

Entering the Finnish Food Market

Case: Authentic Korean Barbeque Concept

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Abstract

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The trend of Korean culture is caused by the new music and cuisine. Due to the trendiness of Korean culture around the globe. Authentic Korean barbecue can be found in many countries. Yet it has not reached the Finnish food market. Therefore, the authors researched if Finland, Helsinki would be a potential market area for authentic Korean barbecue.</p> <p>The research methods used in this thesis were quantitative and qualitative. The empirical research was carried out with a help of several printed and electronic sources. The primary data was collected from the survey, that was formed for the needs of this thesis.</p> <p>Korean food culture and the concept were introduced at the beginning of this thesis. The potential of the internalization of the concept was analyzed more deeply with macro-level, industry, and data analysis. Based on the results of the different analyses a concept analysis was conducted by using the SWOT tool.</p> <p>The results of this study show that Finland is a potential market to enter for authentic Korean barbecue in spite of existing Korean restaurants. Even though there is no authentic Korean barbecue restaurant in Helsinki, the results of our survey showed that Finns have an interest in the concept. The opportunities for the future and expanding the concept would need broader research.</p>		
Keywords Internationalization, Korean cuisine, market-entry, market selection		

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

With the help of modern technology, we have entered the globalized world. The Oxford reference (2021) defines globalization as “a process in which the whole world becomes a single market.” This has created a phenomenon that businesses and business ideas are spreading across the globe. By widening their business, they are available for a bigger audience thus creating new market opportunities. (Ritzer 2007.)

Hollensen states that all the companies from all parts of the world are competing for the same customers, resources, talent, and intellectual capital. Not every company is capable of internationalizing. The readiness to internationalize is depending on the company's international experience, current market position, and whether the company is more in the culture-bound industry or not. The process of internationalization is not easy. Many factors need to be weighed to get the best alternative. (Hollensen 2012.)

According to Hollensen, 'global marketing' consists of finding and satisfying global customer needs better than the competition, and of coordinating marketing activities within the constraints of the global environment. (Hollensen 2012, 11.) The aim of bringing the authentic Korean barbeque concept to Finland gives more insight into Korean culture. The main idea of the Korean barbeque table is for a group to get together and cook their food the way they want it to be cooked.

In this thesis, the focus is on the Finnish food market area. We have chosen a concept from South Korea, the authentic Korean barbeque. Both authors have connections to the East Asia region from traveling and exchange experiences. Both authors have experienced authentic Korean barbeque. From not being able to travel because of the COVID-19 pandemic that started in late 2019, both authors miss South Korean cuisine. Korean barbeque restaurants are mostly owned by families in South Korea, meaning that they are not restaurant chains. The authors have decided to bring the authentic Korean barbeque as a concept.

We are both business students who have studied the topic of internationalization and marketing. Therefore, we are interested in studying market opportunities for this concept. This study aims to test if the chosen concept would work in the Finnish food market. The concept of authentic Korean barbeque concept has taken universal popularity and has a market area, for example, around Europe. (Nupponen 2020.)

1.2 Thesis Objectives, Research Questions and Limitations

To understand what research objectives are, one needs to understand the meaning behind the research aim. The research aim is a goal of the research and answers the question 'what'. Research objectives answer the question 'how.' Therefore, it sets the path on what needs to be done to achieve the aim of the study. (Saundars, Louis & Thornhill 2009.) The purpose of this study is to research the restaurant market area in Finland and see its potential for authentic Korean barbeque restaurants. The aim is to look for target customer segments for authentic Korean barbeque restaurants. The objective of this study is to research Finland's food market's suitability for the authentic Korean barbeque concept. After the authors have a deeper knowledge of this concept, they analyze the information they learned from the theory aspect. The authors will conduct a survey relating to consumers' interest in authentic Korean barbeque as a concept in Finland. Because Finland is geographically a big country, the authors believe that Helsinki would be the best target city since most of the population lives in the metropolitan area. (Helsingin Seutu 2021). All the gathered information will be used to answer the research question and reach the aim of this study.

A research question is the center of research. It is created to give a path to research and help the author to work on a specific goal. A research question should be something the researcher is passionate about and feels strongly about. This creates motivation and determination for the author to complete detailed research. Sub-questions can be created to help answer the main research question. Sub-questions are more precise and smaller. (Goddard & Melville 2004.)

A good research question is not too broad. The research question should be kept specific and easy to answer. By narrowing down from a broad topic. For example, Korean culture alone is a broad topic, and one could find it hard to keep cohesive in their research. But narrowing down the topic to Korean barbeque, it will be easier to analyze and get a deeper insight into the topic. (Goddard & Melville 2004.)

The main research question is "Is Helsinki a potential market area for authentic Korean barbeque restaurants?"

The sub-questions of this thesis are:

How familiar is the Korean barbeque concept already in Finland?

What is the existing competition in the market area?

Who are the potential target customers?

Every research has its limitations, our study has two main limitations. This study is very geographic and field-specific. The study is only analyzing Finland and especially the Helsinki area as a market area. Therefore, data from Finnish markets can be used to get exact results for this study, the data from other countries are not comparable. The study will be done more specifically on the Finnish food market. The aim is to find out if there are market opportunities for the authentic Korean barbeque concept in Finland. This study does not provide answers related to other food concepts entering Finnish markets.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In this thesis, the authors use Hollensen's book "Essentials of Global Marketing" to base the theory focusing on internationalization. Hollensen has divided his theory into five parts. The decision to internationalize, deciding which market to enter, market entry strategies, designing the global marketing program, and implementing and coordinating the global marketing program. These parts are visualized in the figure below.

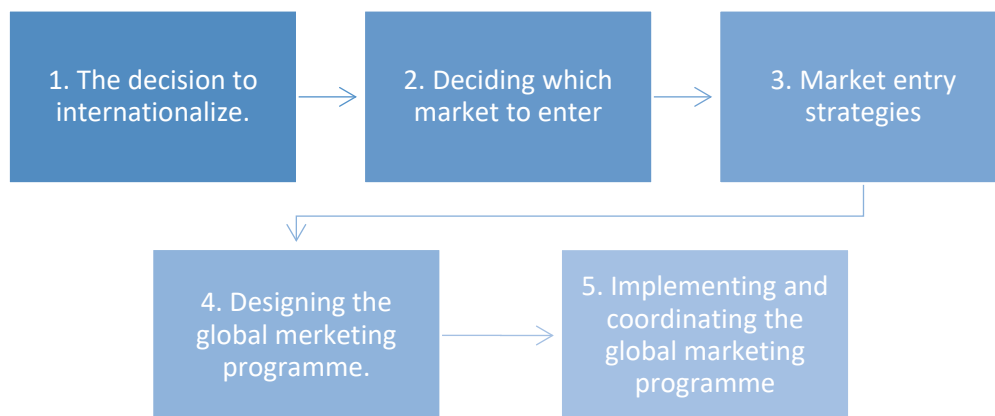


Figure 1 The five-stage decision model in global marketing (Fitted from Hollensen 2012, 5)

This thesis is focusing on the second part 'deciding which market to entry' to analyze if Finland would be a suitable "option" for the authentic Korean barbeque. This thesis discusses the three situational analysis tools to support Hollensen's theory and analyze different factors affecting the possibilities of the concept to internationalize. PESTEL, Porter's five forces, and SWOT form the theoretical part of the thesis. The same situational analysis tools will be implemented in the empirical part of the work.

The PESTEL analysis tool helps the authors to understand the macro environment. This tool is used to understand external factors that affect the company or concept. With PESTEL the authors form deeper analysis of the potential customers and their desire to buy a product or a service. Porter's five forces tool was chosen to be one of the analysis tools chosen for this thesis. This tool is used to understand the market at an industry level and see the full

potential the market area has. SWOT helps the authors to analyze both internal and external factors of the concept by finding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These theories are explained more thoroughly in chapter three.

1.4 Research Methodology and Data Collection

There are three different research methods, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method. Qualitative consists of several types of data collection such as open questions in questionnaires, interviews, and pictures. Quantitative research is more about data collection and statistics behind it. A mixed-method is when research has both methods used, not only one. (Goddard & Melville 2004.) The authors of this thesis have decided to use the quantitative approach and created a questionnaire. The questionnaire aims to learn about the potential target customers, their dining habits, and general interest in the authentic Korean barbecue concept.

The main data used in research are primary and secondary. Primary data is new data the researcher has collected themselves. Primary data can be collected from surveys or interviews. And secondary data is using already existing data, for example, books. Both methods have their benefits. Secondary data collection is fast and cheap, but the data collected could have old and irrelevant information. Primary data is new but could take a long time to collect and be expensive. (Goddard & Melville 2004.)

In this research both, primary and secondary data will be used. As a secondary source, various published sources will be used. As the main primary source, the questionnaire made for this research purpose will be used.

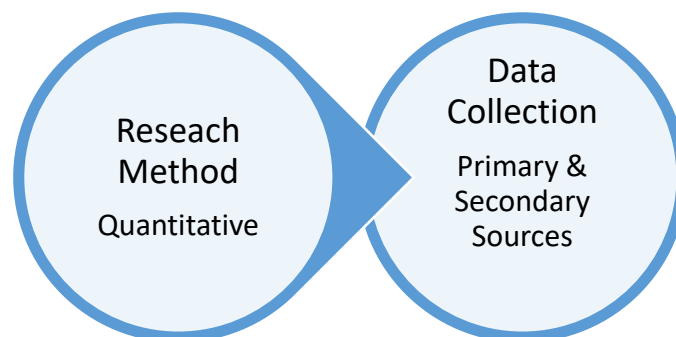


Figure 2 Research methods and data collection of this thesis

The figure above shows the research methods and data collection used in this thesis.

1.5 Thesis Structure

Figure 3 below illustrates the structure of the thesis.



Figure 3 Thesis Structure

The first chapter introduces the background of the thesis. It will also introduce thesis objectives, research questions, and sub-questions that will help answer the main research question. The chapter will include thesis limitations, theoretical framework, research method and data collection, and finally, thesis structure.

The second chapter will give deeper insight into the chosen concept for this thesis. In this chapter, the history, traditions, and basics of Korean barbecue are introduced. Authentic Korean barbecue's place in the culture now and worldwide popularity will be covered as well. All the information processed in this chapter will support the theory in the next chapter.

The third chapter focuses on the theoretical framework. In this chapter, the authors will focus on explaining the situational analysis theory and tools, PESTEL, Porter's five forces, and SWOT analysis in more detail. These will be implemented in the empirical part of the thesis.

Chapter four will focus on data collection. The chapter begins with an explanation of how the empirical study is designed and formulated. Further to the chapter, the collected data from the questionnaire will be analyzed. The situational analysis tools are implemented to

the concept to understand if Finland, Helsinki is a potential market for authentic Korean barbecue.

Chapters five and six will summarize and conclude this thesis. In chapter five the research question will be answered. These are the last chapters of this thesis.

2 KOREAN CUISINE

According to Michael J. Pettid (2008), the Korean culture should be understood to understand the Korean food culture. He states that between Korea as a country, the Koreans as citizens, and the way of preparing the food has no partition at all. Meaning that these three are simply alike.

2.1 The origin of Korean food

In the past, Korea has been under the ruling of both its neighboring countries. First China and then later Japan. Korea has adopted many customs from the Chinese culture such as instruments, political systems, and architecture to name a few. Rice was first domesticated by China and is now a big part of Korean food culture. (Kraig 2021.)

