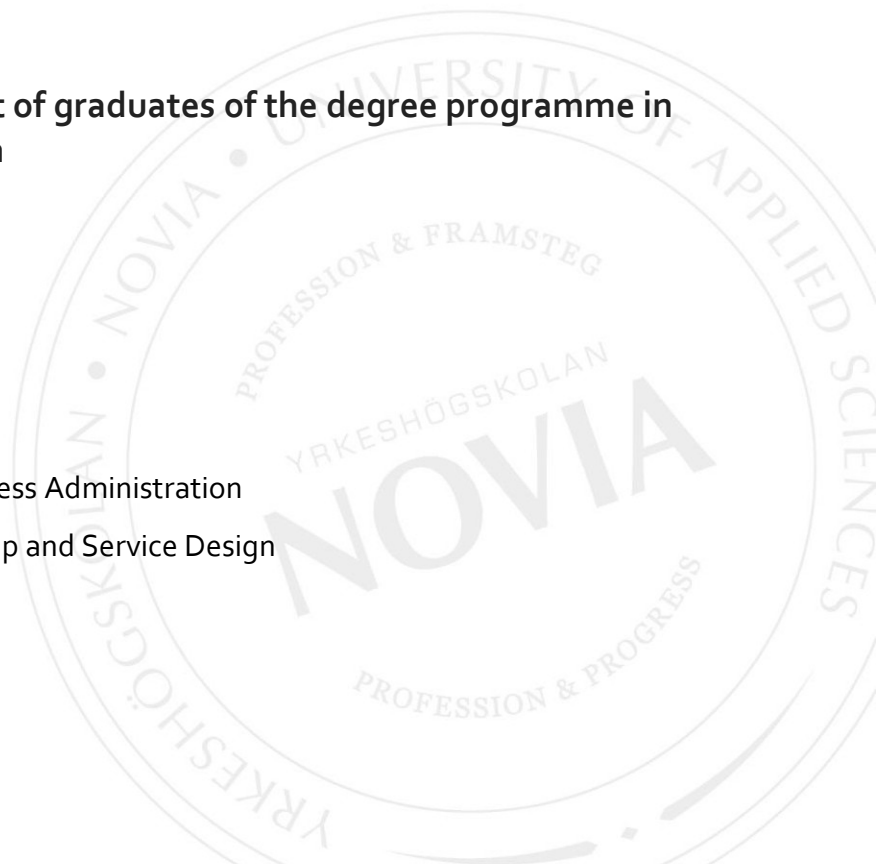


Using Service Design Methods as a Tool to Facilitate Foreign Graduates Transition and Integration into the Finnish Labour Market

Case study of the employment of graduates of the degree programme in Leadership and Service Design

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis was to investigate using services design tools and methods, how foreign graduates from Finnish universities can be integrated into the Finnish labour market. The focal group for this research was ex-students of the degree program in leadership and service design, jointly organized by Novia and Turku universities of applied sciences.

Different service design methods were used to navigate the studies. These methods vary in approaches and range from double diamond, stakeholder maps, business canvas model, survey, benchmarking, swot, personas, and customer journey maps. The aim of using different methods was to give the researcher a broader collection of data and different perspective for analysing. The principal tool was the surveys with 30 respondents out of a group of 73 ex-students. Personas were then established from the results. The results also aided the researcher in developing different journey maps and touch-points. Benchmarking results were similar to those from the surveys. The two research methods both established that Finnish language courses, internships, and collaborative platform are a must for foreign graduate's integration to be successful.

A co-design workshop was organized during the final stages of the thesis to address the above concerns. The researcher met with some ex students online to develop prototypes of the solutions to the aforementioned problems.

Language: English

Key words: education, integration, empowerment, labour market, service design

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1 Introduction

The past three decades have ushered tremendous changes in the lives of mankind. From the economic recession at the dawn of the millennium to the advancement in technology and digitalization, and the current corona pandemic, just to name a few. These events have reshaped the world both positively and negatively. The economic recession at the dawn of the millennium made it very difficult for people to settle down in their home localities, and as such people have been forced to abandon their homes, cultures, personal values, and ways of life in search of better opportunities and new experiences.

Meanwhile in Finland, the post-war baby boom generation is all retired thereby creating lots of vacancies that cannot be filled solely by the nation's young generation. Hence, Finnish employers are now organizing recruitment fairs abroad and soliciting foreign workers to come to fill the vacancies (This is Finland, 2020). At the end of the year 2020 for example, Helsinki Business Hub organized a relocation package with the aim to lure foreign workers in the techs industries from around the world for a 90-day experience. There were over 5,330 applicants vying for the 15 available places, within a short time from when the jobs were advertised for application (Bbc world news, 2020).

However, the corona virus pandemic (covid19) has made it even more difficult for both migrants and indigenous workers to find a job. According to Statistics Finland, the numbers of unemployed has steadily been on the rise during the previous quarter as compared to the same period a year ago. For example, there were 155,200 more people unemployed in December 2020 than in the same period a year ago. This statistic was even more worrisome because of the 155,200 registered as unemployed, 37,700 were people with a foreign background. Another disturbing trend with the statistic is that people with higher education degrees were more prone to be jobless than those with secondary or high school qualifications (The Finnish National Agency for Education, 2020).

The exoduses orchestrated by the global recession and quest for better lifestyles have seen new waves of migrants coming to Finland as foreign students, who at the end of their studies have decided to settle and integrate into the Finnish society. However, these graduates often find themselves struggling on the sidelines for months and sometimes even years without any breakthrough and end up settling for unskilled jobs like cleaning, and newspaper delivery. Some graduates have migrated to other countries like United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands with better opportunities on offer. It is important to mention that

education is a vital component of every government policy because of the exposure and opportunities it creates in the lives of individual citizens.

It is disheartening to have acquired knowledge through higher education, but be unable to utilize it to better one's life and benefit society. Lack of jobs and other social amenities through no fault of theirs has led most immigrants to distrust the system and distrust everyone around them. The aim of this thesis is to find out how foreign students can be assisted in their transition and integration into working life before and after graduation. As a foreign student myself, one of the challenges I have faced over the years living in Finland has been on how to find suitable work placement during my studies and getting a job after graduation. A case in point recently was trying to get a commissioner for my master's thesis. Some of my international classmates are still to locate a thesis commissioner. Our hope is that the findings and recommendations of this thesis will help the school administration upgrade the school curriculum to better serves the needs of future students and open room for better engagement between the different stakeholders in seeking better solutions to the current and future labour crises facing the country. Finally, the researcher wishes to develop his own ability in conducting academic and trustworthy research and contribute to the field of scientific knowledge. In this study, foreign graduates and immigrant graduates will be used interchangeably. Also ex-students and formal students will be used in the same manner.

2. The Commissioners

The commissioners for this thesis are Novia University of Applied Sciences and Turku University of Applied Sciences (Tuas). Novia and Turku Universities of Applied Sciences are two great institutes of higher learning who pride themselves in excellence. Their cooperation is unique and their successes over the years can be traced from the success stories of their alumni. Although partners, both universities are independent of each other and have their unique curriculum. It is worth mentioning that both institutions offer a variety of their programs in the English, and thus a third of their students come from abroad. This thesis work is part of the curriculum for the master's degree program in leadership and service design, which has been re-branded as a master's degree in service design. The program is taught completely by seasoned lecturers from both institutions. The program is structured in a way that gives students the opportunity to work and study at the same time, in an international arena. The acronym Novia and Tuas that stands for Novia and Turku universities of applied sciences will be used through this thesis.

2.1 Novia University of Applied Sciences

Novia University of Applied Sciences was founded on August 1, 2008, by the merging of the Sydväst Polytechnic and the Swedish Polytechnic, Finland. The Novia University of applied sciences is the largest Swedish-speaking UAS in Finland with over 4000 students. With traditions dating back to 1813. Novia University of Applied Sciences is a multidisciplinary higher education institute. Novia UAS offers higher education with a practical orientation, training professionals for expert and development posts based on the requirements of working life and its development, on scientific research and artistic principles. Novia operates in four different cities within Finland and offers 7 bachelor's degree programs within the field of Health and welfare, Technology and Seafaring, culture, and Bioeconomy. Novia also offers 12 master's degree programs that range from Health and Welfare, Technology and Seafaring, Culture and Natural Resources (Novia University of applied sciences, 2020). Figure 1 below is a structural compositions of Novia University of applied sciences. It indicates the different degree programmes offered by Novia University of applied sciences and their locations in Finland.

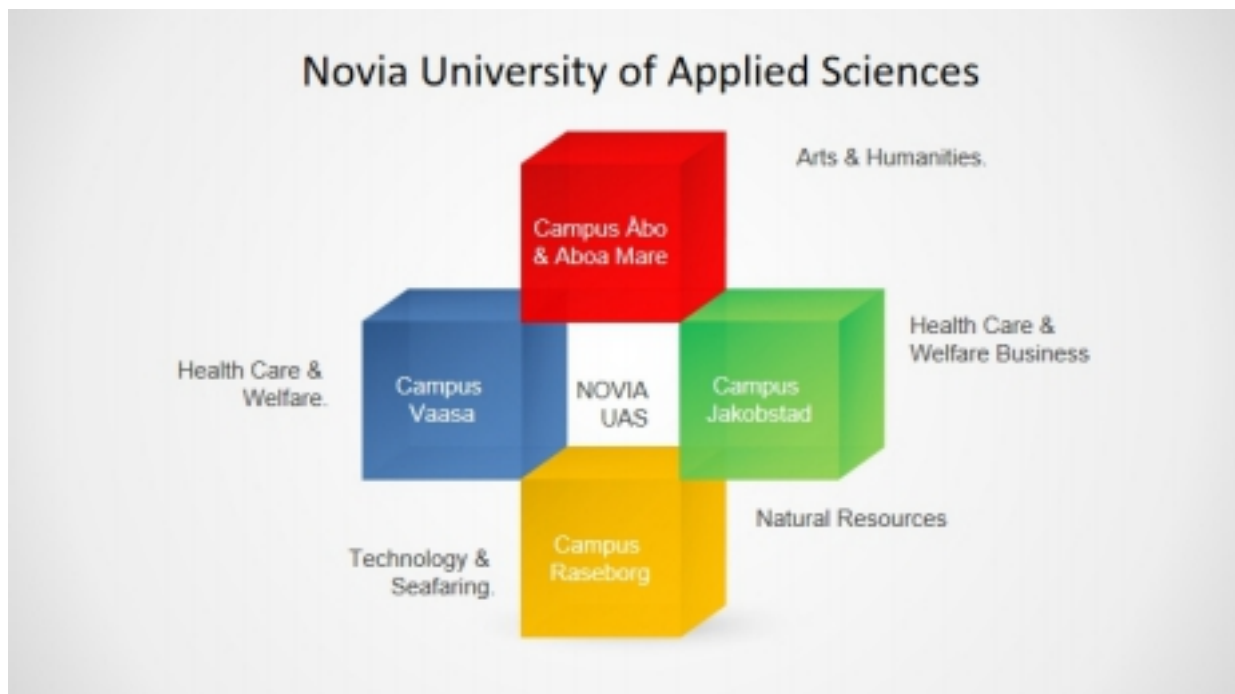


Figure 1. Novia Structure

2.2 Turku University of Applied Sciences

Turku University of Applied Sciences is one of the leading players of higher education in Finland. Turku University is a host to over 10.000 students within three separate faculties. Unlike Novia, Tuas is located in Turku and Salo. Turku and Salo are within half an hour's drive from each other. Tuas core competencies are innovation and solutions. Like her partner Novia, Tuas has a strong international and national presence. Tuas core degree programs are in Arts Academy, Health and Well-being, and engineering and Business (Turku university of applied sciences, 2020). Figure 2 below shows the academy structure and locations of the different degree programmes organised by Turku University of applied sciences.

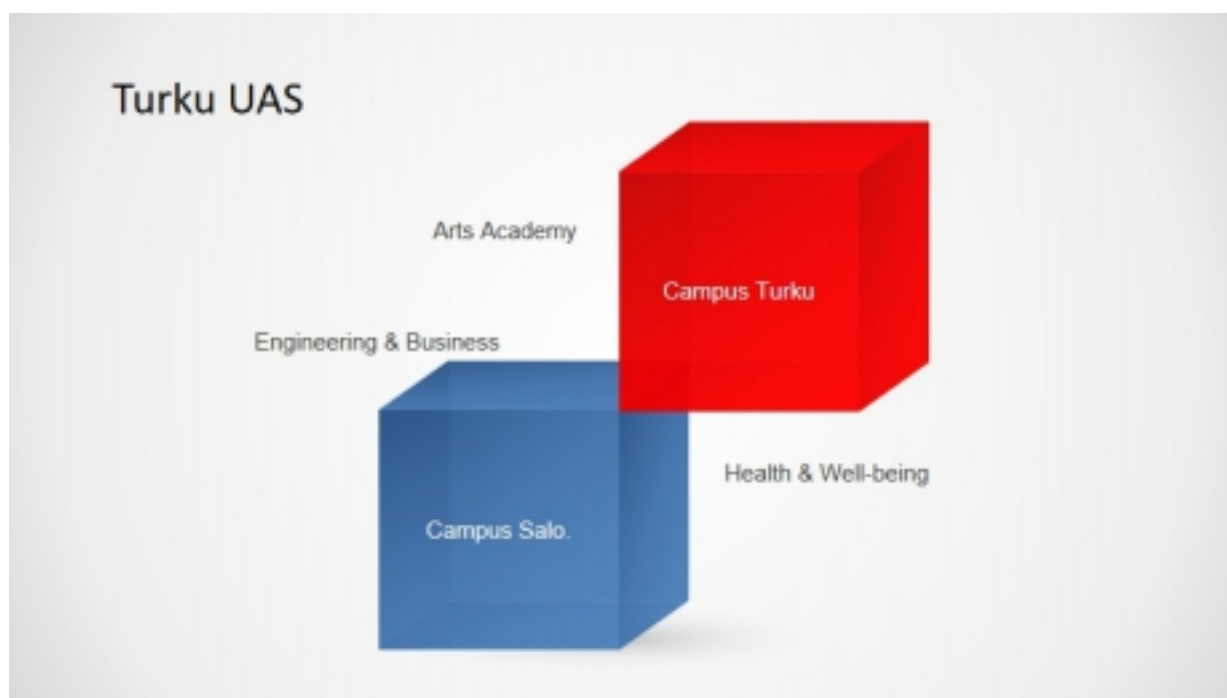


Figure 2. Tuas Structure

3. Problem Area

As we all know, ageing is one of the biggest threats facing humanity in the 21st century. With good health care and technological advancement, people now live longer than before. On the other hand, fertility has dropped tremendously. According to united nation (UN) data released in 2019, there is a possibility that by the year 2050 one in four persons living in Europe and North America will be 65 years of age and above (united nation, 2021). Finland is also experiencing its own fair share of the global ageing catastrophe. The share of over-65-year-olds of the population will increase from the current 20 percent to 26 percent by 2030 and to 29

percent by 2060 (Finnish institute of health and welfare, 2021. See figure below). It is imperative to mention here that Finland has one of the oldest populations in Europe. With the above dynamic at play, there is a scramble for labour from Africa and Asia within Europe, and the Americas etcetera. This has also prompted the Finnish government to revise its labour legislature to be able to accommodate and integrate new workers and prevent labour shortages. For example, the 90 days of living and working in Finland experience is one such initiatives. The legislation giving students a right to reside in Finland after their studies in search of jobs is another such initiative. Despite all the above initiatives, foreign graduates end up searching for jobs for over three or more years before having a breakthrough after doing unskilled jobs. There are no denying that Finland has labour shortages, while at the same time thousands of graduates both foreign and home-based are searching for jobs. The aim therefore of this thesis is to mitigate these lapses and seek a sustainable solutions to the labour shortage. Figure 3 below shows the age and gender structure of Finnish population. It gives a vivid description of life expectancy in comparison with life birth. It also highlight the fact that there will be accrue labour shortages in the future if the situations remains the same.

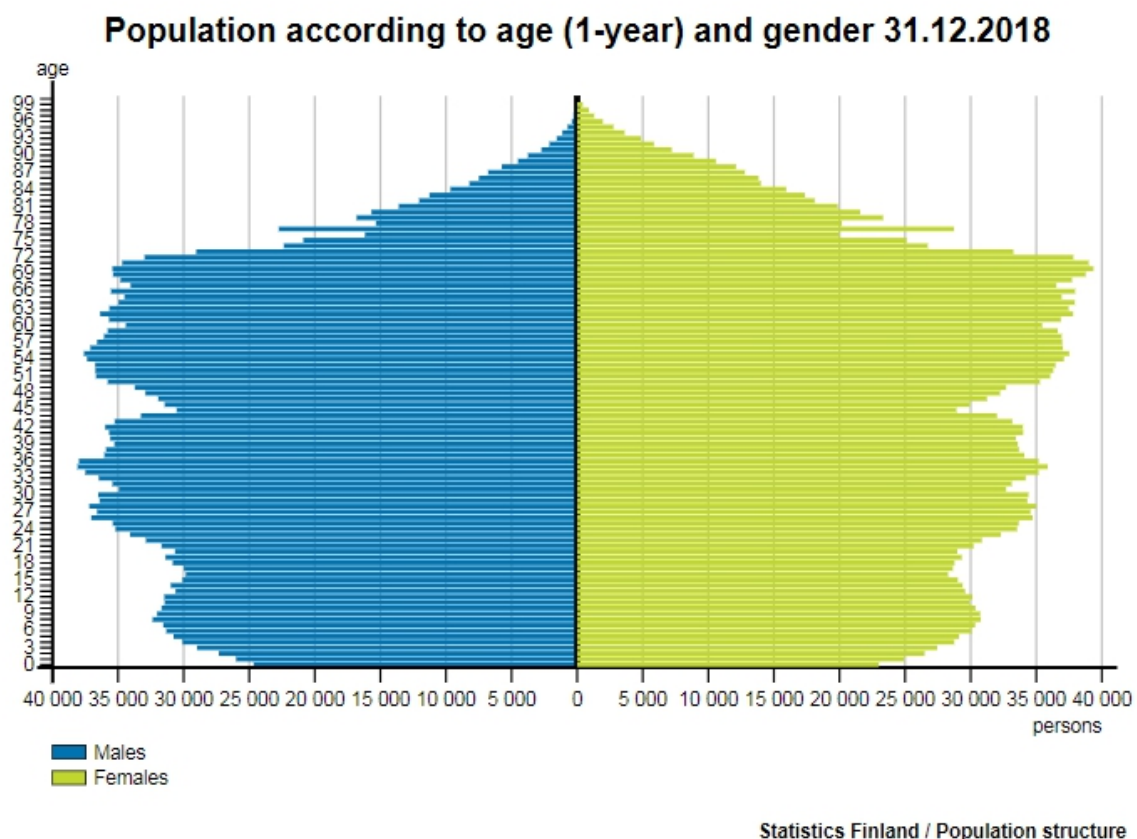


Figure 3. Population Structure curled from Statistic Finland

3.1. Research Questions and Aim of the Thesis

The purpose of the thesis is to find out how foreign students can be assisted in their transition into working life before and after graduation. The research also aims to investigate and provide solutions on how to improve the employment situation of foreign students after graduation. Furthermore, the research aims to provide deeper insights into the different resources available to aid foreign graduates' integrations, and show how to better develop the resources to better serve the needs of foreign graduates. The additional goal of this thesis is to use service design tools and methods to create a working tool that will serve as a guide to prospective students at the above universities. After establishing the problem area above, it is imperative to formulate questions on how to resolve these problems and find ways to improve the chances and opportunities for foreign graduates to gain employment after graduation. In addition to the structural survey that was sent out through google questionnaire to the formal students, the main research questions were:

- How can foreign graduates be assisted in getting a job in their field of study?
- How does Finland integrate foreign students into the labour market after graduation?
- How can foreign graduates be motivated to stay in Finland?
- As a formal student of the degree program leadership and service design, what can you say about the employability of the program's graduates?

