

Increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region

Yinan Zhang

Master's Thesis
Degree Programme in International
Business Management
2013



Degree Programme in International Business Management

Author Yinan Zhang	Group IBMA 2008
The title of your thesis Increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region	Number of pages and appendices 65 + 4
Supervisors Tarja Römer-Paakkanen	
<p>This study is an exploratory research focusing on increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region. It is based on a group of Chinese restaurant owners who participate a training program organized by Haaga -Helia University to improve their abilities of running business successfully. The objective of this study is to increase systematic knowledge on vital aspects to improve this group's entrepreneurial capabilities by digging out, categorizing, summarizing and analyzing data, and finally apply research result in actual operation in future.</p> <p>The study includes two sections: literature review part and empirical study part. In literature review part relevant theories are demonstrated step by step from broad topics to detailed ones, from 'entrepreneurial capabilities' to 'SME entrepreneurship', then moves to 'Chinese style entrepreneurial capabilities' and last focuses on 'Chinese SME entrepreneurship in Helsinki region'. As a result of this part, the preliminary core values of theoretical aspects will be identified.</p> <p>The empirical part is conducted by a qualitative analytical approach which is Appreciative inquiry. Twelve Chinese restaurant entrepreneurs were interviewed and study was also supplied by some quantitative data related to this topic. Then data analysis, finding and conclusions were brought out based on these.</p> <p>The results suggested the findings and discussion of this research. First the data analysis result of Appreciative inquiry will be introduced and proposition will be constructed on increasing the entrepreneurial ability and business running performance of Chinese entrepreneurs of Helsinki region and the four core values are elaborated: Entrepreneurial training, Networks, Chinese culture and Attitude. Secondly how Finnish culture working on this target research group will be explained additionally.</p> <p>In conclusion, implementation plan, reflections and recommendations for future research are demonstrated.</p>	
Keywords Entrepreneurial capabilities, Chinese entrepreneurs, Helsinki region, Qualitative research, Appreciative Inquiry.	

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Needs and objectives	2
1.2	Scope of the study	3
1.3	Research questions of the study	4
1.4	Benefit and outcome	5
2	Literature review.....	7
2.1	Entrepreneurial capabilities	7
2.1.1	Factors affecting entrepreneurial capabilities	8
2.1.2	SME entrepreneurial capabilities	10
2.2	Chinese style entrepreneurship capabilities.....	13
2.2.1	Networks (Guanxi)	13
2.2.2	Humanism.....	15
2.2.3	Familism	17
2.3	Chinese SME entrepreneurship in Helsinki region	18
2.4	Conceptual framework	21
3	Research methodology.....	23
3.1	Research philosophies	23
3.2	Research strategy.....	24
3.3	Research approach.....	25
3.4	Research method	26
3.4.1	Appreciative Inquiry	27
3.4.2	Advantages of Appreciative Inquiry.....	30
3.4.3	Particularity of applying Appreciative Inquiry.....	31
3.4.4	Data collection and analysis	33
4	Findings and discussion	37
4.1	Appreciative Inquiry analysis	37
4.1.1	Discovery	38
4.1.2	Dream.....	41
4.1.3	Design	42
4.1.4	Destiny	46

4.2	Local culture influence – Finnish culture.....	47
4.2.1	Commitment.....	47
4.2.2	Restrained on the surface and intensive inside.....	49
4.2.3	Great attention on life quality.....	50
4.3	Reliability and validity of the research.....	53
4.4	Chapter summary.....	54
5	Conclusion and recommendations.....	56
5.1	Implementation and suggestions.....	56
5.2	Reflections.....	58
5.3	Recommendations for future research.....	58
	Bibliography.....	60
	Appendix.....	66
	Appendix 1.....	66
	Appendix 2.....	68

1 Introduction

This study is a research focusing on increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region. The research is based on a group of Chinese restaurant entrepreneurs who participate a training program organized by Haaga-Helia University to improve their entrepreneurial abilities. The purpose is to find out the effective and applicable ways to enhance this specific entrepreneurs group's abilities of running successful business. The outcome of this study will not only help Haaga-Helia University to optimize and develop the follow-up training, but also benefit several institutions, organizations and companies which intend to develop Chinese related programs, trainings, research, cooperation and markets.

