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# **Business Model & Market Study of Chinese Educational Travel in Finland**

CASE: SHANDONG FANGCE EDUCATIONAL  
CONSULTING CO., LTD

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM  
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<p data-bbox="312 730 424 757">Abstract</p> <p data-bbox="312 801 1458 869">This thesis is aiming on promoting and orienting the Chinese company Fangce Education Consulting Co., Ltd. in the development of educational travel market in China.</p> <p data-bbox="312 913 1458 1126">The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the current tourism market characteristics in China. Define educational travel and define the concept of educational travel which match the Chinese tourism market. By studying the tendency of the target customer group to choose Finnish study tour products and the content and experience that the products should contain to build a roadmap for the Chinese company in order to guide the possible future direction of their tourism business.</p> <p data-bbox="312 1171 1458 1417">The theoretical part of this thesis presents an overview about the Chinese tourism market, the definition of educational travel in China. This is followed by an in-depth understanding of the analysis of this specialized market. In addition, the theories related to the design of educational travel products for the Chinese market are included. Meanwhile, the content of the Finnish educational tourism market is one of the highlights, and the authors will describe the advantages of Finland as an educational travel destination as well as its own characteristics.</p> <p data-bbox="312 1462 1458 1574">In addition, the thesis uses Business Model Canvas to help the case company analyze its unique strengths to guide its competitive strategy to attract customers in the Chinese market</p> <p data-bbox="312 1619 1458 1720">The experimental design section analyzes the data sample obtained through the quantitative study and identifies key factors for development, laying the foundation for future strategy development.</p> <p data-bbox="312 1765 1458 1865">In conclusion, the results of this thesis will guide the enterprise in the future development direction of educational travel, policy formulation, providing basic ideas for their product design and finding potential customers.</p>		
<p data-bbox="312 1892 456 1919"><u>Key words</u></p> <p data-bbox="312 1928 1458 1995">China, Finland, International Tourism, Study tour, educational travel, Tourism product design</p>		

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the early 1990s, the world began to recognize that China is an emerging economic power to reckon with (Chow, 1994). Today, China has become the world's second largest economy, has seen its economic growth remain dynamic over the past decade.

Since 2018, along with the promotion of the tourism cooperation between China and EU, Chinese tourists have received more facilitated treatment in four major areas of visas, flights, tourism products and consumer services for visiting Europe.

According to data released by the China Tourism Academy in 2018, through their "Chinese Tourists to Europe Big Data Report 2018", Europe has become the second most popular destination region chosen by Chinese tourists. The five Nordic countries are gaining more and more attention from Chinese tourists, with Denmark seeing a 120% increase in visitors and Finland a 77% increase. (Shang, 2019.)

China's tremendous economic development momentum provides great opportunities and challenges for the development of China's tourism industry. With China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), this opportunity is getting closer (Guo, 1999). As a great opportunity it raises expectations that both foreign and domestic companies which will explore and benefit from the growth of the Chinese outbound tourism market.

Economic development has raised the living standards of the Chinese people, and the material affluence has led to the pursuit of higher spiritual needs. This phenomenon can be seen through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, proposed by the scholar Maslow in 1943. According to Maslow. The physiological need is the most important and powerful of all human needs. (Maslow, 1943) Obviously, the needs of travel in China,

on the other hand, is related to more advanced needs, such as Cognitive needs, Aesthetic needs etc.,.

Therefore, in the tourism market, educational travel has become a new form of tourism products and consumption hotspots. In recent years, educational travel has become a rigid demand of the post-70's and 80's parents in terms of consumption and education, and a "standard" for the growth and development of the younger generation. (Wang, 2019) It is receiving more and more attention from scholars in China and abroad.

From the other side, the success of Finnish education has drawn the attention of the world. Chinese scholars, such as Liu Yuan Yuan (2006) and Dong Zhen Fang (2012), have argued that analyzing the reasons for Finland's educational success can provide reasonable lessons for China's educational reform. The high quality of education and reasonable costs e.g., tuition fees are also attracting many Chinese students. STEAM majors (Short for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) at Finnish universities are becoming increasingly popular in China.

Compared to the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia this traditional study abroad destinations for Chinese students are slowly losing their appeal (Website of 163). More and more academics are looking to Europe. In this case, an early layout of educational travels based on Finnish resources will give the company an advantageous position in the future competition.

In subsequent chapters, the author of the paper tries to describe a viable business operation strategy by reviewing the background of the development of educational travel, summarizing the existing research results, selecting a suitable definition, and elaborating on the selection of the Business Model Canvas as the main tool for this study.

## 2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE THESIS

Shandong Fangce Education Consulting Co., Ltd is a young company which was founded in 2017. Hereinafter referred to as Fangce Co., Ltd. It is the commissioner of this thesis. The company is located in Taian City, Shandong Province, China. Its main business is to provide educational information and consulting services to local educational institutions. The company's main customer groups include schools, education-related organizations, and student groups. By partnering with local schools and education-related organizations, they can provide quality English-based language training services to local student populations.

The company has long been interested in entering the educational travel industry by cooperating with domestic and foreign tourism-related companies and developing the educational travel market in China. By providing high-quality educational travel products to the existing customer, it is also an attempt to explore further expansion of the local education market. Therefore, for a company that has never had any experience in the tourism industry, it is crucial to have a clear strategic direction and a realistic development strategy. In this situation the content of this thesis aims to analyze the future development direction of the educational travel industry and the possible product design roadmap for enterprises and provide an analysis of ideas for product marketing and exploring potential customers.

The fundamental question that the commissioning company needs to address through this thesis is how to develop a Finnish educational travel product to make a profit in the Chinese market?

To answer this question, the author expands it into 6 sub-questions:

- How interested are Chinese consumers in participating in Finland education travel?
  
- Who is the target customer group and what is their acceptable price range?

- Compared to other educational travel products, what are the unique experiences that Finland can provide?
- What are the advantages of Fangce company in the Chinese market?
- What kind of business model should Fangce choose for a start-up project?
- What advice should be given to the commissioner?

The objective of this thesis is divided into 6 steps as seen in Figure 1: First, the thesis will give the commissioner a macro view of the educational travel market and give the commissioner an overview of the educational tourism development trends.

Secondly, the characteristics of China and Finland in their respective tourism markets, especially in the educational tourism market, were analyzed, for example, to find out what the Chinese market needs to be considered as a source of future customers for the company and what special experiences Finland can offer as a product provider.

Thirdly, help the commissioner to analyze what advantages and disadvantages that Fangce has in competing with similar competitors in the Chinese market.

Step four, identify potential customer groups for Finnish educational travel products based on the previously analyzed company's strengths and future development directions.

Then choose the suitable business model for the company, mainly discussing what are the differences between the company's choice of B2B and B2C models. And which business model is more suitable for the commissioner.

Finally, the data is collected by means of quantitative research and appropriate recommendations are given based on the results of the analysis.



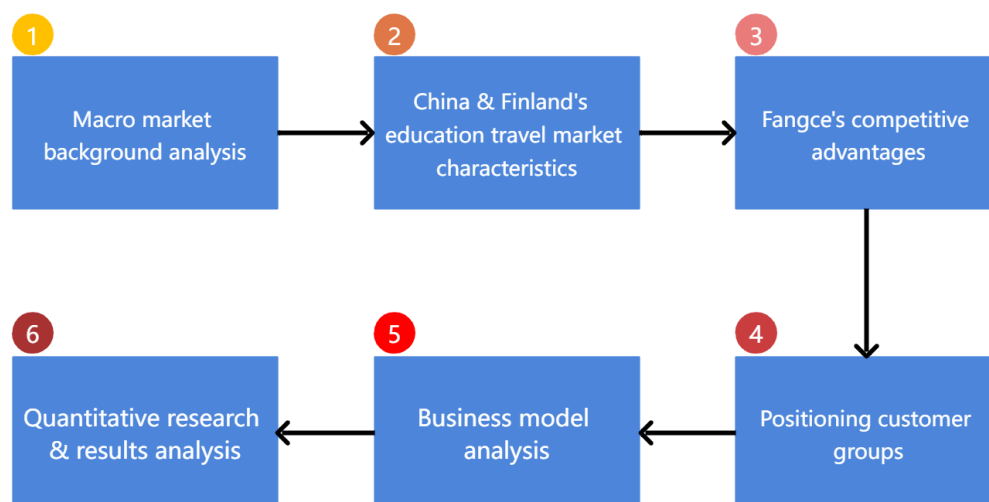


Figure 1. Implementation plan for thesis projects

Therefore, to answer these questions and organize a quantitative survey, a problem-driven theoretical framework is formed in Table 1.

Table 1. The Theoretical Framework and Research Methods

Research Questions	Theoretical Framework	Research Methods
Q1: How interested are Chinese consumers in participating in Finland education travel?	Macro Market Analysis	Desktop Research Quantitative Research
Q2: Who is the target customer group and what is their acceptable price range?	Chinese market Research Pricing strategy	Desktop Research Quantitative Research
Q3: What are the unique experiences that Finland can provide?	Finnish market Research	Desktop Research
Q4: What are the advantages of Fangce company in the Chinese market?	Business Model Canvas	Desktop Research

Q5: What kind of business model should Fangce choose for a start-up project?	Business Model Canvas  B2B versus B2C	Desktop Research
Q6: What advice should be given to the commissioner?	Recommendations for Fangce company	Quantitative Research

### 3 BACKGROUND OF EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

While the outbound educational travel has been a major feature of China's tourism market in recent years, the concept of educational travel itself has been around for a long time in China. The earliest record of the concept of educational travel in China is from a book which called *The Historical Records* by Sima Qian around 100BC. Within the book it records that during the Spring and Autumn Period in ancient China, Confucius led his students to travel around different countries to spread his scholarship and ideology. (Website of CNKI) This act is also seen as the origin of the concept and culture of educational travel in China.

As China's development has moved into the modern world, the concept of educational travel has also changed with the time. Educational travel itself has increasingly changed from once focusing on learning to focusing on travel or tourism. Today, Chinese tourists focus on educational travel in the general sense, more for different age groups of students, workers. Various research papers have also aimed on the market segmentation and product design of educational travel activities, analyzing the economic, social, and personal development impacts of this type of tourism. (Wu, 2019.)

### 3.1 Definition and Segmentation of Educational travel

The practice of educational travel in Europe is early than China, and the academic terms related to education travel are Experiential Education, Outdoor Education, Field Trip, Study Tourism and Learn travel. Among them, John Dewey is usually considered the originator of the idea of experiential education, and this concept usually refers to travel activities with the purpose of education and learning (Ord & Leather 2017). The common forms of educational travels in Europe are visits to museums, planetariums and other scientific institutions, tours and visits to natural environments, enterprises, agricultural production related to the content studied; participation in program activities such as summer or winter camps; study abroad; internships, etc.

A more precise definition is necessary for tourism practitioners. This can determine the range of possible benefits for the practitioner. Figure 2 illustrates a classic educational travel product structure model it was built by Ritchie in 2003. In Ritchie's book *Managing Educational travel*, the author defines the concept of educational travel as a tourist who engages in an overnight or day trip where education and learning are the primary and secondary motivations for the trip, including general educational travel, adult learning tourism, domestic and international college tourism, and campus tourism. (Ritchie 2003.)

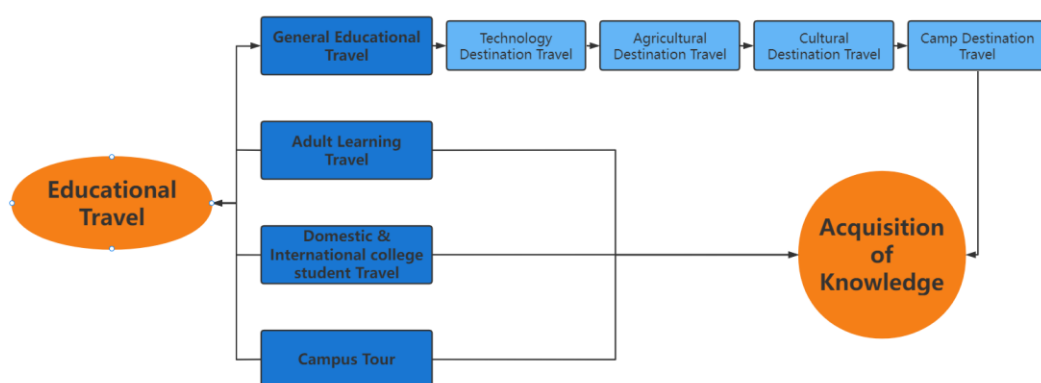


Figure 2. Ritchie's Classification of educational travel (Ritchie 2003)

According to scholar Pitman and Broomhall, educational travel should have three characteristics: first, purposeful experiential learning is central to its structure; Second, the learning content on the trip is appropriate for participants with different educational backgrounds; and third, the leader is often a scholar, and this leader plays a crucial role in experiential learning (Pitman & Broomhall, 2019).

