



Factors influencing foreign students' choice of studying in Finland

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Abstract

With the globalization and internationalization of higher education, the flow of global students has become frequently, people's demand for higher education has increased, and the importance of the education industry has also enhanced. Nowadays, Finland is recognized as one of the countries with the most complete education system in the world and has attracted many foreign students to study in Finland.

The objective of the research is to understand what factors influence foreign students to choose college in Finland. In-depth research can not only design strategies for attracting foreign students for Finnish higher education institutions, but also provide foreign students with factors to consider when choosing a college as a reference.

Based on Hossler et al.'s (1999) combined model as the theoretical framework, qualitative research methods are used. In the research process, the author organized the semi-structured interviews with four international students who are studying at JAMK University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) to obtain the primary data. In addition, the author uses some existing data collected early by the survey agency or organization as secondary data. And then the author uses the coding method to analyze the primary data and through the data triangulation method, combined with secondary data for in-depth analysis.

The research results of this thesis are helpful to analyze the factors that influence foreign students to choose Finnish higher education and can also provide reference for the recruitment of international students in Finnish higher education institutions and guide foreign students to make the right choice of college.

Keywords/tags (subjects)

International student destination choice, internationalization of education, Finnish higher education, Higher education

Miscellaneous (Confidential information)

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Nowadays, the internationalization of Finnish higher education has shown a highly development trend, and it has become an important strategy for Finland to improve its comprehensive national strength and expand its international influence. Countries have reached a general agreement on the importance of international cooperation and the internationalization of higher education. And the number of foreign students enrolled in Finland is increasing. Every year, the number of applications from the Finnish University is gradually increasing. Therefore, the objective of this thesis is to understand what factors attract foreign students to choose to come to Finland for higher education.

The development of internationalization now has an impact on Finnish higher education. Education in Finland is always changing. Considering the structure of everything about the school, they redesigned it to adapt to the international degree structure. It also improves the communication and foreign language skills among teachers, students, and researchers. (Nokkala, 2007, p.26) With the globalization of education, Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences also would like to receive more international students to increase revenue. Now Finland is increasingly becoming a popular country for foreign students to choose higher education institutions to study abroad.

1.2 Motivation for the research

Nowadays, studying abroad has become a hot topic. Many parents choose to let their children study abroad to increase their experience and enhance their value. Study abroad programs. From the beginning, it aims to provide students with many benefits, including having a global perspective, critical thinking ability, knowing how to use new information to analyze and solve flexibly, innovation and understanding of cultural differences. (Norris & Gillespie, 2008). But on the way to study abroad, many people have been confused and hesitated about where to study abroad. Because choosing a different country means that the education method and environment received will be different, which will have different effects on students. Therefore, knowing how to attract international students is becoming more and more important. According to the definition of Maz-

zarol and Soutar (2002), “push” factors are defined as the factors that prosper in the education industry in the country and prompt students to decide on cross-cultural learning, and “pull” factors refer factors that motivate domestic students to seek study abroad destinations. The study believes that international students tend to choose a country first, and then a school within that country (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). With the globalization of education, Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences also would like to receive more international students to increase revenue. Now Finland is increasingly becoming a popular destination for foreign students looking for higher education institutions to study abroad (Kunwar,2017). Under this development trend, people need to understand what makes Finland become a popular country for foreign students to choose to get a higher education. This also requires further research in the field of education.

1.3 Research approach and problem

The purpose of this study is to understand what factors have attracted foreign students to study in Finland under the influence of the epidemic. Through the semi-structured interviews with four international students who studying at JAMK University of Applied Sciences to obtain the data. The data is summarized through a theoretical framework and uses the coding method to analyze this data. in addition, through the data triangulation method, combined with secondary data to in-depth analysis, in order to make readers understand more clearly.

The research question is:

“How to attract foreign students to get a higher education in Finland after covid-19?”

In order to answer this research question, first of all, it is a need to consider the expectations of foreign students receiving higher education in Finland. This may be related to the factors that make students choose a university (for example, economics, sociology, or personal behavior, etc.).

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 describes the main motivation of the thesis and emphasizes the research purpose and purpose. Chapter 2 includes a description of the research theoretical framework. It mainly involves internationalized higher education and the impact of the current pandemic on students' choice of country to study abroad. The theoretical framework tells that students' choice of university is determined by many different factors. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of this thesis. It also contains an explanation of the process of designing and organizing interviews that collected data through interviews with foreign students studying in Finnish universities and interviews with JAMK experts. Chapter 4 introduces the results of the interview. It contains descriptions of interviews to show the reasons that affect foreign students' choice of higher education in Finland, and to evaluate the different factors. Chapter 5 discusses about finally summarizes the main findings, the self-evaluation of the research based on terminology or reliability and validity, the limitations of the research, and the final recommendations for further research.

2 Literature review

2.1 Internationalization of higher education

The wave of education internationalization is quietly rising around the world. It is not only an educational ideal, but also an educational practice that is being carried out on a global scale. The internationalization of higher education has different definitions of perspectives, depending on the stakeholder groups, such as the government, private companies, educational institutions, teachers, disciplines, and students. These different viewpoints have led to many solutions and solutions for the internationalization of higher education (Trilokekar & Jones, 2007). In addition, the phenomenon of domestic supply and demand imbalance makes students choose to study abroad (Chadee & Naidoo, 2009). For example, students who are unable to meet the requirements of their home country's university due to their academic performance or who are unable to study certain courses choose to study abroad.

Knight (2012) described the internationalization of higher education as a process that integrates internationalization/interculturalism and various tasks of higher education, which is sustainable. Moreover, she pointed out that the internationalization of higher education consists of two parts.

One part is local internationalization-activities carried out can help students gain international understanding and cross-cultural skills. Among them, many activities are curriculum-oriented, aiming to immerse students in a globalized world. Activities at the local level include international courses, conducting cultural comparative research projects, collaborating with local people, and promoting connections between domestic and foreign students. (Knight, 2012) The other part is overseas internationalization, including the flow of students and scholars, the exchange of projects and service providers. (Knight, 2012) These two parts are not mutually exclusive but are mixed in various policies and projects. (De Wit, 2011) Since this definition was proposed in the early 1990s, the internationalization of higher education has continued to evolve. When talking about internationalization, many documents, policy documents and books mention internationalization, but do not define the reason. (De Wit, 2011) The literature (De Wit, 2002) points out that political, economic, social, cultural, and academic principles are not mutually exclusive, their importance may vary from country to country and region, and their dominant position may change over time change. The links between theories are getting closer and closer with the rapid changes around the world.

2.2 Impact of covid-19 on higher education

In the 21st century, by the end of 2019, some medical institutions in Wuhan have successively appeared patients with unexplained pneumonia. These patients were all diagnosed with viral pneumonia infection. The spread of this epidemic has caused many deaths. This new virus is also called COVID-19 (Shereen et al., 2020). Since then, the new coronavirus has become a global pandemic. As COVID-19 has caused great impact on the normal operation of the global supply chain, the global operating conditions have undergone tremendous changes within one month. The consequences of the economic impact are beyond the control of many industries in the world. In addition, in terms of education, nearly 120 countries/regions have stopped face-to-face teaching. Approximately 1 billion students worldwide are affected by the pandemic and cannot go back to school to receive education. As a result, most higher education systems are operated through distance learning (Azzi-Huck & Shmis 2020; Shahzad et al., 2020).

The pandemic has exacerbated the education gap, and most countries/regions in the world have implemented measures to close educational institutions. Among them, the country closed resulting in the world's nearly 70 percent of learners affected by the disruption of education.