Entrepreneurial capabilities research is a very important topic in modern society and internationalization environment. Entrepreneurship plays a fundamentally important role to firms and government agencies worldwide. In certain aspect, entrepreneurship could be even regarded as the core of the dynamics of modern capitalism.

Entrepreneurship's function includes typically liberalizing the economy, infusing new technology, promoting foreign investment, and raising economic standards of living. (Barringer & Bluedorn 1999, 2.)

Then why entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region is chosen as research topic? Since China is a huge, potential, fast-increasing market, how to communicate and cooperate with Chinese becomes more and more a critical issue, especially how to collaborate with Chinese entrepreneurs. Such research of this area will be very practical, helpful, valuable and meaningful for both Finnish and Chinese. Knowing Chinese from Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region, researching how to increase their entrepreneurial capabilities will help Finnish understand more Chinese business and entrepreneurial culture or style, enhance competitive abilities, and build a bridge for future cooperation between Finnish enterprises and Chinese enterprises. Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region are strongly influenced by both Chinese and Finnish culture so this group has the representative value to be noticed and researched.

The study contains two main sections: theory and empirical study. The theoretical section creates an overall understanding about related concepts: entrepreneurship capabilities, SME management, Chinese culture and Chinese business value (including several detailed sub items). The empirical study consists of quantitative data and qualitative interviews conducted with certain number of Chinese restaurant entrepreneurs living in Helsinki and the interviewees will cover a wide range of age and different background. According to both theoretical section and empirical study the data will be systematically analyzed and the final conclusion will be brought up. Also certain suggestion will be proposed.

1.1 Needs and objectives

There are already thousands of Chinese in Helsinki and 43 registered Chinese restaurants in this city up to 2012 (Bureau of statistics.); Most of Chinese entrepreneurs enter food and beverage industry and operate restaurants according to Chinese culture. Recent years, this group wishes to play more important roles, participate in more social economic activities, and enter mainstream.

Moreover, in Helsinki region, most Chinese entrepreneurs are SME entrepreneurs, and most Chinese SME entrepreneurs are running Chinese restaurants instead of other business. This is due to the special Chinese culture, practical demands and social overseas environment. Here are two photos of two representative, famous Chinese restaurants in Helsinki city center, and both of their owners attended Haaga-Helia training program. The left one is called Tang Chao and the right one is called Da Shanghai. Both of them are typical and famous Chinese SMEs in Helsinki.

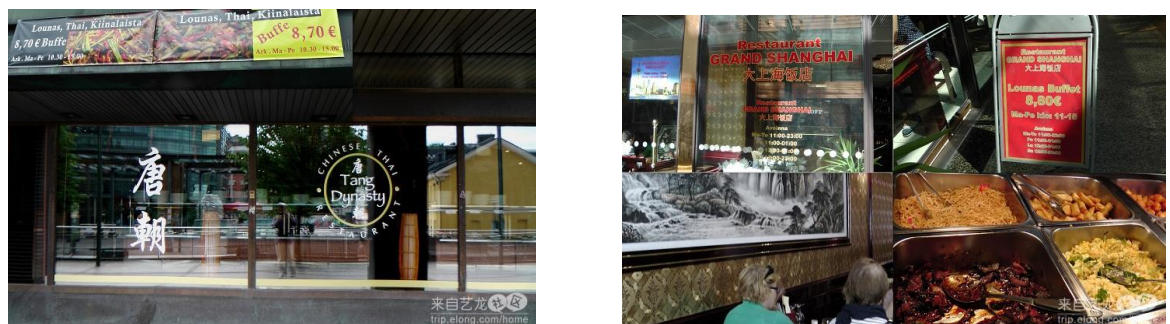


Figure 1. Pictures of Tang Chao and Da Shanghai restaurants (www.trip.elong.com)

Several reason could account for such phenomenon. First of all, running Chinese restaurants needs very low cost compared to other business; Second, most Chinese restaurants are family business which often be called as ‘husband-wife restaurant’ or ‘father-son restaurant’, which is very easy to start since it usually only need 2 or 3 employees which could be totally supported by a family; Last but the most important, Chinese food culture is very popular and accepted all over the world.

