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EXPORT OF EDUCATION TO CHINA – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

– Case: Turku University of Applied Sciences

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Finland has already for long been famous for its high-class and modern education and expertise and good reputation of the learning results. Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) has together with other Finnish higher education institutes (HEI) started to develop educational expertise and services to the global education markets. TUAS is still in a learning phase, but some promising openings have been made.

As a definition of the export of education is a complex term, it is not commonly agreed. Export of education has been understood mostly as teaching which has been exported abroad. Exporting the education expertise takes over a broader entity. Finnish expertise has enormous market potential. However, the results have not been as promising as the reputation might indicate.

China has become one of the world's biggest economies. The market area is huge and growing fast, bringing a lot of opportunities to the western HEIs. China shouldn´t be ignored as a market area as they are willing to invest into education. In addition, they have capacity to pay for the education and they are reform oriented. China also offers a wide range of challenges, which are good to be understood, when starting business with Chinese. TUAS has already had some export activities in China and some more operations are planned in future.

The purpose of the thesis was to discuss the status and the future of the export of education at TUAS. The research question was to define the status of TUAS education export business towards China and its´ future potential and challenges. After the key findings, some development proposals were given at the end of the research.

In the theory chapter, it was discussed the theory of the export of education in Finland and worldwide, in addition about the marketing of HE and professional services. Furthermore, the status of Chinese education and society, and China as a market area were covered. The methodology of the research was a qualitative research and as a method partly structured thematic interview.

KEYWORDS:

Export of Education, Marketing Strategy, Marketing of Higer Education, Marketing of Professional Services, University of Applied Sciences, China.

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KOULUTUSVIENTI KIINAAN – MAHDOLLISUUDET JA HAASTEET

- Case: Turun ammattikorkeakoulu

Suomi on jo pitkään ollut tunnettu korkeatasoisesta ja modernista koulutuksestaan. Maalla on hyvä maine oppimistuloksista ja korkeasta osaamisestaan. Turun ammattikorkeakoulu (Turku AMK) on yhdessä muiden suomalaisten korkeakoulujen kanssa kehittänyt koulutuksen osaamista ja palveluita kansainvälisille markkinoille. Koulutusvientiä määriteltäessä se yhdistetään useinmiten ulkomaille vietävään opetukseen, vaikka siihen sisältyy paljon laajempia kokonaisuuksia.

Kiina on maailman suurimpia kansantalouksia, jossa markkinat ovat suuret, ja ne kasvavat hyvin nopeasti tuoden paljon mahdollisuuksia myös länsimaisille korkeakouluille. Koulutusviennin markkina-alueena Kiina on varteenotettava alue, joka on valmis investoimaan koulutukseen. Kiinan markkinoilla on kuitenkin paljon haasteita, jotka tulee huomioida jo liiketoiminnan suunnitteluvaiheessa.

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli selvittää Turun AMK:n koulutusviennin nykytilaa ja tulevaisuuden mahdollisuuksia ja haasteita Kiinan markkinoilla. Teoriaosuudessa käsiteltiin koulutusviennin teoriaa niin Suomessa kuin maailmalla sekä korkeakoulutuksen ja osaamisen markkinointia. Lisäksi käsiteltiin Kiinan koulutuksen yhteiskunnan nykytilaa ja kehittymistä sekä Kiinaa koulutusviennin markkina-alueena.

Turun AMK:lla on ollut joitakin koulutusvientiaktiviteetteja Kiinaan ja uusia toimintoja on suunnitteilla tulevaisuuteen. Tutkimusmenetelmänä käytettiin laadullista tutkimusta ja metodina osittain strukturoitua temaattista haastattelua. Opinnäytetyössä tehdyn selvityksen perusteella esitetään koulutusvientiin liittyviä kehittämisehdotuksia.

ASIASANAT:

koulutusvienti, markkinointistrategia, korkeakoulumarkkinointi, asiantuntijapalvelujen markkinointi, ammattikorkeakoulu, Kiina.

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ABBREVIATION

TUAS	Turku University of Applied Sciences
UAS	University of Applied Sciences
HEI	Higher Education Institution
MIGRI	Finnish Immigration Service

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the thesis

The Finns education is well known brand worldwide, especially the results in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have increased the Finnish educational system's success abroad.

Finnish education export strategy was established in 2010. Since then Finland has tried to find models how to benefit and commercialise this good reputation. Finnish expertise has enormous market potential. However, the results have not been as promising as the reputation might indicate.

The term export of education is not yet commonly agreed, and it is not long since HEIs started to develop activities related to export of education in Finland. There is not long history, Finland is still rather small and in the beginning of the processes. Export of education is mostly seen as degree sales; however this does not apply in Finland. Finland has taken a different approach for export of education. (Rautakoura 2013)

Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) has among other higher education in-states (HEI) and universities of applied sciences (UAS) in Finland find ways how our education could be exported to other countries. TUAS is still in a learning phase, but some promising openings have been made.

Many HEIs are active in China, it has been seen as an attractive and huge market area where there is room for everyone. Chinese economy is growing rapidly and there is potential to grow the export business. The market is challenging and demanding, but despite all the difficulties, it is seen as one of the most important markets in the future.

1.2 Goals and research problem of thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to discuss about the current status and the future of the export of education at Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS). TUAS is one of the largest universities of applied sciences (UAS) in Finland. TUAS has 10 000 students and 700 experts in its learning community. The vision of TUAS, it is seen to be an internationally esteemed institution of higher education which has a positive impact on the

competitiveness and well-being of Southwest Finland. The studies are working life-oriented, combining theoretical studies with professional skills. What is unique is the learning and teaching method called Innovation Pedagogy, Innopeda®, a pedagogical method developed at TUAS. It emphasizes the viewpoints of RDI and working life, providing skills for independent thinking, effective communication, and international activities. (TUAS 2020)

The research question is to define the current situation of the TUAS` export of education business towards China and it´s future potential and challenges. In the focus has been Bachelor´s degree programs as it is seen as our strengths at the universities of applied sciences (UAS).

The Finnish UAS Bachelor's degree can have different sizes depending on the field and the degree program. It can consist of 210, 240 or 270 ECTS credits and the duration is 3,5−4,5 years of full-times studies. The UAS have a lot of flexibility when it comes to the content of the programs, they can decide the content of each degree programme. Therefore, programmes with the same name may have different study modules and units at different UAS. Finnish UAS provide bachelor's level degrees in various fields of study. (Study Info 2020) So does TUAS. However, TUAS offers, in English only two Bachelor's degree programs, which are Bachelor of Business Administration Interna-tional Business Online and Bachelor of Engineering, Information and Communications Technology. (TUAS 2020). What is common for all the Bachelor´s degrees are that they consist of basic, professional and elective studies, practical training and the final thesis (Bachelor´s thesis). (Study Info 2020)

In the theory chapter of the thesis is discussed the theory of the export of education in Finland and worldwide, in addition about the marketing of higher education and professional services. Furthermore, the status and development of Chinese education and society, the current status of China as a market area is covered. Finally, some development proposals are given for the future, in order to improve the export of education activities of TUAS to China.

1.3 The research methods used in the thesis

The methodology of the research was a qualitative research and as a method of the qualitive research was used partly structured thematic interviews. This method was

chosen as it was meant to find out the opinions and thoughts about certain issues related to the export of education towards China at TUAS.

According to Hirsijärvi et al the basis of the qualitive research is the description of the real life and the material is collected in spontaneous and real occasions. In the qualitative research the target is studied comprehensively. The aspiration is to find and expose facts, in turn not really to verify the veritable claims. The human is favored as instru-ment for collecting the data. The researcher trusts more to his or her observations and discussions with the examined persons than to the knowledge acquired via measurement instruments. It is typical to use thematic interviews in the qualitative research. The target audience is chosen appropriately, not with a random sample. The research plan is modified during the research, and the research is implemented flexible and plans are changed regarding the circumstances. The cases are dealt as unique and are interpreted according to that. (Hirsijärvi et al 1997, 155).

As a method to collect the data was chosen a half-structured interview. In this way the research touch is an empirical research method. The interview is made using a form with questions. An interview is a flexible way, as it allows an interaction with the inter-viewed person. The good thing is that the interviewed person can be chosen so, that they have an expertise regarding the topic. The order of asking the questions were changing according the interviewed person as the discussion was flowing in different ways with each interviewed person. This is the reason the method is half-structured question, as the order of the questions were not always the same, there was some flex-ibility. The questions were open, so no ready options for answers were given. (Hirsijärvi et al 1997, 195)

The questions were built under different thematic areas, so the interview can be also partly called thematic interview, where the themes are known beforehand. This means that if in the interview is used exact same questions of certain topics, but all the questions are not used to all the interviewed persons, then is a question about a thematic interview. (Hirsijärvi et al 1997, 195) This was the case in this research too, as some questions were differently formatted e.g. for the stakeholder that to the personnel of TUAS. Open questions allow the interviewers to express their true opinions and all the ideas they have in their mind. The persons who were chosen to the research were experts in their field, with a long working experience in the topic. This is the advantage of a qualitative research.

2 EXPORT OF EDUCATION

2.1 Worldwide Educating

Finland has already for long been famous for its high-class and modern education, good reputation of the learning results and high quality of the knowhow and expertise. Finland´s strongest brand internationally is Finnish education, which is renowned for its high quality. Finns have been successful in PISA tests in the 2000s and especially Finland´s teacher education is valued through the world. (Huusko 2017)

As the Worldwide Educating for The Future Index 2019 statistics show in the figure 1, Finland has retained overall leadership, with Sweden in second place. As in previous years, Finland's future skills strengths are almost universal across the index pillars. It is the category front-runner when it comes to the teaching environment, where it is a leader or co-leader in extracurricular learning, career counselling and classroom access to technology. The quality of its teachers is among the world's best, coming second only to South Korea. Although difficult to quantify, another of Finland's advantages is the consistency of standards across a large expanse of territory. "Whether you attend a school in Helsinki or in a remote rural area, the educational experiences and opportunities are the same," says Jamil Salmi, a global tertiary education expert. (From policy to practice 2019)

Figure 1: Worldwide Educating for the Future Index 2019 scores, overall and by category (out of 100)

High score Medium score Low score

OVERALL SCORE			POLICY ENVIRONMENT			TEACHING ENVIRONMENT			SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT		
1	Finland	84.8	1	Sweden	93.2	1	Finland	82.0	1	New Zealand	87.4
2	Sweden	84.3	2	Finland	88.3	2	Singapore	78.9	2	Norway	87.1
3	New Zealand	79.9	3	Netherlands	88.1	3	Sweden	78.3	3	Finland	86.9
4	Singapore	79.7	=4	New Zealand	86.2	4	Germany	76.4	=4	Sweden	86.0
5	Netherlands	79.2	=4	Singapore	86.2	5	Canada	75.8	=4	Switzerland	86.0
6	Canada	79.1	6	Norway	86.0	6	Switzerland	75.6	6	Canada	85.5
7	Switzerland	78.5	7	Australia	82.4	7	New Zealand	73.2	7	Netherlands	85.2
8	Australia	77.8	8	South Korea	80.5	8	Australia	73.0	8	Germany	83.1
9	Germany	74.9	9	Canada	80.2	9	Japan	72.4	9	Australia	82.9
10	Japan	74.2	10	Peru	78.8	10	Hong Kong SAR	72.2	10	UK	82.0
11	Norway	73.5	11	Japan	78.6	11	Netherlands	71.4	11	France	78.1
12	Hong Kong SAR	73.0	12	Switzerland	78.2	12	South Korea	70.6	12	US	76.1
13	South Korea	72.6	13	Italy	75.7	13	Spain	70.2	13	Chile	73.6
14	France	69.9	14	Tanzania	75.5	14	UK	65.7	14	Hong Kong SAR	73.0
15	UK	69.8	15	Turkey	75.2	15	Poland	64.5	15	Japan	72.4
16	Spain	69.1	16	France	74.9	16	France	63.6	16	Singapore	71.9
17	Italy	66.7	17	Hong Kong SAR	74.3	=17	Mexico	63.2	17	Spain	71.7
18	UAE	66.5	18	UAE	74.1	=17	UAE	63.2	18	Italy	67.4
19	Poland	65.8	19	Kazakhstan	71.0	19	Italy	61.0	19	Poland	66.1
20	Mexico	63.9	20	Ghana	70.7	20	Norway	60.6	20	South Korea	66.0
21	Chile	62.5	21	Israel	70.6	21	South Africa	58.5	21	Argentina	65.6
22	US	61.4	22	Uzbekistan	70.5	22	Philippines	57.8	22	Colombia	65.0
23	Philippines	60.6	23	Chile	70.0	23	Indonesia	57.5	23	Brazil	64.9
24	Peru	59.9	24	Mexico	68.9	24	China	56.8	24	Israel	64.2
	AVERAGE	59.8	25	UK	68.4	25	US	56.2	25	UAE	63.2
25	Colombia	59.5	26	Colombia	67.9	26	Vietnam	56.1		AVERAGE	62.2
26	Ghana	59.2	27	Poland	67.6		AVERAGE	55.5	26	South Africa	61.9
27	South Africa	58.7	28	Germany	66.9	27	Chile	53.6	27	Ghana	59.8
28	Indonesia	57.9	29	Philippines	66.0	28	Colombia	52.3	28	Philippines	59.6
29	Israel	57.6	30	Myanmar	65.9	29	India	52.2	29	Peru	58.9
30	Kazakhstan	57.0	31	Spain	65.7	30	Ghana	52.1	30	Mexico	58.2
31	Vietnam	55.6		AVERAGE	65.3	31	Russia	50.9	31	Thailand	54.9
32	Turkey	54.9	32	Russia	65.1	32	Kazakhstan	50.4	32	Kazakhstan	52.4
33	Russia	54.1	33	Indonesia	63.8	33	Peru	48.8	33	Saudi Arabia	52.3
34	China	53.8	34	Vietnam	62.4	34	Thailand	47.6	34	India	50.1
35	India	53.0	35	Pakistan	61.2	35	Israel	47.2	35	Indonesia	49.9
36	Uzbekistan	52.0	36	US	60.4	36	Saudi Arabia	45.7	36	Turkey	49.1
37	Brazil	51.9	37	Ethiopia	60.3	37	Turkey	45.2	37	Kenya	48.7
38	Thailand	51.8	38	Brazil	58.4	38	Uzbekistan	44.5	38	China	46.7
39	Tanzania	51.7	39	South Africa	56.9	39	Bangladesh	43.6	39	Egypt	46.6
40	Argentina	49.9	40	Thailand	56.8	40	Argentina	43.0	40	Myanmar	45.9
41	Ethiopia	45.9	41	India	56.3	41	Brazil	42.8	41	Russia	45.6
42	Iran	44.3	42	China	53.5	42	Iran	42.3	42	Nigeria	44.6
43	Myanmar	42.6	43	Egypt	52.7	43	Tanzania	40.5	43	Ethiopia	44.4
44	Egypt	41.3	44	Iran	52.6	44	Kenya	39.1	44	Vietnam	44.2
45	Pakistan	41.0	45	Argentina	51.1	45	Nigeria	38.1	45	Tanzania	44.1
46	Saudi Arabia	40.9	46	Saudi Arabia	25.4	46	Ethiopia	37.9	46	Pakistan	43.8
47	Bangladesh	36.6	47	Kenya	22.2	47	Egypt	32.3	47	Uzbekistan	42.7
48	Kenya	36.0	48	Bangladesh	21.2	48	Pakistan	27.7	48	Bangladesh	42.2
49	Nigeria	33.5	49	DRC	20.3	49	Myanmar	27.3	49	Iran	36.5
50	DRC	21.3	50	Nigeria	18.5	50	DRC	17.0	50	DRC	33.4

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit

Figure 1. Worldwide Educating for The Future Index 2019 scores, overall and by category (out of 100) (The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited 2019)

America, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada are the world leaders in export of higher education services. For example, higher education is Australia's second largest export earner after raw materials (Shive 2010). We are not competing in the same league with these Anglo-American competitors. In spite of the strong brand and demand of high-quality Finnish education, Finland has not been able to respond to export opportunities as effectively as could be hoped and compared to the rest of the world.

Export of education can be seen as wide area, as there is not a question only about the tuition fees, but the paying students become a consumer of academic and much more services. These include banking, telecommunications, air travel, housing, food and restaurants, entertainment and tourist services, etc. In addition to the revenue to related industries servicing students and their parents, the long-term benefit to the exporter is often the opportunity to attract highly talented people to work, live and contribute locally. An importer of higher education services sends its young people away to university. The money and the students go in opposite directions. (Shive 2010).

According to the vision which supports the export of Finnish education and expertise, there will be concentrated unique expertise on learning and education systems during the upcoming years in Finland. This will support the learning both of individuals and communities, in addition expertise which will serve nationwide educational systems. Finland has already until now act as a showroom of education and expertise for many countries. According the governmental program, Finland is a country where you want to learn constantly new. The target of the governmental Flagship program is to raise the revenue of the education export with one third, up to 350 million euros, until the year 2018. Finland´s reputation on quality education and as a country of contributor of high expertise, offers for this a lot of potential. (OKM 2016)

The Ministry of Education and Culture wanted to disassemble the obstacles of export of education. The tuition fees for the students coming from outside of EU/ETA areas were launched in the higher education institutes starting from the fall 2017. In addition, the obstacles in on-demand education have been cleared among other things renewing the legislation of the education which leads to a degree. During the spring 2016 The Ministry of Education and Culture published a road map for the export of education for the years 2016-2019. It stated that the volume for the export of education will be generated not only with the related areas of the development of the educational systems by the international evaluation, learning materials, and consultancy business, but in addition from the tuition fees which are charged from the students studying in the degree programs. More speed for the export business of expertise is taken also from common marketing services and from a new enterprise type of a action model. (OKM 2017b).

According to Vanhanen, the global world has made that during the resent years many universities of applied sciences (UAS) have also started systematically to develop their

educational expertise and services to the global education markets. It has been confessed to its own sphere of operations, which is not reliant on top-quality education but also requires new skills and competences, as well as novel mindset from the actors in higher education institutions.

However, export of education is a challenging task for universities of applied sciences because there are no traditions for it. The knowhow is been developed together in different consortiums and trainings. (Vanhanen 2016)

2.2 Definition of a term of the export of education

As a definition of the export of education is a complex term. It has been understood mostly the teaching what has been exported abroad. Exporting the education expertise takes over a broader entity which also includes consultancy services and the technology related solutions to the learning. The Finnish term ”koulutusvienti” is related to concept of education export which is used in the English speaking countries. The export related to educational knowhow can be seen also on a side of a traditional industrial export, and as way to support it, when the Finnish expertise is taken on side, different development services, learning environment solutions, and as a productization and commercialization of the research results.

It is also good to take a term of ”osaamisen vienti” the export of expertise. It includes the export of education and the export of educational expertise and takes over broadly expertise and know-how and the services of knowledge. In Finland, in commonly used term is global education services. (OPM 2009a.)

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture’s broad definition, “education export includes all business activities based on education, the education system and the transfer of knowledge that create products or services that a foreign party pays for. Education export is a highly divergent field. Early childhood education and higher education, for example, are comprised of completely different content.

The dominant form internationally is education leading to a university degree. It is the field of education with the highest revenues, but also the one where competition is the most intense. In addition to university degrees, learning environments are receiving a lot of attention: There are businesses that create healthy and safe school buildings. Of

course, you also have the digital side of things: there is growing global demand for digital learning environments, learning games and more traditional learning materials. We have examples of all of these in Finland. (OKM 2016)

In the survey made by TEKES 2015 most of the UASs said that export of professional services were meant export of degree programs or other education, its development, consultancy, or research activity, supporting capacity building, technology supported by learning outcomes or export of learning environments or overall solutions, where the payer is foreign and no own funding is needed. The payer and customer can be different parties. The implementation can take place in Finland, target country or online. In the export of professional services, the business is profitable. As common products were seen degree education, supplement education, intensive courses and visits, development and consultancy services, selling concepts and solutions, and development of degree programs and professional teacher training. From these the degree education with tuition fees were seen as most profitable and significantly growing export product. (Aura et al 2016)

Most common products in the in the export of education are training the trainers, study visits and intensive programs, consultation, tailormade degrees and double degree programs and upgrading education, states Helli Kitinoja, in the publication by JAMK, 2016. In the publication Export of Education by Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, Reflections on best practices is referred to the article by the Ministry of Education and Culture, defining that transnational education, can bring diversification of income, reputation and brand; new research initiatives, increase tolerance of diversity, innovation mobility and projects. In addition, new viewpoints and is targeted outside of Finland. (Vanhanen 2016)

Definition for transnational education (TNE) can be confusing and vary greatly throughout the world, making comparisons difficult. Alumno – International Education Experts summarizes that all types of higher education study programs, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based can be seen as transnational education. Alumno also states that English speaking countries lead the way in TNE export. Top TNE exporting countries (JISC 2018) were

1.UK, 2. USA, 3. Australia, 4. France, 5. Germany, 6. Netherlands, 7. Russia, 8. China, 9. Canada, 10. India.

The top TNE host countries (JISC 2018) were 1. China, 2. United Arab Emirates, 3. Malaysia, 4. Singapore,,5. Qatar, 6. South Korea, 7. Hong Kong, 8. Mauritius and 9. Vietnam.

