

INTERNATIONALISING A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PHD
PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND: STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

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Given the interrelated and interdependencies of countries, business organizations including higher education have taken the advantage to extend their products and services across borders. Higher education, for instance, is one aspect that has benefited from the international cooperation and trade liberalization. However, many of the higher institutions that have extended their service to foreign countries fail to make an impact due to the poor managerial and internationalisation strategies. For such a reason, this thesis has analysed and proposed internationalization strategies and approaches for a multidisciplinary PhD program (IMPDET) from the University of Eastern Finland.

The proposition of the internationalisation strategies was based on the International market assessment opportunity framework that has widely been used in international business. Hence, this framework encapsulates with several other fine-grained international business strategies in every stage. Network and waterfall models were proposed for the IMPDET program in terms of its entry into developing economies.

The proposition of the internationalisation strategies was partly based on data collected from the selection of students and managements of the IMPDET program. Through a mixed research method analysis, the internal abilities and suitability of the IMPDET program was ascertained.

The investigation revealed that the IMPDET program has the internal ability, such as the required resources, to internationalise its operations in the foreign country. Additionally, this thesis found that the IMPDET program is suitable for meeting the challenges of the emerging economies, as this forms part of the key objectives of IMPDET to extend its operations to the developing economies.

Key words: International Business Strategy, International Market Opportunity Assessment, Higher Institution, University, Management

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FOREWORD

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I am indebted to all the staff members of the Master's degree program in the International Business Management course for their support. We have been coordinated and help each other throughout the program, on social media and other educational platforms.

While I envision that this thesis can be adopted as guidelines for the externalisation of the IMPDET-le program, the contributions of the management and students of the IMPDET program from the University of Eastern Finland is deeply appreciated. The staff and students from the University of Eastern Finland have been splendid during the data collection, especially to the IMPDET-LE program coordinator – Dr. Jarkko Suhonen.

Finally, I dedicate this piece of work to my late mother - *Mrs. Asibi Awuni* - who did not live to witness the completion of this work. Her effort to see me rising up in academia has motivated my development. May her soul rest in peace.

ABBREVIATIONS

CBE	College of Business Education
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMOA	International Market Opportunity Assessment
IMPDET	International Multi-disciplinary PhD degree program in Educational Technology
LE	Learning Environment
PESTEL	Political, Economical, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RBA	Resourced Based Approach
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat
TCA	Transaction Cost Approach
TOWS	Threat, Opportunity, Weakness, Strength
UEF	University of Eastern Finland
VRIO	Valuable, Rare, Imitate, Organise

1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the background of this thesis. In the background, the research objectives and statement of the problem are discussed. The research questions and the motivation for this thesis are elaborated in this section. Organisation of the thesis is systematically described in this section as well.

1.1 Background

The fast advancement in Information and communication technology (hereinafter ICT) has steadily become an inevitable tool suitable for business organisations to rely-up to compete for customers. This advance has prompted the need for the academic higher institutions to produce human resources capable of leveraging ICT into business operations, for effectiveness and efficiency. This highlights the need for high quality and equitable levels of education in a global arena. This is because the business organisations do not only compete domestically but globally as well. The impact of the higher institution on producing human resources for the business sector cannot be overlooked, as it is the foundation for knowledge creation. With this in mind, the Internationalisation of higher education for universal accessibility is eminent which therefore requires a careful approach with good strategies for ensuring a successful implementation. The goal of the higher education is to produce human resources capable of solving societal challenges (Henard et al. 2012).

Despite the fact that research has advocated and proposed diverse frameworks for internationalisation of higher institutions, ICT education in most of the emerging economies, is still at the infantile stage which lags behind in terms of the highly trained lecturers who hold doctoral and its equivalent degrees, to impart knowledge. However, most of the higher education in the emerging economies are yearning to augment their human resource capacities in terms of recruiting more lecturers or researchers with doctoral qualifications. Conversely, only a few of these universities have the capacity to provide doctoral degrees in ICT, thereby producing the needed and qualified lecturers for the sector to blossom. Many of

these universities have resorted to relying on the available researchers who hold a research-based master's degrees to teach.

Despite this approach, for instance, the National Accreditation Board of Ghana has revealed that more than 40% of lecturers in the Ghanaian universities do not have the required qualification, i.e. doctoral degrees and its equivalent, to teach. Majority of these lecturers were found in the ICT disciplines (Addy 2013.) This situation prompted a radical change in the sector. However, the change was not possible given that there were no qualified lecturers available to fill in the gap. Therefore, the government issued an ultimatum for the affected lecturers to acquire their PhD or equivalent degrees (Addy 2013). This situation cannot be said about Finland, for example, who has qualified lecturers for their higher institutions. This underlies the fact that the developing economies are still struggling to train doctors for their higher institutions.

In the light of this drawback, many institutions and individuals seek doctoral education elsewhere, mostly in the developed countries. This comes with some considerable financial obligations. Some of those who get the opportunity to acquire their doctoral or its equivalent degrees elsewhere often decline to return to impart the knowledge acquired in their respective countries. But rather, they take their chances elsewhere. This challenge has provided opportunity for the developed economies to extend their university education, usually through online or distance education. This situation has created room for competition among these universities with many resorting on "*whatever means*", without due attention to the quality. Usually, these higher institutions employ business strategies to internationalise their degree programs on the purpose of amassing a higher revenue.

Instead of giving less attention to quality in order to provide higher education to students in the emerging economies for the purpose of wealth creation, this thesis is set to investigate the suitability and intent of internationalising a multi-disciplinary PhD program offered by the university of Eastern Finland to the emerging economies. This thesis is particularly geared towards helping, from the international business strategy point of view, to develop strategies and

approaches for the University of Eastern Finland (hereinafter UEF) to penetrate and set-up learning hubs that will seek to train PhD students in the emerging economies. To help facilitate the effort of UEF, this thesis explores the suitability and internal abilities of the IMPDET program for the internationalisation of the IMPDET program. This aim is motivated by Ng and Tang (2016) who have advocated for the need to consider the challenges and needs of the indigenous citizens when designing and strategizing for internationalising higher institutions. “Promoting a high quality, equitable and global learning experience can help prepare graduates to live and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society” (Qiang 2003, 7). By this approach, an internationalisation market assessment opportunity (hereinafter IMO) framework was adopted in this study.

1.2 Research Questions and Motivation

To achieve the objectives of this research, as elaborated in Section 1, the under listed are the framing research questions:

- RQ1** How suitable is the University of Eastern Finland’s IMPDET program for internationalising in the emerging economies?
- RQ2** Does the University of Eastern Finland have the internal ability to internationalise the IMPDET program?
- RQ3** What internationalization strategies and approaches are suitable for the IMPDET program to operate in the developing economies?

Internationalising higher institutions in the emerging economies is not a new concept though the existing approaches are not devoid of the challenges and difficulties for its implementation. Considerable research has been conducted to prove that most of the profit making higher institutions are fraught with the challenge of its sustainability due to their inability to enrol students and as well poor management strategies. This challenge can be attributed to the poor packaging of such programs for internationalisation. The motivation to propose the internationalisation strategies are rooted in that the emerging economies would be able to tackle their own challenges where ICT has become a vehicle for transformational development.

The University of Eastern Finland recognises the deficit in human resources in the developing economies which has motivated the zeal to help mitigate such challenges. In this light, the University needs a strategic plan to envision the expansion of its PhD program to the emerging economies. This intent from the University's management led to the formation of the IMPDET program with the aim of providing higher degrees to students in the emerging economies. Findings of this study will augment the effort of the management of IMPDET to strategically penetrate into the developing economies. The systematic process adopted in this study shall serve as a benchmark for similar studies to be conducted, hence the researcher envision that this study will contribute to literature in the domain of international business management.

With the internationalisation of IMPDET program, UEF shall be able to boost up its research-base, since students from the supposed developing countries will contribute to the research output of the university. This will enable the University of Eastern Finland to compete with other global universities for the best ranking position, and more specifically, in the domain of ICT for global ranking. Getting to be ranked high attracts high quality students to study with the university. Additionally, since the Finnish universities are funded based on their research output, the university will boost-up its funding from the government.

Furthermore, the key motivation to this thesis is mainly stemmed from the fact that ICT education is still at the infantile stage in most of the developing economies. Many of these universities in the developing economies do not have qualified teaching staff with higher degrees to deliver quality education to students. As the researcher hails from a developing economy, it is apparently delightful to undertake this research, thereby helping to augment the human resource capacities of these countries. The researcher has been tasked to lead a project to establish a research partnership between the University of Education in Ghana and the University of Eastern Finland, Finland. The goal of this research will lead to expanding the IMPDET program to Ghana, and other developing economies. Taken up this research opens up a gateway to complement the project that the researcher is leading. Leading this project also represents a huge motivation for the researcher and for the university at large.

1.3 Thesis Organisation

This thesis consists of eight chapters. The chapters are developed systematically to provide insight into the research topic.

Chapter one introduces the thesis topic with due cognisance to the research objectives. The research questions are developed as a guide to help achieve the set objectives and this is captured in Chapter 1. Aside the thesis organisation, the motivation to conducting this research has been elaborated in Chapter one as well.

Chapter two delves into the background of the study. This takes a holistic insight of the background of the IMPDET program and the University of Eastern Finland at large. This encompasses the rationale that led to the formation of the IMPDET program which forms part of the School of Computing of the University.

Chapter three is the review of literature. In this chapter, literature and related works in international business strategies and theories are discussed. Relevant acknowledgements have been duly recognised

Chapter four is the research methodology. In this chapter, the research methods and procedures in which the data was collected are discussed. This includes the context in which this study was conducted. The approaches used in this research and the method of analysing are discussed in this chapter.

For having analysed the collected data in Chapter three, there is the need to report the findings. Hence, *Chapter five* reports and partly discusses the findings that arose from the analysis of the data.

In Chapter six, the researcher discusses the findings of this research in details. Based on the findings from analysing the internal abilities and the suitability of the IMPDET program for internationalisation, the researcher proposes a systematic process for the internationalisation of the IMPDET program. The

proposition is based on the various internationalisation challenges and factors for a successful internationalisation of the IMPDET program.

In *Chapter seven*, the internationalisation strategies and approaches for the IMPDET program are proposed. This follows the adoption of the International Market Assessment Framework which is tilted to suit this research. The proposed strategies and approaches have systematically been reported in this chapter.

The concluding part of this thesis is *Chapter eight*. With this chapter, the researcher summarises the entire work, and as well provides answers to the research questions that are formulated in Section 1.

2 RESEARCH CONTEXT

In this section, the background of the University of the Eastern Finland is described. The section also shed light on the background of the IMPDET program as it forms part of the global strategic plan of the University.

2.1 University of Eastern Finland

The University of Eastern Finland was, until 2010, two different independent universities which were all located in the eastern part of Finland (University of Eastern Finland 2011). These universities, university of Joensuu and University of Kuopio, ceased to exist after the University of Eastern Finland started to operate. Currently, the university has three campuses located in Joensuu, Kuopio and Savollinna. Although the university of Eastern Finland launched its operations in 2010, the cooperation between the University of Joensuu and the University of Kuopio was already existed before the merger (Ministry of Education & culture 2010). They two formally independent universities partnered and collaborated in several research domains and even shared a common global strategic plan (University of Eastern Finland 2011).

The key reason for the merger was for the university to be strong in terms of research and international recognition, thereby attracting high quality students and researchers. The merger was affected by the university sector reform in 2009–2010 in Finland (Ministry of Education & culture 2010). This reform was based on the previous University act enacted in 1997 (Ministry of Education & culture 2010). The 2009-2010 Finnish Universities reform further extended the autonomy of the universities by giving each university an independent legal personality, either as a public corporation or as a foundation (Ministry of Education & culture 2010). The University of Eastern Finland has four different faculties: 1) the Philosophical Faculty, 2) the Faculty of Science and Forestry, 3) the Faculty of Health Sciences, and 4) the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies. Under each faculty, there are several departments and schools. For instance, the Faculty of science and forestry has ten departments and a school. The only school under the faculty, school of computing, developed and founded the IMPDET program.

While the university aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by leading cutting edge global research, it has the mandate to act autonomously to achieve its strategic goals. Under the global challenge, the key interdisciplinary areas of focus by the university are as follows:

- Ageing, life style and health,
- Learning in digitised society,
- Cultural encounters, motilities and boarders, and
- Environmental change, sufficiency of natural resources.

From the four strategic areas of the university, Firstly, the university aim to meet the emerging global challenge by developing interventions to support the old age group. Secondly, the university aims to provide learners with the opportunities for learning according to their learning style or abilities through research. Several research domains within the university have taken up this area of research. Notable domains are the psychology and educational technology research domains. Thirdly, cultural encounters, motilities and cross boarders have increased due to trade liberations and partnerships. The aim of the university is to support these areas in terms of research. The idea is to help improve cultural interactions and integrations. The forth and last strategic plan is concerned with the environmental change and efficient use of the natural resources to support humanity. For instance, the university has been conducting research in climate change where a chunk of its resources has been committed.

2.2 International Multi-disciplinary PhD Degree Program (IMPDET)

IMPDET-LE (hereinafter IMPDET) is an acronym for the International Multidisciplinary PhD program in Educational Technology and Learning Environments. IMPDET program is operationalised under the auspices of the Educational Technology research group of the School of Computing of the University of Eastern Finland. The IMPDET program was launched in 2004 as a way of producing a doctoral graduate in Educational Technology and ICT for Development. With the IMPDET program, emphasis is placed on students from developing countries or emerging economies. As of now, the IMPDET program

is open to students who are willing to study online or on regular basis. However, the new direction of the IMPDET program is to set-up hubs in the other parts of the emerging economies.

The IMPDET program follows a blended learning mode, where most of the required courses are completed online. However, the program is designed in such a way that students are expected to visit the University of Eastern Finland for seminars in at least once a year. The university is intending to extend its hub to the developing economies instead of engaging students solely in the online and distance mode. Students are able to attain a doctoral degree in computer science and education from UEF after graduation.

