Understanding and Developing Educational Tourism from Russia to Finland

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This Bachelor's thesis focuses on researching educational tourism from Russian degree students' point of view and sources of information which Russian students and applicants utilize. The research paper intends to compare the educational systems of two partner countries Finland and Russia, aiming to uncover main tendencies in educational tourism from Russia to Finland. The thesis is also a project with an aim to research the motivation of Russian students as well as difficulties in a process of finding information about education in Finland. Providing analyzed data to the Centre for International Mobility CIMO in Helsinki for them to improve implementing the information about education in Finland in Russian language is another purpose of the study. In the process of writing the thesis, different sources of information were used. Among them are books, articles, web pages, and statistical data on the chosen topic.

The theoretical part of the thesis consists of a review of several definitions of tourism, education and learning, and educational tourism as well as illustrates the brief history of educational tourism. The study also presents the relationship between tourism and education, motivation for educational tourism and gives a comparison of educational systems of Finland and Russia. The thesis also gives prospects for the development of educational tourism. No previous research on the topic was found, at least in Theseus.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in the thesis. A questionnaire related to the topic of the thesis was made. It was sent to a number of Russian degree students in Finland. Statistical information of the Centre for International Mobility CIMO in Helsinki and Statistics Finland was analyzed as well. The data for the study was collected during spring 2015.

The results of the research indicate that the geographical location affect the availability of the information about studying in Finland. Only those applicants who live close to the Finnish border have an unlimited access to the information. The results also show that during the process of applying for a Degree Program and moving to Finland, as well as after arriving in Finland, applicants faced difficulties of all sorts. A list of the main steps to moving to Finland for the purpose of studying was made by the author in order to help the applicants to obtain all the needed information in one source.

Keywords: educational tourism, motivation for studying, degree programs

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1   Introduction

There is a lot of academic research on tourism from the past decades, because tourism and hospitality sectors have grown to be one of major industries globally. In this thesis emphasis is placed on understanding tourism as a global and local phenomenon. The emphasis of the thesis is on researching educational tourism from Russian degree students' point of view. The focus of interest includes motivational factors that have an influence on decisions and sources of information which Russian students and applicants use. The purpose of the research is to provide analyzed information to the Centre for International Mobility CIMO in Helsinki for them to improve planning and implementing the information sites to serve better Russian students in Finland. The commissioner of the thesis is CIMO.

Despite the recent attention paid to tourism and education as industries, traveling for learning and education is not a new concept. Travelling in search of either academic qualifications or extensive learning and observation predates our times by several centuries. Smith and Jenner (1997a) suggest that tourism broadens the mind, and thus all tourism may be considered educational. However, they acknowledge that there are smaller, more identifiable, market segments within the broad educational tourism field. Nevertheless, Smith and Jenner (1997a) note that the concept of travel for education and learning is a broad and complicated area, which explains why tourism academics and industry have to date largely ignored this field.

It is mainly international students that Finnish higher education institutions educate in their foreign-language programs: of the applicants and accepted students, 79% and 65%, respectively, come from outside Finland. Russia is a significant partner for a great many institutions of higher education in Finland and it also holds a prominent place in the national strategy for 2009–2015 for the internalization of Finnish higher education. Closer co-operation is also seen in the number of Russian degree students in Finnish higher education. With 2 500 students in 2012, Russians are the single biggest group of foreign degree students in Finland (Facts Express 2013).

The thesis focuses on two different research issues. First, comparative analysis of Finnish and Russian educational systems. Second, the sources of information that Russian applicants use. The topic of the research was chosen according to the personal interest of the author in relation to marketing of Degree Programs in Finland taught in English. The difficulties the author of the research and students, interviewed in the process of writing the thesis, encountered with when searched for the information about studying in Finland became the other factor. The research was conducted in an attempt to understand weaknesses in the ways of distribution of the information, and in collaboration with CIMO in Helsinki. The website of CIMO was studied by the author of the thesis, and some ideas on how to improve the way of presenting

information for Russian applicants was suggested. The research topic is found to be relevant as the subject has not been studied previously. The thesis provides an idea of what steps should be taken to make the process of finding information by Russian applicants easier, and gives a comprehensive overview of educational tourism phenomena and understanding of educational tourism from Russia to Finland.

While there are many foreign-language programs, Finland has relatively few international degree students in international comparison. They amount to less than 4% of all higher education students, which is below the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average 6,9% (OECD 2008). The 2011–2015 Government Program in fact identifies increased student mobility between Finland and Russia as a common goal. Russia is also one of the strategic priorities in CIMO's work, and Finland has promoted the strengthening of links between the European Union and Russia also in the field of higher education.

2   Understanding Growing Tourism Industry

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries taking place in both developed and developing countries worldwide. The growth of tourism has been fuelled by the growth in leisure time combined with an increase in discretionary income and a desire to escape and engage in holidays both domestically and internationally. Definitions of tourism vary with respect to whether the definition is from a supply-side or industry, or demand-side or consumer perspective. As Smith (1988, 181) has noted several decades ago, 'there are many different legitimate definitions of tourism that serve many different, legitimate needs'. Moreover, many of the tourism definitions vary due to the organization or individual trying to define tourism and to their motives. However, there are commonalities between many of the definitions.

2.1   Service Industry

Former tourism definitions stated that a minimum of a 24-hour stay was required to be considered a tourist. However, this has been modified to an overnight stay, which, according to Weaver and Oppermann (2000, 28), 'is a significant improvement over the former criterion of a 24-hour stay, which proved to be both arbitrary and extremely difficult to apply'. If a person's trip does not incorporate at least one overnight stay, then the term excursionist is applied (Weaver & Oppermann, 2000). This definition can be applied to both international and domestic travelers. For example, international stayovers or tourists are those that stay in a destination outside of their usual country of residence for at least one night, while international excursionists or same-day visitors stay in an international location without staying overnight. Furthermore, a domestic stayover or tourist is someone who stays overnight in a destination that is within their own country of residence but outside of their usual home envi-

ronment which is usually specified by a distance of some kind. Domestic excursionists or same-day visitors undertake a similar trip but do not stay overnight.

Furthermore Smith (1988) believes that it is difficult to determine the precise magnitude of the tourism industry due to the absence of an accepted operational definition of tourism. Nevertheless, the tourism industry has been defined as an industry that 'encompasses all activities which supply, directly or indirectly, goods and services purchased by tourists' (Hollander, Threlfall & Tucker 1982, 2). Hall (1995, 9) believes that the following three factors emerge when examining the myriad definitions concerning the tourism industry. First, the tourism industry is regarded as essentially a service industry. Second, the inclusion of business, pleasure, and leisure activities emphasizes 'the nature of the goods a traveler requires to make the trip more successful, easier, or enjoyable'. Third, the notion of a 'home environment', refers to the arbitrary delineation of a distance threshold or period of overnight stay.

However, McIntosh & al. (1995, 10) take a more systems-based approach when defining tourism as 'the sum of phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments, and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors'. This definition includes the potential impacts that tourists may have upon the host community, and also includes 'other' visitors such as students. Educational tourism is discussed later in the thesis, because it is a new definition in modern world, and the author examines the topic in details in the following chapters.

The above discussion illustrates that there are many different components to defining tourism, which range from tourists themselves, the tourism industry and even the host community or destination. A number of authors view tourism therefore as an integrated system of components (Gunn 1988; Leiper 1989; Mathieson & Wall 1982; Mill & Morrison 1985; Murphy, 1985 and Pearce 1989), which generally have a number of interrelated factors. The first factor is a demand side consisting of the tourist market and their characteristics such as motives, perceptions, socio-demographics. The second one is a supply side consisting of the tourism industry such as transport, attractions, services, information, which combine to form a tourist destination area. Another factor is a tourism impact side whereby the consequences of tourism can have either direct or indirect positive and negative impacts upon a destination area and the tourists themselves. And, finally, the last one is an origin–destination approach which illustrates the interdependence of generating and receiving destinations and transit destinations and their demand, supply and impacts.

2.2   Review on Statistics

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 1999), tourism is predicted to increase with future tourist arrivals growing to 1.6 billion by the year 2020 at an average growth rate of 4.3%. Despite the effect of external factors such as the Asian Economic Crisis in the late 1990s and the September 11 incident in 2001, tourism growth appears to be assured.

According to the latest information, international tourist arrivals or overnight visitors grew by 5% in 2013, reaching a record 1087 million arrivals worldwide, up from 1035 million in 2012, when the 1 billion mark was exceeded for the first time ever. Despite a global economy in 'low gear', demand for international tourism exceeded expectations, with an additional 52 million international tourists travelling internationally in 2013 (UNWTO 2014).

The growth of tourism has spread geographically with the market share of tourist arrivals reducing in Europe and increasing in the Asia-Pacific area, which has the fastest growth rate of world tourist arrivals. There has also been a growth in tourism to developing countries with their share of tourist arrivals and expenditure increasing especially in destinations such as Eastern Europe, South America, the Middle East and Africa (UNWTO 2014).