A big part of Korean culture is the country's geographical location. The country is full of mountains and valleys which allows the country to experience multiple climates. Therefore, every region has its dishes. In the valleys, Koreans grow rice, beans, and multiple vegetables, while in the mountains many wild plants and mushrooms are successful. Many Korean dishes include wild ferns and roots native to the country. Korea has humid and hot summers while the winters are cold and dry. Because of the cold winters, food had to be preserved to last longer. Koreans took the custom of drying fish, meat, and vegetables to keep over winter. (Kraig 2021.)

The Korean peninsula is surrounded by water. Therefore, it is no surprise that a big part of Korean food culture is the delicacies of the seas. The meat was expensive and slaughtering the livestock was not economically a good decision as originally Korean based their industries on agriculture. That led the Koreans to the sea. Therefore, they had to learn the benefits of the sea. Seafood is enjoyed by the Koreans in several different forms. Small, dried sardines appear on almost every meal as a side dish, while dried cuttlefish is the country's most popular snack. (Kraig 2021.)

2.2 Traditions

Korean people value eating together. It creates unity and is seen as an opportunity for sociability. Eating with a group does not limit to friends and family, but also professional life. Hweshik is an event of dinner outings with co-workers or school members. These outings are paid for by the institution. Hweshik word is hard to translate into English. Hwe refers to office, company, or business and Shik means food or meal. Company dinners (hweshik)

are a big part of the culture. And these are seen more as an obligation rather than a voluntary event. The company dinners are used for team building. (Janhonen 2015.)

The event of eating together has its etiquette. In Korean culture, elders are respected, and this is seen at the dining table as well. No one is allowed to eat until the eldest of the groups has started their meal. The whole entourage should eat at the same pace out of respect. While the eldest starts the meal, the youngest usually takes care of the rest of the party. The youngest pours drinks for the others and gets their utensils out and ready. (Kusbianoro & Park 2015.)

Koreans believe that sharing is caring, therefore almost every dish on the table is shared with others. Different dishes, like soup and meat, are ordered for the whole table. Compared to Finnish customs, no one has their personal dish, except for rice. The diners all eat from the same soup bowls with their spoons, which is not common in many western cultures. (Kusbianoro & Park 2015).

2.3 Authentic Korean Barbecue

2.3.1 History

Korean barbecue centers around Bulgogi which literally translates to fire meat. The first stages of Korean barbecue date to Goguryeo era (37 B.C. to 668 A.D.). But then it was meat in skewers. It has evolved since Korean history and its different eras. Its first name was Maekjeok. Maek referred to the people of Goguryeo era and Jeok was the skewer. In Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) the name changed to neobiani. The dish has then taken the form of thinly sliced beef which was marinated and roasted. It was mainly served to the royals of the Joseon Dynasty.

Neobiani took the form of bulgogi due to several factors. Japanese colonization over Korea and the Korean war led to the shortage of beef. And the demand for the popular dish got significantly low because of the high prices of meat. But slowly beef was becoming more commercialized. Thus, the dish did not disappear. The Korean war led to the presence of the U.S military in Korea. They then introduced the machinery for slicing meat more thinly. The thinly sliced beef was less expensive for customers and cooked faster. This boosted the popularity of Bulgogi.

2.3.2 Basics

The Korean barbecue is built around the grill. The main dish is meat. The customer has many meat options to choose from and the meat variety does not limit to only the basic

parts, inner organs are often also on the menu. The basic principle is that the whole animal is used. The pricing is based on the amount and the type of meat ordered. These restaurants are available to everyone regardless of their income. The meat is eaten with rice and a variety of side dishes. As the pricing is only focused on the meat, the price includes side dishes and one portion of rice per customer. The customer can order more rice for a small payment. Some of the main side dishes are Kongnamul Muchim (soybean sprout), Kimchi (fermented Chinese cabbage), Ssamjang (Korean dipping), garlic, and lettuce leaves. The food is eaten in a way that might seem unusual in the parts of the world where we are used to having our own plates. The only food on the table that is not shared with the rest of the dinner party is rice. (Marx S. 2019.)



Picture 1 Authentic Korean Barbecue (Marjo Maunola's private photo album 2016)

Plates are not used, therefore lettuce leaves are used to replace them and eaten by hand. The leaf should be big enough to fit everything. Into the lettuce a chunk of rice, meat dipped into the dipping sauce, kimchi, and other side dishes are placed on top of the lettuce leaf. With the help of the leaf, everything is made into a small ball which is eaten as a whole. (Sue 2019.) As a part of the Korean barbecue, experience is beer, Soju, and Makgeolli. Soju is a Korean rice liquor that is colorless and mostly reminds people of vodka, but it is

not as strong. Makgeolli is a Korean rice wine that has a sweet taste and a milky color. (Kellerman 2015.)



Picture 2 Authentic Korean barbecue (Marjo Maunola's private photo album 2016)

Pictures 1 and 2 illustrate the authentic Korean barbecue experience. The grill is in the middle of the table and circling it are the side dishes.

2.4 Korea Worldwide

Over the years Korean pop (K-pop) culture has reached worldwide popularity. It all started with Korean TV dramas and later continued with Korean music. One of the most known songs would be Gangnam Style by PSY released in 2012. The attention for this song boosted the Korean wave, Hallyu, even further. (Korean culture and information service 2011.) Oxford English Dictionary added multiple Korean word entries in mid-October 2021. The term Hallyu is explained in the dictionary as "the increase in international interest in Korea and its popular culture, esp. as represented by the global success of Korean music, film, television, fashion, and food." (Oxford English dictionary 2021). As the popularity of

Korean culture grew, the interest for other aspects of the culture was shed light as well. From Korean dramas and music to cosmetics and fashion. Many brands use popular K-pop stars as the face of the brands, leading to a peak in sales for certain brands. Korean dramas often have product placement as hidden advertising for the same reason. As an example, a Korean boyband BTS was part of an advertisement for a Hyundai car model Palisade in 2018. As a result, the car was in backorder for months. (Liu 2020.)

3 ENTERING TO NEW MARKET

In this thesis the focus is on the second step of Hollensen's five step model of internalization process. The right selection in which market to enter is important for many reasons. The market selected either is a success or a failure. The second step is "deciding which market to enter" and in that step different environments are studied of the chosen country. Hollensen (2012) says that a company must understand the variables of international competitiveness of the market area before entering it. These variables are resources, competencies, and relations. For a company to enter a market they should adapt themselves according to customers, competitors, and public authorities. The understanding of these variable factors will be carried out after analyzing the macro level, industry, and the company itself.

The figure below illustrates the categorization of data for assessment of market potential in a county applied to the concept of authentic Korean barbecue adapted from Hollensen.

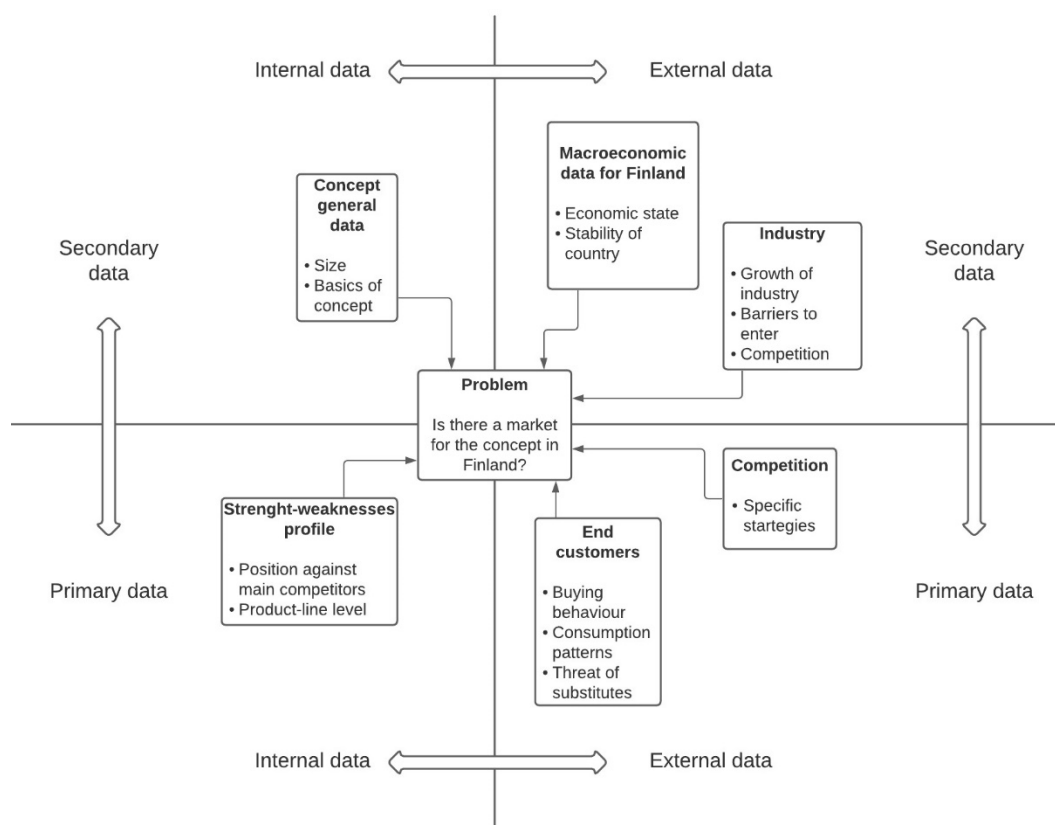


Figure 4 Categorization of data for assessment of market potential in a county (Adapted from Hollensen 2020)

Primary and secondary data will be analyzed to understand the internal and external factors of a company. After the analysis of these factors, the problem, research question can be

answered. Internal, external, primary, and secondary data will be combined to understand certain things affecting the concept. With external and secondary data, we will understand the macro environment and the industry. This will include the economic factors of a target country and characteristics of competition. Primary and external data will be used to understand the behavior of customers and the factors in the behavior are buying and consumption patterns, financial state, and substitute products. Internal and secondary data are used to create an understanding of the basic information of a company. The size, basics of the concept, and products they have. Primary and internal data include the strengths and weaknesses of a company. These factors determine what is the company's position against the competition.

3.1 Macro-Level Analysis

PESTEL is a marketing tool to understand the macro environment. Understanding of macro environment helps the company to understand the consumers and their willingness to purchase a product or service. PESTEL is an acronym of several factors influencing the macro environment. These factors are political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal. All the factors mentioned were external. All these factors influence the company from perspectives the company has no influence over. The macro-environment has positive and negative effects on a business. An example of a negative factor is taxes. High taxes harm a business. However, taxes are changeable. During different electoral terms, taxes could change in favor of the business. (Stewart 2014; Person 2009.) The figure below proves the framework of the PESTEL tool.

