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EMPOWERING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS IN FINLAND

Through The Young CEO Entrepreneurship Event.



ABSTRACT

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In an effort to improve the state of high unemployment rate among the foreign students in Finland, an event was organised on the 18th of October 2019 called “Young CEO” at the premises of the International Evangelical Church in Helsinki Finland. The event aimed to serve as a platform to inform, train and disseminate useful information to international students with the objectives of showing how to gain insightful access into the Finnish start-up market, knowing the available supports, tools, practicalities, free training and networking to maximise. Speakers were invited from the government organisations, Non-profit organisations, and private. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to highlight how events can be used as a form of educative means, in reference to Young CEO event implementation, to inspire and steer foreign students in the direction of considering entrepreneurship as a form of potential career alternative.

The outcome of the event show that, with access to proper information, foreign students can be steered towards becoming business owners. Some of the highlight of the event was the presentation of the financial support made available by the government to encourage entrepreneurs and how to access the entrepreneur grant. The event also enlightened participants on how to start business from the start, how to maximise the light entrepreneurship opportunity, the job opportunities available in the tech industries, the free training and development available for start-up and how to network with other like mind in the field of start-up

Keywords: Immigrants, Students, Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, Capacity Building.

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1 INTRODUCTION

According to Levander (2016), "Foreign graduates have immense underutilised potential". The tuition free education system that Finland used to provide to foreign students up until year 2017, made the country to become an education destination for foreign students seeking to explore what the country has to offer. Levander (2016), wrote that in 2018, Finland was ranked by Universitas21 as the best higher education system in the world, while the country has Fourteen Universities and Twenty-Four Universities of Applied Sciences, which in combination have more than 20 000 foreign students.

Nonetheless, despite the great reputation of the education system it is a tussle for foreign students to find descent jobs after their studies, this is largely impacted by the lack of adequate language proficiency and poor networking with the locals. It has been noted by many that regardless of one acquiring the right certificates and degrees foreigners still struggle with finding suitable work positions. In a survey conducted in 2015 by TEK and technical universities, one third of foreign graduates had a job as soon as they graduated, but over Sixty percent of Finnish graduates were employed (Levander, 2016).

Furthermore, in a recent research by Ahmad (2019), it was stated that even being strong in experience, education and excellent Finnish language proficiency, all these still do not guarantee having the same employability opportunities compared to Finnish born citizen. It was noted that an applicant's mother tongue and name play a significant role in lowering the opportunity of being employed.

In spite of all this we believe that, inspiring international students with entrepreneurship idea as a potential alternative career path may impact positively on the unemployment situation of the foreign students. Entrepreneurs play a vital role in job creation and providing opportunities to young people" Pinelli 2015. According to Enterprise Agency (2018), entrepreneurship is "about believing in one's own business idea, and it can be a way of life or a means to provide a livelihood and to employ oneself and possibly others". It is about

building a business in order to generate profit, bring about life changing solution or solve a problem. Bacigalupo et al (2016), explained that entrepreneurship cut across every aspect of life, from cultivating self-development, to keenly playing a part in the society, to going into job market as a business owner or creating a start-up business that impact different aspect of life.

In 2018, the International Evangelical Church of Helsinki, carried out an unpolished inquiry for the administration of the organisation activities. The purpose of the inquiry was to identify the areas in which the church can better serve its congregation and the people. The inquiry also identified the need for foreigners to be integrated into the Finnish job market and full integration into the local networks.

It was an effort made by the International Evangelical Church of Helsinki that led to the birth of Young CEO idea. The event which targeted foreign students in Helsinki, aimed to empower them with information that would steer them towards the opportunity that exist in the start-up market. The objectives of the event were to present to the participants, how to gain insightful access into the Finnish start-up market, knowing the available supports, tools, practicalities, free training and networking that are available to new business owners. Our goal was to inspire our participants to pursue entrepreneurship and self-employment bearing in mind that there is a structural discrimination in the Finnish labour market (Ahmad, 2019).