In addition, Chinese scholar Wu Xiaowei argues in 2019 that: This definition clearly overlaps with other forms of special interest travel, such as cultural, heritage, hobby/interest, and ecotourism. Another narrow definition of educational travel is travel for formal educational experiences, such as cultural exchange between schools, study abroad, language course study, campus tours, special interest learning trips, etc. And this coincides with Pitman and Broomhall's view.

### 3.2 Tourism Market Overview

In this section, the author will provide an in-depth analysis of the tourism market through the data and information collected and illustrate the trends of this industry from both a macro tourism perspective and a micro educational travel perspective.

#### 3.2.1 General Tourism Market in China

According to the public information released by China's National Bureau of Statistics, refer to figure 3, China's tourism economy has maintained a faster growth rate than the country's GDP growth since 2012 to 2019. 6.63 trillion yuan (0.87 trillion euros) of total tourism revenue was achieved in 2019. (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2019.)

### 2012–2019 China Total Tourism Revenue Trends

Billion Yuan

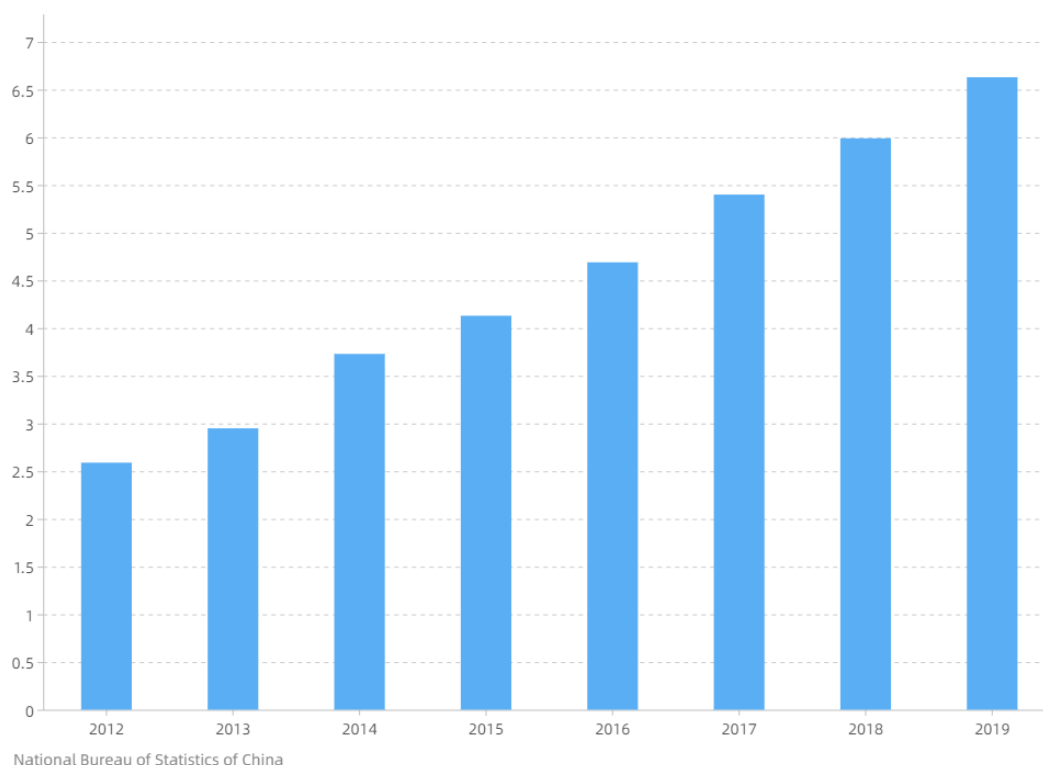


Figure 3. Trends in China's tourism revenue from 2012 to 2019 (China National Bureau of Statistics 2021)

From the Finnish side as figure 4 shows, analysis through the data of Statistics Finland. In the period from January 2019 to November 2019, a total of 21.32 million nights were spent in Finnish accommodation places. (Website of Business Finland). For the Finnish tourism market, the largest number of non-resident visitors were Russians, with 740,000 overnight stays. The second largest group was Germans with 617,000 overnight stays. The third largest group was the Swedes with 535,000 nights and in fourth place were the British with 376,000 nights. In fifth place were the Chinese with 343,000 nights. (Website of Statistics Finland.)

This is an increase of 4.1% compared to the same period in 2018. Among the most important countries for inbound tourism to Finland, the absolute number of overnight stays by Chinese increased the most, by 42,100 nights which means 14% higher than 2018.

### Percentage change in overnight stays from January to November 2019/2018

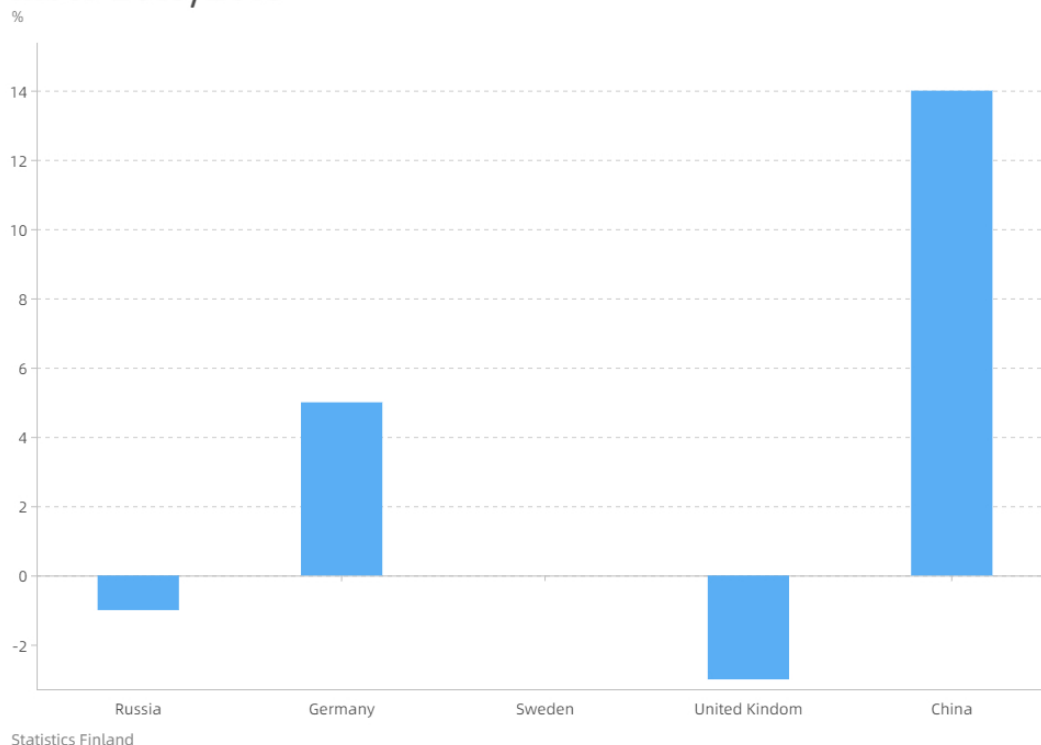


Figure 4. Percentage change in overnight stays from January to November 2019/2018 (Statistics Finland 2020)

According to publicly available data from Statistics Finland and Visit Finland, the number of Chinese citizens visiting the Nordic countries increased by 63% in 2017, from 265,000 to 432,000, with Chinese tourists spending an average of 1,263 euros per person per trip, more than visitors from other countries. (Website of Business Finland.)

Finland benefits from close cooperation with Chinese companies in technology, tourism and tourism marketing, and Finland has become one of the most popular destinations and stopovers for Chinese tourists. (Website of China Daily.)

Finland has been able to maintain and increase the new level of tourism demand. This indicates that the growth achieved has been structural. This can be attributed to

companies in the tourism and travel sector across Finland, which play a strong growth-oriented role in international markets. (Website of Business Finland.)

Finland has four main tourism regions, Helsinki, Lapland, Lakeland, Coast and Archipelago, each with its own distinctive character and great potential to attract tourists. These major regions provide the basis for the provision of tourism services and products and the establishment of attractive sub-brands (Website of Business Finland).

According to Finland's latest international strategy China is starting to be seen as a priority country for Finland in terms of diplomacy, economic development, and education. (Holttä & Pekkola & Cai 2014.) The target markets for Visit Finland are divided into three segments: focus markets, stable growth markets and fast-growing new markets. (Website of Business Finland).

- **Focus markets:** Germany, UK, China and Japan
- **Stable Growth Markets:** Russia, Benelux, Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, USA and South Korea
- **Fast Growth - New Markets:** UAE and India

With the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics approaching, snow and ice sports are becoming popular among the Chinese. Finland as one of the best destinations to enjoy snow and ice activities Local tourism growth benefits from an increase in Chinese tourists. (Website of Xinhuanet.) All these signs of business and tourism development indicate that the trend of tourism cooperation between China and Finland is entering a new phase.

### 3.2.2 Educational travel Market in China

The term educational travel first appeared in the Chinese tourism market in February 2013 in the Outline of National Tourism and Leisure (2013-2020) issued by the General Office of the Chinese State Council. Since then, the Chinese government has seen it as a new way to explore China's education reform. Educational travel have

gradually come to the forefront of research in the Chinese education and tourism sectors (Chen, 2019).

The current Chinese market for education tourism includes professional study institutions, travel agencies, language training institutions, study abroad intermediaries, DMCs and units under the education administration, according to the first industry development white paper of China's educational travel industry, "China Study Tour Development White Paper 2019", which shows that, according to incomplete statistics, there are more than 7,300 enterprises mainly involved in educational travel business in 2019. (Website of Djyanbao.)

As shown in Figure 5, the existing educational travel institutions can divide into 4 tiers in China based on indicators such as enterprise development, revenue scale, brand influence, financing and listing, and product and service development. Within the revenue over 100 million yuan (13 million euros) ranking in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tier, for example, Beijing CenturyMind Education Technology Co. Institutions with revenue at the level of 10 million yuan (1.3 million euros) are ranked in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier, such as Beijing ZhongKai International Study Travel Co. Smaller institutions with revenue capacity below 10 million yuan (1.3 million euros) but receiving long-term attention from the capital market form the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier. A large number of small and micro institutions or studios that follow the favorable government policies and enter the industry due to relatively low entry barriers, with small profit scale, and them make up the 4<sup>th</sup> Tier. (Website of Qianzhan.)



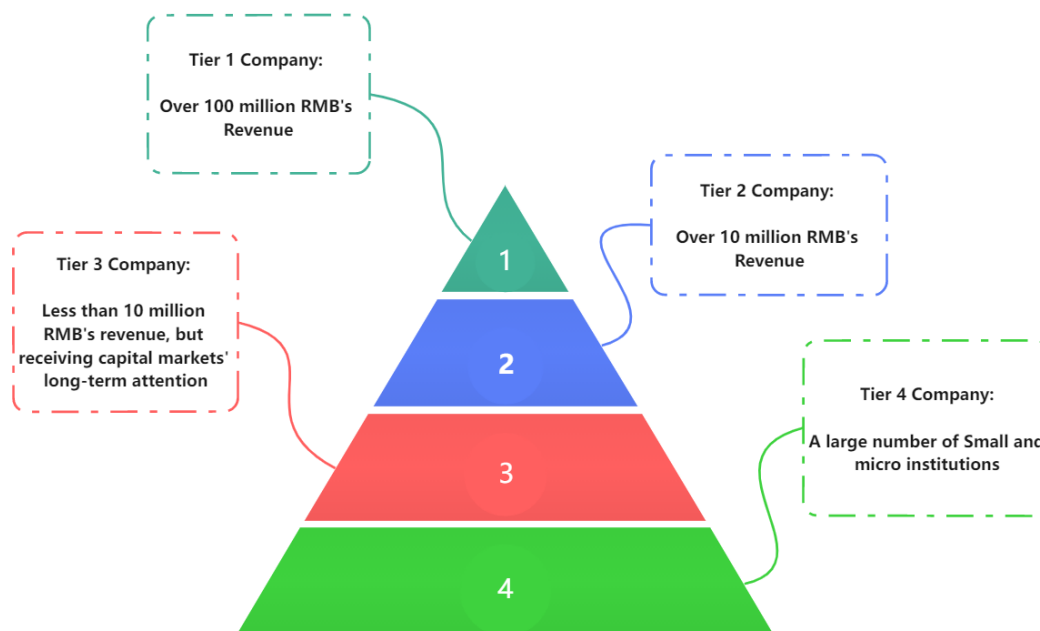


Figure 5. 4 Tiers of Chinese Educational travel Institutions (Website of Qianzhan)

According to the data of "China Study Tour Development White Paper 2019" released by the Study Tour Committee of the Chinese Children's Culture and Arts Promotion Association, parents in major cities in China are willing to pay a reasonable fee for educational travel products with quality assurance. The unit price and profit of overseas study programs are much higher, with an average price of 12,000 yuan (1,600 euros). As seen in Figure 6. Major popular tourist cities in each region such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Shenyang, Wuhan, and Xian are basically willing to participate in educational travel with a ratio of more than 70% (Website of Sohu).