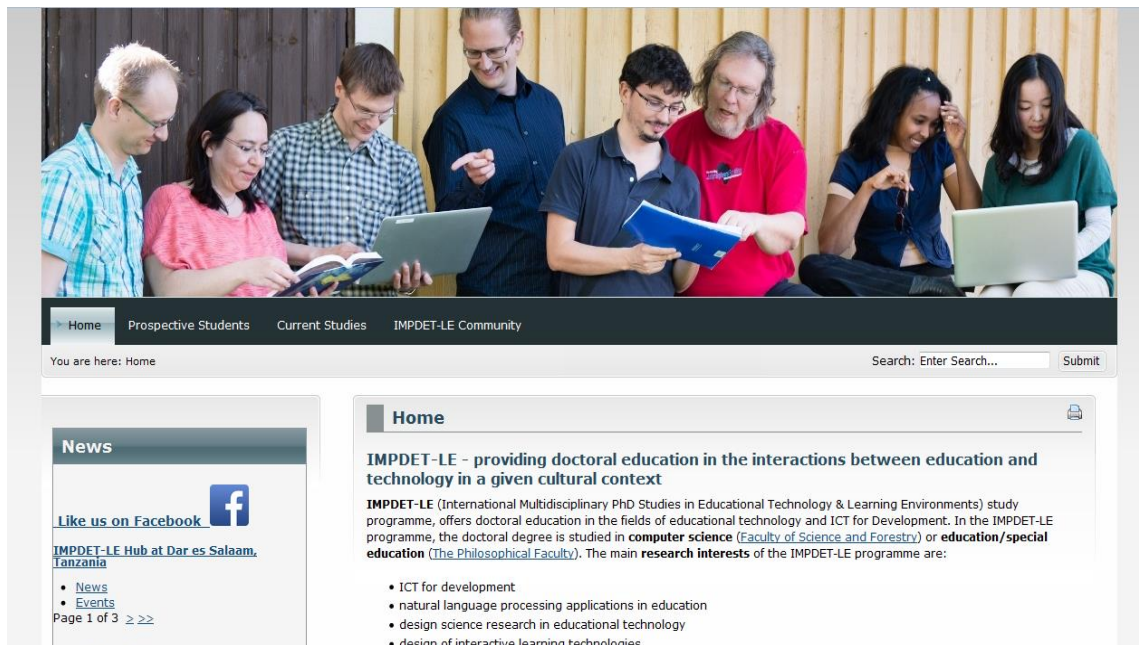


Figure 1. Webpage of IMPDET-LE (source: <http://www.impdet.org/>)

Figure 1 is the snapshot of the IMPDET page. In the figure are few of the teaching staff of the IMPDET program. The management structure regarding the line of authority of the IMPDET program is a flat one. There are only few layers of the chain of command. Decision making is decentralized since lecturers and supervisors are able to take independent decisions of their students. Figure 2 represents a course-grained managerial structure of the IMPDET program. To pre-empt is that, this researcher deduced based on the available data from the

secondary sources. This is because this researcher could not find any explicit Organography for the IMPDET.

From Figure 2, Lecturers/instructors and supervisors are found at the last but one bottom of the chart. While the Lecturers/instructors develop their own course content based on the syllabus. They also deliver the content, in terms of course work, to their students who are found at the bottom of the chart. The supervisors are responsible for supervising the thesis work of their students. However, there are part of the staff members who plays dual role as both lecturers and supervisors of the students. Currently, most of the course works are delivered from Finland (UEF) through a virtual learning environment.

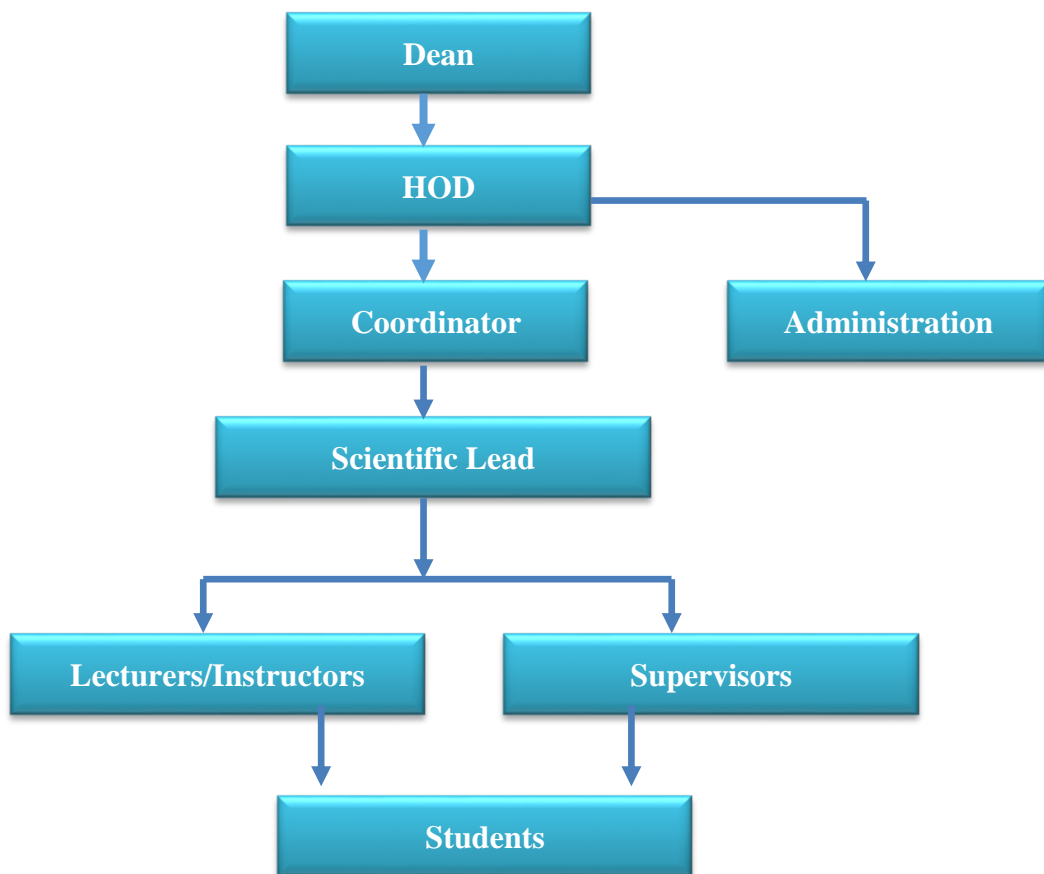


Figure 2. IMPDET Management Structure

As indicated in Figure 2, the lecturers and supervisors report to the *Scientific lead* who links-up them up to the IMPDET coordinator in matters concerning the program and academic issues. The major role of the scientific leader is to handle most of the research related activities in terms of appointing supervisors and

other responsibilities associated with students and lecturers. The scientific lead does that in consultation with the program coordinator who reports directly to the Head of Department (HOD) of the School of Computing. The HOD also reports the activities of the IMPDET program to the Dean of the Faculty of Science and Forestry. The administration is made up of several administrative staff who takes oversight responsibilities of the administrative works of IMPDET, such as clerical duties, finance and legal obligations.

2.3 IMPDET internationalisation approach

Before 2013, the management of the IMPDET program saw the need to extend the program to the door step of potential students by harbouring the idea of setting-up hubs in other countries, particularly in the developing economies. The ideation stage moved to the level where the management considered Tanzania as the first destination. This was borne out of the fact that UEF had history with Tanzania in terms of research. For instance, through the Lutheran church activities in Tanzania, UEF has established a research partnership with College of Business Education (Hereinafter CBE) in Tanzania. The establishment of the hub did not follow any internationalisation procedure as it was merely borne out of the already existing research partnership.

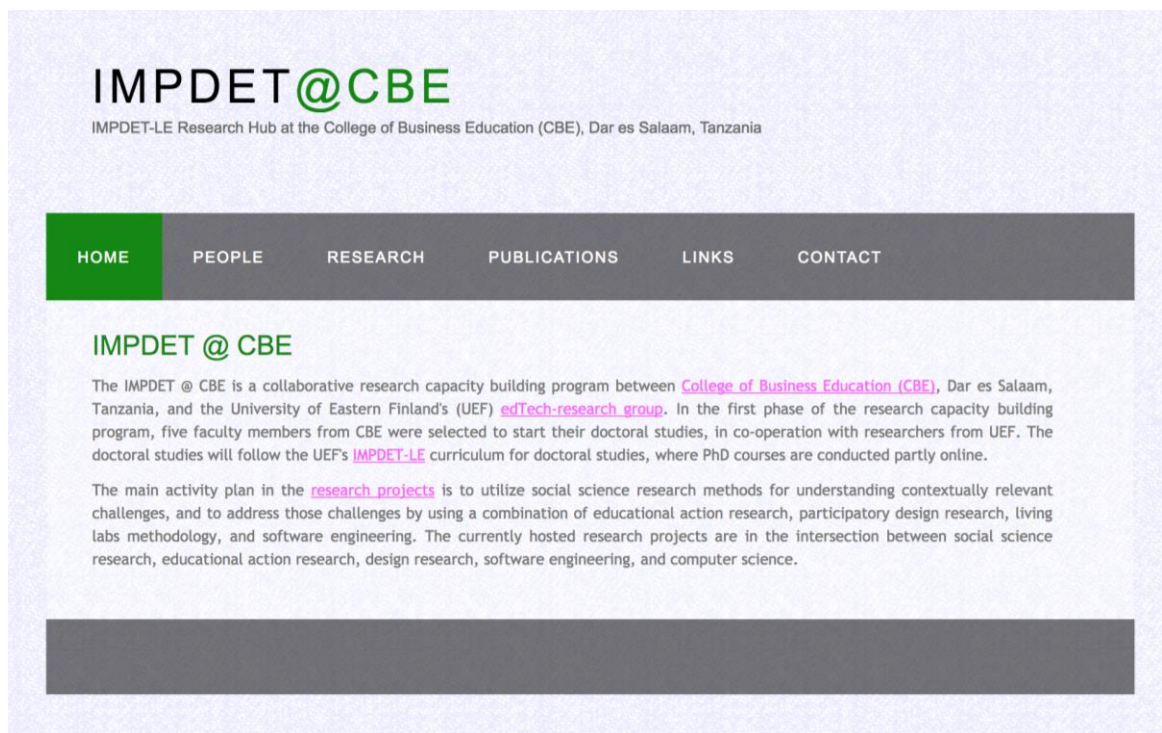


Figure 3. IMPDET CBE Webpage (IMPDET@CBE 2004)

Figure 3 is the snapshot of the IMPDET in CBE. The webpage of the CBE contains relevant information such as the research areas of the current students. The CBE and the IMPDET management team, which was then headed by Professor Erkki Sutinen now at the University of Turku, began to discuss a possible collaboration in research training hub in the Business College. The essence of the discussion was to collaborate and support the ongoing research and development initiatives in Tanzania. On the side of CBE, their interest was to enhance their research culture and improve their research impact in College of Business Education and Tanzania at large. This initiative was agreed and the negotiation ended successfully. The first agreement was signed in 2014 where the IMPDET hub was launched. “The main activity plan in the research projects is to utilize social science research methods for understanding contextually relevant challenges, and to address those challenges by using a combination of educational action research, participatory design research, living labs methodology, and software engineering. The currently hosted research projects are in the intersection between social science research, educational action research, design research, software engineering, and computer science” (IMPDET@CBE 2004.)

The IMPDET program coordinator recounted during the interview that, as the program kept rolling several research papers were published towards its success, challenges and sustainability. The findings from these published researches have prompted the idea of setting-up hubs in other countries. This has motivated this line of research to investigate the suitability and internal ability of IMPDET towards setting-up hubs in other parts of the emerging economies from the point of view of the International Market Assessment Opportunity Framework (IMOA).

3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section discusses existing literature that underlies the internationalisation strategies and approaches of the IMPDET program. Related works on the internationalisation of higher institutions, theories and challenges of internationalisation are discussed in this section as well.

3.1 Internationalisation of Higher Education

The definition of Internationalization is not definite as several disciplines have defined the concept to suit their intent and domain. From the point of view of international business management, internationalization can be viewed as the process of increasing involvement of enterprises in international markets (Mulliqi 2011). As this thesis focuses on the higher institutions, this section tilts the focus to the internationalisation of higher institutions.

Internationalisation of higher education is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education." (Knight 2003). While the internationalisation of higher education has existed for years, its development and expansion has seen a lot of research works. The expansion has an issue of negotiation on liberalizing trade in services through multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements (Vincent-Lancrin 2007). Given the complexities in the internationalisation of businesses due to the diversity of culture in different countries, a General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was established in 1995 (World bank report 1996, 2002). The agreement was developed to "corresponds to a set of multilateral rules governing international trade in services, which covers different internationally-traded services including education" (World bank report 2002, 12). With respect to the internationalisation of higher education, The GATS defined four modes of trade which are quoted from (World bank report 2002):

- Cross-border supply of the service where consumers stay in the country, examples of this mode are e-learning programmes, virtual universities, distance education.

- The second mode represents consumption abroad where the consumers cross the border; this includes full time studies abroad and exchange programmes.
- The third mode denotes the presence of a provider in another country in the form of branch campuses, twinning partnerships and franchising arrangements between universities. This is the mode by which IMPDET intends to adopt for extending into the foreign countries.
- the fourth mode refers to the presence of representatives in another country to provide the service, example of this mode is the mobility of professors, teachers, and researchers from one country to another.

Given the interrelated and interdependencies of countries, business organisations including higher education have taken advantage to extend their products and services across borders (Bashir 2007). Higher education, for instance, is one aspect that has benefited from international cooperation and trade liberalisation. Mulliqi (2011, 105) wrote that the “world economies have become increasingly interrelated; the free movement of capital, goods and service has grown the demand for international education.”

In Europe for instance, internationalisation of higher education began with the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (hereinafter ERAMUS) (Wit et al. 2015). Since the inception of ERASMUS, the program has created opportunities for many students, mostly from the emerging economies to study in Europe. The major issue of the ERASMUS program is that; beneficiary students often decline to go back to their respective countries to impart the knowledge that is acquired. What is more, programs in the ERAMUS universities, in most cases, are developed to solve challenges that are peculiar to the European economy. Developing a curriculum for international students ought to indulge the indigenous citizens in order to address a contextual challenge. For instance, street trading is a peculiar job phenomenon in most parts of the developing economies (Mbramba et al. 2016). Therefore, there is a need to augment the capacities of street traders in order for them to thrive in their chosen career path. Recognising this fact, the UK universities’ Higher Education Academy frameworks “are evidence-based and provides the higher education

sector with a national reference point to enable the institution to develop its own approach according to local circumstances as well as benchmarking performance” (Universities UK 2016, 73).

3.2 Theories of Internalisation of Businesses

As defined earlier regarding the internationalisation of businesses, several internationalization theories have been propounded to explain why there are international activities to explain international business activities. However, this section will define and explain the evolution and concept of internationalisation of business organisations with due cognisance to the higher education. Models of internationalisation explain the strategic process or approaches for a company or an institution to internationalise their service. While there are several other internationalisation models, two of the notable models are discussed in this section: Uppsala and Network models.

3.2.1 The Uppsala Model

Given the current trend of globalisation and continual agreements of trade liberalisation among nations, the study of internationalisation model has been intensified for easy internationalisations of businesses. The most notable and widely used model i.e. the *Uppsala model* has seen quite a lot of research regarding criticisms and improvement to meet the pace of technology. The development of the Uppsala model started by researchers from Uppsala University in Sweden (Johanson & Vahlne 1977). The researchers from Uppsala University conducted a study to develop models for firms to internationalise their products and services (Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul 1975; Johanson & Vahlne 1977). The initial model they developed met with criticism by themselves. Additionally, the researchers noted that the most existing theories at that time toned down the problems of cultural differences and ignored the internal foundations needed so that companies could handle international activities. As a result of this, the researchers improved and developed their own model to explain increased foreign dedication (Johanson & Vahlne 1990). The model was later named as Uppsala internationalisation model.