Based on the implementation of the Young CEO event at the premises of the International Evangelical Church of Helsinki on the 18th of October,2019, this thesis aims to illustrate in detail the process and challenges faced while organising the event.

The aim of this thesis is to highlight how event can be used, referring to young CEO event implementation, as a form of educative means, to inspire and steer foreign students in the direction of considering entrepreneurship as a form of potential career alternative.

2 BACKGROUND

Guided by the work of Paulo Freire (1993), this project was initiated due to the challenges that are being faced in the community by immigrant students in Finland. Given the composition of their student body, specifically, urban students of color from working-class backgrounds, immigrants at different stages of adaptation, and refugees from different parts of the world.

According to (YLE ,2018) the majority of foreign students leave Finland after completing their studies. The problems they face include not being able to find a job in their respective fields of study, their foreign qualifications and diplomas being overlooked, the distress experienced by large numbers of immigrant students due to rapid acculturation, the learning of a new language and the tensions and conflicts these students experience as they navigate across the Finnish social and cultural world, without much support. Taina Susiluotto chief executive of the confederation of Finnish Industries noted that every year Finland trains up to 3,000 foreign students while the vast majority 2,000 leaves.

Echoing Paulo Freire (1993), it can be said that a large segment of students are prevented from achieving a sense of empowerment, success, and a substantial measure of self-realization. To get to a deeper understanding of student disempowerment, it is helpful to start with some elaboration of student empowerment as a concept. This concept will be further elaborated in chapter three literature review and key concepts.

The goal of the project would be to shift the immigrant students' perspective from an experience of disempowerment to a situation where they regularly experience more control over their lives and environment, where they discover new insights and abilities, and where they contribute their knowledge, energy and talent to the community for the purpose of social justice and to uplifting others while making an impact.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND KEY CONCEPTS

In this chapter we will elaborate on the key concepts used in the thesis, which are empowerment and capacity building; we also as introduce previous immigrant-student empowerment programs in the social work field.

3.1 Empowerment

Empowerment is a multidimensional, social process of increasing the capacity of individuals to make sound choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (Staples, 1990).

The concept of empowerment is based on consistent tendencies of sustainable support mechanisms. The term is widely used in social work and targeted at including people in decision making processes in their communities and raising their level of confidence in life (Fitzsimons, Hope, Cooper, Russell 2011,4-5).

In summary, empowerment seeks to oppose oppression and marginalization, It can be viewed as a process of increasing interpersonal or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situation (Gutierrez, 1990, 149.)

3.2 Capacity Building

Capacity building will obviously has varied definitions in various capacities. Capacity Building may be defined as “the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes in individuals and groups of people relevant in the design, development and maintenance of institutional and operational infrastructures and processes that are locally meaningful” (Groot and Molen, 2001).

Capacity building is the intentional actions and initiatives that support us to become the best we can be- as individuals and as communities. It goes on to say capacity in itself is potential, it's about building change and becoming more, it talks about that which one has the potential to become. This change

sometimes includes behavior, knowledge and skills of the individual or the community (Capacity building)

In this thesis, empowerment and capacity building is depicted as the concept of enabling the people to have a voice, to give them the encouragement that their voice has a right to be heard, and give them hope for tomorrow in that their skills are sharpened and hence allowing them future economic opportunities. We also mean that they have increased interpersonal power to influence their tomorrows. It is about supporting to bring change and increasing opportunities thereby enable the potentials of these youth to be realized.

3.3 Previous Similar Events

In Finland there are several successful initiatives that aim to inspire and empower international people to start their own business. For instance the Nordic Business forum. It is a Finnish company based in Jyväskylä; the company is best known for its eponymous business and leadership conferences in Helsinki, Oslo and Stockholm. Their conferences are organized each year and they gather around 10,000 attendees from over 40 countries. They have the world's best business experts speaking at their conferences about leadership skills and business. The next event will be held in Helsinki on the 23rd -24th of September 2020.