Export refers that the customers of the business are abroad. The customers of the export of education can be private persons, companies, other organizations. The training does not need to take place abroad, but as an export can be seen also so called on-demand education that takes place in Finland, when the paying person, institution is foreign. (OPM 2009; Aura et al 2016).) The important aspects to clear out regarding export of education are on the other hand the implementation of the strategy and the issues related to the organization and partnerships inside the higher education institutes (HEI). At the same time HEI´s should be able to find out what kind of products in different market area is worth of promote and offer and how those should be productized and formed as service packages to be suitable to the target markets. Launching the tuition fees is significant issue for a country like Finland, where the living costs are remarkable. When implementing education services in domestic markets should be taken into consideration total costs, what are resulted in for the customer. (Aura 2016)

University of Applied Sciences (UAS) can organize also on demand education leading to a higher education degree which is in its action license for the student groups outside of EU/ETA area. The education needs to be ordered and financed by Finnish nation, other nation, international organization, Finnish or foreign public corporation, foundation, or a private organization. UAS´s need to collect from the subscriber a fee which covers at least the expenses caused by the on-demand education. The subscriber has a right to collect fees following the legislation in the prospective country from the students participating into the on-demand education. (Finlex 2014)

Franchise	Degree programs move instead of organizations. Monitoring and quality checking of the education is done by the foreign partner.
Joint degree	Degree programs move partly instead of organizations. Joint degree programs in a cooperation with domestic and foreign partners. Techer mobility.
Twinning programme	Recognized credit transfer system between the domestic and foreign partners. Program has been divided into two parts: one part is carried out abroad and another part at home institution. Organizations don´t move, but students do between the institutions.
Offshore campus	Both degree programs and organizations move. Curriculum, HR recruitments and development is on responsibility of the foreign partner.

Figure 2. There are different forms for export of education. (Bhushan 2006 in Aura et al 2016).

The same model is explained in the tutorial for the export of education by Education Finland. The mobility of the services can happen throughout four different scenarios:

1) Services are produced in the target country, when the experts of the service provider and service are moving.

2) Services are produced outside the target market e.g. in Finland and then the customers are moving.

3) The services are offered over the country limits, utilization networks, software's and other technology, when is happening only virtual mobility.

4) The service is offered via own or partner´s unit abroad. (OKM, Education Finland 2020)

Gibbs and Maringe explain the spread of overseas campuses is increasing rapidly in the world. The USA, Ireland and the UK have been identified as the most active players in

this field. UK has universities which have perhaps the best-developed programs of overseas educational partnership program in China, Malaysia and India. Key advantages which are seen with this development include: providing a ready environment for staff and students to learn cooperatively; providing a ready environment for staff to gain international academic experience necessary for their career growth and promotion; enhancing the reputation of the university as a global player in key educational markets; enhancing inter-country relations and understanding. However, there are also challenging issues like quality maintenance; export controls; protection of intellectual property; maintenance of brand image and quality; and issues related to corporate and individual taxes. (Gibbis and Marginge 2008)

International development consultancy is an example of a mobility of the experts. The challenge in this type of an export of education is, the availability of the experts when needed. The guidebook recommends that generally it should be found ways how the physical mobility could be decreased and replaced by virtual mobility of the experts. This is also the direction when checking the finance issued, from the physical mobility is caused travel costs, which needs to be added to the prices and reduce the margin which is received from the service. (OKM, Education Finland 2020)

The typical example of the mobility of the customers is sales of the degrees. In many superpower countries of the export of education the export of education is importing degree students. In Finland this came possible only very recently, to charge a tuition fee from the students outside of EU and ETA countries. However, we cannot compete with the English-speaking countries, due the shortage of the traditions and geographical location. However, Finland has a competitive advantage when offering virtual services. One typical example of this is offering virtual course, which does not contain any contact teaching. Challenges are how the virtual technology supports the pedagogical models. Other challenge is if the teachers and students don´t control the technology if they are not willing to learn the new technology or if the universities do not invest in getting the technology. (OKM, Education Finland 2020)

In the document ”Road Map of the Export of education 2016-2019” by the Ministry of Education and Culture 2016 the export of education is seen as a commercial action, where the success demands both the utility of the high expertise, know-how and experience and productization but also novel mindset. As a common challenge is to build

up Finnish, internationally attractive business from our educational expertise, which enables sustainable growth in the target markets, and which is at the same time build up to a common value basis. The Ministry can offer support services and visibility, but at the end the companies, HEIs and institutions need to make the choices to build up sustainable way to run the business. The productive growth is reached with a persistent work. (OKM 2016)

”Road Map of the Export of education 2016-2019” aligns that as an export of education can be included all the business related to the education, educational system or knowledge transformation, from which formulated product or service a foreign customer pays for. The guidebook for export of education by OAJ adds that the products can be degree, and continuous education and their development, teacher training, short courses, visits, development and consultancy services, selling results and concepts. The actions related to export of education can happen both in the domestic or foreign markets. (OAJ 2020) Internationally the biggest volume of the export of education comes from the degree education and the tuition fees which are charged from the students. In addition, from the business related to the educational systems e.g. international evaluation, learning materials and consultant businesses. (OKM 2016)

2.3 Market areas and customers for Finnish export of education

2.3.1 The competitiveness factors in export

Regarding the research done by TEKES in 2015 the most outstanding market areas for exporting expertise are Middle East, East and South-East Asia. Most of the UASs said that the key areas for the export are China, Kazakhstan, India, Vietnam, and some African countries, Russia, from Latin Amerika Chile, Brasilia, Peru, Gulfs area and Arab Emirates, Middle East, South-East Asia, Romania and Antarctic area. (Aura et al 2016)

According to Vanhanen, with the UAS´ the focus has been more into professional competences and innovations. In Finland there are 26 UASs which work closely with industry, society, and business. They act domestically and globally and the link between professional learning. In addition, the applied research and innovation is strong. Many UAS`s have also develop new focus areas and pedagogical solutions to reach this goal

in practice. Finnish UAS professionals can offer a lot to international agendas. The educational models used in UAS`s have already piqued interest, which in tur has led to practical cooperation, especially in Asia, Latin America, and Arabian Peninsula. (Vanhanen 2016)

Most potential customers for the export of professional services were seen international degree students, educational institutions, educational networks, ministries and their organizations, companies and communities. Long term project cooperation and strategic partnerships and other collaboration with the partner institutions are seen important motives when selecting target areas and customer ships. (Aura et al 2016)

The competitiveness factors in export were seen customer understanding and relationships, know-how of the personnel, conception and productization. When speaking about the export of professional services, many support services are needed from the different sectors of the whole HEI, so the know-how of the international service business is important factor for the whole personnel of the HEI. (OKM 2016.)

In the publication, Road map for the export of education 2016-2019 it was underlined that there is a need for fostering the market know-how. The field of export of education is globally very competitive field. In Finland is missing composed and actual information about the markets of the export of education e.g. in the competition in a degree education and country specific market and background information. Finnish exporters find difficult to perceive key target markets and do clear segmentation. Team Finland does every quarter of the year a target market analysis for the export of education activities and presents case presentations certain target markets. There is also a lack of the knowledge about the legislation of the target markets in the educational field. Education and teaching are regulated in many countries, and if affected by the existing legislation. Finnish actors have very few know-hows about these matters, the changes and the opportunities. Team Finland follows these changes and reports about these regularly. In addition, Finnish exporters don´t know their competitors in different countries and their strengths and weaknesses. Knowing the competitors could also allow new and needed partnerships, to implement bigger project entities. There is also a lack of knowledge about different events e.g. fairs, conferences and competitions. This may affect participating into wrong and impractical events and preparation into them. (OKM 2016)

2.3.2 Decision making process and cooperation aspects

According the survey done to UASs in 2016, mostly the strategical decision making of the professional service export in the UASs is done by the top management, so rector and the board of the UAS. The operative management of the export is mostly in the faculty or program level. However, the coordination was made on the university level. Other half of the repliers said that the organizational model for the export of education was done in centralized way. Most of the times the export of professional services was situated under the RDI-services. In some UASs was named a steering committee or a team for the export of education activities and in different units or faculties was named a responsible for the export. Daily supporting services for export actions were named reference lists, offer and agreement services, common prizing policy, support in risk management, support in legal, taxation, productization, sales, marketing and communication services, and student and international services and in online teaching support. Usually the support services were able to get inside the university but need for cooperation was underlined. Outside services were get from Team Finland ja Finpro´s EEF-program. (Aura et al 2016)

Some UASs are still in an initial stage of developing organizational structures and practices for education export, while other have been involved with many export projects during several years already. In the survey made by Arene, many universities saw the need for could and should work together sharing information and engaging in cooperation in different kind s of networks and consortiums. (Vanhanen 2016)

Preparing a business plan for exporting the professional services for the HEI´s, would demand clear long-term financial investments states the experts in the article in the UAS Journal 2017. The monitoring of the revenue, the development of covering, finan-cial numbers and the implementation of the business plan were involved into the export of professional services. It was seen important both to follow the development of mar-kets and customer needs, likewise the continuous product and offering development based on the customer needs. In the internal development was seen crucial the com-mitment of the whole organization to the export of professional services, the cohesion in the instructions and methods, the usability and best possible personnel planning and resourcing. It was seen important that the export of professional services needs to be

linked to the development of the education programs and RDI activities, and that it needs to support the strategy and the internationalization of the institution. (AMK-lehti 2017)
Some example of an existing networks is the Team Finland -cooperation (together with the Ministries of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and Ministry of Foreign Affairs). With it the education export activities have been speeded up broadly. Education Finland -growth program runs within the Finnish National Agency for Education (OPH) starting from 1.6.2017. In the program there has been joined already over 110 members, in which TUAS is one of them. The activities are funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, in addition from the members is charged a membership fee. The program was running with a name Education Export Finland within the Business Finland (Finpro) until the spring 2017. (OKM 2017)

According the survey of TEKES in 2016, less than half of the UAS said that they were involved in Finpro´s Education Export Finland (EEF) export of education program, some were also a part of Team Finland and Findpro´s Finland care networks. Most of the HEIs did regional cooperation with cities, companies, other educational institutes, organizations, and export organizations. In addition, UASs are involved in networks, which are organized by the customer, country, expert area or the size of the expected export. The flexible ways to function of the networks is seen important. The partners of the implemented export activity can form an export consortium. (Aura et al 2016)

According the survey made to the UAS´ in late 2016 the meaning for cooperation were seen crucial. The cooperation models were such as sharing teachers and expertise, product development, marketing activities and in an agreement preparation. In addition, possibilities in establishing common export unit in some specific country and sharing experiences and discussions between certain exporters. The cooperation requires trust and getting rid of the setting of a competition. The role of the international cooperation partners was seen important. Together with the partnership institution the partner abroad can be a representor or an official facet. (AMK-lehti 2017)

In addition, there are different consortiums which have been established to support export of education of HEIs. E.g. in the metropolitan area three UAS have got together to improve the export of education activities. In the university sector one example is a consortium of several science universities called Finland University. (Aura et al 2016)

2.3.3 Commercial phase of the internationalization

It has been moved into a commercial phase of the international cooperation in the internationalization of the HEIs. This has brought challenges for the HEI´s. UAS´ see that the export of education important part of the implementation of their strategy, although the development in the area of service business might take many years, even decades. Markets are challenging because Finland competes globally together with other HEI´s. The success is possible with networking and cooperation instead of competing with each other's. With the business of expertise services, the export of professional ser-vices supports the development of the quality of the education, and strengths the coop-eration with the strategic national, international partners. (AMK-lehti 2017)

In the newest aligned document, an international strategy for higher education and research, by the ministry of Education and Culture 'Better together for a better world – Policies to promote internationalization in Finnish higher education and research 2017–2025' one of the seven action areas was "speed to the Finnis export of professional services". The publication targets to build up the quality of Finnish higher education and research and to achieve a globally acknowledged frontrunner position by 2025.

The publication underlines that Finland's strengths include its readiness to reform and experiment and its efficient use of research and knowledge. In addition, it states that it is easy to come to Finland to study and work. Finland has best-quality higher education and research environments that are highly inspiring globally. Finland offers solutions to shared challenges in the world that draw on expertise, research and business collaboration. It has a robust and responsible position in global cooperation networks and value chains in knowledge production and competence, and it is an attractive investment location for knowledge-intensive activity. (OKM 2018) Söderqvist (2002) has divided Finnish HEIs´ internationalization in five phases in his doctoral thesis, in which one is the commercialization of the internationality - the era of commercialisation, the 2010-chapter. His opinion is that the results and the knowhow and best practises should be able to be commercialized in a cooperation with domestic and international partnerships and networks. (AMK-lehti 2017)

There has been recognized some elements for the success of HEIs in the international markets, in the latest research papers. Those are e.g. the suitability of courses for the

needs of the students, academic reputation, the opportunities to help the progress for the employment offered by the degree programs, in addition the quality of the teaching. In the core of the education of export´s competitiveness is seen also the customer understanding, and customer contacts, the knowhow of the personnel and concepting and productization. In the different phases of the process of export of expertise, is needed also the whole personnel of the international service business knowhow. (AMK-lehti 2017)

Vanhanen (2016) states that Finland has little experience in commercial export of university education in Finland. This due our history and high levels of regulations. Being active in international business requires many things. At Institutional levels having something to offer – both in terms of content and the supporting infrastructure, is the key. All actors need to have necessary language and cultural skills and experience of the tough international scene. Cultural understanding, tolerance and freedom from prejudice must be values held throughout the entire organization.

According to Vanhanen (2016) UAS have payed attention to the internalization and it is seen in many ways in the higher education institutions. The student mobility, curriculum and study practices, and strengthening the staff training and partnership networks are the most common areas, but also export of education was seen one of the most topical matters in the field of internationalization. Many UASs have been developing educational concepts and service activities, creating new working methods and staff competences, were seen important steps enhancing the UAS´ abilities to enter the global education market more target oriented manner.

In the publication ‘Better together for a better world – Policies to promote internationalization in Finnish higher education and research 2017–2025’ by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the goal three is to build momentum for sharing Finnish Knowledge, Expertise and Educational innovations. Globally, education exports and expert services are one of the most rapidly growing export sectors. The competition is tough, especially among the degree programmes of higher education institutions. Even though Finnish higher education institutions will, in the future, have stronger individual profiles, it will be possible to support the work of these institutions through joint marketing actions. This means marketing services digitally and worldwide, in close cooperation with the Team Finland network. There is a clear need for joint market surveys. The plan of the ministry

is to establish a firm to accelerate investments and the pace of product development in Finnish education exports, and to encourage internationalization among operators in the sector. The firm will function as an investor and partner in big or interesting export projects which find it difficult to obtain capital financing. With the new firm in place, also the risk sharing will be possible in education exports and development projects. (OKM 2018)

The success in the export of education markets means that the strengthening the competencies of the personnel of the companies´, HEI´s and institution´s and at the same time the utility of the competencies as a part of the services. It is possible to productize new products and services, in the key expertise areas of the HEI´s. There is a need to increase the experts in the field of export of education by offering training and education for the future experts. (OKM 2016)

According to Gibbs and Maringe (2008) internationalization will become the major focus for university development in the future. However, there are potential threats to the internationalization efforts of universities now and in the future. Those threats are e.g. global warming and terrorism. Challenges in tuition fees as many countries charge higher tuition fees for international students. It may become increasingly difficult for individuals to afford the higher fees. Countries such as Germany which do not charge fees for international students are experiencing a huge surge. Visa restrictions affect problems. Many students from outside the EU face severe visa restrictions to travel to key study destinations in the region. Widening access and internal capacity: In many of the world's best study destinations, widening and increasing participation in higher edu-cation have become core policy frameworks. The net effect is that internal capacity has been increased. This could depress desire to look elsewhere and thus limit cross-border movement of students. Wider use of English as a medium of instruction: Many coun-tries in the EU and the rest of world are increasingly adopting English as a medium of instruction in higher education. Study of English language has been one of the most important reasons why students travel to the UK for higher education study. With more universities providing tuition in the language locally, the pull factor is weakened. The expansion of e-learning facilities, even though e-learning facilitates internationalization, it may develop to an extent where people may find it unnecessary to travel for their higher education experience. Quality assurance: Although individual institutions have adequate capacity for internal quality monitoring, there is evidence of multiple barriers in establishing and monitoring external quality outside the institutions. Staff resistance to

internationalization: Academic staff do not share agreement on whether pedagogy is more important than content in the design of international programmes . In addition, they also feel uncomfortable making significant changes to what they should teach in the international curriculum. Institutions need to consider ways of raising the level of acceptance and equipping staff with skills and knowledge about the international context to facilitate their teaching. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

2.4 Conditions for the export of education

In the manual of education of export produced by the ministry of education of Finland it is defined that many companies and higher education institutions start their education export activities very from the beginning and the task is to improving their own capacity, and building up their infrastructure. Only after that it is possible to start systematically and broadly develop and implement the business plan and strategy of the education export. Without a proper infrastructure the export of education activities will become too risk sensitive and can mean lost in financially and image vice. (Auvinen 2016)

In the export of education, the entity who pays and finance the service is not usually the entity who uses the service finally. Many times, the product or service has user who does not pay him- or herself of the service, but whom the service provider needs for developing the service. It is crucial the customer satisfaction of all these entities, different customer segments, so called benefiters and users. (Auvinen 2016)

It is crucial to understand the benefit and value for the customer, what benefits the customer gets and from what the value experience is originate from. Finns should be proud of our know-how, but it is important to understand the international competition in the field. The own status in the competition and the strength should be clearly understood. This should be built in in the business plan and it develops through the analysis of the competition situation. This can lead to identifying the development needs and conclusions that for the customer can´t be offered services until the crucial development actions have been made. (Auvinen 2016)

2.4.1 What and how

The guidebook of the export of education available for the Education Finland member´s it is stated that export of education is discussed when it is sold products and services or the combinations of both of these or the international markets. The condition to get into the markets and for effectively functioning there is the ability to produce and implement competitive solutions, products and services for the customers. Different products, services and solutions are named business areas. (Auvinen 2016)

How Finnis exporters can organize their international business so that the targets are reached. The homework needs to be done, both creation of the business model or models and the plan for the internationalization. The customer segments need to be cleared out, likewise the ways for marketing, sales and product development. (OKM, Education Finland, 2020. (Auvinen 2016)

According to Alumno (2020) there are certain aspects that need to be taken into consideration when thinking the key issues on commercial viability. Those are selecting the right market and location in addition with the right offering. There needs to be right partnerships models and partners and a realistic business plan, which include also appropriate investments. There needs to be realistic sales and marketing approach, which is also modified to the local context.

Figure 3. Key factors in commercial viability (Alumno 2020)

2.4.2 Product development

When discussing about the product development of the services, it is characteristic that the product is produced together with the customer and the customer participates in the product development. Even the services are productized together with the customer, it is a question of a unique service for the producer and for the customer. The customers do the quality check compering the expectations and the final experience. The service or the service process can be divided so that it includes the final result, service process and recourses and systems, what is demanded when producing the service. As a final outcome is generated results and outputs that are shareable, which are valuable for the customer. (Auvinen 2016)

The service process is a description of the different phases of the service development and action chains, which are needed when productizing the service for the customer. In the process description is defined also the responsibilities for productizing the service, in the different phases and actions. It can be also described the cooperation relationships, with other actors and other indicators such as finance, quality etc. are measured. One of the biggest challenges of the service businesses is combining tailor-making in cost-effective way, as the services are planned and produced to the special needs for each customer. Then is a question of mass-tailor-making. Modulating is a way to mass-tailor-make products and services. The module is a collection of actions and components, which are produced and can be described as one entity. This provides for the customer ability to combine different product-elements and create the final product, which suites for their taste and needs. (Auvinen 2016)

2.5 Export of education at TUAS

At TUAS IntraNet Messi the export of education is seen as business, where the training, education, services and other products developed at TUAS are sold to a foreign customer. The term export of education at TUAS is translated in English as *Global Education Services.* The export of education team works as a part of the service business unit. The task of the team is to productize, market and sell TUAS´ education services to foreign customers. Each School of the faculty is responsible for its business activities, but cooperation and coordination are done in the university level. (TUAS 2020)

2.5.1 Motivation for export of education at TUAS

Virtanen and Kakko (2016) states that since 2010 TUAS has been striving to develop the export of education as part of the international activities of the university. The economic reasons are thriving TUAS to act also actively in this field. (Virtanen, Kakko, 2016) In the long run the export of education is meant to form a significant income for-mation for TUAS. (TUAS, 2020) With the export of education activities TUAS can in-crease the skills and expertise of the TUAS staff, increase the international attractive-ness of TUAS and in addition it is able to promote its RDI activities and support regional development in the form of joint export projects with the actors and companies in Southwest Finland. (Virtanen & Kakko 2016). There are other reasons too such as:

- ensure that the education of TUAS is sufficiently high quality to success in the global competition.
- internationalize the education and develop cooperation
- to develop the expertise of the organization
- create new networks abroad both to higher education institutions and to companies

The products and services for export are usually formatted via the normal education and RDI-actions. (TUAS 2020) Furthermore, the international contacts of the TUAS staff have played a significant role in the development of export of education business. Both international cooperation and international project activities, lasted over 20 years, have opened doors for export of education activities.

When developing the export of education activities, TUAS have had to pay a attention for establishment of the export processes, analysing target markets, creating an expert register, designing the networking activities related to export businesses. (Virtanen & Kakko, 2016)

TUAS is currently active in following Finnis export of education cooperation networks.

- FinnWayLearning

The network consists of the most significant educational institutes in Turku. Via the network is possible to promote the expertise in Turku in a large variety from the early childcare until the doctoral degrees.

- Education Finland originally called Future Learning Finland

Education Finland is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Minis-try of Economic Affairs and Employment. The program also works closely with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Education Finland is coordinated by the Finnish National Agency for Education. (Education Finland 2018) It combines the exporters of the Finnish Education together and offers its members possibilities to participate to inter-national fairs and be a part of the visiting programs, offered for the foreign delega-tions.

- Team Finland

Team Finland supports Finland and Finnis-companies to be successful abroad. Via Team Finland TUAS has in use a large support network, which has over 70 teams abroad. Those can be utilized when looking for new partners from abroad. (TUAS 2020)

2.5.2 Products and services offered by TUAS

TUAS provides high-quality and flexible education, training and consulting services to public as well as private sector organizations. The training packages can be customized or ready-made, always based to the needs of the customer. TUAS offers also consult-ing services, e.g. to support the education reform at the institutions. It can be also of-fered short visits, tailor-made courses and on-demand degree studies for student groups in higher education. (TUAS 2020)

What has been the most crucial thing to do before starting productization services for the export markets has been the definition of the TUAS core competencies, these re-search and development and educational innovations have been seen for the basis for international business. (Virtanen & Kakko 2016).