Tourists are now more than ever travelling further in search of new and unusual experiences. However, the growth of tourism on a worldwide scale, coupled with the search for new destinations and experiences, has added to the questioning of tourism impacts and calls for more sustainable or 'alternative' types of tourism. The problems associated with mass tourism and the ability of tourism to transform destinations and impact negatively upon host communities is well recognized (Fennell 1999) and there is a move toward more 'soft', 'sustainable' or 'alternative' forms of tourism. Since the 1980s the tourist marketplace has become increasingly specialized and segmented resulting in the growth of niche markets such as rural tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism and cultural heritage tourism. Furthermore, a number of educational and learning experiences within tourism appear to be increasing (CTC 2001), while travel and tourism experiences specifically for study or learning also appear to be increasing (Roppolo 1996), illustrating the potential for educational forms of tourism. More information on educational tourism including its definitions and study-cases is introduced further in the paper.

The overview of definitions and main approaches to exploring tourism industry given above play an important role for the study. From author's perspective, thorough acquaintance with the information provided gives the basis for studying such a phenomena as educational tourism.

3   Education as a Key Element of Tourism

Education has been defined as 'the organized, systematic effort to foster learning, to establish the conditions, and to provide the activities through which learning can occur' (Smith 1982). The key word 'learning' indicates some form of process. As Kulich (1987) states, learning is a natural process which occurs throughout one's life and is quite often incidental, whereas education is a more conscious, planned and systematic process dependent upon learning objectives and learning strategies. Education therefore can be considered as consisting of formal learning through attending classes, language schools, and so on, or participating in further, higher or work-based education.

3.1   Experience-based Informal Learning

Nevertheless, despite the presentation of definitions, authors such as Kidd (1973) and Smith (1982) believe that there is no precise definition of learning, because it can refer to a product where the outcome is important, a process which occurs during learning, and a function which is the actual steps to achieve learning. Therefore, from these observations it becomes clear that educational tourism may be viewed in a similar way, as a product, process and function. In other words as a product the emphasis is on the outcome of the learning experience such as a university degree for international university students. While viewing it as a process or a function the focus is on the means to an end (Kalinowski & Weiler, 1992). For instance, if learning is itself defined as an end, then the experience may be focused upon mastering or improving knowledge of what is already known about something (such as a trip to a marine biology station to learn about marine biology). Furthermore, if learning is derived as a means to an end, then, according to Kalinowski and Weiler (1992), the focus is to extend or apply previous study; for example, travelling to an ancient monument after studying the monument. Thus from these definitions it can be seen that travel for educational purposes can be a diverse and complicated area of study.

There appears to be a contemporary transition from an industrial to a knowledge-based or learning economy and society with an increasing emphasis on extending learning beyond initial schooling (OECD 2001). The reasons behind a drive to extend learning beyond schooling is so that individuals, communities and countries are able to better adjust themselves to current and future changes, and are more likely to contribute to society through increased innovation, business development and economic growth. Another rationale behind the drive for education and lifelong learning is to provide a more inclusive and fair society by making education more accessible, particularly to less privileged members of society (DFES 2001). Generally speaking education and lifelong learning are said to encompass 'all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence,

within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective' (European Union 2001).

3.2   Traveling and Studying

Language learning, particularly English language learning, has grown rapidly over the last few decades. Graddol (1997) believes that the English language has become the global language, and it is therefore not surprising that the provision of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses has grown into a global industry with 1 million people estimated to be learning English as a foreign language (Batchelor 1998). The United Kingdom views itself as a unique destination for language learning provision, yet the competition for this J2 billion market is intense with the United Kingdom attracting over half of the market (640,000 students) in 1998 (McCallen 2000). Claims have been made that English Language Teaching (ELT) is Britain's seventh largest export industry (Education and Training Export Group, 1998) and is therefore seen as an important economic sector.

Growth in domestic and international study excursions has also increased over the last few decades. Changes in the curriculum in Europe have encouraged students to learn outside of the normal school environment and a number of school excursions both domestically and internationally have facilitated travel and tourism for primary and secondary schoolchildren. However, similar to the higher education and EFL market, little research has been conducted on this market segment and data is sparse. There is little recognition of the needs of these educational travelers and how to manage this form of tourism at destinations.

In summary, there appears to be a growth in tourism and an increase in 'alternative' tourism experiences that appear to include a growing number of educational and learning elements. This may be partly due to the growth and promotion of lifelong learning and further/higher education amongst Western countries, combined with a search for postmodern tourist experiences and travel to new and exciting destinations. The growth of offshore education, foreign language learning and school excursions involving travel is also evident. The need for continued education and keeping pace with technological change has fuelled the growth of education and lifelong learning. The growing potential market for the travel and tourism industry amongst schools, universities and further educational institutions is one that should not be ignored and needs to be better understood by the tourism industry. However, to date the interrelationship between both types of educational tourism (travel for purposeful study or education, and travel incorporating elements of learning) have not been comprehensively explored or researched.

4   Brief History of Educational Tourism

Fundamentals of tourism industry were laid during an era of Ancient Rome that was promoted by development of infrastructure which had nation-wide character: construction of roads, construction of milestones, establishment of public accommodation, located in the bottom of the way from each other. Road maps were produced. Those maps contained designation of stations where it was possible to stop for the night, as well as special "road" household items. Guides were released where the route was specified and the sights were described, hotels and prices were given. Wanderings and travels of the Middle Ages in their motivational orientation differed a little from travel of the Ancient East and Antiquity (Senin 2004).

4.1   Religion and Sophistication

Religious tourism got wider scale during that era, as well as "travel for knowledge". Numerous expeditions destined for opening of new lands, awakened in their participants not only "thirst of gold", but also "thirst of mastering unknown." Athens and island Rhodes were considered as prestigious educational centers, though during an era of Hellenism there were already large scientific centers, where scientists from all Oecumene came not only to work for the long term, but also to get acquainted with funds of libraries: Alexandria and Pergamum (Senin 2004).

It should be noted that religious and educational tourism were those kinds of travel that have survived, and their main functions and goals - familiarizing with cultural wealth in a broad sense - have not changed (Senin 2004). Travels of pilgrims and students were not just medieval analogy of modern tourism with a characteristic set of related services; they created a strong cultural tradition of travel, which united both guests and hosts. Nowadays, the attractiveness of a number of tourist centers strongly connected with their old university traditions - Cambridge, Oxford, Krakow, Prague, Bologna, etc. Even Paris with its innumerable attractions is attractive to many categories of tourists as a university city, and such concepts as "Sorbonne" or "Latin Quarter" are known, perhaps, to any visitor, regardless of an education level (Senin 2004).

4.2   Grand Tour

The Grand Tour was seen as the beginning of cultural and educational tourism, undertaken initially by scholars and aristocratic British youth as part of their education during the seventeenth, eighteenth and much of the nineteenth centuries (French & al., 2000; CTC, 2001). The purpose behind the Grand Tour was to teach and civilize participants through a series of study tours lasting up to several years in European destinations such as France, Switzerland

and Germany. Participants were taught foreign languages, fencing, riding, dancing, and foreign affairs. Visiting continental universities and other aristocrats, accompanied by an entourage of tutors and servants, was commonplace during this time, especially for emerging English scholars. As Hibbert (1987 14) notes, 'there were few English scholars of the time who did not go to Italy for some part of their education'. In fact scholars were one of the first groups of tourists, and as Kaul (1985 in Theobold, 1998, 7) notes, 'the English, the Germans, and others, travelling on a grand tour of the continent, came to be known as tourists'.

As Towner (1996, 115) correctly states, from very early on travel for education and learning could take place either formally or informally depending on individual motivations and the type of experience demanded. He suggests:

> the spatial patterns of the Grand Tour passed through two stages;
> from a quest for a formal acquisition of practical training and social skills at specific educational centers to a broader and more informal social and cultural education that was best attained at the main courts and social and artistic centers in Europe.

However, the cost of undertaking the Grand Tour at this point in history was not economical. Despite this, participation moved over time from being solely an activity of the upper class and wealthy elite, to the bourgeoisie, and later to the lower class and mass market (Gee & al., 1997).

Furthermore, due to a reduction in available time and money, the bourgeoisie and lower class had to shorten their trips and hence activities and the number of destinations and settings visited were intensified, leading to an increase in more general sightseeing (Steinecke 1993), and therefore more informal learning through travel. By the mid-eighteenth century an estimated 15 000 to 20 000 British tourists travelled abroad (Towner 1996). As the destinations of the elite changed in order to avoid the mass market, so interest in and visitation to alpine regions increased. The latter phases of the Grand Tour in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries contributed to the discovery of the Alps, which were avoided during the earlier periods of the Grand Tour, resulting in an increased scientific interest in the mountains. An increase in travel to the Alps for educational purposes resulted in many mineralogical, geological and geomorphological discoveries, which were made public through guest lectures and publications in scientific journals and periodicals (Steinecke 1993).