NewCo organizes informative events once a month for anyone who is considering entrepreneurship. The info is normally in English, at the event they talk about business ideas, how to start a business, financing, profitability, forms of enterprise, taxation; VAT and prepayment taxes. Insurances; how to prepare a business plan and how to apply start up grant from TE- services.

4 PROJECT DESIGN

In this chapter we will explain the process of the event, the time frame and the team members who were involved. Event experts and business associations have recognized that Project Management tools and procedures are beneficial in managing event.

“Managing an event is essentially managing a project. Events have a defined beginning and end, and they are unique in terms of teams involved, and changing environments” (Poetscher,2019). Therefore, we will explain the event management processes that were engaged in the implementation of Young CEO event.

In today's project management, there are several methodologies, few of which are shown in Table 1 below which briefly shows an overview of three hand picked project management methodology.

Table 1. Three Project Management Methodology

Method	Contents
The Agile Project Method	It is a value-centered method of project management that allows projects to get processed in small phases or cycles. The methodology is one that is extremely flexible and projects that exhibit dynamic traits would benefit from this process.
The Waterfall Method	This is a traditional approach to project management. The model takes a linear approach towards project management with the project being broken down into sequences with the kickoff of a phase dependent on the completion of the preceding one. It is more commonly used in the manufacturing or construction sectors.
Scrum Method	<p>The Traditional Waterfall method reveals a more lengthy process where planning alone could take a couple of months before moving to the next stage – design. The design phase could also take a couple of months; this could lead to the launch of a product that could be termed obsolete in the current marketplace.</p> <p>With Scrum, however, the planning is just enough to kick off the project as it is based on the Agile framework that was discussed earlier. It's a great way to prevent delays in product launch because the entire process focuses on team collaboration. The Scrum master facilitates the scrum sessions (sprints) which occur within a time frame of 1-3 weeks. The result is an iterative process that significantly saves the company a lot of time and money.</p>

(Nutcache)

With the aforementioned methodologies, in regards to our event management, we applied the Scrum method of project management process, we benefited from this model as it permitted us the ability to kick start the process of our event planning based on team effort and it gave us no room for delay. Below is a breakdown of the Scrum method work processes that helped us in the implementation of our event.

4.1 Planning Process

During our first meeting with the work life partner our routine was established in order to distinguish between what activities we would be involved in with the organization as part of our internship and the tasks we needed to carry regarding the Young CEO event and our thesis. Work life partner addressed the structuring of the setting of action, in terms of predetermined work cycles and associated, routinized conversations. There is no central representation of action. Instead, action follows essentially from the situation, created through prior action. Coordination takes place directly among team members, rather than directed centrally. Each team members announce their daily tasks, which creates visibility on action on short term. The team members are two with the work life partner as the supervisor and the coordinating leader.

4.2 Execution Process

Every team member decides their task, without having to interact with the rest of the team. Nonetheless in this type of self-dispatching, there was no need to communicate with about the task one has decided to take upon. There is no formal declaration of completed tasks, but it is assumed that impediments to any task are announced on a daily Scrum. Without such an announcement, it is implicitly understood that the task is completed.

4.3 The Control Process

In the scrum methodology, there are different stages or levels of control, which are at the lower level, upper level and the uppermost level. During our project meetings, each team member reports on impediments to progress on the task at hand, the work life partner coordinating leader, who is at the upper level of control will figure out how to eliminate these obstacle while we also brainstorming together to find a way to handle issues within our level of control at the lower level.

4.4 The Project Process

In a typical scrum methodology, the transformation model is used very little. Tasks are never defined in writing but are described only orally just before they will be realized. Through the daily Scrum meetings, the daily tasks are visible to all stakeholders. Instead, the principles of the flow model are supported in many ways. Feedback cycles are created both on the daily level and the monthly level for tackling the associated uncertainty and variability. However, in our case, tasks are discussed orally, and individual team member write them down and these tasks are ticked off when they are properly achieved.