The key strengths is the multidisciplinary applied research, development and innovation. TUAS offers education which develops working life and entrepreneurial skills and pro-vide research development and innovation services. At the core of all TUAS´ activities has been innovation pedagogy, Innopeda®. (TUAS 2020)

When productizing it is important to notice the needs of the international markets and cultural differences. Often the leads are coming with a very short notice, then it is needed to react fast to the inquiries. (TUAS 2020)

Another issue that has been productization of the TUAS know-how and its formation for a customer product and for target countries. TUAS has been actively supporting and cooperation with other actors in the regions which are important for foreign trade of Finland and more importantly for Southwest Finland. (Virtanen & Kakko 2016)

3 MARKETING AND MARKETING SERVICES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1 Marketing strategy

Marketing strategy is part of a business strategy. Planning a marketing strategy starts at identifying the market and with an environmental analysis, and with an internal marketing analysis which finally leads to the marketing strategy. In the strategy is important to understand what is the most meaningful combination of marketing means that the company can affect in the target markets better than the competitors.

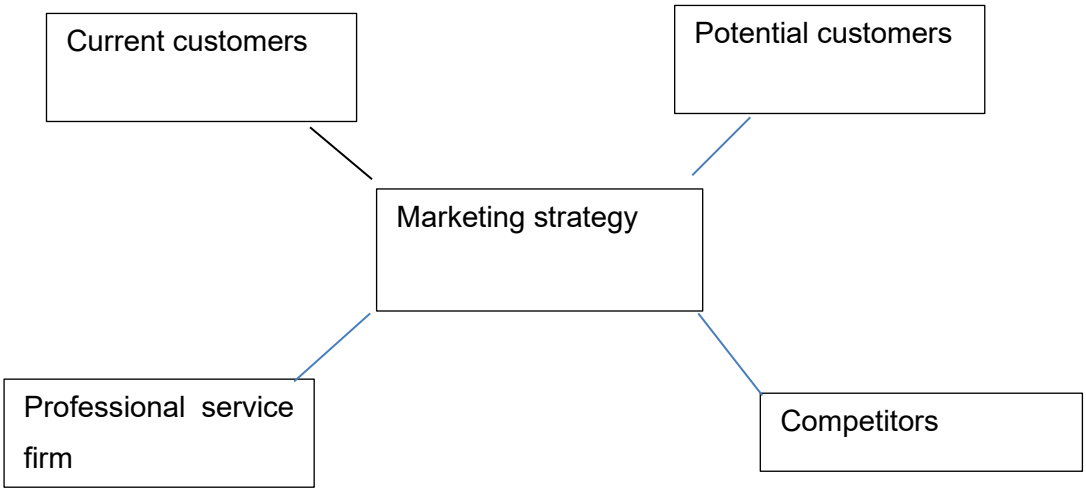

Figure 4.Role of marketing strategy (Sipilä 1996, 86)

3.1.1 Marketing strategies

There are two types of marketing strategies, passive and active ones. In the passive strategy the firm can give the information to different registers and databases, it is not demanded any determined actions, rather is ease. The company doesn´t want to invest in the marketing and wants to start the process carefully. However then finding the right target customer segment might not be as efficient and easy as in the active strategy. There might come requests from market areas which are not suitable for the company. In the worst case there might not come any contacts at all. In the active method the

company has made the export decision and with determined and planned actions pursue to act in the international markets. Before that it is important to do a SWOT analysis, what are the company´s inner and outer strengths, weaknesses, threads and opportunities. (Selin 2004, 110-111)

Äijö (2008) states that marketing and selling is one of the essential business actions so called functions. Other functions are buying, product development, production and logistics, funding and HR. Marketing and selling have key role in the business. Marketing is related into all functions in the company. In the modern thinking selling is a part of marketing, however many times they are used differently marketing and selling. Marketing term can include all following aspects:

- marketing analysis
- target market definition and segmentation
- product and service definition
- distribution
- pricing
- communication
- selling (convincing the customer)
- controlling the customer (CRM)

Still is existing an understanding that marketing is only communication and selling takes care of the customer relationships. Some writers speak about relationship marketing and CRM customer relationship management.

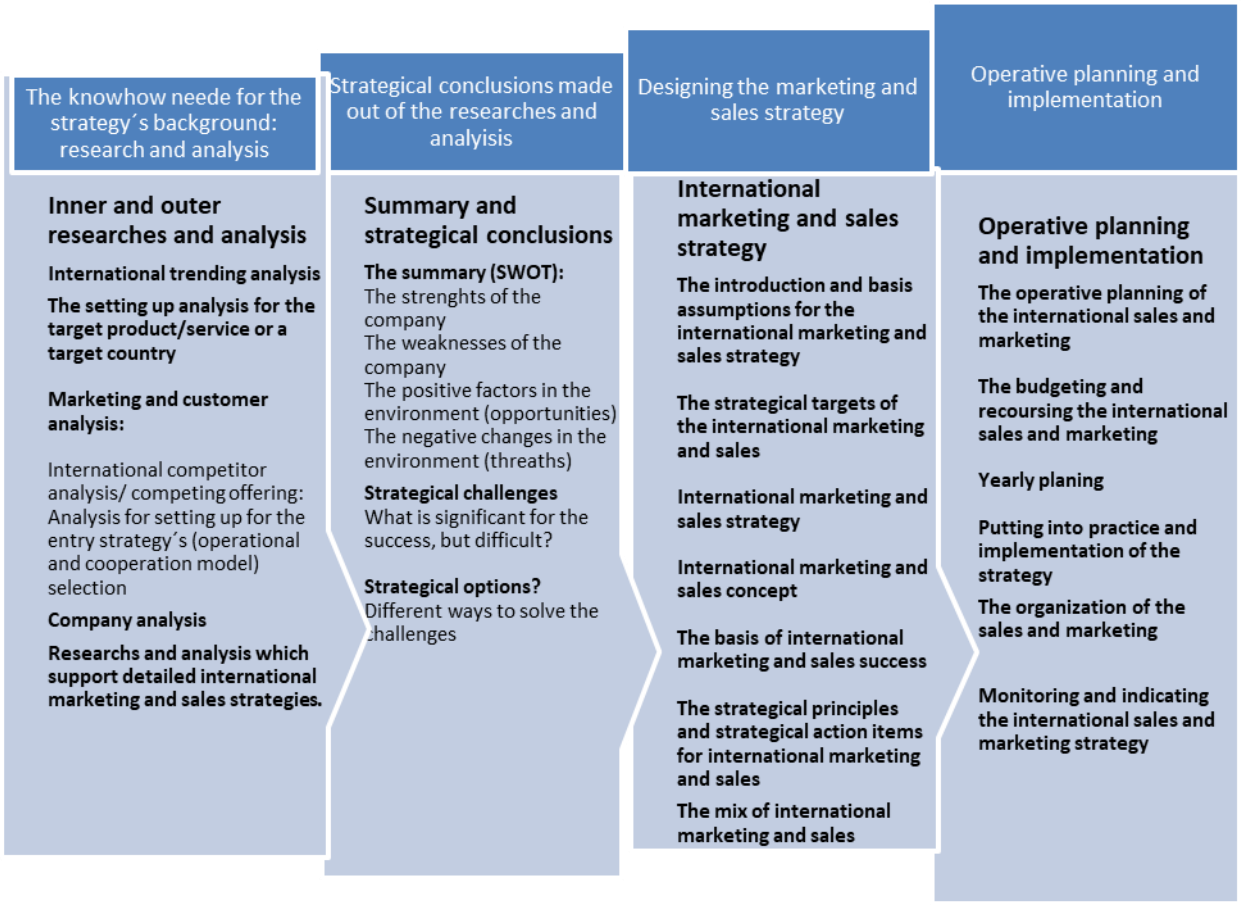

Figure 5.International marketing and selling strategy (Äijö 2008, 144)

3.1.2 Target Market selection

When the management has decided to go global, for foreign markets, exporting, the step is to make a target market selection. It means narrowing down potential country markets to an executable number of countries and market segments within them. Czinkota et al (2005) highlight that rather than try to reach everyone, to best use for the recourses of the firms is to identify potential markets for entry and expanding selective-ly over time to those that are seen attractive.

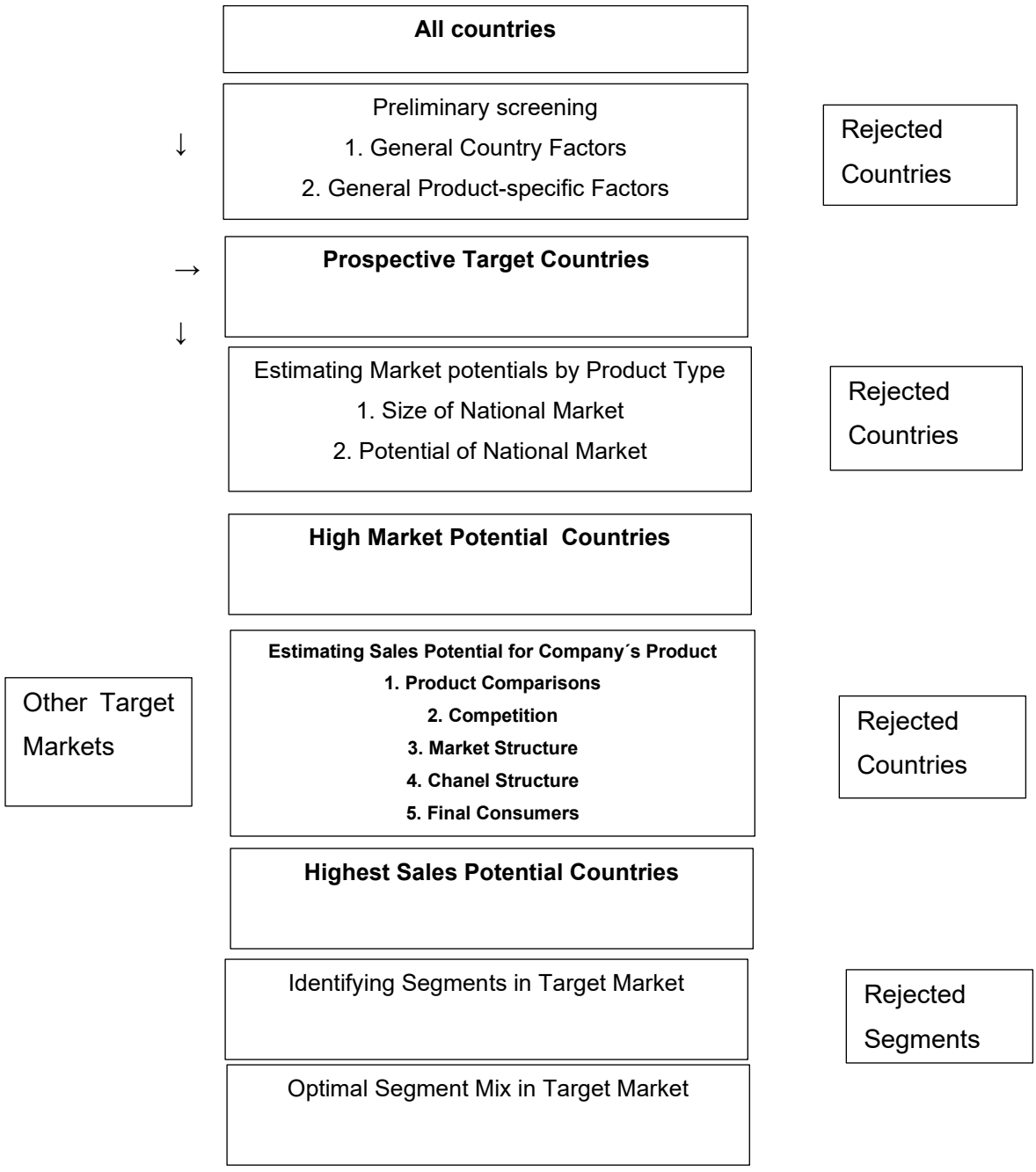

Figure 6.The screening process in target market. (Czinkota et. al 2005, 472)

In the figure 6 is presented the four-stage process for screening and analysing foreign markets. It starts with general criteria and finally with product specific market analysis.

3.1.3 Marketing management

After the target market selection, it is time to move to decide the marketing efforts at specific levels, to standardize the marketing-mix such as product, price, place, and distribution. There are certain challenges to be faced when adjusting certain elements in the international business markets. Czinkota et al (2005) sees that international marketers should think globally and act locally meaning being flexible but not fully standardized, nor fully localize, adapt to the markets either – the balance needs to be found. Many multinational marketers standardize the good ideas, while they leave the implementation to local entities. The degree of adaptation varies by market, good, or service to be marketed, and by overall company objectives.

In the figure 7 can be seen different factors which affect to the product adaptation decisions. In the studies has been seen that most of the products must be modified to international marketplace in some way or another. There might be governmental regulations that needs to be taken into consideration. There can be certain traditions and attitudes to be understood. Cultural knowledge is a key to a success. Pricing is more complicated in international markets than in domestic as there can be governmental influence, different currencies and some unexpected additional costs. (Czinkota et al 2005)

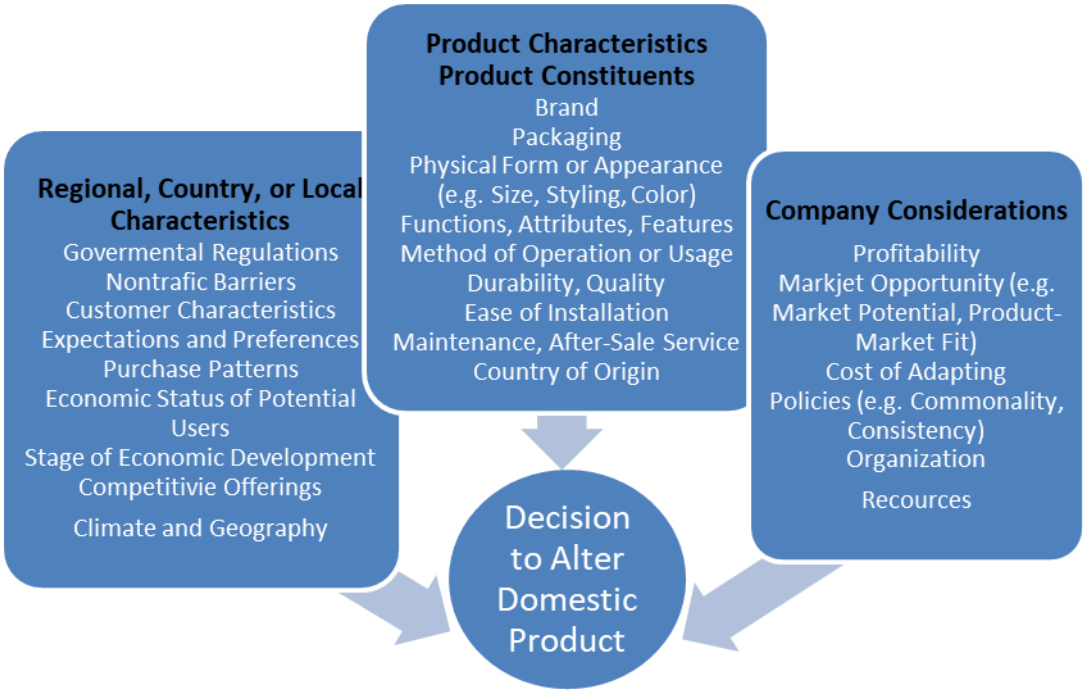

Figure 7.Factors affecting Product Adaptation Decisions (Czinkota et al 2005, 480)

3.1.4 International marketing

International marketing needs to be fundamental thinking process. Unknown company can´t act in the new target market without marketing its offering and without standing out from the other competitors. Marketing is one of the key areas, when starting to plan export business. Marketing targets belong finding the customers, getting them, keeping them and after all securing profitable business. Company needs to know the existing needs in the target market and satisfy their demands providing to the market suitable product and service entities. Having enough target market knowhow is essential and the role of the marketing research is emphasized. The key is to fulfil the wishes and needs of the customer. The customer origin marketing demands knowhow of the target conditions, culture, legislation, values and mind of the customers, in addition of their consuming habits. When service provider can proof the additional value and benefits for the consumer it has more potential to stand out from the competitors in the market. The purpose is often to create positive images. Positive first impression and creating confident is important to be able to create. It demands a lot of planning and preparation. But even more important is to able to keep up the positive company image. It needs conscious customer service oriented and effective implementation from all sectors of the company. (Selin 2004, 108)

What is characteristic for international marketing is to understand the cultural differences. The differences are origin to values and attitudes, which vary a lot from a country to another. In some countries the religion may affect a lot and in some other the relationships and family are the key values. Also, the conception of time differs from culture to another. In the personal communication the concept of a space is crucial. Some behaviour habits may be different, in some countries there are a lot of formalities and in some other conries the business is based on good personal relationships. PR is in some countries vital, and it is crucial to invest in. (Selin 2004, 110)

3.2 Marketing services

3.2.1 Definition of marketing services

Grönroos defines that in the 70´s marketing was targeting some value (e.g. products´) exchange to money or some other value to be measured. Then marketing is seen as all

the actions which company plans and implements to lead and to enable products or services compensated exchange and ways to improve it. This marketing concept is called exchange, bullet selling or transaction marketing. Marketing is seen here more campaign focused. This is typical in the consumer´s products. However, in the service sector has been more emphasize to service providers and customers interaction, as the way to keep up the interaction with the customers affects to their buying behaviour. This is called as an angle of relationship. This is typical in the service firms. (Grönroos 2010,46-47).

Marketing has been mostly seen as marketing of products, it has also affected a lot to the definitions and action items. During the past ten years the theory of service marketing has developed a lot. Still the definition for the professional services has been in the minority. However, more and more companies are focusing into professional services, and more knowledge base companies are established. (Sipilä 1996). Services are the mayor component of world trade and they are actually the fastest growing sector in the world trade. Employment in the services sector is becoming global. Education is e.g. the fifth largest service-sector export in the U.S. (Czinkota et al 2005, 506)

Professional services firms exist in many different industry areas. There are professions such as lawyers, advertising professionals, architects, accountants, financial advisers, engineers, and consultants, among others. Basically, they can be any organization or profession that offers customized, knowledge-based services to clients. (MindTool 2020)

Education can be defined also as professional services. It can be also international service. Education is going global, either through distance learning, study and teaching abroad, or by attracting foreign students into the domestic markets. In the figure 7 Sipilä has categorized the professional services as follows:

CUSTOMERS Private persons	Enterprise services	Ownership
Layers Dentists Private hospitals Architects	Marketing agencies Accounting services Engineering offices Consultants of the company management Research of the industry IT specialist	**Private companies** **Public organizations**
Sub vented **Higher Education Institutions**	research institutions	

Figure 8.Professional services (Sipilä 1996, 15)

Typically, the professional services are seen intangible services, often as plans, instructions or ideas – something that is experienced. The customer needs to take often a risk when buying the service, as the end result is not seen beforehand. (Sipilä 1996, 18)

3.2.2 Marketing process of professional services

In the marketing process of professional services, the key elements are divided into two areas, which differs quite a bit from each other. First the keeping up the current customers' relationships and new customer recruitment. The old customers relationship relies on the trust, that has been created during the previous assignments. While in the new customer recruitment the key issues are the recommendations and the reputation, conspicuousness of the company or the experts of the company. When the customer has a need for the service, he or she most probably contacts the company he knows beforehand. The new customer recruitment is more difficult, but once it happens it can bring customer relationship even for dozens of years. (Sipilä 1996, 39)

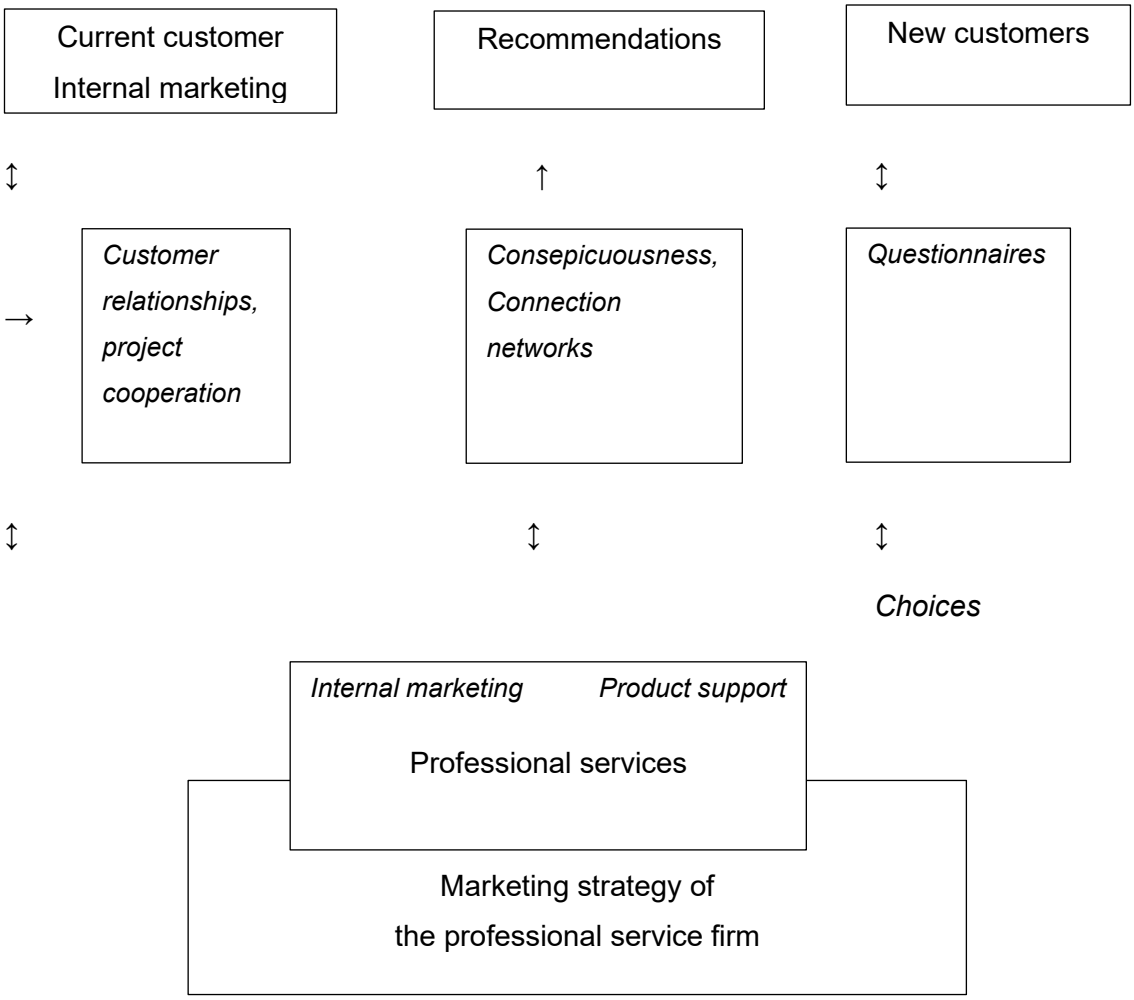

Figure 9.Professional services´ marketing process (Sipilä 1996, 40)