In order to answer the aforementioned questions and accomplish the goal of the thesis, the double diamond design instrument was used in conjunction with other tools like personas, customer journeys, stakeholders map, survey, business canvas model, and swot analysis. In the beginning, the researcher carefully crafted some questionnaires through google doc and with the assistance of his supervisor's email them to all former students of the programs with a time frame of two weeks for their inputs or feedback. At the end of the allocated period, 30 formal students responded. The data were analysed and from there, personas and customer journey maps were developed.

3.2 The Significance of the Research

This research is vital because Finland, just like her European neighbours is undergoing acute labour shortages and would like to boost her labour force to be able to successfully maintain her economy and the welfare states. This work is important as part of the solution lies in the successful integration of foreign graduates, who are currently either unemployed or working in an unskilled sector. The results of the thesis will also benefit other stakeholders who are in dire

need of foreign labour brought about by the ageing situations across Europe. Finally, the outcome should reduce the wastage of resources by employers trying to hire workers from abroad when there are lots of home-based graduates still looking for employment.

3.3 Research Approach

All research work follows research guidelines and methodology. A research approach contain the plans and procedures for research that encompass the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. In other words, it is the overall decision involving which approach should be used to study a topic or phenomenon. To arrive at this decision, the researcher must take into consideration which research design best suits his works and which specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation will be used (Kumar, 2015). For this research, service design methods and tools will be utilized. The choice for these methods will be explained subsequently.

3.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is partitioned into 10 chapters. The first chapter introduces the goal and scopes of the research. Chapter two looks at the commissioners supervising the research. The third chapter glances at the problem and the research framework and its relevance to the study. Chapter four dissects the thematic and frame of reference and the reason for choosing them. The fifth chapter looks at the various service design methods. The sixth chapter answers the questions posed in the research questions section. While the seventh chapter deal with co-design and prototyping. The last three chapters analysis the results of the surveys and benchmarking, discussions, evaluation and recommendations of the work to the commissioners and other stakeholders.

3.5 Frame of Reference

The frame of reference for this thesis comprises five main components that sheds lights to the research questions. As indicated in the diagram below the keywords are education, integration, empowerment, service design, and employment (labour market). These keywords will be elaborated in the theoretical framework. As highlighted in the introduction, the core goal of this thesis is to seek ways on how to improve a foreign graduates' chances of employment after graduation. This also entails assisting them in getting institutions for their projects while studying, as it will facilitate their engagement to employment after graduation.

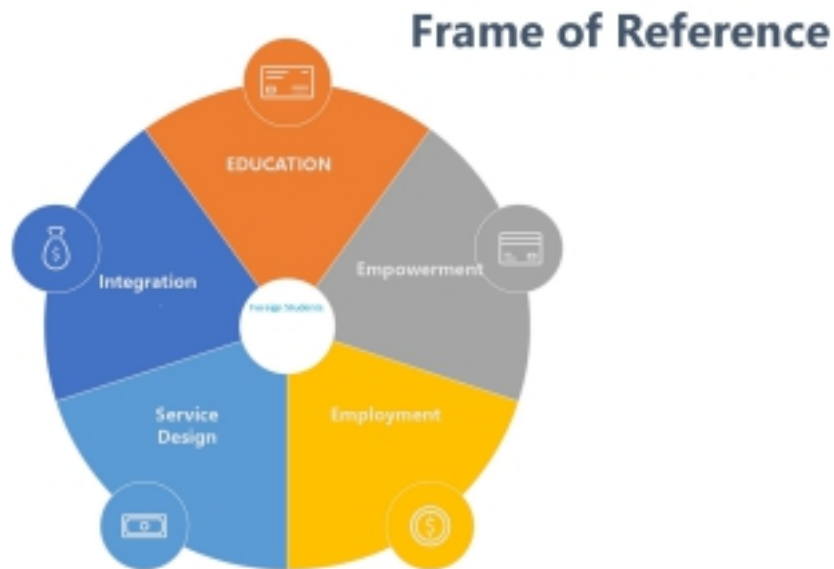
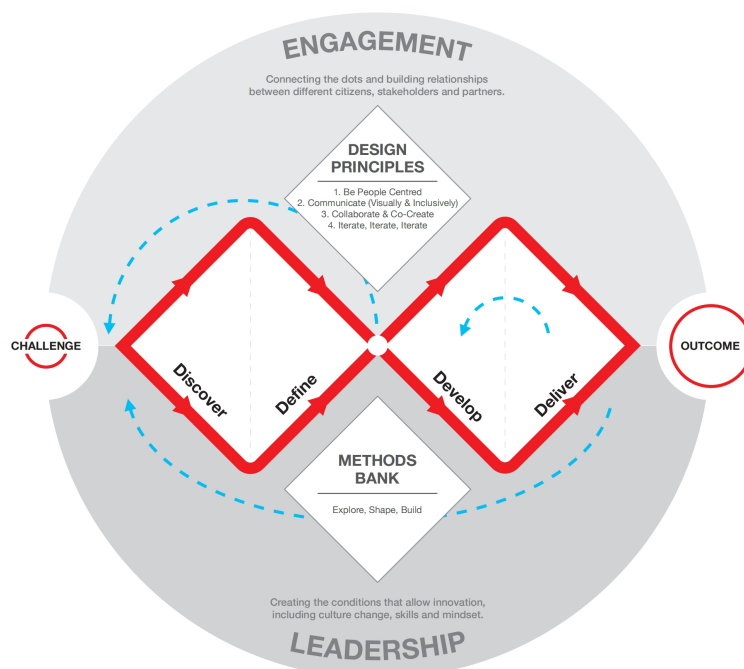


Figure 4. Frame of reference

3.6 Service Design Process

The service design process works perfectly through visualization. For this reason, the Double Diamond method was used to mirror and picture the problem. The Double Diamond with its four D's abbreviation stands for discovery, definition, development, and delivery (Design Council, 2015). The thesis commences with the discovery phase, which embodies the identification of the problem areas. Discovery refers to looking at the problem from a variety of angles or perspectives. To aid the researcher understand the problem area and gather sustainable insight, the customer journey map was used. The next stage in the design process is to define which method is more suitable and important to the research work. Define involves the narrowing down of the problem areas. Here the problem area is narrowed into specific areas. For this stage, the "persona" was chosen. The third stage is developmental work. This is where solutions are starting to form, ideas are being created and prototypes tested. Develop refers to looking at all the available possibilities of solving the discovery problems. Attention are also given to available resources and how convenient it is to the stakeholders. This is literally the most important stage of the design process, as it involves back and forth testing and redesign and also incorporates the users' feedback. In this stage, a survey was used to gather the user's insight as it was the best available instrument during the corona pandemic. The final D in the design process is delivery. The process involves finalizing and launching the products or services. In this section of the design process, the goal is to create tangible solutions and with the cheapest available resources at the designer or researcher disposal (Design Council, 2015). Another cord goal at this stage is to review and evaluate the entire process from start to finish and then write recommendations to the stakeholder backing the project.

As stated in the last paragraph of the introductory chapter, my goal at the end of this thesis was to write a recommendation and give it to the commissioners on how foreign graduates can be assisted while still a student in the institutions. A prototype of the findings will also be enlisted for implementation by the stakeholders. The results of this thesis if manifested will gradually eradicate the number of jobless graduates on the unemployment payrolls. I also wish that these recommendations will be used by other stakeholders involved in immigrant's integration. Figure 5 below illustrates the double diamond process. The diagram summarises the different stages of the design process. The tool helps the researcher stay within the scope of the research.



Tools Guide

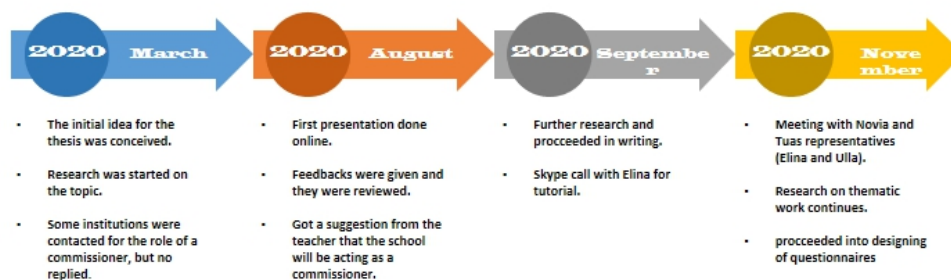


Figure 5. Double Diamond Design Process, Design Council/ Double Diamond tool kits

3.7 Time Chart

Figure 6 below is the time chart. The chart was instrumental in helping the researcher keep records of the different activities carried and when they were completed. The original idea for the thesis was conceived at the beginning of 2020, but because of the lack of a commissioner to approve the start of the work, the thesis was delayed until the end of the fall semester that the work officially commences. However, there was a little pause again due to the prevailing and continuous threat pose by the covid19 outbreak. Below is a visual representation of the different occurrences.

Timeline



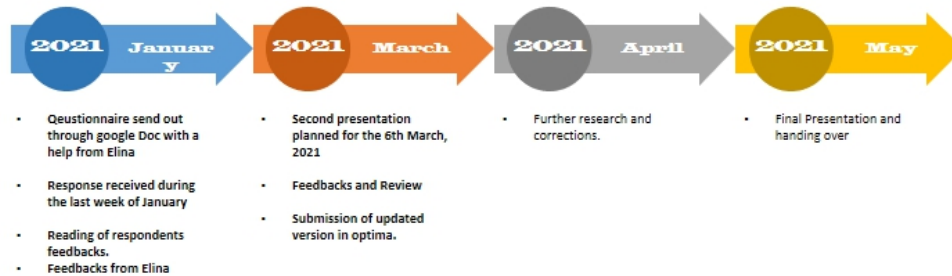


Figure 6 Time chart

4. Theoretical Background

The theoretical framework for this thesis as seen above laid emphases on the research questions and how they are related to the broader scope of the work. It also placed legitimate claims on the chosen concepts and their interrelation.

4.1 Education

Education is the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university (on-line dictionary). Education in itself is an empowering right and one of the most powerful tools by which economically and socially marginalized children and adults can lift themselves out of poverty and participate fully in society (the United Nations organisation, 2021).

Education is an essential human virtue, a necessity of society, the basis of a good life, and a sign of freedom. Education is important for the integration of separate entities. Education is the vehicle of knowledge, self-preservation, and success. Education not only gives us a platform to succeed, but also the knowledge of social conduct, strength, character, and self-respect (Bhardwaj 2016, p.24). Education and lifelong learning are priorities of any educational system. Moreover, the European Union has adopted a set of policies and promoted a series of programs meant to improve the educational systems of the Member-States and enhance cooperation.

Education and continuous education are a matter of personal fulfilment and achievement of economic and social goals (Ratä & Runcan 2014, p.1). The above discourse explains why educational agendas have been on the front pages of most European nations' parliamentary debates.

In the past 20 years, education like many other areas of social policy has become subject to policy overload in the United Kingdom government policy, and elsewhere. The depth, breadth, and pace of change and level of government activity in relation to educational reforms and policies were unprecedented (Stephen 2016, p. 4). These reforms opened education policy and practice to new voices and new actors ushering in sweeping changes within the last six government partnerships. Education is now seen as a crucial factor in ensuring economic productivity and competitiveness in the context of the knowledge economy (Stephen 2016, p. 26).

Educational policies are increasingly thought about and made within the context of pressures and requirements of globalization and within a particular framework of political rationality. The development of the knowledge economy can be attributed to the increasing role of knowledge as a factor of production and its impact on skills, learning, organization, and innovation (Stephen 2016, p. 26). Like the United Kingdom, Finland has also been busy amending its educational policies to better serve the current needs. For example, the current government under Sanna Marin within the context of her policy of vision 2035 has carried on sweeping changes in terms of residence permit for foreign students during and after graduation. They now have a path to a two years residence permits after graduation to enable them to settle in the country while they search for jobs (Minedu, 2020). There is also compusure education for every child until 18 years of age. These reforms are meant to prepare the youths for the future job markets.

Education is also regarded as an investment in human capital that will yield dividends over time. In other words, individuals decide to invest in their own education, at the margin, just as firms decide to invest in new machinery. The investment in each case entails current costs and yields future benefits and an internal rate of return to the investment can in each case be calculated (Geraint & Jill, 2017. p. 5). Geraint and Jill argued that although like investments in physical capital, investment in human capital has its idiosyncrasies regarding the way costs and benefits are conceptualized and measured. They distinguish two types of returns associated with an investment in education, which they named the private rate of return and social rate of return. The private rate of return compares the costs and benefits of education incurred and realized by the individual student who undertakes the investment. While the second type, the social rate of return compares the costs and benefits for the country as a whole or society's point of view.

Education is a fundamental human right and it is enshrined in the universal declaration of human rights 1948 charter. UNESCO is the supervisory body under the United Nations tasked with ensuring that member states adhere to their commitment to providing quality and accessible education for all. UNESCO supports States to establish solid national legal and policy frameworks that create the foundation and conditions for the delivery and sustainability of quality education. In turn, governments must be held accountable for fulfilling their legal and political obligations to provide good quality education for all and to implement and monitor education policies and strategies more effectively (Unesco, 2020).

Education is one of the cornerstones of the Finnish welfare society. Finland prides itself on an educational system that offers equal opportunities for all. Education from pre-primary to higher education is free of charge. Finnish teachers are highly educated and strongly committed to their work (Minedu, 2020). There is no coincidence why Finnish students' performances over the years on a series of international comparative assessments have often placed them best or amongst the best in the world. The Ministry of education is charged with the task of overseeing all Educational reforms. However, this is only successful due to the cooperation with other stakeholders.

4.1.1. The Finnish Education System

The Finnish education system consists of early childhood education and care, pre-primary education, basic education, upper secondary education, higher education, and adult education. Early childhood education and care (ECEC) combines education, teaching, and care in a systematic and goal-oriented manner. The goal of ECEC is to promote children's development, health, and well-being as well as improve children's opportunities for learning. Municipalities are responsible for the organization of this branches of education and a fee is charged depending on the income of the family. The National Curriculum Guidelines on Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland, approved by the Finnish National Agency for Education, guide the planning and implementation of the contents of ECEC and function as the basis for drawing up the local ECEC curricula (Minedu, 2020). Like the name, the aim of pre-primary education is to improve children's opportunities for learning and development. Pre-primary education plays an important part in the continuum stretching from early childhood education and cares to basic education. Pre-primary education is completely free of charge and compulsory. The National Core Curriculum for Pre-Primary Education, approved by the Finnish National Agency for Education, guides the planning of the contents of pre-primary education and functions as the basis for drawing up the local curricula (Minedu, 2020).

The nine-year basic education, or comprehensive school, is compulsory for all children aged between 7 and 16. Compulsory education begins in the year during which a child turns seven and ends when the basic education syllabus has been completed or when ten years have elapsed since the beginning of compulsory education. Every child permanently residing in Finland must attend compulsory education. Basic education is free of charge. Free school meals are also provided. Comprehensive schools are maintained by the local authorities (municipalities) and other education providers. Less than two percent of comprehensive school pupils go to private or state schools (Minedu, 2020).

After comprehensive school, students proceed to the upper secondary level and choose between general and vocational education. General upper secondary education (*lukio* in Finnish) provides, as its name suggests, general education. It does not qualify students for any occupation. At the end of general upper secondary school, students take a national school-leaving examination known as the Finnish matriculation examination. Those who pass the examination are eligible to apply for further studies at universities, universities of applied sciences, and vocational institutions. General upper secondary education usually takes three years to complete (Minedu, 2020).

Vocational qualifications include upper secondary qualifications, further qualifications, and specialist qualifications. Vocational upper secondary qualifications provide the basic skills required in the field. Further and specialist vocational qualifications enable people to develop their skills at different stages of their career. The scope of vocational upper secondary qualifications is usually 180 ECVET points, further qualifications 150 points, and specialist qualifications 180 points (Minedu, 2020).

At the beginning of vocational education and training, the student and the institution draw up a personal competence development plan for the student, outlining the content, schedule, and methods of study. Vocational education and training can also be delivered in workplaces through an apprenticeship agreement or a training agreement. Prior learning acquired in various ways can be recognized as part of the studies. Both young people and adults can apply for vocational education and training (Minedu, 2020).

The mission of universities is to conduct scientific research and provide education based on it. Universities of applied sciences (UAS) provide more practical education that aims to respond to the needs of the labour market. Universities offering higher scientific and artistic education, award Bachelor's and Master's degrees as well as postgraduate degrees, i.e. licentiate and doctoral degrees. Universities of applied sciences award UAS Bachelor's degrees and UAS Master's degrees. The target completion time for a Bachelor's degree at a university is three

years and for a Master's degree two years on top of that. The completion of a UAS degree takes usually between 3.5 and 4.5 years. The requirement for a master's studies at a university of applied sciences is a UAS bachelors' degree or another suitable degree and at least two years of work experience after the completion of the previous degree. Graduates are eligible to apply for further studies at universities or universities of applied sciences (Minedu, 2020).

There is room for adults who were unable to complete their higher education to further their studies through the adult education or open path. Adult education or open path studies encompass education leading to a qualification, degree studies, training preparing for competence-based qualifications, apprenticeship training, further and continuing education updating and extending the professional skills, studies in subjects relating to citizenship skills, working life skills and society, and studies in different crafts and subjects on a recreational basis.

Adult education and training can either be paid for by the student himself or herself or it can be apprenticeship training, labour policy education, or staff development and other training provided or purchased by employers. Adult education and training is provided by educational institutions mainly providing education for young people, educational institutions providing only adult education, private companies, and workplaces (staff-development). It is worth mentioning that every sector of education in Finland from kindergarten to the university is run by an act governing its operations, and is supervised by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Minedu, 2020). Figure 7 below shows the age structure and education system of Finland from kindergarten to university.