In addition, the wholesale unit price of domestic educational travel products in China is 2100 yuan (300 euros) and the average price of these products at the retail market is around 3,000-4,500 yuan (400-600 euros). The revenue advantage of overseas educational travel products is obvious that the price can easily reach 12,000 yuan (1,600 euros) in 2019. (Website of Ctrip.)

### Unit price of study tour products in China in 2019 (Yuan/time)

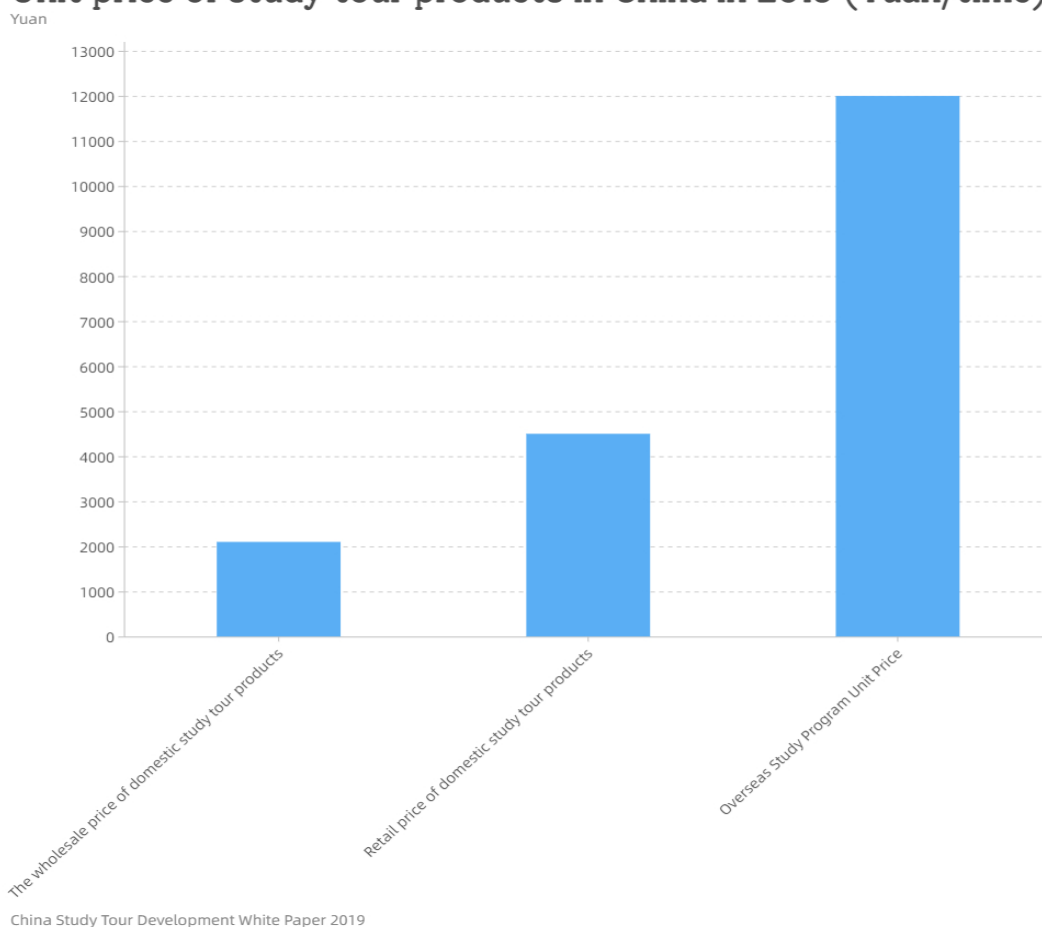


Figure 6. 2019 China Educational travel Product Unit Price Comparison (Website of Ctrip)

### 3.2.3 Educational travel Market in Finland

Finland's reputation as a top education country is already beginning to influence education professionals in China, which in just a few years has become by far the largest source of educational travelers to Finland. (Website of Business Finland.)

From the Finnish side, Finland is trying to combine public education with private travel services. From the tourism industry's point of view, one of the main challenges from the Finnish side is how to arrange the necessary educational content for tourists, especially since the number of tours from China has increased dramatically. In addition,

Chinese are keen to study and do activities with Finnish students at their schools and are often prepared to pay for learning experiences and extracurricular activities (Website of Business Finland). For Finnish education and tourism industry players, these students from China are a potentially profitable group for educational tourism.

Unlike China, Finnish cities and municipalities have different modes of operation. Educational tours as well as tour operators must be aware that most schools in Finland are public schools, which operate with Finnish taxpayer funds and are subject to local city or municipal policy. On many tours, funding is mainly provided by the parents of the students. Often, Chinese schools prefer to establish sister school partnerships in order to provide their students with an international education, and local students benefit from this knowledge. (Website of Business Finland.)

It is foreseeable that more students, principals, and teachers from China will come to Finland in the future to further their education. And the introduction of sister school programs.

However, it is also important for educational travel operators to understand that Finland is different from China that Finnish cities and municipalities have different modes of operation. Educational tours and travel agents must be aware that most schools in Finland are public schools, funded by Finnish taxpayers and subject to local city or municipal policies.

The diversity of learning content is also a major advantage of Finnish educational tourism resources. Compared to Chinese schools, Finnish school hours are relatively short, so more and more Finnish education professionals and cultural institutions are developing out-of-school learning programs. For example, public and private institutions, nature centers, science centers, museums and sports institutions can offer high-quality experiences. (Website of Business Finland.)

In terms of learning topics, participants can experience the interesting Finnish history and Finnish way of life, UNESCO Geoparks and not to mention there are 40 beautiful

national parks spread across the country, Innovation skills and STEAM knowledge through architecture and design as real-world phenomena. etc.

## 4 BUSINESS MODEL

Business Model describes how an organization creates, delivers and captures value in an economic, social cultural environment (Parker, 2017). From ancient times to the present, as long as there is a business system, it is bound to have its own business model. (Yuan, 2007).

The concept of business model originated in the last century, but to this day there is no absolute conclusion. According to the existing business model research results, it can be broadly summarized into 3 views. The first viewpoint explores the value creation of business models. The second view focuses on the system of business model, for example, Mitchell and Coles' 7W theory elaborates the process of service association between enterprises and customers in business behavior. The third view focuses on the profitability of the business model. (Yuan, 2007).

Therefore, the concept of business model in this thesis can be understood as a system based on the existing elements of the company itself, making them more efficient and enabling the company to form a stable and **profitable operating mechanism**. Thus, it is necessary to build a business model that has the following criteria: **it creates value; it allows the company to operate efficiently; it makes the best use of internal and external resources; and it is stable and viable.**

### 4.1 Business Model Canvas

Business Model Canvas were initially proposed in 2005 by Alexander Osterwalder, As shown in Figure 7, it is an important tool used to describe the elements of a business model. The Business Model Canvas contains four areas: Offerings, Infrastructure,

Customers and Finance. There are nine basic modules covering: key partners, key businesses, core resources, value proposition, customer relationships, channel access, customer segmentation, cost structure, and revenue sources, which can clearly and intuitively describe the business model and thus help generate more business ideas and design thoughts.

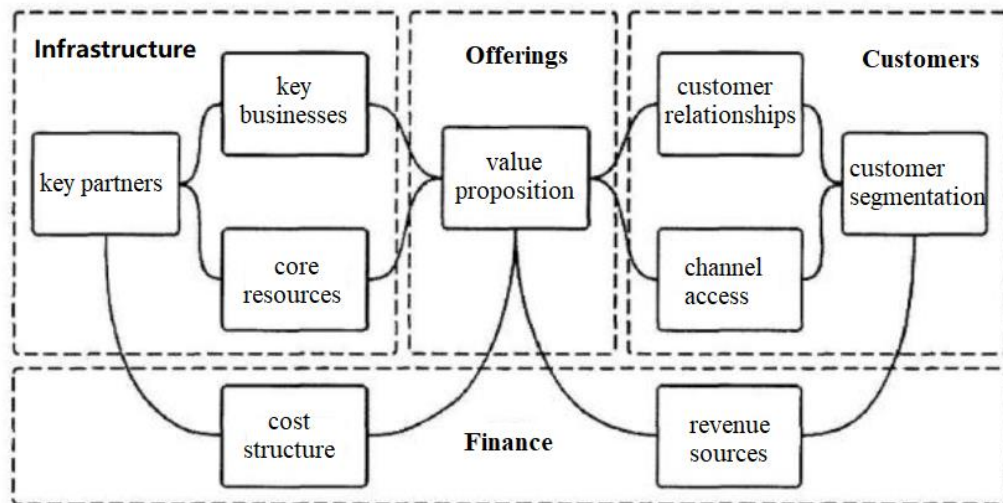


Figure 7. Business Model Canvas (Alexander 2005)

As Chinese scholar Wang pointed out in 2013, the nine elements of the Business Model Canvas are the basis for building a successful business model. Through this model, analysts can clearly and intuitively analyze a company's current business model, discover existing strengths and weaknesses, and thus provide ideas for designing new business models, mastering a company's current business model, and adjusting future business.

- Customer Segmentation

The core of the business model is the customer. After the business model is determined, the specific customer groups under the business model should also be determined. The company should choose the customer groups to focus on, and to avoid unnecessary waste of resources the company should figure out on which customer groups to invest most of its efforts, on which groups to invest a small amount of effort and on which groups to ignore completely. The business model will be adjusted sequentially with the needs of the customer groups under the business model.

- Value Proposition

A value proposition is what a company wants to communicate to its customers. What the company wants to convey to its customers is what the company thinks, the values it portrays, the problems it wants to help customers solve, and the needs it provides for them. In short, it's about solving customer problems and meeting customer needs through a value proposition. I.e., a simple, clear, and compelling message.

- Channel Access

Channel access refers to the way to reach customers, the way for products to enter the market and become customer-owned, and how to ensure that the target customer group can reach and buy after the contact, for example. Companies should think about the whole process, which channels are efficient and secure, how to integrate different channels and other key issues.

For travel companies, there are two channels to choose from: B2B, which refers to business-to-business marketing and business practices, and B2C, which is for individual customers. These two channels have their own characteristics.

In B2C, the buyer is an individual decision maker and is therefore often influenced by various factors, such as "emotional communication", and the marketing strategies of operators using the B2C concept often include giveaways, experiences, offers, etc.

In B2B, the decision-making model is organizational, and individual emotions are unlikely to influence the signing of a contract. And since orders are larger and buyers take higher risks, buyers often tend to choose familiar brands or companies they have already worked with in non-one-time transactions. This is the time to pay more attention to showing professionalism and the overall strength of the company. The company must show a professional, reliable, and credible image.

Typically, B2C's competitive strategy relies on brand awareness and price. These two points are the most intuitive information consumers receive when they meet a product. Due to the short decision time, consumers usually decide on the final product to buy

based on the brand impression conveyed by the advertisement and the price on the label.

B2B model places more emphasis on the cost effectiveness of the product and after-sales service in the transaction, companies have ample time and decision-making minds to examine the different options before them, do a cost analysis of each product as well as an analysis of the benefits to the company. As well as consider establishing and maintaining a sustainable relationship and positive interaction between the company, even if this transaction did not work out to do a good job of daily return visits.

