of life. Additionally, the learner is empowered to take on the role of a leader in society and hence advocate for respect for humankind upholding ethical behavior in the society.

The challenge, however, for educators is how to successfully apply these pillars in their line of work. Educators must be aware of the dynamics of human development as well as at what stage to integrate which pillar. The four pillars of education are the motives of what education should revolve around in this dynamic world characterized by social and economic changes. They clearly explain at each stage the bigger picture of education and what it should aim to achieve. It is however important to note that education cannot fully curb inequality and social prejudices, the community must also take up this responsibility and ensure that it promotes mutual tolerance and understanding. Voluntary organizations must involve teachers and students in community work that strives for social cohesion.

3.3 Physical spaces in educational institutions

The main responsibility of building planners nowadays should be to design buildings that support all-round learning of an individual. In a study carried out in collaboration with six schools in Europe which focused on future physical learning environments, the main aim of the research was to find out the key elements of physical learning environments after which four elements were chosen as the most important: social, individual, formal teaching and informal learning processes. The study also researched the elements which impacted on the physical learning environments the most. The results revealed the need to improve education facilities as a whole with emphasis on the modification of physical spaces had the most inflence. (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011)

From the above a study, Kuuskorpi and González (2011) drew the conclusion that the physical learning environment is considered to be the helm of the school. Given that the case studies were from different countries, they were all faced with the same predicament of how their physical spaces were going to be challenged in the future and to recognize what changes to implement in order to support learners and teachers. The interviewees also raised the need for physical spaces to be flexible, changeable and sustainable. The study therefore shows that there is a need to shift from traditional physical spaces is now an urgent and global matter that many educational institutions are aiming at. Moreover, flexible physical spaces are more in demand as they can be modified depending on the needs.

The current approach to building classrooms is having the teacher as the focal point and the students as the audience, this model of a classroom is still very popular but other types of models have also emerged. These emerging models still have the teacher as the focal point but their spatial designs are more engaging of the students and allow for interaction between the students and the teachers. As mentioned earlier, due to the changes in the teacher's role, the spatial design of the classroom is also shifting to accommodate this change. For example, in a cooperative classroom, some of the seats are

arranged to fit group work sessions while others are fit for individual work but can be modified for group work sessions as well. This kind of seating makes it easy for students to interact with each other while still having freedom to do their own individual work. Subsequently, flexibility is an added advantage in this kind of arrangement. The teacher is therefore not seen as the sole owner of information, but a support and guide for the students (Manninen et al. 2007, 67).

Lippman (2011), 1-6 in an article published by Center for Effective Learning Environments: Can the physical environment have an impact on the learning environment?, adds that, learning is a continuous process that occurs on the hallways, in the cafeterias, in the library and in social gatherings and one that is no longer confined to the classroom, but, in other physical spaces as well. It is therefore important to have optimum interaction between the learner and the learning environment where learners are given an opportunity to fully explore and gain more knowledge. In addition, physical spaces also contribute to the well-being of the learner. The design of physical spaces must fully embrace the learners' needs and recognize what drives the learner to be in a particular place at a particular time.

JSIC e-Learning and Innovation team (2006 3), published a report, Designing Spaces for Effective Learning, which listed qualities that an educational facility should possess. These qualities are:

- Flexible: to accommodate both current and evolving pedagogies
- Future-proofed: to enable space to be re-allocated and reconfigured
- Bold: to look beyond tried and tested technologies and pedagogies
- Creative: to energize and inspire learners and tutors
- Supportive: to develop the potential of all learners
- Enterprising: to make each space cable of supporting different purposes

The attributes described above suggest that learning spaces should inspire students to have a passion for learning in a motivating environment that is comfortable and wel-

coming. Thomas, (2010, 502-511) points out that, the ultimate goal of educational institutions is to provide knowledge to the learners, hence in order to achieve this goal learning spaces have to planned to adapt to the different types of learning and hence careful contemplation of the dynamics of future learning should be done. Physical spaces should therefore be easily converted for variety of uses.

According to Manninen et al. (2007, 59-68), educational institutions are now rethinking the role of the physical environment and the impacts it has on the learners life. It is important to have school buildings that not only support one approach of learning but is also open and flexible to other approaches of learning. Acker and Miller (2005, 4) adds that the added value of having flexible spaces is the fact that these spaces, classrooms especially, can be configured to suit the needs of the different groups of students studying at the school. Besides the factors that have been mentioned, the main goal of formal learning spaces is to bring students together for interaction and collaboration.

The primary goal of libraries is to provide learning materials for the students as well as offer a learning space for them. The challenge, however, is to turn libraries from merely being providers of learning materials to becoming flexible spaces that are adaptable to changing trends in technology, different groups of students based on their backgrounds as well as changing pedagogical needs. The library should inspire students to be creative and have an inviting atmosphere where students can also be creative and still achieve the main learning goals. Quiet zones in the library are essential for the library especially for individual work. The library should be spacious enough for students to move around as well as an open-office plan that can easily be modified (Acker & Miller 2005, 5).

The design of the library should inspire learning and support collaborative student activities and student engagement in learning processes and also trigger interaction of students.

The international forum, Center for Effective Learning Environments (CELE) 2006, has defined physical learning spaces as

> *"spaces that support multiple and diverse teaching and learning pro-grammes and pedagogies including current technologies; one that demon-strates optimal, cost-effective building performance and operation over time; one that respects and is in harmony with the environment; and one that encourages social participation, providing a healthy, comfortable, safe, secure and stimulating setting for its participants".*

The definition above sums up the scope of physical spaces bringing out the point that in order for physical spaces to be innovative and dynamic, both teacher and students are required to be in the co-creation process. Flexibility and harmonious integration is also an important aspect of physical spaces as this a driving factor for students' interaction and collaboration.

3.4 Social spaces in educational institutions

Khine and Fisher (2003, 3-4) emphasize that, it is essential to provide a friendly social environment which considers an constructivist learning approach. This approach is one that   inspires and motivates students to learn. A good social environment not only in-spires and motivates but also empowers students to be creative and contribute to their well-being concurrently analyzing information that contributes to their learning. A good social environment also allows students to interact with each other, exchange ideas and collaborate towards achieving common goals.

In addition, Giersberg and Nenonen (2007, 5) note that physical spaces are not only comprised of the building but also of the meeting places, the library and the cafeteria. The authors suggest the spaces; these include classrooms, cafeterias, and hallways, should have enough lighting and have comfortable furniture that engages students in learning and social conversations. According to Acker and Miller (2005, 6), these infor-mal spaces are mainly used as gathering spots for the students especially in higher edu-

cation institutions. The main aim of informal spaces is to make the institution "sticky", this means that students can spend most of their time on the school grounds. These spaces attract students to interact, have social gathering and at the same time learn from each other. This therefore makes these informal spaces the meeting points after the classroom.