Professional services are often produced by assignments or projects. The marketing must be seen broadly in the professional service company. Marketing is a part of all the operations. And even the experts often hate marketing, they are the best promoters and sellers of their services. The internal marketing and communication are the key for the success for the cooperation. The best way to get new customers is done mostly via the recommendations of the old customers, selling with references. For being conspicuousness is important for professional service companies too, the large connections network plays a key role in getting old customers or finding new customers. Productizing services supports the process to get new customers, it lowers the insecurity of the custom-

er and the risks when thinking the prizing. Having a good marketing strategy helps the firm to attract more customers, select the right assignments and customers, and focus in the right items. The productization of the knowhow creates an effectiveness and profitability and creates the ability for the continuous development of the knowhow and services, and with it the ability to keep the customers in the competitive position. (Sipilä, 1996, 39-43)

3.2.3 International trade of services

International trade of services is more complex than international trade of goods. It is because their intangibility, their perishability, their custom design and their cultural sensitivity. In the global economy the services play a vital role. There are new areas such as electronic commerce which gives new possibilities, also in the marketing field. (Czinkota et al 2005)

Selin states that expanding business to export, to new market areas demands adopting new action models, companies need to have clear strategic plan for the international actions. This is challenging and needs to be done well. It needs a clear view of the current situation and vision how the future looks like. It needs a commitment from the top management. There are new risks, but also opportunities around. For the base to start export, is always a decision of export. This needs a lot of background information about markets and analysis of the company´s recourses and products/services´ validity for export. Export business needs to profitable, continuous and trending growth. (Selin 2004, 16)

Regarding Äijö (2008) Finnish export relays much on following strengths; we have better products than the competitors, e.g. the level of technology behind them and quality aspects. Also, we are good at in other inner areas like high expertise, technology, product development and knowhow in projects and the control in production methods. However, the customer-oriented issues, such as service, tailor making knowhow, product selection, delivery, maintenance, cooperation or keeping up the customer relationships didn´t reach as good results. The less mentioned issues were marketing knowhow, conspicuousness, size, recourses, cost level or international contact networks. So actually, the biggest challenges were firms inconspicuousness, insufficient knowhow about the markets, lack of resources, long distance from the market areas, obstacles in the legislation. (Äijö 2008, 48-49)

Starting to export needs always resources. There are costs like marketing researches, implementing the matter to help of progress for selling, possible visits to meet the potential customers, fairs, promotion and other marketing action items, products approvals, model protections and patents, salaries to hiring additional experts. Exporting demands also from the staff, there needs to be enough of language skills, and export business knowhow. It is also needed to analyse the company´s competitiveness in the target market. It is important to realize the new operational environment. In the export needs to be taken into consideration each market areas cultural characteristics and ways of making business. Making the market research helps to get suitable market knowhow and finding proper action models. (Selin 2004, 18-21)

3.3 Marketing of higher education

Higher education marketing is a growing field of practice, but it lacks theoretical discourse. There is a growing literature base on marketing, however very little have been developed for education. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

3.3.1 Education marketing background

Gibbs and Maringe (2008) states that the study choice in the further education sector is usually based to the references of other students, still young people rely on the marketing information provided by colleges justifying their choices and notifying their decisions to others.

As speaking about traditional marketing means that the audience needs to be identified as consumer. This has not been an easy way to adopt for the higher education institutions as it the approach requires education to become a product delivered by service providers. However, adoption of the tuition fees has supported this development. There is an increasing interest in recruiting overseas students in many countries and a desire to increase global competitiveness in the higer education institutions.

In the last two decades, higher education has undergone a major transformation in support of the knowledge economy. Technological development has increased the globalization of higher education with the General Agreement on Trade in Services likely to

boost the trend of transforming higher education into a commodity that can attract international customers and, through private investment, compete on a global level.

Much has changed in our educational institutions, when bringing the world of business and its ideas into the educational arena. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

3.3.2 The growth of competition in higher education

The competition in higher education field has been increasing. The concept of marketing has been seen mainly from the the promotion and advertising perspective. Today, its meaning is broader and about bringing value to those with whom the organization has a relationship with.

In many countries, such as in Australia and New Zealand, which are the forerunners in introducing marketing into higher education, government policies such as legislative pressure was placed on universities to adapt marketing as a key strategic aspect of institutional development. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

Universities should recognize who their customers are. This can be known the best by segmentation research. There are several issues that the institutes should understand about their students, their customers. Students' expectations and perceptions of service quality need to be managed. Student satisfaction should be at the heart of the educational delivery service.

'Customer' and 'service provider' are not terms that fit well with the traditional values of higher education. However, students are more than just customers and academic personnel more than service providers. Newertheless, higher education has much to learn from the customer point of view as its the ultimate purpose is to deliver value to the students.(Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

Marketing of higher education is expensive. The estimation is that over five per cent of traditional universities' and over 20 per cent of with-profit institutions' revenues are spent on marketing. Marketing strategy is a part of other strategies, it is not something that stands alone. Marketing strategy is an integral part of functional area strategies of the firm.

Marketing in higher education is lacking acknowledge and is still underdeveloped concept. This is reasoning from the belief that marketing is only about advertising and pro-

motion. This stays tightly in the minds of university administration. Its role as a model for developing the products and services wanted and needed by university customers is mostly unrecognized in many higher education institutions. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

3.3.3 The CORD model for a university marketing strategy

The marketing strategy model, which Gibbs and Maringe propose for universities is built on the core values. The model indicates that all actions are ensuring that marketing becomes part of the strategic planning process of universities. According to Gibbs and Maringe the research shows that current university marketing is missing an appropriate contextualization; is badly organized and coordinated and is mostly responsive and not strategic. Moreover, its application missing formal operational guidelines. The CORD model (figure 9) brings to attention the contextualization, organization and coordination, research and development and provides a framework for raising the profile. Furthermore, it sharpens the strategic focus. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

Higher education has grown to a big business where the competition is increasing in the marketplace. New entrants face many challenges. They need to position their services in a market, they need to know how to become excellent and at the same time also different. The strategic positioning is best reached when the institution has a good understanding of the market that it wishes to serve. Segmentation is a process that delivers such an understanding of the intended markets. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

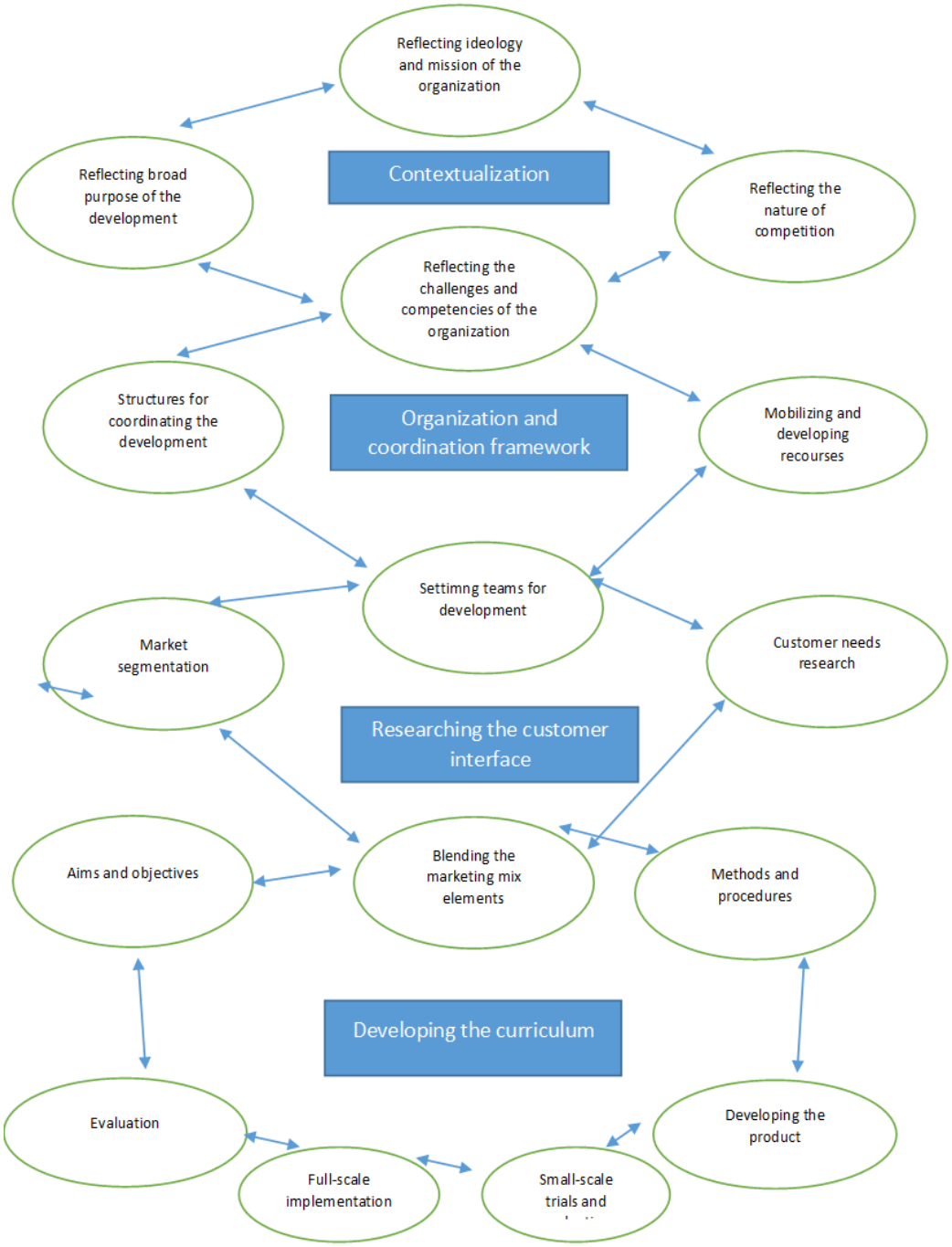

Figure 10.The CORD model of marketing strategy (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

Institutional reputation is one of the core influencer of consumer decisions in higher education. Consumers in higher education show a closer devotion to organizations they consider reputable. Managing this reputation no longer can be left to chance but needs

to be managed with PR, reputation, and risk management included into the strategic vision of the organization. (Gibbs and Maringe 2008).

4 CHINA AS AN INTERNATIONAL PARTNER OF THE EXPORT OF EDUCATION AT TUAS

4.1 China as a target market

The development of China´s economic has made it one of the world's biggest exporters and importers. It is the second largest economy in the world. China is a force to be reckoned with and cannot be ignored. It does export manufactured products with a high technology and importing luxury goods. This has influenced in the constantly changing world trade patterns and created threats and opportunities for companies around the world. India I s still leading the competition in services of knowledge-industry, especially in the IT-sector. (Albaum and Duerr 2011)

China as a market area is huge and the market is growing incredibly fast, this brings a lot of opportunities to the western service providers. One big issue is the urbanization of rural areas, which means that incomes – and rural middle classes – are growing. This means that rural middle-class families can also start to invest in education of their children. (MarketMeChina 2020)

4.1.1 Challenges in China

However, there are challenges when entering to the Chinese markets. Some one could say in China everything is possible – but nothing is easy. It is important to get an understanding of the cultural drivers and expectations of the Chinese partners before starting to do business in China. It is essential to truly understand the importance of 'face' in China and to feel confident to navigate the complexities of Chinese corporate hierarchy. It is needed all the time to develop the relationships. This can bring a lot of success in the long run to the cash-flow forecasts. (World Business Culture in China 2020)

The market is complexity. There is a huge diversity of Chinese dialects and symbolism. It is also good to be familiar with the key cultural values such as the fact that China has strong hierarchical structure, there is a belief that you should respect and honor those with higher status than you. Other issues like 'guanxi', this means that China is a Collectivist society. The people of China tend to think in terms of 'We' and place the needs of

others ahead of their own. This “guanxi” (relationship), is therefore very important to understand that you have to approach Chinese consumers differently to the Western consumers. So, when communicating with Chinese consumers, you need to be aware that different messages will resonate with them. Moreover, it is important to be aware about the various Chinese city tiers. China is society in which success is defined by achievement. This means Chinese want to be the best at what they do. Appealing to their desire to achieve greater things for themselves can be an effective way of marketing in China. Chinese people need a stability, structure and a plan, they do not like taking risks. They wish to get permanence and durability for the products and services. (MarketMeChina 2014)

The Chinese market is incredibly diverse. The better that is understood, with customized research and analysis designed to build a detailed picture of your target market, the better you can develop your brand campaign strategy. There is always a language barrier western brands are marketing their products and services in Chinese; it is very easy to make language mistakes. Translation requires sensitivity and an understanding of cultural factors, such as the everyday words that your target market use, the regional aspects, and even design factors.

Chinese culture and attitudes differ from Western cultures. For example, Chinese customers tend not to trust official government media because of the use of censorship. They follow online advertising and the recommendations of their personal network. Chinese customers see Western brands mostly as high quality. They are increasingly outwards in their view, looking to travel globally, study abroad and enjoy the best of international culture – especially as the Chinese middle classes grow and become more affluent. These types of insight help marketers to get a better sense of the Chinese market, and the attitudes that shape Chinese buying decisions.

Chinese use different social platforms that Western consumers. WeChat and Weido are some examples of social media channels that are very powerful in China. It is recommended to create a brand presence on these platforms and develop them with the right content and engagement programs.

Chinese have many influencers, so called Chinese Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs. They use their social networks to influence Chinese customers with trusted, valuable recommendations, sponsored partnerships and other forms of branded content. Brands seek

to partner with KOLs who operate within their target market to build brand awareness with potential customers. (MarketMeChina 2020)

China is a land of opportunities, but it is also a land of potential traps. The homework is needed to be done, no sense to invest in exporting to China, if there is not enough time for research and planning. (World Business Culture 2020) In the China Round table organized by the Ministry of Education of Finland (11.3.2020) it was introduced following circle, which defins the challenges that China offer for the higher education institutes. These issues is good to bear in mind, when planning a cooperation.

Figure 11.China challenges, China Round table organized by the Ministry of Education of Finland (11.3.2020)

4.1.2 Education system in China

According to Futao internationalization of higher education is not a totally new story in China. However, the implementation of and progress made in internationalization of higher education has been deeply affected by the policies as the higher education institutes were directly administrated and supervised by the Ministry of Education and other agencies in the central government as well as by local governments at various levels. (Futao 2003)

During the past three decades the Chinese government and the Ministry of Education have made a lot of efforts to restructure and reform the higher education system. Chinese government has implemented a policy to decentralized decision-making power to individual institutions and local governments. There has been a lot of changes also in the teachers and students 'training models due the modernization of the Chinese higher education. Chinese wanted to prevent the brain drain and talent acquisition by not sending the students to cross-border education but to recruiting foreign teachers to China. In addition, Chinese institutions started to increase their international connections via the student/scholar exchange and setting up Sino-foreign joint education program with western universities and other diverse cooperation modes.

The impact of the parents is tremendous. More parents are sending their child to overseas to study, this a development by the one-child-policy, which means that parents are willing to invest money for the education and future of the one child they have. (Yu 2017)

4.1.3 Curriculum

China's current school education system consists of three different levels, which are: basic education, higher education, and adult education, which can be seen in the figure 11. China's Law states that every child must have nine years of compulsory education from primary school (six years) to junior secondary education (three years). Primary and middle school is tuition-free. After the compulsory education there will be a small tuition fee requested from students during their high school. (Open Learn 2019)

New curriculum reform late 20´s century in China was a successful part of the quality education, and affected to the political, economic, and cultural development. The main target of basic education curriculum were old fashion, to develop the spirit of patriotism, collectivism and promotion of socialist awareness and national cultural tradition to democratic awareness, respect to national laws and public morals, to cultivation of good values and attitudes of the students towards the world and life, and to enhance flexibility of school curriculum. The new reform of the 1999 curriculum on the other hand considered the individual development and promoted the creation of comprehensive practical activities based on direct experience of students, integrating theoretical knowledge in social life.

The development of school curriculum is one of the most important areas in the quality terms of basic education. The main subjects in curriculum of basic education and senior high school includes math, Chinese, Foreign languages, science, physical education, comprehensive practical activities and humanities and social sciences. (Oyeniran & Uwamahoro 2017)

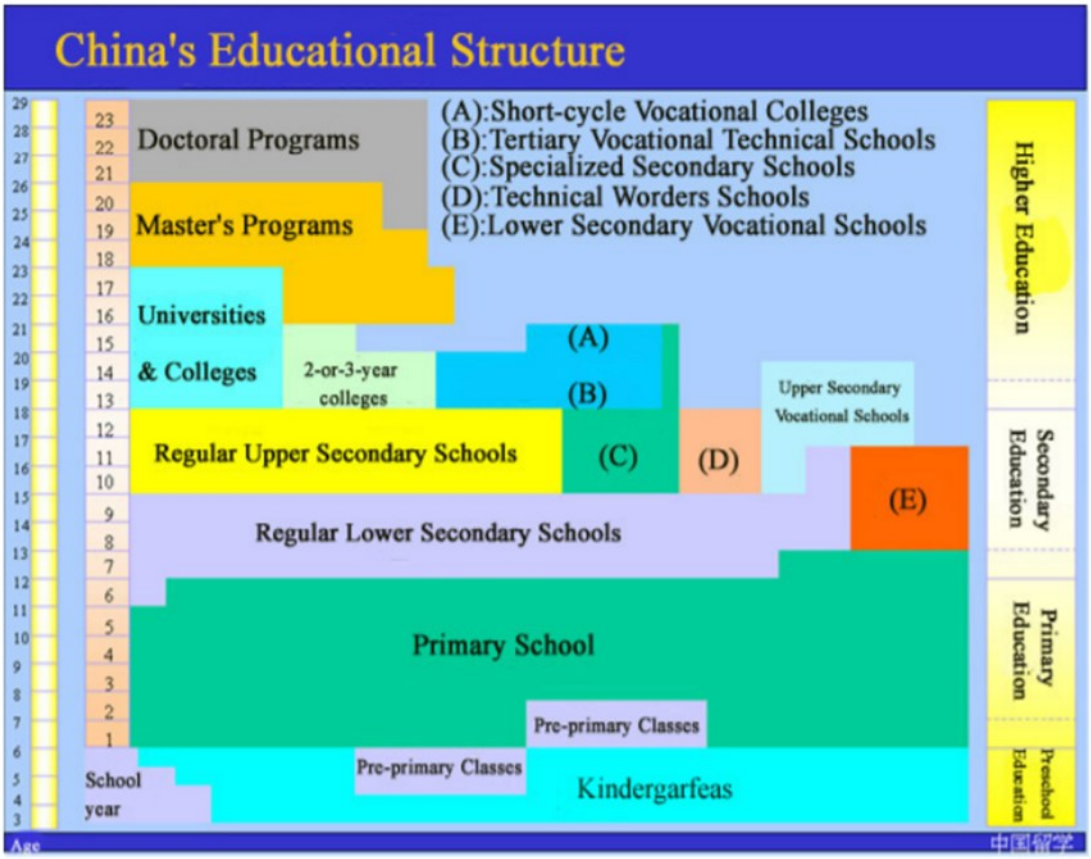

Figure 12.China´s Educational Structure (Oyeniran & Uwamahoro 2017, 34)

There has been a focus that the secondary school students, having their last years of studies, are focusing strongly to the entrance exams to enter to the university. If the entrance is failed, this means a failure. This progress creates a lot of stress and pshychological stress for the only child of the family as the parents` target is to get the child to the university and be successful their lifes. During the last three decades of education reforms, policies concerning the reduction of burden on school students and improving the quality of education have been in the focus, but still no effective results have been introduced. (Oyeniran & Uwamahoro 2017)

We can say many things about China, but one certainty is that the government will stay the course in the long term and keep building. That is a positive feature when it comes to education system reform states Jamil Salmi, Global tertiary education expert. (The Economist 2019)

4.2 TUAS cooperation in China

According to Kirsti Virtanen the former Head of International Affairs and current Partnership Manager of TUAS, China is one of the most important targets markets, cooperation area, in all the educational fields at TUAS. From the very beginning China has been in core, when discussing about the activities related to the export of education. In China especially Tianjin has been in the focus.