In addition, over 100 million children's reading ability was seriously affected. UNESCO is working hard to support countries to reduce the impact of education interruption, giving priority to restoring education and using online networks for teaching to reduce student learning losses. (100 million more children fail basic reading skills because of COVID-19, 2021)

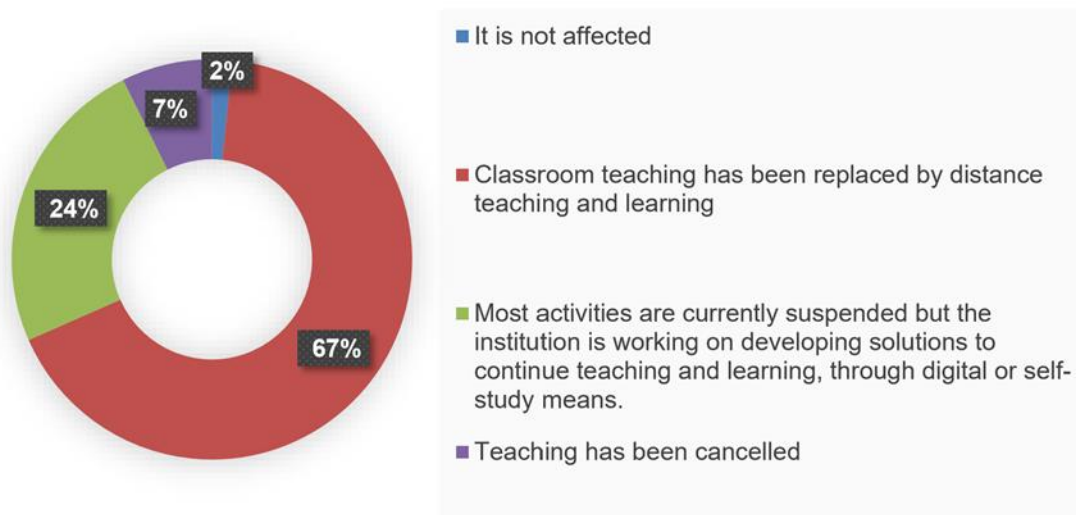


Figure 1: How has COVID-19 affected teaching and learning? (Marinoni et al., 2020, p.23)

According to a survey by Marinoni et al (2019), almost all higher education institutions will be affected by COVID-19. Among them, HEL, whose classroom teaching has been replaced by distance teaching, accounts for 67%. Followed by HEL who suspended most of their activities but self-taught by other means accounted for 24%. The remaining 7% of HEL said teaching has been cancelled and 2% said it was not affected. (Marinoni et al., 2020)

The pandemic has caused schools around the world to close their campuses, allowing students to be separated and protected, and making the pandemic's hazards more controllable (Toquero, 2020). However, the transition from education in the traditional campus environment to remote virtual learning cannot allow people to adapt quickly, and this sharp change also confronts various barriers and challenges. For example, the teaching tools used online are single and cannot be as lively and interesting as classroom education (Crawford et al., 2020). However, due to the long-term impact of this epidemic, most educational institutions have decided to use advanced Internet technology to provide online learning materials for students in all academic fields (Kaur, 2020),

through PC Internet or mobile Internet technology, Recording and broadcasting or live broadcasting, etc., to provide a platform for distance teaching. The education industry uses online live-stream classes to teach, such as digital video conferencing platforms (such as Zoom), Microsoft platforms, and Google Classroom. Therefore, new technologies can be effectively used to transform traditional education to cope with future changes.

However, distance learning is still full of challenges. To quickly adapt to online teaching, schools must have a relatively mature and tested standardized teaching system. This has forced academic experts to reconsider traditional face-to-face teaching. They began to view distance learning as a viable way to fill the previous teaching vacancies, thereby reducing the number of students active daily and the risk of resuming infection. (Kaur, 2020). For teachers, distance learning is just a tool for dissemination of knowledge, in which the important thing is how to play effective help. Clark (1993) found in a survey that, the attitude towards distance learning is moderately positive, while the attitude towards oneself using distance education is moderately negative. When Guber (1998) wrote about geography educators, he worried that if they rely too much on distance learning technology, the subject “may lose our collective soul while eager to gain convenience, cost-effectiveness, and accountability.” (P.130). Teachers worry that under the online education model, students unable effectively study independently. Online teaching is through network equipment to complete the communication, which invisibly reduces direct contact with other people. This undoubtedly lacks the practical experience of students. For example, some experiments require hands-on experience, but students cannot get in touch and inefficient to learn this knowledge. (Healy, 2014)

In addition, not all students can adapt to this way of learning. Online learning makes students are unable to learn more systematically and comprehensively. If the knowledge learned lacks theoretical guidance and practical skills, the courses of study will be severely affected or even scattered. The attention in it. For students who are easily affected by external factors, online learning may cause students to become addicted to the Internet, which is more different from classroom learning (Threkeld & Brzoska, 1994). Hardy and Boaz (1997) found that “compared to most face-to-face learning environments, distance learning requires students to be more focused, better time man-

agers, and to be able to work independently and with group members” (p.43). Therefore, in distance education, traditional education methods should not be completely abandoned, and face-to-face communication with students should be timely as needed.

2.3 Factors to influencing choice of higher education institutes

Most contemporary models of college choice utilize elements like the three-stage model developed by Hossler and Gallagher (1987). The three-stage model include: econometric, sociological, and combined. (Hossler & Gallagher ,1987).

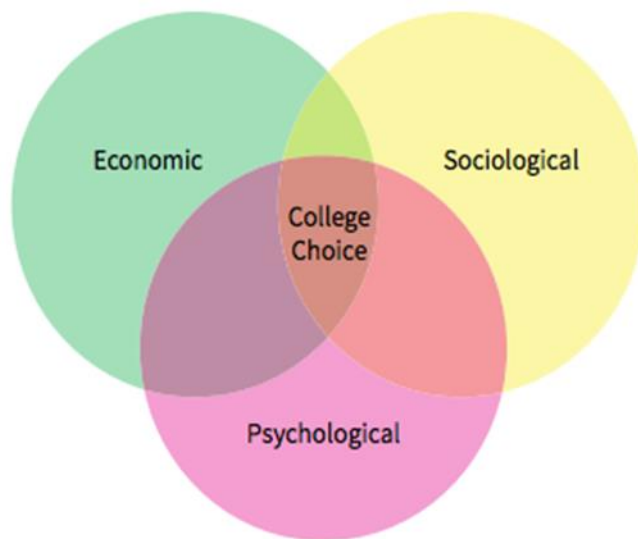


Figure 2: Traditional college choice model (Robertson, 2013)

Economic Approach

Economists describe university choice as investment in education funding and technical training. The individual investment in additional education is measured by whether the expected permanent return is greater than the expected costs (Becker, 1993; Paulsen, 2001). Human capital theory assumes that individuals can obtain many benefits from investment in higher education when calculating the total expected return of higher education. For example, a good job with a high degree of education leads to an increase in income, a planned and fulfilling work environment, better health, longer life, smarter purchases, higher social status, and lower unemployment. (Baum &

Payea, 2004; Perna, 2006) Compare with expected cost. The direct costs of investing in university education include tuition, accommodation, books, and other expenses; alternative education or university prices; personal financial assistance; income lost by choosing to go to school and give up work, etc. (Becker, 1993; Leslie & Brinkman, 1988). However, these comparisons unable to fully explain the observed differences in university choice. Paulsen (2001) notes that different students have different understandings of the economic benefits and costs of higher education, including differences in obtaining information at the university or differences in families, schools, or communities. Some non-monetary investments, such as being confused about the future, facing huge employment pressure and competitive pressure, etc. (DeSJardins & Toutkoushian, 2005; Paulsen, 2001).