It is also important to have community-like meeting places, where students experience a sense of belonging. Having large screen television sets also creates a feeling of togetherness as well as access to resources such as magazines and newspapers can be available in such informal spaces. Nevertheless, these informal spaces should be ergonomically comfortable for the learners and allow learners to move around with ease. (Op. cit. p. 5)

The JISC (2003, 10) report, Designing Spaces for Effective Learning added that the entrance is a critical part of an school especially an institution of higher learning, the entrance gives the first impression and it is usually the first point at which the learner gets in contact with the school. It is also here that the learner or visitor to the school recognizes the culture of the school. The entrance should therefore provide an exciting feeling for whoever steps in as well as provide an overall feeling of inclusion and wellbeing for learners and visitors. It is also important that the entrance becomes the focal point of the school where all the important elements of the school can be seen, for example the library and cafeteria. Learners should find it worthwhile to be in the school.

Social spaces are spaces that provide learning beyond the classroom. They offer inspiration to students, are community-based areas and create a feeling of well-being for their inhabitants. Furthermore, learning should be able to continue in these social areas where learners explore different approaches to learning. Social spaces should offer motivation to students and be flexible in nature to adapt to future changes.

3.5 Multicultural learning environment

Multiculturalism in the society has resulted in educational institutions evolving to accommodate these changes. Educational institutions are the main centers where learns learn how to act as members of the society. Students should be able to become co-creators of their own learning environment. "Learning to live together", the principle highlighted by the report to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization: Learning: The Treasure Within (1998, 85-97) acknowledges that learners need to be taught on the importance of co-existing with others especially in this ever-changing global setting. This prepares the learners for real-live experiences when they finish their studies as well as when they go into working life.

It is the responsibility of educational institutions should create a pedagogy that actively engages all students and uses a wide range of strategies for multicultural groups. Likewise, the schools' pedagogy should empower students to want to learn more and encourage mutual respect of all cultures. Learning should no longer be seen just as absorbing knowledge as was the traditional way of teaching. Teachers and students can become joint learners in a classroom especially in a multicultural setting. The role of teachers should be as facilitators in the classroom, both the teacher and the student can learn from each other and create new knowledge.

Educational institutions are responsible for creating an atmosphere that enriches the learning experience of students and teachers alike. In addition, educational institutions have to provide an inclusive atmosphere for all students and teachers acknowledging their cultural backgrounds especially in a culturally diverse setting. The building by itself cannot create an inspiring environment; new learning approaches in pedagogy have to also be adopted in order to match with the physical learning environment. Furthermore, educational institutions have to be student-centered and encourage students to interact and share with each other.

4   CASE STUDY: JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCI-ENCES- DYNAMO CAMPUS

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is governed by the Polytechnics Act (351/2003) as are all other universities of applied sciences in Finland. In accordance to the Act, poly-technics provide higher education that is in form of applied research and development that provides individuals with the necessary prerequisites for working life and develop-ment of life in general. Polytechnics also provide education that meets the needs of the industry, life-long learning and regional development. Co-operation with businesses and other institutions of higher learning is an essential feature of polytechnics.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences has derived its pedagogical principles from the 2010-2015 JAMK Strategies. These pedagogical principles are designed to develop and evaluate Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, apprenticeship training and open studies in JAMK. They also ensure an equal right to study for each student as well as prepare students for the needs of working life and provide students with support for their professional growth. The pedagogical principles are important for developing flexi-ble study periods for the students and teachers for developing competence in the field of entrepreneurship, internationalization, research and development, and for the mod-ernization and internationalization of learning environments.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences offers degree programmes in three main campuses; Main Campus; Rajakatu 35 and Puistokatu 35, Lutakko Campus; Piippukatu 2 and 3 and Music Campus ; Pitkäkatu 18-22. JAMK University of Applied Sciences has a unit in Saari-järvi located about 65 kilometers from Jyväskylä City, which is JAMK's Institute of Natu-ral Resources and Bioenergy Development. (The Location of campuses of JAMK, 2012)

The values of JAMK University of Applied Sciences are "Responsibility Trust and Creativi-ty". JAMK has a mission to be the best university of applied sciences in Finland aiming at having the best quality education, internationalization and promotion of entrepreneur-

ship. The university also aims at becoming a leader in research and development activities and innovation. (JAMK University of Applied Sciences Mission, Vision and Values 2015, 2012).

JAMK University of Applied Sciences has laid down strategies, Strategy 2015, which aims at making the university the most competent in internationalization, the quality of education offered and the best in promoting entrepreneurship. These are the main focal points. The following diagram represents the main focal points for Strategy 2015. These focus points reflect on the vital areas that the university most values.
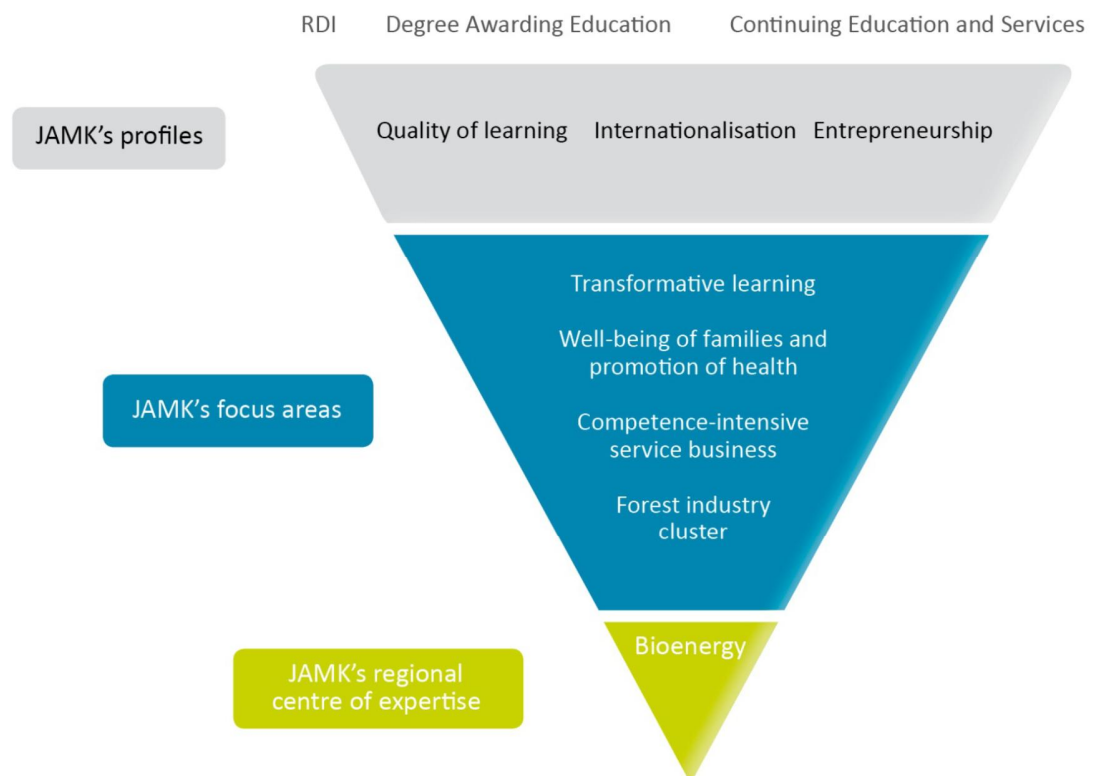