TUAS has had long term international cooperation including mobility of students and staff, joint projects and expert seminars with Chinese partners. This long term cooperation with Chinese has taught that working with Chinese demands building up active partnerships in a long-time line with official partnership agreements. The cooperation has been facilitated by the city of Turku. The twin-city-cooperation of Turku and Tianjin started in 2000 and has served a good ground for fostering the cooperation in the higher education level too. Tianjin is the northern China´s growth center. It is located next to Beijing, and it is one of China´s largest cities and major port city of Hai They river and the Bohai Sea of the Yellow Sea. City of Turku set up an office in Tianjin, 2012. This helps to facilitate the cooperation between Turku and Tianjin regions and different actors. It has boosted the cooperation of between universities and companies both in Turku and Tianjin. This has partly increased the starting process for export of education (Virtanen & Kakko 2016)

The most important partner in China has been Tianjin University of Technology (TUT). In addition, the normal mobility activity, there was made a contract for chargeable education with TUT Business College. They have sent two times a group of 3rd year Bachelor´s degree students to study studies related to entrepreneurship. This is seen as export of education activity. The students can later accredit these studies into their degree at China. In addition, TUT is interested in starting a joint, so called double degree with TUAS, School of Sales and Entrepreneurship. There the challenge has been the issues related to the fees and the demand from the Ministry of Education in China. There is also

an interest in research cooperation in the field of entrepreneurship. TUT has applied to be a national center for entrepreneurship in China.

TUAS has also had export activities earlier in the field of health and wellbeing with Chinese partners, especially educating nurses. The Chinese broker paid to TUAS and collected the money from the students. TUAS organized a preparatory course for 6 months in China for the nurse students, with language training etc. After the training the students came to TUAS, to finalised their Bachelor´s degree. Rector and president of TUAS, Vesa Taatila underlined in the interview, that the cooperation was challenging for many reasons. The language skill of the students was not sufficient, they were not able to find traineeship places, in addition there were challenges with the broker and the ben-efits were not finally as good as in the begging was expected.

Other cooperation partners of TUAS in China are Nankai University in Tianjin, Tianjin Polytechnic University (TJPU), Tianjin Chengjian University, The Fifth People´s Hospital of Shanghai, Fudan University and Guangdong University of Technology. The activities with these partners have not been active and has mainly concentrated to a mobility of students or teachers. (TUAS, 2020) TUAS has also one campus in the city of Salo. Salo´s twin-city is Wuhan and there has been ongoing negotiations about export cooperation with the Wuhan College of Software and Engineering. No actual results have been able to make, yet, but the discussions are continuing. (Salon Seudun Sanomat 2019)

Rectors Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, Arene ry, signed a contract with Finnish universities of applied sciences and the Chinese National Centre for Schooling Development Program (NCSDP). The trip to China was organized together with the Ministry of Education and Culture and Foreign Affairs of Finland in 2018. In China is on going a reform of education, which aims at setting up more UAS into the country. The Finnish UAS model is under a great interest in China. There is a great potential for exporting and developing cooperation related to curriculums, development of the pedagogy, double-degrees, mobility of teachers, students and researchers, teaching cooperation via online solutions, linking the industry and higher education and innovation ecosystem thinking processes. (Arene 2018)

5 THE RESEARCH OF THE EXPORT OF EDUCATION TO CHINA AT TUAS

5.1 Background of the research

The objective of this study is to examine the current situation of the export of education at TUAS and especially towards China and possible recommendations for the future actions. The analysis was based primarily on the interviews both experts of the university staff and management. In addition, two stakeholders of TUAS were interviewed. Furthermore, documentary research was made for reviewing and evaluating documents - both printed and electronic literature and relevant articles. In addition, TUAS own documents and Intranet and webpage material was utilized.

Eight persons were mostly from the management level of TUAS either from the centralized services or from the faculty of Engineering and Business, all dealing with the export of education in their work, having experience mostly from 5-20 years in an export of education activities. All of them had in addition experience working with Chinese and doing education or other business activities with Chinese. Two other interviewed persons were cooperation partners of TUAS, one was a company representative with whom TUAS has planned cooperation on an export of education to China. Other person was expert working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Embassy of Finland in China, facilitating the higher education and business cooperation between China and Finland, additionally having long experience from the higher education and international-ization activities. Both had a long experience in export of education activities with Chi-nese partners.

Each interview lasted about one hour and were done separately with everyone interviewed person. The eight persons were chosen from different areas and functions of the university, some from the top management, some from the Faculty of Engineering and Business or from the degree program level, from the different schools and some from corporate, central services, having bigger understanding of the whole university´s business and international activities. Most of the person were in the management position, but there were also some persons from the lower level such as a lecturer, grass root implementors. There were also two TUAS stakeholders, who gave another point of view, larger perspective to the topics, not only from the eyes of TUAS.

The interviewed persons were reached via email where the background of the study and the inquiry was explained and the question about the willingness to participate to the interview was asked. It was also highlighted the anonymous and confidentiality of the research and the issues, that the interview will be recorded. After the positive answer to the request, a calendar invitation was sent. One interview was organized in late 2019 at TUAS premises. All the rest were organized in May 2020 via Teams, due the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected that no face-to-face meetings were possible to arrange. The interviews were recorded both in Teams and with the phone, to be able to go back to the answers and to transcribe the answers for later analysis needs. The interviews were carried out in English, except one that started with Finnish and in the end, I didn´t see the point to change the language, as the conversation was were fruitful and was floating onwards very fluently.

The first thing after the interviews was the transcription of the recorded interviews. This needs to be done before starting the analysis phase of the research. The transcription In an empirical research the conclusions can be made only after the preparatory work with the collected data is made, which includes following areas; checking the data, is there some information that is incorrect or something is missing or completing the information or organizing the data for saving and for analysis of the data (Hirsijärvi, Remes and Sajavaara, 1997, 207-208). No information was missing, so there was no reason e.g. to contact the interviewed persons again.

One method to analyze the qualitative data is following, where the analysis is progressing in stages:

Data	Imagery Classification	Combination	→	Explanation

Figure 13. Analysis progressing in stages (Hirsijärvi et al 1997, 209)

After the transcription, having read all the answers and getting familiar again with the data, I started to organize the answers in an Excel-table by thematic order following the questionnaire. In this way it was possible to see all the answers under each theme by each interviewed person. Then under each theme was first underlined (with different colors) the most essential factors, both the issues which were the same and some argu-

ing matters. After it the most common and relevant facts, the answers were summa-rized as results, which are analyzed after the results.

5.2 Results of interviews – The export of education at TUAS

5.2.1 Actual situation of export education at TUAS and towards China

There were several definitions for the term export of education among TUAS personnel. One definition was that export of education means products or service which TUAS offers for international stakeholders, universities, companies, or individual students. Where they can fulfil their development needs, in the ways of the short trainings or long trainings, or even to get a degree. The activities can take place both abroad and in Fin-land. One interviewee from the central services pointed out that for TUAS the recruit-ment of individual students who pay the tuition fees, is not recognized or considered as an export of education, like it is in seen in many and most of the other HEIs in Finland and around the world. Only when paying students are in groups, when there is a sepa-rate program organized for them, can be discussed about the export of education.

The export of education was considered as a form of business, when the product or service you are selling, is related to education. It can be a whole degree, part of the de-gree, special trainings, or something you offer for a local university in a foreign country. It can take place in the venue of the service provider or in the customer´s facility. How-ever, the customer needs to be outside Finland – this what all the interviewees agreed. Moreover, export of education is something that the customer is paying. It is a service and knowledge base business. It must be seen in service export statistics, budget of TUAS. No matter what we educate, it will create a fund load from abroad to Finland. The paying individual students were a tricky question, it wasn´t that clear if it seen as export of education, at least the money is not allocated in the budgets in that way. It is perhaps an internal question, that needs to be better defined.

Foreign students don´t bring only the tuition fees, but their significance is much larger for Finnish society, there is plenty of money involved and added to Finnish GDP, and the export supports our economy. Individual student recruitment is still rather small at TUAS, it could be developed, and it could be attracted more students outside of EU and ETA countries to TUAS, according to few interviewees both from the faculty of Engi-neering and Business and central services of TUAS. Paying students and tuition fees are main

service products in many countries. Like in the UK, the main product, is e.g. a joint university, where British universities have joint campuses with Chinese universities. This is another kind of form of export of education.

When defining the general status of export of education at TUAS, one interviewee claimed the situation is confusing, as different faculties, have different approaches and strategies, and as TUAS is lacking strategic decisions related to it. TUAS has some strategic guidance, but not real decisions. For tactical level, there is more guidance and the operational ways in Engineering and Business sector are in a good shape, opinion of one interviewee from the prospective faculty.

Almost all the interviewees stated that TUAS doesn´t have any export of education strategy, no ability to take risks, or will invest to an unsecure issue. There are no targets and TUAS is mainly reactive instead of proactive. TUAS does answer to the requests, but it is not actively marketing itself or its products and services. Many universities have big budgets for export of education activities, they don´t necessary reach for profit making, rather plus-minus- zero approach. But the most crucial issue, objective is the visibility, the value for the brand of the institution and for the development of the internationalization and knowhow and expertise of the HEI. Many institutions are ready to invest in these values, but on an opinion of the interviewee, TUAS does not have such a vision. There is no budget allocated and the coordination is done beside the other tasks. No investments are made, and it seems there is no will do such activities, at least not when considering the level of the whole TUAS. Another issue is if there is such a will in the sectors, among the Deans and heads of education and research and in which type of business activity they have been concentrated. The business activities in general have been going on a minus at the university level. This is due the high expenses of the experts. On these bases it is challenging to make any profit.

China has always been a key market area for TUAS, due its size and growing opportunities and the history of international partnerships. Approach has changed from the basic international relationships more to a business-related action. The export of educa-tion cooperation needs to support profit making activity as it can´t be supported from the basic ministry funding. Many personnel of TUAS have been active when it comes to international cooperation to Tianjin and China. They have personal connections. There have been a lot of promises, but not that much deliveries. China is very interesting growing market. TUAS has good connections to Tianjin, there is supportive political

background. The cooperation has been though very slow. Many agreements have been tied but not well enough followed opinion of the interviewee.

There is discussion about talent attraction from foreign countries to Finland. However, it has been very difficult for Chinese students to find internship places during the studies and employment, after graduation in Turku region, in Finland. It should be raised up the fact that the internships are possible to do in the other countries too, not all are needed to do in Finland. The fact is that the Chinese students aren´t employed if they don´t speak Finnish. However, the direction where the cooperation is heading to is to the models of joint, dual or double degrees, however it is wanted to be called.

One interviewee didn´t like the term export of education and saw it more as one way of international collaboration, where a fee is charged of the work delivered. The term global education services suited better on the opinion of the interviewee, it had a better image and especially in the ears of Chinese customers. TUAS should export something we are good at and we need to tell it to rest of the world. Furthermore, there are all kind of companies related to export of education, which can be e.g. selling Finnish learning environments, like modern school furniture. Another type that TUAS is doing is to sell TUAS´ pedagogical expertise for other organization overseas. It can be teaching the colleagues, other teachers, experts, or provide certain courses for students. For teachers, students and other organizations. We should change a proper fee from the customers.

TUAS has put a lot of efforts to get the joint and double degree agreement signed with Tianjin University of Technology. There have been few shorter-semester-lasting student groups studying and some visiting lectures visiting at TUAS. TUAS has some experience working with Chinese, however it is still very in a small scale.

Accordining to TUAS stakeholder Finnish HEIs and TUAS should offer more services to China. Finnish education is on a high level. Many HEIs are yet in a starting point. We should create new products, we should make new packages with the degree programs, should focus with reliable contacts in China.

To summarize the interviewees opinions, export of education export it is not completely commonly agreed in Finland. It is understood in many ways and is seen e.g. incoming degree students, from whom HEI get finances, tuition fees. It can be different kind of cooperation, where the customer is a foreign. There are HEIs who do these activities, but also export companies. Most of the Finnish HEI have some cooperation with Chi-

nese institutions, many have also export activities. China will be the biggest of market, not perhaps for the revenue, because the fees are rather small, but with the quantity and should seriously considered as one of the target markets.

5.2.2 Export products and activities offered by TUAS

Business administration, International Business (IB) Online and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are the two Bachelor´s degree programs which TUAS has currently in English and are possible products for export of education markets to-wards China. Other degrees can be productized too, according the needs of the cus-tomers.

In the opinion of the interviewee from the central services IB Online has not been actively promoted worldwide, even though has a lot of potential. It would be a good export product, when checked how it could be sold. There is not such online degree programs in the world. But as long it is needed to come to Finland for the identification, to get the personal information into the Virta-system, it is not functioning for export. It needs to be changed so, that there wouldn´t be a need to visit Finland before starting the studies, but everything could be done with a distance. There was made some research on how much there are totally online degree programs and there were not many, at least in Fin-land. Other means, normal business administration program are not potential programs, as they are so many already existing, there is much more competition.

The nursing program in English ended as there came the demand to know Finnish language, then basically the immigrants who knew Finnish were able to apply. TUAS would need more precise marketing to the target markets. We have very few degree programs in English compared to any other HEIs in Finland. It has been appealed into it that TUAS has enough of applicants. In the rural areas, e.g. in the northern parts of Fin-land, they need to get students abroad, as they don´t have enough students from Fin-land. However, there is a lack of skillful labor force even in Turku region, which could be attracted from abroad as students. This is not hand in hand with the actions we do in the university level.

In addition, Innopeda has been an excellent export product, as a development program, what has been taken into Brasil. It has been understood as strategic approach model and not only as a teacher training. In China some years back some of the theoretical universities were changed as universities of applied sciences and TUAS hoped to get

involved to this as trainers and consults, but the research universities were able to make the deals where the teachers came to train themselves to the science universities. For TUAS, the weakness is that the status of UAS is not the same as science universities have in China. But those who see the value of UAS both as regional developers and industry and business cooperation partners, those markets TUAS and other UAS are strong. But in the basic HEI field, we are not yet in the same line compared to the sciences universities. In some countries the government decides with whom they can cooperate with, some ranking is made, and then Finnish UASs are totally out of the game.

Interviewees agreed, that TUAS could attract individual students from China with the help of cooperation partners. More double degree programs could be created with the existing partners. TUAS has already sold shorter courses, on-demand programs and tailormade programs. The legislation is problematic for the on-demand education. Other products could be all the engineering and business programs. In addition, wellbeing programs, however those are difficult, e.g. finding internships for wellbeing students is challenging in case one doesn´t speak Finnish. Furthermore, there is potential towards social work programs. Preschool diplomas could be attractive and less problematic. It would be interesting to study further. However, the question is who is going to pay for the program, stated one interviewee from the top management.

There is a double degree initiative with Tianjin University of Technology (TUT), a Bachelo´s degree program in Entrepreneurship and sales, ongoing as mentioned before. There has been made some MoUs with some other Chinese partners, but not much has happened. Asian students including Chinese students are recruited to Salo IoT Campus to the Bachelor´s degree program in ICT. The faculty of healthcare and wellbeing has had some intensive courses, e.g. with Japanese students. In addition short term courses 2 weeks students staying in Finland. In the past, there was a nursing program. Innopeda, the pedagogical model has not been really marketed to China. So far Brazil has been in the focus.

In opinion of the interviewees bachelor´s degree programs are good products. The company representative proposed that shorter courses could be offered for Chinese customers. In addition, with MBA programs, which are always attractive, more of them. Long lasting studies are not that interesting, those are more expensive. Business is always interesting and IT. Tourism and sport management and healthcare are interesting topics too, in opinion of the company representative. With early childhood education there are some problems. The salaries of kindergarten personnel in China is very low,

so they have big problems to come to study to expensive Finland. The company representative reminded that HEIs should be aware that some students are coming here to spy Finnish systems.

The Embassy representative pointed out that in many ways China is simple. Ministry of Education dictates the international cooperation of HEIs quite clearly. Universities are autonomous, but the financial support comes from the ministries. However, there are clear models, joint and double degree programs, which are quite attractive for Chinese partners. Those suits well with Bachelor´s degree programs, for most UAS and for some science universities. When considering join programs, where the foreign partner contributes for the teaching of the program, Chinese do not want to consider it as a commercial activity, but they rather called it in terms of cooperation. It can be called as a kind of a double degree model. However, Chinese don´t like to use that term either, but rather a cooperation program. That makes it complicated for agreement prepara-tion. Newertheless, it is quite simple model, clearly defined from Chinese side, and fits for Finnish legistlation and strategies of Finnish HEIs. Finland wants also to increase the recruitment of Chinese students to Finland as more foreign talents are needed. However, there is a lot of competition world vide and recruitment of students demand plenty of work and improvement.

5.2.3 Bachelor´s degree programs as products for export of education

The interviewees agree that Bachelor´s degree programs are good products for export of education in different formats. Finnish education is desirable, we have the advantage e.g. PISA results, Finnish education reputation, at least for one more year, we need to have the success during this timeframe.

Bachelor programs are one of the best products, which UASs can offer. Short trainings and master programs are also good products. Short programs can work as an introductory courses, which can at some poitn lead to a Bachelor´s degree programs and Master´s degrees. The best model for Finnish HEI is if all the teaching is done in Finland, then we can ensure the quality, agreed the interviewees. Other models need much more tailor making and much more work, before the program starts eventually. There is a lot of work in the planning phase; preparing the contracts and one big portion is matching the curriculum. Seems like there is a market for such programs in China. However, It needs hard sales and marketing. TUAS needs to consider the target mar-kets. Most

common customers are the existing partner universities. Working with bro-kers or individual student recruitment is not our strength. We don´t have any office or representative in physically in China.

According to one interviewee, current Bachelor´s degree programs are not that good programs, as coming to Finland for four years e.g. for the engineering studies, and to get the resident permit for such many years has been experienced very difficult. Some universities abroad have shorter degrees, lasting 2-3 years, but not leading to a Bachelor´s degree. If those students could be got here for 1-2 years to finalize their Bachelor´s degree, could be an attractive model. TUAS should have more creative solutions how Bachelor´s degree programs could be implemented.

TUAS should be able to stand out of the competitors. Technology education is attractive in China, e.g. IT-field and industrial management. In addition, some circular economy, green energy and chemical industry education programs have potential. However, then it is a different story if TUAS only makes those for export products, is that realistic. The challenge is that young Finnish men apply traditionally to Finnish speaking technology programs, not to English speaking programs. IB Online can be an option, but not normal business programs. The existing international semesters for exchange students could be considered as products.

According to one interviewee more students in China are interested in Master programs, but is problematic due working experience demand and due the few amount of contact teaching days. Question is, how much we can provide online?

One possibility, according the company representative, was shorter introductory courses, e.g. pathway studies. Those study packages which later can be accredited to a Bachelor´s degree program, can be attractive. Some will continue to study the whole degree, some only accomplish the study package of 30 ECTS. Moreover, summer university programs were seen attractive according to the company stakeholder of TUAS.

At the end Bachelor´s degree programs are not risk-free products, but it is a possible way to do cooperation in China. This is the model that has worked out for many Finnish HEIs. There is a lot of experience from many Finnish actors. Finnish HEIs should work together and hear and share more experiences from the others and learn from those experiences. Education Finland is putting together a guidebook how to work in Chinese markets for Finnish HEIs. This will be a good tool, so that the HEI actors don´t need to do all the same mistakes. However, institutes need to realize, that some time and re-

courses needs to be invested. There are no quick wins in export business. There need to be willingness to share ideas and work together, highlighted the Finnish Embassy representative in China.

5.2.4 Future of export of education towards China

According to an interviewee there are a lot of actors who could help TUAS finding partners and cooperation entities to work with when starting a business in China. Organizations like Team Finland, Embassies, other Finnish actors working in China and local people and agents. There should be just enough recourses and time invested in finding those partners. Those reliable partners could work with success-fee-principle, getting some profit out of accepted students. However, someone should have the time to do this investigation. China is full of opportunities if TUAS has enough encourage to invest some recourses into the cooperation.

TUAS personnel of the faculty management hoped that the TUT cooperation starts to run. It could initiate similar programs in different fields. TUAS is not a key player in the Chinese markets, but it can have some specific partners in China. It is enough to have one big city like Tianjin for TUAS to run the business. TUAS may have many programs for Chinese markets in the future. Another interviewee continued that if TUAS is willing to learn, and develop it processes, choose the pool of people to go to China - then there are possibilities to develop the export activities towards China. There are multiple perspectives; degrees, TUAS could also offer beside the degree programs pedagogical training for trainers and teachers, ready made elements like Capstone which is very special for Chinese. In Capstone there is a real working life assignment that students solve in multidisciplinary teams. However, TUAS personnel should learn the about the Chinese culture better and develop processes and make a strategy.

China is not good with human rights, but the working facilities and the society is stable, which are good aspects, when compered many other countries. The export activities have been very short time in the core of any Finnish university. However, the meaning will grow, sees the interviewee. Hopefully it comes a business as usual. It could enable TUAS to grow, get more autonomy. The question is which kind of education and to which countries TUAS will focus in the future. If we learn to improve the immigration processes and as long as Finnish society understands that it is ok to sell education, the export of education activities will grow. Finnish heritage is that everyone should be edu-cated free.

However, for the Chinese, the education should be bought by e.g. the Chi-nese government, not from the Finnish taxpayers´ pocket.

One interviewee said it is difficult estimate what will happen in the future. What is taking place in the world in general, what Chinese want, what we in Finland and what TUAS wants. However, Chinese will be interested in collaborating with foreign partners. Thus, we don´t know with which countries they are more interested in cooperating. In five years´ time, time will show. Only thing is that everything changes so quickly, especially the development in China, what will be the political situation in China. The trend has been lately that they try to attract international professors for their universities. They invite experts who are attractive, who have the knowledge what they want. The inter-viewee didn´t know what is finally the strategy at TUAS towards China. Hoping that the cooperation with Chinese will continue and more groups, more recourses are given. China is interesting market. TUAS has done cooperation already for some time, so it would be the asset to continue.

According to one interviewee China will be the main target country in the future. There are so many people living in China. They have high level economy and they have a lot of money. China has problems with some countries, but EU is more attractive for them. There is going to be good future, on opinion of the interviewee. It is just needed be active and get reliable partners. It is also needed to travel to China. Now China and the world is facing COVID-19, what will happen after it. TUAS should work with some scenarios how it will affect to Chinese HEIs. However, there should be created many models which you can support distance models, online teaching. This is something what many countries are looking at, as they want to ensure that education will continue, even with the thread of the pandemics.