According to Burkart and Medlik (1981), following on from the initial travel for education and learning, travel existed to satisfy travelers' curiosity about the way people lived at home and abroad. In later years the tradition of the educational value of travel facilitated the development of study abroad as a legitimate component of tertiary education in Europe and later

the United States (Kalinowski & Weiler, 1992). Education and learning has more recently become an increasingly important and recognized component of travel activity and travel experiences (CTC 2001), with an increasing amount of tourist activity involving some form of either formal or informal education and/or learning. Despite this, little research has examined educational tourism or the links between tourism and learning/education and various educational tourism market segments (Brent, Ritchie, Carr, and Cooper 2003).

5   Relationship between Tourism and Education

Every tourist trip represents an act of gaining knowledge. By travelling, people familiarize themselves with new landscapes, populations, languages, cultures and customs. However, the didactic purpose of tourism may be even more pronounced, thus promoting education and improving the quality of education for children and youth. Tourism aimed at gaining concrete knowledge through designed programs may be called educational tourism. A modern person has access to any kind of information through the Internet, but nevertheless he or she prefers to see the world's cultural wonders with his or her own eyes. For example, no matter how full the information on Russia and its culture, provided in the network, only a personal travel to Russia can give a full understanding about this wonderful country. As for language studying, studying Russian is simply impossible without educational tours to this country as this language is considered to be one of the most difficult languages in the world, and cannot be successfully mastered without immersion into language environment.

5.1   Motivation for Educational Tourism

Popularity of educational tourism is growing every year, and more and more people are rushing to get an education in one of prestigious educational institutions, to complete specialized courses or internship abroad, to raise their intellectual and education level. It is especially important that in such tour there is an opportunity to relax and to learn. Today, it is a good tradition to send children and teenagers abroad on language holidays, so it is possible to combine comprehension of language it with pleasant rest and entertainment.

Another option is Educational Farms. This is a model for pre-school and primary school children and their families. Children can learn about country life and still have fun. They can learn about the life on a farm through farming activities feeding animals, caring for plants and crops, making dairy products, following the process of making bread from grain to flour to the baked product, watching bees and extracting honey. They can also expand their knowledge of the countryside and country life on nearby farms, markets, in the workshop of country craftsmen where they can learn how to weave, make shoes or pottery. On these farms, children would be fed domestic produce only (Kuskov and Golubeva, 2009).

From the above discussion, a definition of educational tourists and educational tourism can be developed. An education tourist (or educational stay over) may be considered as:

> a person who is away from their home town or country overnight, where education and learning are either the main reason for their trip or where education and learning are secondary reasons but are perceived as an important way of using leisure time.

An excursionist (or same-day educational tourist) is:

> a person involved in any educational/learning activity or excursion, which does not include an overnight stay away from their home destination, and for whom education and learning is seen as an important way of using leisure time.

Therefore, educational tourism can be defined as:

> tourist activity undertaken by those who are undertaking an overnight vacation and those who are undertaking an excursion for whom education and learning is a primary or secondary part of their trip. This can include general educational tourism and adult study tours, international and domestic university and school students' travel, including language schools, school excursions and exchange programs. Educational tourism can be independently or formally organized and can be undertaken in a variety of natural or human made settings.

Educational tourism was one of the first types of tourism which appeared on a planet, after all the pursuit of new knowledge was the purpose of the vast majority of ancient travelers. To this day, educational tourism does not lose its positions, it is one of the most actual, and most demanded types of tourism in many countries of the world. Educational tourism is a tourist activity undertaken by those who are undertaking an overnight vacation and those who are undertaking an excursion for whom education and learning is a primary or secondary part of their trip (Ritchie 2009).

Within the European Union, the European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) has organized exchange programs since 1987. The aim of ERASMUS has been to encourage and support academic mobility of higher education students and teachers within the European Union, as well as EU candidate countries such as Turkey. International programs are springing throughout the globe encouraging such exchanges. Examples are the International Students Exchange Programs (ISEP), a network of 275 colleges and universities in 39 countries cooperating to provide affordable access to international education for a diverse

student population. The Fulbright organization emphasizes the importance of exchange students programs whose purpose is to humanize mankind so we can achieve a peaceful world. Similarly, the Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS), sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and administered by Georgetown University's Center for Intercultural Education (CIED) in Washington, D.C., invites to the US a number of socio-economically disadvantaged, but talented young adults from Latin America and the Caribbean. Finally, besides the exchange of student populations, we also have the teacher exchange programs and lately the administrators visiting programs that aim to investigate the correlates that help other countries succeed in their educational targets (Dillon 2010).

Education tourism is a kind of special short-term tourism whose purpose is learning and knowledge gaining and whose major participants are students with minor participants teachers (Guo 2000). The activities involved in education tours are various, ranging from getting to know a school, custom or culture, studying a language, attending a symposium or seminar to attending an academic or research project (Yuan 2003). Anyway, the chief purpose of education tourism is about education and study. So the destinations of education tour are always set in reputed schools, institutes, universities or some historical sites and famous scholars' residence. It is expected that each participant can gain skills or knowledge in education tours. It is believed that education tour can enrich a person's knowledge and upgrade tourist's products for the local tourism industry.

5.2   Educational Tourism Unites People

Educational tourism has been prevailing in developed countries. In its initial stage in foreign countries, most of its participants are students. They would take advantage of their vocation time to take tours abroad for sightseeing and knowledge gaining. In countries of Europe and America, education tourism has become a tradition and been considered to be a crucial part of modern education. On the contrary, education tourism had a relative late start in China. An early one can be dated back to 1989, in which a tour to Confucius residence was launched. And most of the tourists in that tour were foreign guests. Besides, the content of the itinerary was about cultural exchange. After that, training tourism gradually starts to take shape. In 1995, travel agencies specializing in the organization of education tours were founded while in December 1995, all these education established a syndicate, which signified the epoch of education tourism (Wen 2005). Educational tourism is a powerful means to increase social and economic capital and empowerment for learners and host communities worldwide (Pittman 2004).

Educational tourism is an educational activity implemented during excursions or trips which facilitates gaining knowledge and competences through practice. The model of the structure

of the educational tourism concept identifies three main components: the science of tourism, the science of education, and the factors of the external environment. The term education tourism or edu-tourism refers to any "program in which participants travel to a location as a group with the primary purpose of engaging in a learning experience directly related to the location" (Bodger 1998). It is comprised of several sub-types including ecotourism, heritage tourism, rural/farm tourism, and student exchanges between educational institutions. The notion of traveling for educational purposes is not new (Gibson, 1998; Holdnak & Holland, 1996; Kalinowski & Weiler, 1992) and its popularity in the tourism market is only expected to increase (Gibson 1998; Holdnak & Holland, 1996).

5.3   Future Directions for Educational Tourism

One of the largest impacts upon the future of tourism and educational forms of tourism is technology. Technological advancements and the increased diffusion and use of technology in everyday life will have a major impact upon both tourist and educational experiences. As discussed earlier, the Internet appears to have the potential to offer an alternative to school field trips and may overcome some of the safety issues currently impacting upon school excursions. Once the technology has been purchased it is often cheaper than school excursions and offers the chance to interact with other nationalities without the requisite costs to students or parents. Despite these benefits, the Internet fails to really allow students to experience living in another country and the lack of immersion leads to a poorer quality learning experience. Virtual reality may replace some university and college student field trips, although, as with school trips. However, it is difficult to argue against the implementation of such technology when there is a lack of current evidence pertaining to the educational benefits of student field trips. Distance education and the predicted growth of e-learning may have a dramatic impact upon offshore forms of educational tourism, including travel to universities, colleges and language schools. The ability to source information through the Internet, including video and audio conferencing, will impact upon the future of educational programs and the provision of courses and study. Kurzweil (1999, 191–193) in a vision of the future suggests that:

> students of all ages typically have a computer of their own, which is a thin tablet-like device . . . most textual language is created by speaking. Learning materials are accessed through wireless communication . . . learning at a distance is commonplace . . . by 2019 most learning is accomplished using intelligent software-based simulated teachers.

Kurzweil (1999) paints an interesting if not slightly chilling picture of the future of learning and education but one which illustrates the potential of technology. According to Stallings (2001), e-education is evolving into a growth industry with implications for a wide number of

stakeholders, including universities, students, government and destinations. Stallings (2001, 4) believes that 'most communicating and learning in the future will be done at a distance'. Drucker (1995) believes that online continuing education is the future and is a market worth hundreds of billions of dollars, facilitated by the growth and promotion of lifelong learning by government and a desire to keep ahead in a knowledge economy.