Figure 1 Focus Areas

At the upper top of the pyramid are the school's fundamental focus areas. Quality in learning in JAMK University of Applied Sciences is managed by a team of experts where-

by processes and guideline are evaluated through feedback systems and performance reviews. This is then followed by development projects and tasks as well as follow-up of the feedback. In the middle of the pyramid, the fundamental focus areas are then divided into the school's areas of expertise in which JAMK University of Applied Sciences has intensified activities in learning and research and development. These focus areas are the strong points of the school. At the bottom of the pyramid is JAMK's main goal to encourage entrepreneurs to form bioenergy-based business as well as use research and development methods to improve the use of bioenergy in manufacturing (JAMK University of Applied Sciences, 2012)

Internationalization is also an important aspect at JAMK University of Applied Sciences and the following approaches have been laid down to achieve its goal of being a leader in internationalization.

Figure 2 Internationalization

At JAMK University of Applied Sciences, students can pursue degrees in Finnish or English. In addition, internationalization is also offered through opportunities to study

abroad as an exchange student as well as practical training abroad. JAMK University of Applied Sciences has several arrangements with other universities in different parts of Europe, Asia, America, Australia and Africa for those students who would like to study abroad. Furthermore students who have studied abroad always have a competitive advantage over those who have not had any international experience hence JAMK encourages students to at least one or two semesters studying abroad. The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) is an organization for international mobility and cooperation which partners with universities and universities of applied sciences to provide students opportunities for exchange programmes abroad. The Finnish University Network for Asian Studies also offers possibilities to students studying in universities of applied sciences possibilities to study in Asian countries. (Internationalization through studies 2012)

Dynamo Campus learning environment

Dynamo Campus, previously known as IT-Dynamo was completed in the year 2003 and was primarily for the School of Technology before the autumn of 2009. This was due to the change of location of the unit of School of Business and Service Managment which moved from Mankola Campus and hence the acronym IT was dropped and the campus has been referred to Dynamo Campus thereafter. Dynamo Campus is located in the new residential area of Lutakko where there are two main units; the School of Business and Service Management, and the School of Technology. The School of Business and Service Management offers three degree programmes in English and six degree programmes in Finnish. However, only one degree programme under this unit, Facility Management, is offered in Dynamo Campus, the other two degree programmes are offered in Rajakatu Campus. The School of Technology is divided into four departments; ICT, Mechanical Engineering, Logistics, Natural Resources and Civil Engineering. (JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Units 2012.)

Dynamo Campus is located 500 meters from Jyväskylä's Travel Centre. Dynamo Campus was built between the years 2003-2004. The building has eleven classrooms and a res-

taurant and an auditorium that sits 209 people which is often rented out to the general public for meetings and conferences. In one academic year on average there are about 1600 Finnish students and 140 International students. (Email message of Hartikainen, Tiina September 4, 2012)

The students' restaurant of Dynamo Campus is located right at the entrance of the campus bordered by transparent glass walls. The restaurant mainly serves warm meals as well as coffee and confectionaries. The restaurant has a vast space which can also be used for group work and meetings. The Lutakko library is also located on the first floor of Dynamo Campus contains books ranging from information technology, tourism, food and restaurant services, facility management, building and construction to entrepreneurial books. There is a collection of magazines, newspapers, multimedia sources and theses.

The pictures listed were taken by the author with authorization from Dynamo Campus's receptions desk. The pictures represent the main physical areas of Dynamo Campus that were selected for this thesis. The classrooms listed above as a and b represent the classrooms that mainly used by students of the School of Business and Service Management. Each one of the classrooms, that are similar to the ones presented above, has a projector, flipcharts, a blackboard and a desktop computer. The classrooms are well-lit and also have access to natural light. The classrooms can hold about 35-40 students and some of the classrooms can be opened up to fit about 70 students. There are also computer classrooms that are mostly used by the School of Technology but were not taken into consideration for the study because the study context was based on the School of Business and Services Management of which the students mainly use classrooms without computers unless needed.

Classroom a

Classroom b.

Figure 3: Classrooms a and b, Dynamo Campus 2012

The social spaces a, b and c are located on each floor of Dynamo Campus. These social areas are located next to the classrooms and hence can be used by students to discuss informally before or after the classed start or when they want to have access to Dynamo Campus's wireless internet connection. The social areas also have access to natural light which through the transparent glass windows which boarder the front area of the building structure and which illuminates the social areas. The main entrance of Dynamo Campus is the focal point of the campus. The restaurant, reception desk and the library are all located within the vicinity of the social area. The main entrance has access to natural light from the transparent glass widows and also has a few leather seats that are mainly used as

Social area a

Social area b

Figure 4: Social areas a, b and c 2012

Figure 5: The Main Entrance of Dynamo Campus

The restaurant of Dynamo Campus is located on the first floor of the building and can easily be seen from the main entrance. The restaurant also contains transparent glass windows that have access to natural light. The restaurant also has high a ceiling which is a notable feature of the restaurant not have separate café but the café is integrated inside the restaurant. There are tables and chairs where students sit while having their meals. Dynamo Campus does not have separate café but the café is integrated into the restaurant and used to serve beverages and snacks. The restaurant serves hot meals during lunch breaks.

Figure 6: Restaurant at Dynamo Campus

5 RESEARCH METHODS

On this chapter the research methodology will be explored and the chosen approaches will also be explained in order to attain detailed conclusions that are reliable and also applicable. For this research, qualitative research method was chosen due to its ability to unveil people's perspectives. This research also uses a case study as a qualitative research design approach hence the application of qualitative research method (Kumar 2011, 126). According to Kananen (2011, 41), qualitative research methods are mainly used when there is a new phenomenon that needs further understanding or when the phenomenon in question is relatively new. In this case, the phenomenon already exists and hence the goal is to develop a through comprehension of the phenomenon. Qualitative research method enables researchers to explain events that revolve around everyday lives of individuals. It helps to illustrate the point of views of the participants based on the meaning the participants give to occurrences revolving around their lives rather than constraining the participants to specific set questions. (Yin, 2011, 8). Gillham (2010,) writes that the greatest strength of qualitative studies is their ability to highlight important issues and hence come up with explanations which is fundamentally the goal of all research.