The Uppsala internationalization model was partly developed based on some empirical studies that were conducted in the case of four Finnish firms (Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul 1975). Based on the findings from the empirical study, Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) distinguished four steps in the expansion of firms. These four country-specific steps are as follows:

1. No regular export activities
2. Export via independent representatives (agents)
3. Sales subsidiary, and
4. Overseas production/manufacturing.

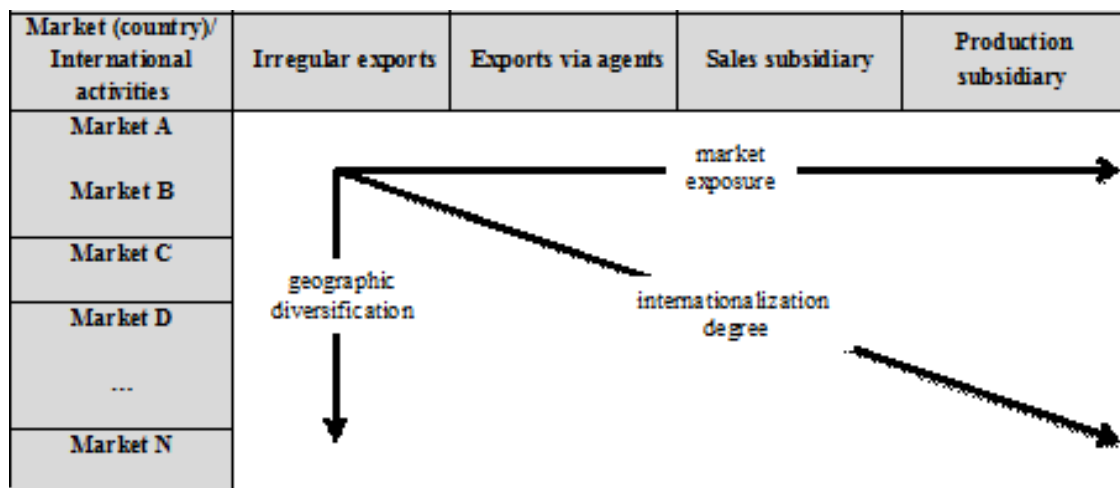


Figure 4. Uppsala Model of Internationalisation (Adapted from Forsgren & Johanson 1975)

Figure 4 is a contingency table indicating the various stages in the Uppsala model with respect to the internationalisation of firms. The figure shows a gradual entry of firms into the foreign market. In the figure, Johanson and Vahlne (1977) explained that companies should start their expansion in a psychic nearby market. The Psychic distance is "sum of factors preventing the flow of information from and to the market. Examples are differences in language, education, business practices, culture and industrial development" (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977, 24). This relates to the fact that international operations are dependent on the cultural proximity of the foreign host countries.

The initial stage of the model enhances firms' knowledge of the market and take more control of resources. Thereafter, gradually when the companies have become more experienced and acquired better resources, they would expand to the more distance market. As per the model, the initial penetration in the psychic distance gives the firms much experience for subsequent markets. The various stages of the Uppsala model are cyclic and iterative as the decision to move to the next stage is dependent on the market knowledge and commitment. Hence, increased market knowledge and commitment will translate into commitment decisions to increase business activities in the foreign market. Internationalisation is therefore an evolutionary process linked to learning (Johanson & Vahlne 1977). The deliverables from the first stage are carried onto the second stage of the Uppsala staged-model.

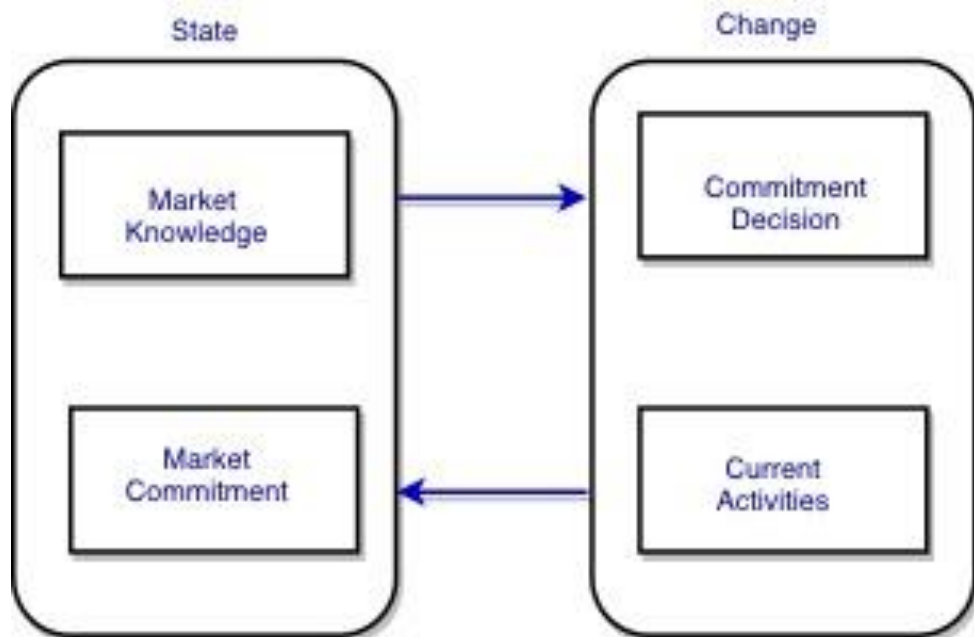


Figure 5. Internationalization-State and Change Aspects (Redrawn from Forsgren & Johanson 1975)

Based on Figure 4, the internationalisation model is characterised by *state* and *change* aspect of the model as indicated in Figure 5. The *state* aspect is the resources that a firm commit in the foreign market. This is to enable the firm to gain market knowledge and commitment decision, on the one hand. On the other hand, the change aspect is the outcome of the state aspect. As indicated with the arrows in Figure 5, the knowledge acquired from the initial commitment of resources will help the firm to decide on what market to commit further. The firm

can plan and execute the current activities needed to complete a cycle by committing to the market. In terms of the entry mode, Pandian and Sim (2002, 4) explained that “the incremental expansion of market commitment means that initial entry in a foreign market is typically some flow commitment mode and followed by progressively higher levels of market commitment. Similarly, commitment in terms of the level of ownerships in different markets is correlated with their psychic distance, with entry mode involving lower levels of ownership in markets which have greater psychic distance from the home country”.

There are researchers who have empirically studied the Uppsala model and supported the model in terms of its relevance for the foreign market entry. Most notable of these researchers are Bilkey and Tesar (1977), Cavusgil (1980), Davidson (1983), Welch and Loustarinen (1988), Erramilli (1991), among others. These researchers empirically studied the impact and relevance of the Uppsala model. Despite the relevance and widely used of the model, there have been several criticisms from researchers and practitioners in the internationalisation research. This goes to show that the Uppsala model is not devoid of challenges. Most notable of these earlier researchers are Sullivan and Bauerschmidt (1990), Benito and Gripsrud (1992) and Melin (1992). Researchers have argued that the Uppsala model is too deterministic and linear, lack of explanatory power (Andersen 1994). These criticisms make the model difficult to falsify. Sullivan and Bauerschmidt (1990) maintain that the interdependencies between countries was not considered in the formulation of the model.

Further, one of the current known critics of the Uppsala model is Hollensen (2007). Hollensen (2007) cautioned that the evolution and advancement of Information Technology has shifted the paradigm of internationalisation, where the researcher maintains that the Uppsala model does not fit well. With this caution, Hollensen (2007) reported that firms, nowadays, have more access to knowledge through Information Technology. In the researcher’s submission to this claim, the researcher reiterated that the Uppsala original internationalisation model was developed purely as internal capability and ignored the external factors such as market potential and competitive forces which have become more important in the global world.

3.2.2 The Network Model

The term *network* in business management is defined as the “set of two or more connected business relationships, in which each exchange relation is between firms that are conceptualised as collective actors” (Ju-Choi & Lee 1997, 2). With this definition, firms establishing a relation with other firms in foreign countries to market products and services literally characterise the concept of the network model in the point of view of internationalisation.

The internationalization network model was born in the late 1980s by Johansson and Mattsson (1988). The network model was as a result of further development in the Uppsala model. The Network model seeks to suggest that for a firm to internationalise, it first establishes network with similar firms in the foreign country. The success of the network model is largely dependent on the kind of relations existing with other network partners. As Evers and Knight (2008) reported, the survival of business environments or firms is dependent on their organizational relationships. This briefly explains the nature of the network model of internationalisation. What is more, Axelsson and Easton (1992, 5) wrote that “the way in which those in the entry market are utilized in the entry process becomes an important issue for research. It can also be assumed that, because of the cumulative nature of network processes, the sequential order of entry activities is important in research terms.”

Unlike the Uppsala model, the network model identifies and establishes a close collaboration with firms that share common objectives and willing to connect. The network model of internationalisation is often motivated by the fact that firms would have to establish commitment, trust and establish agreements. These features are partly a solid foundation to the successes of many businesses. Many firms capitalise on already existing partnership to form a network. The network could be firms from different countries that can pull resources together to produce common products or services.

The need for considering networks in the internationalization process was later supported by Coviello and Munro (1995) who confirmed a wider model by stating

that the network model offers a rich perspective into the international development pattern. The network approach is characterised by actors and their role in the network. Having a network orientation and, consequently, identifying the roles and strengths of the actors within it provides the firm with an understanding of possible constraints and opportunities for its operations (Axelsson & Johanson, 1992; Johanson & Vahlne 1992). Albeit the existing theories of internationalisation is encapsulated with its own characterises and processes, they can be combined in an internationalisation process to achieve a common goal. While the Uppsala model seeks to enter the foreign market by first considering the psychic distance, the network model does identify markets, irrespective of the location, that shares common goals for the formation of network partnership. Given the nature of the IMPDET program, the researcher has adopted the network model in the thesis work.

3.3 International Market Entry Strategy

Before a firm ventures or develops intent for internationalisation, it is imperative to develop internationalisation plans and strategies. The internationalisation strategies serve as guidelines for entry into the foreign market. However, Business market entry strategy comes with several factors that ought to be considered when expanding into the foreign markets. These factors may include the knowledge of internationalisation strategies, degree of availability of resources, situational uncertainty, mimicry entry mechanism and the process or service innovation (Gallego et al. 2009). These factors are represented diagrammatically in Figure 6.

As indicated in Figure 6, the knowledge of internationalisation strategy is the blue print for business success in the foreign market. Knowledge in the various internationalisation theories and the nature of the intended market helps to determine the mode of entry, timing of entry and the market selection approach.

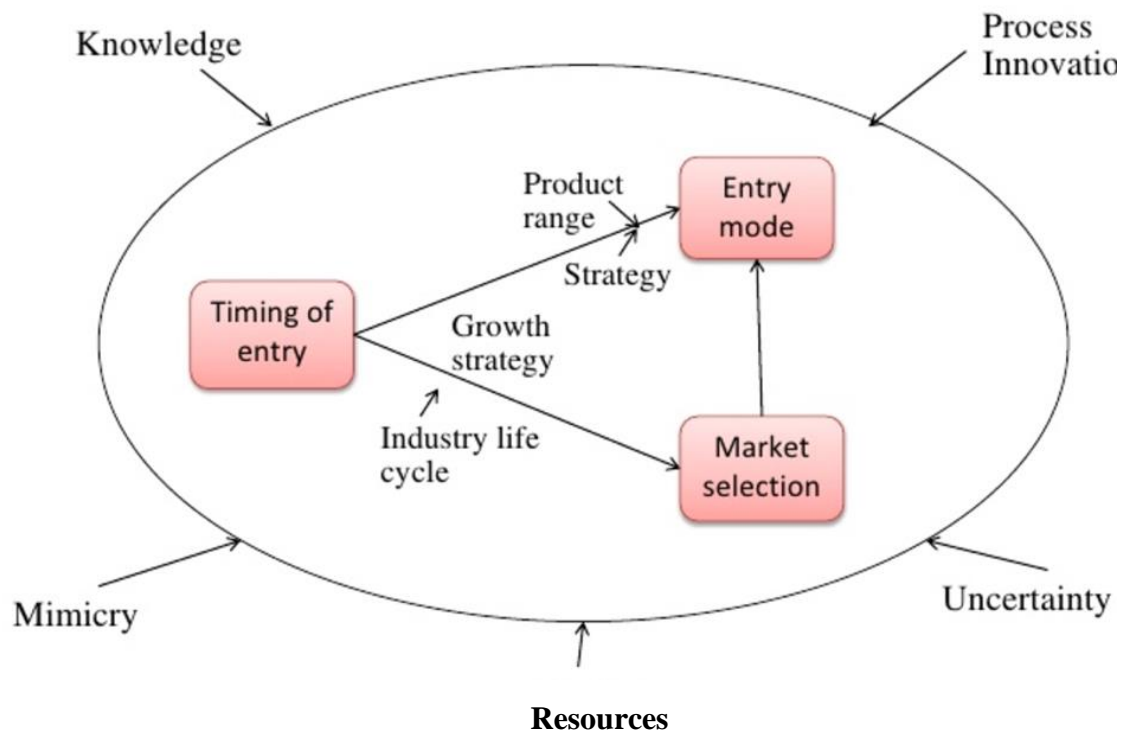


Figure 6. Factors Determining Risk Level of Internationalisation Strategy

Firms that ought to be internationalised is required to possess the needed and suitable resources. Hence, the degree of availability of resources determines where and how to enter the foreign market. Given that many companies have emerged and competing for the same customers, many have updated their resources in order to gain advantage in the foreign market. For instance, the evolution of the Information Technology resources has provided flexibilities for the businesses to evaluate their customers' touchpoints for aiding business decisions. This is through business intelligence. Further, the availability of the competent staff, suitability of the product and service to the foreign market are key resources for internationalisation.

Situational uncertainty during the internationalisation process can not be overlooked. This should be considered a risk. For a firm to compete well in the market, it is expected that provisions are made to contain uncertain situations. The initial entry process may look certain for market entry. However, unexpected happenings could jeopardise the entire internationalisation process. For instance, the legal framework of a foreign country may be considered suitable for entry, but

changes in legal framework in the foreign country may pose a threat to the firm's survival. In the subsequent subsections, two main entry strategies are discussed: Waterfall and sprinkler entry strategies.

3.3.1 Waterfall Strategy

The waterfall model is the most widely used entry strategy. As the name implies, it involves the entry into the international market sequentially but eventually spread across different countries with time. Researchers have explained that the waterfall model avoids massive risk when there are unexpected eventualities, given situational uncertainty in the international market. Figure 7 shows the flow nature of the waterfall model.