Technology may also impact upon 'tourism first' forms of educational tourism into both cultural heritage sites, such as museums and galleries, and national parks and visitor centers. To what extent does the use of technology in museums and galleries turn the visitor experience into a theme park or form of leisure entertainment rather than an educative experience? Or can entertainment and education coexist? Although it is recognized that mindlessness can occur when visitors are exposed to a lack of sensory, visual or interactive material (Moscardo 1996), there is the potential for some technology to simplify interpretation and result in a theme park experience (Griffin & al., 2000) rather than an educative one. The use of technology is a challenge for attraction and site managers as it can help them expand their educational mandate to a broader section of society by making information more accessible and engaging, but they can also be criticized for becoming too commercial and entertainment focused (Griffin & al., 2000).

6   Studying in Finland

6.1   Degree Programs in Finnish Higher Education

In this chapter, the author reviews the statistical data on the degree programs in Finnish higher education taught through a foreign language. In accordance with the consideration of the author, foreign language is meant as English. The degree programs taught in Finnish or Swedish cannot be considered as the degree programs taught in a foreign language as Finnish and Swedish languages are both official languages of the country. Besides, there are no degree programs at the Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences taught in other foreign languages except English. An attempt to examine another study programs available for foreigners was also taken in the following chapters.

Finland has lots of degree programs taught in a foreign language, but few international degree students. Details about the degree programs in Finnish higher education are available in the CIMO database Study In Finland, which listed a total of 275 degree programs taught in a foreign language as of summer 2008. This is plenty in European terms: in relation to the size of the educational system, only the Netherlands has more to offer (Wähcter & Maiworm, 2008).

While there are many foreign-language programs, Finland has relatively few international degree students in international comparison. They amount to less than 4% of all higher education students, which is below the OECD average (6,9%) (OECD 2008). A majority of the Finnish degree programs taught through a foreign language are offered on the Master's level and in the three fields of Business Studies; Engineering and Technology; and Information Technology.

	UAS	Uni	Total	Total %
Bachelor	79	4	83	30
Master's	15	156	171	62
Doctorate	-	21	21	8
Total	94	181	275	100

Table 1. Degree programs in Finland taught in a foreign language by level of education (Study in Finland 2008).

	UAS	Uni	Total	Total %
Agriculture, Forestry and Environmental Sciences	2	7	9	3
Arts and Design	3	13	16	6
Communication and Media Sciences	1	2	3	1
Computer Science and Information Technology	10	24	34	12
Economics, Business and Administration	29	34	63	23
Educational Sciences	-	4	4	1
Engineering and Technology	23	32	55	20
Health Care and Social Services	11	6	17	6
Humanities	-	3	3	1
Interdisciplinary Sciences	-	13	13	5
Languages	1	2	3	1
Law	-	1	1	0
Mathematics and Natural Sciences	-	21	21	8
Medical Sciences	-	7	7	3
Social Sciences	2	9	11	4
Sport Sciences	1	3	4	1
Tourism and Catering	11	-	11	4
Total	94	181	275	100

Table 2. Degree programs in Finland taught in a foreign language by field of education (Study in Finland 2008).

6.2   Study Motivation of Degree Students Differ from Exchange Students

In addition to exchange students and trainees, students doing their entire degrees abroad also come under international mobility. These students are not included in the CIMO statistics, but statistics on the Finnish recipients of student financial aid abroad are produced by Kela (Social Insurance Institution), while Statistics Finland compiles records of international degree students in Finland.

The Kela statistics show that a good 4,500 Finnish higher education students were granted student financial aid in the academic year 2009–2010 for degree studies abroad. The trends in the numbers of degree students and exchange students have taken a different path in the 2000s: the number of outgoing exchange students from Finland has increased by almost 50%, whereas the number of degree students first reduced drastically and has then remained at slightly more than 4,000 students. In the last academic year, however, there was a distinct increase in the number of Finnish degree students abroad.

Britain and Sweden were by far the most popular destinations for degree students. More than half (51%) of the Finnish degree students abroad studied in these two countries. The concentration on a few countries is even stronger than in student exchanges: the four most popular destinations account for two thirds (68%) of all degree students granted student financial aid by Kela.

Britain 1,592

Sweden 749

Estonia 450

United States 324

Germany 230

Netherlands 171

Australia 131

Denmark 112

France 87

Italy 70

In addition to almost 9,000 exchange students, the figures compiled by Statistics Finland show that there are 14,000 international degree students in Finnish higher education annually. The number of international degree students has grown vigorously and has more than doubled in the 2000s. Degree students and exchange students come to Finland from different directions:

the most common source countries for degree students are the neighboring countries of Russia, Estonia and Sweden, but there are plenty of students also from Asian and African countries, and increasingly so in the last few years.

China 2,105
Russia 1,595
Nigeria 731
Estonia 700
Nepal 615
Sweden 530
Germany 478
Ethiopia 467
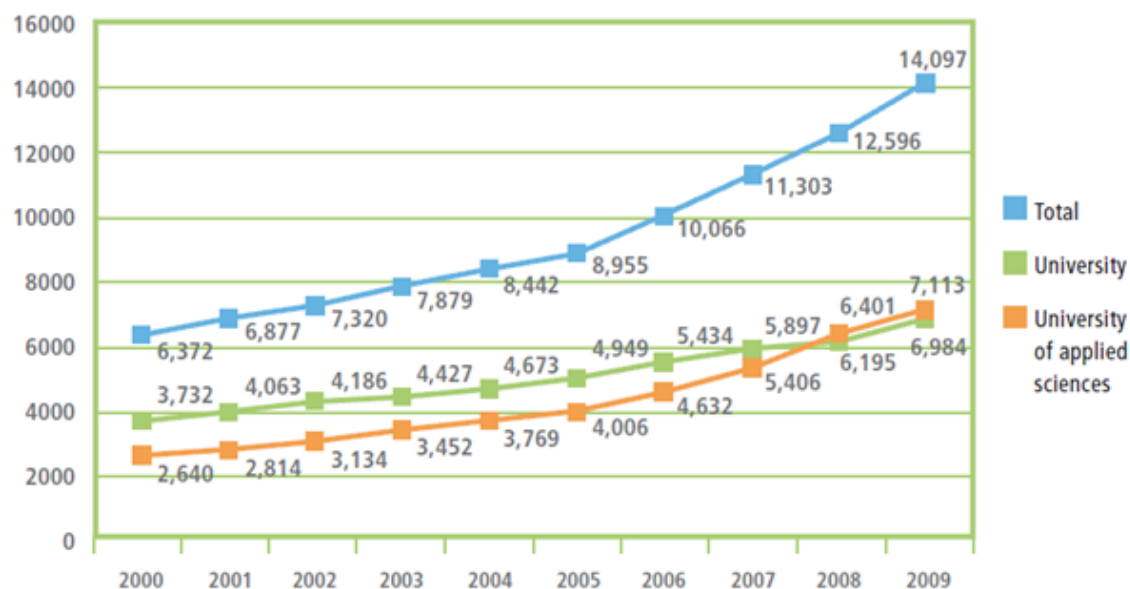Pakistan 420
Ghana 395

Figure 1. Foreign degree students in Finnish higher education (Statistics Finland, 2010)

The Centre for International Mobility CIMO provides specialist services to facilitate international interaction in education, work and culture, and among the youth. Working under the Ministry of Education, CIMO administers and implements various exchange, practical training and scholarship programs. CIMO is the national agency for European Union education, training and youth programs, and the information center for the EU programs Culture and Europe for Citizens. CIMO also supports the teaching of Finnish language and culture at universities outside Finland. And finally, CIMO gathers, processes and distributes relevant information to serve its many different customers.

The CIMO study, analysis and evaluation team produces information and knowledge to help in the planning and development of international cooperation in education. CIMO monitors international student mobility and conducts surveys about internationalization in education and other current issues of inter- national educational collaboration (Facts and figures 2013).

6.3   Degree Studies in Finland are Attractive for Russian Students

Closer co-operation is also seen in the number of Russian degree students in Finnish higher education. With 2 500 students in 2012, Russians are the single biggest group of foreign degree students in Finland (Facts Express 2013).

Regional State Administrative Agency	Sector of education	Total students	Share of foreign-language speakers (%)	Share of foreign citizens (%)
Southern Finland AVI	Vocational education	107 720	7	4
	Polytechnic education	57 764	11	9
	University education	64 806	8	7
Southwestern Finland AVI	Vocational education	34 889	5	3
	Polytechnic education	17 467	4	3
	University education	23 429	4	6
Eastern Finland AVI	Vocational education	30 260	3	2
	Polytechnic education	15 525	6	5
	University education	15 260	3	5
Western and Inland Finland AVI	Vocational education	63 922	4	3
	Polytechnic education	30 676	8	7
	University education	45 663	4	5
Northern Finland AVI	Vocational education	27 266	2	2
	Polytechnic education	11 551	4	4
	University education	15 191	3	5
Lapland AVI	Vocational education	11 491	3	2
	Polytechnic education	6 295	8	7

Regional State Administrative Agency	Sector of education	Total students	Share of foreign-language speakers (%)	Share of foreign citizens (%)
	University education	4 687	1	3
State Department of Eland	Vocational education	923	3	6
	Polytechnic education	598	7	28

Table 3. Foreign-language speaking students and foreign students by Regional State Administrative Agency and sector of education in 2012)

6.4 Student Mobility between Finland and Russia: Reviewing the FIRST program

Russia is a significant partner for a great many institutions of higher education in Finland and it also holds a prominent place in the national strategy for 2009–2015 for the internalization of Finnish higher education. The 2011–2015 Government Program in fact identifies increased student mobility between Finland and Russia as a common goal. Russia is also one of the strategic priorities in CIMO's work, and Finland has promoted the strengthening of links between the European Union and Russia also in the field of higher education.