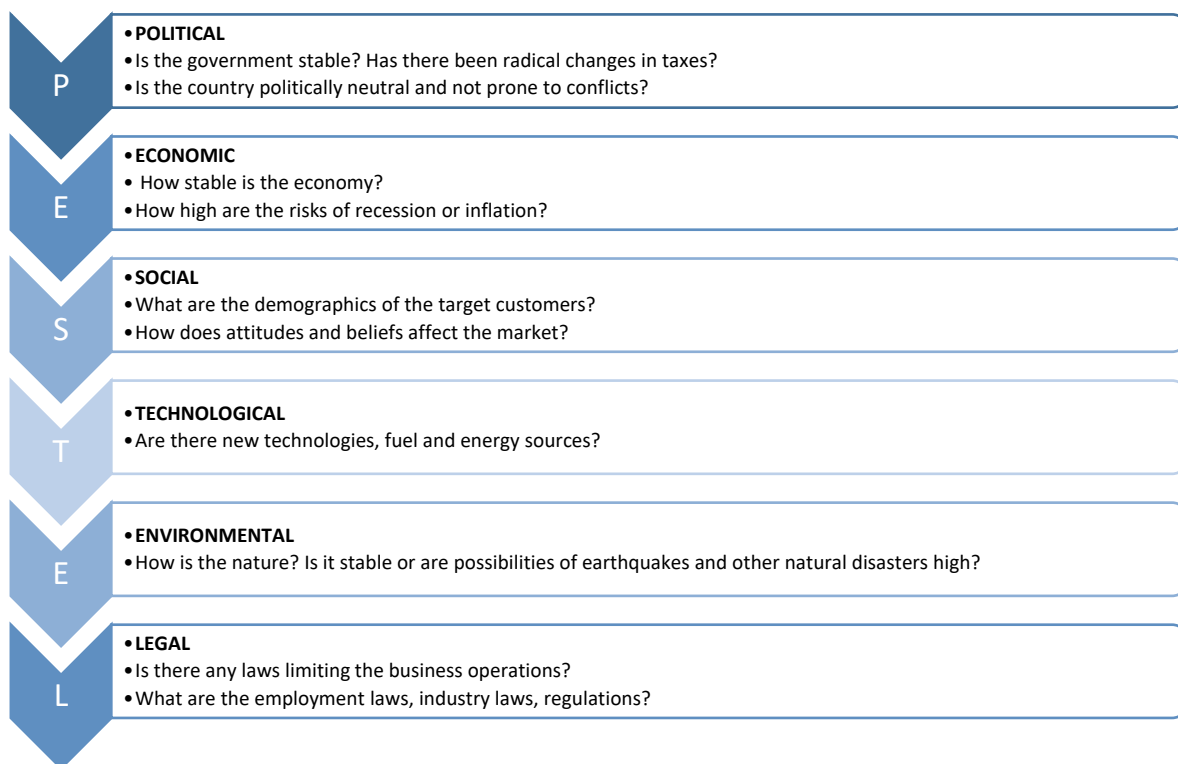


Figure 5 PESTEL Framework (adapted from Person 2009)

POLITICAL

To understand the political factors of PESTEL, one should understand how government policies affect a business and economy. Some of these policies are tax regulations and trade restrictions. These are factors that may have a different importance level and view-point in political parties. Therefore, elections periods can be a stressful time for businesses. (Fosher 2018.)

ECONOMIC

The economic environment is about the consumers. To fully understand this, we must look at the factors that affect the habits of the consumers, how much they spend, and how often. What are the income levels and how is the income distributed? And the level of mandatory expenses affects the power of the consumers. The expenses are often variable. These are the cost of living, interest rates, and savings. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018.)

SOCIAL

When analyzing the markets, we must look at the people as they are the market. To study the people, we look at the demographic. This includes for example age, gender, size, location, and occupation. In the social part of the PESTEL, we must also consider the cultural background of the population. Most come from diverse cultural backgrounds. These diverse backgrounds have shaped the beliefs, behaviors, and values. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018.)

TECHNOLOGICAL

Now is the time that we are not limited by the technology of our time. With the drastically evolving technology, humankind has been able to create amazing things. Smartphones, robotic surgery, and the internet to make a few. But the humankind has also been able to create some not-so-amazing things such as assault rifles and nuclear missiles. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018.) A business should not limit their business to old norms but start to think, how can they use modern technology to advantage in their operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Environmental, the natural environment, consists of both the physical environment and natural resources. Depending on the business, the area the business is supposed to be located should be taken into consideration. If the area is prone to natural disasters, such as earthquakes hurricanes, and typhoons, it might not be the best place for the business. But the effects of natural disasters can have positive effects on other businesses. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018.) Companies should grow their awareness of their surroundings and how potential changes may occur because of climate change. (de Bruin 2016).

LEGAL

The legal part of PESTEL is also linked to the political part of PESTEL, as it is the governments who set the laws and regulations in the first place. Even the countries that are free-market economies think that laws and regulations make the businesses bloom. When laws and regulations are set, there is more competition, and the market of goods and services is fair. The government has many purposes as to why they have set laws and regulations for the companies. They must protect the consumers, protect the interest of society, and protect the companies. (Kotler & Armstrong 2018.)

3.2 Industry Analysis

Porter's original model is based on the hypothesis that the competitive advantage of the firm is best developed in an incredibly competitive market with intense rivalry relations (Hollensen 2012, 79). Porter's model gives an industry analysis of both internal and external factors. These determine the profitability of the industry. The model consists of five different segments. These segments are forces and these forces are the threat of intense segment rivalry, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitute products, the threat of buyers' growing bargaining power, and the threat of suppliers' growing bargaining power. (Porter 1979.) These forces are illustrated in the figure below.

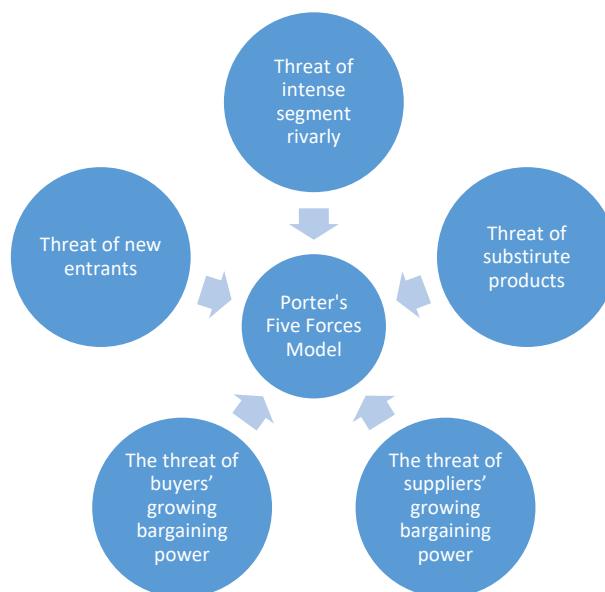


Figure 6 Porter's Five Forces model (adapted from Porter 1979)

The threat of intense segment rivalry

In other words, if the barrier to entering a market is high or low. A product or concept does not do well in a segment where the number of equivalent products is high. It requires high efforts from the new entries to stay in that segment and make a profit. In the idealistic situation, the segment has only a few competitors and none of them is over 50 percent bigger than the other. (Hollensen 2020, 106.)

The threat of new entrants

The best-case scenario generally would be when the entry barriers are high and exit barriers are low. Meaning that not everyone can enter the specific industry, but if a company does not make it there, they can easily leave. If both barriers were to be high, there is an enormous potential for profit but higher risks of mediocre performance. On the contrary, if both barriers are low, companies enter and leave easily. If this is happening, then returns and stability are low. Worst case scenario would be when the barriers to entry are low and the barriers to exit are high. Then, companies can set their foot during good times but not leave when things go bad. This occurs to overcapacity and recession. (Keller 2012, 332.) The importance of entry and exit barriers changes through different industries.

The threat of substitute products

If a company is in an industry where the profits are great, new competitors are more likely to immerse into the markets with substitute products. Several factors affect the likeliness of substitutes. Is the customer willing to switch to a substituting product and at what costs?

And there is no guarantee that the substitute would work as well as the original product. (Hollensen 2020, 109.)

The threat of buyers' growing bargaining power

A business should consider not entering a market if there is already a lot of competition in the market. If the number of businesses offering the same product or service is high, the customer has the power over the company. The companies must determine their prices according to the demand. The lower the demand is the lower the price is. (Keller 2021, 332.)

The threat of suppliers' growing bargaining power

The segment is seen as unattractive for companies if the bargaining power of the suppliers is high. The best scenario is when there are a lot of suppliers for the same product/raw material. Therefore, the suppliers must keep their prices competitive. For example, in the oil industry, the number of suppliers is low, thus the oil prices stay high. (Keller 2021, 332.)

3.3 Concept Analysis

SWOT analysis is a classic tool used to analyze a company itself, a product, or even a competitor. This tool is simple and effective, and it can be used both in newer and older companies. The word SWOT is an acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These four features are usually placed into a square of four to visualize the big picture better. Using this tool to list a company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats give a clear vision of where the company is to the opponents. According to Visma, the SWOT analysis can be seen as an analysis of the competition. (Visma 2017.) The SWOT analysis tool is illustrated in the figure below.

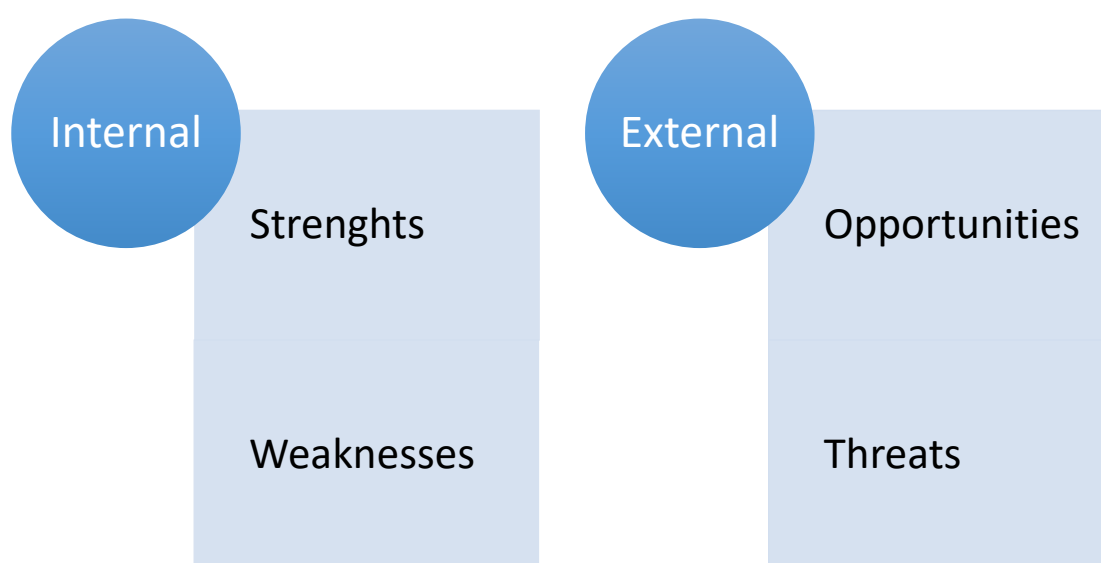


Figure 7 SWOT

These four sectors are divided into two, the external and the internal. Strengths and weaknesses are internal. This means that these factors come from inside the company. On the opposite, opportunities and threats are faced from the outside of the company.

Strengths and weaknesses

The best strength for a company to have would be a product or service that makes them different from their competitors. Meaning that a company would need to bring something new into the market that has not been seen before. It can be an entirely new product or service, or it can also be something old but with a new twist into it. Strengths answer questions: "What makes my company differ from others?", "What makes my products or service unique?", "What is my advantage in the competition?" Weaknesses would be the easiest factor to recognize. Weaknesses are factors that can be identified by asking questions such as: "How does my company get along in the competition?", "How can a company keep up with promises for customers?", "Is there enough revenue to succeed?" (Venugopal 2010.)