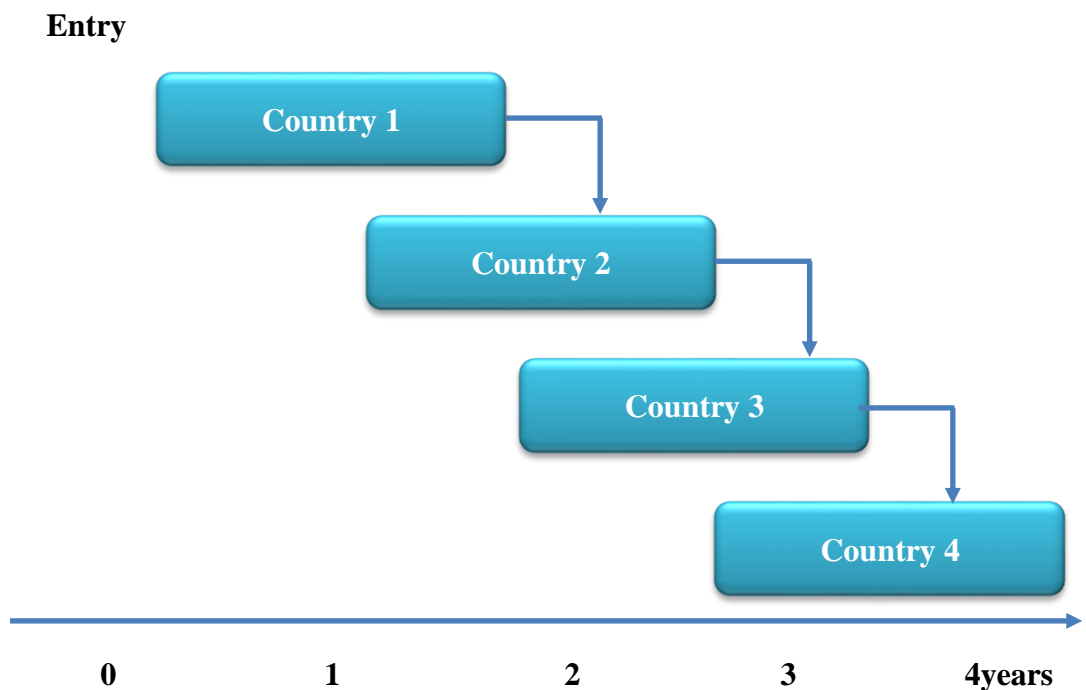


Figure 7. Waterfall Strategy for Market Entry

With the waterfall model, a firm first enters a new market and establishes an identity in the same. Kar (2011, 1) believe that "establishing an identity involves estimation of potential market size and revenue patterns, identification of target segment, creation of brand awareness, identification and creation of possible distribution channels and finally formulation and implementation of sales strategy." Basically, each stage in the model is dependent on the type of product or the services of the firms. In a higher education for instance, institution through

network partners assesses the possibility of extending the partnership into setting-up institutions to co-train students.

In this strategy, once a firm is able to successfully establish identity for their product or service in the international market, the same process could be replicated in another market, which is largely dependent on the situation in the new market. With this model, learning becomes iterative which provide opportunity for refinement. Typically, products with a longer product life-cycle or in the maturity phase would follow a Waterfall Strategy, for expansion into new markets.

3.3.2 Sprinkler Strategy

Unlike the waterfall model in Figure 7, the sprinkler model seeks to enter several international markets simultaneously. This process is riskier than the waterfall model as opined in Section 3.1.1. Nevertheless, by Multiple simultaneous market entries in foreign markets, this allows for a more rapid development of international markets. Figure 8 shows the sprinkler model that takes a single year to enter four different countries.

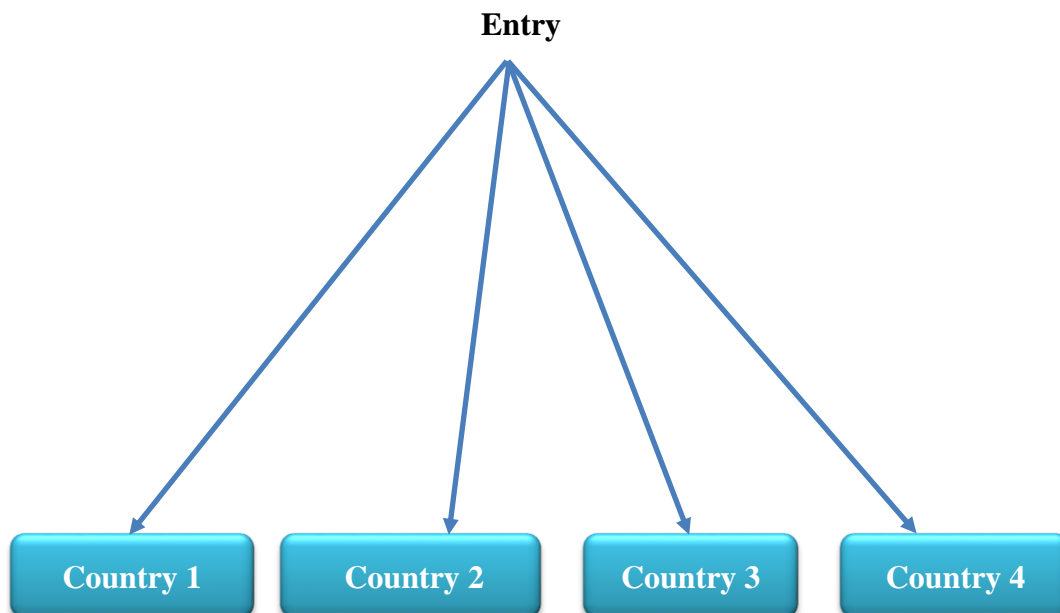


Figure 8. Sprinkler Strategy for Market Entry

In the Figure 8, the sprinkler model takes much time and resources since firms enters several markets simultaneously. This model is suitable for products or services with shorter life cycle. With the internationalisation of higher education, it is imperative to have a shorter period for providing education while subjecting the process to intermittent renewal. Experiences from market responses are limited to individual markets and the same are not replicated in the other markets.

3.4 Challenges of Internationalisation of Higher Institutions

Despite the fact that internationalization of higher institutions holds greater potentials for providing opportunities for people to access higher education from diverse context, its implementation is fraught with challenges that are dependent on the context and the nature of internationalisation strategies. This section reviews some existing challenges that have bedevilled the internationalisation of higher education.

The fact that Globalization has provided opportunities for internationalization of higher education, it still possesses some challenges to the local or domestic higher institutions. The domestic institutions have to compete with the foreign counterparts for students' enrolment. Apparently, in most of the developed economies, the domestic higher institutions have the advantage over the foreign higher institutions in terms of trust, costs of tuition, among others. However, in the developing economies, such as Africa, many students prefer to take degree certificates from the foreign institutions, especially those institutions that have their roots from the developed economies. The situation is stemmed from the fact that many of the prospective students perceive foreign institutions to have adequate resources to equip them for the market. In addition, some students believe that, with the certificate from the foreign institutions, one has the easiest opportunity to secure jobs anywhere compared with the locally awarded certificates.

Considerable research has been conducted to prove that most of the profit making internationalized higher institutions are fraught with the challenge of students' sustainability. This problem usually occurs when students are not able to cater for their tuitions. These situations are common in the developing

economies. Nevertheless, the public perception that the developing economies are poor is, most cases, falsified. Many of the people hailing from these developing economies are able to fund students to study developed economies.

What makes the foreign institutions difficult for many students enrol is the value in the variation currencies, i.e. exchange rate and its fluctuations with time. Usually, these mishaps affect the cost of tuition in most of the internationalised institutions. In internationalised institutions, the inability to get students for sustaining the program may be due to the competition from other foreign and domestic intuitions. Irrespective of whether a higher institution is for profit making or not, there is always a competition regarding the enrolment of students. Innovative ways of doing things are the means gain competitive advantages in the markets.

The goal of extending higher institutions to the foreign markets is to help produce human resources capable of solving societal problems (Grinkevich & Shabanova 2016). However, many of the existing internationalized higher institutions have poor management, and as well lacking technical strategies. Many of these higher institutions do not consider the problems that are peculiar to the foreign environment when taking a decision to internationalized. Curriculums are not developed to suit the context of the respective foreign market. Consequently, the poor management and technical strategies could lead to sheer weakness in competing with other higher institutions with well-developed strategies.

Cultural integration is one challenge that has bedevilled the higher educations in terms of their internationalization activities into the foreign market. Regarding this cultural integration, Grinkevich and Shabanova (2016) wrote in their blog that “International students acquire unique sets of skills and the added value of their diverse cultural background can be hugely beneficial to the community within the university and outside it. However, community integration is perhaps the trickiest challenge. The university as an institution can only create the conditions in which those who work in the university feel free and welcome. It cannot intervene further than that into how the academic community lives” (Granados 2015). Nevertheless, the institutions are expected to work towards adapting to the

environment by meeting the demands of the society. The European Union, for example, has stressed that “higher education must change and adapt to economic and social needs, that institutional change is essential to educational innovation, and that information and communication technologies must form part of the teaching and learning process” (Granados 2015, 4).

The internationalised higher institutions in most of the foreign countries are confronted with changes in the legal, political and economical situations of the foreign countries. Over a period, changes in these situations could affect the effective running of the higher institutions. For example, changes in the tax system of a foreign country correspondingly affects the tuition fees and other costs of running higher institutions.

In recent times, globalisation and trade liberalisations in many parts of the world has provided opportunity for many firms to expand their market operations. However, the internationalisation process, in many countries, is fraught with the challenge of many firms struggling to estimate the demand for products or services, especially the emerging economies where record keeping is poor. For instance, a country such as Ghana, where the researcher hails, do not have a national social identification system to track its own citizenry. In this respect, the emerging economies usually lack the reliable data to provide the needed platform for firms to be internationalised. Data is central in equipping managers to explore opportunities for internationalisation.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is empirically conducted and backed by review of relevant domain-specific literature. Therefore, selected stakeholders of the IMPDET program were made to participate in the thesis process. Hence, this section discusses the participants' demography, data collection procedure, research approach and the method of data analysis.

4.1 Participants and Data Collection

Since this study was concerned with an academic institution, researchers, administrators and students were involved in this process. Two types of sources of data were used in the study: primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data sources used two questionnaires and an interview while existing article publications regarding the IMPDET program, blog posts and webpages were the secondary sources of data used in this study. The reason for the data collection is to ascertain the suitability and the internal abilities of the IMPDET program for internationalisation. The findings were considered in the proposition of the internationalisation strategies for IMPDET.

Two different kinds of questionnaires were developed. The questionnaires were developed and administered to selected participants to respond. The appendix 1 was developed to elicit responses from the IMPDET management while Appendix 2 was given to the selected students to respond. The questionnaires contained both open- and close-ended questions. This was to diversify the findings by giving credence to both qualitative and quantitative methods. While the open-ended part allowed the participants to subjectively respond, the close-ended part used a 5-point Likert scale with the following options: 5 – strongly agreed, 4 – Agreed, 3 – neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 – Strongly disagree

Given the nature of this study and the fact that secondary sources of data were used, thirteen participants responded to questionnaires. The number of the participants that were involved in the study is reasonably satisfactory.

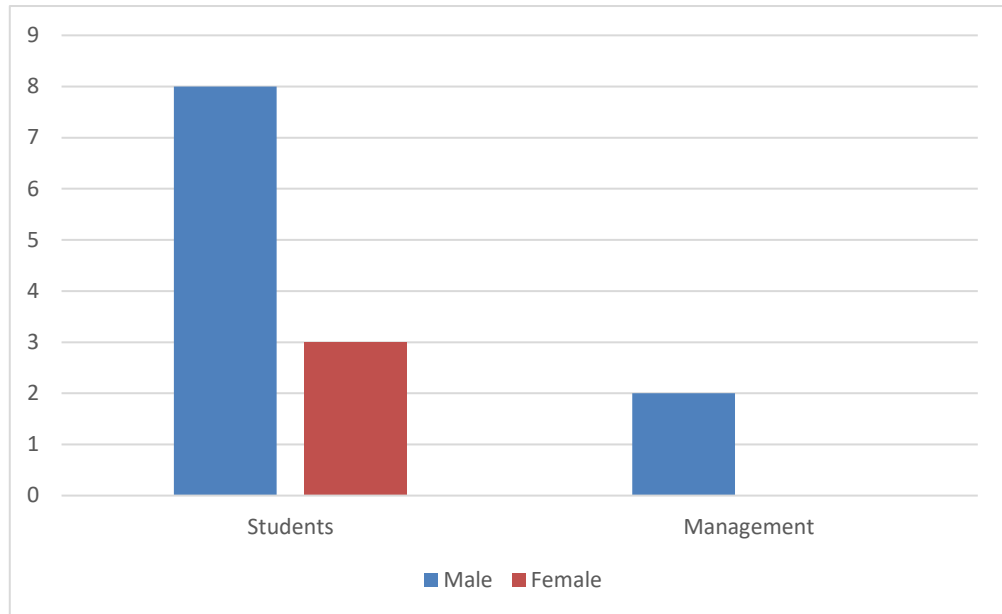


Figure 9. Participants Representation According to Gender

Figure 9 shows the participants with regards to their gender. As the figure shows, students were more in numbers than the management who were made up of the program coordinator and one other staff member. The management who responded to the questionnaire had in-depth knowledge about the IMPDET program.

4.2 Research Approach and Process

This research adopts the International Market Opportunity Assessment (IMOA) model. The various stages of the IMOA, as indicated in Figure 10, was adequately explored with several other models that are discussed in the subsequent sections. The IMOA is often used interchangeably to also refer to as the Global Market Opportunity Assessment (GMOA) depending on the context i.e. Internationalisation or globalisation, on which the term is used. International Market Opportunity Assessment is therefore referred to as “a favourable combination of circumstances, locations, or timing that offers prospects for exporting, investing, sourcing, or partnering in foreign markets” (Cavusgil & Riesenberger 2009, 365).

The opportunities are invariably diverse where a firm’s interest is based on the assessment of its internal abilities “to sell products and services; establish

factories or other production facilities to produce its offerings more competently or more cost-effectively; procure raw materials, components, or services of lower cost or superior quality; or enter into collaborative arrangements with foreign partners” (Cavusgil & Riesenberger 2009, 364).