The thesis research Dynamo Campus of Case study has the ability to capture different perspectives, investigate previously challenged standpoints as well as bring out the impact of the main aspects and the relationship between them. Case studies are also useful in documenting and creating a deeper understating of a phenomenon by carefully examining the processes and the change agents of the case study. Through a process of chronicling, reporting and decoding the happenings in the case study, important factors can be determined and the link between them also recognized. Likewise, it is important to note the inevitable subjective nature of the researcher, however, this can been seen a strength in the research case study as a way of enhancing a deep understanding and interpretation of the case. (Simons, 2009,23-24,). Likewise, (op. cit. p. 29), it is im-

portant to create boundaries for the case study that has been selected. This is because creating the boundary for the case at the start of the study ensures effective exploration of the chosen case. For this research study the School of Business and Service Management in Dynamo Campus was chosen as the case study. This was due to the fact that there is one degree programme that is conducted in English and also has international students whose perspective was important for the study. Moreover, Simons (2009, 147), notes that all participants in the case study should be fairly and accurately represented with their viewpoints and judgments. In like manner, the focus should also be on providing rich and clear data of the context of the case study.

The research study will primarily use interviews for data collection. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, 351), state that interviews are an important tool for gathering information that can be used to find answers that are related to the objectives of the research. Interviewing involves having an encounter with the interviewee through interacting with the interviewee verbally. For this research study, in-depth interviews which were semi-structured were utilized. According to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011, 109-110), semi-structured interviews are used to uncover experiences of the interviewees that are personal as well as identify the influences surrounding the responses of the interviewees. The focus group interview method was also considered for this study however, focus groups interviews are mainly suitable for researchers whose main focus is to collect information from people's experiences rather that individual experiences. The focus group interview method was therefore not chosen for this study as the aim of the study was to collect information that was based on individual experiences.

Observation was also a research method that was applied to this study context due to the inevitable nature of the involvement of the author. Observation is a data collection method whereby the researcher is a participant in the research. Observation can help the researcher to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the case in a way that cannot be achieved simply by interviewing people. Observation also offers insights to the values and norms which are part of the case and which can also be determined by the way

people interact with each other. It is also important to consider the history and context of the case before giving meaning to the events of the case. In addition, interviews that are closely linked with observation help to certify that the observations are not merely being misinterpreted but bring out significances that were not apparent to the observer. The author has been studying in the selected case study, Dynamo Campus for three years and hence through the author's own experiences, the author was able to understand the research problem in depth. (Simons, 2009 55-58).

Benchmarking method was also applied to this research in order to provide a comparison of practices that could be adopted. Benchmarking is a comparison study method whereby reference points are studied in order to determine common characteristics that can be adopted to improve one's own practices. (Hämäläinen, Kristoffersen, Jessen, 2002, 11). Soili (2002, 14) also adds that benchmarking is a method used in order to boost one's performance by learning what others in the same line of work are doing. The main goal of using benchmarking as a research method is to discover something new and also form benchmarking partners who are already developed in their line of work and can offer new and insightful ideas. Laurea University of Applied Sciences Leppävaara Campus and Team Academy were used as a benchmark for this thesis research. Laurea University of Applied Sciences Leppävaara Campus was selected based on the fact that that particular university campus degree programmes to JAMK University of Applied Sciences offered in English and Finnish language and has degree programmes for international students. Team Academy was selected during the late stages of writing the thesis as a recommendation from three participants from the thesis interview. Pictures of the social areas of Laurea University of Applied Sciences and Team Academy have been listed as Figures 7-10.

Laurea University of Applied Sciences and Team Academy (Tiimiakatemia)were chosen as benchmarks with the intention to relate aspects of the school to Dynamo Campus. The pictures of Laurea Academy that used for this thesis are pictures of the different social areas that the campus has, the entrance area and the café and the "International

Corner". These pictures depicted the warm and welcoming atmosphere at the university which also has international students. The social areas that have been presented are colorful and provide an interactive environment for students. Likewise, the social areas in Team Academy create a sense of belonging due to the colorful sofas that are available. In addition, these social areas also create a meeting space for learners for informal gatherings and also provide inclusivity of all students for social interaction.

5.1 Research questions and data collection

The main research questions were:

1. What is the current situation in Dynamo Campus regarding multiculturalism?
2. What elements can be added to the Dynamo Campus to create a more multicultural learning environment?

Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011, 117) propose that it is essential that the design of the interview questions is embedded in the theoretical framework of the study. The connection between the research study and the theoretical framework should be reflected in the interview questions. This is to ensure that the interview questions are consistent to the concepts that have been analyzed in the theoretical framework. The themes of interview questions for this research study were chosen from Fraser's (1998, 3) definition which divided the term learning environment into; the pedagogy, the physical spaces and the social spaces in an educational institution. These concepts were therefore integrated in the interview questions. A letter was sent to each one of the interviewees to request for an interview. The main data collection tool for the thesis was interviews. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, 349) state that interviews allow the researcher the freedom to discuss with the participants about important issues where the interviewer is able to obtain responses for issues that are important.

The data was collected through conducted through face-to-face in-depth interviews with the interviewees. The author contacted 15 participants for the interview but only 12 of them were able to participate. This was because most of the students and teachers were on their summer holidays hence could not participate in the interview. There were four teachers who were chosen for the interview, these were teachers who were teaching multicultural groups or had taught multicultural groups in Dynamo Campus. Three of these teachers had taught in Dynamo Campus on a full-time basis while one international teacher had taught in Dynamo Campus several times but mainly teachers in the Main Campus of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. This was done in order to provide varied responses and find out whether the similarities and differences in the teachers' repsonses. There were three Finnish students and two international students participated in the interview, these were students who were studying in the degree programme that is conducted in English and were also studying in multicultural groups in Dynamo Campus.

The Development Manager of JAMK University of Applied Sciences was also interviewed for this study in order to find out the starting point of a multicultural learning environment in Dynamo Campus and in JAMK University of Applied Sciences as a whole. The Head of Programme of the unit of School of Business and Services Management in Dynamo Campus was also chosen for this interview. This was because the author wanted to find out more about the pedagogy of the degree programme that is conducted in English in Dynamo Campus and how it reflects on multiculturalism. In addition, in order to obtain responses from a professional in the field of education, Professor Jouni Välijärvi, Director of the Finnish Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä, whose contacts were obtained from his numerous education-related publications available on the internet, was one of the interviewees.