Sociological Approach

Sociological methods and economic methods share some factors, observe, and explain economic phenomena and economic systems from a sociological perspective. The sociological approach chosen by universities usually emphasizes the main factors that influence the economic activities of students (Terenzini, Cabrera, and Bernal, 2001), focusing on the impact of students' socioeconomic status (SES) on their education and career expectations, for example, socioeconomic status, family income, parental education, and professional status (Hossler et al., 1999). Among them, the impact of social and cultural capital includes the family's cultural environment, the family's expenditure on children's education, the level of education received by parents, and the impact of these social interactions on students. In addition, in the later stage of college choice (such as whether and where enrollment registration) emphasized that students are often more focused on the relatively early stages and methods to assess the value of the benefit by the full cost of college at the university during the selection. (McDonough, 1997; Terenzini et al., 2001).

Psychological Approach

To describe the aspirations of the university more accurately, it is also necessary to measure the evidence of students' behavioral intentions In the combined model of university choice, multiple

decision-making stages are involved. For instance, Don Hossler and Karen Gallagher (1987) proposed a three-stage model that comprises predisposition, search, and choice.

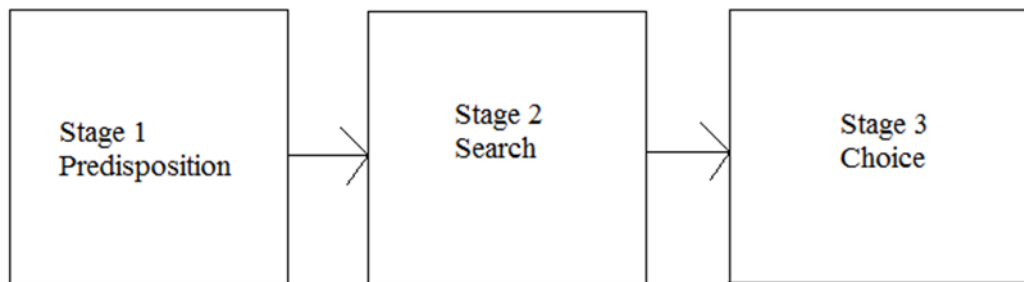


Figure 3: Model of college choice. (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987, p. 210)

Students will be affected by many potential factors in the college choice process. According to this model, in the first stage, most students will first choose according to their personal grades, preferred majors and schools, and develop objective behaviors to receive education. Then, students search for relevant school information on the search engine through some of the characteristics of the ideal university. Finally, students choose and register among the selected universities. This is the simplest model has been widely accepted in the study later in the university. (DesJardins et al., 2006; Perna, 2006).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Whether it is evaluating quantitative research or qualitative research, theoretical frameworks should be used to guide the research process. To understand students' choice of higher education institutions, Hossler et al.'s (1999) combined model has been regarded as the theoretical framework of the study. The relevance of this choice lies in the investigation of how students choose higher education institutions based on the influence of various factors.

Combined Models of College Choice

Economic methods or sociological methods alone are not enough to understand the differences between groups of students in college choices. Manski (1993) believes that due to the inability to fully study the nature of the use of decision-makers' information, economic methods can be used

to provide a decision-making framework for research to better understand. On the other hand, sociological methods only reveal the methods of collecting information, but do not explain how individuals make decisions according to this information (Manski, 1993). Therefore, the combination model proposed by Hossler et al. (1999) is divided into three scopes, including econometric variables, sociological variables, and the plus variables. These models use social or non-economic factors (including the characteristics of students) to describe the university selection process and use economic factors to describe decision-making (Hossler & Bean, 1990). In addition, through the interaction between sociological factors and students' decision-making, these models can provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the university selection process. (Hossler et al., 1999)

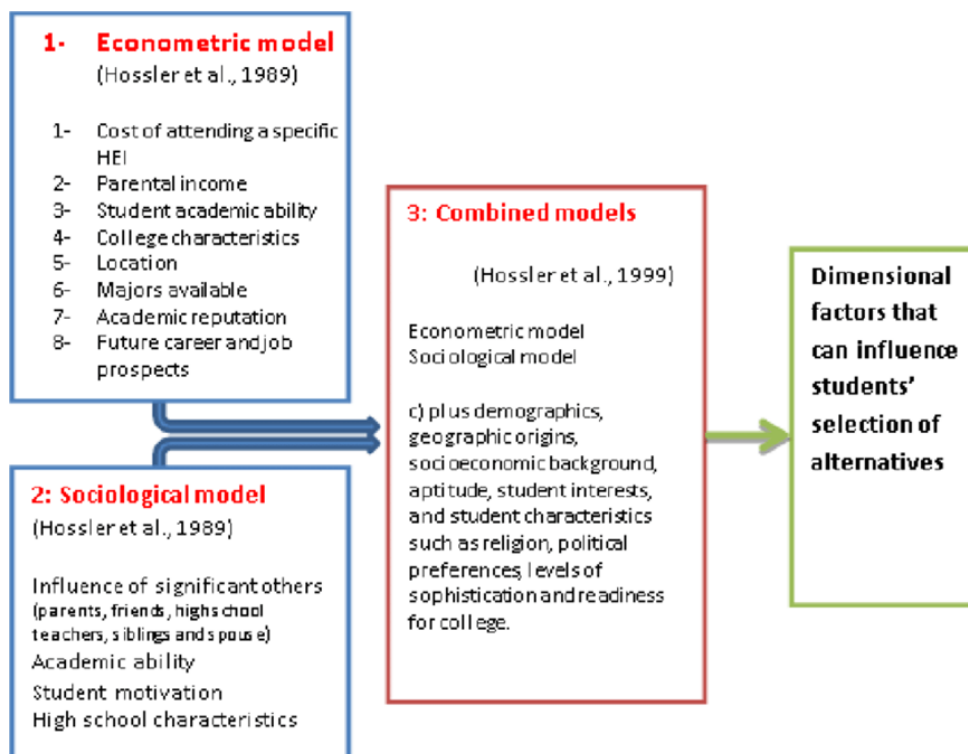


Figure 4: Hossler et al.'s (1999) combined model

The proposed conceptual model assumes that the individual's university choice is determined by four levels: personal habits; school and community background; higher education background; and broader social, economic and policy environment. Through these four aspects, a conceptual model

of the differences between students' consideration of university choices is proposed (McDonough,

<i>Model Dimensions</i>	<i>Influential Factors</i>		<i>Student Outcomes</i>
	<i>Individual Factors</i>	<i>Organisational Factors</i>	
Predisposition (Phase 1)	Student Characteristics Significant Others Educational Activities	School Characteristics	Search for : College option Other options
Search (Phase 2)	Student Preliminary College Values Student Search Activities	College & Univ. Search Activities (Search for Students)	Choice set Other options
Choice (Phase 3)	Choice Set	College & Courtship Activities	Choice

Table 1: A Model of College Choice Developed. (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987)

In the predisposition stage, students will clarify their willingness to receive education. Adelman (1999) believes that "aspirations" refers to people's expectations of treating things excluding external factors, while "plans" reflects people's assessment of future behavior and plans to reach goals. Although there are some conceptual differences, researchers tend to interchange label expectations, expectations, and plans. In addition, the comments of Hossler, Braxton, and Cooper-smith (1989) also emphasized key variables related to college attendance, including students' ambitions, academic achievements, and the important support and encouragement that students receive from parents, school counselors and teachers.

The second stage, referred to as search, focuses on a student's ability to gain information characterizing the type of institution he or she may want to attend. At this stage the provision of information by the school is essential as students seek to gain knowledge of methods for evaluating college options (Hossler et al., 1989). Information related to university admission is an important factor in the university's selection process (McDonough 1997; Terenzini, Cabrera, and Bernal 2001). In the third stage, (called choice), the third stage of the university selection process is still the most frequently checked part of the process. Some researchers use a dichotomy to measure the results of the third stage (Perna, 2000). Students decide which school they will ultimately attend by narrowing their choice of schools.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research approach

The nature of my research is qualitative. Qualitative research allows in-depth and comprehensive understand of the context of events and topics. As noted by Shuttleworth (2008) qualitative research design is a method used extensively by scientists and researchers studying human behavior, opinions, themes, and motivation. Denzin et al. (2005, p.3) also wrote that “Qualitative research is a field of inquiry. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matters. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions surround the term qualitative research.”