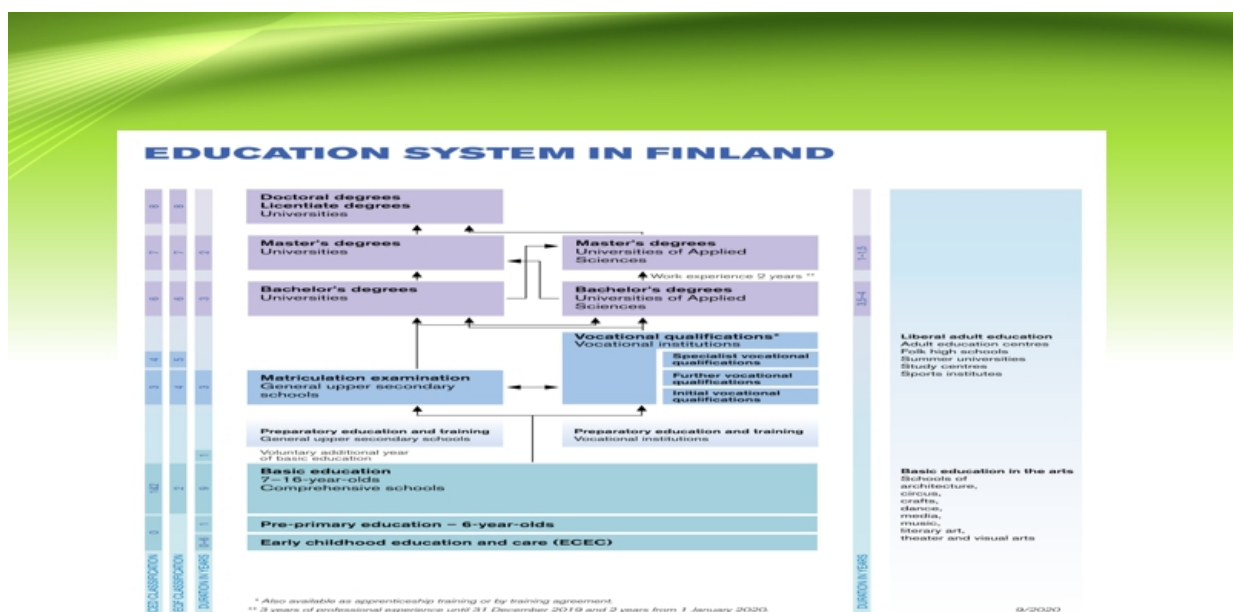


Figure 7. Education System in Finland: Minedu, 2020.

Though education is free in Finland, Finnish students must, however, invest themselves in other studies materials and logistics, which can be termed as an investment in human capital. Finland instituted school fees for foreign students two years ago. This can be their investment in human capital and can also be a motivating factor while some of them need to secure a job as soon as possible after graduation so to start paying off their loans.

4.1.2. Foreign Students in Finnish Higher Educational Institutions

Finland is well recognized abroad due to its excellent educational curriculum and methods of teaching. This has paved the way for an influx of foreign students during the past decades, who are eager to gain knowledge. The reason for the consistent rise in foreign students has been partly because most of the programs taught are in English which makes it easier for most foreign students to acclimate and integrate. Another vital reason though was free education and the safety of the country as a whole. According to CIMO, there were over 20000 foreign students in Finnish universities just before the outbreak of the corona pandemic. See the education chart below for more insight.

Foreign Applicants in English Language Programmes of Higher Education in Finland, 2016-2019

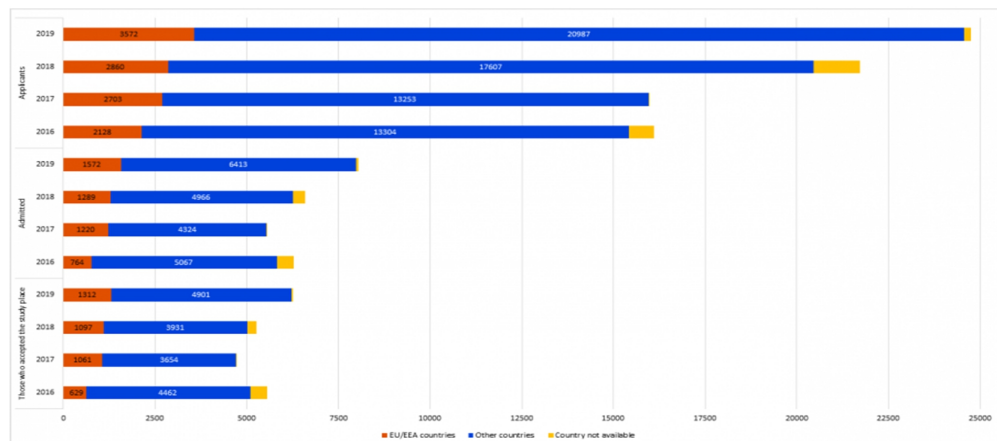


Figure 8. Foreign Applicants in Higher Education in Finland (CIMO)

4.2 Labour Market

The economic backbone of any society is its workforce. Finland has a well-structured welfare system that has survived over the years due to a vibrant workforce and the payment of taxes. The situation is gradually changing due to an ageing population. According to Statistics,

Finland might start feeling the pain of its ageing population by the year 2035 if quick remedies are not put in place. One solution to the problems facing the labour market shortages and to the maintaining of the welfare society is immigration (Ministry of interior Finland). However, most of the government efforts in this sphere have been on skilled migrants from abroad, with less emphasis on graduates from home-based universities. This leads this researcher to ponder, if the home-based immigrants' graduates are not employable, or are there other factors behind the high unemployment rate amongst immigrants? Could this be one reason to explain the co-relationship between the high unemployment rate amongst the immigrant community in 2019 quarterly statistics to the rates of immigrants seeking jobs in the same period? Take a look at figure 9 below for the quarterly unemployment statistic.

In Finland, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is charged with the main duty to oversee all employment reforms in collaboration with other stakeholders. The preamble to their work is enshrined in the constitution and the labour acts. The labour act comprises of different provisions with goals to safeguard the rights of both the employer and the employees. In this study, however, we are going to focus on two main provisions of the acts that address the research areas. These areas are terms of contracts and the non-discrimination acts.

For any working-related assignments to commence, there must be a valid and binding contract between two or more parties. These contracts sometimes can be verbal or in writing. However, it is recommended that contracts are put in writing so that records can be kept for future reference. The structure and role of the Finnish labour regulation reflect many of the central features of the so-called Nordic model of industrial relations. Thus, the Finnish labour market is characterized by a high level of organization on both the employee and the employer side, and an important role played by collective bargaining in labour regulation. The basis of the regulation relies upon, comprehensive and detailed labour legislation which is complemented by collective agreements (International Labour Organization).


In collective agreements, the bargaining parties agree on the stipulations to be applied to employment contracts and relationships. A collective agreement must be drawn up in writing and it may be either of a fixed duration or agreement for an indefinite period subject to notice of termination. A collective agreement binds the employers and organizations who concluded the agreement as parties and is solely binding on the affiliated associations of the parties and their individual members (this is known as normal applicability). It also binds those that endorse it later by the consent of those involved. Disagreements deriving from the interpretation of the collective agreement and breaches thereof are tried and settled in the Labour Court. If any part of an employment contract conflicts with the provisions of the collective agreement applicable to the employment relationship, such part of the employment contract shall be null and void, and the relevant provisions of the applicable collective the

agreement shall be observed instead in cases where this is more advantageous to the employee (Ministry of economic affairs and employment Finland).

Another vital aspect of the provision of interest to this study is the Non-Discrimination Act. The aim of the act is to protect minority groups in the society including immigrants. The right to equal and non-discriminatory treatment is a basic human right. The purpose of the non-discrimination act and the prohibitions of discrimination contained in labour legislation is to ensure equal treatment of all job seekers and employees and to protect them from discrimination in working life. The Non-Discrimination Act requires authorities to promote equality in all their activities. The Non-Discrimination Act applies to the basis of recruitment, working conditions, terms of employment, career advancement, education, and the prerequisites of enterprising and support for industrial activities (Ministry of economic affairs and employment Finland). This provision ensures that all foreign students have the right to work in Finland whilst they study and lives in Finland.

4.2.1 Foreign Graduates and labour Market outlook

Finnish statistic do not give a clear-cut outlook of how many foreign graduates are employed at a given time. The statistic looks at foreign-born in totality and do not really specify who is a graduate and what qualification he has and if he is really working in his field of qualification or in some unskilled job. However, before the outbreak of the corona virus there was a great improvement in the number of foreign citizens in the Finnish labour force compared the previous years. Figure 9 below gives a breakdown of the employment situation prior to the corona pandemic outbreak. The diagram outline the number of foreigners in the labour force and those in the unemployment roll. It also gives details of the employments situation in different regions within the country.



	2019M06		
	Foreign unemployed jobseekers	Foreign workforce	Percentage of foreign unemployed jobseekers of the
WHOLE COUNTRY	29,504	124,396	
Uusimaa	14,760	70,101	
Southwest Finland	2,618	10,103	
Satakunta	595	3,148	
Kanta-Häme	604	2,406	
Pirkanmaa	1,906	7,378	
Päijät-Häme	1,093	3,188	
Kymenlaakso	1,073	3,032	
South Karelia	689	2,252	
South Savo	424	1,401	
North Savo	672	2,276	
North Karelia	700	1,694	
Central Finland	980	2,957	
South Ostrobothnia	334	1,603	
Ostrobothnia	963	4,412	
Central Ostrobothnia	146	726	
North Ostrobothnia	995	3,618	
Kainuu	149	544	

Figure 9. Unemployment Statistics 2019- statistic Finland

4.3 Empowerment

Empowerment may be seen as a process where individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, and a relationship between their efforts and life outcomes (Mechanic, 1991). Empowerment suggests a distinct approach for developing interventions and creating social change. It directs attention toward health, adaptation, competence and natural helping systems. It includes the perspective that many social problems exist due to unequal distribution of and access to resources (Cohen, & Wolff, 1985).

The above definition invoked some key elements that need to be considered for a successful foreign graduates' integration to occur. Decision-making power is an integral component of the empowerment theory. Experience has shown that generally, foreign students are not aware of their rights and possibilities in their host nation. This might have been facilitated by their inability to understand the language. Although Finland has done so much into translating most vital documents into different languages, most foreign students are still clueless about a lot of issues concerning their statutes and rights in the country even years after graduation. Secondly, having access to information and resources paves the way for a graduate to better prepare on or before the completion of their studies.

As we all know decisions making does not happen in a vacuum. Decisions are best made when the individual has sufficient information to weigh the possible consequences of various choices. Thirdly, there should be a range of options available from whence an individual can make informed choices. The current situation has limited most immigrants graduates from working in their field of study. In the bigger cities like Helsinki, Turku, and Tampere many graduates work

as newspaper vendors, cleaners, etcetera. Some of them have left the country for other parts of Europe, the U.S.A, and Canada where the situation is attractive and easy to integrate (Finnish national agency education).

4.4 Integration

The shores of Europe, Canada, and the U.S.A have experienced large scale immigration since the end of the Second World War. Confronted with this influxes of new realities, these nations have looked into ways on how to integrate new immigrants. In this situation, a search for “models” has occurred and different national patterns of integration are being discussed for their relative merits or problems. A prevailing discourse in Europe compares images of different national patterns and how they have successfully been used. For instance, a French Republic, culturally unifying, a universal model is compared to a British or Dutch “multiculturalism” model, and to a German social policy orientation towards migrants (Friedrich, 2003). The concept of integration started so many years ago, but yet most countries are still trying to figure out which model works best.

Generally, the concept of integration is defined as the inclusion of new populations into existing social structures of the immigrant country. Integration can also be categorized into four different perspectives. These areas are structural, cultural, social, and identification. Structural integration is the acquisition of rights and access to membership, positions, and statuses in the core institutions of the settlement society (education system, training system, labour market, housing, citizenship). Cultural integration on the other hand is a precondition of participation and refers to processes of cognitive, cultural, behavioural, and attitudinal change of persons. It concerns primarily the immigrants and their descendants but is an interactive, mutual process that changes the settlement society as well. Like cultural integration, social integration deals with the social circle of the immigrants, such as the people they hang out with on a private sphere or associations (social intercourse, friendships, marriages, voluntary associations). Finally, identification deals with membership in a new society on the subjective level, such as feelings of belonging.

Incidentally, the integration of immigrants has often focused on foreigners with already established relationships with Finland. There are a number of existing channels out there advising and facilitating the integration and empowerment of immigrants in Finland on other grounds, but nothing is said of those who came here to study.

4.5 Service Design

As an emerging discipline, service design is already imposing itself as a multidisciplinary field. There are currently many definitions associated with the term. The emerging field of service design supports the principles of co-creation: the aim of service design is seen as producing for clients while involving them in the process of production (co-creation) (Leppiman, 2013, 54). Service design is creating opportunities for change in customer service through the creation of facilities for personalization (involving the customers' perspective) and customized service (involving the service provider's perspective) (Leppiman, 2010, 215).

Service design creates added value for businesses by differentiating them from their competitors and also by enabling them to better utilize the resources involved in service production. Service design is a people-centric approach that seeks to uncover unmet needs and desires and respond with an innovative design solution. Service design helps to innovate and to create new ideas. It also help to improve (existing) services to make them more useful, usable, desirable for clients, and efficient as well as effective for the organizations (Curedale 2013, 14). Service design helps organizations to see their services from a customer's perspective. In order words, the customer is part of the creating processes, (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018, 18-19 & 26-27).

The above definitions explain the importance of service design methods as a major component in creating and designing with the users. As already stated, the international students of Novia and Tuas are the customers for whom this work seeks to find solutions.

5. Service Design Tools and Methods

In this chapter, we will present and explain the various service design tools used and why they were chosen. When conducting research, it is sometimes easier to get cut up by terminologies. Hence it is imperative that I start this section by differentiating between tools and methods. According to Stickdom, Edgar, Lawrence, & Schneider, tools are concrete modes such as journey maps, spreadsheets and storyboard templates. Methods on the other hand are particular procedures to accomplish or approach something such as conducting contextual interviews as a research method. Tools represent "what" we use, while methods usually describe "how" we create and work with certain tools in a service design projects, such as interviewing, synthesizing and prototyping, (Stickdom & Schneider, 2018, 36).

The survey was the main tool used in getting the service users, in this case, the formal graduates of both Novia and Tuas to express themselves and participate in the design process. The survey results were instrumental in the creation of the personas and also acted as a

springboard to the formation of the customer journey.

5.1 Business Canvas Model

The business canvas model is a service design tool specifically important for describing, analysing, and designing business models. The business canvas model is a graphic representation of a business model using nine core building blocks. The business model is an inherent part of any service design process. Thus any changes to an organization structure affect the design process and as such send the designers back to the drawing board. It also affects the employees' and customers' experiences. The business canvas model can be used to understand the different options available to both the employees and customers. It can also be used to map out a company's competitors and compare their business models (Stickdorn & Schneider 2018, 76).

The business model canvas comprises nine building blocks with each representing a particular segment. The first seven layers of the business model canvas are directly connected to the previous basic service design tools. By adding hard facts such as resources, revenue streams, and cost structures, this framework creates a common ground for designers and managers to talk about new service concepts within any organizational structure. The financial blocks mandate a design team to estimate the potential profitability of a business model, (Stickdorn & Schneider 2018, 76). Figure 10 below shows the 9 building points of the business canvas model and gives an overview of how the organizations operates.

5.1.1 Key Partners

The key partners involved in the running and successes of this program are the Ministry of Education of Finland which has the responsibility to supervise every educational activity in the nation. The city of Turku is the seat of the educational establishments. Novia and Tuusula Universities of Applied Sciences are facilitators and providers of the degree programs. Also included in the lists of key partners are other universities of applied sciences (UAS) in Finland, as well as study portal Finland. Study portal Finland is the institution that coordinates from the application process till when an applicant is granted admission into any of the universities in Finland. In business, the different stakeholders have different interests and it is imperative for the design team to consider the interest of all the partners involved. This builds trust and helps to keep the working and business relationship longer. Figure 10 below box one outlines the major partners involved in the running of the degree program.

5.1.2 Key Activities

Key activities refer to all the main activities done by the company to keep its stakeholders and customers happy. The prime activity for Novia and Tuas is education. This is done by constantly developing curriculum that enhances the needs of the country today and for the future. They teach and implant knowledge to society, supervise thesis and projects, and organise workshops with real-life partners.

5.1.3 Channels

Channels refer to the medium in which the key activities or business is being run. The channels used by Novia and Tuas universities of applied sciences to get to the students and other stakeholders range from web pages, study info portals, emails, websites, face-to-face contacts, and even phone calls.

5.1.4 Key Resources

Key resources refer to the intellectual, human capital, and financial resources driving the company's productivity and success. Novia and Tuas are renowned institutions with great facilities in Finland. Their facilities are their most vital resources. These range from IT services, books, catering services, libraries, infrastructures, teaching, and auxiliary staff.

5.1.5 Customer Segments

Customer segment refers to the people consuming the goods or services. For Novia and Tuas, it is more about education and their main customers are students. Both Novia and Tuas offer education (courses) in English, Finnish, and Swedish. This gives them a broad student base of national and international students from all over the world.

5.1.6 Value Propositions

The value proposition is all about values. Here the focus is on the satisfaction giving to the customer at the end of their journey. Education is strength and it is what opens the door for every other aspect or sector of life. That is to say, the literacy of a society determines the value of its citizens. The main goal of the degree programs from Novia and Tuas University of applied sciences is to give out knowledge to their students, which then transforms them into graduates. The knowledge will offer the graduates a new career path or opportunity in life. It also shapes them into good citizens and future leaders.

5.1.7 Customer Relationships

Customer relationship is a vital component of every company. This is so because it is how satisfied a customer is with a product or service that will make him or her want to come back to that company. Customer relationship is also an advertisement tool, as satisfied customers often act as referrals to their friends and families. The customer relationship in Novia and Tuas is continual. The relationships often begin backstage during the application processes to the physical location which is the campus to the front-stage where the teaching is done. Some of the relationships extend into after-sales where the students and the schools get in touch through an alumni association or through joint projects. The relationship ranges from guidance and support to developmental discussions and thesis supervision.

5.1.8 Revenue Streams

Revenue streams refer to the financial flow of the company. In other words, it is how and where the company generates its finances. Generally, most of the revenue from the sphere of education in Finland comes from the Ministry of Education. However, Novia and Tuas also get funding from their non-European students who are compelled by law to pay fees. Some funding comes from R&D and take-off subsidies.

5.1.9 Cost Structure

Cost structure refers to the running expenses acquired by the institutions in order to provide education to the current students, future students, and ex-students. The costs consist of personnel salaries, facilities rents, IT equipment, maintenance fees, insurance, and books.