 The interview questions were divided into three set of questions each according to the occupation of the interviewees. One set of questions was used for the teachers and another one for the students. The third set of questions was only used for Professor Jouni Välijärvi due to the fact that he was neither a teacher nor a student but his input was

vital to the research study due to his educational and work experience. Each set had questions ranging from 3-5 questions.

The author contacted the interviewees by sending emails to them prior to the interview. The interview questions were not sent to the participants beforehand in order to prompt instinctive responses from the interviewees during the interview. The contacts for the students' interviewees were obtained through contacting different students while some were obtained through the recommendations of other students. The teachers were also contacted through email, all of whom that were contacted were willing to participate in the interview. A digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews. This would allow the author to store the recordings and refer to them as many times as possible (Kananen 2011, 56). Each interviewee's transcription ranged from 2-4 pages and was 10-35 minutes long. All the transcribed interviews had a total of 23 pages.

5.2 Data analysis

The main challenge after collecting huge amounts of data is to organize the data by recognizing the differences in it and therefore forming themes which are within the main topic.

The transcription of data was done through quoting verbatim responses from the interviewees. The interviews were listened to after every interview and transcription was done simultaneously. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011, 211) note that it is vital to turn all recorded data into a verbatim transcript as this allows the researcher to express the interviewees' own words. In addition, (op. cit. p. 212-214) further explain that it is important to transcribe interviews immediately after they are completed so as to note issues that could be altered or delved into more. Unexpected topics may also arise during the interview process which can be added to the next interviews adding to the richness of data. In addition, immediate transcription of interviews helps the researcher to know

when the interviews reach a saturation point, that is, when the same issues are discussed by different interviewees and no new issues come up.

Simons (2009, 120-121) indicates that there various ways of making sense of huge amounts of data. Once the data was collected, data reduction was implemented whereby the author organized the data through by categorizing data and then using codes and forming themes from the data. The coding process of data enabled the author to break down the data into themes that were then assigned titles. According to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011, 216), it is important to develop codes after the data has been transcribed. Codes enable the researcher to identify the main topics that were discussed by the interviewees. Codes are important in identifying the scope of topics discussed and also act as the main points that can easily be located in the data where distinct issues were discussed. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, 478) further explain that codes are drawn from the data itself rather than being decided before-hand. The researcher therefore went through all the data and assigned different codes to it. Coding enables the researcher to recognize the frequency of issues, that is, the codes that appear regularly.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, 479) explain that categories are formed after the codes have been chosen. Codes are more distinct as compared to categories. After the primary step of identifying the codes was completed, the researcher then grouped the codes into categories that reflected on a more general scope, on the codes. The author then retrieved the coded data and categorized it into the themes that had already been predetermined before the interviews were conducted.

6 RESULTS

The results of the interviews were divided into different themes which were already used as a guide for he interview questions. The results were divided into the predetermined themes after which relevant responses were selected and presented under the themes that they fit in.

6.1 Themes

The curriculum and teaching methods and how they reflect on multiculturalism

The most concrete responses on these interview questions were given by the teachers. The results revealed that the curriculum is the same for both international students and Finnish students but its implementation should be different for these two groups. The results also showed that in some cases, the teachers failed to recognize the presence of diverse cultural backgrounds in their classrooms.

> *"The curriculum hasn't changed much since the introduction of English degree programmes. The only difference is that we are giving more and more English courses. The structure of the courses hasn't changed much over the years. We haven't thought so much about the different cultures when we have been planning the courses."*

> *"As a teacher I do not always recognize that the kind of teaching methods I use may not always be good for different cultures. I have never really thought about this."*

The results revealed that the teachers have not yet fully developed cultural awareness which means that even though there are vast cultures in the classrooms in Dynamo

Campus, their differences have not been taken into account in the teaching and in education. The responses echo a great need to thoroughly train teachers on multicultural education and to affirm the cultural diversity of students in school. A multicultural learning environment should be able to account for the experiences, differences and cultural backgrounds of all students. Educational leaders are also responsible for ensuring that the fundamental concerns in multiculturalism are tackled and hence through this the teachers can enrich the students. The following response from Professor Jouni Välijärvi of Jyväskylä Univeristy affirms this point:

> *"There are so many cultural bound contents in the curriculum and this is something that usually teachers forget …teachers usually forget about the cultural dimensions of the students. From the teachers' perspective it is a very complicated situation and very difficult to make changes … it is a matter of how to support teachers as well as people who do not know about the Finnish culture. Information technology can be used to help teachers as well as multi-media such as videos to help teachers learn more about teaching multicultural groups".*

Educational migration is one the extensive modern-day phenomenon, teachers have to be prepared to use teaching methods that are equitable and ensure that students receive a wide range of perspectives in their education. It is also critical that teachers use a variety of teaching methods for multicultural groups. Below is a response from a senior lecturer in cross-cultural management teacher whose extensive knowledge in intercultural education has helped him in teaching multicultural group at JAMK University of Applied Sciences

> *"…there is no one size fits all approach and so what I do is that I keep in mind that these students are coming here with all their traditions".*

With the adoption of the "2009-2015 Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions", higher education institutions are now been urged to recognize the need to adopt policies that cater for international students. The Development Manager at JAMK University of Applied Sciences added that the school is exploring new ways of

learning and also planning to rethink their learning environment. He also pointed out that supporting the teachers is essential as Professor Jouni Välijärvi reaffirms this by adding that it is important not to make the teachers feel as if they are doing anything wrong but instead to support the learning processes and their current teaching approaches while slowly introducing new approaches.

> *"We are willing and have to change our actions into a more open way, which means that educational learning environments have to be more open, more multi-disciplinary environments which means that everybody will be able to learn regardless of which degree programme they are in. That is why I think that this new way of learning and thinking concerns multiculturalism because all kinds of students have to be able to work together and learn together. …we are trying to support teachers to realize the need for having different implementation methods."*

The results also revealed that there is a need to introduce the Finnish ways of learning as a starting point for international students when they arrive in Finland. This will drastically reduce the stress and frustrations that is usually experienced by international students while they are trying to adapt to the Finnish Educational Systems. It is important to justify one's teaching methods especially when teaching multicultural groups as this enables the students to understand each other's cultural backgrounds and hence find a wide range of approaches that engage all the students.

The results also revealed that Finland is still in its early stages of integration of Foreigners and especially in the education systems. Due to the homogenous nature of Finland, teachers tend to forget that they are teaching multicultural groups.