China is a huge economy and they want to keep dominated many areas; they need to cooperate with foreign partners. It is important that Finnish HEIs have partners and keep having contacts, keep the partnerships and relationships going on, and seeing models and ways to cooperate through distance methods. Then when the time has become normal we can return daily model of cooperation. Flexibility is a key issue that we need nowadays.

5.2.5 Characteristics when working with Chinese and for the Chinese markets

According to one interviewee for Chinese is characteristics that they are strong with negotiations, you need to be decided and prepared beforehand and know when to be flexible and when to work together. It is not always easy. In Asian countries the trust is almost everything. It is needed long term collaboration; it is one of the basis. E.g. with the twin city of Turku, Tianjin, it has taken years, not weeks or months, to build the partnerships.

There needs to be persona connections, the lenght of negotiations can be long, there needs to be many parties involved to finalize the agreements. Then numbers, China is a huge country. TUAS can only offer a limited amount of e.g. student places, when we speak about two students, they can find 200 students.

It is important to know the Chinese culture, it is different from ours. We need to learn it better. There should be someone who could communicate with them with their language. If you start something with China, it is needed to be understood that it takes a lot of time. Maybe at some point you need to be capable to say, if the negotiations need to stop. Important factors are trust building, learning culture and to understand that we can´t ever understand them totally. If we are too humble, they will eat us. When we send our staff to China they should experience the culture and respect their manners, other ways it is unpolite. We need to be adaptive and find the balance. It helps, when you have used to work in the private sector, to follow the customer mind. It is good to know even small cultural things, how to greet etc. They value those issues, summed up one interviewee.

Chinese are competitive. You need to be clear with your communication. The decision time can be very short. It is not good to give too much freedom, tell the options. China as a country is not open, there is strong censorship, hagiarchy, you must know how the society works, who makes the decisions, what persosn you need to have in the meetings. You can´t just take a course how things run in China, you need to experience it. We at TUAS need to have more information, what we have at them moment. It is also needed to share that info with different persons. There is already existing an office of Turku in Tianjing, and there is a contact person, Kitty Wang, who represents and helps us, organizations from Turku, to start cooperation and businesses in Tianjin. There are reports and analysis produced by the Embassy of Finland in China, those should be

utilized. On opinion the interviewee TUAS should focus on few, 2-3 countries and find people who know these cultures and people. Rather than just run all over the place.

We need to be able to build the trust. Chinese look for long-term collaboration. It is good to keep in mind that the cooperation needs to be built in a good athmosphere. In the case of Tianjin they have sent visiting professors to TUAS. We have the connections needed and we know their staff. Then there is not room for misunderstanding when we know the people.

The company representative pointed out that surely you need to make background check, when starting new cooperation with Chinese partners. Organizations are easier, but finding a reliable agent is more difficult. It is good to bear in mind that there is a lot of criminal business too. We need to collaborate with Finnish Embassy. They can help to find out about those contacts. However, it is fairly easy to communicate with Chinese as we have same kind of mind. We don´t say how good we are, but we could say it louder. Chinese like our attitude. We give what we have promised and what it costs. We have to be ready to negotiate with Chinese. There should be a person, who could speak Chinese and represent us, because you need to build the trust.

The Embassy representative summarized that Finnish HEIs are not well prepared when working with Chinese. There is missing a strategical orientation. There is appreciation for a loyalty and relatability in China, it is something we should investigate from the partners too. We must remember the unpredictability, as there are some risks in Chinese system. They play their game and partnerships with certain models, international cooperation models are quite controlled. We should be careful especially in some critical engineering fields, we know that they can be demanded to do spying of the technology and partner. These issues should be understood when working with Chinese.

5.2.6 Issues to take into the consideration when productizing products and services to the Chinese markets in the future

According to one interviewee TUAS should define the model for the cooperation, is it 4 or 3,5 years here depending of the program, engineering or business, or 1 year in Finland and the rest in the target country or vice versa, or 2+2 or 3+1. Overall defining the model is important. TUAS needs smoother processes and process development is needed inhouse. There should be more strategic level support from the top manage-

ment and internal other functions´ support. We need to improve the productization, which products we want to offer, and all the issues related into it like marketing. More support and cooperation with the authorities related to issues of arrival and staying in Finland. These are not directly related to productization but are important like issues related to websites, marketing activities, contracts, and legal level issues.

Governance guidance should be considered. Everything in export is times two, the awards and challenges. Challenges are faced when trying to match the curriculum. Chinese can have e.g. military training included in their curriculum of studies, stated one interviewee.

Very important is the culture, and it´s understanding. Many persons even at TUAS still thinks that Chinese try to trick us, that they are twisted and try to spy our innovations. In the productization is important to match the curriculum and define clearly the responsibilities to be succesful. Weaknesses appear when customer wants to buy some specific product and we need to tailor-make it. We need to understand that there is behind many time governance guidance. The productization process takes a lot of time. To get an agreement is a difficult task. The interviewee considered that we Finns don´t need to be so flexible, as we have been so far. Chinese try to get many changes, but we can keep our point, and not negotiate too much. When matching the curriculum, it is needed to define, what are the studies they have previously done, is it something similar what our students do, how these correspond into our curriculum. However, we need to respect their curriculum. They have it very strict how curriculum is designed, e.g. the titles of the courses in Chinese curriculum may differ from the Finnish curriculum. You need to be a problem solver when negotiation with the Chinese, there may appear peliculiar questions on the way. They are authority country the education is understood differently in China. We should consider adjusting our education a little. We are too optimistic in some areas, we should be capable to grow these Chinese students step by step, have more cultural awareness, when starting to educate students from different cultures. Our way is stressing the students, and it is not an effective way of learning. Chinese have more problems to adjust into our methods.

In the addition it is good to ask, what the customer wants, what are they lacking. What they want to study in Finland and what are the problems when coming to Finland. They think it is too cold in here and that Finland is far away. They don´t know Finland. We need to promote us better. When we learn about the customers, we can create better products. It is about negotiation and planning the products together, more about planning

it together. We need good and reliable partners; we need to have few of of them. Keep up the contacts we have already, at the universities and a city level. It demands a lot of work, takes time. But you need to be able to also react fast. The interviewee proposed to have a working group which focuses to China at TUAS, dedicated staff members, who have the right attitude and experience. There is not any person, who could work full time with Chinese matters. If there is willing to form a working group, it could make an offer and consider all sides for the cooperation. How feasible this would be, it can be considered. The communication demands time. We need to have staff members who have time to reply fast to the requests. Elicitation to finalize the agreements and deals takes time and requires dedication and investment of time from the actors of the staff member whose working time is not seen. This should be considered.

Finnis HEIs need to be aware of the unpredictability of the Chinese markets. It is needed to be careful with certain products and services especially, if they come from some critical technology, which China is interested to develop further. China can use technologies to different end results than just a partnership purposes, so we have to understand that China plays with little bit different rules, reminded the Embassy representative. In case Finnish HEI works together with Chinese partner in critical areas, this should be remembered. The ideological tightening has been happening, it doesn´t seem to be going away. We don´t know how much this is affecting to cooperation with foreign part-ners in the future. We know already that the political parties´ secretaries have become more prominent features even in the HEI cooperation, where they usually didn´t play a role. That means that ideological control is more important. We need to take into a consideration the competition. China is not only attractive to Finnish HEIs, but China is attractive for everybody. English speaking countries are more interesting for China, due the long history of high-quality education. Corona virus pandemic may affect that the cooperation with smaller countries becoming more attractive. We need to know our place in the market, our offerings, our products, we need to understand the whole game a little bit better, than many Finnish HEIs do now. We are attractive partners in China, we are not competing in the same league with other due our size, but our education is as good as anybody´s. We are a safe partner, we do not have any other elements in the cooperation, we can just compete with our quality, we don´t have politics behind, we are considered as good partners in the eyes of Chinese HEIs.

5.2.7 Pricing and current tuition fee considering Chinese customers

Most of the interviewees thought the current pricing of TUAS´ tuition fee is more or less in the correct level. However, some stated that it could be higher. One interviewee stated that for Chinese the price is every time too high, but in general was considering that TUAS has a good level when it comes to the tuition fees. Tuition is guided by the rector, and we follow that guidline, stated the interviewee from the faculty level.

However, the question is not what Chinese are willing to pay, but how our pricing level is situated compared to other countries. Our level is lower that UK and Australia, so it could be even higher. However, we need to be able to offer the same level of service if the price is higher. China invests in education. Even there is poverty, still many can send their child to be educated abroad.

Another interviewee considered that the tuition fee is too cheap and that we are too modest in this. They may find it amuising, as we are the happiest nation with the highest quality of education, in that perspective we shouldn´t ask too low prices. Australia and other English speaking countries can ask double even triple prices. This shows that we are still learning, we need to know the way for processing and do sales of our mental capacity, or learning materials, books etc. Chinese are used to pay separately of each product. We normally offer packages, but we could also but different prices, to each product, stated one interviewee from the faculty level.

Currently the tuition at TUAS is 11 500 € per academic year. There are possibilities to get scholarships, based on the good success in Finnish language skills. Another interviewee considered the fee could and should be higher. If we compare with other UAS in Finland, they are selling their education for free, ruining the markets. The current price couldn´t be less, otherwise there is not economically point of few. Chinese students find it quite confusing, if there are similar programs with different prices. Market price is rather high in China. There it is not a problem. It can be even suspicious if the level is too low. It could mean for Chinese that the education has low quality.

One interviewee considered that we should sell with a package price, like in Australia. The parents want to know how much you must pay in total of your children´s education during the whole degree, what are the living costs. How much is the accommodation and how much goes for living and eating in the campus restaurants. This is what the other countries do. We should have an estimation about those numbers, so that parents can

compare them with other countries. Not only the tuition fee, but also the rent and other living costs included. We should be able to productize a package with a price tag, what to sell.

The company representative considered the tuition fee 11 500 € as for a Bachelor´s degree programs too high. They prefer to pay the almost the same, whether it is 11 500 € or 15 000 € like in USA or in Canada, than to Finland, which is not well known.

5.3 Results of interviews – Marketing and marketing services

5.3.1 Should TUAS focus to Chinese markets in the future?

Some interviewees thought TUAS should focus to China. Some had an opinion it shouldn´t be any more important than any other market.

According to one interviewee from the central services TUAS should focus to China, because it is a huge market, the volume for the purchase has enormous potential and there are development possibilities to grow. China can be in the future more significant market than USA. If TUAS needs to focus somewhere, then as a priority should be China. Chinese are easy to cooperate with e.g. to compared to Japan, which is more static. Chinese have more entrepreneurial attitude. It is easy to communicate, no risk to be misunderstood.

In China there is room for everyone even though there is at the same time a lot of competition. Only in Tianjin, in the sister city of Turku, there are 12 million inhabitants. Having now the agreement process going on for several years with TUT in Tianjin, TUAS has now the edge, the next 9 months will show if the deal with TUT will be managed to be tied. The reputation is very important, so TUAS needs to make it happen or forget the cooperation with Tianjin.

One interviewee from the top management of the university stated that the nationality is not the question, the question is having the access to the paying customer. There was also another answer which differed from the other answers. That interviewee from the management of the faculty thought that we should not put more focus to China what has been put so far. Let´s see what the Tianjin cooperation brings. There are still many

questions marks open. It was also stated that export of education is not the focus at TUAS.

Others thought that China can be one focus area, but there are other counties too. TUAS should check which are stable countries to work with. There are some countries which are not safe, are very unexpected. It was also stated that we should not focus only to China, but we should take China as one of the focus areas, it shouldn´t be larger than any other. We should take students from many countries. It is also the question if it is only one market we focus. Then what happens if you lose all the business in there? We should have active ongoing things with other parts of the world too such as with South America, Africa, Far Est Asia and Soviet countries. Then some challenges don´t kill all the businesses. There are some examples. Earlier TUAS did a lot of business with Brazil and then it suddenly stopped. China could be one focus area but not the only one. We could concentrate to some certain regions, like Tianjin, but not the whole China.

One interviewee pointed out that everything should start identifying why should we collaborate with China, what is our strategy. Chinese market is huge, it is impossible to ignore China, it is going take over USA, their market and business. TUAS needs to prepare the students for the working life, also prepared to the internationalization of the world. If we have Chinese students in the campus, there is also a networking possibility for our own students, to make new contacts and possibilities to learn from Chinese culture. It is an asset for the home internationalization too. It is a question, is our strategy to put extra funding for export activities. It needs to be a strategic decision, which TUAS board should make and after it an action plan. Results are not that good as they could be with the recourses we have currently. China is not the easiest market, but the possibilities are huge. It is a good market, as families are willing to invest and willing to pay for the education of their children. We are different, they can learn something new from us too. Finnish and Chinese business life managers get along very well. We can work well together. Benefits and business opportunities are two ways, for both parties. China is a growing economy that should be focused.

5.3.2 Competition

The interviewee stated that Finnish actors shouldn´t look at each other as competitor but look Finnish education as a brand as an umbrella, under which we all work together. There is a room for everyone, we should work together to make this bigger and better.

English speaking countries are the bigger competitors, they have bigger resources like US, UK, Australia, and New Zeeland. There are also European countries like Germany and The Netherlands which are ahead of us. Our model of export of education is a little different from the others. There are different approaches in different countries. E.g. in Norway they are not looking for to do export of education to China, it is not in their strategy. We have established some models and mechanism for export of education, but we are still very small, and many times coming alone as small actors, and we don´t have the power what we could have if working together. We have to work better with student recruitment, e.g. under the Talent Boost -program initiatives. We should understand what is beneficial for the whole country. China is a huge place for talent recruitment. That is hopefully something we can investigate in the future.

Another interviewee saw that TUAS competes with other universities UAS in Finland and abroad with UK, USA and Australia, as they have all the systems in place, funding and recourses. Chinese students normally choose Canada, UK, or Australia as their destination. However, nowadays we are clean and safe, which gives us a good advantage. There is a feeling that TUAS is yet a little behind from the competitors.

There are were not seen any problems regarding competition. In Finland there is a lot rumors going on that making business with Chinese is too risky. The interviewee thought that there should be more companies in the field of education involved. Educa-tion Finland does a good work. TUAS should collaborate with other companies and do more cooperation.

5.3.3 Cooperation of HEI´s

The cooperation among the HEIs was seen challenging, according one interviewee. There are different kind of consortiums that are doing it. However, the more there is, the better is. Business Finland and Education Finland should collect the collaboration players together and coordinate some actions among them. On opinion the interviewee this is not done properly. TUAS cooperates, but not much. It could be done some shared marketing. The efforts that have been done so far have gained very little results. We could do regional and national level cooperation, but the mayor problem is that we are lacking of products. If we can take 5-10 paying students per year to some degree programs, that is not really a considered as a business. What we need is to find partners, who find the students.

There are different consortiums such as marketing and sales consortium Finnips of UASs in Finland, they were able to find few students for TUAS, when it had partnership agreement with Finnips, not too big results. The problem is currently, how do the students get into Finland. The challenge is how badly the resident permit processes is working.

Finnish universities and UASs are very small and our recourses are limited. In opinion of the interviewee it might be beneficial to team up and create joint activity. The issues are that the whole activity is based on mutual trust, and that you can rely to your partners. In Finland there is a weird tendency to work alone. There have been some collaboration entities like Finland University with the science universities from Helsinki, Tampere, Eastern Finland, and Turku. They didn´t want to have other companies, universities evolved in the activity. However, they were still unexperienced in international business and the consortium ended up with a bankruptcy. However, if e.g. Tianjin wants to have 90 000 students educated, we would need some cooperation partners, as alone we are too small. We can´t success alone, stated the interviewee from the faculty level.

Starting a cooperation with other HEIs it needs to be based to openness and honesty. It would be good if the rectors could deal ways how to operate, for joint contracts, and there would be a need for establishing separate organizations like Finland University. It would be better to the cooperation in a practical way. The earning logic needs to be dis-covered thus.

Regional collaboration could be good way to do cooperation, like TUAS already does with FinnWayLearning consortium with education institutions in Turku region. There have been good intentions and in certain level it has worked out. The interviewee stated that there is no sence to national level cooperation.

The interviewee from the international relations pointed out that Finnish HEIs should work together not only among them but also with the ministries. We could also utilize the Carpe-network of TUAS, the strategic international partnerships network, along Europe. We could map out, what we could offer together, perhaps we have already some similar partnerships in China, some regions, where to work together. Perhaps some Erasmus+ global mobility grants could be used. If we had common partners, we could use synenergies as everyone is very small alone. The marketing budgets and personnel are very small, with cooperation it could be get more visibility and recourses. Finnish HEIs

could use same export of education companies to work in China if they are identified reliable to work with. in China, if others have found realiable partners.

The Embassy representative underlined that Finnish HEIs should work together, should learn from one another and they should share more information. There should be platforms for it. At the same time Chinese value personalized long-term partnerships, so in that terms we can´t go all together, but we have to build our own partnerships, but then see the synergies, where we can work together. Perhaps we can borrow or involve another partner, to create something bigger, especially if we have certain common products. Are there some disciplines, degree programs or under some certain themes e.g. teacher training could be one area, where we could work together. Finnish education is a brand already. We could turn that into a platform.

5.4 The results of interviews - SWOT- analyses of TUAS capabilities with export of education to China

The SWOT- analyses (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) bases on the interviewes (table 1).

Table 1. SWOT-analyses of TUAS capabilities for the export of education in general and toward China, based on the interviewes.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• TUAS has a lot of expertise and skillful personnel • The high quality, flexible and multidisciplinary education of TUAS • The pedagogical model @Innopeda • A lot of potential products and services to offer, some global areas of expertise to stand out from the competitors • Cooperation with the industry and strong working life connections • Internationalization is strong at TUAS • There is already some market knowhow about China, experience working with Chinese and doing business in China • Professional sales team and dedicated teachers going to China • Good existing long-term partnerships and city level cooperation with Tianjin	• Lack of strategy at the top level • No clear processes and communication between the actors at TUAS • No proper support or inhouse operations • Lack of dedicated personnel for export activities • Poor starting • No physical office in China • No strategy, nor targets set, no budget or marketing, no systematic action plan, no capacity to take risks or willingness to invest • UASs are not in the same line with the traditional science universities in China, not as valued • Don´t have proper agents to work with or processes to identify the trusted and best partners in China

region supporting the export of education activities • Excellent flight routes to China, China is near • Finland is safe, not politically charged • The size of the Chinese market is huge, there is place for everybody • Chinese system is very reform oriented in terms of education • Finnish education has a very good brand so Finnish exporters have a lot of potential to be successful in China • Finnish PISA results • There is a clear model for HEIs to operate in China, the joint or double degree model	• Difficulties with Migri processes • Export is done with a left hand • Not a lot of experience on Chinese markets, don´t know the customer and the needs and expectations of Chinese customer are not known, not familiar HEI system in China • Too naïve and soft attitude and too much tailor making • The political impressiveness and control in China are not known too well • TUAS online platforms are targeted to inhouse students • Not enough commitment or recourses from the top management. • Not enough recourses for product development and marketing, TUAS is not proactive • Not enough perseverance working with Chinese, demands time and building the trust • We don´t have processes, we are not used making business, we are just learning, don´t have expertise in pricing, experience lacks.
Opportunities • China is a huge market and has a growth potential • China is attractive market also in a national level. • China´s willingness to develop education, reform oriented • Finland´s reputation as one of the best countries for the education - the high-quality education. • Possibilities to stand out of the competitors by some global areas of expertise, especially in technology area and with pedagogical models such as Innopeda and CDIO • Finnish position as a safe and neutral county politically compared to others like America • Many partners are already present and active in China if there was a will, TUAS could cooperate with them • TUAS has opportunities to increase student pull from Tianjin and then levering the market - possible to get more openings through Tianjin, reputation spreads, a good reference • Knowledgeable and vice creation of an agent network, widening of the portfolio, dedicated personnel and	**Threats** • China´s political guidance and impressiveness. The political and ideological environment creates that there are many uncertainties • Universities and actors in China are dictated by their Ministry of Education • Difficulties to get the money go out of China • Technological copying, IPR and safety issues e.g. cyber security threats • Competitors run over, if no readiness to invest into a product development, marketing and development of export of education activities • The slow processes in the immigration services. Clients select other countries due the slow decision in resident permit processes. The reputation spreads around • Quality assurance when building up double and joint degrees, Chinese are demanding and with a strong vision, Finns too naïve and soft, too vulnerable

smoother cooperation inhouse offer developing and growth possibilities. • TUAS international networks, good partnerships, experience in working in China • Finland as a country encourages to cooperate with China. • Education Finland offers support and different possibilities and openings • Finding new pathways to potential students can open new possibilities • TUAS has all the elements to be successful in China, we just need to improve the communication to the potential clients • There is endless need for education, China is an endless market. • China is getting stronger and they want to influence to the world, they want to cooperate with international partners, and it offers growing opportunities also for TUAS	• Finnis HEI do not have enough business and especially export business experience • Finnis HEI do not have possibilities to follow up certain market areas • The poor handling in the official and governmental level processes such as immigration matters or incoherent decisions by the Ministry of Education • The threat is if the ministries don´t act in a line and don´t cooperate. Some are supporting the export of education activities and some not. • Chinese education system and differences in curriculum and culture. • If TUAS decides that China is not a strategic focus, and starts to degrease inhouse recourses • Selection of poor agents, too soft approach from TUAS side and tailor making everything • Pandemics, and other economical insecurities can affect dramatically to the collaboration – difficulties in travelling • Legal and financial problems related to foreign students • Communist one-party country, with strict censorship and issues with the human rights • A possible trade war between America and China, how much funding HEIs will have and which market they will focus in the future

5.4.1 Strengths

According the interviewees TUAS has many strengths when considering its possibilities in the export of education activities in general and towards China. As strengths were seen good reputation of Finnish high-quality education in China and worldwide. Finnish education system is highly respected and seen as a good quality education, as one of the best in the world. PISA results even though are not measuring higher education, can be used as a marketing asset.