Therefore, companies must consider their own characteristics when choosing B2C and B2B. When choosing B2C, companies must pay attention to the audience flow of the promotion and sales platform and must choose online or offline environment with plenty of visitors. For example, Online, companies can choose to run social media; offline can be shopping malls, plazas, and prime time advertising spots on major TV stations. And usually this also means high marketing expenses.

B2B sales are then often planned to participate in (a certain field of) shows, fair, these trade shows or fairs are a sort of platform, and a reputable platform can act as an authoritative intermediary to vet and "meet" suppliers, allowing companies to work together on a large scale with greater confidence. This will be a more economical option for Fangce to develop future business.

- Customer Relations

What kind of relationships that the company wants to establish and maintain with their customers? the cost of those relationships, integrating them with the various parts of the business model, and the need for the company to continuously understand customer needs in order to improve products and services?

- Revenue Sources

The source of profit for the company, the underlying reasons why customers are willing to buy the product, and the content of the product or service that the customer is buying.

- Core Resources

What are the most competitive resources an enterprise has, the resources that can raise the barrier of entry for other enterprises and build its own business barriers. What kind of core resources are needed for the value proposition of the enterprise? What kind of core resources are needed for the enterprise's channel?

- Key businesses

Based on the value proposition of the business, the channel, the key business operated. Only if the key business exists can the revenue stream be guaranteed, and the business can continue to operate.

- Important Partners

Enterprises need to clarify the types of partners and their respective characteristics, the important partners of enterprises include capital injectors, business partners, and communities of interest.

- Cost Structure

Costs incurred by the company to implement a certain business plan or business model and the share of the costs of each aspect. At the moment, Fangce's biggest costs in running its education consulting and language training business are rent and labor costs. For a small company with limited resources, the current business already takes up most of the company's resources, thus choosing B2B is a necessary choice based on the company's own characteristics. In the future, choosing the B2B model to operate educational travel will effectively reduce service and management costs compared to the B2C model.



## 4.2 Fangce Co., Ltd. Educational travel Business Model Canvas Analysis

Fangce Co., Ltd 's business model construction is still in the preliminary exploration stage, and the operation manager does not have a clear and explicit framework structure for the specific business model of educational travel, and the existing operation system is not sufficient to support a complete educational travel project. Based on the business model canvas theory, the author combined with the current situation of Fangce Co., Ltd. and analyzed and determined the nine elements of its business model canvas step by step according to the four modules under the theory, namely value offering, infrastructure, customer, and finance. And summarize the characteristics of each element, explore the roadmap of educational travel development suitable for Fangce Co., Ltd. and create a business model canvas for Fangce Co., Ltd.

### 4.2.1 Value Proposition

From the theoretical basis of the value proposition, education in China has been a topic of great interest since ancient times. As China's educational reform process advances, the concept of educational travel is gradually being applied to actual teaching practices around the country.

A highly professional management team and a responsible management style are the keys to stand out in the market. Safety is a top priority. Although the current market response shows that China's educational travel are developing well, there are still many problems according to the specific implementation and social media feedback. For example, for many related enterprises, the lack of, financial security, imperfect coordination mechanisms, and the lack of government management system deficiencies and many other key factors. For these problems, Chinese scholars Zhong Linfeng and Tan Zhan proposed a model of educational travel operation system and guarantee system in 2017 as seen in Figure 8.

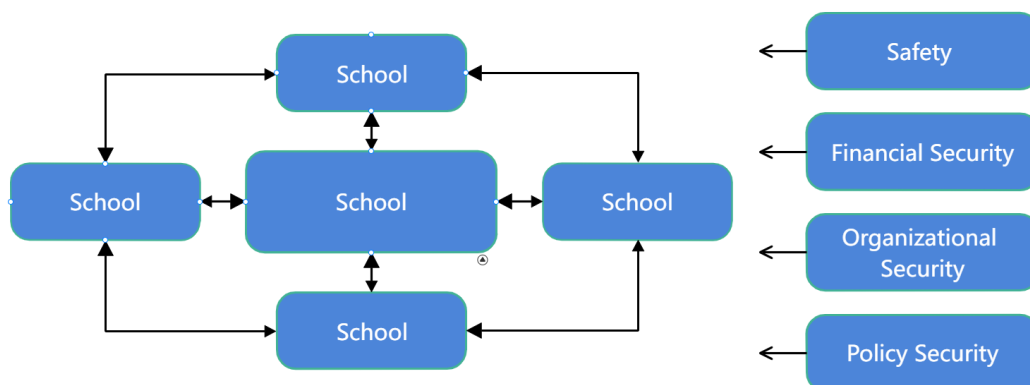


Figure 8. Zhong & Tan's Educational travel operation system and guarantee system (Zhong, L., & Tan Z., 2017)

According to this system model, providers of educational products should start with security, financial security, and organizational security to avoid problems such as irregular management and operation and lack of security because the Chinese educational tourism market has not formed barriers to entry. For the parents of students, safety is always the primary factor influencing the examination of study products.

An international perspective and an open mind are powerful tools to compete in the Chinese market. According to the existing market feedback, the homogenization of products in the Chinese educational travel market is serious. It must be clear that educational travel is travel-based and study-based. Enterprises should consider how to provide study products that are different from the current market with serious homogenization. Develop new products with reasonable prices for its target customers based on Finnish characteristics.

As an example of the development of STEAM-based educational travel products in Finland, the Finnish Ministry of Education organized and conducted a mathematics and science education development project called LUMA as early as 1996-2002. In Finland, LUMA is an acronym for the words "Luonnontietee" (Finnish for Nature) and "Mathematics". The Finnish Ministry of Education's LUMA project aims to improve STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education practices and enhance students' interest in these subjects (Website of EU STEM COALITION).

STEAM Education is an approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. STEAM education theory. STEAM Developed since STEM education, which emphasizes only science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. By adding the arts as a humanities curriculum, the theory of STEAM education has been refined

It is not just a collection of these different disciplines but encompasses many more related fields, combining these major disciplines and related fields in an interdisciplinary manner to foster scientific inquiry, innovation, and problem-solving skills in students. (Ledbetter & Ferguson, 2017).

Some education industry practitioners say students' exploration through the four areas of study in STEM is a wonderful start but lacks the critical process of creativity and innovation. Students in STEM programs may have more experiential learning opportunities, but they are limited to science, technology, engineering, and math. Our economy needs more than an understanding of these fields-it needs application, creativity, and ingenuity. STEM instruction alone is clearly inadequate. (Website of Artsintegration.) STEAM is a way to take the benefits of STEM and complete the package by integrating these principles in the arts. STEAM takes STEM to a new level, it allows students to connect their learning in these key areas with artistic practices, elements, design principles, and standards to provide the full range of learning at their disposal. STEAM removes limitations and replaces them with curiosity, critique, inquiry, and innovation.

Most of the activities carried out by the Finnish LUMA program are outside the regular school education curriculum and generally take place after school or during holidays. These activities create an active, participatory, collaborative, student-centered, phenomena- and problem-based, contextual learning environment by choosing a variety of settings, making full use of existing infrastructure and community environments, as well as well-designed, colorful processes, tools and materials,

ultimately providing children and youth with an immersive STEAM learning experience, the joy of discovery, and knowledge and skills growth

Educational travel is not just for the enjoyment of tourism, but a unique and valuable experience. Participating in international activities by expanding international horizons has an important role in students' life development, values formation and moral development.

For Fangce, in the future, it is necessary to reach customers through B2B model, explore their real needs, and study customer-oriented personalized product and service strategies. Therefore, it is necessary for Fangce Company in the future to make a correct judgment of the development trend of the customer value orientation of educational travel and to make a correct forecast of the future market competition trends. Make a strategic choice according to the characteristics of its own resource structure. In case of unfavorable shift of customer value orientation to its own strategy, it is necessary to make timely adjustments.

In concrete practice, companies can operate in three steps.

In the first step, focus on promoting all the benefits of the company's products. The operator should list all the benefits that he thinks the product may bring to the target customer for the customer.

The second step is to promote the advantages. After highlighting all the advantages of the company's educational travel products, it should focus on advertising the points of difference in its favor, highlighting how it differs from its competitors, which of course requires the company to know very well the various characteristics of similar alternative products.

The third step is to focus on promoting the value points that are most valued by the customer. It is important to capture several elements that are most valued by the target customers to demonstrate the advantages of their products, to prove to them the value

of this superior product performance, and to demonstrate in the communication that they are aware of the customer's concerns.

In short, for the values that Fangce company demonstrates based on the products and services it currently offers. Seeking a customer base that shares the same values of openness, internationalization and professional management is the key to gaining product competitiveness from the highly competitive Chinese market.

#### 4.2.2 Core resources

Core resources are the leverage in the business canvas to realize the value proposition, conduct key business, and acquire key partners. In Fangce's business model canvas model, core resources should include both tangible and intangible resources.

Among the tangible resources, Fangce Co., Ltd. a professional language training provider, has recruited and trained many excellent English teachers since its operation in 2017. These teachers have ample management experience in dealing with students for years. Secondly, the language requirement is necessary for developing educational travel based abroad. Although travel agencies generally have Chinese teachers and guides, several courses abroad are taught in English. Various activities also hope that students participating in educational travel will go deep into the lives of local people and interact directly with them. This requires a high level of vocabulary building and oral communication skills from those in charge of organizing study trips abroad. They can also help students who are passionate about learning and who are limited by their language skills but are still willing to try to communicate. The availability of these basic requirements will directly determine the overall experience of an out-of-country educational travel.

In terms of intangible assets, Fonze Co., Ltd. has developed well in recent years. It has worked with many schools in the region and accumulated a large number of educational partners and loyal customers for its educational service products. The business has considerable visibility in the local city and in similar industries in nearby

cities. Through the attraction of various marketing tools, these loyal customers will be converted to a large extent into new customers for educational travel products.

#### 4.2.3 Key Operations

Fangce Co., Ltd.'s main business consists of two main components, namely off-campus language training business and on-campus cooperative schooling, supplemented by the sale of language training booking or other materials.

Off-campus language training services can also be divided into two categories. The first category is school-based language training services that are advertised to the general student population (including elementary, middle and high school students) in the city where they are located. The second category is language training for students aiming to study abroad with the IELTS or TOEFL exam as the standard, the latter training services are much more expensive than the former.

The second major business is co-operative schooling through cooperation with local schools. Provide professional English teachers to schools and training services for teachers.

As mentioned earlier, years of language training services have enabled the company to have an English-speaking staff, which gives it a competitive advantage in conducting international business, especially in the service industry.

As shown in Figure 9, with the future launch of the China-Finnish educational travel business, Fangce Co., Ltd. can leverage its existing resources to increase its key business types to include general educational travel products for students as well as educational travel products for adults i.e., schoolteachers, education stakeholders etc.

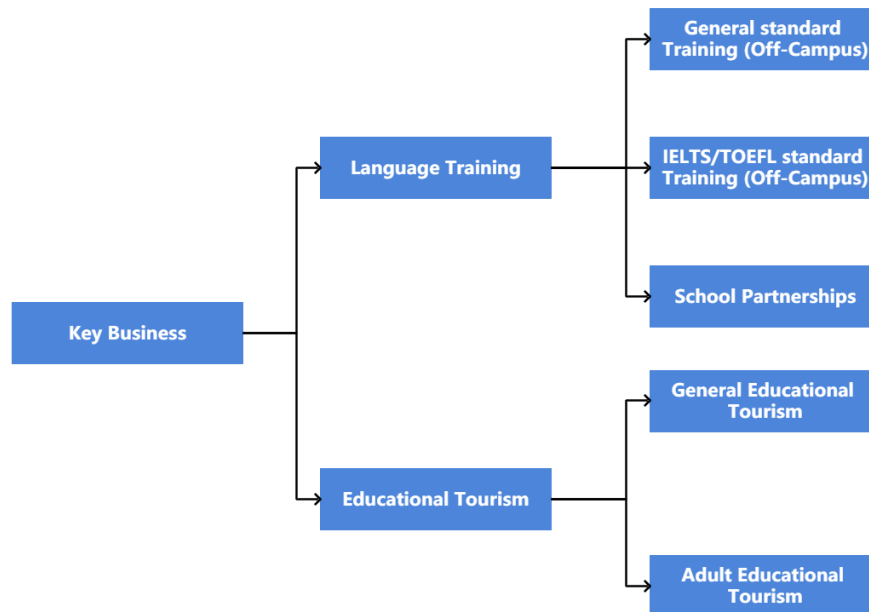


Figure 9. Fangce Co., Ltd. Key Businesses

#### 4.2.4 Important Collaborations

As a well-known language training provider in the local city, the company can only operate with the support and cooperation of its various contacts, which at this stage include local government education departments, local schools, companies, and individual participants.