Table 2. Work Schedule

Work details	Responsible Person	Timing
Event designing	Lisa, Ola and work life partner	first week
Perfecting event purpose	Lisa, Ola and work life partner	second week
Venue accessing	Lisa, Ola and work life partner	second week
Speakers list assembling	Lisa, Ola and work life partner	second week
Invitation of speakers	Lisa, Ola and work life partner	third week
Event social media marketing	Lisa, Ola and work life partner	third week
Web designing	Work life partner	third week
facebook page and event	Ola	4th week
Instagram n event marketing	Lisa	4th week
Venue booking	Lisa	4th week
Flyers designing	Work life partner	4th week
Video marketing editing	ola	4th week

5 PROJECT ETHICS

There were some ethical factors that had to be taken into consideration throughout this project.

5.1 Professionalism perspective

A professional experience is integral for every event that aims to interact with people. It was important to abide to certain codes of conduct to ensure that we were professional and that the participants understood that we were creating an organized and unique experience for them. The very best planners go above and beyond no matter the obstacle or issue and there should be no question as to how the event planner or their team members should behave during an event. Therefore, here are some codes of conduct we believe are very crucial to event planners in general (Barker, 2018).

5.2 Cultural-Respect Perspective

The Young CEO Event was targeting international students and graduates with diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the ethics of culture respect needed to be complied in order to ensure every culture is welcomed and respected. Our event anticipated to receive people across different cultures hence it was important for us to be culturally unbiased. The term refers to a theory or perspective that is not distorted or influenced by a particular cultural perspective (Barker, 2018).

5.3 Deontological Ethics

Deontology is a way in which people judge the morality of others based on a set of rules. Not only should the individual person have an ethical framework but also business owners, company CEO's, and boards members, because a good frame can shape an entire organization. Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. In teamwork and among group members that are involved in an organization, there is a need that each person identifies their duty and act accordingly which falls in line with the application of this ethical perspective (Barker, 2018).

6 YOUNG CEO EVENT

The target group for the Young CEO event were immigrant students, or graduates in Finland. The event was about gaining insightful access into the Finnish start-up market. Getting informed about what support, tools, practicalities and networking opportunities are available for immigrant students and graduates aspiring to become entrepreneurs. The event was initially planned to inspire students who are yet to venture into the world of entrepreneurship, but along the way as we met up with the speakers, we determined that the Young CEO event, could also be an empowering platform for those who have tried for instance, light entrepreneurship or for those who were looking for business partnership, ideas and such.

In conjunction with the aims mentioned we also prepared to deliver tools and information that would ensure our participants were equipped for the world of job employment. For this reason, we brought one speaker who highlighted on that subject.

The Young CEO Event was set to last about six hours from 10-16 and for that reason we offered our participants with lunch at 12 o'clock, one coffee break at 14 and also had two music entertainers performing in the morning and in the afternoon. At 15 o'clock we had a fun game known as the mushroom game, in which our participants were split into two groups and asked to build a tower using spaghetti and mushroom. This was our method of alleviating our participants from the pressure they may have accumulated during the long day at the event.

6.1 Assessing the event speakers

Based on the objectives of the Young CEO, we were very particular and attentive while selecting which organizations we would invite to speak. Young CEO objectives includes show casing what support the government can provide to

new entrepreneurs, where can aspiring entrepreneurs access information regarding the practical tools that are available for business owners and where to go when in need of networking, and trainings for start-up.

A representative from TE-Office was contacted to come and speak about the support they provide to entrepreneurs. NewCo Helsinki sent a representative to speak about the practical tools one can get from them while starting own business. Eezy sent a representative to enlighten our participants on self-employment through light entrepreneurship, which basically is a way of doing business in which the person performing the work, bills the customer through a billing service company such as Eezy. The Shortcut sent a representative who came to talk about networking and trainings for startup and people looking to develop their employability skills for job employment.