The core of the qualitative researchers’ work is to extract the meaning from a large amount of data, and its meaning is related to people's situation, experience, and occurrence (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, p. 4). Similarly, Holloway & Galvin (2016) described that qualitative research can be defined as a scientific inquiry activity carried out on the society, which focuses on how people understand their own experiences and life world. The purpose is to in-depth study of people's views through discovering problems, understanding event phenomena, analyzing human behavior and viewpoints, and answering questions. However, unlike quantitative research methods that use mathematical statistics and probability theory, qualitative research does not convert language symbols into digital data, but researchers use non-quantitative methods to analyze them. (Holloway & Galvin, 2016). Because qualitative research has provided me with a unique depth of understanding, interviewees can disclose their experiences, thoughts, and feelings without restriction. I can engage in valuable conversations around topics to get answers from interviewees, and structured surveys cannot do this. Therefore, I choose qualitative research of my thesis.

3.2 Research context

Higher education in Finland

In recent years, the Finnish education system has gained worldwide recognition. Finland has invested a lot of resources in training its population throughout its life, whether in elementary schools or universities, and the results show that things are doing well. (OECD, 2019) The Finnish

higher education system is mainly composed of universities and universities of applied sciences. There are 13 universities and 22 universities of applied sciences. (Higher Education Institutions and Scientific Agencies, 2021) In addition, Tirronen and Nokkala (2009) argued that the roles of economic development, innovation and competitiveness of a country also rest on the education provided by the universities. Moreover, these roles are indispensable in any country, whether developed, developing or underdeveloped. Now Finland has implemented a set of education policies related to the legislative system, aimed at reforming, and modernizing the education system. Since the beginning of the 21st century, Finland has entered the path of internationalization and development in all fields. The main changes in the structure are better cooperation with local and foreign institutions, joint research and projects, and exchange plans. (Tirronen & Nokkala, 2009)

The joint project between Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences is called "Digivision 2030", which aims to meet the challenges of the current and future world, integrate digital teaching into higher education, and bring greater learning flexibility to all learners. Additionally, the minister of science and culture Annika Saarikko said that: "Digivision 2030 brings higher education closer to every Finn and strengthens cooperation between higher education institutions. New ways of organizing educational programmes and studying also attract international interest and promote the admission of international students to Finland." (Digivision 2030 project implementation in higher education institutions launched, 2021)

3.3 Data collection

Based on my research question, I need to understand the reasons why international students choose to pursue higher education in Finland. This thesis has adopted interview as qualitative research technique. I combined the theoretical framework of this thesis to design the interview questions, and then communicated with the interviewees in English, I will gather the primary data through interviews. (because in the epidemic period, so the interviews through apps such as zoom or Teams), and the interviewer and the interviewee still maintain face-to-face contact. I got the permission of JAMK University of Applied Sciences to collect data by interviewing four international students at this school.

In the process of statistical analysis, data is the most basic and critical information resource. In the study, there are various methods to collect information, all the methods are divided into two categories, i.e., primary data and secondary data (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Primary data is collected by the researcher specifically for his research, which means that this type of data collected directly from the data without using existing data collected by other researchers. Therefore, the original data is usually reliable, true, and objective. Primary data sources include surveys, observations, experiments, questionnaire, interview etc. (Saunders et al., 2009.)

Secondary data refers to existing data that has been collected by investigating agencies and organizations earlier. It can be used for qualitative and quantitative research types, because even if it is not written for the same research field or research question, it may become some secondary data set. Usually collect secondary data first to understand the research content and plan the primary data collection. (Saunders et al., 2009.) The strong points of using secondary data are saves time and money. It could offer comparative and contextual material and may lead the result in unpredicted discoveries. (Saunders et al., 2009, pp.268-269.)

In qualitative methods, the collected data is usually saved in text format (such as interview records, documents, video clips, etc.). In quantitative methods, the data is displayed in a digitally coded format (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015). Patton (2002, p. 348) described that "the purpose of qualitative interviewing is to capture how those being interviewed view their world, to learn their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experience". Additionally, interviews provide many advantages as a data collection method. First, the interview allows the participant to use his or her own words to describe the experience. Second, researchers can obtain specific insights by asking exploratory questions and gain more insights from follow-up questions. Third, interviews may be less expensive than other collection methods. Fourth, a large amount of data can be obtained through this format. (Hays & Singh, 2011) Qualitative research tries to solve the problem of "why", and the reasons and specific characteristics or behaviors that led to the decision of participants. (Curry et al., 2009; Yin, 2015)

Interviews are a useful method of data collection the data is obtained through written records or observations, and the data in the records can be protected by the researcher. (Kvale, 1996). Similarly, interviews may reveal success stories that can be used in communicating the results of the

assessment. Participants may not want to list their results in the questionnaire, but they will voluntarily provide the information to skilled interviewers, who will ask the right questions and explore more information. Research interviews are divided into three basic types: structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

Structured interviews have a planned list of questions, and interviewer strictly follows the questions in their order and expects the interviewee to give straightforward answers to his questions. Unstructured interviews have no defined structure and normally questions are not planned. It has a free form and interviewee expresses his opinion about the topic. Semi-structured interviews have planned questions in advance, but interviewer does not have to follow them strictly. Thus, some deviations from the questions are allowed during the interview. (Qu & Dumay, 2011)

Semi-structured interviews can take flexible questions or highly structured questions. These questions help to explore the reasons for their occurrence and allow the interviewee to have their own unique definition of things. (Britten, 2006). Semi-structured interviews have planned questions in advance, but interviewer does not have to follow them strictly. With the development of spontaneous questions and answers, this method allows greater flexibility between the visitor and the interviewee to communicate during the visit. For this thesis, I first use the existing data collected by some survey institutions and organizations as secondary data, and then decided to use a semi-structured interview type to collect the main data. The reason is that it has both structure and flexibility, which can help me plan the interview in advance. Flexibility will allow interviewees to express their opinions freely and will not be stressed. In this situation, I interviewed four international students at JAMK University of Applied Sciences. All four students chose to remain anonymous (They are called interviewee 1, interviewee 2, interviewee 3, and interviewee 4 in thesis). One Chinese student (interviewee 3) just willing to reveal his nationality. Interview time of Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 both were about 11 minutes; Interviewee 3's interview time was about 19 minutes, while Interviewee 4 spent 24 minutes. Furthermore, Interview questions can be found in the appendix. Appendix 1 includes questions from interviews with international students.

3.4 Data analysis

Qualitative research mainly text-based unstructured data. The first step in data analysis is to regularly listen to the recorded interviews and record them verbatim. In addition, the choice of transcription data can be to select research-related information or write down every word spoken by the respondent. (Lee & Fielding, 2004) When people decide to shorten the interview time to avoid copying and analyzing large amounts of data, this is not to show a certain degree of laziness in the research, but to limit the use of useful data. Each respondent's transcription interview ranged from 1-2 pages, and all interview transcripts produced a total of 7 pages. The complete data was verified by contacting some interviewees to confirm or further clarify some unclear answers. This is an important aspect in unstructured interviews. It is a standard to ensure the accuracy of the collected data (Kumar, 2011).