The FIRST program is the single most important funding instrument of Finnish-Russian student mobility in higher education. It accounted for 35% for outbound students and 40% of incoming students between Finland and Russia in 2011. The program has been reviewed in a survey, and this abstract is a compilation of the survey's key findings.

6.4 FIRST

The FIRST program (Finnish-Russian Student and Teacher Exchange Programme) promotes partnership and collaboration of higher education institutions between Finland and the neighboring regions in Northwest Russia. Higher education institutions in Finland and Northwest Russia can use the program to support their student and teacher mobility and joint intensive courses.

Established in 2000, the FIRST program is run by the Centre for International Mobility CIMO. Scholarships are awarded to networks created by higher education institutions. The program is financed from Finland. Finnish-Russian higher education co-operation and mobility is also funded by EU and Nordic educational program and from higher education institutions' own resources. The FIRST program was instigated by higher education institutions and CIMO to provide support and funding for Finnish-Russian collaboration in higher education. More re-

sources were especially welcome in student mobility, which had received only limited support until then.

During the years of running the FIRST program, teacher and student mobility between Finland and Russia has increased considerably. In the first year of the program, in 2000, FIRST funding enabled the mobility of a few dozen students, while today some 300 Finnish and Russian exchange students benefit from the program each year. Practical training was added to the program in 2013. The volume has also increased in teacher mobility. Annually more than 100 teachers are now doing a teaching exchange in a higher education institution in their neighboring country.

The program has also successfully grown its funding volume. The budget was 263,000 euros in 2006, whereas in the academic year 2013–2014 the program was already able to distribute 740,000 euros to the participating higher education institutions.
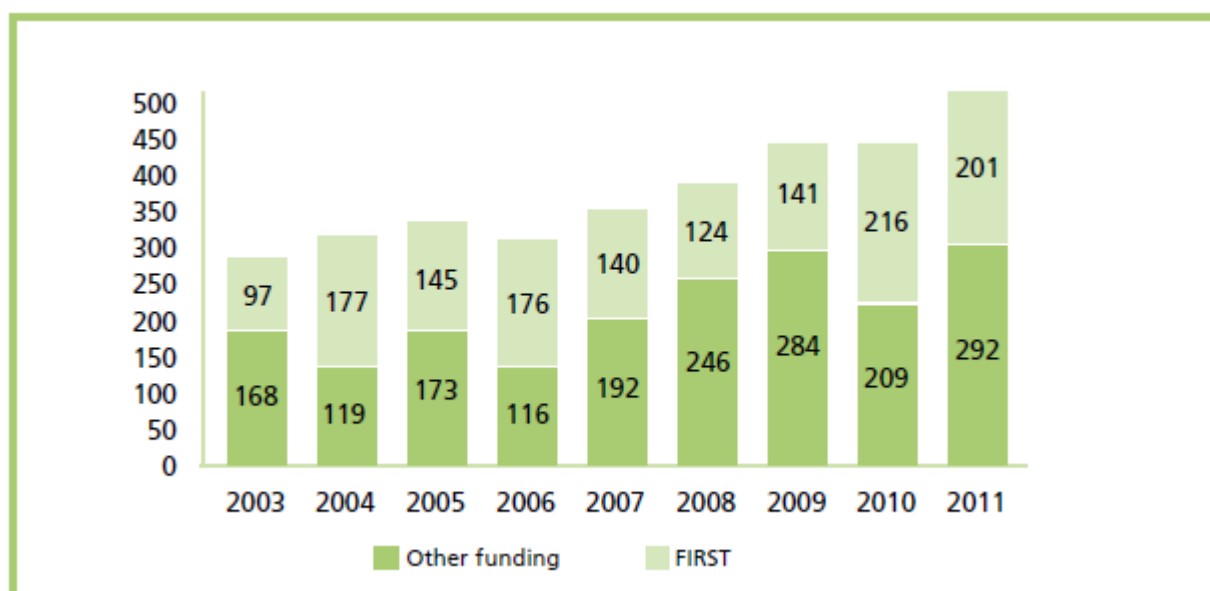

Figure 2. Higher education student mobility from Russia to Finland, 2003–2011

Almost all Finnish higher education institutions participate in the FIRST program, which is now an established part of their collaboration with Russia. Well-known in the higher education institutions in Northwest Russia, the program has partners in around 50 institutions in this district. Institutions are involved throughout the area, from Kaliningrad to Arkhangelsk, and from Petrozavodsk to Syktyvkar and Murmansk. In terms of numbers, the most institutions come from the St. Petersburg area.

Funding within the program is awarded to networks created by Finnish and Russian institutions. These networks are always coordinated by a Finnish higher education institution.

Collaboration takes place in various fields. In terms of student mobility and co-operation as a whole, the most active fields are Economics and Business, Technology and Engineering as well as the Humanities and Social Sciences. Active collaboration is also done in such fields as Arts and Culture, Medicine and Health Sciences, and Education. Intensive courses have been arranged in a variety of fields, from Law to Fine Arts and from Health Sciences to Economics and Business (Facts express 2013).

7   Research Methods and Conduction

Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge. Once can also define research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. In fact, research is an art of scientific investigation. The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English lays down the meaning of research as "a careful investigation or inquiry specially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge." (OALD 1952). Redman and Mory (1923) define research as a "systematized effort to gain new knowledge." Some people consider research as a movement, a movement from the known to the unknown. It is actually a voyage of discovery. We all possess the vital instinct of inquisitiveness for, when the unknown confronts us, we wonder and our inquisitiveness makes us probe and attain full and fuller understanding of the unknown. This inquisitiveness is the mother of all knowledge and the method, which man employs for obtaining the knowledge of whatever the unknown, can be termed as research (Kothari 2004).

Research is an academic activity and as such the term should be used in a technical sense. Research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions; collecting, organizing and evaluating data; making deductions and reaching conclusions; and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis. D. Slesinger and M. Stephenson in the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (1930) define research as "the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in construction of theory or in the practice of an art."3 Research is, thus, an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge making for its advancement. In short, the search for knowledge through objective and systematic method of finding solution to a problem is research (Kothari 2004).

The systematic approach concerning generalization and the formulation of a theory is also research. As such the term 'research' refers to the systematic method consisting of enunciating the problem, formulating a hypothesis, collecting the facts or data, analyzing the facts and reaching certain conclusions either in the form of solutions(s) towards the concerned problem or in certain generalizations for some theoretical formulation. The purpose of re-

search is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet (Kothari 2004).

The thesis utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods. During the study, the author made use of case study, comparative analysis, statistics analysis, theme interview and content analysis. The more detailed information about the used research methods is given further.

7.1   Case Study and Analysis

The case study is the most flexible of all research designs, allowing the researcher to retain the holistic characteristics of real-life events while investigating empirical events.

In general, a case study is an empirical inquiry which:
- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context: when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident;
- and in which
- multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin 1984).

Case studies are only one of many ways of doing social science research, with experimentation, observation, surveys and archival information (as mentioned above) each suited to a certain type of research problem, degree of experimenter control over events and historical/contemporary perspective and focus (Schell 1992).

7.2   Comparative analysis of Russian and Finnish Study Systems

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) is a research method popularized largely through the work of Charles Ragin (1987, 2000, 2008), counts among the most influential recent innovations in social science methodology.

QCA has to be understood both as a research approach in a broad sense and as an analytical technique in a more narrow sense. Briefly said, the interpretation of QCA as a research approach refers to the iterative process of data collection, model specification, case selection and re-conceptualization of the conditions and the outcome which are of central importance for any QCA-based research design (Wagemann & Schneider, 2010).

The general goal of a QCA analysis is to support the researcher in his/her attempt to arrive at a meaningful interpretation of the patterns displayed by the cases under examination.

The main principle dominating the technical aspect of QCA is the examination of set theoretic relationships between causally relevant conditions and a clearly specified outcome (Wage-mann & Schneider, 2010).

7.3 Statistical Analysis of Data

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making. Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains (Wikipe-dia 2015).

Analyzing qualitative data is essentially a simple process. It consists of three parts: Noticing, Collecting, and Thinking about interesting things (Seidel 1998).