Furthermore, we reached out to the board chairman of MediVida Limited and co-founder of Bali Bagus Helsinki restaurant, to come and share their experiences as foreigners in Finland with thriving business organizations (Appendix 5).

We assumed that knowing what to do when having a business idea, who to contact, the training to undergo, the networking to make use of and learning from business mentors is essential in the process of becoming an entrepreneurs as foreigners in Finland, and these were what the event speakers came to address. Also, because the event was scheduled for six hours, two entertainers were invited to come and perform (Appendix 3).

6.2 Project Design

The Young CEO event was designed to inform its participants about entrepreneurship, and the support that exists in Finland or business owners, the content of the event was design to give information concerning entrepreneur in every aspect and not only in the social sector. After we had a clear understanding of what the event was set to address with our work life partner who is the International Evangelical Church (IEC), we proceeded to made a list of

government organizations and Non-profit organisations and private companies that we can reach out to. Once these organizations have been identified, they were contacted via email and phone calls and set up meeting with individuals in these organizations to discuss what the event is all about and in which area they may be able to contribute.

The organizations that were represented in the Young CEO event were MediVida Limited, NewCo Helsinki, The Shortcut, TE-Office, Eesy, and Bali Bagus Helsinki restaurant. Our work life partner made the access to the chairman of Medivida to be possible, also Eesy and the Co-founder of Bali Bagus Helsinki restaurant.

One of the team members was assigned to reach out to NewCo Helsinki while the other team member was assigned to reach out to TE-Office by sending email and making call through to them. After two days when there was no reply to the email and response to the call, the team members decided to pay a visit to TE-office and NewCo Helsinki. It was at NewCo Helsinki and TE-Office offices that we got the phone numbers of individuals to reach and we were able to get a favourable response afterwards. After we got responses from the four organizations, we deduced we needed networking partners, and this made us to pay a visit to The Shortcut office and they were willing to be part of the event.

6.3 Assessment of the Venue

Once the speakers had been secured and the purpose of the event had been well defined, we proceeded to look for a venue that suited the purpose of the event. From a list of venues were: Oodi Library. IEC and Diaconia University of Applied sciences hall, we visited Oodi to make an inquiry of their conference space for November 8th 2019. However, it was determined during our thesis supervision that in order for us to graduate in December 2019, we needed to submit our preliminary thesis on the 28th of October 2019, hence we had to push forward our event to the 18th of October. For this reason, we were unable to secure the Oodi venue but rather decided to utilize the space at the work life partner IEC Tähtitorninkatu 8A Helsinki.

6.4 Event Marketing

For the marketing aspect of this event we created a website with the support of our working life partner, we also created social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram platforms. We made creative videos to reach out to our audience and shared them on all our social media platforms including personal social media accounts. The work life partner helped us in creating a flyer which we distributed to people around Helsinki. We also shared the event via WhatsApp groups to friends and our classmates. The distribution of the flyers meant that we had to walk into the various youth clubs, libraries and schools to hand out the flyers and if needed engage in conversation about the event. We gave flyers to random people in trams, metros, trains and at the mall. The Material was printed two weeks prior to our targeted launch date. In addition, we set up a web page, Facebook and Instagram account for the event. The links to these sites are listed in the reference.

6.5 Event Funding

We determined that the attendees may need to eat lunch, therefore based on our projection of ten to fifty participants we ordered food. Initially we had thought of placing a five euros price on the food for our attendees but later on we chose to give free food to all our participants. The overall amount of money that was spent on the food and drinks was about one hundred and fifty euros. Setting up the website and domain was about thirty euros. Printing out the flyers and the signage for the entrance was fifty euros. In order to appreciate the speakers for gracing our event with their present, we gave each one a seventy euros lunch gift cards to Bali Bagus restaurant in Helsinki. The flowers for the decoration costed forty euros and in total we spent three hundred and forty euros which was fully funded by our work life partner IEC.