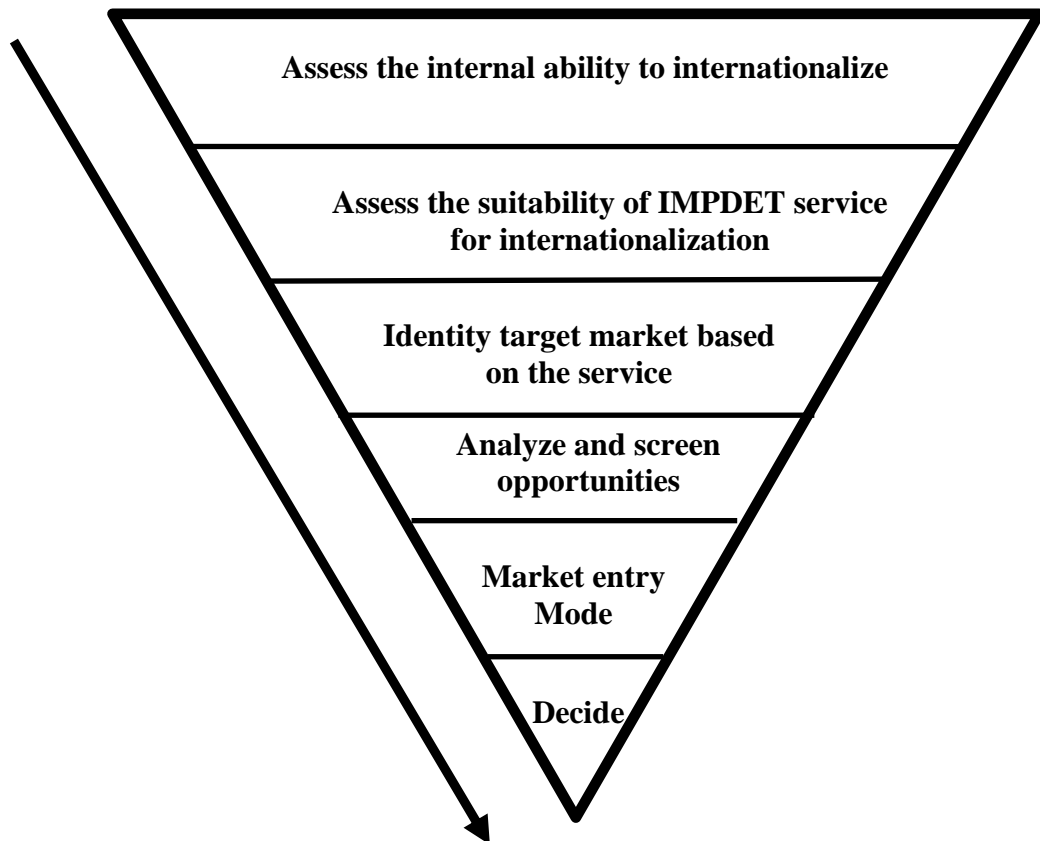


Figure 10. International market opportunity assessment framework

As indicated in Figure 10, the IMOA is made up of six steps. Each step requires a different strategic approach to achieve its goal. At every stage in the figure, decisions are expected to be made. These formative decisions are vital to the success of firms. The last component of the model, i.e. decide, is the aggregated or summative decision that a firm need to make before practically entering the foreign market. Section 6 of this thesis have delved into how this IMOA framework can be adopted to internationalise the IMPDET program.

The IMOA process takes a holistic approach of helping to understand, and devising strategies for a firm to thrive in the international market. The IMOA process encompasses the following systematically areas which are considered in Section 5, as it forms the central framework of this thesis. Other

internationalization frameworks such as the PESTEL, VRIO, among others are adopted to explore the opportunities and strategies for IMPDET to thrive. Figure 10 illustrates a top down process of the IMOA as it applied to the IMPDET program.

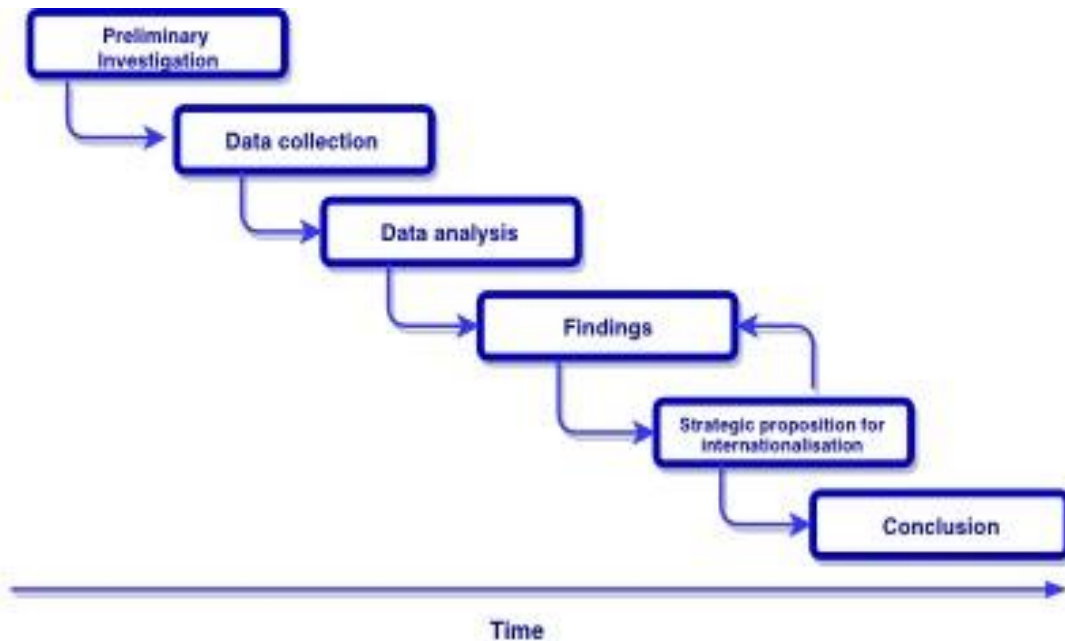


Figure 11. The Research Process

The entire process of this research is shown in Figure 11. In the figure, it can be seen that a preliminary investigation was conducted to ascertain the feasibility of this study. Once this researcher decided to carry out this project, data was collected and analysed. The findings from analysing the data were considered in the proposition of the strategic model for the internationalization of the IMPDET program, which are captured in the subsequent sections.

4.3 Method of Data Analysis

Given the nature of this thesis work and the fact that secondary sources of data were used, the sample participants of this study are small as stated in Section 4.2. For this reason, the content of the open-ended part of the responses were analysed from the point of view of using qualitative research approach, i.e. content analysis. The analysis of the data was backed by some descriptive statistical analysis of the close-ended data, hence a mixed research method.

According to Creswell and Clark (2007), mixed methods technique encompasses the collection and analysis of data from several sources, such as both the open- and close-ended responses.

With regard to the descriptive analysis of the data, the researcher computed for the measures of central tendencies where mean and standard deviations were computed. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was the tool that aided in the descriptive analysis of the collected data. However, the content of the secondary sources of data was analysed using discourse analysis technique. This was done manually.

5 FINDINGS FROM THE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS

Having analysed the content of the data collected from the participants, this section reports the findings. The findings from the participants aided the proposition of the internationalisation strategies for IMPDET. This was based on the understanding of the case institution. Sections 5.1 and 5.2 provide details of the findings regarding the internal ability and suitability of the IMPDET program for internationalisation.

5.1 Internal Abilities of IMPDET for Internationalization

The internal ability of a firm to internationalise is a core component of the IMOA framework. Starting IMPDET program in other countries (internationalisation) comes with several benefits and risks as this have been discussed in the earlier sections. As this researcher deduced, four key objectives regarding the management interests to internationalise the IMPDET program were observed and are as follows:

- To provide skilled technologists and researchers needed to manage the increasingly needs of Africa as the continent keeps growing.
- To bridge the gap between the developed and the developing countries through technology (ICT).
- To help developing countries grow their own technology cultures. This will help avoid outsourcing of technologies from abroad.

There are few lecturers in Africa who have PhDs in Computer Science and most of these lecturers are Master's degree holders. Their motivation is to help produce more capable Doctors to man the sector. The aforementioned intent and objectives were deduced from the secondary data accessed by the researcher during the data collection. However, from the data collected from the program management, the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), as part of its global strategic plan, is intending to reach out as many students as possible, thereby making the university a dominant institution for all and sundry to yearn to study.

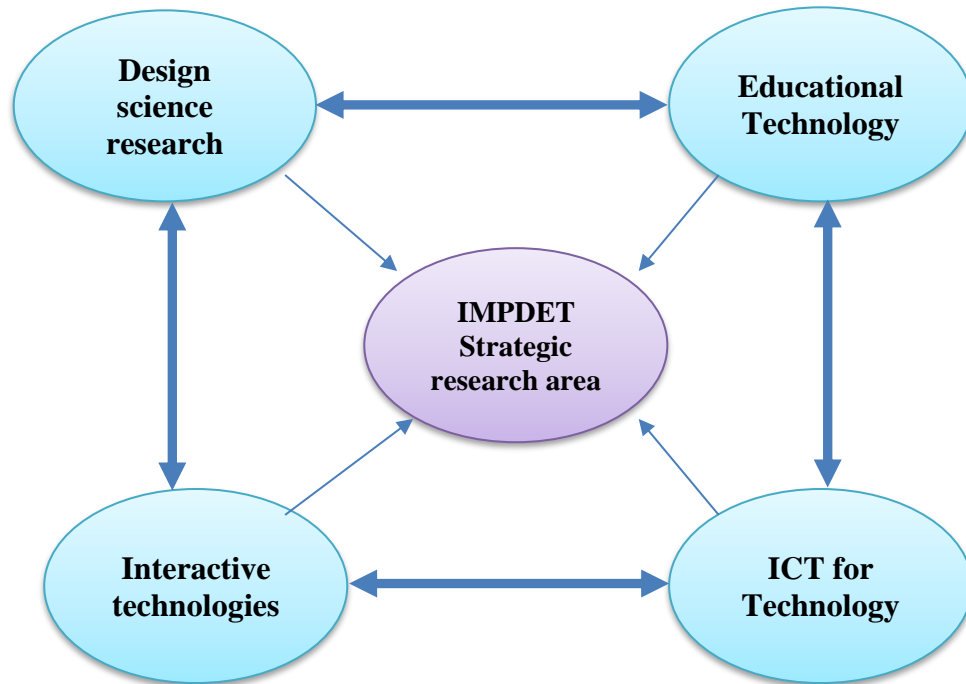


Figure 12. Strategic Research Area of IMPDET Program

In terms of the specific areas of research, IMPDET has four key areas of research: Educational technology, ICT for development, Design science research and Interactive technologies. This can be visualized in Figure 12. From the figure, each of the areas of research can be combined to address a global challenge or problem.

5.1.1 Staff Perspective of Internationalising of IMPDET

From the data, the School of Computing of the university has the needed resources, such as qualified lecturers to roll-out the program to some limited number other countries. To add is that the management were emphatic about the possibility of sourcing funding from the Government to complement their effort of internationalising the program. Nevertheless, this researcher deduced that once there is agreement to set-up hubs in any countries, the students, through the host university bear some of the cost to cover administrative expenses. This cost payment by potential students is expected to be transacted between the host university and the students. This is because Finland does not, in principle, charge tuition fee for Post-graduate education.

This situation, as discussed in Section 2.3, is what is applied in the already existing hub in the College of Business Education in Tanzania. This is what one of the management members said regarding their current ongoing hub in the College of Business Education in Tanzania.

“There is no specific funding for overall running of the studies. The School of Computing contributes to the studies via paying my salary and other staff members involved in the studies. We have an agreement with College of Business Education regarding the doctoral training hub in Tanzania. We have agreed that they will pay certain sum for the running of the hub and supervision of the doctoral students in the hub”

By following up on the rationale for the setting-up of the international hub in the College of Business Education in Tanzania, the researcher enquired from the management what was the motivation towards establishing a PhD hub in Tanzania. This is what one of the management members said regarding their motivation.

“We were able to find a partner (College of Business Education) that were keen on improving their research cultures via doctoral training. We were then able to come to an agreement for establishing the first doctoral training hub in Tanzania. We are also interested to establish similar collaboration with other institutions around the world.”

From the quote, it can be deduced that the management is open and willing to expand its operations in the other parts of the developing economies. It was on this note that the researcher investigated the internal abilities of IMPDET for the developing economies. The management agreed that the university has the internal capabilities to operate anywhere in the developing economies.

The management further explained that though the structure of the IMPDET program is flat, they are able to use the limited resources available at their disposal to coordinate the activities of the IMPDET program. For instance, the international office of UEF provides assistance when the need arises. However,

rolling out the IMPDET program into other countries by entering one country at a time (waterfall model). The other resources that are needed to roll out the IMPDET program can, at the initial stages, be afforded by the School of Computing while working out to secure funding externally (including host university) to support the program. This was deduced on the basis of the data collected. Though this assertion is doubtful for an institution to internationalise, the management were emphatic about their willingness for internationalisation.

Among the notable resources of UEF's MPDET program, which is essential for internationalisation is the human resources, informational and technological resources, among other resources. As this study is not to analyse the financial statement of IMPDET, this researcher aimed at analysing to establish whether the university has enough resources to thrive and outperform potential competitors in the foreign countries. In the nutshell, the management of IMPDET is motivated to internationalise the program because it aims at helping the developing economies to solve their own challenges through research. The management viewed most of the developing economies to have poor research output that needs the support of well-established higher institutions. This is what one of the management member said:

“The main reason is that we want to contribute to the development of so called developing countries via doctoral training. We see that many higher education institutions, for example in Africa, has very poor research outputs. Also we believe that improvement of the research will also contribute to the wider development of the country.”

5.1.2 Students Perception of the Internal Abilities of IMPDET

Table 1 shows the perception of existing PhD students from the point of view of the abilities of UEF to internationalise the MPDET program. This data was collected to ascertain whether there exist internal challenges that would impede the effective internationalisation of the IMPDET program. These challenges could be diverse from the perspective of the students and management.

Table 1. Students View on the Availability of Resources

	Item	\bar{x}	SD
1.	I am able to easily access any resources from the university that is relevant for my studies.	4.3	1.3
2.	My supervisor (s) and school administrators always get back to me whenever I send my concerns.	3.5	0.7
3.	The university uses the state of the art ICT infrastructure for teaching and learning.	4.3	1.0
4.	The tuition-free nature of the program attracted me to join this PhD program.	3.6	0.4
5.	The course content of the program is suitable for me as a PhD student.	4.5	1.5

Where \bar{x} is mean and SD is standard deviation.

From the perspective of the students, results shown in the descriptive statistical Table 1, majority of the student participants ($\bar{x} = 4.3$, $SD = 1.3$) do not have any problem assessing the university resources for their studies. While the existing students do need the support of their supervisors for successful PhD studies, majority of the students agreed ($\bar{x} = 3.5$, $SD = 0.7$) that their appointed supervisors attend to them and do not have much challenges dealing with them. To buttress this point, the management revealed that in the case of their existing hub in the College of Business Education, supervisors of the students intermittently visit the hub to have face-to-face interaction with their students. The minority of the students who were not in agreement maintained that their supervisors, sometimes, take a longer time to respond to them. Additionally, the minority of the participants reported lack of intensive supervision as the weakness of the IMPDET program. This is what two of the students said:

“One of the weakness of IMPDET program is lack of intensive supervision and sometimes lack of quick responses and feedback from supervisors”

“The program must increase the rate of supervision and intensive communication from supervisors. The rest of things are ok, the program is well designed.”