7.4 Theme Interview and Contents Analysis

Interviewing is a fundamental methodology for both quantitative and qualitative social re-search and evaluation. Interviews are conversations between an investigator (interviewer) and a respondent ('interviewees', 'informants' or 'sources') in which questions are asked in order to obtain information. Interviews seek to collect data and narrative information in or-der to better understand the respondent's unique perspectives, opinions, and world-views (Better Evaluation 2015).

Content analysis is a set of procedures for collecting and organizing information in a standardized format that allows analysts to make inferences about the characteristics and meaning of written and other recorded material. Simple formats can be developed for summarizing information or counting the frequency of statements. More complex formats can be created for analyzing trends or detecting subtle differences in the intensity of statements.

8 Results: Comparative Analysis of Finnish and Russian Study Systems. Statistics

This section offers description and comparison of the main characteristics of Finnish and Rus-sian study systems.

8.1 Finland: System is Relaxed and Cost free

The Finnish system is relaxed and creative. Students take off their shoes inside the school, call the teacher by their first names, and spend fewer hours in school. Interestingly enough

the system is so trusted that teachers' evaluations do not exist. Pasi Sahlberg, the director of the Finnish Ministry of Education's Center for International Mobility, explained that accountability is necessary when responsibility is absent (Partanen 2011). It is the principal's job to notice if a teacher is ineffective and deal with the problem. The education in Finland is free of charge. Financing of Finnish higher education institutions is carried out at the expense of the state, so studying at the institutions is free both for degree students, and for those who comes to study on an exchange.

8.2   Finland: Co-operation before Competition

Another difference stems from the American emphasis on competition, an orientation that makes Finns quite uncomfortable. Sahlberg quotes a line from the Finnish writer Samuli Paronen: "Real winners do not compete." It's hard to think of a more un-American idea, but when it comes to education, the country's success shows that the Finnish attitude might have merits. There are no lists of best schools or teachers in Finland. The main driver of education policy is not competition between teachers and between schools, but cooperation. Children do not have to change schools when they turn 12 but continue with the same teacher until they graduate (Burridge 2007). School teachers have Master's degrees and the profession is well respected. They also have an unusual degree of autonomy over the curriculum as they can choose their own texts while adhering to nationally established objectives. The relationship between students and teachers is informal while the attitude of parents toward teachers is that of trust and not suspicion. In each classroom there are two teachers supporting students with disabilities or working independently with the gifted ones. There is no tracking and the hours spent in classroom are among the fewest in the developed world (Jimenez 2009).

8.3   Finland: Interactiveness and Trustworthiness

The trust shown towards the teachers stems from the status and prestige of their occupation. If the teacher feels he should take the students on a field trip unexpectedly, he does not need parental consent. Test-based accountability and externally determined learning standards have not been adopted by the Finnish system. External standardized tests do not exist, whereas all assessments are based on tests designed by the teachers.

More importantly, the system appears to emphasize equality in opportunity. As tracking does not exist, better students tutor the weaker. There are no private schools either. A few independent schools do exist but are publicly financed. None is allowed to charge tuition fees. Furthermore, there are no private universities.

8.4   Finland: Graphics on Education System

It can be seen from Figure 1 that the basis of the educational system is a nine-year study pe-
riod both in Russia and Finland. After that, students can continue their education either in a
vocational school or in an upper secondary school. Furthermore, both countries signed Bolo-
gna declaration which means that higher education in Finland as well as in Russia is divided
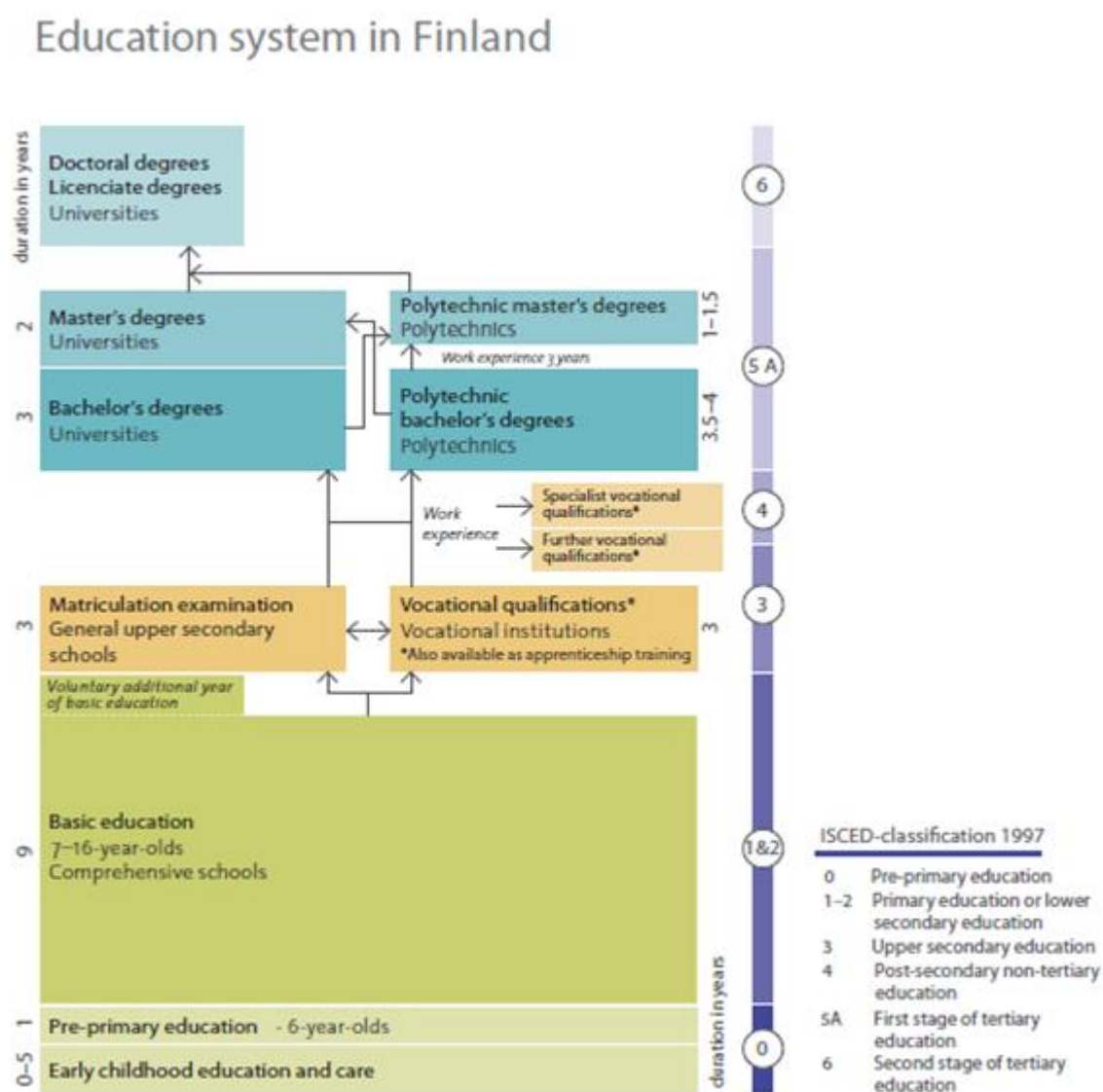into Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

Figure 3. Overview of the educational system in Finland. (Study in Finland 2015)

8.5   Russia: High-quality Mass-education at Public and Non-State Schools

Russia has a long-standing tradition in high-quality education for all citizens. It probably has
also one of the best mass-education systems in the world producing a literacy rate (98%) ex-

ceeding most Western European countries. Education is split into a compulsory Basic Education, and ongoing Higher Education. Basic general education lasts for nine years. Graduates of this level may continue their education at senior high school to receive secondary general education. They may also enter an initial vocational school or non-university level higher education institutions (Study Russian, 2015).

Higher education is provided by public and non-public (non-State) accredited higher education institutions. There are two levels of higher education: basic higher education that lasts 4 years leading to the Bachelor's degree, and postgraduate higher education that lasts 5-6 years or more. After two years, students are entitled to receive a Master's degree. This is equivalent to a Master's Degree (M.Sc, M.A.) in the US or Western Europe. After a Master's degree, students can continue to study towards a doctoral degree (Study Russian, 2015).

8.6   Russia: Competition and Strict Requirements

Russia's top universities have very competitive entry requirements, and special entry exams are held each year. Students with Russian citizenship, regardless of residency outside of Russia, must apply for studies according to the standard competitive system and directly with a faculty admissions office. Applicants for advanced degrees (M.A./M.Sc., Ph.D., D.Sc.) should have their prior degree in the same or a very similar field. This is a more strict requirement than in some other countries, especially the US (Study Russian, 2015).