The government participants are mainly the local education department in Taian City. The government plays a very important role in conducting education-related business. The city of Tai'an, where Fangce Co., Ltd. is located, has a population of 5 million, with many schools, many students, and tight educational resources. The government is responsible for introducing policies, adjusting them and is the provider of many education-related programs. The government will also play a decisive role in providing program support, policy advice and related matter in the follow-up of international educational travel programs.

Companies are only allowed to carry out projects with schools if they are allowed to do so through government and related policies. Schools are in many cases not only

customers, but also collaborators. After receiving good feedback, the company can get more attention and do business with more schools.

At this stage, a major part of the business remains the provision of language courses, the biggest fixed expense is the rental of classrooms, and Fangce Co., Ltd. has partnered with local companies to get classrooms in prime locations in the city, close to many schools and residential areas, which attracts many general customers. In the future of the educational travel business, B2B cooperation will be the top priority. The ability to find high-quality partners will be directly related to the final experience of the participants. For Fangce, it is necessary to select high quality Finnish DMCs and related tourism companies and send invitations to discuss cooperation models in advance.

The nature of Fangce Co., Ltd.'s service industry is such that it includes individuals i.e., company consultants with a background in the education sector involved in the education sector as key partners. These individual participants can guide the development of the company in many ways, providing input and feedback to improve operations and service quality.

#### 4.2.5 Customer Segmentation

The core of a business model is the customer, and once a certain business model is identified, it determines the specific customer groups under that business model. Which customer groups should be valued, which customer groups should be looked down upon, and which customer groups should be ignored instead? At the same time, it is necessary to make targeted adjustments and changes to the needs of the selected customer groups under the business model.

The development of educational travel products with Finnish characteristics is a characteristic that determines the relevant customer groups. Urban families with a certain level of assets and a high level of self-management and economic conditions, i.e., the urban middle class.



According to the China Tourism Academy released report in 2020 "China educational travel Development Report," The data shows that About 80% of the students who participated in the educational trips abroad came from public schools in major Chinese cities and had the intention to study abroad in the future. Of the students' parents, nearly 70% believe that educational trips can improve their children's self-development, 60% support international educational trips, and 40% support educational trips that cost more than 50,000 (6,600 euros). Overall, more than 60% of parents have a high willingness to spend on educational travel products, especially families with an annual income of more than 200,000 yuan (26,000 euros) want their children to go on educational travel with the highest willingness. (Website of China Tourism Academy).

#### 4.2.6 Channel Access

In theoretical terms, Fangce Co., Ltd. service offerings should efficiently reach middle-class urban households. And to ensure that the products are accepted and purchased by the target group once they reach them.

However, at this stage, Fangce Co., Ltd. has very limited and single communication channels. The products are only given to partners such as schools, or through traditional advertising channels. This has led the company to be more dependent on the original accumulation of partners.

According to the previous analysis of B2B and B2C models, after choosing B2B as the main model, the company can make a wide range of attempts, such as the perspective of direct channels, a cost-effective option is to use social media platforms and try to develop online sales channels. Numerous online platforms have been trying to attract more entrepreneurs by lowering the barriers to entry. For example, the two Chinese social media giants, WeChat and Weibo, already offer a number of reliable marketing tools.

It is also possible to learn from using proven online platform e.g., Ctrip.com or Flyzoo.com. Take advantage of the proven and reliable sales processes already

designed by the platform providers. The benefits of doing so are also obvious, avoiding the huge overhead of creating your own sales website and the subsequent expense of maintaining it.

At the same time, Fangce company can choose to establish a marketing channel, dividing the direct channel from the indirect channel. In the construction of indirect channels, the company can try to find agents marketing way, by providing unique international educational travel products based on Finnish characteristics to other language training institutions, turning past competitors into future partners. Or cooperate with travel agencies to sell product packages and promote educational travel products through these travel agencies, which can make full use of the travel agency's proven, market-tested marketing techniques to create momentum for their own publicity and reduce the company's learning costs in marketing, which has been a traditional marketing tool in the tourism industry.

#### 4.2.7 Customer Relations

A high-quality business model is built to form customer relationships that are linked and can ensure customer stickiness as well as deep, multi-faceted and high frequency.

From the marketing point of view, the business model canvas of Fangce Co., Ltd. at this stage is segmented into three types of relationships: transactional, supply, and partnership. The company should focus on considering building stable, two-way customer relationships when carrying out international educational travel projects. For different customer relationships should focus on their relationship characteristics and make corresponding maintenance strategies.

Analyzed from the perspective of a transactional relationship, this is a very simple relationship involving only a sale and purchase transaction, where the transaction is for an international research product or an existing service of the company.

From the point of view of the supply relationship, the relationship between the company and the customer will no longer be a simple transactional relationship, in which the choice of the customer must be considered to maximize economic efficiency.

For example, in a certain period, the company as a supplier has a certain priority when faced with a conflict between individual orders for scattered customers and large orders submitted by schools on a classroom basis. In this case, schools, institutions, and other groups should be considered as large customers to carry out supply services first.

In China, typical examples are: Labor Festival in the first week of May and National Day in the first week of October, students' summer vacation from mid-July to early September, and students' winter vacation from the end of January to mid-February, leading to four large scale travel peaks in the market, in which schools as the main purchasers of educational travel products have a very high willingness to spend, and the market also has a fairly large scale travel groups organized by students and parents on their own, which are large in scale but have more diverse needs than school-based purchasers, making it difficult to achieve uniform coordination

By ranking customers according to priority and allocating the company's work efforts to key customer groups, it is possible to alleviate and prevent various unexpected situations, reduce operating costs and operational risks while ensuring a stable market share.

Partnership is created when the relationship between the client and the company is further deepened. The formation of a partnership means that both parties agree on the ideology and expression of the values of the company's operations and can participate in some of the day-to-day management and decision-making

#### 4.2.8 Cost structure

Fangce Co., Ltd. is doing well and has a considerable market share in the education service industry in its location in Taian city. Although the annual turnover is not

outstanding in the local area in the first place with the scale of operation, it can still maintain a high profit margin due to the nature of its service industry.

Considering the scale of its operations, the development of the China-Finnish educational travel project will require considerable capital investment at the beginning of the project and based on the design concept of key business modules, the cost structure of the company should change after the development of the China -Finnish educational travel business.

The company's production costs will take up a significant portion of the costs, as the company must have sufficient capital and cash flow to ensure a smooth procurement process for tourism products. At this stage, the company's production costs only include the electricity expenses for teaching. When China-Finnish educational travel business is launched, the high cash flow will challenge the company's financial management as well.

The other major costs are fixed costs, including classroom rental, purchase of teaching equipment, and depreciation of equipment. This is because the company is developing the China-Finnish educational travel business as a new business and at the same time ensuring that the normal operation of the existing language training business is not affected.

Effective management is indispensable for the operation of a company. At this stage, the company's management model is simplistic due to the single product range, single channel and simple user relations, and the company only needs to pay for staff salaries and equipment maintenance expenses at this stage, while in the future it will need to consider the design expenses of the educational travel products. It is necessary for the company to be prepared to run efficiently when starting a new business.

#### 4.2.9 Revenue Sources

The sustainable development of a business should have a clear source of revenue. Based on the current situation, the revenue source of Fangce Co., Ltd. can take the

form of a combination of educational travel products and existing language training services. We can effectively use the feature that educational travel are mostly organized during holidays to fill the off-season gap of the products with each other. Also developing multiple sales channels for educational travel products can effectively expand the market, for example, by developing agents for educational travel products, online sales, and social media operations to increase the awareness and revenue of new products.

#### 4.3 Fangce Co, Ltd.'s Business Model Canvas

Based on the the business model canvas theory. An exclusive business model canvas for Fangce Co, Ltd can be built, as seen in Figure 10.

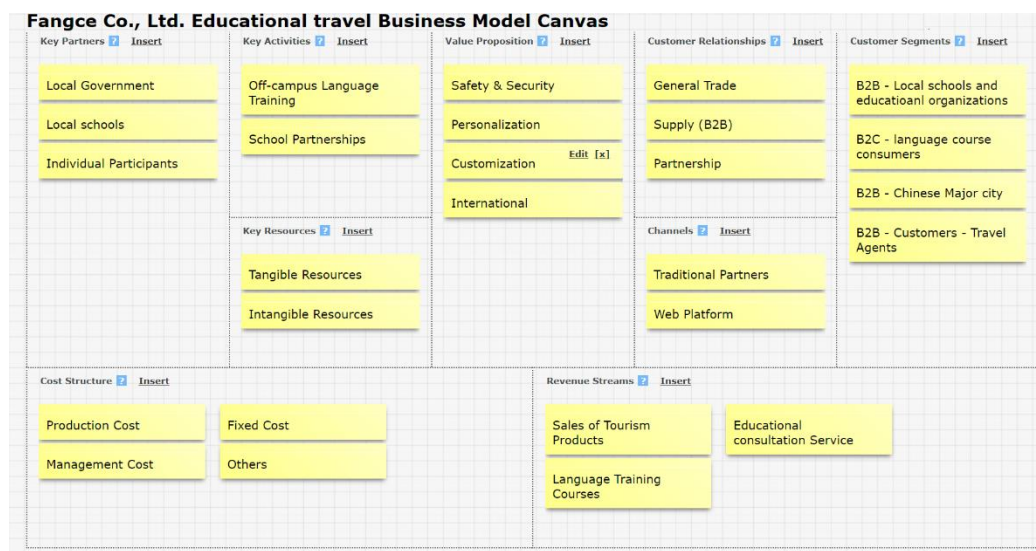


Figure 10. Fangce Co., Ltd. Educational travel Business Model Canvas

The business model of Fangce Co., Ltd. Educational travel is structured from the perspective of the company's essential positioning in the service industry. The company needs to maintain close customer relationships with high income families in urban China and should essentially be given the business model type of "high-grade international educational travel product". This matches the analysis of the spending power of the potential customer group in the previous chapter.

Meanwhile, this positioning will ensure that the company is able to conduct its business with a clear and precise customer segmentation. Urban middle-class families have higher spending power and higher quality education needs for their next generation and high quality of life leads to the need for higher level demands.

## 5 RESEARCH METHOD

The research data for this thesis was collected through a quantitative study in the form of a questionnaire. The author went through the quantitative study and listed specific core survey questions.

### 5.1 Research Design

Quantitative research is a research strategy that focuses on quantifying the collection and analysis of data (Alan, 2012). It is formed from a deductive approach where emphasis is placed on the testing of theory. Quantitative research is the opposite concept to qualitative research, to examine and study the quantity of things, it is necessary to use the tools of mathematics to analyze things quantitatively

Quantitative research has been the predominant research method in the social sciences. Quantitative research method design includes experimental studies, quasi-experimental studies, pre-test-post-test designs, and other designs (Newman, I., & Benz, C, 1998). In addition, because data for quantitative studies involve surveys, experiments and real-time collection, there is little delay in collecting material for examination, which means that the information being studied can be analyzed very quickly compared to other research methods (Website of Ittana).

For Fangce company, data collection and subsequent analysis as soon as possible are the key to win in the future market competition. At the same time, quantitative research uses random process to collect information to prevent personal subjective opinions

from affecting the final analysis, to provide reliable and repeatable information. The structure of quantitative research allows more extensive research, so that it can be carried out more accurately when trying to summarize the topics involved.

Thus, quantitative research was chosen in this thesis, and the data collected were presented in figures and pictures to confirm theories and conjectures, and the data collected were related to the main topic. The results analyzed through quantitative research as well as mathematical and statistical methods are presented in figures, graphs, and tables, which provide the thesis commissioner with simple, visual evidence to support the ideas of this thesis.