While the aforementioned quotations represent the minority view of the students, much effort is needed to improve the supervision work, thereby augmenting the suitability of the program for internationalisation. The course content of the IMPDET program, according to the students, is suitable for awarding one with a PhD degree ($\bar{x} = 4.5$, $SD = 1.5$).

Regarding the ICT infrastructure, majority of the students agreed that the IMPDET program uses state of the art ICT infrastructure to connect with students ($\bar{x} = 4.3$, $SD = 1.0$). Notable infrastructure that the university uses in its activities include Adobe connect virtual learning platform and MOODLE. However, the students expressed some concerns about the difference in the communicational accent. Some students expressed their difficulties in understanding some of the lecturers though the IMPDET program is purely conducted in English. This is what one of the students said:

“Communication is sometimes a problem - I think that we sometimes misunderstand one another due to the language barrier.”

Additionally, students agreed that the program is suitable for solving societal problems from the point of view of the developing economies. Students revealed that the tuition-free nature of the program was a motivation for them to enrol in the program. To ascertain, therefore, the suitability of the program other than the students being motivated by the tuition-free nature of the program, this researcher prodded further with open-ended questions. Students were emphatic that though the tuition-free nature of the program was a motivating factor, the program is suitable and competitive enough to produce high quality doctors.

5.2 Suitability of IMPDET Program for Internationalisation

Several internal and external factors need to be considered when taken decision to internationalize higher institutions. Some factors that would immediately affect the ease of internationalisation are organisational factors such as the internal resources and capabilities, industrial factors and institutional factors such as the governing rules and laws. In this section, this researcher considers the internal

factors of the organisation and analyses the suitability of the IMPDET for the developing economies. By assessing the IMPDET program from the point of view of the resource-based approach, Zahra and George's (2002) identified three key factors that have extensive effects on internationalizing a company. These factors are top management team, specifics of the firm and the internal resources. The subsections discuss systematically according to these internal factors.

5.2.1 Management Team and Students' perception

This is considered as the key part of evaluating the suitability of higher institutions for the foreign market. The reason is because when all other factors or strategies have been accomplished, a firm may still fail in its bid to internationalize due to the following reasons:

- When the assessment to move to a host country is not perfectly carried out i.e. bounded rationality.
- When wrong judgement is made on available information i.e. bounded reliability.

Both reasons are human errors. Management's knowledge and experience, especially international work experience, international education, background and vision can directly influence the success or failure of the internationalisation process. Internationalising the IMPDET program requires a strong management team that have acquired experience over the years through international activities.

From what this researcher deduced, the management and the working staff of the IMPDET program have good experience working internationally given that many of them have been collaborating in research with other universities in the developing economies such as Africa. Nevertheless, this researcher recommends the management to institute an international office that will ensure the smooth implementation of the proposed strategies in this study. This researcher has found, based on experience and the data, that the internal

resources can support the program, and as well have good advantage for internationalising the IMPDET program.

As this researcher enquired about the number of students who have passed out. The management reiterated that since the inception of the program 23 students have so far graduated, with the first student passing out in 2007. The management emphasized that the first student who graduated from the program did it remotely. The management further reiterated that many students have been applying enrolment into the program but only few students are admitted yearly. Currently, more than 30 doctoral students from over 15 different countries are enrolled in the program.

5.2.2 Specifics of the IMPDET Program and its Internal Resources

The age, location and size of the program are considered under this factor. As explained earlier in this thesis, the IMPDET program is ran by the University of Eastern Finland. Finland is touted as one country with the best or among the best educational system in the world. Many countries have visited Finland to under study their educational system in order to replicate their practices in their respective countries. The location and the internationally recognised educational system projects the IMPDET program for quality students. Additionally, the tuition-free nature of the post-graduate studies in Finland makes the IMPDET program suitable place for many students as this thesis has revealed earlier.

In this thesis work, the researcher employed the VRIO framework to ascertain the competitive advantage of the IMPDET program. VRIO is an acronym, where V is VALUABLE, R is RARE, I is IMITABLE and O is ORGANISED. This researcher examines IMPDET specific advantage using the VRIO framework. This is based on the data gathered from the participants. The VRIO framework is used to determine the competitive potential of a firm, that is, firm's specific advantage (FSA) by considering the following questions:

- Are the resources VALUABLE?
- Are the resources RARE?

- Are the resources easily IMITABLE?
- And Are the resources well ORGANISED to convert the resources into value?

Table 2. FSA using VRIO Framework

	Value	Rarity	Imitability	Organization	Competitiveness
Management team	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Advantage
Internal Resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good Advantage
Specifics of the Firm	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good Advantage

where weak advantage is the lowest and the highest is good advantage

Generally, the results in Table 2 indicates that the IMPDET program is valuable for tackling the intended challenges associated with the higher institutions in the emerging economies. As this researcher has found and reported earlier, the university may have resources deem necessary to internationalize the program, the management maintains that the limited resources at their disposal can be harnessed for internationalising the program if adequate strategies are put in place.

As indicated in Table 2, the university do not find it difficult to imitate, and will not unnecessary incur cost disadvantage in trying to obtain, develop, or duplicate their resource or capabilities at their disposal. From the organisation perspective in the VRIO framework, the university is noted to be well organized, ready, and will be able to exploit their resource or capability for extending its services to the developing economies. In the nutshell, this thesis has revealed that the university's IMPDET program would hold competitive advantage in the foreign settings. This is based on the data and partly the experience of the researcher who works with the department.

As indicated in Table 3, most of the students agreed ($\bar{x} = 4.5$, $SD = 1.2$) that IMPDET is well packaged in dealing with or tackling the challenges associated with their settings. While many of the higher institutions in the developing economies operate because on the basis of making profit, regardless of the quality, the student participants agreed ($\bar{x} = 3.9$, $SD = 1.0$) that the University of Eastern Finland has qualified and competent teaching and management

professionals for the IMPDET Program. This was apparent in that majority of the students have not regretted in enrolling into the IMPDET program as indicated in Table 3. The finding is evident from the point of view of the current students that the IMPDET is well packaged and suitable for setting its hubs in the various developing economies.

Table 3. Students View on the Suitability of the IMPDET Program

	Item	\bar{x}	SD
1.	The university (IMPDET) run courses that are of high relevance to my settings.	4.5	1.2
2.	The university has qualified academic professionals to manage and train us (IMPDET students)..	3.9	1.0
3.	I have regretted to enrol in this IMPDET program as it is not well packaged to appeal to prospective students.	1.2	0.9
4.	The required number of task require to be awarded with the PhD degree is worth it.	3.8	1.4
5	I am satisfy in taken the IMPDET courses remotely through the virtual learning platforms.	1.7	1.1

What is more, the student participants agreed that the task required to obtain a PhD degree through the IMPDET program is satisfactory ($\bar{x} = 3.8$, $SD = 1.4$). Nevertheless, the students were not satisfied on taken all the courses remotely ($\bar{x} = 3.8$, $SD = 1.4$). This finding was to be expected as research has shown that less face-to-face contact in online sessions reduce students learning output and non-linear behaviour towards learning.

Table 4. SWOT Analysis of IMPDET Program

SWOT ANALYSIS		
	Strength	Weakness
Internally Driven	S1: Dedicated and motivated staff S2: International experience S3: Cost advantage through cheap labour S4: Tuition-free nature of the program	W1: Competition from the domestic and other foreign institutions W2: Narrow scope in research area W3: Lack of intensive supervision
	Opportunity	Threats
External Driven	O1: Rapidly growing demand for PhDs in the developing economies, such as Africa O2: Possibility to source external funding. O3: Large pool of available prospective students.	T1: Intense global competition T2: Government possible failure to sponsor T3: Double taxation in host and home country. T1: Political, social, economical, environmental and legal challenge from the host university.

From the point of view of this findings, Table 4 represents the SWOT analysis of the IMPDET's readiness for internationalisation. As indicated in the table, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the IMPDET program has been summarised. This summarisation is based on the analysis of the data by this researcher.

6 INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGIES FOR IMPDET PROGRAM

In this section, the strategies for the IMPDET to internationalise are proposed. The strategies are proposed which is partly based on the findings from analysing the suitability and internal abilities of IMPDET in Section 5. The subsequent subsections take into account the Target Market Assessment Strategy, Opportunity Screening opportunity, Market Entry Strategy and the Decision for the entry into the foreign market.

6.1 Target Market Assessment Strategy

Having analysed the data collected from the participants, this researcher found that IMPDET has already set-up a hub in the College of Business Education in Tanzania. Details of this are discussed earlier in Section 2.3. The agreement that led to the setting-up of the hub in Tanzania was merely based on the extension of the cooperation existing between the two universities. The proposition of the strategic decision for the IMPDET program is generally discussed rather than narrowing to a particular context. Given the timeline of this thesis, this researcher has only outline the processes of adopting of the PESTEL framework toward expanding IMPDET to the international market. Another reason is that the implementation of this framework requires some financial and other resources to execute.

Based on the core business operations and the various models of the IMPDET program, this researcher recommends the use of the PESTEL framework to monitor and screen the external market before penetration. The term PESTEL is an acronym that defines the factors for screening international markets. These acronyms are defined as P – Political factors, E- Economic factors, S – Social factors, T – Technological factors, E – Environmental factors and L- Legal factors. Originally, PESTEL was developed as a framework used by marketers to analyse and monitor the macro-environmental factors that have an impact on an organisation. The result of which are used to identify threats and weaknesses that can further be used in SWOT analysis. This researcher discusses the various factors of the PESTEL and how this can be applied in the internationalisation of the IMPDET program.

Political factors: With this political factors, a firm that is willing to extend its operations in other countries ought to investigate the degree to which a government in the foreign country intervenes in its economy. This takes into account the government policies, political stability or instability in overseas markets, foreign trade policies, tax policies, labour laws, environmental laws, trade restrictions, among others (Team 2013). In the case of Ghana, for instance, the management of IMPDET ought to conduct a feasibility study by conducting an investigation into the political situation in Ghana. This can be based on the historical background of the political situation in Ghana. Both primary and secondary sources of data can be used for further analysis. In the case of the primary sources of data, questionnaires and interviews can be used while web data, among others can be used as the secondary sources of data for further analysis. As a strategic business approach and the intent to internationalise in other countries, this researcher recommends that the IMPDET management takes a strategic position on the government regulations regarding businesses in the foreign market. For example, the IMPDET management is expected to be able to respond to the current and anticipated future legislation, and adjust their marketing policies accordingly.

Economic factors: These factors precede the aforementioned political factors based on the PESTEL framework. It shows how a company, thus UEF, does business and how profitable they are. Factors that are characteristics to the economic factors are economic growth, interest rates, exchange rates, inflation, disposable income of consumers and businesses, among others (Team 2013). “These factors can further be broken down into macro-economical and micro-economical factors. Macro-economical factors deal with the management of demand of products or services in any given economy. Governments use interest rate control, taxation policy and government expenditure as their main mechanisms for this. Micro-economic factors are concerned about the way people spend their incomes” (Team 2013, 21). By considering the economic situation of IMPDET, it is expedient to investigate, strategically, to ascertain the viability of doing business in other countries by considering economic indicators of that country.

Social factors: This encompasses social-cultural factors of the foreign country. The socio-cultural factors, which includes population growth, age distribution, health consciousness, career attitudes among others, affects the way businesses are conducted. These factors have a direct effect on how marketers or companies understand customers and their motivation (Team 2013). These social-cultural factors need to be considered when the curriculum of the IMPDET program is developed. For instance, in Islamic countries or Islamic dominated countries, Fridays should be set aside or be made flexible in terms of academic discourse. This is because Muslims use Fridays in wrapping up their prayers. The researcher therefore proposes a strategic marketing approaches through surveys to ascertain the social-cultural variables of the foreign market that UEF intends to extend its IMPDET operations.

Technological factors: As it forms part of PESTEL framework, technological factors cannot be overlooked in this technology-driven economy. Hence, there is a need to assess how technology impacts the marketing of the IMPDET services. “Technological factors affect marketing and the management thereof in three distinct ways: new ways of producing goods and services, new ways of distributing goods and services and new ways of communicating with target markets” (Pilinkienė et al. 2016). As this researcher understood from analysing the collected data, it was found that the IMPDET program adopts state of the art technology to advertise their program such as making advertisements on the social media, webpage of the university, among others. These technological platforms need to be verified whether the target country can easily be reached.

Environmental factors: Internationalising a firm or higher education in foreign countries require that the environment is conducive for penetration. Some environmental issues in today’s business include availability of raw materials, pollution targets, doing business as an ethical and sustainable company, carbon footprint targets set by governments (Pilinkienė et al. 2016). The University of Eastern Finland institution is expected to assess if the external environment or the foreign market has what it takes to sustain the program in terms of raw materials and/or human resources. Usually, the local people are recruited to be part of the working force. While this researcher agreed that the University of

Eastern Finland can harness its resources for the implementation of the IMPDET program in other foreign countries, the environmental impact from the foreign market cannot be overlooked, and therefore, has to be considered in initial assessments of the potential host country.

Legal factors: The legal systems in every country is different. To enter a foreign country, there is the need to initially conduct investigation to ascertain how the legal system is structured and if the products or service will be accepted. For instance, it is unacceptable to punish students who do not attend classes on Fridays in the Islamic countries. Legal factors include health and safety, equal opportunities, advertising standards, consumer rights and laws, patenting and product safety (Pilinkienė et al. 2016). In addition, it is clear that UEF needs to know what is and what is not legal in order to set-up the intended hubs in the target countries. Every country has policies and laws that regulates their educational system. IMPDET has to access such regulations and use as a guide towards decision making. Expert advice is required in this perspective.

6.2 Opportunity Screening Strategy

Strategically, findings that is expected from the PESTEL process in Section 6.1 will provide a fair view of the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the external environment in terms of the market assessment. At this point a tentative decision is made as to whether the internationalisation of the IMPDET program is feasible.

The SWOT analysis, though used in the early stages of this report for summarising the suitability and internal abilities of the IMPDET program, it is still important at this stage for the IMPDET to use SWOT for screening the opportunities. Performing SWOT or TOW analysis, at this stage, will enable the University to make a strategic decision on the internationalisation intent based on market survey and the external factors in the PESTEL. The researcher has established in Section 4 that UEF has the internal ability, and as well, has a suitable service for internationalisation.