Another strength was mentioned flexibility as we can plan our curriculum quite flexible and implement it in many ways. This is not possible in many other cultures and coun-

tries, where education authorities are very strict and controlling all the changes and development ideas. TUAS has strong programs, wide offering and high quality. TUAS has strong connections such as good long-term connections to Tianjin region and especially with Tianjin University Technology (TUT), which helps the cooperation and creating business activities with the already existing partners.

At TUAS the education programs are good examples how to combine industry and higher education activities – and where these two are in good relation and balance with each other, supporting one another. We have high quality, multidisciplinary education with strong working life connections and customers can find almost any field of educa-tion. The core brand is the pedagogical model, @Innopeda developed at TUAS. Furthermore, in the engineering education as an education methodology is used the CDIO model. By combining these two pedagogical methods together TUAS has a great opportunity to stand out from the competitors, others higher education institutes in the world. TUAS and the faculties have a professional sales team, dedicated teachers going to China and sema-international teachers.

Furthermore, the expertise at TUAS was seen in the key role of strengths as TUAS has some global level areas of expertise such as in the technical and engineering areas, digital business, sales and entrepreneurship, social work, and health care. Normally universities offer very generic topics, but TUAS has some specialties to offer. Chinese want to increase their expertise e.g. in sales skills. TUAS has expertise in many fields. There are ongoing discussions with potential double degree partners. TUAS has some amount of people who have worked with Chinese and have experience doing business in China. The market area is not too strange and there is already some know-how of China as a market area. We have excellent connections, flight routes to China from Finland. China is after all quite near, in time.

When summing up the answers by the interviewed persons the internationalization was seen strong at TUAS, there is market knowhow, skillful experts and there are all the strengths related to products and services. However, it was stated that when there is no will to act and develop, then these strengths are turned as weakness. There have been discussions with Wuhan region, but the discussion was too high level and no final decisions has been made, it has not lead to a practical level of cooperation so far. Finland is safe, it is not politically charged. Finland is quite neutral country compared to others. Chinese people think that they can trust us, and that we keep our promises. China is so attractive, because of the size of the market, there is a feeling that there is a place for

everybody. Then Chinese system is very reform oriented in terms of education, in that terms the Finnish education offering with the very good brand of the education, Finnish exporters have a lot of potential to be successful in China. Even though there are a lot of challenges operating in China, there is a clear model that Finnish programs can work with and make joint degree programs with Chinese partners.

5.4.2 Weaknesses

China is a challenging market, there are rules, many restrictions, there is a lot inflexibility, the legal framework is quite difficult for western partners, there is certain unpredictability about what happens, the kind of obstacles you may face in partnership and cooperation and business actions. This is due the political structure of the country, the communist party rules, keeps tight control of all the elements of the society. The political system makes the cooperation quite challenging. Ideological elements have become more important for the Chinese communist party in the resent past years, this runs into difficulties when speaking e.g. about mixing the curriculums with a foreign partner. There are many things you need to be really careful about, you really need to work hard to find a good partner, whether it is to find an agent to recruit the students for you or a university partner with whom you build the program with. Especially for the HEIs it is important to understand that you can´t just marge with a new university proposing, let´s do business together, but you need to build the partnership, as they consider the cooperation as a part of the partnership, that is a cooperation even if then there is a business model placed into it. They value the long-term partnerships. In China, the city level connections are very important, they can give a really big boost for the coopera-tion. It can be encouraged HEIs to ook if there is a sister city in China, to utilize that, if only starting to build up a cooperation.

Many interviewees claimed as weaknesses the lack of strategy at the top level. There are multiple players, actors within TUAS, with no clear communication between the actors from centralized services to faculties and sectors. Weaknesses were seen the support or inhouse operations, IT systems and lack of dedicated personnel for export activities. The online platforms are targeted to inhouse students and not good for outhouse students. Some cooperation activities have had poor starting (has been going on years). In addition, the fact, that TUAS does not have any physical office in China was seen as a weakness. One interviewee was frustrated that there is no sense to talk about

export of education if there is no strategy for it, no targets set, budget, marketing, no systematic action plan, no capacity to take risks or willingness to invest. That takes the ground from all the actions.

The status of universities of applied sciences (UAS) is not the same as traditional science universities in China, not as valued. UAS don´t compete in the same playground with science universities. TUAS has less connections to end customers (students) in other markets. We don´t have direct paths to the services, we don´t have not decided where to recruit students, what are the target markets, we don´t have proper agents to work with. As great weakness was seen in many responses the difficulties with Migri processes. The slow processes in the immigration services. Clients select other countries due the slow decision with the resident permits. The reputation spreads around. There are some examples, where only 10 out of 100 paying students got the positive resident permit acceptance and were able to enter to Finland.

Export of education needs a lot of recourses, and it can´t be done with a left hand. One interviewee was thinking if TUAS has really invested that much energy and recourses as should have. However, there is willingness and readiness to take export cases. TU-AS does not have people who could only focus on export of education. Some respond-er thought that TUAS does not have a lot of experience on Chinese markets, was questioning if TUAS is familiar HEI system in China. There is no one who speaks Chinese, this was also seen a weakness. Chinese speaking personnel could e.g. help to identify the right partners as the country is so huge. Someone who knows the language could follow up a big country like China, we might not have enough knowhow about the culture.

In many ways TUAS is a classical educational organization, even TUAS was changed as LTD company in 2014. There are no processes, we are not used to making business, we are just learning, don´t have expertise in pricing, the experience lacks in many areas. One weakness was the matter, how it is reacted to the inquiries. It was stated that it is needed to serve, to be in a servant mode, and take our time really think good contracts from TUAS point of view. Finns have sometimes too naïve and soft attitude in a real life and too much tailor making. TUAS should choose target markets, and not to put our effort to everything, choose tactical points. TUAS needs to decide what to do, find the focus, and after it put people power into it. TUAS should be there where the deals are.

Weakness was also the fact that the strategy and action plan are light compared to other UAS, which might have much more concreated goals. Open question is what we want to do in general, what are the goals for next 5 years ahead, and especially with China. Now is seems hazard. Weakness is that TUAS does not collaborate with other UAS. Even if all UAS together, they are so small, collaboration other partners is lacking, it is not done enough. One proposal was to have some think tank, a working group in-side at TUAS related to Chinese matters. TUAS should use more the expertise e.g. from the Councilor of education and science in China, from the Finnish Embassy. The Councilor can help to know what is happening in China. TUAS does not have enough knowledge and time to follow the markets, as there is no dedicated staff member to certain things, not just for China.

Furthermore, as a weakness was the fact that TUAS is quite slow, and we should not let the customer to wait so long but reply quickly and show commitment that you want to go forward. It seems a pricing can be challenging, we can´t be the cheapest. Chinese families they want to invest in education. TUAS customers are coming from the fami-lies, who have possibility to invest and pay. In general, TUAS does not have enough resources, willingness to invest, and is too reactive, teachers working schedule is already very tight. The interviewee askes, are we ready to take risks?

5.4.3 Opportunities

TUAS has currently three initiatives ongoing which have Chinese partners involved, if these three cases start working properly, there are huge opportunities available as good reputation will spread around. Other opportunities were seen the knowledgeable and vice creation of an agent network, widening of the portfolio, dedicated personnel and smoother cooperation inhouse.

The good reputation of Finnish education, international networks, good partnerships, experience in working in China - previous experience in nursing education and Tianjin collaboration. Finland as a country encourages to cooperate with China. Through Education Finland there is a possibility to get support and answers to questions related to doing business in China. China is attractive market in a national level. Many of TUAS´ partners are already present and active in there, if we had the will, TUAS could cooperate with them. TUAS has opportunities to increase student pull from Tianjin and then levering the market. It is possible to get more openings through Tianjin. If the Tianjin

programs could get started, those success stories could be used as a refence, e.g. in Wuhan and in other areas. However, this requires starting the program. The contract is not yet signed, the negotiations have been going on for three years, and still without the final signature.

Often difficulties are raised up when discussing about accepting the terms of the Chinese side, matching the curricula and with lots of other practical level questions. TUAS can learn out of these experiences. Finding new pathways to potential students can open new possibilities. Finnish system is working. New models for marketing could be used for other programs too, such as done is Salo IoT Campus with ICT program. Chi-na is a huge market, there are a lot of possibilities. If you can create a right product, you might easily attract lots of students enrolling into it. TUAS needs to make choices, where to put the efforts.

We have possibilities as we have good educational reputation. Immigration issues should work out better, national organizations should work together to solve those prob-lems. TUAS has all the elements to be successful, we just need to communicate them better to our potential clients. By improving the communication can be reached better results. China is one of the oldest cultures, they have huge population, they want to have partners, they want to influence through them. TUAS personnel must know how to communicate with Chinese. The communication is made face to face in China, it is needed to have time to go there. Not everything can be done remotely. If cooperation is wanted to do with Chinese, it should be ready to invest time and be ready to go there, on regular basis. In addition, you need to answer to their emails and requests fast and effectively, be active when communicating with the partners and dedicating time to keep the partnership´s relationship alive. During the visits it is important to give as much time as needed, even over the office hours. This is valued by the Chinese partner.

Many times, a lot of work is done behind the scenes by many personnel of TUAS, work that is not seen in the working hours. International relations are people to people work, it is must to know each other and build the trust, sometimes during many years. If things are done correctly, there are a lot of possibilities for business cooperation for TUAS in China. There is an endless need for education, China is an endless market. China is getting stronger and they want to influence to the world. There are growing opportunities for TUAS.

5.4.4 Threats

The stakeholder of TUAS stated that in a general level as a threat can be caused, when creating the models of joint or double degree programs. The biggest challenge is the quality assurance, because these are programs where you really build the curriculum together with the Chinese partner. Finnish side needs to be careful, to ensure that the quality of the program is high enough, when the result is a degree from a Finnish HEI. It needs to be the same quality as here in Finland, as it is our business card, to keep up our high-quality Finnish education.

Chinese come to these programs ready with their ideas. They are dictated by their Ministry of Education and their environment, they try to push their ideas, which might not be suitable for a Finnish degree. Finnis HEIs needs to be prepared and aware of this. We need to take into a consideration the political and ideological environment - there are many uncertainties. Finnish actors are not as well prepared to these joint programs negotiations as Chinese side is. When Chinese partners speak about agenda and rules, Finnish should be more strategically prepared. When in the negotiations Chinese are demanding, with a vision, having their needs ready, they know what and how they want the things to run, Finnish side may come perhaps to listen, how can we do it, and may be vulnerable from the quick decisions from the Chinese side.

There have been some cases, where there have been some problems to get the money out of China. The interviewee told that there was an export case in Aalto University which was dealing many degree programs, it was very complicated case. It was need-ed to work with a business consultant to ensure that all the facts and legal entity ques-tions were taken into consideration according the Chinese law. Aalto ended up getting the money on time, but many have not been as successful getting the money out of China. The reason is still a bit unclear why some have not been so successful. The in-terviewee told that Aalto University made earlier a decision, that they take business consultant into the negotiations, its costs were calculated into the fees. This is something that can be considered to do in other HEIs too, as Finnis HEI do not have enough busi-ness experience, no possibilities to follow each certain market areas. It could be taken into a consideration having a business consultant in the negotiations and agreement processes. If you want to export and do serious business, you need to have an ap-proach that it is truly a serious business. Education providers are not usually the best businesspeople, then some challenges may appear.

As threats the interviewees saw the poor handling in the official and governmental level processes such as immigration matters or incoherent decisions by the Ministry of Education. The threat is if the ministries don´t act in a line and don´t cooperate. Some are supporting the export of education activities and some not. The question is then, how it is possible to develop it. The resident permits for the incoming paying students have been a bottle edge for many HEIs in Finland.

Chinese education system and differences in curriculum and culture. A threat is also if TUAS decides that China is not a strategic focus, and starts to degrease inhouse recourses, not paying attention to IT systems or support services. Moreover, a selection of poor agents, too soft approach from TUAS side and tailor making everything are big threats.

There should be a will to do export of education at TUAS level. An interviewee commented, if there are no resources and the actors who work with export issues have hands full of other tasks, things can´t run as they should. If there are unsecure years economically with pandemics, causing economic difficulties, difficulties to invest, how it can be developed the business activities. TUAS is not seen as a profitmaking unit, but as an actor which serves the region, then the business is not in the focus, and not seen relevant. The business activities have been going into minus during the latest years. There would be a room for improvement even in the basic level of business activities, without even mentioning the export activities, which are normally two to three times more complicated and time consuming. The situation does not encourage to invest or take risks. There are no objectives and no budget. One interviewee underlined that if there was a plan, there could be thought threats, but without any action, is difficult to set threats. In addition, TUAS doesn´t have enough know how the businesses are run in China.

The world is unsure, the pandemics, and other economical insecurities can affect dramatically to the collaboration. When planning and building something together, but in the end is not implemented, finalized, this is a thread as time and recourses have been invested.

Legal and financial problems related to foreign students can be seen also as a threat. This is what TUAS learned with the case of the Chinese nursing students. There was a foreign company, a broker between, who didn´t follow the agreed processes. The agreement wasn´t favorable and TUAS didn´t want to go legal battles as the costs would

have been too much etc. It is learned that the agreements need to be very care-fully done, taking consideration many aspects, and when having disagreements, the cases needs to be dealt under the Finnish law. As a threat can be also seen if you don´t find a reliable partner.

One challenge, perhaps a positive one, was seen if the product is too good, that you are not able to take all the students that are willing to come.

It was also questioned the political situation in China. The interviewee questions if there was some national guidance behind the students and universities. We don´t know what China is aiming for, what is their main motivation. Is it for individuals, which is not typical, or is it the governance who puts the reins? We should be aware how they want to influence into us. Chinese are very straight forward; all should be done in a nice atmosphere. The Chinese public administration is a threat as it is never known what the governance and the Education of Ministry decides next, in what it will put the efforts and invest in. The government of China is a thread for the businesses in there, in opinion of one interviewee.

We must learn the real culture, and how the business is done in China. One should trust itself when going to China even may face very unexpected situations. One interviewee considered that we should understand, who are and who are not suitable for export of education. That can be a taboo, but there should be openly discussed who we can be sent to China and who not. Those people who have only administration or public sector experience don´t always understand the business negotiations methods. At TUAS we should accept different kind of roles for different people. We need to cooperate with the Chinese and understand that they are not doing anything, which is link to the Chinese strategy. They want to be number one in the world. We shouldn´t be too naïve and let the Chinese dominate us. Threat can be seen the political situation, the Chinese government and how the society is organized, how it is dictated. In the one-party country, censorship is very strict. One issue are also the human rights and how they are dealt. We should be careful not to give up our ideas and innovations for Chinese. Technology copying, IPR and the safety issues e.g. cyber security aspects should be considered. The IT sector is very vulnerable.

We are in the middle of Covid-19 -crises. These kinds of pandemics can affect a lot how travelling and flying business are developed in the future. There should be a strate-gy for that, how can we then meet the people and continue doing the export of educa-tion

activities with foreign partners. The different tools should be considered e.g. for online lectures. It needs to be considered what tools can be used in China.

A possible trade war between America and China can have an impact. This can affect how much funding the Chinese universities will have. They might focus on other Asian countries instead of America and Europe, due the political issues. Political issues might cause with whom they want to collaborate. Finnish universities UAS are not in a ranking list, however they are quite neutral and safe compered to many other countries.

5.5 Development proposals for the future

5.5.1 The export of education readiness at TUAS – proposals for the future

According the interviewees, if TUAS wants to be high quality HEI, which has opportunities to develop and offer foreign-language degree programs and other high quality products and services for the export, the first thing to do, would be formatting a business model and business plan, make a market analysis and after it a marketing plan. There would be certainly markets for many programs from different schools within different faculties of TUAS. Education Finland´s guidebook for export of education proposes following approach for the HEI´s when planning their business model for the export. The model could be used as an initial approach also for TUAS to define its business model for export.

BUSINESS MODEL

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">COSTS</th><th colspan="2">CREATING VALUE</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">KEY PARTNERS (6)
Value networks, roles, benefits and efforst in the network</td><td>KEY ACTIONS (5)
Processes, tasks and responsabilities</td><td rowspan="2">PRODUCT, SERVICE
Solution – value and value proposition

(2) What?</td><td>CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP (4)</td><td rowspan="2">CUSTOMER SEGMENT

(1)
Who?
Where?</td></tr>
<tr><td>KEY RECOURCES (7)
Physical
Intellectual
Humane
Economical</td><td>CHANNELS (3)
Marketing, sales, Production, product development, delivery, invoicing, customer service</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">COST STRUCTURE (9)
The cost of the business model
Comparison of alternatives</td><td colspan="2">CASH FLOW (5)
Revenue generation model
Sales of the property, use charges, rental, leasing, licensing, franchising, commission fees, leading rewards</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 14. Business model (Auvinen 2016)

Interviewees underlined, that there needs to be found the commitment and the will at TUAS management level and from the whole organization to develop forward the ex-port of education activities. It was seen that there are a lot of opportunities to grow the export of education activities. However, it seems that hands are already full only operat-ing in the Southwest Finland region and that the strategy, commitment and the will are missing. In addition, pandemics and financial crisis take the room from making busi-ness. When

the main task of the university is somewhere else than in making business, the export won´t be in the focus. These issues, don´t encourage taking risks and make new investments. As Laivola states we need to confess export of education as a part of the HEI´s strategy and vision and secure its capability and recourses. (Laivola 2018) There is no strategy for export of education business currently at TUAS level, it is miss-ing and needs to be created. Only after that it is truly possible to start to develop export activities at TUAS. As the strategy is missing, there are no goals, no action plans, busi-ness model and plan and no measures, furthermore the recourses are quite narrow. It is challenging to develop anything with these bases, stated the interviewees. TUAS needs to define what it wants to archive from the export of education. It should be thought in a broader way, not only the financial perspective but what benefits it brings to our staff and students. Do we have some specific targets, and then work with that and ahead to those goals?

Laivola states that HEI´s should utilize digital solutions, to be able to offer scalable and cost-effective education services. In addition, HEI´s should develop and productize ed-ucation services in a concise segment, where Finland has strong evidence of know-how. The technology allows being close to the customer, despite the geographical and cultural distances. (Laivola 2018) TUAS needs to decide what are the key products to sell. Not everything should be sold. E.g. Innopeda and some double degree (DD) -programs and the already existing degree programs offered in English were mentioned in the research and should be considered as key products and services. According to The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) the mobility of the services over the borders are done based on four different alternatives.

1. The service is produced at the target country, when the experts of the service pro-vider are moving.

2. The service is produced outside of the target market, e.g. in Finland, when the cus-tomers are moving.

3. The services are offered over the borders utilizing the networks, software and other technology and digital solutions, when only virtual mobility is happening, no physical mobility of persons.

4. The services are offered via the own or partner´s unit abroad.

Selling the degrees, where the customers, the students move to Finland, is the most typical form of the model where the customers are moving. (Auvinen 2016) This was one of the best models for TUAS export business too. Not many teachers are willing to travel abroad. Moreover, the expenses are growing high when the experts of TUAS are moving. What the interviewees saw, was that TUAS should focus to find more DD-partners and programs and find more win-win cases. In the DD-program the students are normally moving to Finland for the last year to finalize the degree in Finland. Other parts of the degree are accredited to the degree at TUAS - this demand building up the degrees together and mixing the curriculum.

TUAS could use the current success stories as a showcase, in and outside China. TUAS needs to more flexible and find new ways e.g. via distance education. Utilizing distance teaching could be one solution also for the double degree programs, especially for the Bachelor´s degree programs, which last for many years. Furthermore, TUAS has already strong expertise in virtual and distance learning methods and creating degrees in online. Distance education could also solve the immigration challenges and be cost-effective way to implement the services.

5.5.2 Marketing and marketing of services – proposals for the future

TUAS tends to be rather reactive with marketing actions, there is no proactivity. Selin underlines that marketing is one of the key areas, when starting to plan export business, it needs to be a fundamental thinking process of the company. The focus is to find the customers, get them, keep them and after all secure profitable business. Company needs to know the existing needs in the target market and satisfy their demands by providing to the market suitable products and services. (Selin 2004)

One interviewee stated that the first thing is to find active cooperation partners, with whom TUAS could market the programs, export products, it could be in total 4-5 partners. They could promote and advertise, both Finland, Turku, Salo and TUAS - as this can´t be done alone. Secondly, we need to develop the processes, both at TUAS level and Finland in general. Find ways how we can attract the international students to Finland. Thirdly, we should have stronger internal organization, to investigate the export of education matters, in addition marketing aspects.

According Selin it is important to have enough target market knowhow and the role of the marketing research is emphasized. (Selin 2004) TUAS should do a marketing strategy, make a target market selection. Narrowing down potential country markets and market segments within them. The interviewees saw that marketing activities should be done in business to business model. TUAS can be and needs to be present in the regular marketing platforms, but export of education is typical B&B case, where the customers comes from the personal connections – trust and reliable connections are must to have. Czinkota et al (2005) highlight that rather than try to reach everyone, to best use for the recourses of the company is to identify potential markets for entry and ex-panding selectively over time to those that are seen attractive. China is seen as one of the interesting markets for TUAS, due the long-term cooperation and existing connec-tions. As for the model to narrow down potential target markets and screening and ana-lyzing foreign markets, could be used the four-stage screening process in target market by Czinkota, which is seen in a figure 5. (Czinkota et. al 2005, 472)

The key is to fulfill the wishes and needs of the customer. The customer origin marketing demands knowhow of the target conditions, culture, legislation, values, and mind of the customers, in addition of their consuming habits. When service provider can proof the additional value and benefits for the consumer it has more potential to stand out from the competitors in the market. The purpose is often to create positive images, es-pecially keep up the positive company image. It needs conscious customer service ori-ented and effective implementation from all sectors of the company. (Selin 2004, 108) In this TUAS needs to act together with all the functions of the company. Export of edu-cation and the marketing should be integrated into all the actions of the company. One interviewee thought that it might be a good idea to have local partner representative in the prospective target country e.g. in China. TUAS does not have enough knowledge about the business culture and all the legislation and conditions for the business in Chi-na. It is important to have a good partner, which can operate as an agent in specific target markets. The partner could also be a local university. In general markets, we need knows better the local regulations. The homework needs to be done.