## 5.2 Data Collection

The sampling and inferential framework of this thesis is shown below

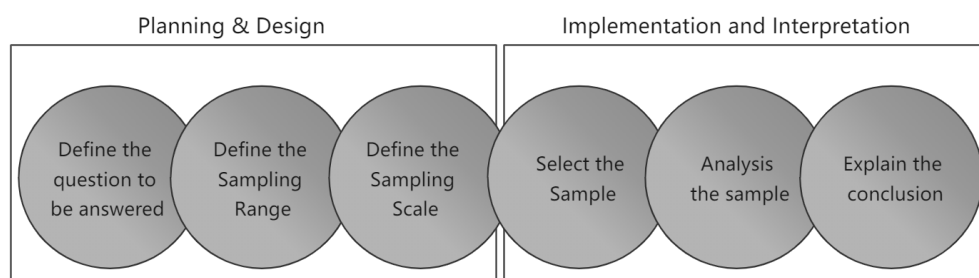


Figure 11. Sampling and Inference Framework

In this process, the author identified the questions and details to be investigated by designing a set of questionnaires about educational travel in Finland. The sample was then determined to be drawn from the top four developed cities in China: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. The sample range was expected to be the new middle-class in China. According to the “2018 China New Middle Class White Paper”, Hurun Research Institute defines the new middle class as those with an annual household income of at least 300,000 CNY in the most developed cities of Beijing,

Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen with 16.6 million new middle-class families which covering about 50 million Chinese people (Website of Sohu). The Sampling scale was limited to these new middle-class families in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, and Shenzhen, i.e., households that own a home and have a full year family income of no less than 300,000 CNY in these four cities and. The questionnaire was distributed through online platforms and social media advertising, and receivers voluntarily responded, which is essentially a voluntary response sampling by probability sampling method. The rationale for choosing this method of data collection is that random sampling is a common sampling method that attempts to avoid any form of sampling bias by treating the choices of individuals in the sample as random chance. The basic rationale behind the random sampling method is that if the sample is truly random then the sample will be representative.

The data collection tool for this thesis was selected from WJX.CN, an online questionnaire platform in China. The questionnaires were distributed through a paid service provided by the platform to pinpoint the company's target customer group. One hundred respondents' responses were collected by distributing the questionnaire. After the respondents completed the survey, the results were automatically collected by the WJX.CN platform and made into an Excel sheet for analysis. Questionnaire Design

The questions in the questionnaire were divided into several sections. The main focus was on the basic background information of the target group, customer lines, the level of interest in Finnish educational travel, what the target group was willing to pay for Finnish educational travel products and what services should be included in Finnish educational travel products.

### 5.3 Data Analysis

In this thesis, basic descriptive statistics was chosen as the method of analysis for the data. Descriptive statistics is a method of organizing, summarizing, and presenting data in a convenient and informative way (Website of Sixsigma). Descriptive statistics are brief descriptive coefficients that summarize a given data set, which can be either a representation of the entire or a sample of a population.



After descriptive analysis of the statistical data, the author obtained the results by creating graphs, analyzing the mean, and median.

## 6 RESULTS

The questionnaires were collected over 2 weeks and a total of 208 questionnaires were collected during this period. With the help of the paid service tool of the web survey questionnaire platform WJX.COM, after the link of the questionnaire was closed the data showed that total number of visits reached 412. Meanwhile, 108 high-quality and effective questionnaires were selected through screening tools. Therefore, the response rate of this survey is about 50.4%, and the effective response rate is about 26.2%.

### 6.1 Interest and Attraction Level of Finland Educational Travel

In Figure 12, among the 108 selected questionnaires, 33% of respondents chose Finland as their first education travel destination, followed by the UK with 32% and Germany with 20% of respondents.

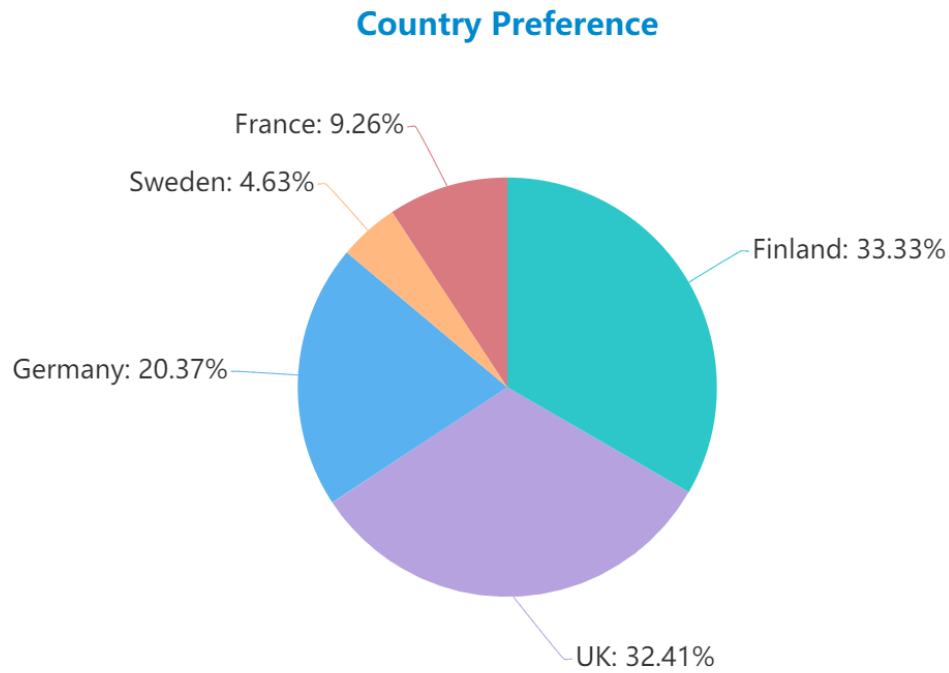


Figure 12. Country Preference

This data can well confirm the fast development of China's educational travel market mentioned in the chapter 3.2, and overseas educational travel have become very popular in China. And the market research of visit Finland, that is, the reason that in just a few years, China has become the largest source of educational tourists to Finland (Website of Business Finland). At the same time, this data shows that Chinese educational tourists still prefer European countries with a long history and rich culture, such as the UK and Germany. Though Finland has an advantage during this research it is not clear when competing with these countries. Thus, this will be a challenge for Fangce Co., Ltd in the future, it is necessary to find a way to effectively promote the Finnish destination and compete with these traditional destinations that are already familiar to Chinese tourists. And it is necessary to find out what is stopping customers from getting interested in Finland and making their final decision.

Respondents were asked to rate Finland's attractiveness as an education travel destination on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 represents not attractive at all and 5 represents very attractive. The data as shown in Figure 13 shows that 18.52% respondents gave a score

of 5, 55.56% respondents gave a score of 4, 22.22% respondents gave a score of 3, and 1.85% respondents each chose a score of 1 and 2.

### The extent of Finland's attractiveness as an educational travel destination

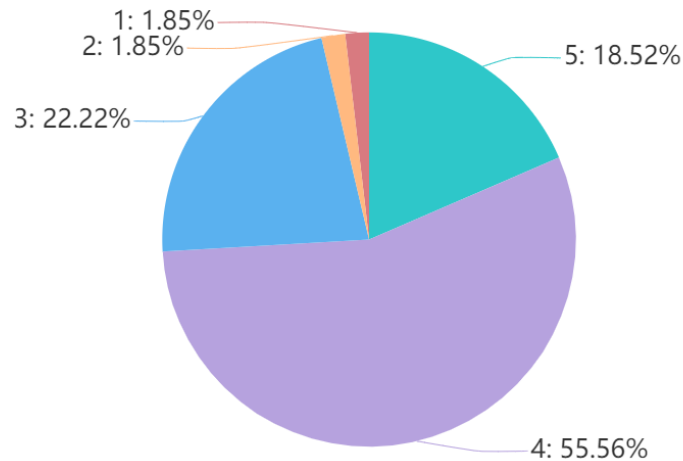


Figure 13. The extent of Finland's attractiveness as an educational travel destination

Overall, the attractiveness of Finland as an educational travel destination is impressive, with most respondents showing a high level of interest in the country.

### 6.2 Finland's popularity as an educational travel destination

Respondents were asked whether they had heard of educational travel in Finland before and how they had obtained information. In response to the first question, 81.48% of the respondents said that they had heard of such activities but had not participated, while 8.33% of the respondents said that they had participated in such educational travel and even participated in several times. In response to the second question, about 70.37% of the respondents said that they mostly got the information about the event from various social media. Another 21.3% of respondents said they got information from friends and relatives who had already participated in the event.

Thus, the application of social media is a necessary promotional tool for Fangce, Co. Ltd. to explore such activities in the future. It is also necessary to maintain good customer relationships to keep a certain level of customer stickiness after successfully selling educational travel products. Loyal customers can also help to promote the company's products to a certain extent. The tools available include social media operations, setting up email marketing systems, etc.

### 6.3 Respondent Financial Ability

Respondents were asked to choose an acceptable budget amount in the range of 10,000 CNY (1,300 EUR) to 50,000 CNY (6,600 EUR). As shown in Figure 14, 44.44% of respondents chose 35,000 CNY - 50,000 CNY (4,600 - 6,600 EUR), 35.19% chose 20,000 CNY - 30,000 CNY (2,600 - 3,900 EUR) and another 10.19% of respondents said they could accept educational travel products above 50,000 CNY (6,600 EUR). From the survey results, the majority of people can accept a budget of 35,000 CNY - 50,000 CNY (4,600 - 6,600 EUR). This price is basically in line with the current price of 7–12-day all-inclusive travel packages for Nordic educational travel groups at the retail end of the Chinese market. Take Ctrip.com, the largest online travel product sales platform in the Chinese market, for example. The top 10 selling Nordic countries educational travel packages, packages with more experiences and learning content starts with an all-inclusive price of 30,000 CNY. Packages with more sightseeing price from 15,000 CNY to 25,000 CNY. The difference between the two kinds of travel packages is that the former will contain diversified experience, such as reindeer driving and local school curriculum experience, while the latter is to visit museums or well-known historical and cultural sites. In addition, the former is more flexible, and the product package with higher price contains more replaceable experience. Customers can even change the experience content according to the weather conditions after arriving locally.

Thus, for Fangce company, it is profitable to develop the educational travel program further by developing a high-value tour package or developing a high-grade private tour product to satisfy the customer group belonging to 10.19%. Also, for respondents with a target budget of 10,000 CNY - 15,000 CNY (1,300 - 1,900 EUR) and the

customer group represented by this group, the company should exclude them from its target group.

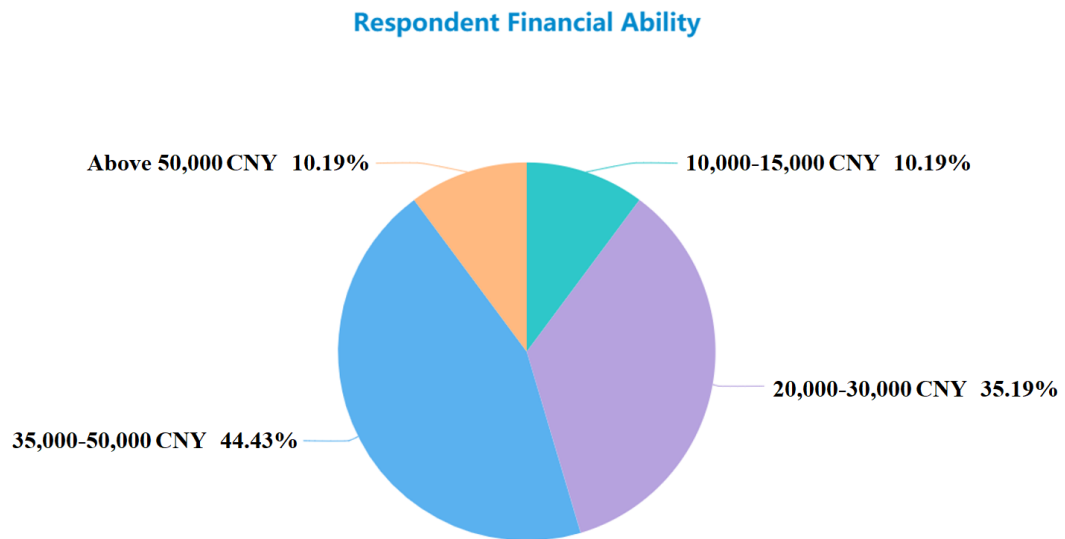


Figure 14. Respondents' budget preference

#### 6.4 Customer Behavior of The Target Group

When respondents were asked about the duration of the study trip to Finland, according to the data, about 56.48% of the respondents said they would like to have a schedule of 5 to 10 days, while 42.59 respondents said they would like to have a schedule of more than 10 days. When asked what kind of activities they would like to do when they arrive in Finland, 52.78% of respondents said they would like to spend as much time as possible experiencing the local school curriculum and learning content, preferably with Finnish students if possible. This option has a much higher percentage of numbers than the other options and the data strongly confirms the study presented by Business Finland that

In a follow-up question about accommodation arrangements, 43.52% of respondents wanted to arrange a local homestay for their children, which they felt would allow them to experience the local culture and social environment in its purest form. Another 34.26% of respondents said that camping was also a good option, as it would exercise the sense of independence that Chinese children have been lacking. The percentage of

figures for these two options is much larger than the 10.19% who chose chain hotels and the 12.04% who chose star hotels. This data is basically consistent with another question in the questionnaire, that is, what kind of harvest the respondents hope their children can get through the Finnish research travel. In this multiple-choice question 82.41% of the respondents wanted their children to learn about different cultures through educational trips to Finland, 68.52% wanted their children to develop a sense of independence, and 66.67% wanted their children to develop their language skills. As described in the introduction part, Chinese educational travel customers want to try, experience, and learn foreign advanced educational ideas, which is essentially because the economic development has improved the living standards of the Chinese people, and material prosperity has led to the pursuit of higher-level needs.