The research phenomenon in this study is entrepreneurship and the research objective is to increase systematic knowledge: the vital aspects to improve entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region, digging out, categorizing, summarizing and analyzing them, and finally apply research result in actual operation in future.

1.2 Scope of the study

The study concentrates on increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region. The study focuses on a specific group – Chinese restaurant owners who are majority of Chinese entrepreneurs living in Helsinki region. Thus, the Helsinki branches and regional offices of large-scale Chinese corporations will be excluded from the study, for instance, Zhongxing Company and Huawei Company which have registered branches in Helsinki. (Zhongxing Company’s full title is Zhong Xing Telecommunication Equipment Company Limited and Huawei Company’s full title is Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd. They represent minority of Chinese enterprises which operating style is more close to international corporations or even Finnish companies. Their parent companies locate in China and are very large scale ones.)

The research interviewees of empirical study are students of Haaga-Helia’s Chinese entrepreneurial capabilities training program. The courses of training program include management accounting, management & leadership, marketing & customer relations, service quality and design, product design, Finnish language and labor law in Finland. Thus when preparing the interview form, the above courses will be taken into

consideration. The research method chosen would be Appreciative Inquiry (sometimes shortened to "AI") which is primarily an organizational development method focusing on increasing what an organization does well positively rather than on eliminating what it does badly negatively.

Meanwhile, the theoretical study needs in-depth background research which will cover certain fields: entrepreneurship, culture influence, international communication, and local government affect. All these aspects will be discussed, demonstrated, analyzed and summarized in a detailed and systematic way in literature review chapter.

1.3 Research questions of the study

There are three research questions of this study:

- 1) What are the positive aspects to increase entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region?
- 2) How to locate and find out these positive aspects and why they are so important?
- 3) How to utilize these positive aspects in actual operation?

There are already thousands of Chinese living in Helsinki and 43 registered Chinese restaurants in this city (Bureau of statistics.), some of them have been operating for over 20 years. All of them are trying hard to improve entrepreneurial capabilities but they always get very confused: How? Is there any practical guideline and suggestion we can use? In many years the researcher has been always hearing their complains and negative comments of their current situation: language obstacle, culture difference, lack of business knowledge, etc. These SME entrepreneurs attended Haaga-Helia's training program and other courses, but they seldom systematically consider, summarize and analyze positive response.

However, learning and researching positive aspects, experience and knowledge are more important in real operation, which could indeed benefit entrepreneurs and help them improve entrepreneurial capabilities. This is the reason the researcher will apply Appreciative inquiry which focus on inspiring people to dig out their potential to

change current situation and create better results, to redefine past problems and to create future opportunities. Problems appear during research will not be avoid but will be considered in other respective. A way to process discovering, praising and building positive and applicable issues is more valuable and practical instead of fixing problems.

Certain possible proposition will be brought forward to utilize the research result of positive aspects in actual operation. The future proposed implementation methods will aim on creating motivation and energy amongst the people who participate, improving communication, trust, understanding and relationships, empowering and gives people the confidence to take risks in future, and promoting enthusiasm and productivity.

1.4 Benefit and outcome

Increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki can strongly benefit local economy and flourish market, and research on this topic have several meaningful benefit and outcome, which includes: researching entrepreneurship by a specific academic angle, promoting culture communication, developing new markets, and outputting education.