6.6 Event Implementation

The event begun with a performance by one of our entertainers, followed up by a panel discussion by MediVida and Bali Bagus Helsinki restaurant, in

which they were asked a series of various questions. The discussion was followed by a presentation by a representative of TE-Office (the employment office). After that representative from the Shortcut Organization presented the activities provided by them and other organizations within their networks, the various training and events available for startups and job employment in the technology industry. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions during after these presentations.

After we had a lunch break at 12 noon, the program resumed with a song performance. It was followed by a presentation from Easy representative, who talked about light entrepreneurship. NewCo representative was next, he touched on the practicalities of starting a new company. The day ended with participants showing interest in further business mentoring programs. Everyone seemed excited and were exchanging contacts amongst each other to stay connected.

6.7 Event Results

We used SMART to measure the result of the event, in the light of the aim and objectives that were set from the planning stage. SMART is commonly use in setting and evaluating project result. It means specifics, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound (Landau, 2018).

Specific: Young CEO event was organized to present to its participants the various information and opportunities that are beneficial to immigrants' students considering start up career path. When few of the participants were asked to give feedback about the event and its content, the participants expressed their satisfaction, while three of them expressed their gratitude to us for putting such an event together for foreign students.

Measurable: The objectives of young CEO were measurable, which are to hear what support the government has for entrepreneurs, and TE-office presented that, the practical tools for new start-up was presented by NewCo Helsinki, the available networking and development trainings for start up was presented by the Shortcut, while MediVida and Bali Bagus represented the inspiring testimonies that we targeted.

Attainable: These objectives were attained because our work life partner was able to connect us with the private organizations that we needed for the event, also, the financing of the printing of signage, flyers, web design, the hall and the decoration was provided by them. On the other hand, we were able to use our social media skills and video editing skills to create short video adverts for the website and social media platforms. So, based on these resources that we had access to and with the support that we received from our work life partner, these made it possible for all the pre-planned information needed to meet these objectives to be available on the day of the event.

Relevant: The objectives of the event is relevant to the aim of our thesis which is to show how events can be used to inform immigrant student in order to inspire and steer them in the direction of considering entrepreneurship as a potential career alternative.

Time bound: The event was properly scheduled (Table 2), and programmed to hold before the deadline for the submission of our thesis.

According to Funds for NGOs (2019), the results of every project are expected to be evaluated in order to see if the set objectives were achieved. However, project results are in three different phases, they are project output, which are seen at the end of the project immediately; project outcomes, which is a form of a midterm result which is not seen immediately at the end of the project activities but after some time; while project impact is a long term project result which is seen over a long period of time.

Based on our personal observation and experience Young CEO Event was a success. The project output in this case, which was observed immediately after the event, we could tell that the participants were inspired to venture into the world of start-ups. This data was collected based on word of mouth and through the participants initiative to stay connected by creating a contact pool to reach one another in order to be able to support each other business ambitions.

The event outcome was later seen several days later after noticing that we had been added to a WhatsApp group in which most of our participants were

in. The purpose was to continue with the discussion on business development. The name of the group is career support and we are very delighted to see that initiatives are being anticipated. The event impact cannot be measured at this point but in the future, we may be able to evaluate. Ourselves as the event creators we were very inspired to start our business Finland and are currently writing our business plans.

7 EVALUATION

According to Pearce (2016), "Evaluation methods are the criteria for evaluating the success of a program or project". He further explained that there are three major forms of evaluation methods which are; goal based evaluation methods which is a criteria that measures if set objectives have been achieved; process based evaluation methods which is used to analyze the project weakness and strengths; and the outcome based evaluation which is used to measure the impact of the project and most times look into what positive change did the project made to happen.

7.1 Goal Based Evaluation

Our evaluation of the Young CEO Event will be based on the goal-based evaluation method by Pearce (2016). After the event, we had a debrief with our working life partner, the speakers, and the participants and from the data generated from the personal discussions, it resulted into a substantial amount of information sufficient for the event evaluation. A ten questions - questionnaire was further sent to our participants via email.