At this point, the University of Eastern Finland can still buck-out or take a critical look at their decision on the internationalisation intent if the findings from PESTEL are not favourable enough to penetrate into the foreign markets. For instance, if the political and economic situations in the foreign country are not favourable, there is a need for re-assessing the situation. Expert advice is needed, after PESTEL analysis, in order to gain insight into understanding the host country.

6.3 Market Entry Strategy

The University of Eastern Finland is a non-profitable organisation, and since the IMPDET program is founded from the School of Computing of the University of Eastern Finland, there is no tuition fee as it is in line with the Finnish regulations on higher education. This makes the program attractive for students who wish to upgrade themselves academically. It is for this reason that this researcher proposes no specific time of entry. However, the entry should be instituted in stages after affirming and selecting countries or partner universities suitable for setting-up the IMPDETs' hubs.

Based on the findings from the internal ability and suitability of the IMPDET program, this researcher proposes a network-based model for the setting of hubs in the foreign countries. With this model, close collaboration and network should be established before entry. Section 6.4 delves deeper into the network process though this is discussed in Section 3.2.2 as part of the literature review. The entry into the selected countries should be based on limited contract subjected to renewal. The renewal of the contract with the host university can be based on the level of commitment and the overall success of the program in the host country. This can be accompanied with licencing modes of entry where the university leases its right to the host university to use some of its intellectual property such as patent, technical know-how, copyright among others. This researcher further proposes that the selection of the host university should follow the waterfall model where the University of Eastern Finland negotiate and enter one university at a time.

Once the negotiation is completed and both parties agree, the hub can be instituted. This will largely depend on the preparedness of the host university regarding their contribution and commitment. This proposition is as a result of the analysis of the data which touched on the nature of higher education in Finland.

6.3.1 Network-based Theory for IMPDET

IMPDET program is aiming at students all over the world with particular focus on the emerging economies. Prospective students are expected to have obtained a master's degree in Computer Science, Information Technology, Informatics and any other related master's degrees from an accredited University in the world. Based on the key objectives of the IMPDET program and the desire to elevate Universities in the developing countries, this researcher recommends that students from developing countries should be the main target group as it already forms part of the management intent. With this approach, the researcher proposes that since the University has had relations with some partner universities, the management could verify or find out the acceptance intent of such universities. This will help form the idea of rolling out the program in respective universities or the country of interest.

Even though available market entry approaches can be applied to the IMPDET program, this thesis is strategically proposing the network-based entry strategy. The implication is that, based on the strategic plan of the IMPDET program and the nature of higher institutions in Finland, this researcher proposes that UEF rollout its IMPDET program into the foreign market through a network-based approach. For IMPDET to go international using the network model, there is the need to analyse and understand the needs of the target market, i.e. students. In Figure 13, the researcher presents the flow process of the network model. Through the network approach, IMPDET will be able to capitalised on its existing partnership with universities in the emerging economies to start rolling out the program. This is particularly relevant and characterises the network-based entry approach.

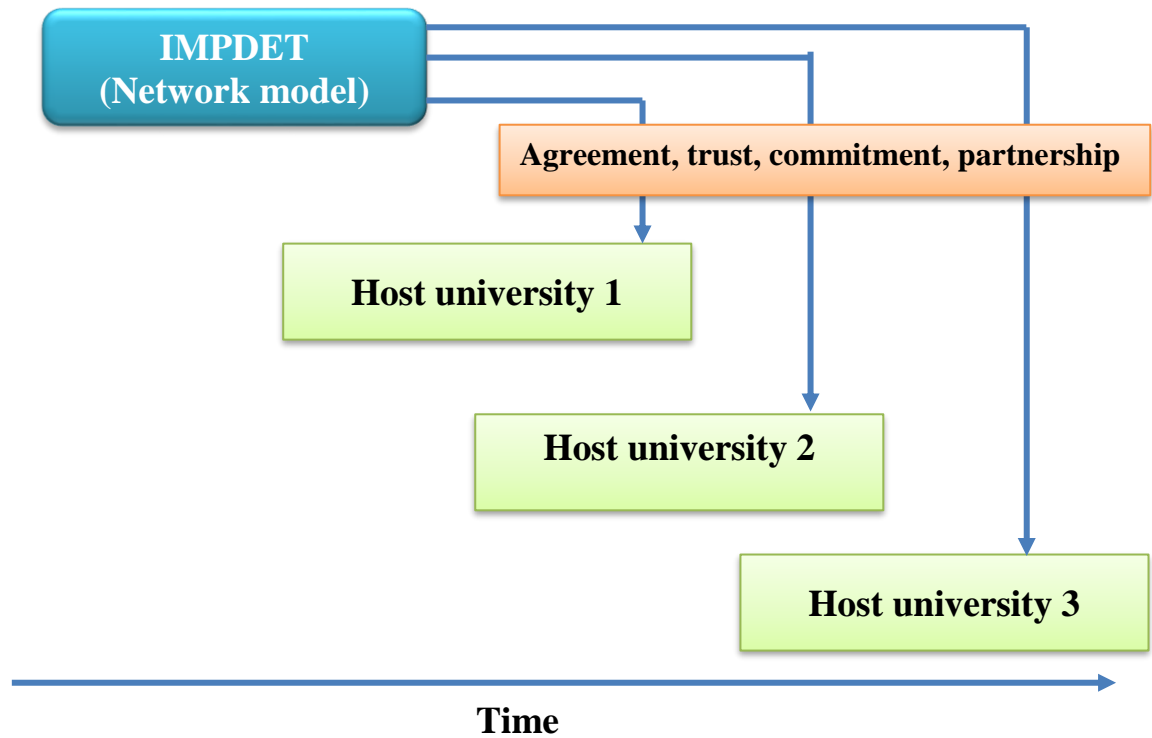


Figure 13. The Network-based Process with the Waterfall Entry Strategy

Figure 13 shows the schematic diagram of the combine network and the waterfall models. In the figure, it shows the penetration of the IMPDET program into the host university one after the other. Additionally, the penetration is motivated by the partnership, trust, commitment and agreements.

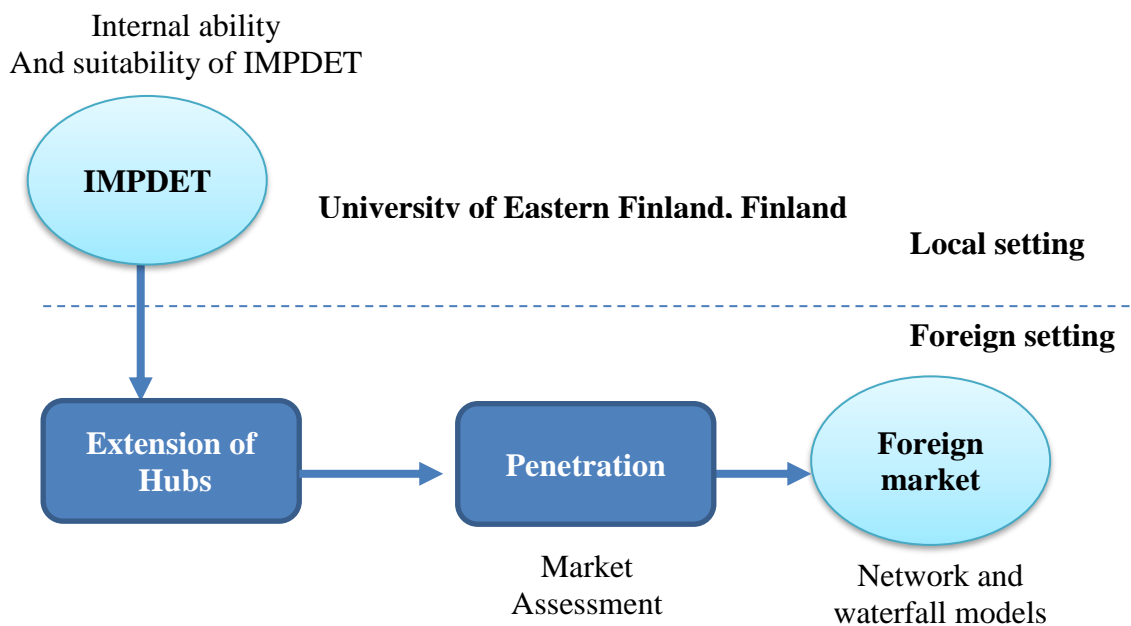


Figure 14. Model for Internationalising of IMPDET with Network-based Strategy

Figure 14 illustrate the entry process of the IMPDET from Finland to the foreign countries. Through these approaches, UEF will be able to gain much understanding of the partner institutions in the foreign countries. Through forming the network, trust and commitment are built along the line between the parties. In network model, trust is a key ingredient to effectively solidify the network between the parties. The trust resulting from the ties between the parties is hard to imitate and these ties have consequences in three dimensions. These dimensions are information available to the parties involved in the relationship, time and referrals (Kian Chong & Leing-Tan 2011). Information relevant to the building a strong tie and trust should naturally flow freely according to the various structures of the partnership. Thus, each party should not hold back any information that will strengthen the partnership.

As a result of building trust, there is higher tendency for penetration and acceptance. After understanding the partner university and gaining penetration based on trust and commitment, IMPDET can gain international integration by adopting the network-based model. As explained earlier and in line with the network-based model, the IMPDET ought to link up with the other partner universities thereby leveraging their resources to admit more qualified students for program. Despite proposing a market entry for the IMPDET program, several factors need to be considered in order to successfully internationalise the IMPDET program, thereby avoiding or minimising possible challenges of internationalisation approaches. These may include the level of commitment of the host university, trust, cultural integration with the host university, among others.

6.3.2 Internationalisation Life Cycle of IMPDET

The internationalisation life cycle shown in Figure 15 takes a holistic approach on forecasting the future of IMPDET program in the foreign market. This figure is developed based on the network-based and waterfall entry models. The cycle is meant to be replicated in any country or host University where IMPDET would be setting-up its hub.

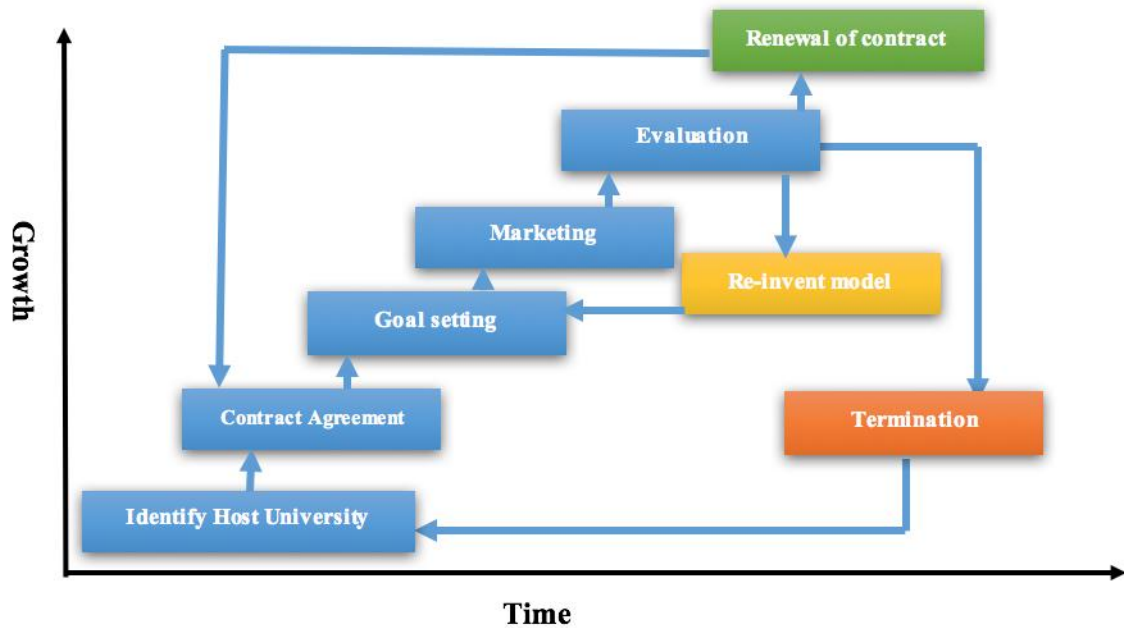


Figure 15. IMPDET Service Lifecycle for Internationalisation

As discussed earlier regarding the internationalisation strategies, it is proposed that UEF explores and identify partner universities willing to agree with the establishment of IMPDET hub by taking into account all other factors that warrant a more comfortable environment to internationalise. After that, the management of IMPDET starts negotiation leading to contract agreement. After the agreement is signed, both parties set goals based on the context and the availability of resources. The next step is to focus on how to market the program by advertising it in the local media and other multi-media platforms. The program can start once the prospective students have been admitted upon meeting the requirements to take up a PhD program.

As this is based on contract through the network model, the management of IMPDET is expected to evaluate the entire program whether the objectives are met while approaching the end of the contract. One other key factor to consider is the commitment level of the host university, whether it is satisfactory or not. At this point, the management of IMPDET, in consultation of the host University, would have to decide whether the contract should be continued, re-invent the business model or terminate the contract by giving opportunity to students who are already on the program to complete. Should both parties agree to continue with the program, there is the need for a new contract agreement and the process

continue as indicated in Figure 15. Should the business model be re-invented, new goals are to be set by the parties involve to allow the process to continue. However, should both parties agree to terminate the contract then IMPDET management may have to to identify a replacement for the sustainability of the program.

6.4 Decision Making Strategy

This stage climaxes the entire study by taken due cognisance to the analysis of the data from the participants and the internationalisation strategies that have been proposed. This stage has been systematically developed in line with the International Market Opportunity Assessment process. Although, formative decisions are taken in every stage of the IMOA framework, this final stage is the summative decision for the IMPDET to internationalise. This final stage decision culminates the various formative decisions from each stage of the IMOA framework. For instance, decision is taken by the management once the state of the internal ability and suitability of the IMPDET is established.

Figure 16 represents the proposed flow chat that shows a systematic process of the approaches and strategies for IMPDET to internationalise. What is more, the figure is a top down approach that starts with the assessment of the case institution. As earlier explained, taking IMPDET international in this study, implies the setting-up of IMPDET hubs in foreign countries, thus developing economies.

As already established, the university has the ability and suitable services to enter the foreign market. This led to the proposition of the PESTEL framework. The PESTEL framework assesses the foreign market for entry. Further, proposition with the use of SWOT/TOWS analysis is expected to be developed by the management based on the PESTEL findings. With regard to the supposed findings from the SWOT/TOWS analysis, the management is expected to make decisions as to whether to enter or penetrate the foreign market.