Opportunities and threats

The opportunities and threats cannot directly be controlled by the company since they are eternal. By identifying threats and opportunities the company does have a chance to strengthen itself. To identify opportunities for a company, some important elements need to be recognized. These elements could be doing something with megatrends, internationalizing, or other developments. The most common threats would be other companies who sell the same product or service. But threats can be deeper than just other companies. The external threats could be connected to political or economic trends or even the law. (Venugopal 2010.)

4 RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Situational Analysis

Situational analysis is combining methods to analyze the internal and external factors that affect a business. The methods used in this research are PESTEL, Porter's five forces, and SWOT. Macro-level environment analysis (PESTEL), industry-level analysis (Porter's 5 forces) are conducted and the primary data collected from the survey is analyzed before the concept level SWOT analysis. (Indeed 2021.)

Figure 8 below illustrates the situational analysis and how these methods are combined in this study.

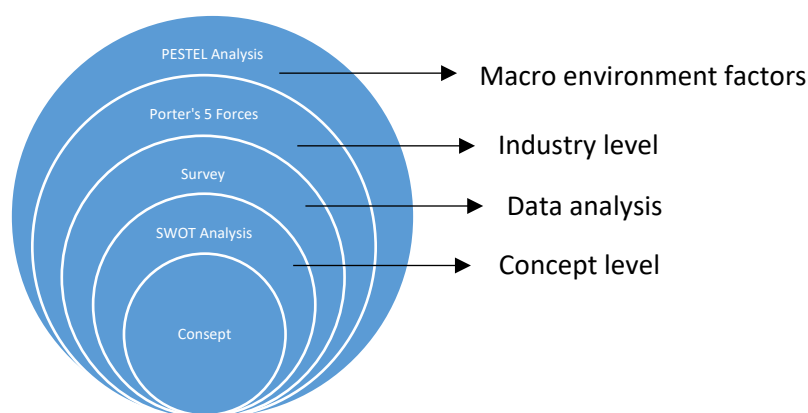


Figure 8 Situation analysis (adapted from Un-Teeth 2021)

4.1.1 Macro environment factors

In the PESTEL analysis, the authors will focus on the political, economic, social, technological, and legal parts of Finland.

POLITICAL

In world politics, Finland is a neutral country and is not prone to conflicts.

Different political parties have different interests. Therefore, whoever is the leading parties have more places in the cabinet. The member parties in 2021 are Social Democratic Party, Centre Party, Green League, Left Alliance, and Swedish People's Party. (Valtioneuvosto 2021.) All these parties promote the causes they have an interest in. Taxation is controlled by the government and the cabinet makes changes to it. The cabinet is planning to tighten the taxation by over a hundred million euros. (Luukka 2021.)

Taxation for companies varies with company forms. Entrepreneurs pay several different taxes. Some of these are personal income tax, corporate tax, value-added tax (VAT), and

capital gains tax. These taxes are the most common and are often paid in some sort of combination. (Heinämaa 2021.)

Finland is a very entrepreneur-positive country. As most of the tax payments come from small businesses. The Finnish government supports new businesses and offers them the opportunity to apply for Starttiraha, which is a start money. The purpose of this is that the income is secured for the business. Start money can be approved to be paid for the business for up to a year. (TE Office 2021.)

ECONOMIC

In general Finland's economy is doing good. But because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all industries are taking a hit but compared to statistics from the year 2019 the number of bankruptcies has not grown because of the pandemic. (Tilastokeskus 2021). Finland is highly industrialized and has a highly free-market economy. The recession in 2020 affected Finland mildly compared to other European countries and Finland was highly successful in containing the pandemic. Finland made a good recovery after the recession and since the pandemic started. A strong vaccination program and lifting of the restrictions helped the employment rate return to the pre-pandemic level. Growth in the economy is expected, as during the pandemic the demand for domestic goods and services has been high by private consumers. Finland's GDP is expected to grow by 3,25 percent in 2021 and keep growing up to 2,75 percent by the year 2022. However, the growth is expected to stop in 2023 and drop into 1,2 percent. This is because of the aging population and the drop in the workforce. (Suomen Pankki 2021a & Suomen Pankki 2021b.)

As stated in the theory part above, the power of consumers must be understood. 70 percent of Finland's population aged between 15 to 64 has a paid job, which is above the OECD average of 68 percent (OECD Better Life Index 2021). And out of their income households use approximately 17 percent of their income on culture, restaurants, and hotels. Which is relatively high compared to the highest expense, housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels which take almost 30 percent of the income. (Tilastokeskus 2021.)

SOCIAL

This research concentrates on the Helsinki food market. Therefore, the social part of PESTEL concentrates on Helsinki.

As mentioned above the population of Finland is aging. Only 20,5% of the population of Helsinki are young. Thus, the percentage is a little under 21 percent, it is still highest compared to any other city in Finland. In this case, the definition of young is the people of the age between 15 to 29. And 22,6% of the city's population is over the age of 60. Which is

higher than in Vantaa or Espoo but lower than in any other part of Finland. (Helsingin kaupunki 2020.) Moving of the younger population is higher than in any other age group. Helsinki offers more studying and work opportunities compared to other cities in Finland, which is the main attraction for younger people to move to Helsinki. (Nuorten Hyvinvointi Kertomus 2016.)

The population of Helsinki will exceed 700 000 by the year 2028. The number of children needing daycare has been going down year by year. But based on recent predictions, the number of children in day-care will increase back to where it is now by the year 2026. Also, the age group from 65 to 74 will stop growing and the age-group 75 and up will grow rapidly. (Helsingin Kaupunki 2021.) Predictions refer to the growing population change and the increase in housing in Helsinki. The predictions are made up to the year 2035. The biggest growth areas in Helsinki are predicted to be Jätkäsaari, Pasila, Kruunuvuori, Kalasatama, Vuosaari, Hernesaari, and Lauttasaari. (Vuori & Kaasila 2020.)

According to Kesko, Finns no longer need a reason to eat outside in a restaurant. It is now a part of their day-to-day life and acts as a pick-me-up. (Kesko 2019.) Due to the pandemic, restaurants have gone through tough times. There were restrictions for the opening times and the capacity of customers. The biggest restriction was when restaurants could only sell food to go in the summer of 2020. During this time, many people did not eat in restaurants since they could only buy takeaway. According to Kespro's research, (Kesko 2021.) most Finns estimate that they would continue eating out as much as they have before. Altogether 21 percent of the respondents are planning to eat out more than before since the restaurants are open again.

As claimed by Kespro (Kespro 2019.) in the research of the expectations for restaurants in 2020, there are four profiles of Finns who eat out. These profiles are named spontaneous experimenters, quality-conscious hedonists, practical stomach fillers, and considerate home cooks.

The table below represents all four profiles with deeper information about each profile.

Profile name	Spontaneous experimenters	Quality-conscious hedonists	Practical stomach fillers	Considerate home cooks
Gender	50% women, 50% men	75% women, 25% men	31% women, 69% men	68% women, 32% men

Age	Young adults (18-34-year-old)	All age groups, mildly high-lighting 25-34-year-old	Slightly fewer younger adults	Aged 35-year-old and older
Economic position	Different sized economies	Single people highlighted, altogether 41%	Different sized economies	Mostly families with children
Amount of money spent	Spends more money while eating out	Spends more money while eating out	Different amounts used, depending on the citizens	Spends less money while eating out
Location	Spread equally around Finland	Mostly in Helsinki metropolitan area and other bigger cities	Mostly in smaller cities and the countryside	Spread equally around Finland

Table 1 Eating out profiles (adapted from Kespro 2019)

The spontaneous experimenters act as pioneering consumers. They are the ones who actively use the services of eating out and are eager on finding new restaurants. The quality-conscious hedonist appears as pioneering consumers. As well as the spontaneous experimenters, the quality-conscious hedonists are also persons who eat out often and want to know about new restaurants. The most common profile is the practical stomach fillers. They are people who eat out because they need to have food. To emphasize their habits of eating out, it is basically just an energy supply for them. The last profile, the considerate home cooks are people who have an interest in food but are more willing to cook at home than going out. They still do eat out, but it is not commonplace. (Kespro 2019.)

The portions of each profile are demonstrated in the figure below.

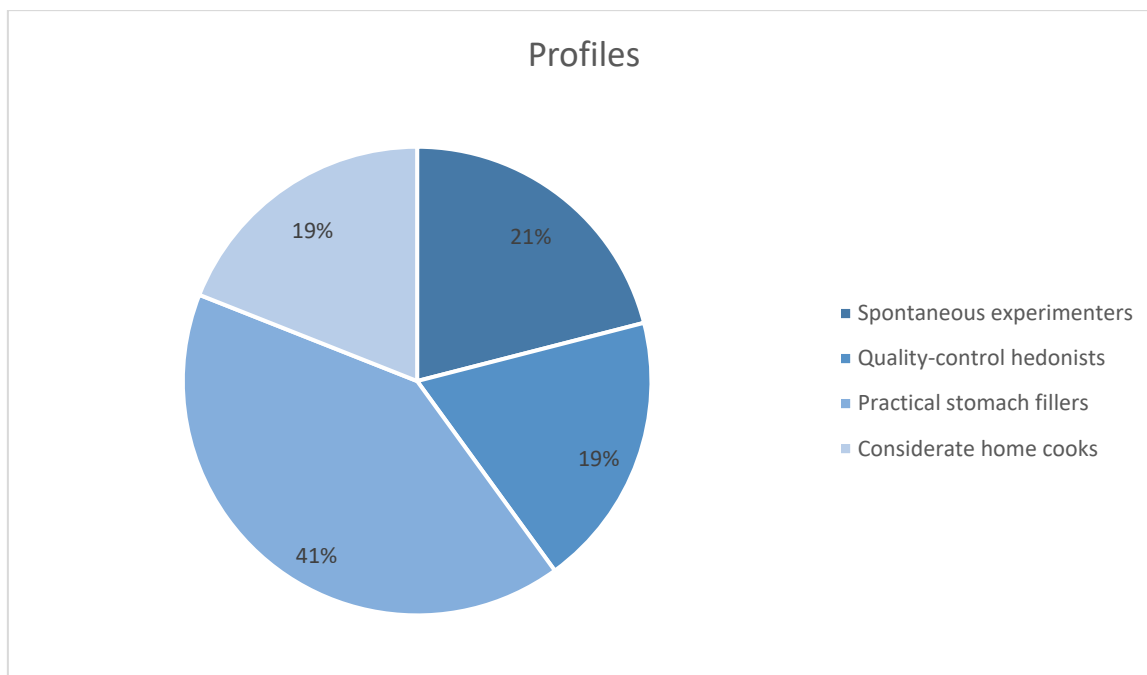


Figure 9 Eating out profiles (adapted from Kespro 2019)

As seen in the figure above, the most common profile seen is the practical stomach fillers. The three others, spontaneous experimenters, quality-control hedonists, and considerate home cooks are divided equally.

From these profiles, the spontaneous experimenters and quality-control hedonists are the ones who would most likely visit the authentic Korean barbecue restaurant. The people who fit these profiles are the most active ones to use the service of eating out.