Researching entrepreneurship by a specific academic angle: There are a great deal of academic research materials concerning entrepreneurship field but the ones closely and directly related to this topic are quite limited. That is partly because in previous years very few of researchers focused researching on Chinese overseas restaurants fields, especially in Finland although a lot of people did research on entrepreneurship or even Chinese SME entrepreneurship. Chinese overseas restaurants fields entrepreneurial capabilities in Helsinki was somewhat ignored although restaurant owners are exactly the majority of Chinese SME entrepreneurs group. Therefore my research could fill in the blanks and it is very practical.

Furthermore, Chinese restaurants are usually the first window for Finnish to learn Chinese and Chinese culture, to learn new stuff of a new market, to be prepared to enter and develop a new market. Thus, the research results of increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki will be very important

naturally. Finally, to Haaga-Helia University, it is very valuable and potential to output education and training program.

2 Literature review

The literature review chapter will begin with introducing relative literatures step by step by gradually concentrating the knowledge range from large to small topic, from general to specific issue. Researcher starts from demonstrating the broad and general topic ‘entrepreneurial capabilities (SMEs)’ and then moving to ‘Chinese style entrepreneurial capabilities’ which is strongly influenced by Chinese culture, and eventually focusing on a specific group and specific research topic of ‘Chinese SME entrepreneurship in Helsinki region’. As a result of this part, the preliminary core values of theoretical aspects will be identified.

2.1 Entrepreneurial capabilities

According to Mosakowski (1998), entrepreneurial capabilities could be defined in terms of an entrepreneur’s (or an entrepreneurial firm) ability to act with foresight, creative behavior, intuition, heuristics activity, being alert to new opportunities and to develop the resources foundation required to start or/and develop a new venture. This definition covers the definition of entrepreneurial capabilities from two aspects (Mosakowski 1998, 625-643):

- 1) Cognitively viewing entrepreneurship from the individual level of analysis;
- 2) Objectively observing the entrepreneur as one fulfilling an economic function.

Zahra (2011) defines entrepreneurial capabilities (EC) as the ability to perceive, choose, shape and synchronize internal and external conditions for the enterprises’ exploration and exploitation (Zahra 2011, 7); exploration includes recognition, discovery and creation while exploitation means developing opportunities. Zahra (2011) also highlights three characteristics of EC as a useful concept to advance (Zahra 2011, 8):

- 1) EC is characterized by interplay of entrepreneurs’ abilities of envisioning and mobilizing action;
- 2) EC is located at the intersection of cognition and action. It emerges and develops from certain actions that entrepreneurs take to reconfigure conditions within or outside the organization.

- 3) EC consists of both exploration and opportunities exploitation so it could synchronize and shape emergent conditions on both internal and external aspects of the firm.

Several factors could influence entrepreneurial capabilities and certain core values work on them accordingly. In following sections the factors will be introduced and the core values will be located from two perspectives, from big scope to small scope:

Factors/core values working on general entrepreneurial capabilities, and factors/core values focusing on SME enterprises which the research topic is specifically concerning on.

2.1.1 Factors affecting entrepreneurial capabilities

There is a growing trend of interest in researching entrepreneurship and entrepreneur as the central role all over the world. The interest in entrepreneurial capabilities has increased considerably as a fast growing number of people take on a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship (Driessen & Zwart 2010, 1.). This section will dig out the factors and summarize core values affecting entrepreneurial capabilities from two different approaches: One is based on objective evaluation approach for entrepreneurs (Driessen & Zwart 2010, 1-2), another is based on a subjectivist theory of entrepreneurship focusing on individuals, concerning their knowledge, resources, skills, and the processes of discovery and creativity (Kor 2005, 2.).

Driessen and Zwart (2010) adopt objective approach to identify 4 components determining entrepreneurial competence based on competence theory: motivation, characteristics, capabilities and knowledge (Driessen & Zwart 2010, 2-6).