Two of the speakers who were still around at the end of the event expressed great interest in helping any participant who was willing to network with them for any support and business counselling. They shared their contacts with the participant during the discussion in groups at the end of the event.

It was noted that few participants already had business ideas that needed further training and mentoring to bring to execution. While there were some who only knew about the industry in which their interest lies. About six of the participants brought about the concept of crowd funding, which is basically a platform where a business owner can seek funding for an idea through crowd contribution towards the idea execution, the people can either get in return a share percentage of the business a product or service at a discounted amount for a period of time or outrightly.

Our work life partner is currently contemplating starting a business in which he will provide mentoring and networking platform for international student to repeat such type of events and network with organizations that can provide practical guidelines and support for any international student ready to start own business.

Most of the participants noted that the content of the event was just what they had been looking for and that it enlightened them; they were surprised to find out about the free trainings, mentoring and support available to them which they were not aware of. One participant who is already operating a marketing and sales business expressed her excitement to network with the representatives of the organizations that came to speak. She signed up for a training at the Shortcut that is being organized for people who already have a business idea. The event output evaluation generated a positive feedback from the participant in regard to program content, the duration of the event, the entertainment in form of music and food. Our participants gave us positive feedback stating that the event was professionally organized, and the venue was beautifully arranged.

In contrast to that, from the perspective of the working life partner, the attendance was a little disappointing as 9 people besides the speakers attended the event, whereas, the estimation was to get about 30 to 50 participants. Although, the event output was highly acknowledged by the work life partner as fulfilling. This disappointment was a shared feeling for us as well as we had assumed that we did a good job marketing the event.

During the first hour of the event we had only about four participants which generated a feeling of anxiety mixed with disappointment, but as the day unfolded and a couple more people came the anxiety faded away. We noticed that our speakers were not discouraged by the number of participants; matter of fact they gave excellent and enthusiastic powerful presentations. Our participants were also not dismayed by the outcome of attendees they seemed to be fully focused on the content of the event. Many of them felt comfortable enough to ask and share personal issues that they had been dealing with while starting their businesses or getting grants from the TE-Office.

7.2 Professional development

As future social service professional, there is a strong desire to develop and operate in different levels of professional competencies. We believe that the Young CEO Event implementation gave us the opportunity to exercise and developed our skills. We had the chance to use our decision-making skills, teamwork skills and managing our own individual strengths and weaknesses.

One of the main skills that was developed during the event planning and execution was our communication skills. Everything rises and fall on our ability to communicate with the speakers, relate any feedback to the team, and further follow up with the few participants that we had personal relationships with. Sending emails, making calls, sending out invites and coordination each individual personal task and getting back to the team on outcome impact positively on our communication ability. It is paramount important in event planning and implementation to be able to communicate effectively.

Our work division skills and team support were further developed as the event activities were properly divided and everyone was able to exercise their strength and supported in any area of weakness. The thesis writing process were carried out together while the writing was distributed by chapters. Lisa wrote chapter two, three, five and eight while Ola wrote chapter one, four, six and seven. The editing and referencing were done together as the thesis process progress.

Furthermore, being able to remain positive during the implementation process is a much-desired skill, facing disappointment and challenges is capable of bringing discouragement but we were able to overcome difficult situations with the support that we received from our working life partner and from each other.

8 CONCLUSION

In conclusion we believe that empowering immigrant youth is a pathway to achieving sustainable and successful integration in Finland. When immigrants are empowered, they can help themselves, their families and communities. Immigrants should be supported and provided with the skills and resources they need when it comes to pursuing their dreams of entrepreneurship and of becoming a part of this community. We are interested in furthering this project by cooperating with other organizations to provide immigrant youth with professional development and soft skills trainings, experiential learning opportunities as well as peer to peer mentorship and networking opportunities.

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APPENDIX 1. Young CEO Website

Young CEO

EMPOWERING STUDENTS INTO BECOMING IMPACTFUL ENTREPRENEURS AND CEOs.