TECHNOLOGICAL

Technology is modernized all the time and various sources of energy are becoming more common. Due to this concept, the grill in the table is in the leading role of technology. The authentic Korean barbecue consists either of a gas or a charcoal grill. For the long-term, it would be better to have an electric grill as it would be more sustainable. But the grill should be adapted to the concept slightly. With the adaptation of electric grills into the restaurants, comes health benefits. The gas and charcoal grills could release smoke and fumes which if inhaled for too long can be bad for the body. These types of grills are not as widely accessible as electric ones.

LEGAL

The core of this concept is raw meat, handling the meat, and handling the grill, therefore the concentration is in the legal issues regarding them.

Law can be changed in time so that they adapt to the world. In 2020, the laws changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The biggest changes were made to the restaurant industry. The changes affected restaurants opening hours, and the capacity of customers. These regulations have changed many times as the pandemic has been spreading.

Due to the meat, there is no specific law that raw red meat cannot be served for customers. But it is mandatory for restaurants and their employees to handle raw meat and cooked meat with different tools specified for the purpose. (Ruokavirasto 2019.) Additionally, other raw ingredients the restaurant uses that are produced outside of the EU may require a permit. The permit applies to new raw ingredients that are brought outside of the EU. (Ruokavirasto 2021.)

The business space in which this concept would be needs to follow different regulations for fire safety. Considering that the concept comes to Helsinki, it would be a business space that is rented. The building where the space is would have to have the basics for fire safety in “control”. Since the concept's main idea is grilling, the space needs to be modified. Above all grills needs to be cooker hoods, and also some kind of extinguishing systems in case of emergencies for the grills. The Finnish emergency service department does a fire inspection before the restaurant opens. In this inspection, the department checks that the fire safety in the restaurant is according to code. (Helsingin kaupunki 2019.)

4.1.2 Industry-level factors

In this thesis, the focus will be on four forces of Porter’s five forces. These forces would be the barrier to entry, new entrants, bargaining power of customers, and rivalry among existing competitors.

Rivalry among existing competitors: The concept has a lot of competition. Every restaurant in the industry is competing for the same customers. And almost every cuisine in the world is represented in the restaurant market in Helsinki. With research, we have found that the concept has plenty of direct competitors since there are many Korean restaurants in Helsinki.

Below the table shows different competitors, specifically Korean restaurants. It defines the location of the restaurant, its specialty, price range, and ratings. The information seen in the table is gathered using Google and the home pages of each restaurant. The table is made to clarify the competitors specifically those that are Korean restaurants.

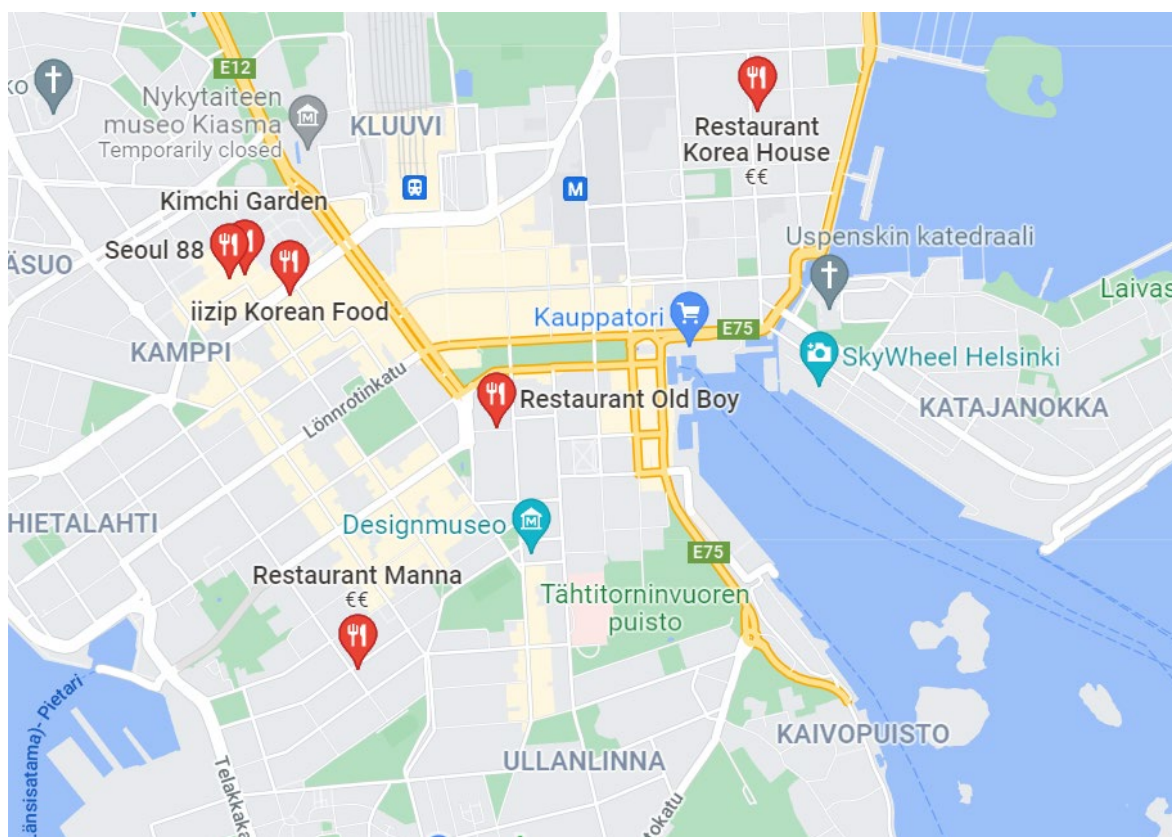
Name	Location	Specialty	Price range 1-3 (in Google)	Rating (amount of ratings in Google)
Korea House Restaurant	Kruununuhaka	No specialty, set menu of traditional dishes	2	4,4/5 (835)
Restaurant Manna	Punavuori	Bibimbap, home-made tofu, and kimchi	2	4,7/5 (220)
Restaurant Old Boy	Esplanadi	No specialty, set menu of traditional dishes, Sunday sessions with a dj	2	4,3/5 (166)
Kiva Restaurant	Malmi	No specialty, set menu of traditional dishes	1	4,7/5 (146)
Seoul 88	Kamppi	No specialty, set menu of traditional dishes	2	3,5/5 (30)
Kimchi Garden	Kamppi	No specialty, set menu of traditional dishes	2	2,5/5 (43)
Izip Koren Food	Kamppi	Chef Younghwa and her trendy food	2	4,9/5 (28)

Table 2 The concept's competition restaurants in Helsinki.

All these restaurants serve either Korean food or Korean-style food. But none of the restaurants serve Korean barbecue. By their menu, only two competitors stand out. Izip Korean food and Restaurant Manna. But every other restaurant serves the same style of Korean food. All the restaurants serve meat prepared in Korean style but none of the restaurants offer the customers the experience of grilling the meat by themselves. All the competing restaurants in the figure were put into a price range from one to three. One is the cheapest

and three is more expensive. According to all the restaurants' websites belong to segment 2. Which can be interpreted as neither cheap nor expensive. Only one restaurant falls into segment 1, which will be considered as cheap. All the restaurants except one, Kimchi Garden, has good ratings, all above three stars. One restaurant stands out among the others, Korea House. It was the first Korean restaurant in Helsinki and has almost 850 ratings with an average of 4,4. (Nupponen 2020.) Location is important for a business, which can be seen from the locations of the Korean restaurants in Helsinki. All are located near shopping centers and urban areas. Kiva Restaurant is the only exception located outside of the center of Helsinki, which is located in Malmi.

The picture below shows the different locations of the restaurants mentioned above. Every restaurant except the Kiva restaurant is seen in the picture. All of the restaurants seen in the picture are located in the center of Helsinki. Restaurant Kiva is located in Malmi which is located about 15 kilometers from the center of Helsinki.



Picture 3 Korean restaurant in the Helsinki central area.

The barrier to entry: From the real-estate point of view, it can be tricky for new businesses to open in Helsinki. Rents are higher in Helsinki compared to other cities in Finland. (MTV Uutiset 2020.) In the restaurant industry, the barrier to entering a market is low. New restaurants open all the time. People eat outside all the time, whether it the form of business

lunches or family dinners in the evening. If we look at both factors together, we think that the barrier to entering the restaurant industry in Helsinki is low.

The threat of new entrants: In the restaurant industry, the authors see that the barriers to entry are low and the barrier to exit is low. This is because nearly anyone can come to the restaurant industry, and if they do not succeed, they can drop out of it. As the trends change over time, so does the variety of new restaurants. These factors make the threat of new entrants high.

Bargaining power of customers: The restaurant industry is versatile and wide. Different cuisines and ethnic foods are represented. And the market is already overflowing with restaurants. Therefore, the customers have plenty to choose from. And many customers are set in their ways and have become regulars at certain restaurants. Based on statistics of the city of Helsinki (Helsingin kaupunki 2021b), in 2019 there were 2612 restaurants in Helsinki.

According to Kespro's research (Kespro 2019.), there are profiled customers of which the spontaneous experimenters and quality-control hedonists made up to 40 percent of the customers. These people enjoy diverse restaurants, they do not want to go to the same place every week.

These factors make the bargaining power of customers medium.

	Key findings	Rating: low-medium-high
Rivalry among existing competitors	High competitiveness, a handful of Korean restaurants	Medium
The barrier to entry	Competitiveness among business spaces	Low
The threat of new entrants	Easy industry to enter, following trends	High
Bargaining power of customers	Broad industry, many restaurants in Helsinki, specific profiles as customers	Medium

Table 3 Key findings, Porter

Above the table shows key findings of Porter's four forces used in this study.

4.2 Data collection

This sub-chapter is about the process of collecting the data. The table below illustrates the steps of the data collection process.

Date	Action
1.9.2021	Started to gain information on the topic
18.10.2021	Spread the survey
31.10.2021	Closed the survey
1-7.11.2021	Analyzed survey results
10.11.2021	Made a SWOT analysis

Table 4 Data collection

In September, the authors began the process of writing a thesis. The first step before writing was to get deeper information about the topic and different theories. The data was collected from various sources for this thesis. Data were collected from published sources, for example, Hollensen's book of global marketing and Keller and Armstrong's book were used to base the information of the theoretical framework. The gain more information about the target market adding to the information gained from the survey, many electronic sources were used. For example, government and food industry websites specific to the topic at hand.

Within researching the topic, a survey was made in Google Forms. The survey was designed in a way that the authors would get an understanding of the respondent's ways of eating out combined with their knowledge of Korean barbecue. At the end of the survey was a question to gain information about possible customers. The survey was targeted at people living in Finland in order to gain real answers.

The survey went online on Monday 18.10.2021. Both thesis authors spread the survey link via several social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. The survey was also sent to all LAB University of Applied Sciences business students. The survey was open to respondents for two weeks. In that time period, we gained 236 answers altogether. After closing the survey, the authors began to analyze the results in order to fulfill the research and data analysis chapters. With the help of the responses of the survey, SWOT analysis of the concept was conducted by analyzing different internal and external factors.

4.3 Data analysis

The questionnaire for research of this thesis was made by using Google forms. Altogether there were 11 questions. One question was open-ended, and the rest were multiple choice. The survey was online for two weeks.