Figure 10. Business Model Canvas

5.2 Stakeholder Map

The stakeholder map outlines the various stakeholders involved in an experience. The stakeholder map answers the question of who are the important people and organizations involved in an experience. A stakeholder map helps us to know which stakeholders are involved in this ecosystem and what are their stakes in the running and successes of the business. It also helps bring to light those hidden and connecting stakeholders and highlight hidden business potential. A stakeholder map helps the design team actively redesign a system by adding or eliminating certain stakeholders who may have become redundant (Stickdorn & Schneider 2018, 58).

During the customer journey process, customers engage with numerous internal and external stakeholders. In the process, customers usually do not realize which stakeholders are involved as the engagement is usually done through websites, apps, machines and platforms without knowing who is responsible for maintaining these systems and who are involved in the handling of their information. It is the stakeholder maps that enable the designers to constantly redesign the system by adding or eliminating certain stakeholders which might have become redundant, (Stickdorn & Schnerdier 2018, 58-58). Figure 11 below indicate the major stakeholders involve in the running of the both institutions. These stakeholders were listed under three separate categories. There are internal, external, and connected and they are all affiliated in one way or another with Novia and Tuas.

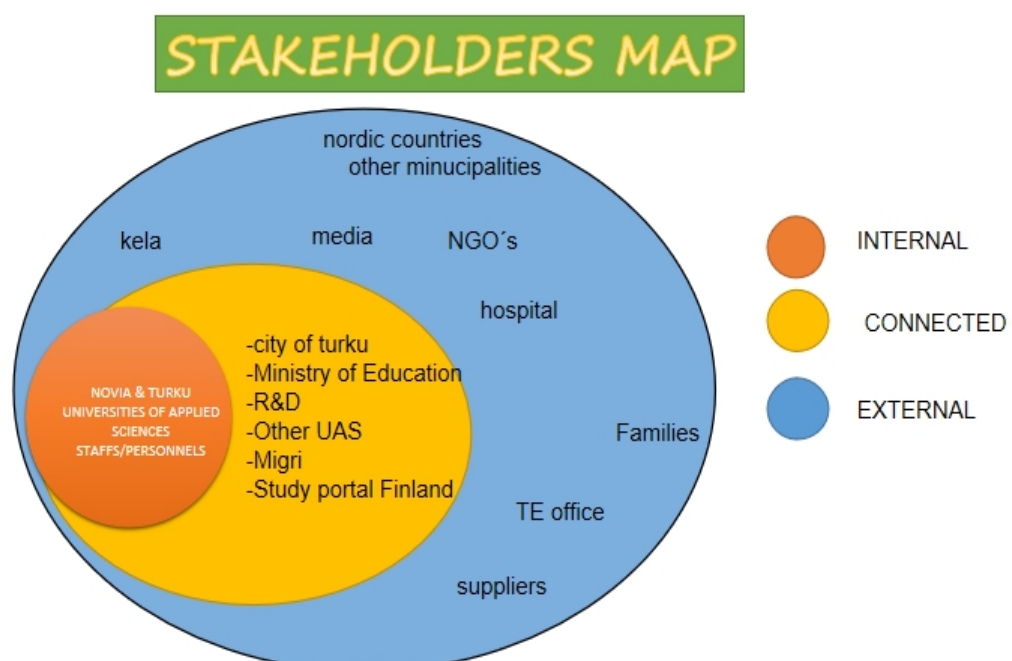


Figure 11. Stakeholders Map

5.3 Swot Analysis

The analytical tool usually refers to its acronym swot has been around for decades and could lay claim to being the most widely used strategy tool in modern times. The word swot means, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Swot is used by lots of organizations to gauge their performance. Many companies or organizations like to use swot because of its numerous advantages. It is so easy to use and self-explanatory. It is applicable to many levels in an organization, ranges from individual assessment to teams and units (Alan, 2016, 3).

Swot analysis is a strategic planning technique used by organizations to measure the current situation of the organization with regards to their vision vis-a-vis with other competitors. It helps access its internal and external positions as well as current and future potentials. The Strengths describes a company's prowess and what makes it flourish. Weaknesses point to those things that put the organization at a disadvantage and that need to be improved. Opportunities refer to those unexploited external factors that the company can plug in for growth. While threat refers to those factors that can destroy the company if not avoided (Investopedia). The choice for this technique is aimed at measuring the current situation while gauging how it can be improved. Figure 12 below shows in brief the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities for improvement within the degree program of leadership and service design. For example, the partnership between the two schools in the degree program of leadership and service design is a powerful strength. It gives the institutions more and better resources. Their combine resources also gives them the opportunity to wither any threads, and an opportunity for growth.

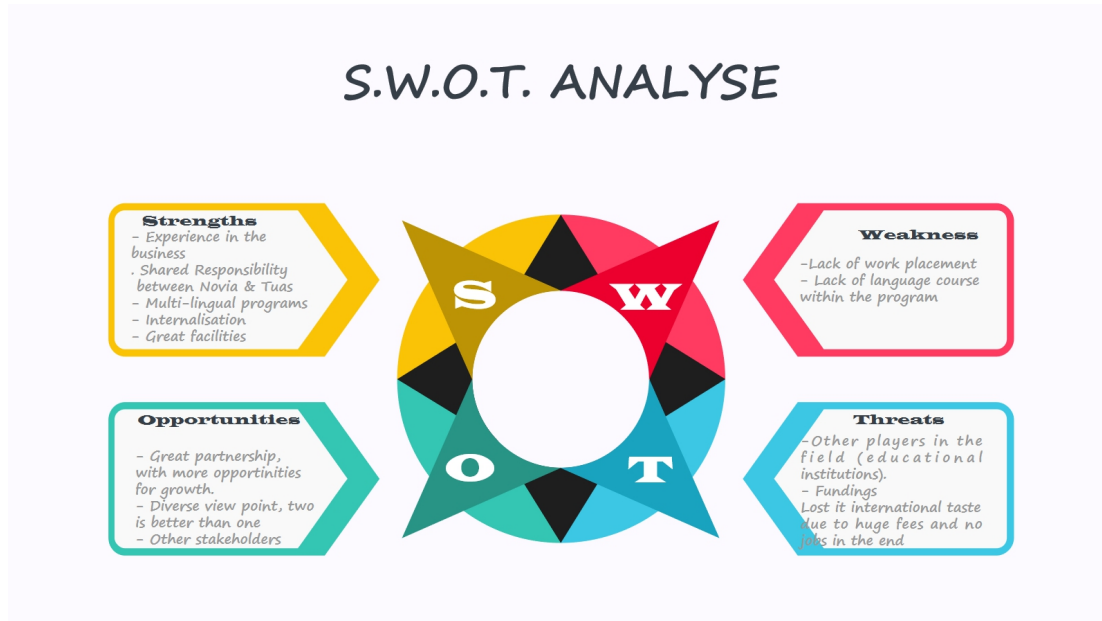


Figure 12. Swot Analysis

5.4 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a research tool used in measuring the performances of a company's products, services, or processes against those of another business considered to be the best in the industry. In order words, it is a way of discovering what is the best performance being achieved; through the "what" and "how". There are different types of benchmarking ranging from internal to external and also different steps involve to achieve the goals (Isixsigma on-line). Benchmarking is the systematic comparison of the performance of one firm against other firms. It is generally the act of comparing production entities. The goal is that firms within the same production lines that transform the same type of resources into the same type of products and services. The production entities can be firms, organizations, projects, decision-making units, or even individuals. Benchmarking can be used in many different settings and situations. For instance, benchmarking can be used in intra-organizational comparisons, as well as inter-organizational comparisons. The overall aim for benchmarking however remains the same, which is to copy the best practices of other companies (Bogetoft & Otto 2011, 1-2).

This will be a good tool for this project, as the author seeks to exploit how graduates from other western nations are being integrated into the labour force. The chosen country for this comparison is Australia. The reason is that Australia has one of the world's best and structured integration plans for foreign students. Since the goal of this project is to learn from the best so as to improve the Finnish model, we thought it was logical to benchmark the Australian model. As we all know, the scramble for skilled labour is something affecting the whole world and every nation is seeking ways on how to attract more workers and beat their competitors. Like the United States of America and Canada, Australia has long been engaged with the process of attracting skilled immigrants through their Skilled Workers' visas. But this has not been

sufficient to alleviate Australia's dwindling workforce and thus has to embark on other measures. This led to the creation of WIL, to oversee and bridge the gap between universities and employers (International Education Australia).

WIL as it is usually called refers to work-integrated learning. The aim is to give students both international and national the possibility to obtain valuable experiences in work-related activities relevant to their course of study, thereby preparing them ready in advance for the job market. In order to be able to achieve this, universities and employers partner to offer to students internships, projects, simulations, fieldwork, and other activities. For this partnership to succeed, universities are offering sustainable supports to employers so that they can accept students and involve them in their organizations. The employers on the other hand are also increasing and solidifying their links with the universities through placements and project work. The duration of these partnerships demonstrates that it is a win-win situation for all the stakeholders (International Education Australia).

The WIL partnership was further developed and included in the 2015 National Strategy on Work Integrated Learning in University Education. Universities Australia, the Australian Collaborative Education Network, group, the Australian Chamber of commerce and industry, the Business Council of Australia, the Commonwealth Department of education and training, and the Office of the Chief Scientist partnered on this Strategy to facilitate deeper connections between universities and employers and to promote the benefits of WIL for all stakeholders. The goal is to develop a national profile of current WIL activity in the higher education sector by measuring the level of participation in WIL by students enrolled in Australia's universities (International Education Australia). The work done by the WIL partners is of particular importance in supporting the Australian government's National Strategy for International Education 2025. The aim of the strategy is to retain Australia's position as a global leader in education, training, and research. A key element of the strategy is the need for Australian universities to prepare their students for the global labour market (Action 2.3) (International Education Australia).

In Finland, the arrangements are a little bit different. Job placements are predominantly for undergraduate students. Graduate studies do not usually have internships in their curriculum. The responsibility to organize these internships are generally left on the individual schools to network on their external relationships on how they deem fit to their core values. For a better insight into this comparison, we will be breaking it down into five main areas. These areas are internships, projects, accelerators or simulators, competitiveness, and language courses. In Australia for example, internships are part and parcel of the general curriculum in all fields of studies and at all levels. This means that there are a variety of internships available for the

students to choose from. These internships are organized by the universities thereby saving the students time and stress in searching for it for themselves. This is specifically important for international students who might not be used to the society and might also have language and cultural difficulties in the beginning. In Finland the reverse is true. Internships are only available at the undergraduate levels and most often the job of searching is solely the responsibility of the individual students. This is hard for international students who have to struggle between the culture and also the language as many organizations are unwilling to open their doors to foreign students.

Another area of concern is the lack of accelerators and simulators in most universities where students can physically experience a working life environment even in the comfort of their school. In Australia, there is well-organized structures between the universities and the companies around whereby the companies usually come to the school and carry out projects with the students and the teachers. Students are given the opportunities to develop their ideas in the simulators, which may end up as a start-up company.

Thirdly, in Australia some companies partner with universities and organize competitions where the best students are rewarded. This gives students the opportunities to work on real-life projects where their ideas are developed and given recognition. Again in Finland, this is only done by a few universities. Language is another issue of concern. Communication is key to any smooth and meaningful relationship. Hence it is imperative for the intended meaning of a message sent to be understood by the receiver. Language is a vital component to successful integration. Language courses are generally not incorporated into the graduate programs of Finland. This makes it hard for international students to find a job after graduation. In Australia language courses are a must in all fields of studies, though most of their international students already possess some understanding of the English language. The benchmarking diagram below in figure 13 illustrates the five areas in which Finland and Australia were studied. The five areas studied were language, internship, projects, competitions, and accelerator and simulator. The researcher found out that foreign students from Australia at all degree levels were better equipped for the labour markets than their counterparts in Finland through the above activities.

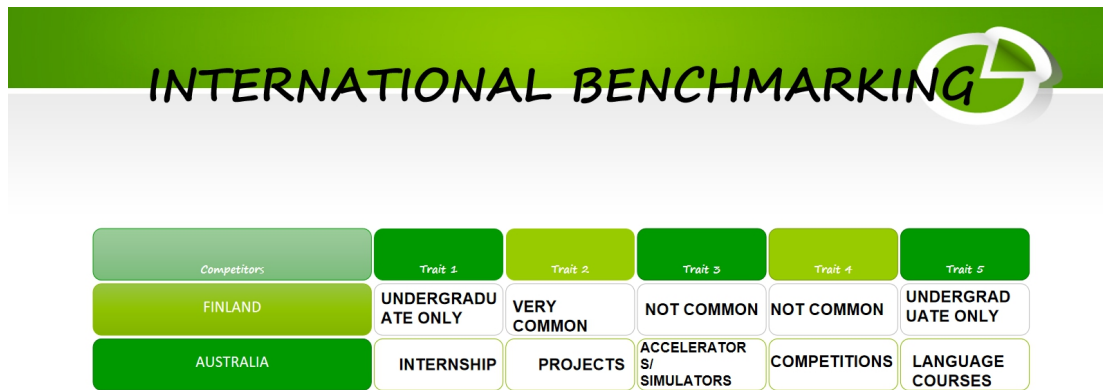


Figure 13. Benchmarking of Finland and Australia Work integration processes

The above figure explain the different dynamics interplay in the work integration process between Finland and Australia. The figure portray that Australia work integration process is superior to that of Finland and goes to explain that Finland needs to quickly revamp and redesign her educational curriculum and work integration policies if she want to remain competitive in the quest for international labour.

5.5 Survey

A survey is a research tool for collecting information from or about people to describe, compare, or explain their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. The survey process usually comprises seven steps. These include setting objectives for information collection, designing the study, preparing a reliable and valid survey instrument, administering the survey, managing and analysing survey data, and reporting the results. Like every other research tool, the survey system should operate in an ethical manner and have sufficient resources to achieve its objectives (Arlene 2003, 1). Surveyors can gather their research data by collecting information's directly from people or indirectly by reviewing written, oral and visual records of people's thoughts and actions. Surveyors can also obtain data by observing people in natural or experimental settings.

Surveys can be conducted in regard to political and consumer choices, use of health services, number of people in the labour force, and opinions on just about everything. Surveys are usually conducted to find out about people by asking questions about their feelings, motivations, plans, beliefs, and etcetera. A survey can be done by mailing the questionnaire to the respondents, self-administered, through the internet, face-to-face, or through the telephone. A surveyor's job can be very rewarding in a variety of ways and it can be also very challenging

(Arlene 2003, 2).

A survey can be best explained as a research method used for questioning individuals on a topic or topics and then describing their responses (Business Research Methodology). Unlike an interview, a survey is often direct and gives the interviewees easier access to a concise response to the researcher's question. The author's goal here is to get some systematic and clearer narratives from the interviewees.

For this thesis, the ex-students of Novia and Tuas in the degree program of leadership and service design were the customers. The questionnaires were emailed to them by the head of the degree program of Novia at the beginning of January 2021. The questionnaire had to be completed within two weeks. Respondents were asked some questions patterning to their background and life during and after graduation. They freely gave their opinions on a variety of issues concerning the subject matter. All in all, about 30 ex-students responded and the results are provided in the next section.

6 Results and Analysis of the Surveys

This chapter explains the results of the survey and how the themes were constructed. The chapter also explains the different personas and their Journey maps in relation to the aim of the thesis. At the end of the chapter, co-design method was described and analysed. As already mentioned, the questionnaire was sent to all formal students from the inception of the graduate degree program in leadership and service design. They were 73 in numbers and 30 ex-students responded. Figure 14-19 below gives a background information about the respondents in regards to gender, age, education, language and country of origin. While figure 20-28 gives the employment situations of the respondents before the commencement of studies and couple of months after graduation. It also covered suggestions from the respondents on how best the school can help students integrate into the labour market.

Gender

Out of the 30 ex-students that responded to the questionnaire, 25 of them were female while 4 of them were male. 1 respondent preferred not to disclose their identity. This gives a figure of 83.3% of female respondents and 13.3% male. About 3.3% preferred not to talk about their gender. Figure 14 below represent the gender classification. The data indicates two things. Either most of the ex-students were female or those that find interest in the research topic were mostly female.

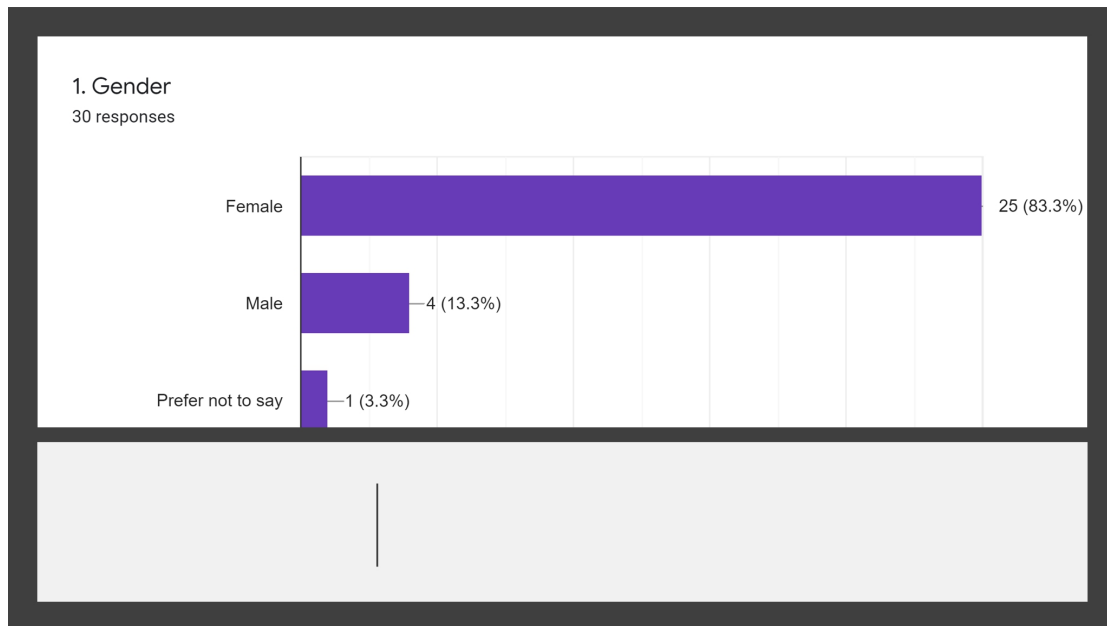


Figure 14. Gender Division of the Respondents

Age

The data reveals age disparity between the respondents. 46.7% of the respondents were between the ages of 36-45. 36.7% were ages 46-55. 10% of the respondents were of the age between 20-35. There were no respondents aged 55 and above. This indicates that most of the ex-students were over the ages of 36 but lesser than 55. This gives a good picture of the number of viable working population within the country. Figure 15 below illustrate this demography.