With agents the background check should be done. When you really need to enter to the new markets, you must know the partner and establish the partnerships and build the trust personally. We must understand that we might work differently, might have different habits and customs, but still the end results can be good. TUAS should find a reliable partner, with common goals and with same earning logics. TUAS should start to go

through our staff´s former connections, which connections could be utilized and what twin city relations there are etc. One proposal was to establish a group who works with China, with persons, who have connections and experience to work together – to share the information and evaluate the business cases together. There is not only one person who could dedicate enough time for following one specific market area. In addition, it was recommended to have at least one Chinese person who speaks and knows the culture in the team. It was recommended if possible, to expand to those local areas where you are already working, to work e.g. with the partner universities, use the existing contacts, if they are willing to pay. Having the reputation is the key. The existing contacts may have some other connections too in the region, which we could utilize, and they could recommend TUAS. Someone needs to monitor this work.

We must find targets groups and we must know the customers. We need to find the real markets; we need to be present and go there often. TUAS needs to have a local presence in the target market. There are organized some group visits and exhibitions, fairs e.g. by Education Finland, but it is very seldom, when you find something, true clients from those.

Marketing in China is difficult. Competition of the best international degree students is huge, the best students are going mostly to English speaking countries. The actors need to be present as much as possible in the target country, the B to B connections are the key. It is also good to bear in mind that Chinese students use different social media platforms than Western students. MarketMeChina recommended to create a brand presence on these powerful Chinese social platforms, such as WeChat and Weid and develop them with the right content and engagement programs. (MarketMeChina 2020)

5.5.3 Should TUAS focus to Chinese markets in the future? – Proposals for the future

Most of the interviewees agreed that China should be in the focus in the future, at least among one of the key target countries. TUAS stakeholder from the Embassy of Finland in China disclosed very general level findings what Finnish HEIs should consider when entering to the Chinese markets. HEIs are a little bit naive when they come to the Chinese markets, they are not well prepared, just coming to see and hoping the best. There should be a better focus, better strategical approach. More strategical orientation towards the partnership search, understanding that doing business in education is really investment and demands to put the institutions´ efforts into it. There needs to be institu-

tional support for the cooperation. Chinese partners do not like that only commercial actors are sent; they want to see the commitment from the top leadership. Chinese expect the commitment and ongoing friendship and partnership, communication on regular basis. Sometimes some Finnish HEI have had an export office in China and they try to promote the cooperation models via them, but Chinese don´t value that. There needs to be the whole institution commitment behind it, with the top management.

China has become one of the world's biggest exporters and importers. It is the second largest economy in the world. (Albaum and Duerr 2011) China as a market area is huge and the market is growing incredibly fast, this brings a lot of opportunities to the western service providers – it is said, there is room for everyone. We should not ignore China as a market area as they are willing to invest into education, they have capacity to pay for the education and they are very reform oriented, they want to be in the top of the technology and development, they are keen to have international cooperation and partners. (MarketMeChina 2020)

Of course, it is important to understand the unpredictability of Chine markets. The political guidance and the influence and censorship by the Communist party. The fact that the universities are dictated by their Ministry of Education. There is the threat for technological copying, IPR and safety issues e.g. in cyber security. The quality assurance should be kept in mind, when building up double and joint degrees, as Chinese are demanding and with a strong vision. Compared to that Finns are too naïve and soft, too vulnerable for the impact of Chinese partners.

The World Business Culture forum states that China is a land of opportunities, but it is also a land of potential traps. The homework is needed to be done. There is no sense to invest in exporting to China if there is not enough time for research and planning. (The World Business Culture in China 2020) Ministry of Education of Finland has also reminded academic actors about Chinese the challenges that China offer for the higher education institutes. These issues about the liberty of science, rules for cooperation and IPR, human rights and about the academic playground, are good to bear in mind, when planning a cooperation with China. (The Ministry of Education and Culture 2020)

The conclusion is that HEIs should focus to Chinese markets despite all the challenges if they are ready to invest time and recourses. China will lead the education and science sector in the future. China is already now the second largest country. Maybe future the most important, not just in the education, but it will lead the other markets too. It is im-

portant to Finland that we are present there, that we have many people, companies, many students, who learn about China, who are active with China, so that we are active player in China – including TUAS. Despite all the challenges and difficulties, TUAS should take China into consideration, and not to give up too easily.

5.5.4 Competition and cooperation of HEI´s – proposals for the future

The cooperation factors came out strongly with the results of the research. Most of the interviewees thought we are too small actor to act alone and the recourses are limited in the export of education. Therefore, synergies should be utilized and TUAS should team up and do cooperation with different actors such as other HEIs, ministries, embassies, Education Finland, Migri, regional level institutions, cities, organizations, and companies. The meaning for the cooperation were seen crucial according the survey made to the UAS´ in 2016, e.g. in the field of sharing teachers and expertise, product development, marketing activities and in an agreement preparation. In addition, possibilities for cooperation were seen in establishing common export unit in some specific country and sharing experiences and discussions between certain exporters. The cooperation requires trust and getting rid of the setting of a competition. (AMK-lehti 2017)

Starting a cooperation with other HEIs it needs to be based to a trust, openness, and honesty. One proposal for the cooperation was that rectors could deal ways how to operate together, for joint contracts, for cooperation in practical level – not establishing any heavy export organizations. TUAS could also utilize the CARPE – The European strategic network in higher education for the cooperation. The member universities of the network could map out, what could be offered together, as there might be similar partnerships e.g. in China. There could be some regions, where to work together or in some thematic areas. Finnish HEIs could use same export of education companies to work in China if they are identified reliable to work with.

Finnish HEIs including TUAS should work together, they should learn from one another and share more information and knowhow. There should be established platforms for such an activity. Asian countries such as China value personalized long-term partnerships, this affects the HEI´s can´t go all together, but we have to build our own partnerships, and see the synergies, where could be worked together. Regional level cooperation was a good option. When creating something bigger, joint programs, the expertise could be borrowed or be involved other partners too, especially in certain thematic are-

as could be worked together. Finnish education is a brand already and it can be used as an umbrella also for TUAS export of education activities, together with other cooperation actors we become stronger and have more impact.

5.6 TUAS capabilities with export of education to China

5.6.1 Strengths – proposals for the future

Finnish UAS´ work closely with industry, society, and business. The applied research and innovation are strong. The work is focused into professional competences and innovations. Many UAS`s have develop new focus areas and pedagogical solutions. Finnish UAS professionals can offer a lot to international agendas. The educational models used in UAS`s have already piqued interest in many parts of the world. (Vanhanen 2016)

TUAS should also use these same strenghts as an asset in the export of education. TUAS has a lot of expertise and skillful personnel, with the high quality, flexible and multi-disciplinary education. In addition, the pedagogical model @Innopeda, developed at TUAS, is one key brand, which could be sold to Chinese markets too. TUAS has a lot of potential products and services to offer, as there are some global areas of expertise to stand out from the competitors, especially in the fields of technology, which is attractive field especially among Chinese students. TUAS has strong cooperation with the industry and strong working life connections.

Internationalization is strong at TUAS. There are existing long-term partnerships and city level cooperation with Tianjin region, which supports the export of education activities in China. TUAS has already some market knowhow about China as a target country, experience working with Chinese and doing business in China. There are some dedicated teachers willing to travel to China. The geographical situation of Finland support also the cooperation towards China. There are excellent flight routes to China, it is near in terms of time. Our neutral position in the eyes of the Chinese, give us an asset. Compared to many competitors, Finland is not politically charged, and it is safe environment.

In addition, Finnish HEI´s and especially UAS have a clear model to cooperate with Chinese partners, the double degree model is attractive both for Chinese and Finnish actors. TUAS should look for new partners to create more DD-programs.

5.6.2 Weaknesses – proposals for the future

It has become clear via the research that TUAS has no strategy, nor targets set, no budget, marketing or business plan, nor systematic action plan or capacity to take risks or willingness to invest to the export of education activities. There are no clear processes and communication between the actors inside TUAS, nor proper support or inhouse operations. There is a lack of dedicated personnel for export activities, the work is done with a left hand. When speaking about the export of professional services, many support services are needed from the different sectors of the whole HEI, so the know-how of the international service business is important factor for the whole personnel of the HEI. How Finnis exporters can organize their international business so that the targets are reached. The homework needs to be done, both creation of the business model or models and the plan for the internationalization. The customer segments need to be cleared out, likewise the ways for marketing, sales and product development. (OKM, Education Finland 2020) TUAS should define a strategy, get the support from the top management to develop export of education activities, the knowhow of the personnel and start systematically develop the actions, with defining targets, marketing and business plan. More recourses and budget should be dedicated to the actions from the top management.

UASs are not in the same line with the traditional science universities in China, not as valued. TUAS doesn´t have proper agents to work with or processes to identify the trusted and best partners in China. More cooperation with other UAS should be done, to get recommendations about the good agents ´to work with and to stand out of the science universities, as UAS have a lot to offer with their applied research and innovations, with the good working life cooperation.

There are identified problems in the immigration processes, students have difficulties to get resident permits on time if at all. There should be more cooperation with Migri and ministries, to improve the situation. More communication between the actors should be made. In addition, new ways for more flexible education should be developed, such as

online and distance teaching, which could also improve the challenges in the Migri-processes.

According to Alumno (2020) there are certain aspects that need to be taken into consideration when thinking the key issues on commercial viability. Those are selecting the right market and location in addition with the right offering. There needs to be right partnerships models and partners and a realistic business plan, which include also appropriate investments. There needs to be realistic sales and marketing approach, which is also modified to the local context. (Alumno 2020) It was claimed by some of the inter-viewees that TUAS personnel don´t have enough experience in export of education activities, and about Chinese markets. TUAS personnel don´t know enough the cus-tomer, the needs, and expectations of Chinese customer. In addition, TUAS is not famil-iar with the HEI system in China. In the publication, Road map for the export of educa-tion 2016-2019 it was underlined that there is a need for fostering the market know-how. In Finland is missing composed and actual information about the markets of the export of education. Finnish exporters find difficult to perceive key target markets and do clear segmentation. There is also a lack of the knowledge about the legislation of the target markets in the educational field. Team Finland follows these changes and reports about them regularly, it also does every quarter of the year a target market analysis for the export of education actors. In addition, Finnish exporters don´t know their competitors in different countries. Knowing the competitors could also allow new and needed partner-ships, to implement bigger project entities. (OKM 2016) TUAS should utilize more this information produced by Team Finland and Education Finland.

It was claimed in the research that there is sometimes too naïve and soft attitude and too much tailor making by TUAS side. The significant of the political impressiveness and control in China is not either understood in general level enough well. The competitiveness factors in export were seen customer understanding and relationships, know-how of the personnel, conception and productization. (OKM 2016) TUAS should develop the competence of its staff and get more know-how of the markets, more customer understanding. The working group of China could be established, to share the knowhow and expertise regarding matters related to China.

According many of the interviewees, there is not enough commitment, will or recourses from the top management for product development and marketing, TUAS is not proactive. There is not enough perseverance working with Chinese, as it demands time and building the trust – many emails need to be answered and many meetings held, trips to

China need to be made, in regular basis. It was claimed that TUAS doesn´t have proper processes, TUAS is not used to making business. TUAS is still in a learning phase of the export business, with many other UAS´ in Finland. It should be developing the expertise in pricing and other areas.

5.6.3 Opportunities – proposals for the future

The size of the China is huge, there is place for everyone in the Chinese target markets and a lot of growth potential. The Chinese system is very reform oriented in terms of education. They are ready to invest in education of their children and have international cooperation with Finnish HEIs. Finnish education, with Finnish PISA results, has a very good brand, so Finnish exporters have a lot of potential to be successful in China. China is an attractive market also in a national level. Finland as a country encourages to co-operate with China and offers supports in many levels e.g. via Education Finland.

Many partners are already present and active in China if there was a will, TUAS could cooperate with them. TUAS has opportunities to increase student pull from Tianjin and then levering the market. It is possible to get more openings through Tianjin, if the reputation spreads and it is managed to use as a good reference.

The knowledgeable and vice creation of an agent network, widening of the portfolio, dedicated personnel and smoother cooperation inhouse offer developing and growth possibilities for TUAS export activities.

TUAS could also try to find new pathways, shorter pathway programs for Chinese, which could be used as a roll-in products to the degree programs. TUAS has all the el-ements to be successful in China. However, it should be able to improve the communi-cation to the potential clients. There is endless need for education - China is an endless market. China offers growing opportunities also for TUAS.

5.6.4 Threats – proposals for the future

The political and ideological environment creates that there are many uncertainties in China, it´s political guidance and impressiveness are strong. The Communist party has a strict censorship and there are certain issues with the human rights. Universities and HE actors in China are dictated by their Ministry of Education. It was mentioned in the

research that there have been cases, where have appeared difficulties to get the money out of China. There is a threat of technological copying, IPR and safety issues especially the cyber security threats. TUAS should understand the risks when doing cooperation with Chinese.

If TUAS is not ready to invest into a product development, marketing and in generally into the development of export of education activities, the competitors will run over. There is a momentum to be active now. The slow processes in the immigration services can spreads around and creates bad reputation for Finland. Clients select other coun-tries due the slow decision-making time in the resident permit processes. One challenge is also the incoherent decisions by the Ministry of Education. The threat is if the minis-tries don´t act in a line and don´t cooperate. Some are supporting the export of educa-tion activities and some not. A coherent decision should be made. This would also allow better results for HEIs in the field of export activities. TUAS should be flexible and find new ways for cooperation, e.g. utilizing digital solutions, which might help to solve the immigration challenges.

There are differences in Chinese education system, curriculum and culture compared to Finland. One of the key issues is a quality assurance when building up double and joint degrees together. Threat is that Chinese are demanding and with a strong vision, Finns too naïve and soft, too vulnerable. However, Finns should keep their vision, the quality should be kept high, even though the negotiation time would stretch.

Finnish HEIs do not have enough business and especially export business experience. They do not have possibilities to follow up enough well certain market areas. One of the biggest threats for the export activities in China is, if TUAS decides that China is not a strategic focus, and starts to degrease inhouse recourses, if the commitment of the management is lacking. Preparing a business plan for exporting the professional services for the HEI´s, would demand clear long-term financial investments states the experts in the article in the UAS Journal 2017. It was seen important both to follow the development of markets and customer needs, likewise the continuous product and offering development based on the customer needs. In the internal development was seen crucial the commitment of the management and the whole organization to the ex-port of professional services, the cohesion in the instructions and methods, the usability and best possible personnel planning and resourcing. It was seen important that the ex-port of professional services needs to be linked to the development of the education programs and RDI activities, and that it needs to support the strategy and the interna-tionalization

of the institution. (AMK-lehti 2017). TUAS should develop the competencies of its personnel and create a clear strategy with a business plan. The Chinese markets should be possible to follow, to know the customers and their needs. There are good products and services, but it is needing also a productization knowhow. TUAS should develop these areas.

Selection of poor agents and tailor making everything are also issues that can affect badly for the businesses. Background check needs to make for new possible partners. One of the biggest challenges of the service businesses is combining tailor-making in cost-effective way, as the services are planned and produced to the special needs for each customer. Modeling is a way to mass-tailor-make products and services. The module is a collection of actions and components, which are produced and can be described as one entity. This provides for the customer ability to combine different product-elements and create the final product, which suites for their taste and needs. (The manual for the export of Education 2016) TUAS should also consider not to tailor-make everything, but create modules and use existing products, such as international semesters and smaller modules for the service packages.

Pandemics, terrorism, global warming, and economical insecurities can affect dramatically to the collaboration – difficulties e.g. in travelling. Political crises, such as possible trade war between America and China, can have a huge impact. It will have an effect, how much funding Chinese HEIs will have and which market they will focus in the future. When doing export business, there is a higher possibility to risk than domestic businesses. There are differences in laws, customs, business practices and the geopolitical context can all affect difficulties and increase the changes for risk. A risk plan and management need to be established. (National Bank 2018) TUAS should be prepared for these threats by creating a risk management plan and not only focus to one market.

5.7 Validity and reliability

The validity of the qualitative research means the ability of the indicators or the research methods to measure exactly that, was meant to be measured. Sometimes, the indicators and methods don´t correspond to the reality, what the researcher had imagined to research. This can happen e.g. if the interviewees have understood the questions in the interview template differently than the researcher had meant to be. (Hirsijärvi 2003, 213)

In my research the validity has success fairly well, as the methodology was used interviewe and during the interview there was a possibility to define the questions, if they were not understood correctly, as the interview flowed forward according the speed and motivation of the interviewee.

The reliability means the repeatability of the research results, the ability to give non-hazardous results. There are different ways to measure the reliability of the qualitative research with some statistical procedures and methods. One is the repeatability, if at least two persons have given the same answer or if another person had asked the same questions and the results were the same, despite the interviewer. Another matter is to make the research to the same person, but in another time, but still the answers are the same. (Hirsijärvi 2003, 213) In my thesis, it is presumable that the same answers and results were given, despite whoever was the interviewer. However, if the research is made after one year, the results may differ, as the processes may have developed and changed may have occurred during this time.

With this regard the validity and reliability can be seen true and competent. However, when discussing the term validity with the qualitative research, there are different interpretations about it, as the terms have been mostly used with quantitate researches. However, in this research the methods and conditions for the interviews have been very similar, via Teams and duration was mostly one hour for each interview. The whole research procedure has been opened and explained clearly for the readers in the chapter 5.1. Background of the thesis. This is what Hirsijärvi underlines, that reliability is enhanced when the interviewer has precise review the process of the interviews. (Hirsijärvi 2003, 214)

One possibility to sharpen the validity of the research can be utilizing many methods, which is called as triangulation. One of the methods of the triangulation is a triangulation of researchers. The validity and reliability can be stronger e.g. if there are more people collecting the data, not just only one researcher. Hirsijärvi states that what we see when we look at the crystal ball, depends how we look at it. (Hirsijärvi 2003, 215) This can be interpreted that as in my research the only interviewer was me, analysis of the results is done by my perspective. There was not a possibility to use any others opinions for the analysis. The issues that I knew all the interviewees beforehand and that I am currently working partly in this specific field, I have my own working experience regarding the thematic area, matters related to export of education activities in the same organization, can have given some touch to the analysis. However, the answers were dealt and ana-

lyzed with reference to the theory and were true opinions of the interviewees themselves.

6 SUMMARY

Finland has already for long been famous for its high-class and modern education, good reputation of the learning results, especially the results in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and high quality of the knowhow and expertise. The strongest brand internationally is Finnish education. (Huusko 2017)

TUAS has among other HEIs and UASs start to find ways how education could be exported to other countries. TUAS is also in a learning phase, but some promising openings have been made. What has been the most crucial thing to do before starting productizate services for the export markets has been the definition of the TUAS core competencies, these research and development, and educational innovations have been seen for the basis for international business. (Virtanen & Kakko 2016). The key strengths are the multidisciplinary applied research, development and innovation. TUAS offers education which develops working life and entrepreneurial skills and provide research development and innovation services. At the core of all TUAS´ activities has been innovation pedagogy, Innopeda®. (TUAS 2020)

The export of services can be seen benefitting HEIs in many ways. The export of education grows the competence of the personnel of the HEIs and produces new operating models, which profits the development of the whole organization. Export of education fosters the expertise in sales, marketing, contract services, language competences and can act as an awakener for other changes, e.g. for the development of digitalization. The career opportunities of the personnel can grow via the new expertise and experiences. The export of education can build up the visibility and the attractiveness of the HEI both in a national and global level. The development of export activities can challenge and even bring competition beside the traditional international relation activities e.g. international projects and student and teacher mobility. Procedures based to a business don´t flow in that smoothly and strait forward inside HEIs. The ownership of the procedure is not that easy to find. In order to be successful and for avoiding risks, the education of export activity requires certain competencies, infrastructure and recourses behind the service provider and the customer – such as motivation, knowhow in marketing and about the target market, teaching equipment, process management, image and reputation and customer needs´ analysis etc. (Laivola 2018)

The conclusion is that HEIs should focus to Chinese market despite all the challenges if they are ready to invest time and recourses. China will lead the education and science sector in the future. China is already now the second largest country. Maybe future the most important, not just in the education, but it will lead the other markets too. It is important to be present there, Finland needs to be active player in China – including TUAS. Despite all the challenges and difficulties, TUAS should take China into consideration when looking into possible target markets for export.

Finnish HEIs including TUAS should work together, they should learn from one another and share more information and knowhow. There should be established platforms for such an activity. Finnish education is a brand already and it can be used as an umbrella also for TUAS export of education activities, together with other cooperation actors we become stronger and have more impact.

Despite all the threats, there are a lot of opportunities for TUAS to develop the export of education business to China. The size of the China is huge and there is a lot of growth potential. The Chinese system is very reform oriented in terms of education. They are ready to invest in education of their children and have international cooperation with Finnish HEIs. Finnish education has a very good brand, so Finnish exporters have a lot of possibilities to be successful in China. China is an attractive market also in a national level. Finland as a country encourages to cooperate with China and offers supports in many levels e.g. via Education Finland.

The knowledgeable and vice creation of an agent network, widening of the portfolio, dedicated personnel, and smoother cooperation inhouse offer developing and growth possibilities for TUAS export activities. TUAS could also try to find new pathways, shorter pathway programs for Chinese, which could be used as a roll-in products to the degree programs. TUAS has all the elements to flourish the business in China. However, it should be able foster the competencies, infrastructure, and recourses. TUAS should create a strategy, business plan and improve the productization and communication to the potential clients. There is endless need for education in China, it is an endless market. China offers growing opportunities for HEIs and TUAS has all the possibilities to be successful in China if it has the commitment and the will to invest some time and recourses into the development of export of education activities to China.

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