The survey starts with questions about age and gender. Most of the respondents were 21 to 30-year-old. This was expected as the questionnaire was mainly spread among students. Altogether there were 147 respondents ages 21 to 30-year-old. They make up to 62,3 percent of all respondents. The second highest age group was 31 to 40-year-old. They make a total of 15,3 percent of the respondents. 11 respondents are older than 50 years, and they are only 4,7 percent of the respondents.

Most of the respondents are women, altogether 64,8 percent. 32,6 percent are men and the rest 2,5 percent either are non-binary or prefer not to say.

As the questionnaire was spread among business students of LAB University of Applied Sciences, Lahti and Lappeenranta were the two popular places to live. Most of the respondents live in Lahti, altogether 34 percent. 25 percent of the respondents live in Helsinki metropolitan area, and the rest 21 percent live somewhere else in Finland in cities such as Mäntsälä, Turku, and Tampere. Below the figure shows the distribution to a different place of residence.

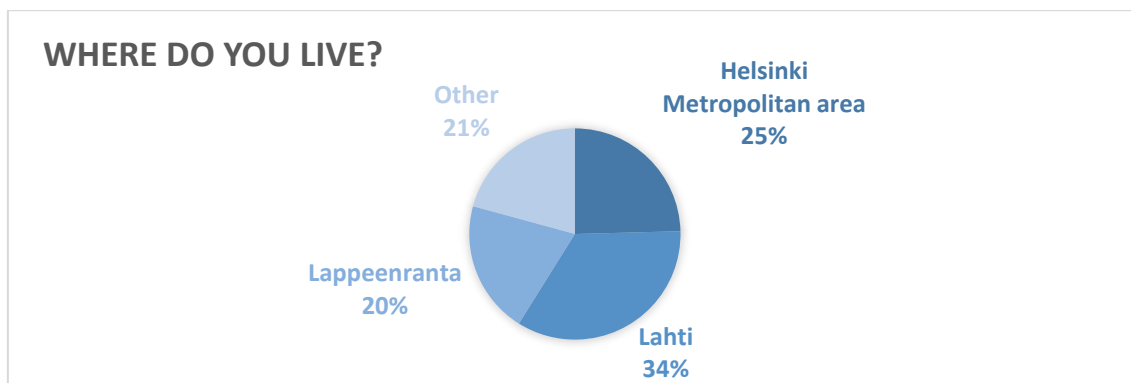


Figure 10 Question 3 of the survey

It was expected to see so many students responding to our questionnaire. That is why neither of us was amazed that nearly three-quarters of the respondents are students. Altogether 164 respondents are students, which makes up to 69,5 percent of all respondents. The second biggest occupation was employed. They make 26,7 percent of all respondents. The smallest groups were unemployed and retired. The unemployed are 2,1 percent of the respondents and the retired make altogether 1,7 percent of all respondents. Below, figure 11 provides the division of occupations.

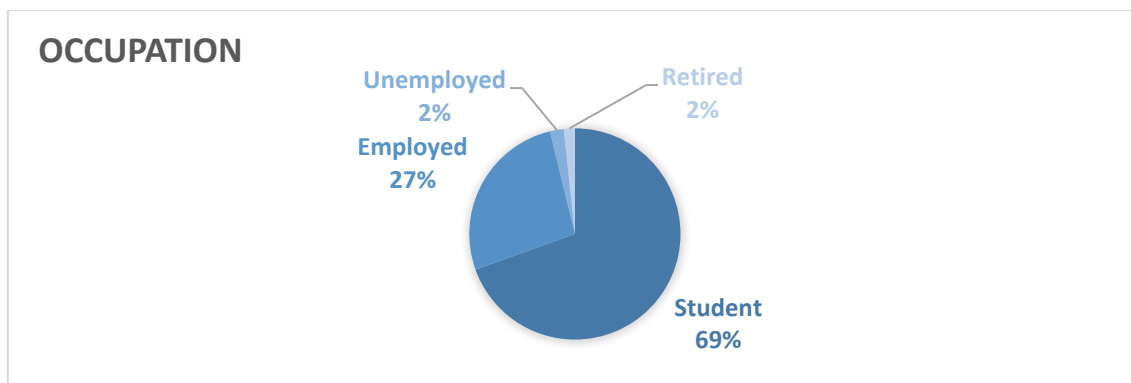


Figure 11 Question 4 of the survey

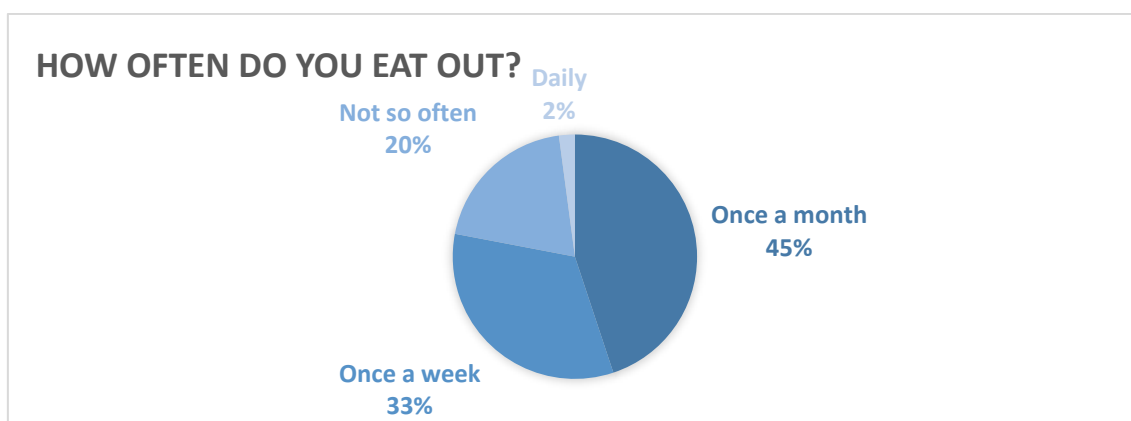


Figure 12 Question 5 of the survey

Figure 12 illustrates how often the respondents eat out.

It was interesting to see how often the respondents eat out. As the majority of them are students, it does not affect the habit of eating out. Major speculation would be that students have more affordable places to go eat. Nearly half of the respondents eat out once a month. 33 percent, which makes a bit more than one-quarter of the respondents eat out once a week. Only 5 respondents answered that they eat out daily. To interpret, the authors believe that those who eat out daily would be the ones who are also employed. In some work environments, it might be a regular thing to go out to have lunch. Also, there are possibilities that meetings with customers are held by dining together.

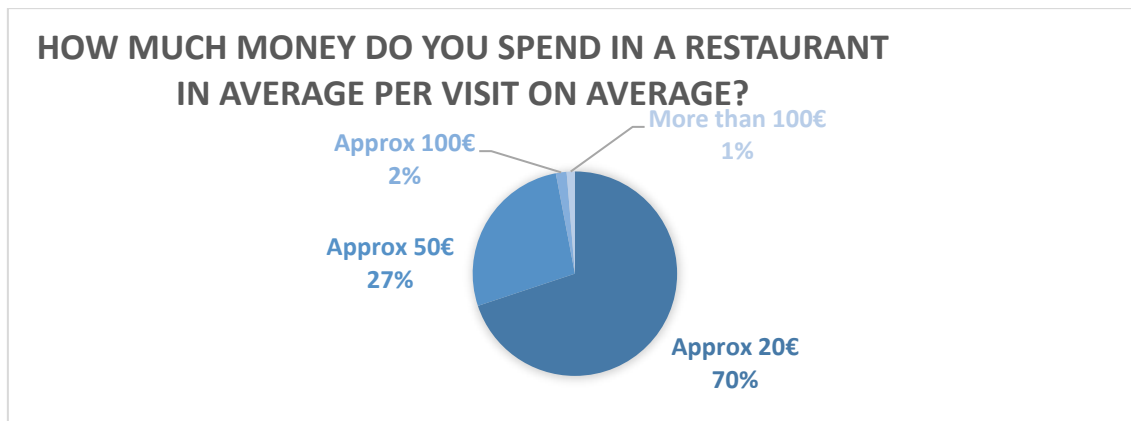


Figure 13 Question 6 of the survey

Figure 13 above displays the amount of money respondents use in a restaurant per visit.

As the majority of the respondents are students, it is understandable that the most common answer to this question was approximately 20 euros. Usually, students do not have that much money to spend, so they go to more affordable places to eat, compared to the ones who are employed. Altogether 70 percent of respondents use approximately 20 euros per visit. A bit more than one-quarter of the respondents uses approximately 50 euros per visit. The rest, 3 percent either use more than 100 euros or approximately 100 euros per visit.

Question seven of the survey was formulated to answer the question, do the respondents need a special occasion as a reason to go eat in a restaurant. Figure 13 below presents the percentages of yes and no answers by our respondents to this question. Most of our respondents do not need a special occasion as a reason. As mentioned before in this thesis, Finns have incorporated eating in a restaurant as a part of their day-to-day life. Over a fifth of the respondents need a special occasion to go to a restaurant. After this question, we left an open question as a possibility for the respondents to clarify what would be considered a special occasion. The open question got 43 answers and all the answers followed the same pattern. The reoccurring theme of the answers was a celebration of birthdays, anniversaries, or holidays. But dates and meeting a friend were also common answers.

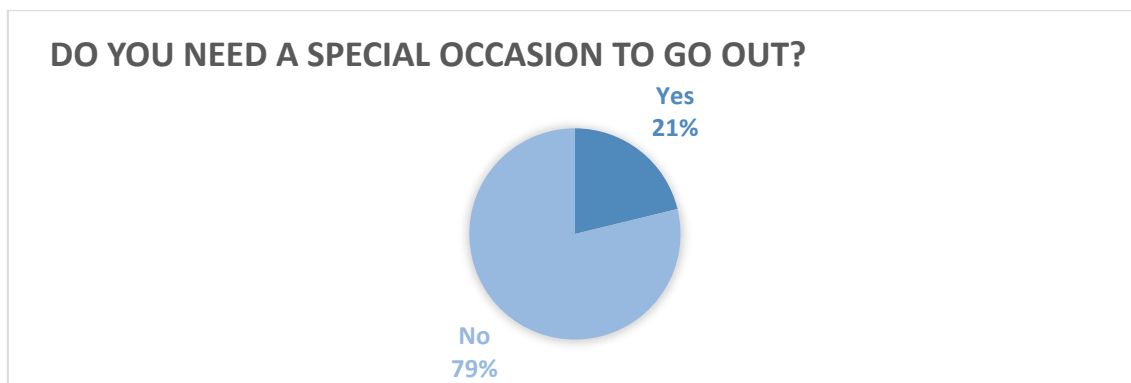


Figure 14 Question 7 of the survey

With our last three questions, we wanted to understand the knowledge of Korean cuisine in the target customers. The respondents were equally divided by either not knowing or knowing what Korean barbecue is. Only 16 percent of respondents were unsure what the cuisine is. Most of the target customers do not know what Korean barbecue is, therefore, the spontaneous experimenters are potential customers.

To follow up this question we explained briefly with a picture of what Korean barbecue is. Some might have eaten it or know what it is without knowing. Figure 15 below indicates answers to the ninth question of our survey “Do you know what Korean barbecue is?”.