2. Age

30 responses

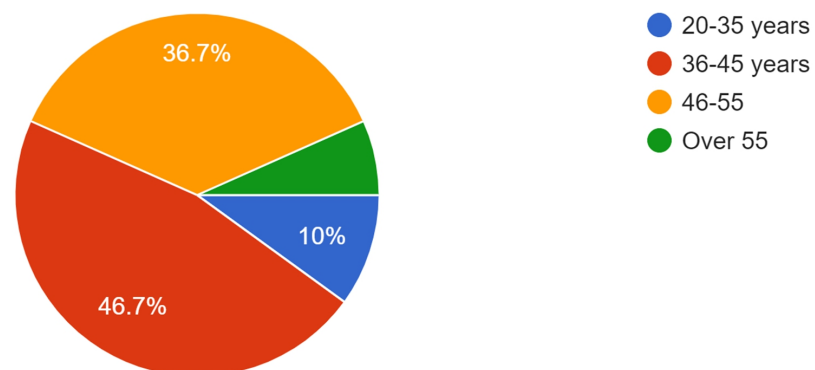


Figure 15. Age Division of the Respondents

Education

The results also revealed that 96.7% were already holders of both bachelor's and master's degrees before they started the degree program. 10 % also said they had only bachelor's

degrees before they started the degree program in leadership and service design. This indicates that most ex-students had other educational background but wanted a new career path. Which is why some who could not find a service design job in Finland have to relocate elsewhere. Figure 16 below gives a breakdown of the educational background of the ex-student before the master's degree program at Novia and Tuus.

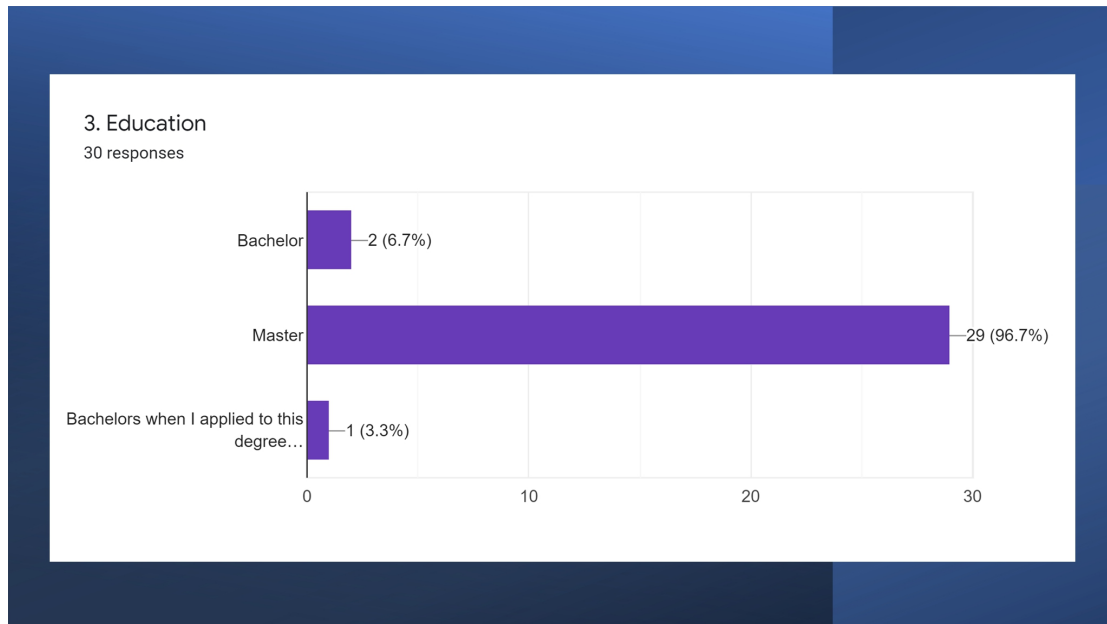


Figure 16. Educational Division of the Respondents

Reasons for Moving to Finland

Surprisingly, the result also revealed that 28% moved to Finland to study. This is interesting because it confirms the data from Statistics in Finland about the number of foreign students that enrolled in Finnish universities yearly. This emphasizes one of the core reasons of this thesis, which is to assist in immigrant graduate integration. The rest of the respondents however were born in Finland or came to Finland through a family connection. See figure 17 below.

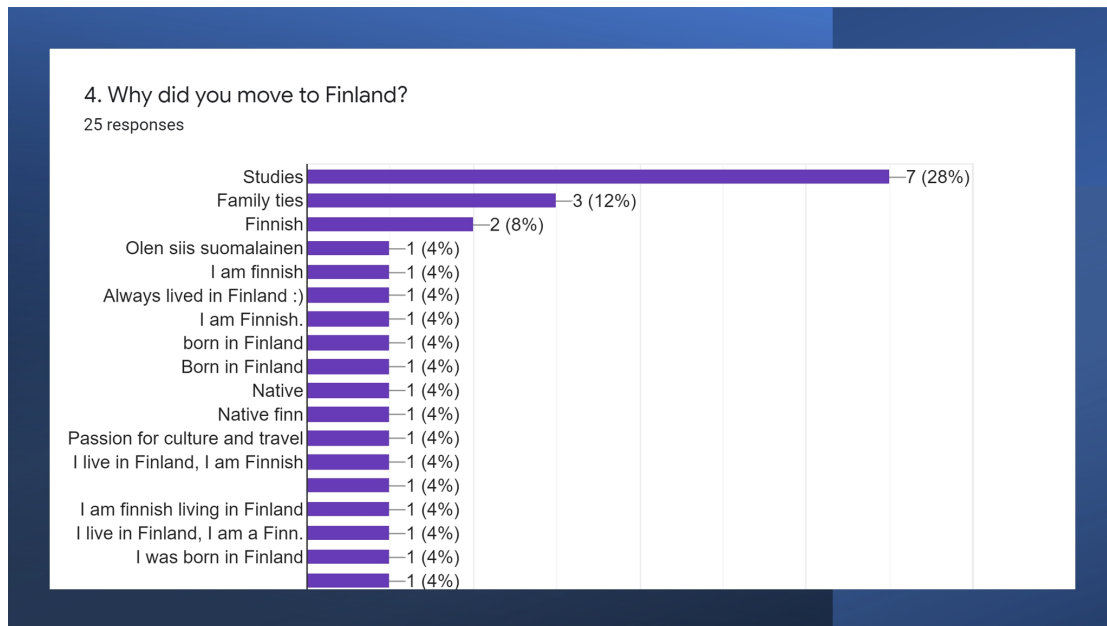


Figure 17. Respondents' Reasons for Moving to Finland

How Respondent Got to Know about the Program

With regards to how the respondents found out about the degree program in both Novia and Tuas, 58 % found it through the school websites and a further 13.3% found it through a friend while another 10% found it through relatives. The remaining percent of the respondents however found information about the degree program through social media, and elsewhere online. Marketing strategy is the key element to how the respondents found out about the degree program. See figure 18.

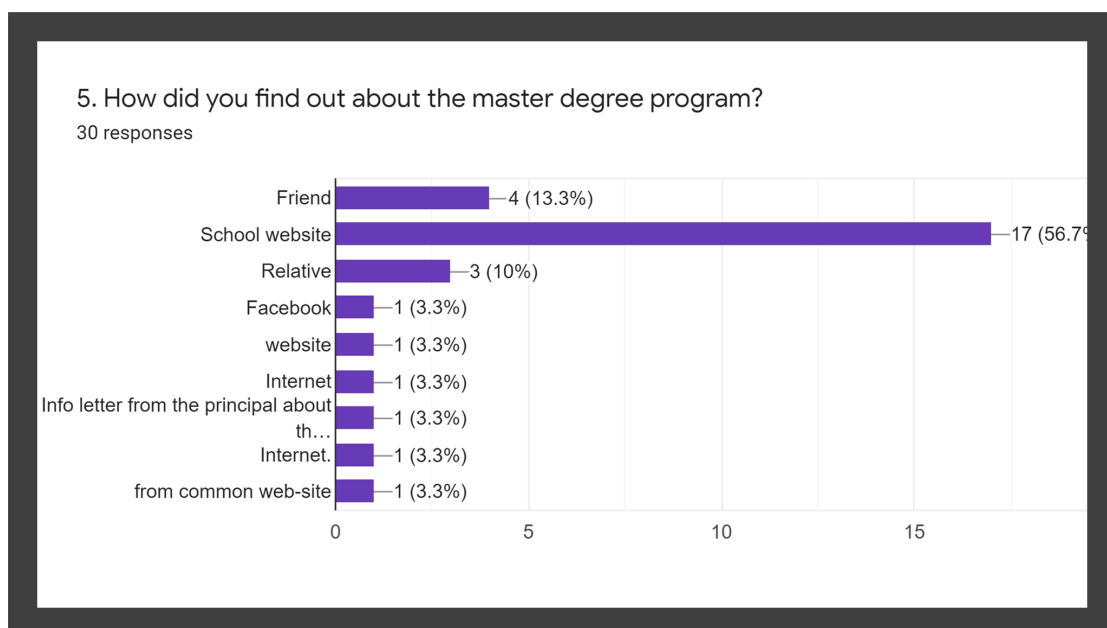


Figure 18. How Respondents Got to Know about the Degree Program

On Language

72.4% indicated that they are either native speakers of Finnish or have an excellent command of the language. 13% indicated that they are between intermediate and good while a further 13.8 % indicated that their language skills are at the basic level. Figure 19 below shows that most respondents were Finns. However it also shows that all foreign graduates have been to some language training. This is an important factor for this thesis as it indicates that foreign students are interested in learning Finnish language and needs to be supported by the school during their studies.

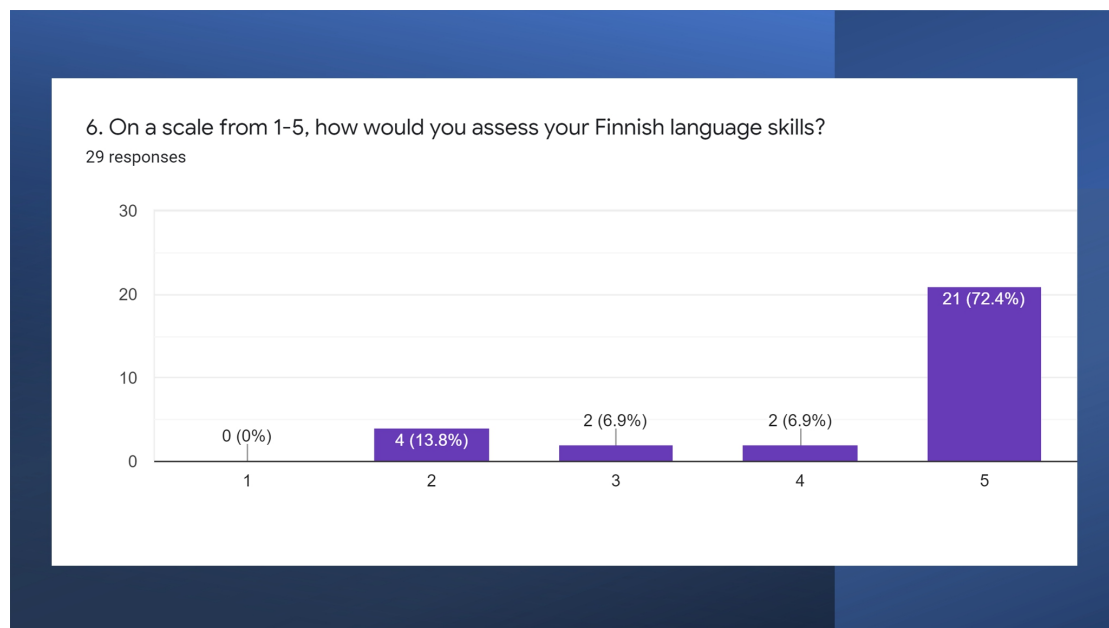


Figure 19. Language Capacity of the Respondents

Current Employment Situation

86.7% of the respondents said they are currently employed, while 13.3% said they are currently unemployed. The current employment outlook according to figure 20 is good. However, it does not give a full picture of the kind of employment. Figure 21 attempts to shed light on the above question. As stated in the goal of this thesis, the researcher aim is to ensure that there is smooth coordination between stakeholders and graduates are able to find work in their field of studies.

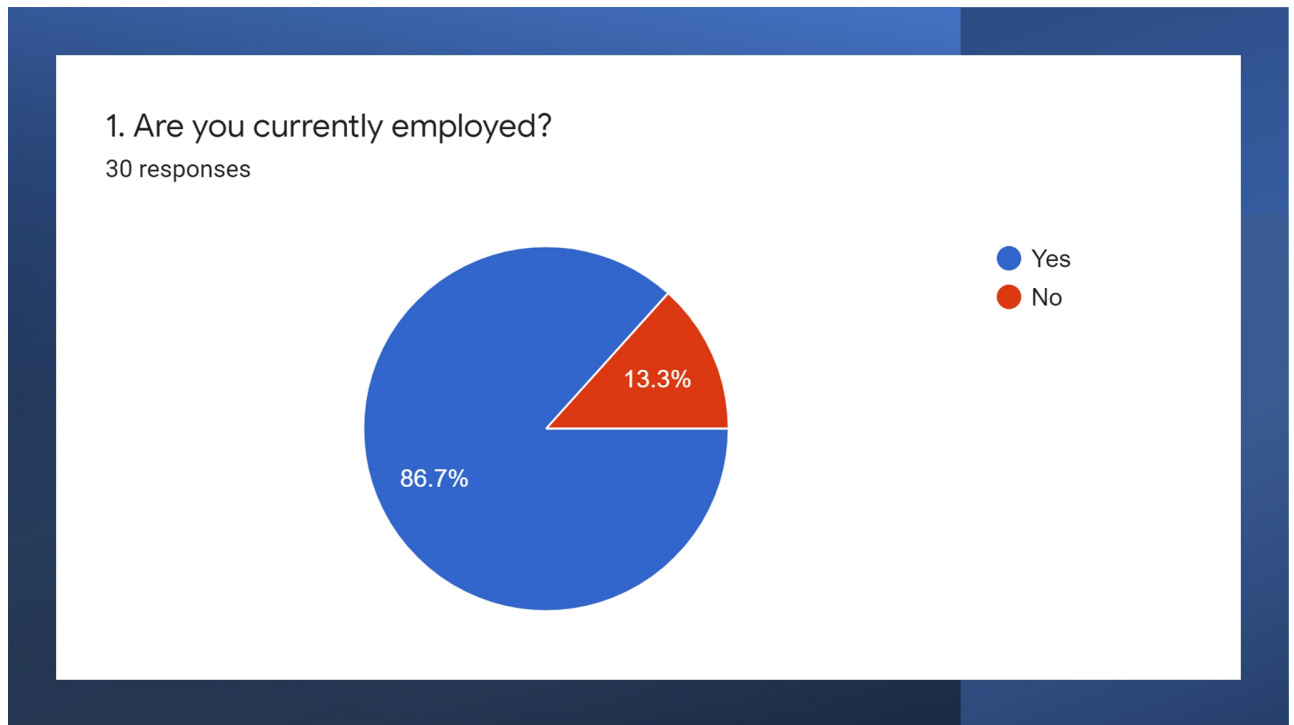


Figure 20. Respondent's Current Employment Situation

Ex-Students Situation before Commencement of Studies

However, 80% of the respondents were working even before they commence their studies in Novia and Tuas. 20% of the respondents were not working however even before their studies. With this in mind, it will be irresponsible to conclude on the impact of the knowledge gained from the program after graduation. The data also revealed that 32% of the respondents are still working in the same place that they were working before they commenced their studies. This indicates that though most graduates are currently employed, they are not working in the field of service designs.

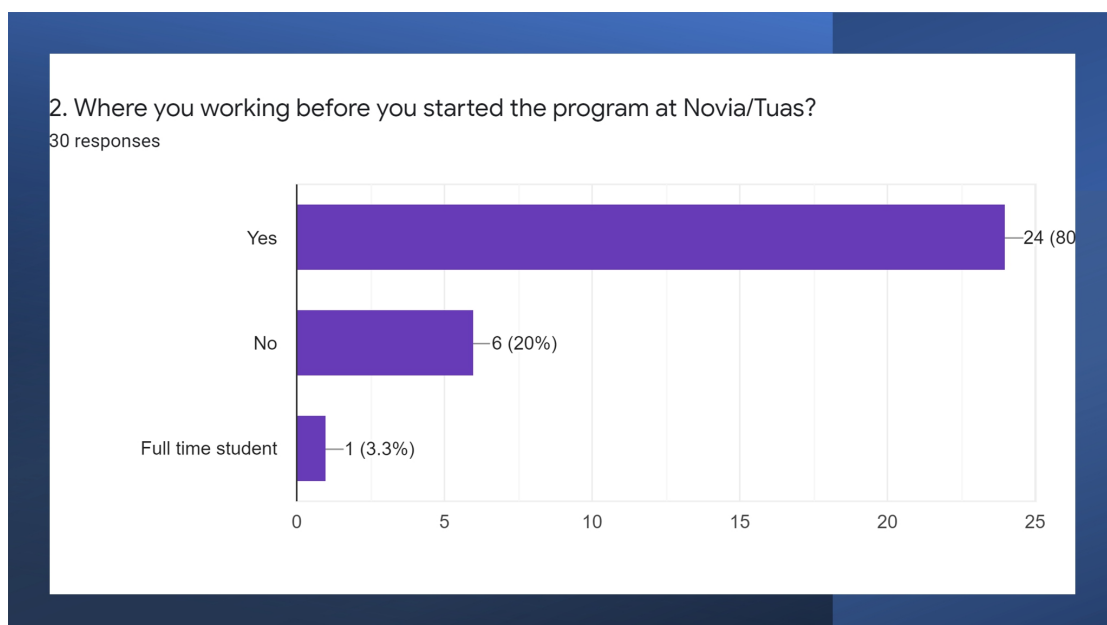


Figure 21. Respondents Working Situation before Commencement of Studies

Working Situation after Graduation

Figure 22 below is a sub question to figure 21. In the question mentioned in figure 21 I wanted to know if the graduates were working before they started the Degree Program in Leadership and Service Design. This was to build a groundwork for a follow up question and to analyse it in regards to the aim of the thesis. The responses to the question as shown in figure 22 indicates that most graduates changed workplaces after graduation.