> *"Finland has been quiet a homogenous for a long time in that sense that our population, we don't have that kind of variety and that explains a lot about what is happening in Educational institutions and in the society maybe we are still learning because the initial idea was that foreign students come here to learn and then take back what they have learned to their own countries. It is easily forgot-*

ten that there are people (foreign students) who have social needs, are not willing to go back to their countries. That is not only learning in a narrow sense with cognitive skills but it's also living. Maybe this is something that is not familiar to Finns and many teachers don't have that much experience of this."

The above statement strongly shows that with globalization rapidly impacting all facets of the society, more international students are moving to Finland every year with the intention of staying after their studies.

Teaching Spaces on the Dynamo Campus

Physical spaces play a significant role in how students interact with each other and how they interact with the teacher. Classrooms are the main centers for interaction and learning at the same time, they should provide the students with inspiration to learn. The responses on teaching spaces in Dynamo Campus were a key concern especially for the students. The teaching spaces in Dynamo Campus were thought to be inflexible and very predictable, especially due to the monotonous arrangement of chairs and desks. The arrangement of desks and chairs was hardly rearranged and only a few teachers had attempted to do so.

"I think we should have more different types of classrooms because now we have typical classrooms with desks and chairs and a class with computers. I think we should probably have social interaction in the classrooms, classrooms with round designs or classrooms that resemble a theatre. I think because normally, when we sit in class without discussing issues, most of the time when a teacher asks questions, everyone is silent. On the other hand, if all students would sit in around or circular table of chairs, it is easier to interact with each other".

Traditional classrooms are still very popular at Dynamo Campus but as the need for more flexible teaching spaces arise, traditional classrooms are slowly becoming obsolete.

"Then arrangement of desks doesn't inspire conversation and doesn't support the multicultural environment where students can connect with each other…everybody sits facing the teacher and not like a circle for example if all the tables were arranged in a circle where we could be facing each other it would be totally different. It doesn't support communication between students."

The above statements describe the current atmosphere at Dynamo Campus concerning teaching spaces. Most of the students interviewed felt less engaged in the classrooms due to minimum interaction and exchange of information. The students felt less interested in participating in the classrooms siting the arrangement of desks and chairs. A variety of sitting arrangements should sought after to provide a more engaging physical learning environment and also promote interaction between students as well as between teachers and students. The aim should be to provide students with a participatory teaching space.

The statements from the Head of Programme and Professor Jouni Välijärvi revealed the overarching role of buildings in Finland. They explained the strict focus of educational buildings as basic providers of education without much attention being paid to the social functions of the building. Educational institutions are not seen as places of interaction but are very traditional in nature and only concentrate on the main function, to offer a place to learn.

"Even though Dynamo campus is a relatively new building, it represents an old way of thinking…the building is very efficient but reflects the 90s way of thinking of what success meant and what power meant."

Social Spaces in Dynamo Campus

The results generally showed a strong desire for students to interact more in informal spaces. There was a need to have more social spaces that could be flexible enough to accommodate different changes.

"I think that the social spaces in Dynamo Campus are modern but on the other hand, the feeling is kind of cold. There is a lot of glass, metal and leather… they are similar to hospitals."

"The cafeteria is a bit too noisy for learning to go on. The problem is the high ceiling which always creates space for noise".

"If you think of learning as a process that is more than lecturers and involves these social spaces, it is simply not a cozy place for people to get together…they are configured for lecturers and don't really have much decoration, they are sort of blank spaces that do not create warmth, there made functional in a purely utilitarian factor but they do not convey human warmth".

The above statements convey that the social spaces in Dynamo Campus do not meet the needs of the students as should informal spaces. The social spaces are not creative enough and are also not enough in capacity to allow students to share information with each other and get to know each other. Likewise, the available social space in Dynamo Campus do not provide students with an informal meeting place where students can exchange ideas, cultivate creativity and collaborate with each other. Furthermore, it also emerged that Dynamo Campus in general and the structure of the building, according to the students, is very formal and business oriented. There are usually a lot of business meetings taking place at the campus that the students feel as though the campus is designed for this purpose.

Professor Jouni Välijärvi noted that social spaces are a good to help students learn how to co-operate especially in a multicultural learning environment. The results also revealed that Dynamo Campus does not have very many social spaces and hence students from different degree programmes do not get to know each other. The students also expressed a desire to know other students of the same degree programmes but studying in different years. Professor Jouni Välijärvi continued to add that when there no informal meeting spaces for students, there is a likelihood that students will not learn how to work together because they will not have fostered social relations.

"It is important that the school buildings have available rooms where students can work together informally."

Orientation for multicultural groups

Throughout the interviews, it emerged out that most of the students felt the need to have a planned introduction to the concept of studying in a multicultural environment. They felt that it was not easy for them as students to work together especially in multicultural group sessions. The students expressed a desire to learn more about other cultures especially during their first year of studies, which would help them understand each other's cultures and learn how to embrace view points from different cultures. The students also stated that it has been sometimes difficult to work in multicultural groups since they do not have the background knowledge of working in a multicultural environment.

"There have been some problems with group work especially due to the presence of different multicultural groups. I think that the international groups' way of working is different from Finnish students…there was no orientation on working in multicultural groups. The orientation was very practical and dealt with practical issues. The teachers just let us figure out by ourselves how to work in multicultural groups".

"As you saw in our first year, all foreign students sat by themselves same as Finnish students; there was not a lot of mixing up. There was no effort made to mix the students…there was no discussions about how foreigners learn in their countries. So in that way Finnish students do not understand why foreign students learn the way they do because they do not know their background."

It also emerged that most of the Finnish students have not had a lot contact with foreigners before they join university and hence it might be difficult to understand for them to understand the behavior of another culture.

"…maybe there could be some cultural education highlighting how different cultures study in the eyes of the other culture. There could be a common understanding of the students and different cultures. That could be done at the first week of school to introduce the different cultures and emphasize the cultural differences in order to learn how to work together."

In order for research to be considered credible, it must have the capability to contribute to existing knowledge or create knowledge that was previously unknown. The credibility of research lies in the reliability, validity and authenticity of the data collected. These are the main measures of research that has the ability to contribute relevant knowledge. Reliability of the research is important as it shows that a measurement tool can be used by another person to conduct the same research and generate consistent results. Validity refers to the accuracy of the results from the research. Validity aims at creating a coherent interconnection between the results of the research and the theoretical frameworks. Authenticity is concerned with how well the research results can be justified and can also be trusted. (O'leary, 2004, 57-61). Kananen (2011, 68) states that the best way of ensuring that the research is reliable and valid by having someone as a guide and also having them read the material of the research. Furthermore, in qualitative research it is only vital to introduce new responses during the data collection phase of the study; only if this information is new to the study this is in order to avoid too many repetitive responses (op. cit. p. 68).