8.7   Russia: High Tuition Fees

One of the great attractions of education in Russia and also one of the main differences from the Finnish educational system is the cost, especially when compared to the quality. Degree study tuition can range from $2000 to $8000 per year, with other costs such as room & board, and books ranging from $1500 to $5000 per year, depending on location and spending habits. Many Russian universities also offer distance education and provide courses for the public and for specific professional needs. However, such systems are usually less developed than in the US and other Western European countries. The academic year lasts from Sept 1 to Mid-June everywhere, with long summer vacations from July 1st to Aug 31 (Study Russian, 2015).

8.8   Russia: Graphics on Education System

In Russia, higher education does not split into polytechnics and universities. Working experience is not a mandatory requirement for applying for a Master's degree as well. Among other differences between the two study systems is also different duration of educational periods.
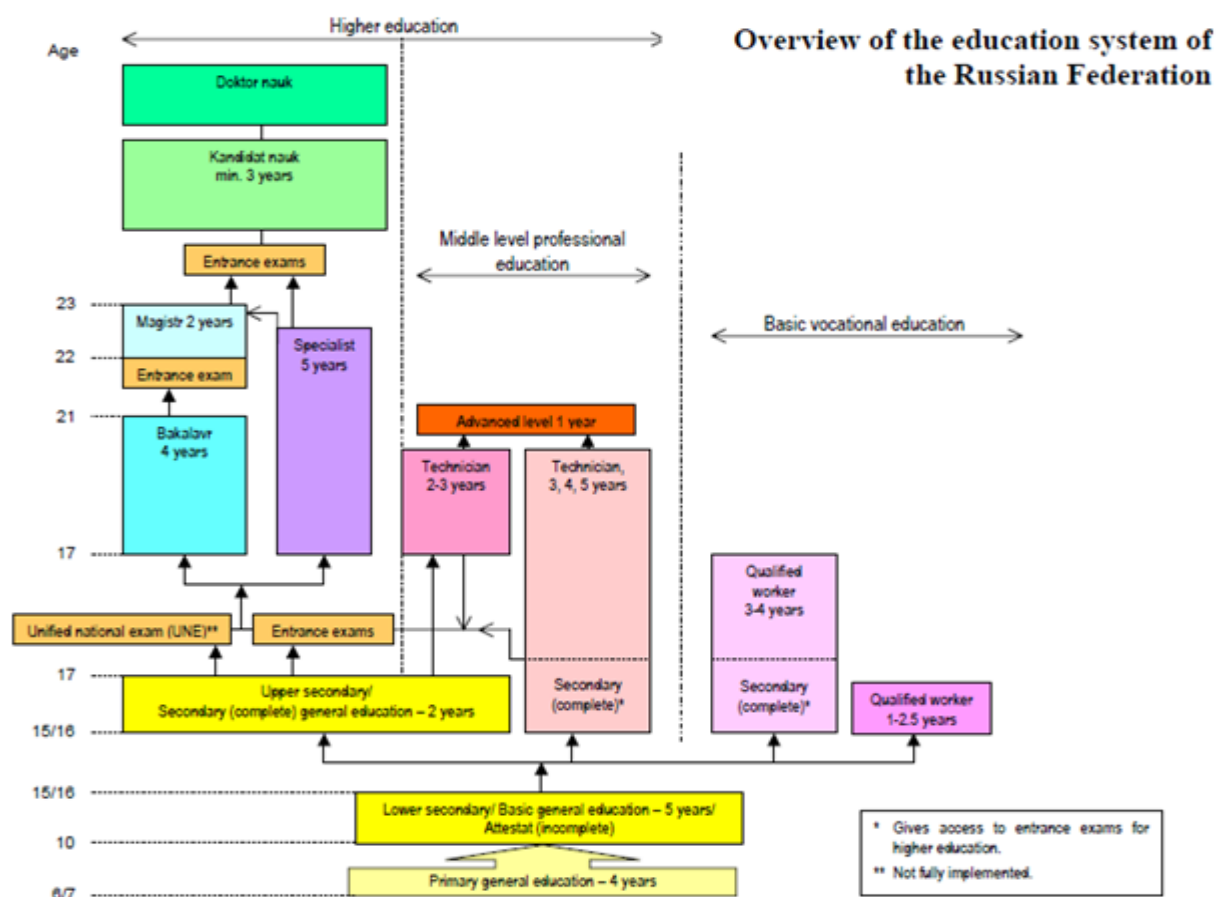
Figure 4: Education System in Russian Federation. (Study Russian 2015).

9   Cooperation with CIMO

During the thesis process the author contacted CIMO International Communications Manager Heidi Hänninen on updating information on CIMO website. First of all, the author studied all the information given on the website carefully aiming to find information about higher education in Finland in Russian language. To author's personal perspective such information given in Russian language will help to attract more Russian applicants and let them better understand the processes of applying and studying.

Some information in Russian can be found on the CIMO website. However, the given information represents the stories of Russian students who study in Finland. They tell about their student life in Finland but do not give any certain information or tips on the main steps to either applying for a higher education or further studying at a college or University of Applied Sceinces.

Thus, the author of the study suggested drawing up a list of the most important steps that should be taken by the future applicants while preparing for studying in Finland. The list is

supposed to be drawn up in Russian language. The information included in the list was selected based on the same type of information on given on the website in English language.

Ms. Hänninen (2015) confirmed the need of Russian material for CIMO website. Nevertheless, putting the information in Russian on the website, according to Ms. Hänninen, was not in CIMO plans for year 2015. The author was suggested to contact CIMO in the end of the year 2015 for possible future cooperation in terms of drawing up check list or translating the information into Russian language.

The list looks as follows:

1. Знакомство с основными культурными особенностями Финляндии.
   - Электронная Финляндия - http://e-finland.ru/info/culture/osobennosti-finskogo-natscionalnogo-haraktera-obychai-i-traditscii-finlyandii.html
   - Все о Финляндии - http://www.vse.fi/
   - Официальный туристический сайт Финляндии - http://www.visitfinland.com/ru/o-finlyandii/
   - Это Финляндия - http://finland.fi/ru/

2. Выбор программы обучения и расположения (города).

   - Центр международной мобильности CIMO - http://www.cimo.fi/frontpage
   - Портал об обучении в Финляндии - https://studyinfo.fi/wp2/en/ (на английском)
   - Магистерские программы в университетах Финляндии - http://www.studyinfinland.fi/ (на английском)
   - Летние университеты Финляндии - http://www.kesayliopistot.fi/koulutustarjonta/in_english (на английском)

3. Поиск подходящего учебного заведения и ознакомление с требованиями для поступления.

   - Университеты Прикладных Наук в Финляндии - http://www.studyinfinland.fi/institutions/polytechnics (на английском)

4. Регистрация на языковой экзамен (TOEFL/IELTS).

   - http://www.ets.org/toefl
   - http://www.ielts.org/

5. Подача заявки.

   - https://studyinfo.fi/wp2/en/
   - Портал для подачи заявки в 11 университетов Финляндии - http://studyglobe.ru/countries/Europe/Finland/ (на английском)

6. Получение приглашения на вступительные экзамены, участие во вступительных экзаменах.

7. Получение приглашения на учебу и подача заявки на предоставление жилья.

   - Жилье для студентов - http://www.hoas.fi/www/hoaswww.nsf/sp?open&cid=homepage (на английском)

8. Решение визовых формальностей.

   - Посольство Финляндии в Москве - http://www.finland.org.ru/public/default.aspx?nodeid=36988&contentlan=15&culture=ru-RU

9. Прибытие в Финляндию для обучения.

10. Практические советы – где получить?

    - База данных языковых школ Финляндии - http://www.finnishcourses.fi/ru
    - Форум Финляндия по-русски - http://www.russian.fi/
    - Доска объявлений Финляндии - http://www.doska.fi/

In English

1. Acquaintance with the main cultural characteristics of Finland.

   - E-Finland - http://e-finland.ru/info/culture/osobennosti-finskogo-natscionalnogo-haraktera-obychai-i-traditscii-finlyandii.html
   - Everything About Finland - http://www.vse.fi/
   - The Official Travel Guide of Finland - http://www.visitfinland.com/ru/o-finlyandii/
   - This Is Finland - http://finland.fi/ru/

2. Choice of study program and future location (city).

   - Center for International Mobility CIMO - http://www.cimo.fi/frontpage
   - Portal About Studying In Finland - https://studyinfo.fi/wp2/en/ (in English)
   - Master's Degrees In Finnish Universities - http://www.studyinfinland.fi/ (in English)
   - Summer Universities in Finland - http://www.kesayliopistot.fi/koulutustarjonta/in_english (in English)

3. Search of suitable educational institution and acquaintance with requirements for admission.

   - Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland - http://www.studyinfinland.fi/institutions/polytechnics (in English)

4. Registration for language test (TOEFL / IELTS).

   - http://www.ets.org/toefl (in English)
   - http://www.ielts.org/ (in English)

5. Filling the application.

- https://studyinfo.fi/wp2/en/   (in English)
- Portal for applying in 11 universities in Finland - http://studyglobe.ru/countries/Europe/Finland/ (in English)

6. Receiving an invitation to entrance examinations, participation in entrance examinations.

7. Receiving an invitation to study and submission an application for housing.

- Homes for Students - http://www.hoas.fi/www/hoaswww.nsf/sp?open&cid=homepage (in English)

8. Dealing with residence permit issues.

- Embassy of Finland in Moscow - http://www.finland.org.ru/public/default.aspx?nodeid=36988&contentlan=15&culture=ru-RU

9. Arriving in Finland for studying.

10. Practicalities.

- Database of Language Schools in Finland - http://www.finnishcourses.fi/ru
- Forum Finland in Russian - http://www.russian.fi/
- Bulletin board of Finland - http://www.doska.fi/

A theme questionnaire was made by the author and sent to the interviewees. The aim of the research was to discover the motivation of Russian students coming to Finland. The other purpose of the study was determining the main difficulties during the process of finding information about studying in Finland. Finally, based on the survey results, the author intended to create a list of main steps which should ease the whole process of preparing for moving to Finland. The respondents were also requested to tell about the sources they used to find the information about studying in Finland.