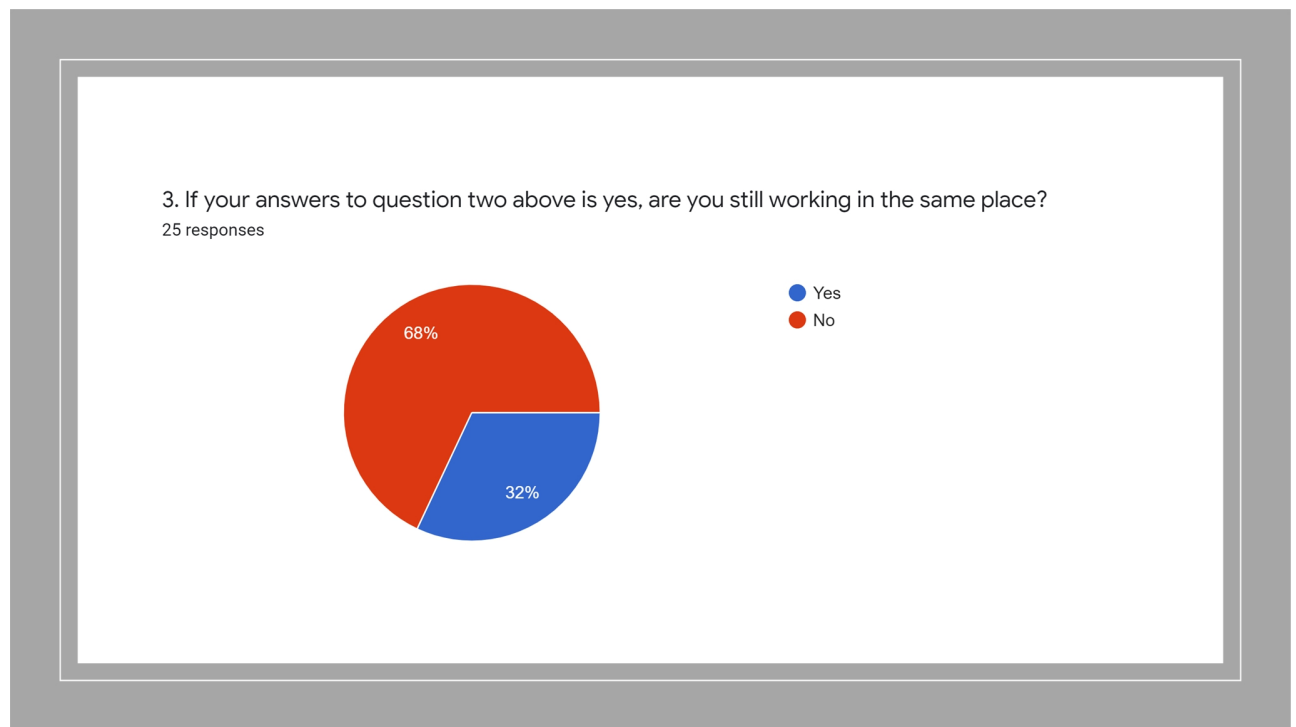


Figure 22. Respondents Working Situation after Graduation

Ability to Get New Role

Another important revelation is that 49.9% of the respondents indicated that they were unable to get new responsibilities at their workplace that matched their new profile and graduate degree. A further 35.7% indicated that they got a new role in their places of work, while a further 7.1% said they left for a new role elsewhere.

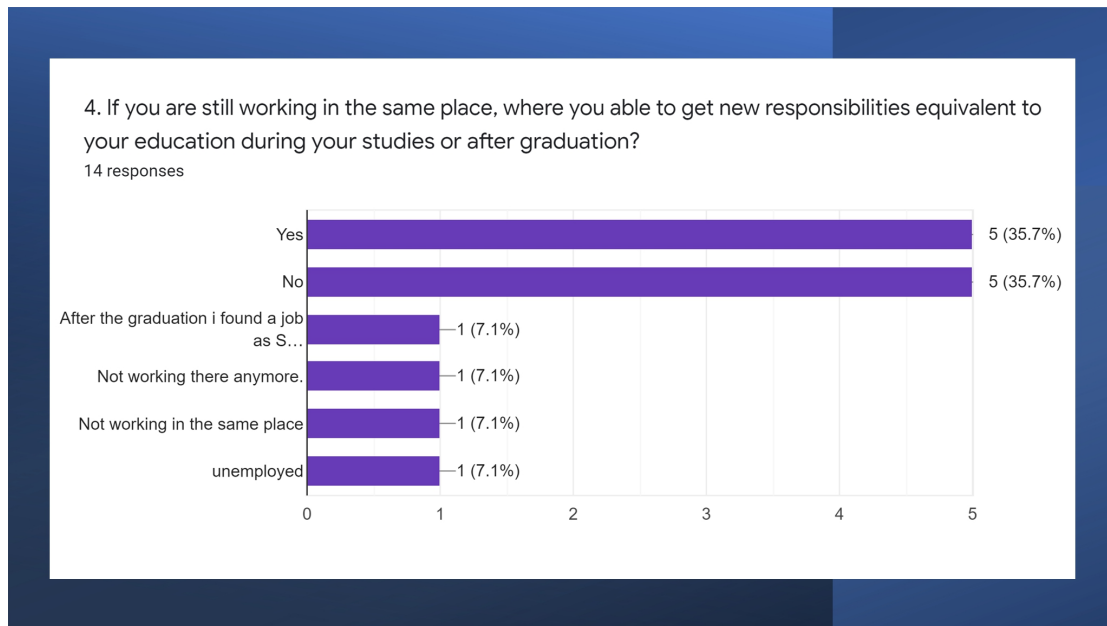


Figure 23. Respondent's Ability to Get a New Role in their Places of Work after the Degree Program.

Did you apply for New Role?

The data also reveal that about 86.2% of the respondents wanted a new role corresponding to their degree, thereby applied for new roles. Figure 24 below indicates that most graduates wanted to work in position of leadership and service design but were unable to secured one. This point highlight the importance of a working integration model that will helps facilitate employment of graduate in their field of studies.

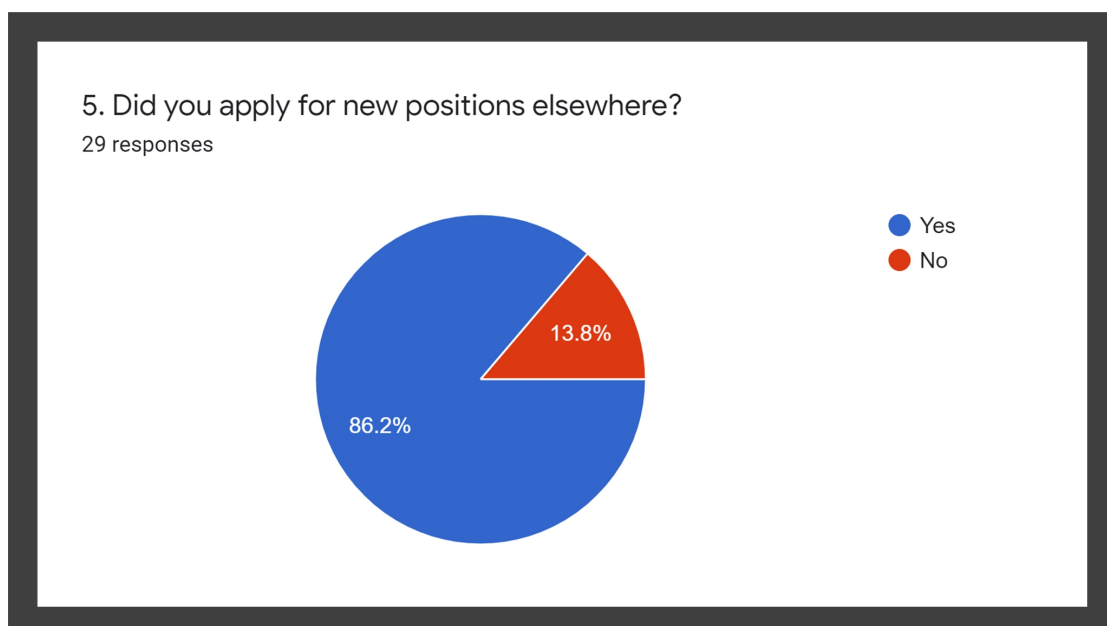


Figure 24. Respondents Answers to the Question, did the Applied for a New Role

Percentage who Applied for New Role and got it

52% indicated that they were able to get these new roles while another 48% were not able to get it. The results indicate how difficult it is to find a job in Finland as a service designer.

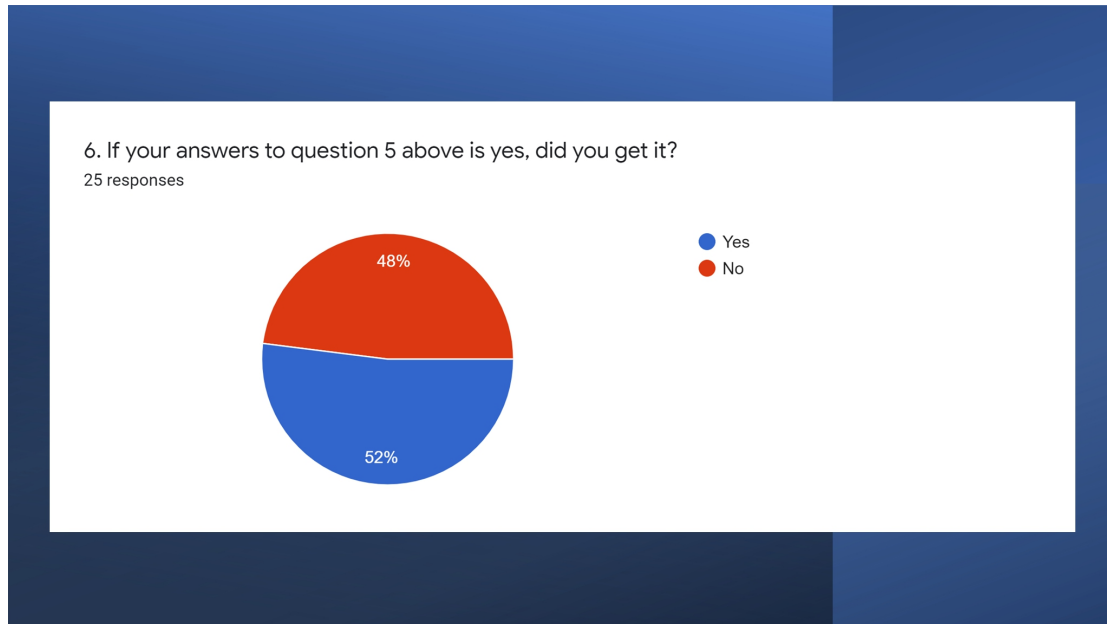


Figure 25. Percentages who Applied for and Got New Role

Is Job in your Field of Study?

The results also revealed that 60.7% of the respondents were able to get work in their field of studies, while a further 32.1% were unable to get it. A further 3.6% continue their studies as researchers. See figure 26 below.

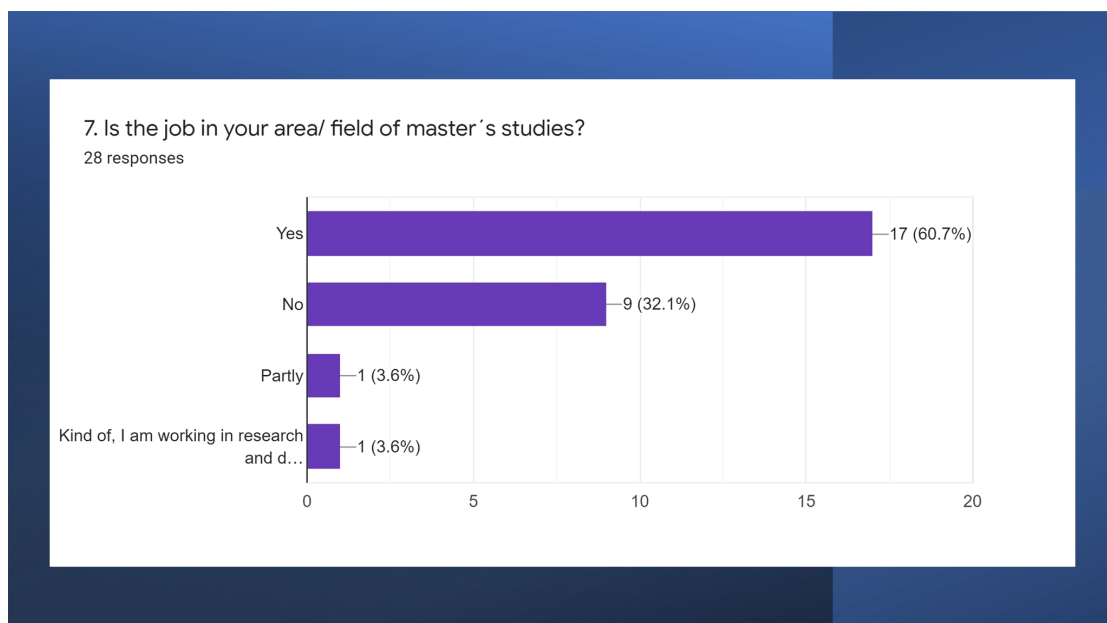


Figure 26. Respondents Responses to the Questions of is the Job in your Field of Studies

Job Channels

On how were they able to find their current jobs, 36% got it from friends and relatives recommendations. A further 20% got it through their LinkedIn profile pages, while 16% said they were introduced to the job by the unemployment office integration plan. This indicates that if there is a coordinated channels during studies many more graduates will be able to get jobs after graduation.

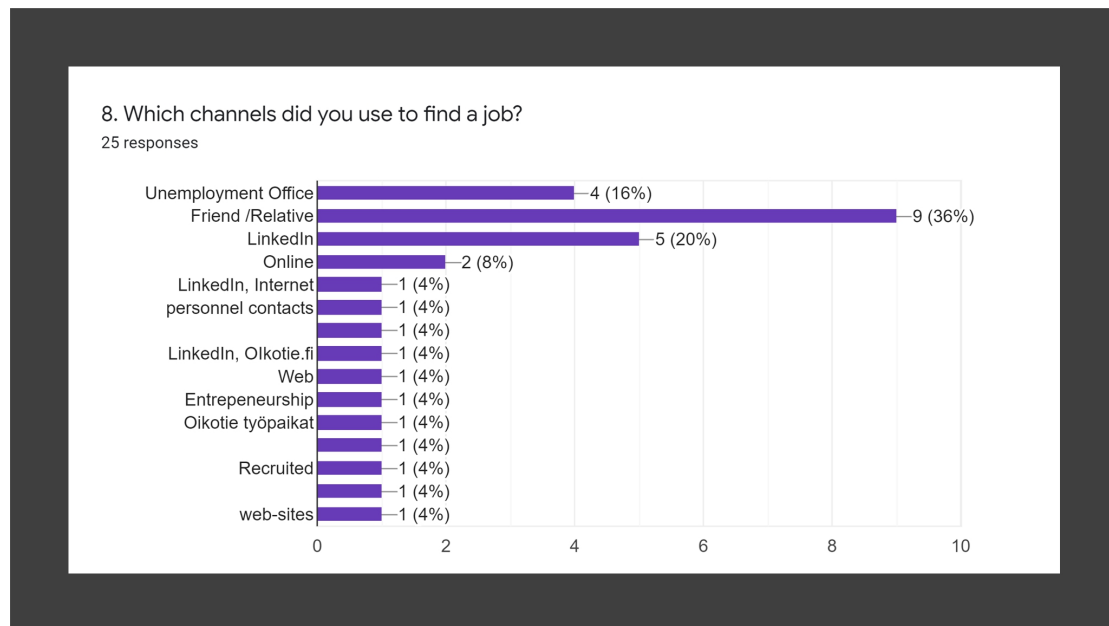


Figure 27. Respondents job channels

How long it took to get a Job after Graduation

The responses were somehow slightly inconsistent. Of the 30 respondents 3 said they were able to get a job after 4 months. 2 said it took 3 months. Another 2 took about 2 years. Of the two respondents that took two years before getting a job, one said he had to completely give up his previous job and reinvented himself by creating a company of his own. 1 got a job after a year, another took 14 months. 1 got a job during the studies and another 1 maintained his job during his studies and is still working in the same place.



Figure 28. Respondents Answers on the Duration it took them to get a Job after Graduation.

10. Describe your experiences with job searching!

26 responses

When asked about experiences in job-hunting the respondents were generally negative. Many of the respondents talked about how exhausting and frustrating it is to get a job in the field of service design. They said there are usually very few jobs advertised in the field of service design and more often those opportunities are filled from within and only advertise as a formality. It should be noted that even Finnish speakers did talk about how difficult it is getting a job in the field of service design and as such one could only wonder how the experiences must have been for international students with very limited Finnish language skills. Service Design is literally a new field and needs more exposure. Some companies do not even know what is the job of a service designer. This can only happens through marketing and sensitisation of the business community.

Some respondents feel that at the moment the curriculum do not offer much to a student for healthier competition in the job market and recommend the inclusion of UI/UX and Java courses into the curriculum. The reason for the request is to add more value to the curriculum as some companies will prefer a service designer with a touch of graphic design. Some mentioned the inclusion of internship in the program so that it can give the students an exposure to real-life situations and also introduce them to some companies thereby giving them some necessary work experience and networking. This explained the important of the research questions and the needs for urgent solutions.

However, there were some positives from the ex-student experiences. Some of them

acknowledge that their search opens their eyes to the numerous possibilities elsewhere in the world in the field of service design, and how easy it is to link up with employers through LinkedIn. Below is a transcript of their responses.

"It is hard to get a job by just applying and wait. Most of the positions are just there for formalities. The workers for the positions are already taken from within the organizations. It's an internal recruitment thing in most companies in Finland unfortunately.

The majority of the vacancies seem to be hidden. A good network is essential.

It's quite easy via LinkedIn, several good work opportunities worldwide

After graduating I have been job hunting to several places

I was active myself, looked for jobs every day, kept sending applications. e.g. LinkedIn is a good tool for job searching".

11. In your opinion, what can the school do to make it easier for foreign graduates to integrate successfully into the job market?

27 responses

With regards to what can the school do to assist students in finding a job after graduation the responses were unanimously the same in three categories. Finnish language was mentioned as a necessity to get started and that often led to frustration from the international students who did not speak the language or have been offered the opportunity to learn it. Finnish language for foreign students to be incorporated into the curriculum, so as to ease their stay in Finland. Language is key to integration of immigrants. This is why it is important for the school to organise language courses for foreign students.

The second point that came up from the results was an internship needed to be incorporated into the study curriculum. The aim here is to help students gain real-life experiences as well as putting into practice what the students have acquired from the theories in school. The third point raised by the respondents is the need for the school to create a network with a variety of companies that are aware of what is being taught in the school and have the companies periodically invite the students to their companies to the workplace. This would create a network for possible employment after graduation. Below is the transcript of the respondents.

"Finnish language studies, as surprisingly many companies in Finland, demand the language. Or listing and having co-operation with companies who use English as working language".

"Facilitate building relationships between students and hiring companies during the studies".

"Have more company representative visits, have previous students who are employed give guest lectures, etc. I would say that the Finnish language is required in most jobs, so learning that would be beneficial. Cooperate

with cities; get real projects from cities for students to practice with. It is highly appreciated in service design that you have experience from cities”.