Data analysis is part of qualitative research, which includes the process of transcribing interviews, browsing data, printing relevant records, or sorting and sorting data into different types based on information sources. Researchers have accumulated this information to enhance the understanding of the phenomenon. (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997), different from quantitative research methods, quantitative method analysis is the process of performing statistics in certain indicators and interpreting and analyzing relevant data. Qualitative research focuses on the value, meaning, attitude and understanding, affection, creativity, and feelings of life of the investigated phenomenon. (Basit, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010)

The most widely applied classification scheme in qualitative data analysis is coding. In the coding, each segment of the transcription data is briefly described. Through this description, the different definitions of each group can be distinguished intuitively, and then they can be checked and compared in the category. In addition, Bogdan and Biklen (1997) describe that coding categories as "a method of sorting the descriptive data that has been collected so that material related to a given topic can be physically separated from other data" (p.161).

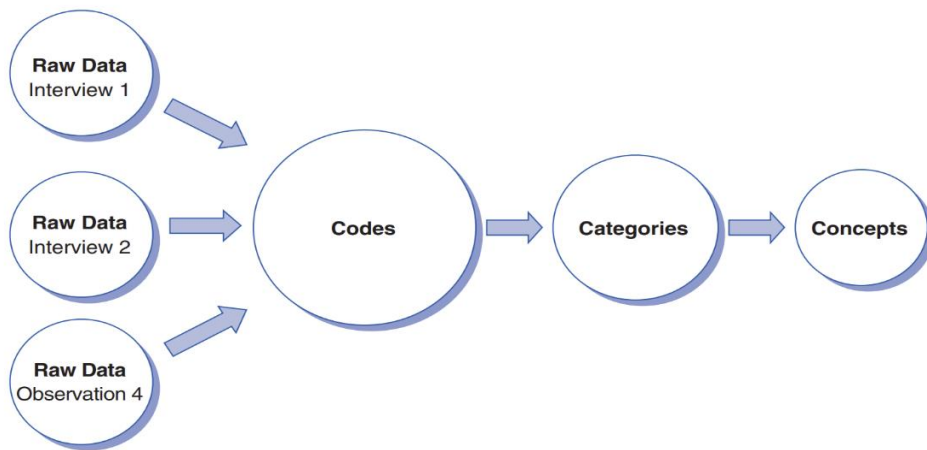


Figure 5: Three Cs of Data Analysis: Codes, Categories, Concepts (Lichtman, 2012)

Considering the analysis of the original data, I will first be transcribed it from the interview into a Word document and labeled it according to the interviewee's number (for example, Interviewee 1). So as not to be confused with the data, the transcript has been studied and the relevant data is highlighted. The relevance of the data is defined by codes (see Table 2), which represent each indicator of the theoretical framework in the same way as the interview questions. I will be coding and classify the clustering and classification schemes of qualitative data. And link categories and concepts to form a theory (Maxwell & Miller, 2008) to simplify the complete data for analysis. The reduction of data only means that the use value of evidence should be prioritized based on rationalized explanations (see Table 3). It should be noted that not all information obtained may be relevant to research. Therefore, be careful when selecting useful research information. Simplify the process also considers the respondents restructuring of certain sentences, to more clearly understand and to read, while maintaining the original meaning of such a sentence. (Lindlof & Taylor, 2013)

Code	The explanation from theoretical framework
E1	Economic factor, Tuition fee and scholarships environment
E2	Economic factor, Student academic ability
E3	Economic factor, Government support
E4	Economic factor, Parental income
E5	Economic factor, Location
E6	Economic factor, College characteristics
E7	Economic factor, Academic reputation
E8	Economic factor, Majors available
E9	Economic factor, Future career and job prospects
S1	Sociological factor, Security Issue
S2	Sociological factor, Influence of others
S3	Sociological factor, Student motivation

Table 2: List of codes for data analysis.

Code (main category)	Code (sub-category)	Text from data sheet	Location of text	Analysis/comment
E	Tuition fee and scholarships environment	Affordable tuition and th	Interview 2 page 2	Tuition fee is one of t
E	Student academic ability	to be honest, I not sure	Interview 4 page 4	This code is importar
E	Government support	Finnish governments re	Interview 3 page 4	This information is nc
E	Parental income	The excessive cost from	Interview 2 page 2	This information is nc
E	Location	Jyväskylä, as it be called	Interview 2 page 2	4 interviewers all mei
E	Academic reputation	education system here is	Interview 2 page 3	Academic reputation
E	Majors available	I can learn a lot in the co	Interview 3 page 4	This information is nc
E	Future career and job prospects	I think you have a good	Interview 4 page 7	Job prospects are no
E	College characteristics	Jamk is beautiful, most i	Interview 3 page 3	The college's charact
S	Security Issue	This country must be saf	Interview 3 page 3	This information is ir
S	Influence of others	The influence of family a	Interview 3 page 3	Three interviewers w
S	Student motivation	I want to get internation	Interview 4 page 5	Student motivation is

Table 3: Sample of Data Analysis.

3.5 Verification of the results

Reliability

All forms of answers to the same question are equal, which can provide a useful reliability check. The questioning process of using the questions needed by the investigator for their in-depth exploration can avoid getting answers that other researchers have already collected, because the in-

quirer needs to follow the content direction of the investigator's investigation to expand the answer to the question. If only one interview is conducted with the interviewee, the same and alternative questions in the interview can be used to test the reliability of the interviewee. (Kvale, 1994) In addition, the similarity of observations in the same period is called synchronization reliability. When synchronization reliability fails to produce similar results, it is most useful for qualitative researchers, because the ambiguity of synchronization reliability forces researchers to explain the truthfulness of the existence of multiple but different observations. (Kirk & Miller, 1986) When conducting qualitative research, I will use the same questions to interview different interviewers to maintain internal consistency, and each interviewee only accepts one interview. and I will use the data triangulation method to analyze the results. By combining a plurality of materials data, to make up for deficiencies incomplete data collection, thereby improving the reliability and validity of the results. (Creswell, 2014)

Validity

In qualitative research, its effectiveness is more important, but there are three negative factors in the effectiveness of qualitative research, namely the researcher's subjective bias, responsiveness, and the interviewee's one-sided or even wrong views. (Lincoln & Guba, 1994) There are several techniques that could be used to check the validity of the research. Most common are data triangulation, it is the use of various data sources in the research, including time, space, and people. Confirmed by findings, and some data can be used to make up for the deficiencies in the other data, thereby improving the validity and reliability of the results. (Creswell, 2014) I will record the authenticity of the interview throughout the interview. When translating the recording, the interviewee's answers will be analyzed using the coding method. Without changing its original meaning, sort out clearer data for readers to read and understand. In addition, I will use secondary data for analysis to increase the validity of the research.

4 Results

This chapter introduces the results obtained from the analysis of primary data and secondary data. Through the combined model to analyze the factors of foreign students choosing Finnish colleges, there are a total of 12 factors indicators in the theoretical framework. This chapter uses relevant

indicators to form the research results, and it will be introduced in Discussion chapter. This chapter is written based on the interviews with four international students at JAMK University of Applied Sciences (Interviewee1,2,3,4) and some information from the website (secondary resources).

4.1 Economic factors

Tuition fee and scholarships environment

The tuition fees of Finnish universities only need to be paid by international students, that is, students from countries outside the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland. The annual tuition fee depends on what level of higher education the student is attending, and the course chosen, and its cost ranges from 4,000 euros to 18,000 euros. However, not all international students need to pay tuition fees, such as exchange students from other countries, but this does not rule out that they may need to pay fees to their country of origin. International students can apply for scholarships to study in Finland, and every university in Finland offers a series of scholarships for international students, which can be subsidized to a certain extent for living expenses. These are mainly based on academic merit, and each degree program usually has a certain quota. Some scholarships can be exempted from all fees, while other scholarships may be deducted from the tuition fee (Study.eu Team, 2017). For example, the official website of JAMK University of Applied Sciences states that if students earn at least 60 credits for a bachelor's degree per academic year (30 credits per semester), the scholarship will pay 50% of the tuition; The official website of University of Tampere states that tuition scholarships amount to 50% or 100% of the tuition fees for a two-year master's degree program.