The author planned to interview ten students from Russia, who came to Finland with the purpose to study. Though, only five of them finally responded. The questions of the survey are the following:

1. Demographic Information
- Location (city, country)
- Age

2. Previous Education in Russia and Motivation
- Your previous education (the name of the university and the program)
- Motivation for moving to Finland for studying

3. Degree Program in Finland

- Place of current studies (the name of the university and the program)?

4. Information Search and Main Steps

- How and when did you first learn about the possibility to study in Finland?
- Main steps that were taken to move to Finland to study

5. Expectation vs. Reality

- What was the most difficult?
- What was the easiest?
- Expectations and reality (after arriving in Finland)?

6. Improvement Ideas and Future Plans

- Is there anything that you would do in a different way now?
- Plans after graduation (if you already graduated, what you do now?).
- Advices for future students.

9.1 Demographical Information

The age of the respondents fit between 22 and 27 years old. Four of the respondents stated their gender as female representing of total respondents. One respondent identified himself as male. Those are persons mainly finished their studies in Russia, had some working experience and decided to study an international degree program. Only one respondent came from the area located close to Russian-Finnish border, Petrosavodsk, Republic of Karelia. Three lived in the European part of Russia (Nizhny Novgorod, Tolyatti). There were, though, one respondent who came from the Far East of Russia – Peninsula Kamchatka, which is about 8 000 km from Moscow.

9.2 Previous Education in Russia and Motivation

Three of the respondents had a certificate of higher education in Russia before they decided to apply for a Degree Program in Finland. One respondent studied in a college in Russia that is considered as the vocational education in Russia. Another one had an incomplete higher education when applied for a studying in Finland.

The next question in the survey questionnaire was about Russian study programs of the respondents. The responses varied. Among them were such programs as English Teacher, Pharmacy, Jurisprudence, Translation, Information Services and Technology Design. With one voice all the respondents stated that the main motivational factor for then was the future

perspectives which will appear after graduating from Finnish degree program. The reasons for that were different. For instance, one respondent specified that there were no any perspectives in a hometown for graduates. The other interviewee lived in a border region with Finland, often visited Finland and studied Finnish language at secondary school, and thus decided to continue studied in Finland. The respondent who lived on the Kamchatka Peninsula actively used the world web for searching for the information and found out that many people studied in Finland and decided that this will be a good opportunity for the future.

9.3 Degree Program in Finland

The Degree Programs selected by the respondents to study in Finland varied as well as their study background in Russia. Two of the interviewees applied for a Vocational Qualification in Business and Administration (Helsinki Business College). After graduation they applied for Degree Program in Restaurant Entrepreneurship and Nursing (Open University) at Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Laurea UAS). Another two respondents studied Tourism at Laurea UAS. One respondent applied for the Degree Program for Multilingual Management Assistants at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences (Haaga-Helia UAS).

9.4 Information Search and Main Steps

One of the main goal of the research was receiving data about the sources the respondents utilized when searched for the information about studying in Finland. For this reason, the following section of the survey was of particular interest for the author of the thesis. The author tried to foresee possible answers to this question, and, as a result, the author's assumptions were true. The question was as follows: How did you learn about possibility of studying in Finland?

As the author assumed, those respondents lived close to Finland had many different opportunities to obtain useful information about studying in Finland. Frequent personal visits to Finland, many friends enrolled in Finnish programs, educational fairs held by Finnish universities in Russia in the border areas, all this was a source of necessary information. Three interviewees found out about Finnish study programs from friends already studied in Finland. The respondent from Kamchatka Peninsula utilized Internet as the main source of information. Even so, as a result, the final information was received from those who at that moment lived and studied in Finland.

Respondents were also asked to tell about the main steps that they took to move to Finland for studying. This question was significant for the author as well. One of the aims of this Bachelor thesis was making the list of main steps for applying for the Finnish Degree Program

and finally moving to Finland. The author assumed that this list will help future students to orient with a large number of information and to avoid mistakes and waste of time. For this reason, the answers of the respondents were of interest for the author from the point of view of analyzing of the actions of people who did not have a clear plan in conditions of insufficient information.

All the respondents started to prepare for applying for studying in Finland from observing of various information sources. After finding the required information, the rest of the steps was the same for all respondents. It happened because the process of applying for Finnish study program and the set of needed documents are the same for every educational institution. Two of respondents specified that they also studied English language trying to improve it before beginning of studying.

9.5   Expectations Versus Reality

The survey questionnaire also supposed to receive data about the respondents' expectations and real situation they encountered on arrival to Finland. The overwhelming majority of the interviewees (80%) distinguished the adaptation and job searching processes as the most difficult, and would like to get some help with it from the university. One respondent (20%) faced the housing problem – needed to wait for housing for six months since arrival to Finland. As for the process of submission of the application form or passing the entrance examination, all the applicants noted the simplicity of the process. The process of studying itself occurred to be different from the same process in Russia, but, the same time, considered by the respondents as quite clear and simple. One respondent noted the need for more intensive Finnish language course for foreign students.

9.6   Improvement Ideas and Future Plans

Two respondent suggested more intensive learning of Finnish language at the stage of preparation for admission and studying in Finland. From their point of view, this will help to better integrate to Finnish society and find a job. Regarding to the process of searching for a job, the same two respondents noted the fact that it is better to start searching for a job or educational practice as soon as possible. This advice was particularly addressed to those students who planned to stay in Finland after graduating. One respondent suggested to pay much attention to the choice of university and study program. Moreover, this respondent also advised to get serious about the choice of the location of educational institution and feedback, as it will matter in the future.

Four respondents indicated job search as their future plans. Two of them also stated that they planned to apply for the Bachelor Degree at University of Applied Sciences (the respondents that graduated from Vocational Qualification at Helsinki Business College). One respondent had plans to move to another country because of the difficult economic situation in Finland and difficulties when searching for a job.

10   Conclusions

The main object of the study of the thesis was educational tourism from Russia to Finland. During the process of writing the thesis, author compared educational systems of Finland and Russia in an attempt to understand the main motivational factors which lead Russian degree students to Finnish degree programs. The aim of the thesis was also to discover which difficulties the applicants from Russia encounter while searching for the information about education in Finland, as well as while preparing to moving to Finland for studying. The commissioner of the thesis was CIMO, and the author aimed to make a list of the main steps meant to facilitate the process of finding information for the future students from Russia.

The author also conducted a research in which a questionnaire consisting of ten questions was made. The research questionnaire was sent to ten degree students from Russia studying degree programs in Finland. Only five of them replied. However, according to the obtained data, author's assumptions came true. It turned out, that only those students have a full access to all the information about studying in Finland who live close to the Finnish border. As an example, the applicants, who live in Saint-Petersburg or Petrozavodsk. These people can visit Finland quite often and get all the needed information, or receive this information from their friends, who already study in Finland, or attend different educational fairs arranged in their home city. The applicants, who live far from Finland, do not have such opportunities and need additional sources of information.

After analyzing the results of the survey, the author made a list of ten main steps which should be taken by an applicant in case of applying for a degree program in Finland. The list contains useful links to assist students at the stage of preparation for moving to Finland, and in the process of adaptation after moving. The author suggested CIMO to publish the list on the company's website, however, at the time of writing the thesis, CIMO refused, having reasoned it that the company did not have any plans to publish new information on their website in 2015. Though, the author was offered to contact CIMO at the end of 2015 on further cooperation on this issue.

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Figures

Figure 1. Foreign degree students in Finnish higher education

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Figure 2. Higher education student mobility from Russia to Finland, 2003–2011

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Figure 3. Overview of the educational system in Finland.

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Figure 4: Education System in Russian Federation.

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Tables

Table 1. Degree programs in Finland taught in a foreign language by level of education
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Table 2. Degree programmes in Finland taught in a foreign language by field of education
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Table 3. Foreign-language speaking students and foreign students by Regional State
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