“An obligatory internship as a part of the studies would benefit in many ways; in job searching, in getting work experience in “real life” as well as apply the knowledge taught at school in practice”.

12. Any other comments or advice in regards to foreign graduates integration that you will like to share with the researcher?

19 responses

On the last word or take-home message, the issue of the Finnish language came up again. This explains how important it is for foreign students to get this course incorporated into their curriculum. Another vital issue that came up was for the school to introduce a lesson that talks about an overview of the Finnish job market and how the system operates in both the private and the public sector. Finally prospective students should be open to spreading their wings out of Turku and Finland because there are lots of opportunities worldwide in the field of service design. Below is a transcript of the responses.

“Knowledge of the Finnish language can give you a better chance of employment. Networking. Maria 01, Slush, Hackathons, etc”.

“There should be also lessons that give an overview of the job market in Finland. It would be also created to give an insight into the system how the public and private sector is working in Finland”

“In the service design industry working in Finland requires almost always fluent Finnish speaking/writing. Some companies employ Finnish speakers but almost always in senior positions that require 5 or more years of working experience”.

6.1 Personas

After analysing the data from the questionnaire, the next task was to create a persona for the different categories that came up from the data. Personas are fictional characters or profiles which represent the users of a service. Personas help to keep the focus on the customers during the rest of the design process (Design Council UK n.d.). Persona also gives the researcher the opportunity to empathize with customers. A persona is a profile representing a particular group of people, which might be a customer or a group of customers. Though fictional, it is not a stereotype, but an archetype based on real research. Persona can also aid to share research findings and insights within a research team, and even across a broader spectrum (Stickdorn & Schneider 2018, 41).

The personas for this thesis are formal students of the combined degree programs in business administration, specialization in leadership, and service design. From the survey data, I was able to establish three categories of personas. 83 percent of the respondents were female and only 13 percent acknowledge being male, while a further 3 percent preferred not to disclose their gender. The three categories of personas we came up with are a Finn, an immigrant who came here through family ties, and an immigrant who came here to pursue education and end up settling here after graduation.

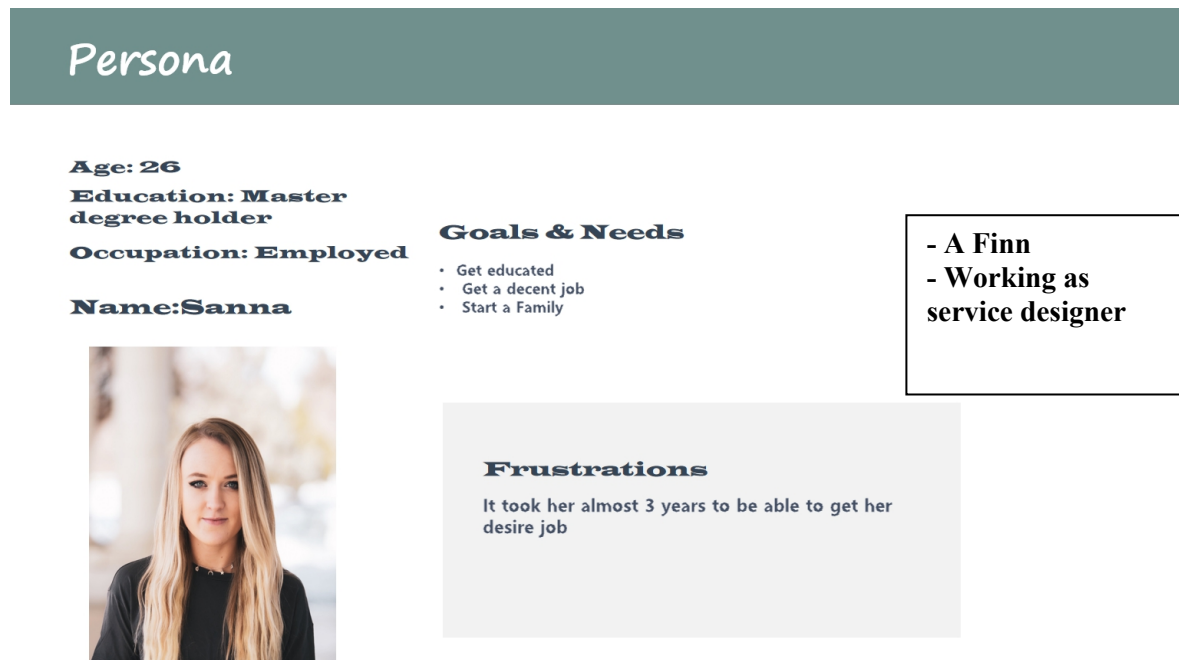


Figure 29. Persona 1. A Finn and a Service Designer.

Sanna is a 26 year old and a Finn. She is a graduate with a master's degree in leadership and service design and is currently working in the field of service design. Sanna talked about her experiences and the challenges she faced even with fluency in Finnish language. It took Sanna roughly three years of constant searching before she was able to land the job. She spoke at length about her frustration during the processes but said all that is now in the past. She is now looking forward to her next goal, starting a family.

Persona

Age: 40

Education: Master degree holder

Occupation: Employed

Name: Matt



Goals & Needs

- Get educated
- Get a decent job
- Improve Language skills

- An immigrant who moved to Finland through family ties
- Speak some Finnish but can't find a job

Frustrations

Working but unhappy with current job

Figure 30 Persona 2. Immigrant with Family ties.

The second persona is Matt, a 40 years old male and a holder of a master's degree in leadership and service design. Matt moved to Finland about 6 years ago through his Finnish spouse. He became attracted to the degree program of leadership and service design and immediately enrolled in the program. After completion of the program, he was unable to find a job even though his Finnish language skill is at level 3. Since he needed to support his family, Matt had to search for jobs in other areas. He found a cleaning job which he has been doing ever since.

Persona

Age: 36

Education: Master degree holder

Occupation: Unemployed

Name: Maddie



Goals & Needs

- Get educated
- Get a decent job and start a family.

- An immigrant student.
- Speak very limited Finnish

Frustrations

Unable to find a job

Figure 31 Persona 3. An International Graduate.

Maddie is a 36 year old graduate who moved to Finland four years ago to study in the leadership and service design program. She graduated two years ago and has been searching for a job ever since. She is single and planning to start a family as soon as she is able to kick-start her career. She is currently studying the Finnish and is unemployed.

6.2 The Journey Map

The main goal of a Journey Map is to visualize the user experience over time. The journey map includes all the steps or touch-points the customer accesses with a given business. These touch-points might not be all visible to the customer but his/her overall experiences within the business are what count. A Journey Map helps businesses to find gaps in customer experiences and go ahead seeking ways to resolve them. Journey maps offer the possibility to survey past experiences as well as potential future customers' experiences. The journey maps can take place in various scale and scopes and one will usually need several to represent some aspect of experience or service. A high-level map can show an end to end experience while a more detailed map focuses on one step of a higher level journey. A very detailed step by step descriptions of micro-interactions (Stickdorn & Schneider 2018, 43). In the service design pedigree, a customer journey map is usually sketched out from the data from the personas. Usually, a single journey map is enough to communicate the different experiences. However, for this study, the researcher decided to craft out three separate journeys to depict the three customers. The reason was to make it easier for readers who are not conversant with service design methods and also to give a clearer picture of the separate experiences encountered by the different customers. Below is the customer journey map of the above personas.



Figure 32. Customer Journey of Sanna.



Figure 33. Customer journey of Matt.

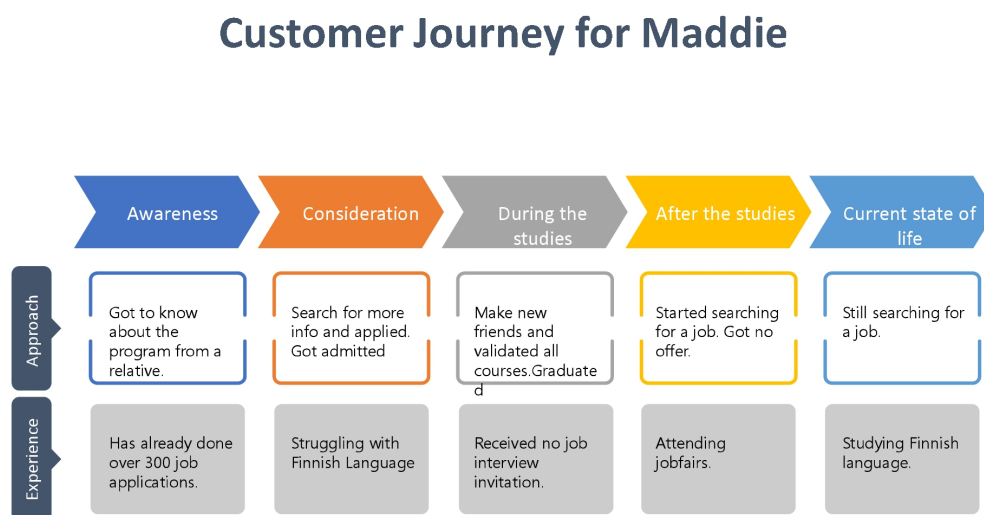


Figure 34. Customer Journey for Maddie

6.3 Co-design

Co-design is increasingly getting popular in many businesses and research spheres. The reason for this popularity is the unique creative cooperation between the different stakeholders and experts in the design processes. Hence, co-design can be defined as the coming together of

diverse experts to cooperate creatively for the production of goods and services. Here diverse experts refer to researchers, designers, producers, and users or customers who are also experts in the users' service journey experience (Visser, Stappers, Van der Lugt, & Sanders, 2005).

Sander (2002), outlined three categories of users' experiences within the interaction of the design processes. These experiences say, do, and make. In using the tool interview, the researcher or designer can listen to what the interviewee says and then try to make sense of it. In using the observatory technique, the researcher can observe and make sense out of what other people do and react after using a service. Finally, the "make" refers to the co-design process where together with the designers or researchers solutions are created. In the co-design workshop for this thesis, brainstorming was used between the researcher and ex-students. The diagram below illustrate how complex the co-design workshop may look at the beginning and how simple the end product look when properly coordinated.

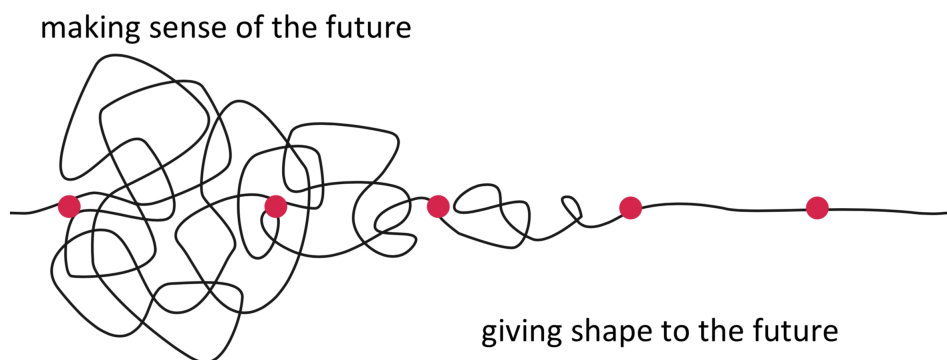


Figure 35 Co-Design Process (Medium online)

6.3.1 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an old research technique dating back to the 1940s. This technique was first used in the marketing discipline and were developed by Alex Osborn. It was developed as a way to quickly generate multiple creative ideas (Baruah & Paulus, 2008). Gautschi, in 1990 further elaborated that for brainstorming to be effective the right brain must be free from the dominance of the left brain and thus gives free asses to creativity. Brainstorming is usually done by like-minded people working on a project with goals to solve an existing problem. Brainstorming usually happens in a non-formal setting as opposed to semi-structured or unstructured as focus group discussions often are (Rossiter & Lilien, 1994). The aims and rules of Brainstorming are re-explained in advance to group members at the beginning of each group (Morgan, 1997). The rules include the aims of the session so that they can start to think about possible contributions to the problem under discussion. They are also told that no criticism or praise of an idea is allowed within Brainstorming (Morgan, 1997). During the group itself,

participants are encouraged to enjoy themselves and not take it too seriously. Further, humour is allowed during brainstorming as it has been shown to improve the performance of brainstorming sessions when the group is faced with either vague or difficult goals to achieve (Roach et al. 2006). The moderator may even give room for silly ideas just to make the atmosphere welcoming and encouraging for everyone to be able to contribute. No idea at the beginning of a brainstorming session is useless because it sometimes contain the grain of a good solution and quality of ideas often goes together with the number of ideas.

Nonetheless, academic research has shown that respondents working alone or in smaller groups generate more ideas than they do working in bigger groups (Paulus et al. 1995, 1996; Pinsonneault et al. 1999). However, in terms of collecting and then assessing ideas, working alone takes longer. A widely known barrier to idea generation in groups is “group-think” or peer pressure where people in the session are reluctant to share ideas for fear of ridicule. One of the rules of brainstorming attempts to overcome this by stating at the outset that no evaluations are allowed during the actual Brainstorming itself. However, an evaluation or idea ranking stage may take place immediately. Eckerson, (1988) highlighted that an advantage of brainstorming is said to be that it allows people with multiple areas of expertise to come together with the effect that the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts. Solutions may present themselves in such an environment that would not be evident to individuals working alone on the same problems. Brainstorming was the main tool used in this thesis during the lone workshop in idealizing and establishing the outcome of the prototype. The processes will be explained below and the outcomes show in the prototyping section.

6.3.2 On-line Workshop

The workshop took place online due to the corona virus restriction prohibiting physical meetings in large numbers people. This explains why we were not able to schedule any workshops during the earlier phases of the thesis. The lone workshop was organized during the last week of March and was carried out on the 7th. April, 2021, from 17:00-19:00. An enrolment form was tailored and sent out to all formal students through Google Feedback so that they could enrols for the workshop. This was accomplished through the help of the supervisors. Interested participants were then asked in the form to affix their email addresses for onward communication regarding the workshop. On the morning of the day of the workshop, the thesis author who also doubled as the facilitator send an email to all participants who have signalled their willingness to participate a tentative agenda of the workshop.

The workshop opened with a brief of the rules and the goal of the workshop. This was followed by the self-introduction of participants. Many of the participants who had earlier indicated their willingness to participate could not make it to the workshop due to other commitments. Thus,

only three persons were able to participate in the workshop. It is important to point out that the three participants were all male.

The workshop was partitioned into two segments, interjected with a coffee break of 5 minutes. In the first segment, the participants were asked to think of ways in which the problem of language for foreign students could be solved. Here, the participants unanimously stood for the incorporation of a language course into the curriculum. Some thought it should be done on-line and the classroom should be divided according to the students' proficiency levels. That explains why in the prototype, the credits was divided into 2.5 per level, within a given duration.

In the second segment, the participants were asked to envisage a way to address the problem of internships and collaborative platforms. Although the participants differed a bit on the approaches, the over-riding idea was the creation of a website to handle the situation. The participants gave suggestions on what should be included in the websites. (see figure 37 below). After the workshop, the researcher went back to the drawing board trying to figure out how to make use of the numerous suggestions that came up from the workshop. These ideas were then put into a prototype for the school to consider implementing in the future. See Figures 36 and 37 of this thesis.



Figure 36. Workshop on Language



Figure 37. Workshop on Internships and Collaborative Platform

7 Prototype and Developmental Suggestions

The word prototype originates from the Greek word *prototypes*, which when loosely translated means first or primitive (Harper n.d). The word prototyping or prototype varies in contents depending on the schools of thought (Beaudouin-Lafon & Mackay, 2007). However, there is a consensus that prototypes are a representation, embodiments, or manifestations of an idea or ideas that must be tested and evaluated. The goal of a prototyping is to explore, evaluate and communicate service ideas during different activities within the service design process. Prototyping enables companies to arrive at reforms and solutions that are beneficial to both the end-users and the stakeholders. In order words, prototyping helps the design team to identify vital aspects of a new concept, explore alternative solutions, and evaluate which one might actually be feasible in everyday business reality (Stickdorn & Schneider 2018, 64-65).

Prototyping was used for this thesis to visualize how the results from the survey and benchmarking could be incorporated for future students in the degree program. As mentioned above, this was done via Google Meet and Google Jam Board. Two separates Jam Boards were created where the team wrote their ideas for development. Thereafter the leader, who doubles the author of the thesis was able to use the ideas gathered from the workshop and put them together. Figure 38 and 39 below depict the original ideas from the lone workshop.

Novia & Turku University of Applied Sciences

SERVICE DESIGN

SD20 & YSERVIS20

SCHEDULE 2021 - 2022

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM PROTOTYPE

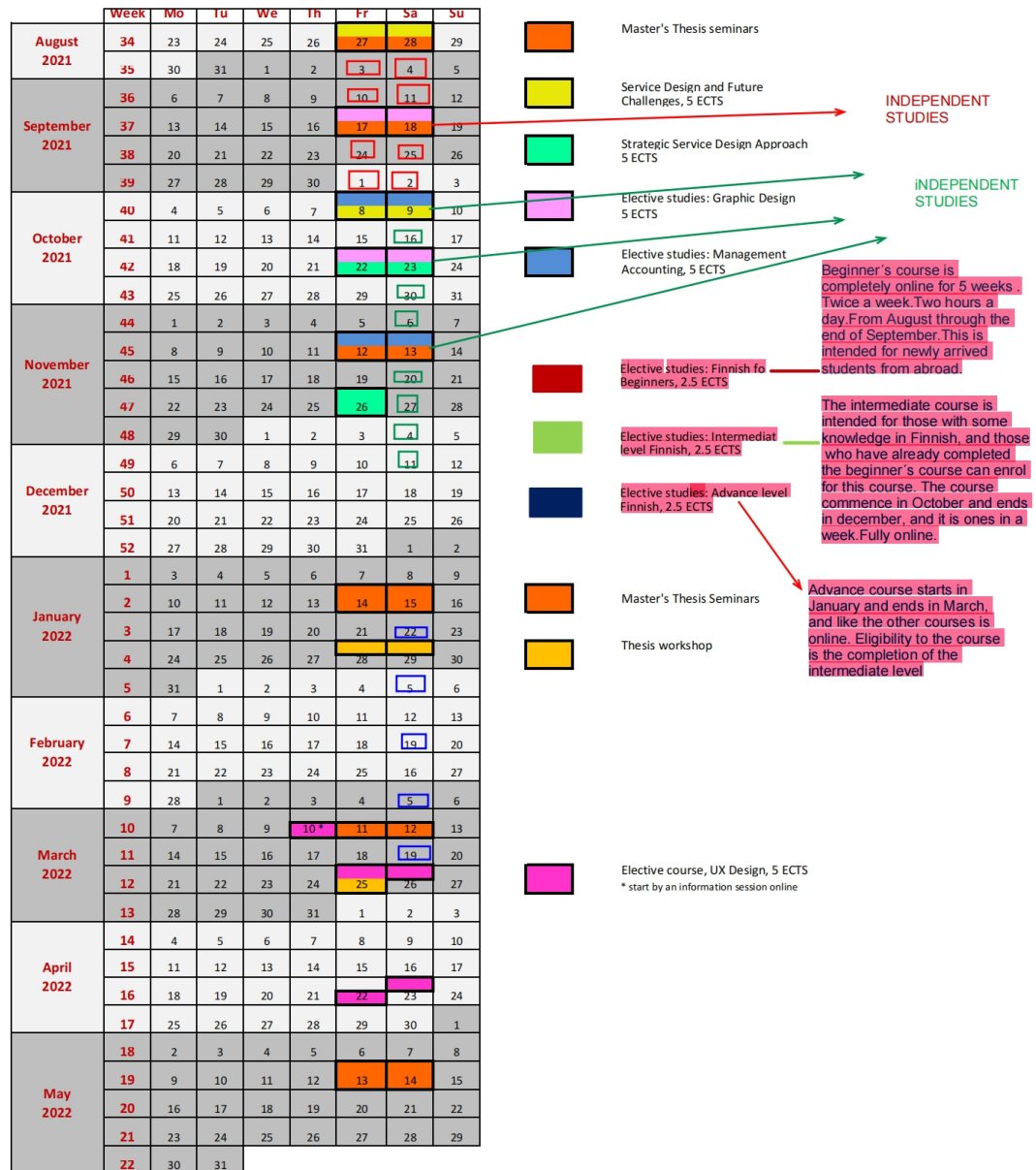


Figure 38. Modified curriculum from Novia-Tuas Model (Prototype 1)

In coming up with the above modification, the goal was to find a way to utilize the feedback from the survey and benchmarking pertaining to language. The group brainstormed for about half an hour and came out with the idea that the best possible way to help foreign students get started with learning the language was to incorporate language lessons as elective studies into the curriculum at different stages.