The author met with the thesis tutor for face-to-face feedback sessions and also received guidance and feedback from this study topic. From the responses received from the selected interviewees, it was clear that most of the responses were relatively similar. This was because there was little or no new additional information added to the study from the selected interviewees. In addition, this study used different students of different nationalities who were also studying in different academic years in order to achieve impartial results. Also, the research study included one international teacher who had taught multicultural groups in Dynamo Campus several times but was mainly teaching in

the Main Campus of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. This therefore prompted different responses to the interview questions that were not only based on the teachers who teach in Dynamo Campus on a regular basis but also on teachers from other campuses who come to Dynamo Campus. Furthermore, even though this research study was conducted in Dynamo Campus which hosts two units, it was only conducted for the School of Business and Service Management which therefore indicates that the results that were collected are trustworthy for this context. The discussion of the results demonstrates the relationship between the theoretical framework and the research results.

6.2 Discussion

The thesis topic revealed several attributes that contribute to a multicultural learning environment. With globalization being a key concern in modern societies and its implication can be felt on all facets of the society, educational institutions have had to rethink their current approaches to learning environments due to the rapid growth of multicultural societies. With distances being reduced and visas for several countries abolished, movement of people has eased over the year which has resulted to the movement of people to different countries in search of better opportunities especially among young people who are seeking higher education in other countries. As a result, higher education institutions are now recruiting more international students than ever before who are hoping to achieve a competitive edge by acquiring a degree from another country. (Valtonen, 2009, 1-5; Varghese, 2009, 13). Moreover, research on learning environments show that the phenomenon of learning environments has changed over the past decade. When the term was first introduced, it was merely characterized by the usage of technological solutions but over the years the definition of learning environments has

widened to include a wide range of topics from the physical space, social space and the pedagogy of the school. The general findings of the results show that JAMK University of Applied Sciences recognizes the need to have various approaches that will support the context of a multicultural learning environment.

The studies carried out by out at Tukkiharju Institute of Social Care explicitly revealed that Finland is still in its early stages of integrating a multicultural learning environment (Kris, 2004). However, through the study of the study of this research topic it has also emerged that the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has laid policies that will guide educational institutions in rethinking their strategies of internationalizations (Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland, 2009 2009–2015). Likewise the results also show that JAMK University of Applied Sciences is planning new ways that will support teachers in order for them to be able recognize the impact of different cultural backgrounds in their classrooms. This would especially promote more interaction and communication between Finnish and international students which would also lead to more sharing of knowledge and information.

Multicultural education emerged as a strong factor in creating a learning environment that will support multiculturalism. The results showed that the teachers do not always recognize the presence of international students in their classrooms. Rosebrough and Leverette (2010, 19-20) stated that the role of the teachers has evolved over the years as due to the changes taking place in the world. Teachers nowadays are seen more as facilitators to the students; their role is no longer characterized by them as the only holders of knowledge but as seekers of different ways of teaching different students. The results strongly support this, as they should that one way of teaching cannot fit all students, teachers have to find a variety of teaching methods in order to keep the students enthusiastic and motivated. The results also showed that JAMK University of Applied Sciences as a whole is exploring new approaches that will support teachers in teaching multicultural groups as well as integrating a multicultural learning environment. Bode and Nieto (2008, 52-60) reinforce this by adding that the goal of multicul-

tural education is to enrich all students from different cultural backgrounds. Multicultural education should be inclusive education that is seen in the school culture and the learning environment.

The results also revealed that the structure of Dynamo Campus is very business oriented and its structure is not inspiring to university students. According to Lippman (2011, 1-6), the structure of educational institutions should inspire students and embrace their needs by recognizing what drives students to be in a particular at a particular time. One of the most critical areas of Dynamo Campus, that the reached covered, was the physical spaces. The students expressed a desire to have more wide ranging classrooms that were not as classic as the current ones. Most of the students suggested that having more flexible classrooms for example a circular arrangement of tables and desks would be more inspiring than the current arrangement which is used in all classrooms. They also noted that having a circular arrangement of desks would make the students interact more with each other and create a feeling of harmony and togetherness. The study conducted by Kuuskorpi and Gonzalez (2011) affirmed this by stating that educational institutions have to created physical spaces that are flexible due to the demands of the changing. By creating physical spaces that are inspirational to the students teachers and learners feel motivated to be in the spaces.

The social spaces are spaces that students use to share information and interact with other students. The results revealed that the social spaces in Dynamo Campus are less inspiring and do not create an environment whereby students want to be spend their time. Social spaces help to foster understanding especially between students of different cultures. They provide room to learn about each other's culture and explore different ways of working together. The lack of enough social spaces in Dynamo Campus revealed that students are not always present in the campus because there are no enough informal spaces where students can gather. Giersberg and Nenonen (2007, 5) stated that social spaces create a feeling of well-being for the students and also allow them to experience each other through informal discussions. Social spaces also create a sense of be-

longing for the students in that they are community-like meeting places. Social spaces are essential for educational institutions because it is where students foster creativity. The results also show that, social spaces are important for helping students cultivate social relations. The need to have more colorful social spaces also arose, students did not want to have social spaces that resemble "hospitals" but spaces that comfortable and attractive to the students. Acker and Miller (2005, 6) state that social spaces should make an institution "sticky" which means that students spend most of the time on the school grounds.

The role of education in promoting social harmony is important for any educational institution. Students learn how to co-relate with one another and have mutual respect for one's background while they are in school. Education shapes students into individuals who can be able to live in harmony with each other as well as help them embrace other people's viewpoints. The four pillars outline in the UNESCO: International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century; Learning: The Treasure Within (1998, 85-97) show that educational institutions can find ways to incorporate these pillars in their pedagogy and in the in teaching methods in order to transform their institutions. Teachers have the responsibility of training young people to become responsible adults and educational leaders have to provide their schools with teachers that that thoroughly trained for the changes that are taking place globally. The results revealed that students carry along their own cultural belief systems and do not know how to incorporate them into the Finnish education system, hence, it is the role of educational institutions to help all the students achieve flexibility in order for them be creative and understand the different perspectives of different cultural dimensions.

Finally, the results achieved in research study show that Dynamo Campus has to take measures that will lead to a multicultural learning environment. The most repetitive results concerned the structure, teaching and social spaces in Dynamo Campus. The participants agreed that in order to create an inspiring learning environment, the latter have to be modified to embrace all students and promote their feeling of well-being. In addi-

tion, teachers have to be supported in teaching multicultural groups and also made aware of the need to have wide-ranging teaching methods that cater for these multicultural groups. In order to create an inclusive learning environment, educational institutions have to find ways to embrace the changes that are happening in the world.