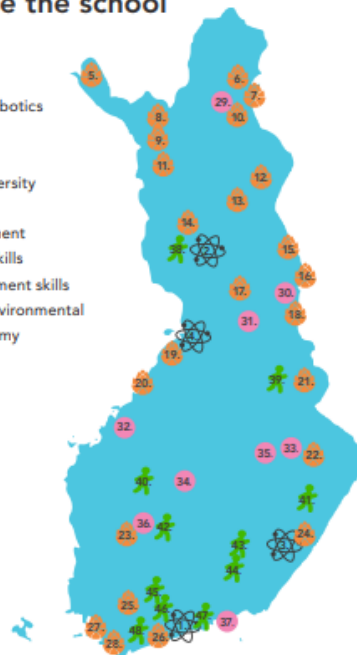
As for the curricula that should be covered on educational travel in Finland, the three most popular options are humanities and history, natural ecology, and science and technology. The percentages are 87.04%, 77.78% and 71.3% respectively. This is a very encouraging result because it is basically consistent with the rich STEAM teaching content provided by Finland. This is in line with the promotional content of the "2020 Educational Travel Best Practices" brochure produced by Visit Finland. Science and technology centers, nature centers and early childhood centers are located all over Finland to support the future of educational travel with a variety of experiences (Website of Business Finland 2020). As shown in Figure 15.

There is a wide range of learning topics that can be covered at Finnish schools:

Sustainable development	Multi-culturalism	Inclusive teaching and support	Flexible learning environments	Sports and physical activity	Co-operative teaching
Environmental education	Global education	Child involvement and support	Digital learning	Music	Shared leadership
Mathematics and natural sciences	International projects	Learning to learn	Digitalisation	Play	Team teaching
Entrepreneurship education	Active citizenship	Social and emotional skills		Drama, arts and media	Teacher teams
University cooperation		Animal-assisted learning	Communal ICT-architecture		Cross-disciplinary teaching

Several learning topics can also be covered outside the school environment:

- Coding, digital fabrication, robotics
- Filmmaking
- Finnish history and way of life
- Geological and biological diversity
- Innovation skills and STEAM
- Nature as a learning environment
- Social and life management skills
- Physical education and movement skills
- Sustainable development, environmental education and circular economy



- Science Centres**
1. Vantaa
  2. Rovaniemi
  3. Punkaharju
  4. Oulu
- Nature Centres**
5. Kilpisjärvi
  6. Northern Lapland
  7. Ivalo
  8. Fell Lapland
  9. Pallastunturi
  10. Saariselkä
  11. Yllästunturi
  12. Savukoski
  13. Pyhä-Luosto
  14. Pilke
  15. Oulanka
  16. Kuusamo
  17. Syöte
  18. Hossa
  19. Liminka Bay
  20. Kalajoki
  21. Kuhmo
  22. Koli
  23. Seitsemeniemi
  24. Saimaa
  25. Häme
  26. Haltia
  27. Teijo
  28. Ekenäs
- Youth Centres**
29. Vasatokka (Inari)
  30. Oivanki (Kuusamo)
  31. Pikku-syöte (Pudasjärvi)
  32. Villa Elba (Kokkola)
  33. Hyvärilä (Nurmes)
  34. Piispala (Kannonkoski)
  35. Metsäkartano (Rautavaara)
  36. Marttinen (Virrat)
  37. Anjala (Kouvola)
- Sport Institutes**
38. Santasport
  39. Vuokatti
  40. Kuortane
  41. Tanhuvaara
  42. Varala
  43. Vierumäki
  44. Pajulahti
  45. Eerikkilä
  46. Kisakallio
  47. Solvalla
  48. Kisakeskus

Figure 15. Diversity in the content of Finnish on-campus and off-campus activities (Website of Business Finland)

Generally, it is important to match the customer's perception of the destination image with the actual experience. Therefore, if the customer's needs are better understood, the company can develop a coherent travel plan based on this and thus increase the customer's satisfaction with the trip. Meanwhile, the image of the destination will have

a direct impact on the expectations and satisfaction of the customer and on the trust of other potential customers in the company.

When asked about the organizers of educational travel in Finland, more than 65% of the respondents said they would choose a large professional institution (Tier 1 organization) as mentioned in Chapter 3.2.2, 15% of respondents said they could accept the same type of product from a small organization but only if the organization was reputable and the product was guaranteed, and another 19% said they had no special requirements for the organizer. It is clear from the numbers alone that Fangce. Co, Ltd. will be at a definite disadvantage against the Tier 1 companies in China in the future but consider the size of the Chinese educational tourism market and the potential market share for a small company, 15% is still means a significant number of customers, and another 19% is a target that worth to be pursued.

An interesting statistic is that when respondents were asked if they wanted shopping activities to be included in the educational travel experience, the data collected showed very little variation. 52% of respondents said they would like to include shopping activities, while 46% said they would not like to include a shopping experience. With the data so close, companies will need to be careful in considering the scheduling of shopping activities in the future. In the follow-up feedback, the author found that a large portion of the respondents who wanted to include a shopping experience were among the group of customers willing to pay more than 50,000 CNY for their trip, it worth the company to do a separate market research on this issue in the future.

## 6.5 Target Groups Background information

When respondents were asked about their future plans, 64.81% said they had definite plans for their children to study or work abroad in a foreign country. Another 25.93% of respondents said they had intentions but no definite plans, and only 9% said they had no plans for their children to develop abroad. For those who have definite plans, 52% of respondents have considered sending their children to study in Finland in the future and participating in an educational travel to Finland is part of their precursor



plan, while another 37% said they would like to participate in a study trip to Finland before making further plans.

When respondents were asked about their children's current academic progress in China, 57% were primary school students, 27% were middle school students and 16% were high school students. This is largely influenced by China's education system, where primary school students have more free time and vacation time than students of other ages, and these vacation and free times are keys for their parents to purchase educational travel products for them. In addition, the young age of participants in educational travel activities also presents a challenge for companies that must consider how to ensure the safety and security of these children during their entire trip.

## 7 RESEARCH VALIDITY

One of the important components of research is the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Validity is defined as the degree to which a concept is accurately measured in quantitative research. A second measure of quality in quantitative research is reliability, or the accuracy of the instrument (Roberta & Alison 2015). In other words, validity and reliability refer to the quality and accuracy of the data instrument. The validity of an instrument is the idea that the instrument measures what it intends to measure (Website of The Graide). Validity is related to the link between the purpose of the study and the researcher's choice to quantify that purpose. The validity of an instrument is the idea that the instrument measures what it intends to measure. Reliability does not relate to intent at all, but rather asks whether the test used to collect the data produces accurate results. In this context, accuracy is defined by consistency (whether the results can be replicated).

The survey will only be conducted in mainland China, and the social media involved will only include Weibo and WeChat, which are available in mainland China. The reason for this is to avoid collecting incorrect feedback from other countries and avoiding political issues that may involve targeting Taiwan and other regions.

Since the target group of the survey is limited to large cities in mainland China (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen), the questionnaire will be translated into simplified Chinese. The survey is distributed through a paid online survey platform, WJX.CN. By purchasing the paid services of the platform, the author ensures the maximum possible authenticity of the recipients of the questionnaire and the reliability of the survey.

In the first question, after reading the introduction to the questionnaire, respondents will be asked which European country they prefer for their study trip. The choice of the four countries, except Finland, is based on the ranking of the top five most popular international education tourism product destinations on Ctrip.com, a Chinese online travel product sales platform. This question can clarify for the commissioning company the competitive dynamics between Finland as an education tourism destination and the traditional Chinese market for popular educational travel purposes.

In question 5, which deals with the price of the product, the selection range is based on the existing hot-selling educational travel products on Ctrip.com, according to different grades and prices.

In questions 6-10, the consumer behavior of the target customer group was studied. Respondents were asked questions about their preferences for accommodation, food, scheduling, activities, course selection, etc.

In questions 11-16, some background information about the customer group is studied, such as whether there is already a desire and intention to study abroad. The age distribution of the product experiencers (student population) and whether they would like to choose Finland as a study destination in the future.

Therefore, this research explores to the greatest extent possible the preferences and needs of middle-class families living in major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and Shenzhen in choosing international educational travel products and Finland as a preferred destination.

## 8 CONCLUSION

Of the 108 participants selected for the survey, 36 participants indicated that they would consider Finland as their top educational travel destination. A further 35 participants considered the UK to be their preferred destination but still showed a high level of interest in Finland and Finnish educational travel programs. While this is largely indicative of the high level of competition in the European educational travel market it is still a positive sign that the majority of respondents are interested in the program. This will give confidence to the case companies.

Considering the results of the analysis and the business model canvas, the future path of Fangee Co, Ltd. is relatively clear. For the company's key partners, it is necessary to look for a wide range of DMCs or Travel Agencies that have a good reputation in Finland and can provide high quality educational travel activities in order to seek long-term business cooperation. High quality and guaranteed educational travel products are the key support to lead the company to success in this field. Although in many cases this type of travel product often implies a high price, it can be a possible direction for the company, considering the target group of the company and the willingness of these groups to pay and spend, to a large extent it can even create an image of the company by promoting a quality educational travel product with high price and quality.

As a key activity, product promotion is one of the priorities for the company's future. Although Finland as an educational travel destination has an advantage in terms of product type and quality compared to traditional Chinese destinations such as the UK and Germany, lack of promotion is still a problem in order to improve competitiveness. According to previous research, 81.48% of respondents have never participated in any education travels in Finland, but 70.37% of them have learned about it on various social media platforms in China and have become interested in it. In addition to social media, an independent website is a good starting point to introduce and familiarize potential customers with Finland's unique advantages, such as natural attractiveness and high-quality education, by creating their own website. Companies can develop an

evocative website with various visual materials to allow more potential customers to selectively choose the right educational tourism product for them.

In view of the competition in the market, although most of our clients have expressed interest in choosing Finland as a destination for educational travel, according to our previous survey small and medium-sized travel agencies are not as competitive as large travel agencies, and the characteristics of Fangce Co, Ltd. Therefore, it is not advisable for the company's decision makers to invest heavily. For example, social media and other convenient platforms can be used to launch advertisements and marketing videos that dispel Chinese stereotypes of Finland. For example, Finland has more comfortable weather and environment compared to the hot Chinese summer. Or perhaps promote the fun of snow and ice experiences to customers in southern Chinese cities, such as Shanghai, Shenzhen and Guangzhou. For the people living here, they have hardly ever seen snow in their lives.

Meanwhile, according to the survey data. Considering the UK as a competitor, Germany is also quite attractive. The company should try to do an exhaustive market survey of the same type of companies conducting these two countries to find out their product types and product characteristics, so that they can develop competitive educational travel packages based on Finnish educational travel resources in a targeted manner. For example, the company can try benchmarking in the future to compare business processes and performance indicators with the practice results of the best companies operating educational travel in the UK and Germany. This process is often referred to as "best practice benchmarking" or "process benchmarking"

This is crucial to improve the company's future profitability and ensure continued growth. this is because aspects of its own processes can be assessed against those of a best practice company. This allows companies to target plans on how to improve or adjust specific best practices, or improve an aspect of performance, based on various issues revealed by benchmarking. Benchmarking can be a one-time event or an ongoing process, but overall, it is a good way for companies to continually seek to improve their practices.