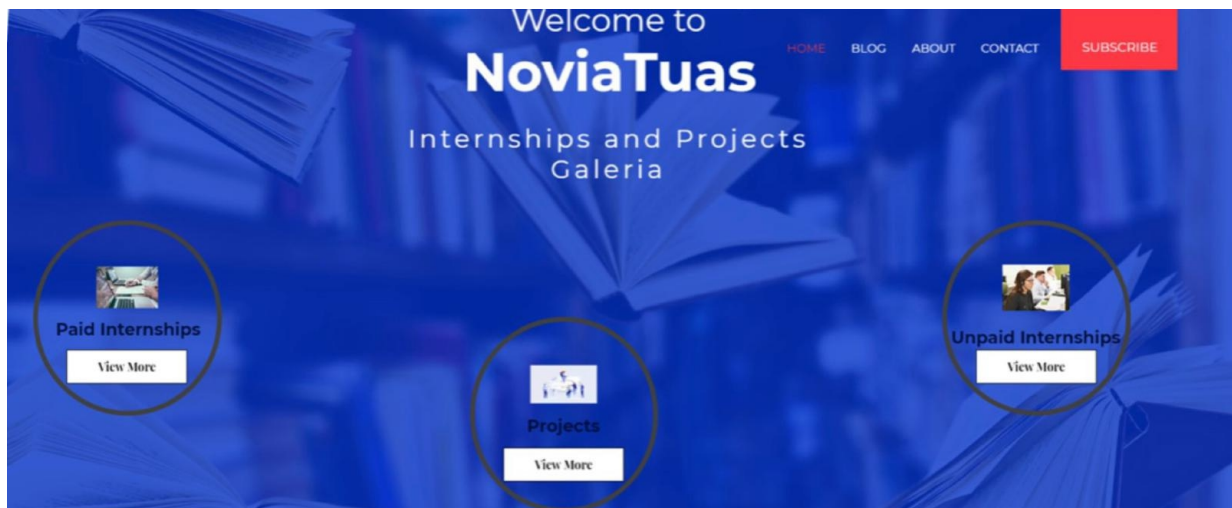


Figure 39. Website/Interactive Platform (Prototype 2)

As a solution to the second and third problems that came out from the survey and benchmarking, we created a prototype website that could be incorporated with that of Novia and Tuas web pages. The website should comprise of three columns and should cover the topics of paid internships, unpaid internships, and projects. The goal is that companies can advertise their open positions for students to apply for. The purpose of the two-column for internships is to give students the opportunities to gainful employment in the future during summer vocations or during the final years of their studies. The column for the project can also offer students the possibilities to apply for their school projects, as well as thesis projects. The overall aim is to empower students, while at the same time creating an avenue for job creation in the future.

In the upper right corner of the website, is a subscriber button where students can subscribe or enrolls to be able to get access to the events of the page. Next to the subscribe button is the contact information of those managing the page. Further down the left is the about button, which talks about the goal of the page. Next is the blog forum. The blog forum is where all the information of companies willing to partner with the schools for this venture can be found. And the last button is home, which brings us back to the starting page. In this way, students can register and have the opportunity to meet with representatives of the different stakeholders and ask questions pertaining to jobs, internships, and also thesis projects. This page could be used by current and ex-students whose profiles are still on the website. Another vital goal here is continuity between and the current and ex-students through the exchange of ideas relating to the labour market and students. The page could be managed by the student offices of both institutions. Below is a table of the summary of the main findings and summary of the solutions vis a vis the the results from the benchmarking.

KEY RESULTS	SURVEYS DATA	BENCHMARKING	SUGGESTIONS
LANGUAGE:	<p>- I mostly get a rejection because of my Finnish language skills. -Maybe by organizing Finnish courses for foreigners who want to stay here and search for jobs.</p>	<p>-To help international students develop their language skills and increase their knowledge of Australian workplace culture, for example, the program 'Talking with Aussies' was created. The program provides an opportunity for international students to ask questions and make connections with the local community.</p>	<p>-This can be introduced in all the master programs of both schools and even in Finland as a whole. There is no point in educating students that the country cannot employ after graduation especially as the country is in dire need of foreign labor. Finland will not be able to compete with other countries if we do not seek solutions right now</p>
INTERNSHIPS:	<p>- An obligatory internship as a part of the studies would benefit in many ways; in job searching, in getting work experience in "real life" as well as apply the knowledge taught at school in practice</p>	<p>-Internships are obligatory in Australia at all levels and in every field of study.</p>	<p>- The school can also adopt this measure, so as to give students the possibility to network and gain real-life experiences.</p>
COLLABORATIVE PLATFORM:	<p>-The schools should wider their cooperation also with those companies who are not specialized in service design but perhaps they have a need for this kind of service. This way foreign student could have a contact point to local companies and then easier approaching for temporary/summer or permanent work already during their studies.</p>	<p>-The diversity in types of WIL activity reflects the considerable range of relationships between universities and employers. Institutions are partnering with organizations – both domestically and internationally – in a multitude of ways to ensure that the WIL experiences offered to students are dynamic, meaningful, and opportune.</p>	<p>-A collaborative platform between the universities and companies is of paramount importance for Finland's economy in the future. For example in the 1990s, when Nokia industry was the number in the world, they had this kind of collaboration with schools like Evitech university of applied</p>

			sciences Espoo
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Table 1: Summary of the Main Solutions from the Benchmarking

8 Results and Conclusions

This chapter analyses the main results from the research vis-a-vis with the aim of the thesis and research questions. The results from both the surveys and benchmarking highlighted three main themes. These themes were Finnish language, internship, and a collaborative platform. The resulting themes can also be found in the appendices.

The Finnish language was the theme that had the highest scores in the survey amongst the different respondents. There was a general outcry that there cannot be any genuine labour integration for foreign graduates without them speaking the language. All of the 30 respondents agreed for the incorporation of the Finnish language into the curriculum. They felt that this course should be introduced at the beginning of the first semester, and all foreign students struggling with the language should be giving the possibility to enrol in the course as elective studies.

The courses should be tailored in a way that meets the individual student needs. That is so to say the structure of the courses should be split into beginners, intermediate, and advanced courses. The credit should also vary depending on the level and the number of hours worked which should be equivalent to the normal Novia and Tuusula credit valuation. For example, at the beginner level, the credit can be 2.5, and with studies taking place twice a week for five weeks. This course is basically for new arrivals or foreign students who have been in Finland for some years but have not taken any Finnish lessons.

The second category or intermediate course is tailored for foreign students with some Finnish knowledge who want to develop them. This course as well can be 2.5 credits, taken once a week for seven weeks. The focal group for this course is all those who have validated the beginner course as well as those foreign students who are acquainted with the Finnish language basics. The final piece to the language puzzle is the conclusion with an advanced level course. This course is also a 2.5 credits course and could be arranged once every other week for five weeks. All of the courses from beginners to advance should be online with the inclusion of independent studies. If these suggestions are incorporated into the curriculum and the goal achieved, most foreign students will be better off and ready for the labour markets by the time they graduate from the program.

This theme answered the first three questions of how can for graduates be assisted into getting a job in their field of studies, how doe Finland integrates foreign students into their labour market after graduation, and how can foreign graduates be retain in Finland. As already mentioned above, language is the first step into successful integration of all immigrants in every society. That is why the employment office (TE office) always begin with language training when a new immigrants register with them. It is a vital tool for employers when looking for people to hire. The first assistance a foreign student especially in the master's degree is access to language training. This language training is the springboard and key element to determining the next moves of the student after graduation. A foreign student with the opportunity to find work after graduation in their field of studies will definitely want to stay in country. Language also help break social barriers with the host population which lead also into an increase of social networks. This is a win-win situation during job hunts for the immigrant's graduates and for the society.

The second theme that came up from the survey and benchmarking was internships. All the respondents felt that there is a need for an internship to be included in the program. The reasons for this are twofold. Firstly as a marketing tool for students and an avenue to acquire the needed work experiences in the field. The respondents agreed that since service design is relatively a new discipline, more needs to be done in terms of marketing so as to boast student chances of getting a job easier after graduation. One way of achieving this is to get students to internships where companies can get to know more about service design through their know-how and maybe employ them. The second point raised was that it may give students some experiences to show for at the end of their studies and also some network of companies to rely on after graduation. This theme answered the first and third research questions of how can Finland facilitates foreign graduates transition into the labour market and also how can Finland motivate their foreign graduates to remain into the country. As mentioned earlier, people go to school because they want to acquire knowledge and also to be able to use these knowledge in working life. As the formal students themselves said in the survey, one of the problem they faced with life after graduation is to sensitise employers in regards to the field of service designs. Another aspect is lack of work experiences in the field. These huddles could be limited through a well-structured and coordinated internship plans. This led us to the next theme of a collaborative platform.

The final point from the survey and benchmarking was a collaborative platform that connects the school, students, and real-life partners or companies. The goal here is to create a platform where companies can advertise their placement (internships), and jobs meant for service designers and students. This will open more opportunities for jobs not just for foreign graduates but also for Finnish graduates who also made known their struggle and dissatisfaction in the job

markets for service designers. This is relevant to the fourth research question of employability of the program. At the moment, most of the formal students said they had to create that position of service designer in their company through their service design samples. However, with the collaborative platform and with engagement with other actors this problem could be solve.

9 Discussions

The studies demonstrated that there is an urgent need for foreign students to commence language studies as soon as possible. This will help them engage in their communities, as well as in different projects within their studies at ease. It will also facilitate their chances of getting a job after graduation and also eradicate foreign graduate's exodus as well as talent search from abroad by the Finnish society.

The results also contradict and questions the classification of all foreign workers into the same statistical box. This does not help the situation of foreign graduates, as it does not give a true picture of how many graduates are actually working in their field of studies, or wallowing in unskilled jobs like newspaper vendors, cleaning, just to name a few. For this reason, we commend that all foreign workers be classified, and the true picture of their qualification be made known. This will also help the universities know which study paths to lay more emphasis on.

The studies also highlighted the need for internships and collaborative platforms between employers and the universities. As we are all aware, service design discipline is a new field still to gain its foothold on a lot of society. Hence, almost all the graduates from the program are with little or no experience within the field to show for. This makes it difficult for them to parade the corridors of service designers on their own without a helping platform to introduce them into the labour market. As such, there is an urgent need for a platform where jobs and internships can be marketed for future employees within the field without any experience. This can also be a good platform for networking by the foreign base students, who are not vested with the system and the Finnish communities.

The thesis was however not without its own flaw. At the very beginning of the research, the researcher suffered the very first setback of the commissioner. Over 20 emails were sent out to different personnel in the employment offices within the countries but got back no response. This act of silence was a strength and it did demoralize the researcher. Further, the ongoing corona crises rocking the world did not make it easier for the researcher, as it deprived him of the opportunities for a face to face interviews and workshops. The researcher strongly believed that the results and trajectory of the final outcome of this thesis would have been different if there were face-to-face interviews and workshops with the respondents.

The initial goal of this thesis was to find out ways in which foreign graduates could assist to transition into the Finnish labour market. In this light, the researcher's aim was to use service design methods as a tool, and foreign graduates as the focal group. However, because of the limited number of foreign graduates from the degree program, the researcher together with the commissioners and supervisors resolved in extending the research group to all the degree program graduates since the inception of the program. The results were mind-blowing because they shared new lights into the fact that not only foreign graduates from the program were finding it difficult to land a job in the field after graduation as it was first thought of by this researcher.

In addition to the above new insight, the research fulfilled all its purposes. All the desired service design methods and tools were used in gathering insights from the participants. The findings from the survey were combined with that from the benchmarking and validated the results. The three key themes of language, internships, and collaborative platforms gathered from the above data were further tested in a co-design workshop. The result was the development of a prototype, which will be handed to the commissioners for onwards consideration and integration into their program. This will be used by future students and graduates alike to ease their job hunts and integration process in Finland.

The Double Diamond research tool of discover, define, develop and deliver was put to use. Surveys were used in the infantry face to the thesis to gathered insights. The data from the surveys were analyses and from thence personas were developed. The insights from the surveys also helped identify details of the customer segments, which helps the researching in drawing up the customer journeys. Next was the business canvas model, which gives the researcher an insight of the different activities and services offers by the commissioners. The researcher then used the stakeholder map in identifying the different players in the business. Then the researcher used swot to scan the current situation of the business and what should be done in the future in regards to helping foreign students transition into the labour market. The researcher benchmarked foreign graduates' integration into the Australia labour market. Australia was chosen because they are currently having one of the best system. By and large, the research questions were all answers, and solutions derived through the creation of a prototype.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Sample Questionnaire

MASTER THESIS IN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE DESIGN RESEARCH SURVEY: SUPERVISORY INSTITUTIONS: NOVIA AND TUAS

This questionnaire is part of my final academic work. The aim is to design a working tool that will assist in foreign graduates' integration or transition into the Finnish job market. The outcome will be analyzed and shared with the school authorities who are the commissioners for the project. The results will also be published in the Theseus database for thesis and publications from Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences. By answering this survey, you agree to the terms, ethics, and confidentiality associated with scientific research. In addition, the survey complies with the GDPR and good principles of research. For any questions and/ or clarification, the researcher can be reached via eawahnde@gmail.com

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

Other:

2. Age

20-35 years

36-45 years

46-55

Over 55

3. Education

Bachelor

Master

Other:

4. Why did you move to Finland?

Studies

Family ties

Other:

5. How did you find out about the master degree program?

Friend

School website

Relative

Other:

6. On a scale from 1-5, how would you assess your Finnish language skills?

1. Do not speak nor understand any Finnish 2. Basic 3. Satisfactory

1

2

3

4

5

4. Good 5 Fluent

INTEGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

1. Are you currently employed?

Yes

No

2. Where you working before you started the program at Novia/Tuas?

Yes

No

Other:

3. If your answers to question two above is yes, are you still working in the same place?

Yes

No

4. If you are still working in the same place, where you able to get new responsibilities equivalent to your education during your studies or after graduation?

Yes

No

Other:

5. Did you apply for new positions elsewhere?

Yes

No

6. If your answers to question 5 above is yes, did you get it?

Yes

No

7. Is the job in your area/ field of master's studies?

Yes

No

Other:

8. Which channels did you use to find a job?

Unemployment Office

Friend /Relative

Other:

9. How long did it take you to get a job after graduation?

Your answer

10. Describe your experiences with job searching!

Your answer

11. In your opinion, what can the school do to make it easier for foreign graduates to integrate successfully into the job market?

Your answer

12. Any other comments or advice in regards to foreign graduates integration that you will like to share with the researcher?

Your answer

Thank you for helping out!

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Forms

Appendix 2:

Event RSVP

Event Address: ONLINE VIA GOOGLE MEET/JAM BOARD

Contact us at eawahnde@gmail.com

Dear Alumni,

It's Eugene here, the fellow from Novia/Turku university of applied sciences writing a research thesis on the topic" using service design tools and methods in assisting immigrants graduates transition into the Finnish labor market".

Let me commence by thanking you all for the great responses to my survey last winter. Your feedback's were greatly appreciated by the commissioner's and my humble self. We are now at the final phase of this project (co-creation/co-design) and we will be needing your assistance once again to rapped it up. We are organizing a 2 hours co-creation workshop to put the main findings from your survey feedback together before submitting the final work to the commissioner's. The goal here is to use the feedback's in designing a support tool or recommendation that will assist students and the school in the future. The workshop will be held completely online, and we will appreciate your participation. The workshop is slated for Monday 05.04.2021, @ 16:00-18:00. The link for the workshop will be communicated to all those who have signal their willingness to participate in the workshop. Please indicate that by affixing your email address in the bottom of the form.

Once again thank you for your support!

Eugene

** Required*

Can you attend? *

Yes, I'll be there

Sorry, can't make it

Comments and/or questions

Your answer

.

Submit

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Forms

Appendix 3:

SERVICE DESIGN

SD20 & YSERVIS20

SCHEDULE 2021 - 2022

	Week	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	
August 2021	34	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	 Master's Thesis seminars
	35	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	
September 2021	36	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	 Service Design and Future Challenges, 5 ECTS
	37	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
	38	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	39	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	
October 2021	40	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	 Strategic Service Design Approach 5 ECTS
	41	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
	42	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
	43	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
November 2021	44	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	 Elective studies: Graphic Design 5 ECTS
	45	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	46	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
	47	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
December 2021	48	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	 Elective studies: Management Accounting, 5 ECTS
	49	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	50	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
	51	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
January 2022	52	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	 Master's Thesis Seminars
	1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	2	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
	3	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
	4	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
February 2022	5	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Thesis workshop
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
	7	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	8	21	22	23	24	25	16	27	
March 2022	9	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Elective course, UX Design, 5 ECTS * start by an information session online
	10	7	8	9	10*	11	12	13	
	11	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	12	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
April 2022	13	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	 Elective course, UX Design, 5 ECTS * start by an information session online
	14	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	15	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
	16	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
May 2022	17	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	 Master's Thesis Seminars
	18	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	19	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	20	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	21	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
	22	30	31						