The results that have emerged can be used by educational institutions that want to explore want to explore new approaches that will support a multicultural learning environment.

6.3 Topics for further research

The results of the study revealed several topics that could be further developed in the context of a multicultural learning environment. There were suggestions that the tutoring program be more involved in promoting interaction between students. Also, they could be more involved in reaching out to international students studying at Dynamo Campus and encourage them to be more involved in school activities which will ultimately promote integration.

The homogenous nature of Finland appeared to be vital in creating multicultural learning environments. This is a topic that could be further explored to find out how the arrival of immigrants in Finland over the past two decades has affected educational institutions. In addition, the interviews revealed that the current sitting arrangement in classrooms is the kind of approach that most Finnish students are used to and has its roots in Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimension of Individualism (geert-hofstede.com). With multiculturalism rapidly spreading, there are likely effects on this dimension of individualism that is, there are different cultures that do not conform to individualism, and therefore the challenge for educational institutions in Finland creates a learning environment where everyone feels comfortable. In addition, cultural backgrounds seemed to influence the way different individuals view physical spaces, social spaces and teaching methods.

Furthermore, research could also be carried out on the unit of the School of Technology since the study was only carried on the unit of the School of Business and Service Management in Dynamo Campus which of which the studies are conducted mainly in Finnish and consists mainly of Finnish students.

7 Conclusion

Educational institutions are on the edge of different changes which means that learning will no longer be teacher-oriented but student-oriented. In addition to these changes educational leaders will have to redefine their policies to ensure they meet the needs of diverse students. The essential role of teachers will also have to be emphasized as their support in the learning process of students is critical. An international perspective is going to be vital as integration of diverse students will be crucial to educational institutions. The structure of physical spaces will have to be carefully considered in order for them to create an inspiring atmosphere for learning. Exploring different strategies that for a learning environment that is creative, inclusive and flexible will be an important aspect of educational institutions.

The study of learning environments and multiculturalism has enhanced a lot of knowledge for the author. The extensive literature material that was used for this study provided a lot of new knowledge and also raised awareness for the author on the role of multiculturalism in education systems.

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Pictures of Laurea University of Applied Sciences Leppävaara Campus
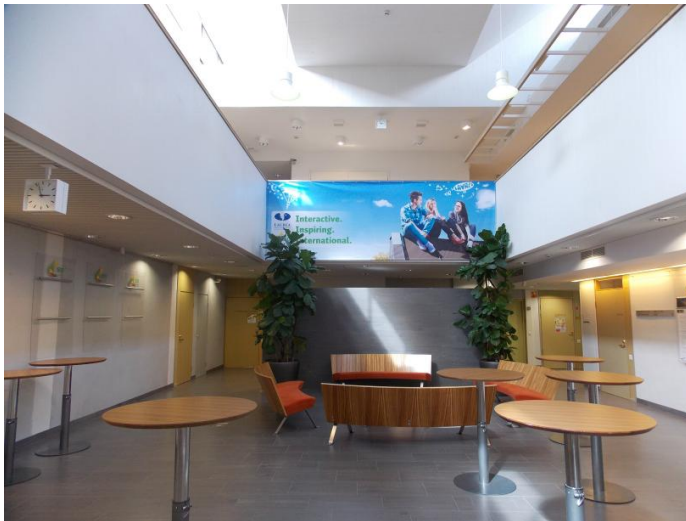

Figure 6: Cafeteria at Leppävaara Campus 2012

Social area a

Social area b

Social area c

Figure 7: Examples of social areas a, b and c Leppävaara Campus 2012

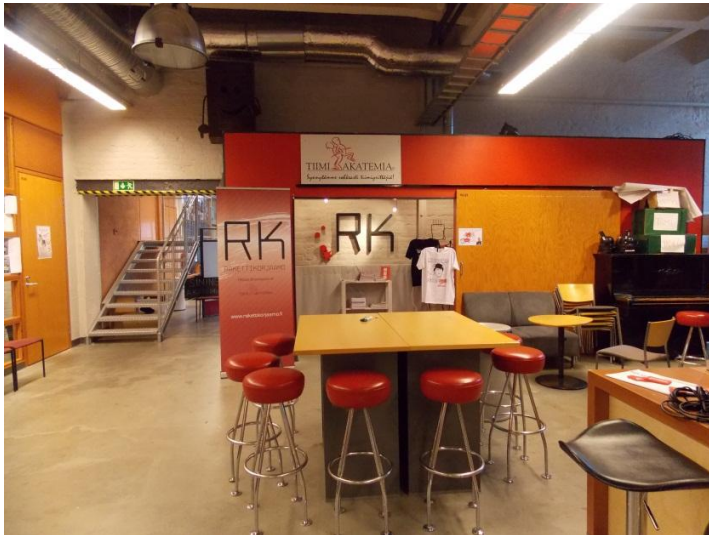Figure 8: "International Corner at Leppävaara Campus 2012

Pictures of Team Academy

Social area a

Social area b

Social area c

Figure 9: Social areas a, b and c at Team Academy (Tiimiakatemia) 2012

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: E-mail letter to the participants for the interview

Hello

I am a fourth year Facility Management Student at JAMK University of Applied Sciences and I am currently writing my thesis on the topic "Creating learning environments that support multiculturalism".

I would like to interview you as part of my research.

Your insight on this topic will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely

Milka Njoroge

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Questions for Staff members of Dynamo Campus

1. From you point of view, how does the curriculum of reflect on the multicultural nature of Dynamo Campus?

2. Would you discuss how the teaching methods that are used in JAMK University of Applied Sciences take into account the multicultural diversity of the students?

3. Would you discuss how the physical spaces in Dynamo Campus support multiculturalism?

4. Would you discuss how the social spaces in Dynamo Campus support multiculturalism?

5. What, in your opinion could be incorporated to Dynamo Campus to support multiculturalism?

Questions for the students of Dynamo Campus:

1. From your perspective, how do the teaching methods in Dynamo Campus take into account the multicultural diversity of the students?

2. Would you discuss how the physical spaces in Dynamo Campus support multiculturalism?

3. Would you discuss how social spaces in Dynamo Campus support multiculturalism?

4. What, in your opinion could be incorporated to Dynamo Campus for to support multiculturalism?

Questions for Professor Jouni Välijärvi, Director of the Finnish Institute for Educational Research Jyväskylä University

1. From your perspective, how should the teaching methods take into account the multicultural diversity of the students?

2. Would you discuss how social spaces and physical spaces support multiculturalism?

3. From your perspective, what could be incorporated to Dynamo Campus to support multiculturalism?