Knowledge	Motivation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market • Environment • People • Production • Finances 	<div> <i>Internally driven</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • autonomy • achievement • power </div> <div> <i>Externally driven</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Gap in the market • Interest in subject • Certainty of clients </div>
Capabilities	Characteristics
<div> <i>Company life cycle</i> <div> <i>Mature phase</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage • Motivate • Organize –plan • Financial administration </div> <div> <i>Early phase</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market orientation • Creativity • Flexibility </div> </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement • Autonomy • Power • Affiliation • Effectiveness • Endurance • Taking risks </div> <div> <i>Thinking styles</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pioneer • Salesperson • Manager • Expert </div>

Figure 2. Components that jointly form a competence (Driessen & Zwart 2010, 5.)

- 1) Motivation: Motivation has everything to do with wanting, thus only entrepreneurs with motivation can start. Motivation is the resources to drive motives and values of an individual to start a business by utilizing one's knowledge and capabilities.
- 2) Characteristics: It is the second component of entrepreneurial competence with strong support. These are traits which make people more or less capable for entrepreneurship. A certain number of characteristics are considered as vital factors in relative studies, such as the need for achievement, internal locus of control and risk taking propensity.
- 3) Capabilities: This component means being able to do something. Capabilities differ from Characteristics on the aspect of ability to learn. Characteristics are more or less a fact which is not easy to change in short period and not easy to learn either. However, capabilities are easier to learn and to change.
- 4) Knowledge: It is related to knowing and refers to the more rational part of entrepreneurship, as knowing rules for administration, principles of marketing, accounting procedures as debit and credit, and certain laws and rules. Experience is also regarded as a part of knowledge.

On the other hand, Kor (2005) indicates three factors strongly influence entrepreneurial capabilities based on subjectivist theory as below: discovery and creativity, knowledge and resources, and experiences and perceptions of opportunities.

- 1) Discovery and creativity: Subjectivist entrepreneurial discovery and creativity take place as entrepreneurs try to find the opportunities afforded by market frictions (i.e. uncertainties in competitive conditions) which are typically not known in advance and will only be resolved over possibly long time. Thus, entrepreneurs' positive and frequent interactions with customers, technologies, and firms lead to a crucial procedure of discovery and creativity. As a result, a causal link between entrepreneurial creativity and how entrepreneurs learn from dynamics in various market processes is built and leads to further research.
- 2) Knowledge and resources: The economic importance of the entrepreneur's personal knowledge and resources plays very important roles in a subjectivist entrepreneurial theory too. Asymmetric information and tacit knowledge make viable new business ventures are short of sufficient financial funds which are essential for growth. However, abundant knowledge and resources could best supply these shortcomings. With knowledge and resources, many entrepreneurs find creative ways to fund new business ideas even in mature product and service markets (Michael 1996, 487-514).
- 3) Experiences and perceptions of opportunities: Entrepreneurial experiences and perceptions of opportunities influence the rate/direction of the future growth of a firm. The entrepreneur's subjective experiences/perceptions and the productive services of firm's resources shape each other and evolve together.

2.1.2 SME entrepreneurial capabilities

First of all the definition of SME should be identified. What is SME? OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005) defines SMEs officially as below:

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are non-subsidiary, independent firms which employ fewer than a given number of employees. This number varies across countries. The most frequent upper limit designating an SME is 250 employees, as in the European Union (OECD 2005, 17.).
- Small firms are generally those with fewer than 50 employees, while micro-enterprises have at most 10, or in some cases 5, workers. Financial assets are also used to define SMEs. In the European Union, a new definition came into force on 1 January 2005 applying to all Community acts and funding programmes as well as in the field of State aid where SMEs can be granted higher intensity of national

and regional aid than large companies. The new definition provides for an increase in the financial ceilings: the turnover of medium-sized enterprises (50-249 employees) should not exceed EUR 50 million; that of small enterprises (10-49 employees) should not exceed EUR 10 million while that of micro firms (less than 10 employees) should not exceed EUR 2 million (OECD 2005, 17.).

European Commission (2005) defines SMEs according to the Extract of Article 2 of the Annex of Recommendation 2003/361/EC:

- The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro (European Commission 2005, 5.).