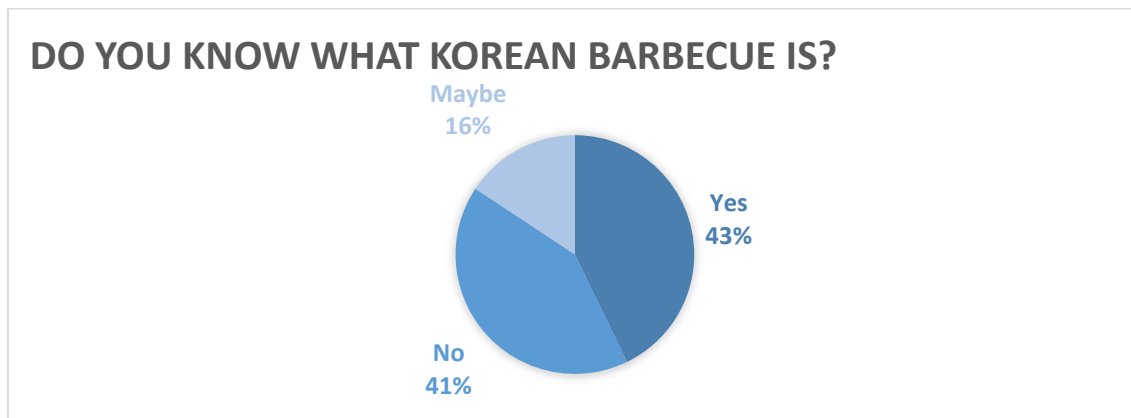


Figure 15 Question 9 of the survey

We asked if the respondents had eaten the cuisine with yes and no question and how willing they would be to visit a restaurant that served Korean barbecue. Figure 16 below reveals the percentages of both answers, yes and no, to the question had the respondents had eaten Korean barbecue before. Exactly a quarter had eaten the cuisine, but the majority had not. This creates a possible market for Korean barbecue as it is not available in Finland in its authentic form. You would have to travel overseas or make it yourself at home. But both options can be very time-consuming and expensive.

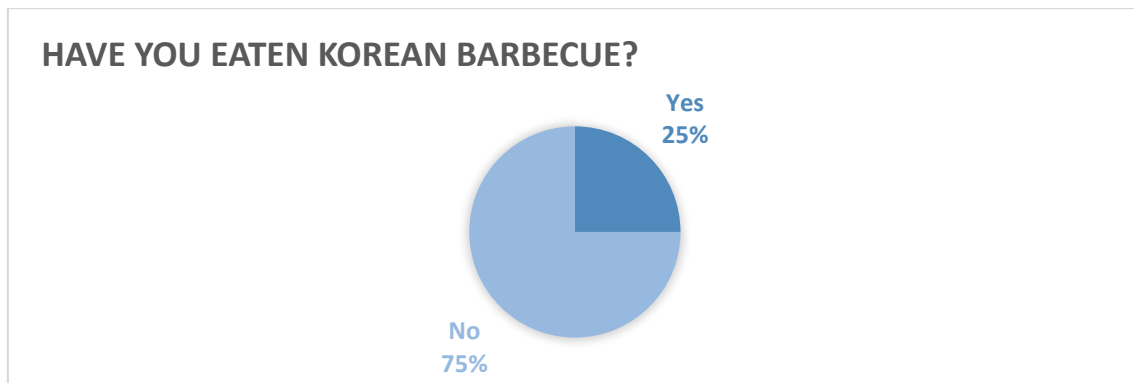


Figure 16 Question 10 of the survey

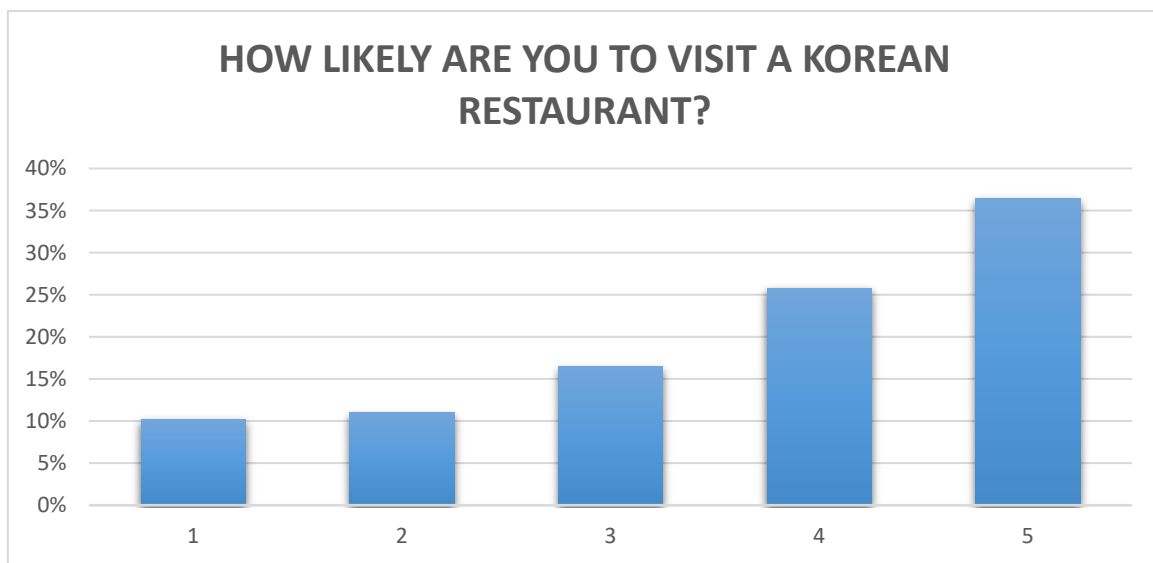


Figure 17 Question 11 of the survey

Figure 17 displays the difference in the likeliness of visiting a Korean restaurant. The score was given by respondents from one to five on how likely they would be to visit a Korean restaurant. One was not likely and five was very likely. Altogether 36 percent of the respondents would be likely to visit a Korean restaurant. 17 percent are not sure, would they visit the restaurant. It is good to see that only 10 percent of the respondents would not be likely to visit a Korean restaurant. From these percentages, it can be concluded that Korean restaurants would have a solid customer base.

4.4 Concept Analysis

This sub-chapter contains a SWOT analysis of this concept. The analysis is used to emphasize the internal and external factors. The analysis is based on the data collected from the survey and various electronic sources.

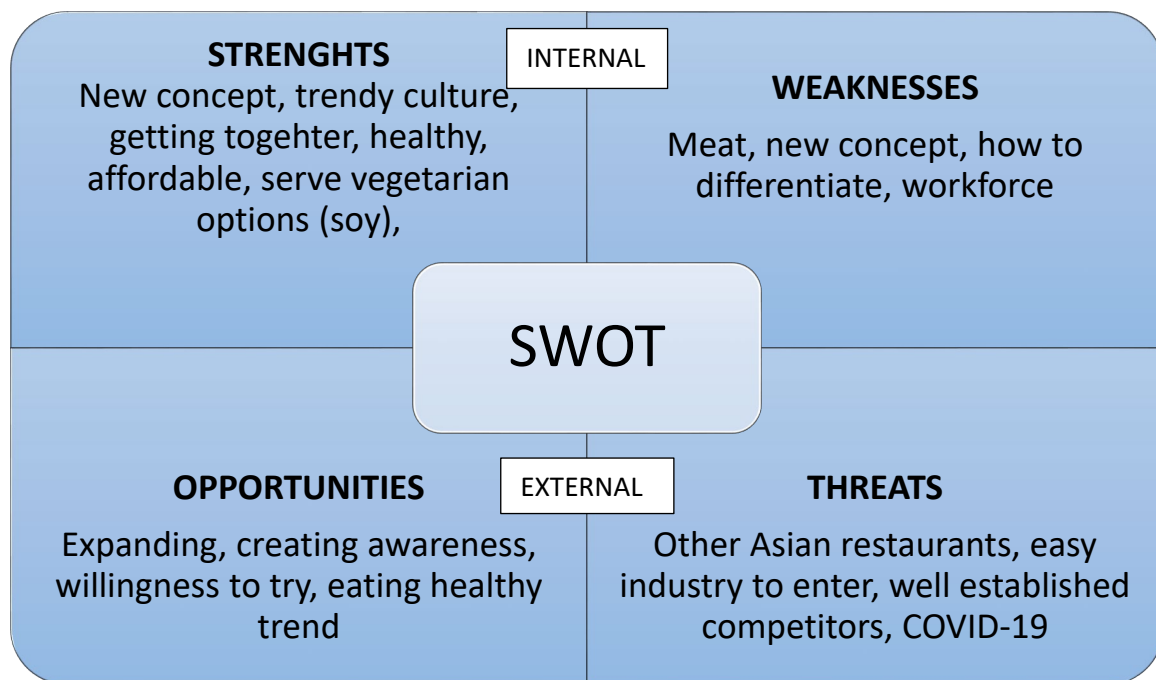


Figure 18 A SWOT analysis of the concept.

Figure 18 above briefly shows the SWOT analysis of our concept. The SWOT analysis will be explained more thoroughly below.

Strength: From our viewpoint, the authentic Korean barbecue concept has a lot of strengths. In the Finnish restaurant industry, it is a new concept. Something many customers have not seen yet. Since Korean culture has become so popular, the people who follow trends are more likely to find a restaurant with this concept. According to Kespro's research (Kespro 2019.), the Finnish food culture is developing a lot. Not only the supply diversifying but also the needs of customers.

As mentioned before, for Korean people, the tradition of dining is a part of getting together with people. Getting together does not focus only on people close to you, it is also considered with those with who you are doing business. As the table is filled with people, and the food is shared among everyone, it is a new approach to dining for Finns. Usually, Finnish people order a dish that is only for themselves. Sharing food is not ordinary for the Finnish culture. With this concept, the Finnish habits of eating out would change and become more connected.

Korean food generally is healthy. The raw ingredients used are fresh, meaning that they are not processed. The Korean barbecue holds many kinds of vegetables which have important nutrients for humans. Even though the main ingredient of Korean barbecue is meat, there

are plenty of side dishes as well. These side dishes are vegetables cooked and seasoned in several ways.

Authentic Korean barbecue restaurants can fit in many price ranges. Which should not affect the customer base of the restaurant. Since there are several options for meat, the prices vary. A customer can choose to have a fine dining moment there and at the same time, the neighboring table consists of students whose bill is not going to be that high. Most Finns do not think that their social class affects their image, but it seems to be more important to the upper-middle- and upper-class. Therefore, if the restaurant is in the lower price range, the upper-middle- and upper-class citizens might not dine there.

The final strength that this concept could have would be to serve vegetarian options. As it is the year 2021, vegetarian and vegan diets are trending. Markets are filled with different meat substitutes made, for example, soy and oats. These substitutes would inspire those who do not eat meat to come and enjoy the barbecue. (Laakso 2018.)

Weakness: A great weakness of the Korean barbecue concept is that meat is the center of the cuisine. We live in a time where vegan and vegetarian diets are more popular, and most people are decreasing their meat consumption. Therefore, to get more customers more meat-substituting options should be offered. And as the main meal the restaurants offer is the barbecue, it can limit the customers coming to the restaurant.

As the main idea of authentic Korean barbecue is to prepare the meat as you are conversing with your company. For the youth, an important aspect of eating outside would be that it is easy. That is why this concept might not be the place for younger ones. Cooking the meat might be easy, but it does take time. (Helsingin Sanomat 2021.)