For four interviewees, the tuition fee and scholarships environment are necessary considerations for them. Because this fee is related to the financial situation of the family, and always has an impact on the decision to study abroad. And they all think that Finland's tuition fees are cheaper compared to other countries. Interviewee 2 pointed out that affordable tuition and scholarship opportunities would be the best choice for him to choose a school. Interviewee 3 and Interviewee 4 expressed the same point of view. They both think that tuition and scholarships need to be considered, but they value the reputation of the college more so that they will measure whether the tuition is worth it.

Student academic ability

In the multicultural environment of Finland, students' academic abilities vary, they are receptive to different cultures. In the meantime, Finland's higher education system to help students improve their knowledge of cognitive, academic, and spiritual formation of the concept of international values and world view. This helps students develop the ability to think independently and solve problems. Most interviewees can quickly adapt to the Finnish teaching system, but there are also interviewees who expressed difficulties in learning. Interviewee 3 mentioned that when facing the Finnish education system, there are differences compared to the Chinese education system. Most of the courseware provided by the teacher in the class are based on European companies as cases, and these contents are difficult for her. On the other hand, and in Finland, most of courseware and curriculum work is done by computer. However, she used to learn by taking notes in a book the way of knowledge, which makes her writing ability has declined.

Government support

The Finnish government decides that the Ministry of Education and Culture will allocate funds based on the core funding model established by universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS). The aim is to comprehensively improve the quality, influence, and development of higher education institutions. (Finland: Higher Education Funding, 2020) The government (through Kela) provides financial support for students and guarantees all students' study. Almost all Finnish students will receive financial aid, in addition to foreigners who are permanent residents or EU citizens. (Financial aid for students, 2020)

Now in the case of Covid-19, The Finnish National Board of Education provides consulting services for training teachers in education, schools, and educational institutions. In addition, Educational administrative agencies exercise the right to close schools and educational institutions and limit the number of social gatherings. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021) Interviewee 3 described that under the pandemic, the college initially provided students with disinfectant and asked them to wear masks to class. Later, due to the increased impact of the epidemic, the college implemented online courses to teach students. The other three interviewers said that they did not know much about the government's support. Among them, interviewee 4 expressed disappointment with the impact of the pandemic because they could not go back to school and could only stay at home.

Parental income

The occupation of the parents is a decisive factor of the family income level and affects the parents' investment in higher education. Parents engaged in high-paying occupations can bring more material support to students in terms of educational investment. However, after all, the proportion of families with high incomes is only a minority. The parents of most college students are ordinary laborers. They do not have excessively high incomes but have enough funds to pay for the needs of higher education. Low-income families have limited expenditure on education, which may affect their children's chances of receiving extracurricular interest classes or higher education. Interviewee 2 stated that his parents could not afford the huge fees and daily expenses of his previous college, and thus gave up his studies in the United States and chose Finland where the tuition is cheaper.

Location

Finland is a country located in Northern Europe. Finland borders Sweden, Norway, and Russia. Sweden and Norway also form the symbolic border of northern Finland between Western and Eastern Europe. Finland's forest coverage rate is nearly 70% of the country's land, making it the most densely forested country in Europe. Finland also has nickname "the land of the thousand lakes". (Enander, 2021) Such beautiful scenery is also the reason that attracts foreign students to choose. Interviewee 3 also agreed that Finland is a beautiful country. She mentioned that you can walk around the lake in summer and see the aurora in winter. In addition, interviewee 4 chose Jyväskylä in Finland because Jyväskylä is a well-known school and study city. It also called the "University Town" and has a good learning environment. There are high-quality and lifelong opportunities for education and self-development.

College characteristics

Finland has 13 universities and 22 universities of applied sciences. And Finland has a different education system from many countries, but it is still a role model for countries in global education reforms. Finland's education policy pays more attention to quality while reducing control and competition. The college and the teachers are trustworthy and have reached a consensus on the educational goals. (Cristian et al., 2017) The representative university is Aalto University, which places great emphasis on innovation and learning in practice. The Aalto University of Arts, Design

and is one of the largest arts and design colleges in Northern Europe with the best teaching quality.

In Finland, Finnish teachers are well-educated and are firmly committed to their work. Teacher training is highly valued, and this profession is greatly respected in society. The university requires teachers necessary to have a master's degree, and they need to conduct systematic internships and training. The Finnish government tries its best to allow teachers to enjoy extensive autonomy in their work, and teachers have the right to decide how they implement teaching activities and make plans. (Crouch, 2015)

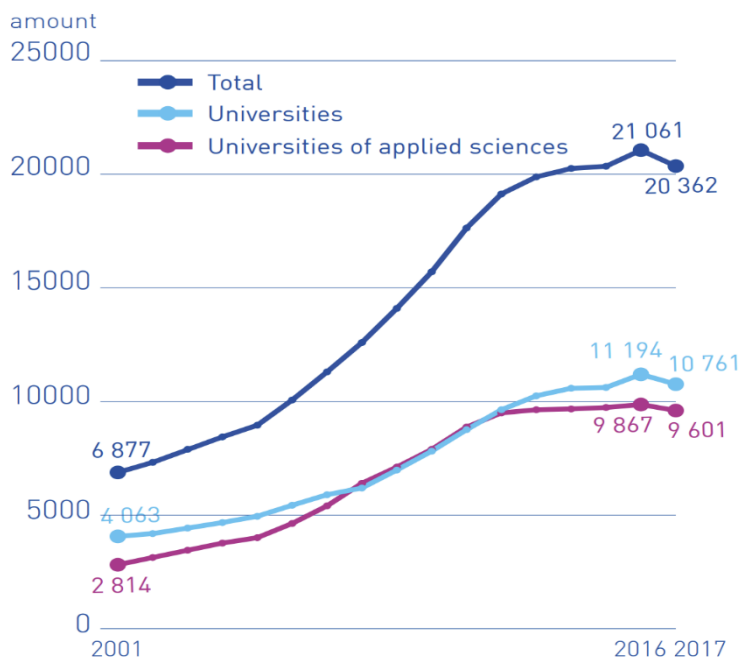


Figure 6: Total numbers of foreign degree students in Finnish higher education institution 2017 (Garam, 2018)

Furthermore, according to the investigation, Irma Garam (2018) found that among all higher education students, the proportion of foreign students has declined in 2017. However, the number of foreign students in Finland is still higher than the average of OECD countries. The foreign students accounted for 6.8 % of students in universities of applied sciences and 7 % in universities in 2017. Interviewee 1 described that most Finnish colleges accept international students, and the development of internationalization has attracted more and more students to study in Finland.

Academic reputation

Finland is an international leader in providing education, and it also has a high level of civil rights and freedom of the press. Nine universities in Finland are ranked in the QS World University Rankings, and the University of Helsinki is ranked 107th. The QS World University Rankings measure universities based on multiple indicators, such as the source of academic reputation data, the number of subjects covered, and the teacher-student ratio. In this year's QS subject rankings, many Finnish universities have also achieved good results. Equally important, Finland in the European teaching rankings, University of Jyväskylä in group 76-100th, University of Eastern Finland (group 126-150th) and Häme University of Applied Sciences (group 201+). The ranking measures students' academic achievement, career potential, and creativity. (Finnish universities ranked among the best in the world, 2019)

In the interview, the four interviewees all stated that they are attracted by the academic reputation of Finnish higher education. Interviewee 4 noted that the Finnish education system is highly evaluated, and it has been promoted by people for a long time as the best in the world. education system. Not only that, the other three interviewees all chose colleges based on their teaching Quality and academic reputation.