From the research data that the majority of customers expect a budget of 35,000 CNY - 50,000 CNY (4,600 - 6,600 EUR), which, as a middle-class person in a large Chinese city, is far above the average domestic price for similar tourism products. At this point, the customer's expectations of the product must be carefully considered, for example, most of the people mentioned in the survey would like to be able to arrange a homestay, taste local specialties and at the same time arrange traditional Chinese food. The company should consider how to balance travel conditions and budget to best meet the needs of the customer, to maximize the match between customer expectations and the actual experience, to match the customer's perception of the destination image, and to create a high-quality experience. All these services must be purchased from other companies. When looking for the right partner or supplier the company must spend sufficient time searching and negotiating in order to make sure that the company can obtain the best cost efficiency and provide the best value for money to its customers.

In addition, the study showed new directions for the company to expand its business in the future. Since most people showed interest in studying in Finland in the future, the case company could consider establishing a branch such as a study abroad agency in Finland in the future, or consider cooperating with other specialized study abroad consulting companies, studying the possibility of cooperation in study exchange programs or other areas, and trying to expand its business by cooperating in new business plans such as study exchange programs or study abroad programs.

The development of secondary distributors is also a good way for the company to follow up on its operations. Given that the case company indicated that it still wants to develop its own business as a traditional educational consulting organization, the company's exploration in new areas is limited by the dilemma of insufficient resources and manpower. As well as the company's traditional scope of operations remains in the northern region of China. The company may consider analyzing and recruiting more regional agents, such as in some southern cities in China. As for the precise travel plan, the case company should carry out it after contacting DMCs or Travel Agencies in Finland. In addition, the company should do more research on other traditionally popular educational travel destinations and use them as references such as Japan, USA, Australia, as the ultimate goal of the case company is to be internationally oriented.

In conclusion, the author explores a range of behaviors and tendencies of the Chinese middle class in choosing Finland as an educational travel destination through a survey-based study. As a result, the author provides advice and recommendations to the case company, which will help the company to develop their future business plan. Overall, the research questions have been answered that it is profitable to create an educational travel product based on Finnish educational travel resources and that the target group - middle-class families in large Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen - that has a significant level of interest in participating in international educational travel. The pricing range for educational travel products for this customer group has been largely established. The range of experiences and learning content that this target group would like to receive on a study trip to Finland has also been largely determined.

### 8.1 Evaluation and Reflection on Learning

Because the author showed a strong interest in this field at the early stage of study, the author believes that most of the work is exciting in the whole process of the thesis, although many times these works are full of unknown challenges. Overcoming these challenges step by step enables the author to maintain his research enthusiasm on the subject. In addition, the study of this topic helps the author further sort out the theoretical knowledge and combine the characteristics of China's educational market. Through the systematic research on the theme of the thesis, the author has greatly improved his research ability and further mastered the relevant knowledge in the field of educational travel, including many aspects of China and Finland. It can be said that the whole process of the thesis is a very valuable learning experience, which teaches the author the important experience of the work that needs development and conceptual guidance in practical work. After research, the author believes that the research results are of positive significance for the case company and the company's exploration of educational travel business activities in Finland in the future.

## 8.2 Feedback from Fangce Co, Ltd.'s CEO

As the CEO of Fangce Co., Ltd. and the Commissioner of this thesis, Wu Haibo gave the following feedback for this paper and the work of the students.

Overall, the decision makers and management team of Fangce Co, Ltd were very satisfied with the whole process. From the planning stage of the thesis to the subsequent work in the process of collecting academic materials, researching data, and arriving at the results and conclusions and recommendations, Hao Lin showed a great deal of enthusiasm and a good cooperative attitude. We believe that he completed the work as promised and according to plan.

We are very pleased with Hao Lin's professional ability and accurate judgment in the field of tourism. And the corresponding academic materials searched in the study of China's educational travel market. These valuable academic materials also provide strong support for the company's future product promotion. At the same time, by using the analysis tools he has mastered, he helped the company analyze the unique business advantages of the company under the current situation, which is very surprising.

During the whole process of the thesis, Hao Lin maintained very close contact with our team. Even in the later stage of the thesis, we were glad that he could return to China for a face-to-face visit to us. On the other hand, we have to admit that the impact of the Covid-19 global pandemic since 2019 on the tourism business cannot be ignored. We have fully taken this into account when analyzing the current situation in the early discussion stage of the paper and in the process of follow-up projects. Although covid restrictions significantly affect the collection of materials and the analysis of the market. However, Hao Lin still collected many high-quality and valuable materials according to the general market conditions before the epidemic.

Hao Lin shows a very strong subjective initiative, which means a strong desire for creativity in the work of the thesis. After participating in several internal discussion meetings of the company, he put forward many successful cases based on reality similar enterprises and ways to achieve success. At the same time, he can use various

tools he has mastered, such as SWOT analysis, business model canvas, 7p theory helps the company solve many problems. At the same time, as the final achievement of Hao Lin's work, he showed us a good combination of theoretical elaboration, data analysis and practical practice through various clear and visual charts. The research results provide many useful views, and most of them are very consistent with the existing views of the company's decision-making team. It can be said that Hao Lin's research work is very valuable for the future development of the company.

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吴海波 Haibo Wu  
Chief Executive Officer



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Survey Questionnaire English version

#### **Finnish Educational Trave Questionnaire**

Finland is known as the Land of a Thousand Lakes, with the highest ratio of water to land area in the world and some of the purest water in the world. And legend has it that Finland is the home of Santa Claus, so Christmas here is extraordinarily lively. In the world's leading travel magazine Lonely Planet, Finland is ranked third in the best places to travel in 2017. At the same time, Finnish education, characterized by equality, quality and balance, and innovation, is renowned worldwide, and Finns believe that a fair education allows every child to live with dignity. A study trip to Finland will allow your child to visit local schools, visit internationally renowned universities and participate in a variety of group activities while exploring Finland's stunning Arctic scenery. Based on your answers to this questionnaire, we will arrange and plan many details of our international study trip to Finland.

The following 5 countries are all popular educational travel countries in Europe. If your child had the opportunity to go on an educational travel abroad, which country would you prefer your child to go to? [Multiple choice]

- UK
- France
- Germany
- Sweden
- Finland
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

From the perspective of educational travel, how attractive do you think Finnish educational travel are to you? 1 for not attractive at all, 5 for very attractive [single choice]

Totally

unattractive.  1       2       3       4       5      Very attractive

Have you ever heard of the Finnish postgraduate tourism project before? [single choice]

- I know it very well and have participated in similar projects
- I've heard of it, but I haven't attended it
- Never heard of it

If you have heard of the Finnish postgraduate travel program before, how did you learn about it? [single choice]

- Television
- Network (e.g., social media)
- Introduction of friends and relatives who have participated in similar activities
- Others \_\_\_\_\_

If your child goes to Finland for an international research trip, what do you think you can accept? [single choice]

- RMB 10000-15000
- RMB 20000-30000
- RMB 35000-50000
- Over 50000

How do you expect your child's Finnish educational travel to be scheduled? [single choice]

- Experience more natural tourism activities
- More time in local school and more local courses
- Equal distribution of tourism and learning activities.

Others \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of accommodation do you prefer? [single choice]

Hotel chain

Star Hotel

Local host families

Research camp

Others \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of abilities you hope your child can get through the Finnish research trip?

[multiple choice]

Improve language skills

Broaden international horizons

Visit international famous universities

Understand different cultures

Cultivate self-reliance awareness

Others \_\_\_\_\_

How long would you prefer? [single choice]

Within 5 days

5-10 days

More than 10 days

What courses would you like to focus on in your Finnish study tour? [multiple choice]

Language

Human history

Natural ecology

Scientific design (e.g., stem)

Art design



Others \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like for an organization that organizes Finnish educational travel?  
[single choice]

- small institutions with guaranteed mechanism
- Large institutions (such as Beijing century minder)
- No special requirements
- Others \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to choose in terms of diet? [single choice]

- More local food
- Both Chinese food and local food
- Most Chinese food, supplemented by a small amount of local food

Do you have any plans for your children to develop abroad in the future? [single choice]

- Yes
- No
- Uncertainty

Do you want to add shopping to your graduate travel experience? [single choice]

- Yes
- No
- Others \_\_\_\_\_

Learn about Finland through research travel. Do you want your children to study in Finland in the future? [single choice]

- Yes
- No
- Uncertainty

What is your child's current learning progress? [single choice]

- Primary school
- Middle high school
- High school

## Appendix 2. Survey Questionnaire Chinese version

### 芬兰研学旅行调查问卷

芬兰素有千湖之国的美称，这里的水域和陆地面积的比例是世界上最高的，水质也属于最纯净之列。而且传说芬兰是圣诞老人的故乡，所以这里的圣诞节格外的热闹非凡。在世界权威的旅行杂志《孤独星球》上，芬兰位列 2017 年度最佳旅行地点第三名。同时，以平等、优质均衡、创新力等为特征的芬兰教育 享誉全球，芬兰人认为公平的教育可以让每个孩子都活得有尊严。芬兰研学旅行，可以让您的孩子在又游览芬兰迷人的北极风光的同时，走进当地学校，考察国际知名大学，参加各种集体活动。通过本次问卷，我们将根据您的回答来安排与策划我们的芬兰国际研学旅行的诸多细节。

以下 5 个国家均为欧洲热门研学旅行国家，如果您的孩子有机会出国游学，您更希望您的孩子去哪个国家？  
[单选题]

- 英国
- 法国
- 德国
- 瑞典
- 芬兰
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

从研学旅行的角度出发，您认为芬兰研学旅行对您的吸引力怎么样？ 1 代表完全没有吸引力，5 代表非常具有吸引力[单选题]

完全没有吸引力     1  2  3  4  5    非常具有吸引力

您之前是否听说过芬兰研学旅游项目？ [单选题]

- 非常了解，已经参加过类似项目
- 听说过，但是没有参加过
- 完全不了解

如果您之前听说过芬兰研学旅行项目，您是通过什么途径了解到的？ [单选题]

- 电视
- 网络（如社交媒体）
- 参加过类似活动的的朋友，亲戚介绍
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

如果您的孩子前往芬兰参加国际研学旅行，您认为您可以接受最高什么范围的费用？ [单选题]

- 10000-15000 人民币
- 20000-30000 人民币
- 35000-50000 人民币
- 可以接受 50000 以上

您希望您孩子的芬兰研学进行怎样的时间分配? [单选题]

- 希望体验到更多自然旅游活动
- 希望更多的时间体验当地学校课程和学习更多内容
- 游玩与学习时间平均分配
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

在芬兰研学住宿上, 您更希望怎样的安排? [单选题]

- 连锁酒店
- 星级酒店
- 当地寄宿家庭
- 研学营地
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

您希望您的孩子通过芬兰研学旅行可以获得: (多选) [多选题]

- 提高语言水平
- 开阔眼界
- 到访国际名校
- 了解不同的文化
- 培育自立认识
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

您希望芬兰研学旅行持续多长时间? [单选题]

- 5 天以内
- 5-10 天
- 10 天以上

您希望芬兰研学旅行应当重点涵盖哪些方面的课程? [多选题]

- 语言
- 人文历史

- 自然生态
- 科学设计（如 STEM）
- 艺术设计
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

对于组织芬兰研学的机构，您希望？ [单选题]

- 有保障的精品小型机构
- 大型机构（如世纪明德）
- 看情况选择，没有特殊要求
- 其他（请说明） \_\_\_\_\_

在饮食安排上，您希望的选择是？ [单选题]

- 当地餐点为主
- 希望中餐与当地餐点都尝试
- 大部分中餐，辅以少量当地餐

您有计划让您的孩子在未来前往国外发展吗？ [单选题]

- 有
- 没有
- 不确定

您是否希望研学旅行体验中加入购物？ [单选题]

- 是
- 否
- 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

通过研学旅行的方式了解芬兰，您是否希望您的孩子在未来前往芬兰留学？ [单选题]

- 是
- 否
- 不确定

您的孩子的目前学习进度是？ [单选题]

- 小学
- 初中
- 高中