[YOUNG CEO Event 18.10.2019](#)

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)



YOUNG CEO Event 18.10.2019

SEPTEMBER 23, 2019

[ADMIN](#)

[LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

www.youngceo.life

APPENDIX 2. Young CEO Event Online Invitation

The graphic features a photograph of a person in a white shirt and red scarf working at a table with markers and papers. A circular logo in the top left corner reads 'Young CEO FINLAND'. The main title 'YoungCEO Event' is overlaid in large white text. Below this, on a blue background with a pink flower graphic on the left, are the event details: date, location, time, speakers, and registration information.

Young CEO
FINLAND

YoungCEO Event

OCTOBER 18
Tähtitorninkatu 18 A |
00140 Helsinki
10:00am

**Mark
The
Date**

Speakers from:
TE-palvelut | NewCo
Helsinki | the shortCut |
MeDivida | Inkuto
International Oy.

Registration:
Send "Attending" to answers@youngceo.life.
Visit our website for more details at www.youngceo.life.
Business idea | Success stories | Networking | Practical Tools

Empowering immigrant students in Finland, into becoming impactful entrepreneurs.

APPENDIX 3. The Young CEO Event Program



Program

10:00 AM
MUSIC - ILONA GILLS
PANEL DISCUSSION - WILLEM,
RICHARDO, & LUCCI.

11:00 AM
TE-PALVELUTE SUPPORT
PRESENTATION- MICHÄEL.
HOW TO BE EMPLOYABLE AND
NETWORKING - LIS.

12:01 PM
LUNCH- BUFFETS

1:00 PM
MUSIC - KBELL.
SELF-EMPLOYEMENT - JOHANNA
START-UP PRACTICALITY- VESA

2:30 PM
COFFEE BREAK

3:00 PM
WORKSHOP
THINKTHANK
IDEAS PITCHING

4:00 PM
CLOSE



APPENDIX 4. The Questionnaire

Please choose a later that represent your answer

1. What is your education status? _____

1. I am a student
2. I am about to graduate
3. I am a graduate

2. How well was the event organized? _____

1. Extremely organised
2. Very organised
3. Somewhat organised
4. Not so organised
5. Not at all organised

3. How well did the content of the event meet your expectation?

1. Above expectation
2. Meet expectation
3. Below expectation
4. Not so sure
5. Not at all

4. Before the event did you have all the information about the event
that you needed? _____

1. All the information
2. Most of the information
3. Some of the information
4. A little information
5. None of the information

5. Was the length of the event too long or short or about right?

1. Much too long
2. Too short
3. About right
4. Too short
5. Much too short

6. What did you benefit from the event? Write freely _____

7. Do you feel like you have needed information to get into start up?

1. All the information
2. Most of the information
3. Some of the information
4. A little information
5. None of the information

8. Would you like to participate in a mentoring entrepreneurs networking and crowd funding if you are presented with the opportunity?

1. Most certain
2. Very Certain
3. Somewhat Certainly
4. Not so certain
5. Not at all

9. Would you like to be mentored in line with your specific business idea? _____

1. Most certain
2. Very Certain
3. Somewhat Certainly
4. Not so certain
5. Not at all

10. Do you have anything you will like to ask, suggest or say? Write freely _____

APPENDIX 5. The Invited Organizations

List of Organizations Invited for the Young CEO Event

1. NewCo Helsinki (<https://newcohelsinki.fi/en/>).
2. TE-Office (<http://www.te-palvelut.fi/te/en/index.html>).
3. The Shortcut (<https://theshortcut.org/>).
4. Eesy
(https://www.eezy.fi/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwgNXtBRC6ARIsAIPP7RsWXvQ24uYwD8qTezwZtxmV3sq2HWQxN2BfG6Z6op8ihCOJ1uxxyxcaAnTnEALw_wcB).
5. MediVida (<http://www.medivida.fi/en/home.html>).
6. Bali Bagus Helsinki (<https://www.facebook.com/balibagushelsinki/>).