Majors available

Choosing a university major is an important decision that students have to face, which to a major extent affects the key points of knowledge that students have learned during the university. However, the main outlook changes with changes in market demand. When the market demand is great, the corresponding major students will find a good job. On the contrary, it is difficult to find a good job. Finnish Higher education is divided into two departments: universities and universities of applied sciences. Both types of schools grant bachelor's and master's degrees, but only universities can grant doctorate degrees. And various majors offered by master's degrees of Finnish school, such as Finance, Administration, Marketing, Engineering, Law, Health Sciences, Sociology, Media, Computer Science, Design, etc. (The Best Masters, 2021)

According to the data of QS World University Rankings by Subject (2021), I found that several Finnish universities have performed well in the field. For example, the University of Helsinki ranks in

the top 50 in the fields of Education and Training, dentistry, agriculture and forestry, and veterinary science; The Aalto University's expertise in the field of Architecture & Built Environment resulted also in a top 50 placement. In addition to the ones mentioned above, University of Jyväskylä in sports-related disciplines, University of Turku in Nursing, and Tampere University in the field of communication and media research, are also in the top 50. These achievements are a highly testament to Finland's success in academic performance and recognition of the level of education quality.

Future career and job prospects

At the age of college, students will be more considerate of their future careers. Experts say that due to the high cost of education and the incalculable losses caused by the current pandemic, students may focus on their financial abilities and future career prospects when choosing a university. (Kerr, 2020)

Traditionally, Finland's job market has been dominated by manufacturing, and its main export products include machinery, paper and wood products, electrical equipment, optical equipment, and vehicles. So far, the country's technology and IT industry has now become its largest industry and is regarded as Europe's main technology center. Under Nokia's leadership, mobile phone technology was a major player in the early days and now focuses on network equipment, software and services, and technology accounts for more than half of Finland's exports. (Higginbotham, 2020)

On the other hand, Finland has two main official languages, Finnish and Swedish, although Swedish only accounts for 10% of the total population. Therefore, mastering Finnish is very important for most professions. Not only must be successful professionally, but also be able to integrate into society. (Higginbotham, 2020) Interviewee 3 believed that staying in Finland to work is a good choice to gain experience. However, if students could not master Finnish, it is difficult to find a high-paying job. Similarly, Interviewee 2 expressed that he wanted to seek job opportunities in Finland, but Finnish is full of challenges for him. Interviews show that students think that Finland has quality job prospects. However, the premise is to be proficient in Finnish, which is one of the reasons why many students do not choose to stay in Finland.

4.2 Sociological factors

Security issue

Security issues have always been the basic concern of all international students. International students may face hidden dangers of harm to their own safety, the possibility of natural disasters, racial discrimination, and other issues. With the increasing number of cases of Asian students being attacked by criminals abroad and cases of discrimination against Asians, many students regard national security as one of their core standards. Fortunately, Finland has unique geographical conditions and there are few major natural disasters. At the same time, Finland has a crime index of 27.01 and a safety index of 72.99 ranking 22 in the world, Finland can also be considered one of the safest countries. (NUMBEO, 2021). Interviewee 3 ranked safety first. She mentioned that when choosing a country to study in, first consider whether the country is safe. There are no serious political turmoil, social disturbances, or racial discrimination. And Interviewee 1 also considered this aspect. She believes that the most important thing is to have a safe environment, otherwise the family will be worried.

Like many countries in the world, Finland is also facing special circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences have continued to operate all throughout the past year, moving to distance education where and when necessary. However, despite the pandemic, international students can start their studies in Finland well. Some foreign students are unable to reach Finland due to epidemic control restrictions, but because Finnish colleges widely provide online learning teaching, they can participate in learning from their home country. (Studying in Finland during the pandemic, 2021)

For those necessary experimental research or group teaching, it is carried out through mixed teaching. For example, some teaching needs to be carried out on campus. Small-scale groups will be kept as much as possible. Students are required to pay attention to safe social distance, hand hygiene and wear protection. Measures such as masks. (Studying in Finland during the pandemic, 2021) And a large part of the teaching is done through distance learning, Therefore, it is very effective way to protect the safety of students.

Influence of others

A child's growth will receive family education, school education and social education. Among them, the most influential way of education is family education, and parents' suggestions are vital to them. Because the students lack social experience, when they are faced with the choice of university, most students will ask or listen to the advice of their parents. From the experience of Interviewee 3, her parents took her to learn and consult about studying abroad, they frequently encourage her to study abroad to broaden her horizons, so her family has a great influence on her. And Interviewer 4 also said that she was influenced by her mother, she learned many Finnish culture in a travel program recommended by her mother.

In addition to listening to the opinions of parents, it may also be influenced by alumni or the media. Interviewer 1 mentioned that when choosing a college, she would first find out about it on the Internet, and then ask some alumni for their suggestions. Overall, the suggestions of others are one of the important factors influencing students when choosing a university.

Student motivation

Students are motivated by various factors to study abroad. Students may choose a specific country/region because they are interested in improving the skills of the language used in that country, or they may choose a specific city because of their cultural advantages, or they may choose an educational institution because of the reputation of the college. In addition, studying abroad can establish friendship with students from all over the world to build their international network. And continuous contact with people and cultures from different countries can increase students' sense of accomplishment.

In a survey of factors affecting the decision to study abroad, Mpinganjira (2009) reported that the tendency to choose a career was the most important motivation for studying abroad, followed by the unavailability of courses and the experience-oriented reasons. However, the averages of these three factors are not far apart. This shows that although students may choose to go abroad for professional reasons, they may also be very interested in the courses and experiences of studying abroad.

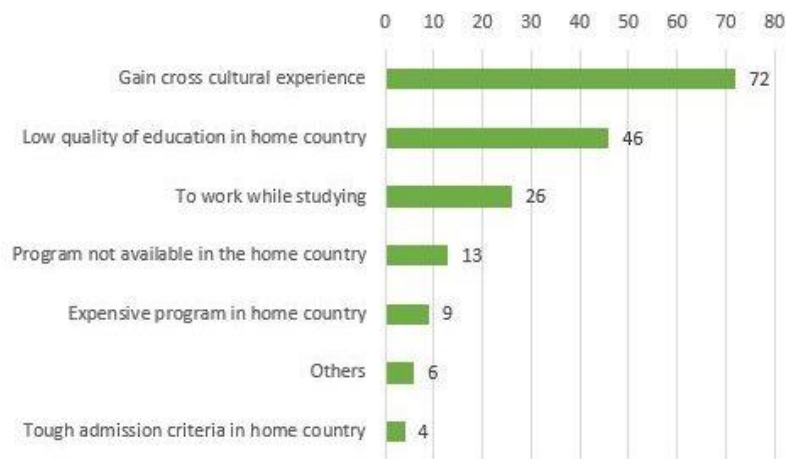


Figure 7: Major motivations for students to apply abroad. (Kunwar, 2019)

Similarly, Kunwar (2019) surveyed 68 international students studying at the Finnish University of Applied Sciences (UAS). The survey results (Figure 6) showed that when asked about their motivation to go abroad, the majority (72%) said they want to gain experience in cross-cultural communication. Another major motivation is the low level of education and be short of access to required courses in their own country, as well as the possibility of studying while working in Finland. The answers in the "other" category include curiosity about the Finnish education system, and students who already live in Finland or want to live in the EU after graduation.

In the experience of Interviewee 3, she described that she has absorbed a lot of new knowledge through different languages and cultures while studying abroad and has better exercised her communication skills and cooperation skills. On the other hand, she believed that the competition in China is great, which brings a lot of pressure to her. Similarly, Interviewee 4 also discussed that she felt stressed because she was not sure whether she could adapt to the education system of her country, so she considered studying abroad.