Authentic Korean barbecue is a new concept in Finland, which can be seen as a weakness for the restaurant entering the industry. In Korean culture, the meals are shared, and everyone eats from the same plates. People who have, for example, a western cultural background might see this as weird and could be reluctant to go to a restaurant where the norms are different. As Kespro (2019) mentioned in their research, out of the four eating out types only 21 percent are spontaneous experimenters. Which leaves the rest 79 percent of dining types not be experimental. This can cause the customer flow to be lower for restaurants with a new concept.

As the concept has not landed in Finland yet, the biggest weakness is that it is different. There are already Korean restaurants in Helsinki, Finland, and people are used to going there. To be able to communicate the uniqueness of this concept, the restaurant needs to

have brand awareness. The awareness would be conducted by advertising the concept itself. How does it work and what kind of food is served.

The personnel of the restaurant needs to be capable of helping the customers prepare the meat if needed. Thus, hiring the right people that know the cuisine can be tough. And the problem is, should the staff be Korean or Finnish.

Opportunities: Depending on the popularity of one restaurant in Helsinki, with time, the concept could expand to other cities. Reflecting on the data collected with the survey, there is interest in the concept and most of the respondents would visit a Korean restaurant but most of the respondents live outside of the Helsinki metropolitan area. The concept would have opportunities to become a chain restaurant with expanding.

As seen in the questionnaire for this thesis, respondents are willing to try this concept. Altogether the ones who answered to be very likely to visit a Korean barbecue restaurant made up more than 50 percent of the respondents. With the help of the survey and Kespro's research, it seems that there are people eager on trying new restaurants.

Trends change with time but the habit of eating healthy has been around for a while now. The Korean barbecue is seen as healthy as it is filled with various vegetables. These vegetables are cooked in a way that they are clean, meaning that they are not heavily processed. As Korean barbecue is healthy, it would not be a barrier for new customers.

Threats: As this concept would not be the first Asian restaurant in the area, we believe that these restaurants would be seen as a threat. Not everyone knows the difference between Korean, Chinese, or Japanese food. Some just see all of them as Asian food consisting of the same rice and meat.

Since the restaurant industry is an easy industry to enter and to exit, it is a threat to even enter it. There were altogether 2612 restaurants in Helsinki in 2019. Meaning that there is a lot to choose from as a customer. The Korean restaurants in Helsinki have a good reputation according to the number of reviews they have. They have a strong position in the market.

The pandemic has done a lot of damage in the restaurant industry, and we do not know when the pandemic will end. Since the restrictions in the spring of 2020, many layoffs were made, and employees resigned. As the restrictions loosened, some employees got back to work but nearly not all of them. Employment in the restaurant industry has not been the same after these restrictions. (Helsingin kaupunki 2021b.)

5 CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the thesis and answers the main research question as well as the sub-questions.

5.1 Answers for Research Questions

The main research question is “Is Helsinki a potential market area for authentic Korean barbeque restaurants?”. The sub-questions will be answered first before answering the main research question. Answering the sub-questions first will make the answering of the main question easier as the sub-questions are more specified while the main question is broader.

Sub-questions

How familiar is the Korean barbeque concept already in Finland?

According to the results from our questionnaire of the respondents almost half knew about Korean barbecue. These suppositions are limited to only the people who responded to the survey. Based on this we indicate that the rest of the Finnish population know the concept as well as our respondents. According to Nupponen (2020), the popularity of Korean culture is growing year by year. Therefore, we can assume that the Korean barbecue concept would become more known as the years go by.

What is the existing competition in the market area?

The statistics by the city of Helsinki showed the number of restaurants in the city is high, roughly around 2600 restaurants in 2019. All these restaurants are seen as a competition to the concept, especially the Asian style restaurants. During this research, we found that there are seven Korean restaurants in Helsinki. These restaurants are also popular that are popular and direct competition because they belong to the same cuisine family.

Who are the potential target customers?

The target customers would primarily be people living in Helsinki. As Helsinki is the capital city of Finland, it is a popular tourist destination for travelers. Therefore, all people living in Finland would be the target customers. The key to the concept is preparing the meal by the customer which can be time-consuming. The research showed that younger generations appreciate the easiness of food, but younger people are more eager to follow trends. The concept is still a little unknown, therefore especially the people who fall into the profile of spontaneous experimenters are the most ideal target customers.

Main question

Is Helsinki a potential market area for authentic Korean barbecue restaurants?

Korean culture is a trendy subject right now. Based on the number of existing Korean restaurants in Helsinki, the demand in the city seems to be high. The demand is expected to stay high because of the trendiness of the culture. The results from the survey show that an authentic Korean barbecue restaurant would have a place in the restaurant industry in Finland. Most of the respondents showed interest in the cuisine. Finland already has many Korean cuisine restaurants but not many of them are authentic (Nupponen 2020). These restaurants are mainly located in the center of Helsinki. The areas in the center of Helsinki that are growing right now are Pasila, Kalasatama, Kruunuvuori, and Jätkäsaari. (Helsingin kaupunki 2021a). Therefore, we suggest if an authentic Korean barbecue is set up in Helsinki, maybe one of these areas should be considered as a possible location for this restaurant. With our research, there are no Korean restaurants in these areas. Relying on the results of the survey, there is interest in the concept outside of Helsinki too. Therefore, the restaurant could also be found in some other cities as well as Helsinki.

Research Questions	Key Findings
How familiar is the Korean barbecue concept already in Finland?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the survey, a relatively known concept
What is the existing competition in the market area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every restaurant and multiple Korean restaurants in Helsinki
Who are the potential target customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who fall in the profile of spontaneous experimenters
Is Helsinki a potential market area for authentic Korean barbecue restaurants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest and demand are high Easy market to enter

Table 5 Research questions and key findings

With the help of these key findings compiled in the table above, the authors believe that Helsinki would be a potential market area for authentic Korean barbecue concept.

5.2 Validity and Reliability

This research was centered around Helsinki and its market opportunities for authentic Korean barbecue. The survey was directed to people living in Finland, but difficulties were faced in spreading the survey to people living in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The survey was sent to all the business students at LAB university of applied sciences. The university campuses are in Lahti and Lappeenranta, therefore most of the respondents of the survey were from either of those cities. Considering the studies based on younger people moving to Helsinki because of a better job and studying opportunities, the possibilities of the students who answered the survey moving to Helsinki in the future are high.

5.3 Suggestions on Further Research

Authentic Korean barbecue could have a place in the restaurant industry outside of Helsinki as well. But this study is based on the market research of Helsinki. Therefore, we suggest that if one has an interest in the market opportunities of authentic Korean barbecue outside of Helsinki, the other areas should be studied more to get a better understanding of the market.

6 SUMMARY

The purpose of this thesis is to study the internationalization possibilities of authentic Korean barbecue to Finland. The main research question “Is Helsinki a potential market area for authentic Korean barbecue restaurants?” specifies the market research to Helsinki. Three sub-questions were created to help answer the main research question. The sub-questions are “How familiar is the Korean barbecue concept already in Finland?”, “What is the existing competition in the market area?”, and “Who are the potential target customers?”. To be able to answer the questions, empirical research was conducted. Primary data used was collected with a survey created for this thesis. Secondary data was collected from various electronic and printed sources.

This thesis starts with information about Korea. The origins of their food culture and traditions which was later deepened into the information of the food culture's position in the culture and overall popularity of Korean culture worldwide. After this, the theoretical framework is introduced. The framework is divided into three sections, macro level, industry, and concept analysis.

After the theoretical framework, comes the research and data analysis. In this chapter, the theoretical framework is adapted to the concept. It includes the situational analysis which consists of PESTEL and Porter's five forces. With the help of these tools, macro environment and industry-level factors could be analyzed. Then we continued with data collection and analysis. These sub-chapters consisted of a deeper examination of the survey and the responses to each question.

Lastly, with all the information gained from the survey, PESTEL, and Porter's five forces, a SWOT analysis was conducted on the concept. With the SWOT analysis internal and external factors affecting the concept were discovered. To conclude this thesis, all research questions were answered. The future of the concept would need further research thus this research showed a potential for the concept in the researched market area.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey

Authentic Korean Barbecue

Hello respondent,
we are third year international business students from LAB University of Applied sciences.
This survey was made to support our thesis regarding internationalizing opportunities of the authentic Korean barbecue concept to Helsinki. Responses are anonymous and will be used in our thesis.
This questionnaire will take about 5 minutes.

Hei vastaaja,
Olemme kolmannen vuoden opiskelijoita LAB ammattikorkeakoulusta. Tämä kysely on tehty tukemaan opinnäytetyötämme aiheesta korealaisen grilliruoan kansainväistymis mahdollisuuksista Helsinkiin. Vastaukset käsitellään anonyymeinä ja niiden tuloksia käytetään opinnäytetyössämme.
Kyselyn täyttö kestää noin 5 minuuttia.

Age / Ikä *

- ☐ <20
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 50<

Gender / Sukupuoli *

- ☐ Female / Nainen
- ☐ Male / Mies
- ☐ Non-binary /Muunsukupuolinen
- ☐ Prefer not to say / En halua kertoa

Where do you live? / Missä asut? *

- ☐ Helsinki Metropolitan area / Pääkaupunkiseutu
- ☐ Other: _____

What is your profession? / Mihin seuraavista luokista kuulut? *

- ☐ Student / Opiskelija
- ☐ Employed / Työssäkäyvä
- ☐ Unemployed / Työtön
- ☐ Retired / Eläkeläinen

How often do you eat in a restaurant? / Kuinka usein syöt ulkona? *

- ☐ Daily / Päivittäin
- ☐ Once a week / Kerran viikossa
- ☐ Once a month / Kerran kuussa
- ☐ Not so often / Harvemmin

How much money do you spend in a restaurant in average per visit on average? / Kuinka paljon rahaa sinulla suunnilleen kuluu per ravintolakäynti? *

- ☐ approximately / noin 20€
- ☐ approximately / noin 50€
- ☐ approximately / noin 100€
- ☐ more than / enemmän kuin 100€

Do you need a special occasion to go out? / Tarvitsetko erityisen syy ulkona syömiselle? *

☐ Yes / Kyllä

☐ No / Ei

If yes, what? / Jos kyllä, minkä?

Your answer

Do you know what Korean Barbecue is? / Tiedätkö mitä korealainen grilliruoka on? *

☐ Yes / Kyllä

☐ No / En

☒ Maybe / Ehkä

Below is a picture from authentic Korean barbecue restaurant. The meat is brought to you marinated and cut. The customer grills the meat the way they prefer to eat it. Pricing is done according to the amount of meat you buy. That price includes side dishes and one portion of rice per person.

Alla olevassa kuvassa näkyy autenttista korealaista grilliruokaa. Ravintolassa liha tuodaan valmiiksi marinoituna sekä leikattuna asiakkaalle. Asiakas kypsentää lihat oman maun mukaan. Hinnoittelu riippuu siitä, kuinka paljon lihaa ostaa. Hintaan sisältyy lihan lisäksi myös lisukkeet sekä yksi annos riisiä per henkilö.



Have you eaten Korean Barbecue? / Oletko syönyt Korealaista grilliruokaa? *

☐ Yes / Kyllä

☐ No / En

How likely are you to visit a Korean restaurant? / Kuinka todennäköisesti kävisit korealaisessa ravintolassa? *

1 2 3 4 5

Not likely / En todennäköisesti ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Very likely / Erittäin todennäköisesti