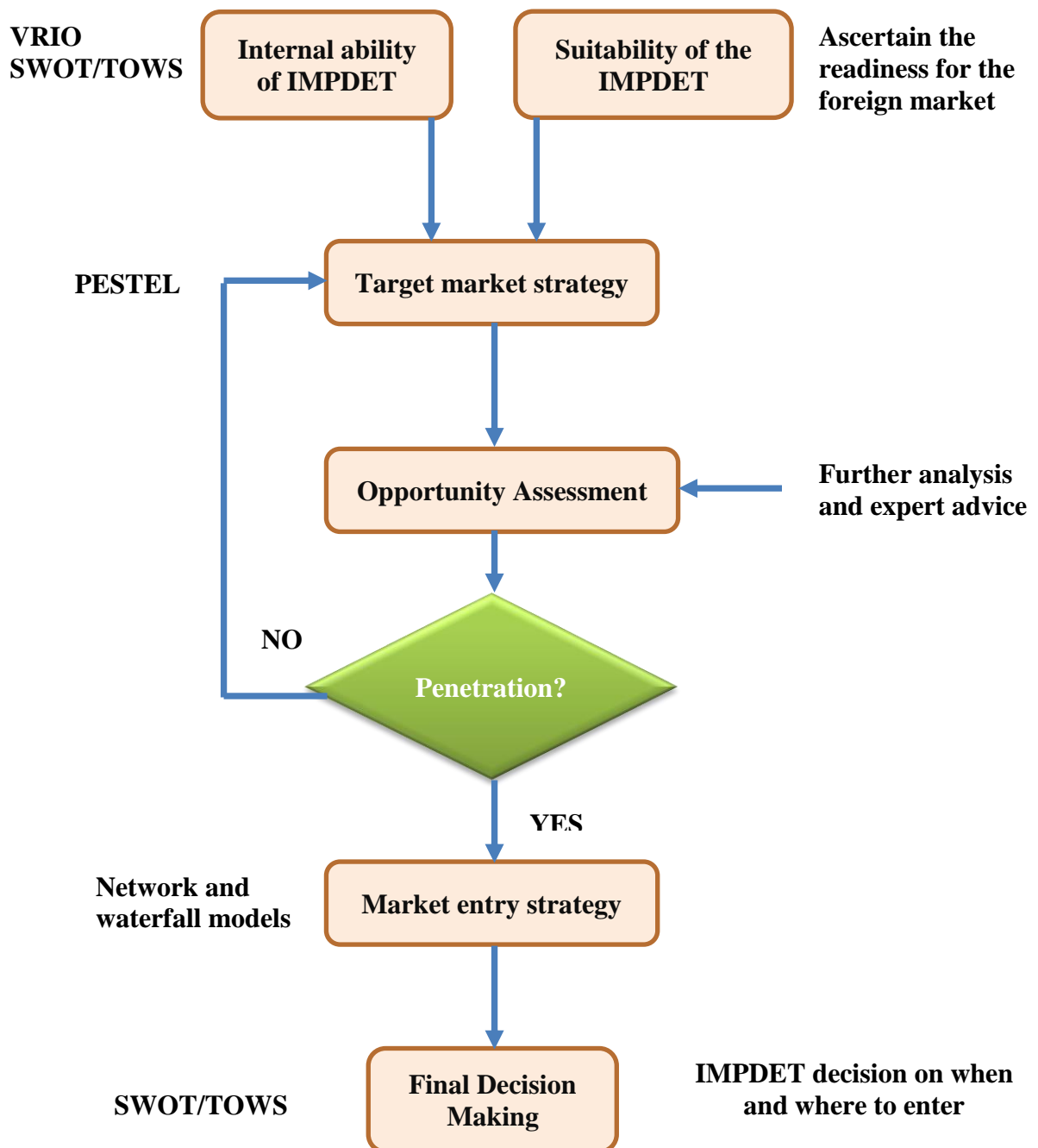


Figure 16. Proposed Internationalisation Process for the IMPDET Program

Should UEF decides to penetrate into the foreign market, there is the need for another entry strategy. At this stage and the nature of the program, this researcher has proposed the network-based and waterfall entry models. The outcome from the various strategic approaches will help IMPDET to take a final decision as to which country to penetrate, but universities or countries with network and partnership agreement.

7 DISCUSSION

By employing the International Market Opportunity Assessment framework, this study has empirically investigated the internal ability and suitability of the IMPDET program for the foreign market. While basing on the findings from the preliminary investigation, discussed in Section 6, this researcher has proposed systematic strategies for IMPDET to enter the foreign market. In the subsections, the findings are discussed.

7.1 General Discussion

According to the IMOA framework, the internal ability and suitability of a firm willing to internationalise is eminent to determine which internationalisation strategy to adopt, such as the mode of entry (Cavusgil & Riesenberger 2009). This initial assessment has been found by researchers to be the most important component of internationalising higher education. This thesis work was empirically conducted and backed up by the SWOT analysis to ascertain the readiness of IMPDET program for setting up hubs in the developing economies. The SWOT analysis summarises the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the program in terms of expanding to the foreign countries.

The preliminary investigation revealed that IMPDET has the capability and intent of setting-up PhD hubs in the other parts of the developing economies, which is not different from their original intent. While delving further to ascertain the suitability of the IMPDET program, this thesis further revealed that the university has the needed resources of internationalising the IMPDET program. Further enquiry into the availability of the resources revealed that the university would seek external funding and funding from any potential host University in order to roll-out such internationalisation intent. This, nevertheless, does not change the management's decision to internationalise the IMPDET program, by way of setting hubs in the potential host countries.

While the management were enthused about the readiness of the IMPDET program for internationalisation as they seek for partnership, the views of the

current students were sought as well. As indicated in the Table 3, students agreed that the IMPDET program has the capability to extend its operations to the developing economies by way of setting-up hubs. According to the students, the University has qualified and well-trained management and teaching staff to man the program should it be internationalised. As expected, the current students agreed that studying remotely has been a challenge for them as they lack the face-to-face interaction with their supervisors. This perception is supported by literature that “Student’s ability and disposition to self-monitor and accurately evaluate content comprehension and request help accordingly may represent a crucial variable, which affects both learning and teaching processes” (Terzi & Celik 2005). Setting up hubs in the foreign countries would bridge the gap between student-supervisor relationships. In this view, supervisors or teachers would be able to, at some point, meet up with their academic supervisors on face to face to discuss their academic progression.

Having ascertained the readiness of IMPDET for internationalisation, the internationalisation strategy was proposed. The PESTEL framework was the first to propose. The use of the PESTEL framework was to assess the external market by identifying the challenges and possibilities of the IMPDET program for the developing countries. Since this study is focused on the proposition of internationalisation strategies, this researcher did not further undertake such initial assessment. This is due to the limited time for this thesis and lack of funding to explore the PESTEL factors in the foreign countries. The VRIO, which was used to determine the competitiveness of the IMPDET program was found to be strong. The implication is that the university is capable of exploiting its opportunity to compete for students in the foreign countries.

Based on the data available for this thesis, this researcher proposes that the entry of the IMPDET program into the foreign countries, based on the network model, should be done one country after the other i.e. waterfall model. Since this is a higher institution, the network model was proposed. By the network approach, the IMPDET management could capitalised on the existing international partnership with existing partnership with universities in the developing economies to start negotiating on setting up a PhD hub. Building trust and

commitment with already existing partner university may be easier. In the nutshell, this research envision that these proposed strategies are implemented.

7.2 Limitations and Constraints of this Thesis

Given the nature of this thesis, this researcher encountered some challenges in the collection of the data. This is because the study revolves around staff, students and supervisors of University of Eastern Finland who are often busy conducting their academic and teaching works. The collection of the primary data delayed and distorted the original plan which eventually affected the graduation plan.

As this thesis is geared towards extending the IMPDET program to the international market, the researcher was constraint on delving deeper into the technicalities of the content of the curriculum to ascertain its relevance to the foreign countries. This is because this researcher does not possess all the technical know knowledge to determine the suitability of the program based on the content of the curriculum. However, the participants, through the data collection, responded to questions that covered the suitability and ability of the IMPDET program for the international market.

Furthermore, one of the limitation of this thesis is concerned with the implementation of the proposed strategies. This researcher was not able to practically evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of the intended strategies and approaches due to the limited scope and timeline of the thesis.

8 CONCLUSION

This is the concluding section of the thesis. In this section, this researcher presents the concluding remarks thesis work by providing answers to research questions. Additionally, future directions of this thesis is described in the section.

8.1 Conclusion Remarks

Given the interrelatedness and interdependencies of countries, business organizations including higher institutions have taken the advantage to extend their products and services across borders. Higher education, for instance, is one aspect that has benefited from international cooperation and trade liberalization. However, the externalisation of firms requires strategies for operating successfully in foreign countries. This thesis study has empirically investigated the suitability and internal abilities of a Multidisciplinary PhD program i.e. IMPDET offered the University of Eastern Finland towards expanding its operations to developing economies. The internationalisation of the program is aiming to set-up hubs in developing economies rather than purely on a distance mode.

Through the preliminary investigation, during which data was collected from a selection of the current students and management, it was revealed that the IMPDET program has the internal abilities and as well suitable to set-up PhD hubs in the developing economies. Secondary sources of data were used as part of the data sources. This revelation answers the research questions 1 and 2 of this thesis. Based on this findings, the researcher has proposed internationalisation strategies for the IMPDET program. The proposition of the internationalisation strategy and approaches was based on the international market opportunity assessment framework where models such as VRIO, PESTEL, SWOT, waterfall market entry and a network model was adopted.

This thesis was motivated by the fact that this researcher currently works as a research fellow in the School of Computing of the University. This researcher has been liaising with the department to expand its PhD program to the University of Education in Ghana. First meeting was organised between the two universities and some corresponding emails has been exchanged. The idea of taken this as

a thesis topic was discussed with the IMPDET project coordinator who supported the idea. The researcher envisions that the findings from this thesis will help the university to internationalise its IMPDET program. As a member of the department, this researcher would motivate its implementation.

8.2 Future Studies

This researcher was not able to practically evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of the intended strategies and approaches due to the limited scope and timeline of the thesis. The future studies of this work shall seek to evaluate the proposed strategies and approaches after it has been implemented.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire for the Management

Appendix 2. Questionnaire for the Students

QUESTIONNAIRE: For the management

I am a Master’s degree student in International Business Management at Lapland University of Applied Sciences, currently researching on the development of internationalization strategy for your Multi-disciplinary PhD program. This questionnaire is to elicit views from you concerning the suitability and ability of the program to go international. As a matter of confidentiality, the data will be treated with high sense of data protection and only group findings shall be reported.

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION AND IMPDET_LE

1. Gender Male Female

2. What is your highest academic qualification?

Bachelors Masters PhD Other _____

3. What is academic Position do you hold in your University?

Research Assistant Early Stage Research Post Doctoral

Senior Beseecher Professor Administrative Other _____

4. What is the full name of IMPDET-LE?

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5. What role do you play in IMPDET-LE program?

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6. How is IMPDET-LE program finance?

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7. Is IMPDET-LE a profit making program? YES NO

B. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

8. What factors motivated the setting up IMPDET-LE in Tanzania?

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9. What informed your (University) decision to go international?

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10. Do you have a management board that regulates the activities of IMPDET-LE?

YES NO

11. If yes in Q.11, Are they different from the main stream of the university board?

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12. If yes in Q.11, are they different from the main stream of the university board?

YES NO

13. How committed is the top management to internationalized IMPDET-LE, since it has a hub in Tanzania?

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14. Do you have the intention of setting up more of PhD hubs in other countries?

YES NO May be

15. If yes in Q.14 how quickly can internationalization program be implemented?

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C. MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

16. Do you have the personnel to set-up PhD hubs in other parts of the developing economy?

YES NO May be

17. Where are the personals (Lecturers and administrative workers) coming from?

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18. Do you have the Financial resources to set-up PhD hubs in the other foreign countries?

YES NO May be

19. How do you generate revenue to manage the program?

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20. Does your institution od department has the management competencies for internationalising the IMPDET-LE program?

YES NO May be

21. Are you programs (service) suitable to entice students to enrol in the program?

YES NO May be

22. Can you estimate; what amount of investment can be committed into internationalizing IMPDET-LE?

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23. Can you estimate, what amount of investment an be committed into internationalizing IMPDET-LE?

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24. What level of operational cost can you tolerate should you internationalise the IMPDET-LE in the other countries?

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25. What is the structure of IMPDET-LE in terms of management?

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C. TARGET MARKET

26. Which people are your target group to take up IMPDET-LE?

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27. Do you have the intention of globalizing the IMPDET-LE program?

YES NO May be

Appendix 1 5(5)

28. How many students do you intend to admit in an academic year in case you want to go international (as in one country)?

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29. Do you think IMPDET-LE program is generally suitable for internationalisation?

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30. Any comment or information that can help in this studies should be filled here:

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Thank you for your time

QUESTIONNAIRE: Students

I am MBA students of Lapland University of Applied Science, currently researching in the development of internationalization strategy for a higher education. The aim of this research is to seek your views on the internal abilities and suitability of IMPDET-LE for setting up PhD hubs in the developing economies. As a matter of confidentiality, the data will be treated with high sense of data protection and only group findings shall be reported.

SECTION A: Personal Information

Gender: Male Female

Age: 19 – 28 29 – 38 39 - 48 other _____

Country: _____

Years of study (in IMPDET): _____years

The Sections A and B contains both close and open-ended questions. The close-ended questions are in a Likert scale, where 5 – Strongly agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 – Strongly disagree. Please tick or circle as appropriate. The open-ended questions are follow up questions that require a subjective response.

SECTION B: Internal ability of IMPDET for internationalisation

Item	Scale				
1. I am able to access any resources from the university that is relevant for my studies.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My supervisor (s) and school administrators always respond to me swiftly whenever I send my concerns or request.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The university use the state of the art ICT infrastructure for teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The tuition-free nature of the program attracted me to join this PhD program.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The course content of the IMPDET program is suitable for me as a PhD student.	1	2	3	4	5

6. Does the tuition-free nature of the program a motivation to you enrolling in the program? Explain further whether the answer is YES or NO.

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7. What do you think is the challenges associated with studying remotely?

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8. Tell about why you think University of Eastern Finland have or do not have the internal capabilities to extend its hub in a physical location in the developing economies.

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SECTION C: Suitability of IMPDET for internationalisation

	Item	Scale				
10.	The university run courses that is of high relevance to my settings.	1	2	3	4	5
11	The university has qualified academic professionals to manage and train us (IMPDET students)..	1	2	3	4	5
12	I have regretted to enrol in this IMPDET program as it is not well packaged to appeal to prospective students.	1	2	3	4	5
13	The required number of task for one to be awarded with the PhD degree is worth it.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am satisfy in taken the courses remotely through the virtual learning platforms.	1	2	3	4	5

15. What do you think is the weakness of the current IMPDET program? Do you think the program is suitable for extending physical hubs in the other countries?

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16. If you have regretted to enrol in the IMPDET program, can you tell about your bad experience with the program?

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17. Any other information relevant for this study can be shared here

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Thank you for your time