5 Discussion

This chapter uses the combined model to analyze the factors that make foreign students choose Finnish universities. Now Finland has become a popular country for foreign students to choose to study abroad. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the choice of foreign students to a certain extent. In order to determine what factors are influencing the attraction of foreign students to Finnish higher education, the following research question was formulated:

"How to attract foreign students to get a higher education in Finland after covid-19?"

In order to answer this research question, I collected and analyzed 12 factors based on the theoretical framework to get the research results. In this chapter, combining the research results, actual situation and the author's experience, I will discuss the factors that affect foreign students' choice of Finnish higher education under the pandemic, and explore how Finnish higher education institutions can design strategies to attract foreign students more. The following will present the main findings of the research, practical and managerial implications, assessment of the results in the light of literature, limitations of the research and recommendations for future research.

5.1 Main findings of the research

Based on the results of the study, I found that Finland attaches great importance to education. Finland has 13 universities and 22 universities of applied sciences. The tuition fees of Finnish universities are only applicable to international students, and the tuition fees are approximately between 4,000 Euros and 18,000 Euros depending on the degree program. And every university in Finland provides a series of scholarships for international students, which to a certain extent provides subsidies for students' living expenses. For example, tuition scholarships cover 100% or 50% of the tuition fees of a two-year master's degree program. Regarding the quality of teaching, all Finnish teachers must have a master's degree and have received rigorous academic research training and practical teaching exercises. At the same time, they are also given considerable autonomy by the school. Teachers have almost full power to decide the teaching materials and textbooks used in the classroom. Students can absorb knowledge through diversified teaching methods and the education system is flexible.

Regarding findings based on other indicators from theoretical framework, there are many motivations for foreign students when their choosing a Finnish college. The main motivation is that foreign students want to gain cross-cultural experience through studying abroad. Another main motivation is that the country's education system is too competitive. Going abroad, and good prospects for work in Finland, etc. In addition, because students lack social experience, most students will ask or listen to the suggestions of their parents or others when they are faced with university choices.

Secondly, considering the choice of majors, students will choose majors based on their future employment and income potential. In the research results, they found that with the development of the society and the country's competition, the job prospects also follow the market demand. The requirements for professionalism of employees in various industries are becoming higher and higher. Student workers play a guiding and enlightening role among students. For students, they not only need to complete their homework, but also need to consider the issue of finding a job. Finland scientific and technological progress as the center of attention and support of technological innovation. The country's technology and IT industry has become its largest industry. The world-famous mobile phone brand Nokia is from Finland. Relying on its technological strength, Finland has been rated as a very competitive country in fact for several years in a row and is regarded as a major technology center in Europe. Although the language used by many companies in Finland is English, if students can be proficient in Finnish, there will be more choices.

The most important point for foreign students choosing to come to Finland for education is safety. Finland's safety index is 72.99, ranking 22nd in the world and be one of the safest countries in the world. And Finland is a beautiful country, where the forest coverage is high and the air is very pure, making it a very suitable place for humans to live in. Therefore, students who come to study in Finland do not have to worry too much about social security and other issues. In addition, under the influence of the pandemic, the Finnish government provides counseling and consulting services for schools and educational institutions, and closed schools and educational institutions to restrict people from gathering. The school also implements remote teaching methods to ensure the safety and education of students. But from the perspective of students, they even hope to return to campus and communicate face-to-face with classmates and teachers.

Summing up, the main factors that affect foreign students' choice of Finland are safety issues, costs, teaching quality, job prospects, parental influence, and student motivation. Finland has a high level of education and a very responsible attitude towards students, which has attracted many foreign students.

5.2 Practical and managerial implications

The findings of this research have important implications for future practice. First, by determining the degree of influence of each influencing factor on foreign students' willingness to go abroad, it

is found that students' motivation, academic conditions, family background, people around, university education effects and overseas experience all have significant positive effects. Secondly, due to the development of education globalization, there is a great demand for students to study abroad. The research results of this thesis will help to increase the degree of attention to the influence of foreign students in choosing Finnish higher education, and can also meet the needs of obtaining international students in Finnish higher education institutions, and guide foreign students to make the right choice of college to studying.

Moreover, it seems that there is a need for considering the impact of the pandemic on international students. Due to the pandemic situation and travel restrictions in different countries, the pandemic has caused chaos in the international learning industry. Students can only acquire knowledge through remote teaching, which has changed their usual learning methods. Although educational institutions provide students with psychological counseling and some material protective measures, they still cannot avoid the long-term expectation at home to cause students to develop some psychological problems. Problems such as fear, anxiety, depression, etc.

5.3 Assessment of the results in the light of literature

Similarly to the findings in the present study prior studies by Tan (2015) have discovered that when foreign students choosing a college, they will make a decision based on three factors: perception, influence, and opportunity. Perception includes concepts such as better educational ideas, having sufficient knowledge, experience, and lifestyle. Influence includes statements made by family, friends, and the media on the impact of students' decision to select a higher education organization. Another major theme is opportunity, including the importance of language learning for students, the admission process, and more options for study/planning

5.4 Limitations of the research

The findings of this study must be seen considering some limitations, the first is the interviewers I only chose from the JAMK University of Applied Sciences and most of the interviewees are Asian, this may bias the results towards Asian attitudes. In addition, qualitative research is open, so the

primary data collected is influenced by the interviewee's responses and may not maintain an objective attitude. On the other hand, because of the pandemic broke out around 2020, and the relevant academic literature I can collect is limited.

The second limitation concerns the deviation caused by personal academic factors, because my major is not in the field of education and I lack the experience of writing large-length academic thesis. Therefore, compared with other scholars who have experienced, the scope and depth of the thesis will be affected, and it may affect the research.

The data for the research obtains from primary data and secondary data. Primary data is collected by the interviews with four international students who study at JAMK. To make sure that the validity and reliability of the data, I also collected relevant secondary data, which is collected from the official websites of organizations. And I used the coding method and data triangulation method to carefully collect and analyse it to ensure its reliability. Regarding the objectivity of the research, I try to ensure that the research is conducted in an objective attitude. However, the subjective judgments are cannot avoid, as a result objectivity of the research will be affected.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

This final part gives several suggestions for the future research on the topic of foreign students choose higher education institutions. Because the interviewees in this study are all international students from JAMK, and most of interviewees are from Asia, this may bias the results. Therefore, the suggestion for future research is use the same framework in universities in different regions, or to use more knowledge for further research to enhance this field of knowledge. In addition, quantitative research can also be combined to obtain more samples for analysis. The results obtained in this way make it easy to understand the intention of foreign students to study in Finland and the factors to be considered when choosing a university.

Another suggestion is about the impact of the pandemic on foreign students' choice of colleges because the current literature about Covid-19 is limited. The impact of the pandemic may cause students to have a certain degree of anxiety, and some students may change or cancel their plans to study in Finland. Future research can be analysed based on some force majeure factors, such as

unforeseen, unavoidable, and insurmountable objective conditions. The research results in this area can provide a better reference for higher education institutions to deal with similar incidents.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview questions with international students

- What were the factors to impact on your study-abroad decision?
- How did you choose the country you want to study in?
- What factors influenced your choice of Finland?
- Who influenced your decision to study in Finland?
- Will you consider tuition in your choice of college? How far does the tuition fees of the program influence your choice?
- Compared to other countries, how do you think tuition fees of Finnish educational institutions?
- Why did you choose to study at jamk?
- Do you think you can adapt to Finnish teaching? Will you face some difficulties?
- What kind of support has Finnish government of education offered your institution regarding the disruption COVID-19 is causing?
- What is your evaluation of the teaching quality of general courses and certain subjects in jamk?
- What is your future plan? Do you plan to stay and work in Finland?
- Do you think Finland will have a good job prospect?