The detailed of explanation of above is, Commission recommendation of 6 May 2003 concern the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Article 2 as:

- The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.
- Within the SME category, a small enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 10 million.
- Within the SME category, a microenterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million (European Union 2003, 36.).

In Finland, a small and medium-sized enterprise is defined as a firm with less than 250 employees and either an annual turnover of maximum € 40 million or a balance sheet total of maximum € 27 million. Businesses larger than this may not own more than 25% of the capital of an SME. (Expat Finland 2012.).

Based on all above the standards the research objectives of this study could meet the requirements. Since most of research objective Chinese restaurants are family-based, the employees are less than 10 persons and the annual turnover cannot exceed one million even. The vital core values influencing SMEs are identified as four: culture, social innovation, knowledge flows and entrepreneurship skills (European Commission – Eurostat 2012, 109-110.).

- 1) Culture: The first frequently mentioned core value working on SMEs' entrepreneurship is culture which includes several aspects. For example, here the

two prominent aspects are ‘networks’ and ‘role models’. Networks has been raising a lot of discussion by showing the culture of creating businesses in groups rather than as individuals, helping to include businesses that begin in communities especially in some European countries as Italy and Sweden. Role models were demonstrated as playing as important role as networks that fitted into culture. The importance is helping people get more knowledge about how to start a business as well as providing an inspiration (European Commission – Eurostat 2012, 110.).

- 2) Social innovation: In recent years, the crisis both happened on financial and economic aspects makes creativity and innovation more important than before to foster sustainable growth, to provide secure jobs and to boost competitiveness (OECD 2010, 195.). Innovation is a very refreshing concept or process which brings organisational change in several aspects. It could solve social problems by identifying and delivering new services that improve the quality of life of individuals and communities; by implementing new labour market integration processes, new competencies/jobs, and new forms of participation, as various elements that each contributes to improving the position of individuals in the workforce. The key distinction for innovation from others is that it deals with improving the welfare of individuals and communities through employment, consumption and/or participation, its expressed purpose being to provide solutions for individual and community problems” (OECD LEED Forum on Social Innovations, www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/forum/socialinnovations).
- 3) Knowledge flows: Knowledge, especially knowledge flows, contributes greatly to the success of new and small firms and to the vitality of innovation systems. Knowledge is crucial for entrepreneurship and triggers the business innovation process as different degrees of knowledge makes entrepreneurial opportunities across the population. Company and university spin-offs are such convincing examples to show the role of knowledge in the entrepreneurial process. Company spin-offs harness both technological and market knowledge accrued in the parent company to launch their business. Moreover, although SMEs tend not to innovate alone but rather in collaboration with other organizations (enterprises, suppliers,

customers, universities, research organisations, etc), they may also need to interact and cooperate with national and sub-national governments, which is essential in the innovation policies design procedure and in the innovation funds distribution process (Gertler 2003, 75-99.).

- 4) Entrepreneurship skills: Learning processes are standing at the core part of entrepreneurship and SME development, since they are essential for the formation, survival and growth of a new business, as well as for the upgrading of existing SMEs. Recent studies strongly support this connection by proving that one of the qualities of successful entrepreneurs is the strong capacity to learn and acquire knowledge from everywhere and everything that comes their way (Minniti & Byrgave 2001, 5-16.). An adequate entrepreneur needs to master the ability as planning, organising and communicating, project development and implementation; team building and attribution and rewarding of success; recognition and proactive orientation to change and innovation; risk assessment and warranting (OECD 2010, 166.).

2.2 Chinese style entrepreneurship capabilities

As a historical country which is famous for its abundant, unique and diverse culture, Chinese culture indeed strongly influences those Chinese entrepreneurs living and working overseas. Although with an ethnically diverse population living in such a huge territory and a widely dispersed diaspora across the world, China still has its own style entrepreneurial culture. This section will list and analyze three most typical and dominant core values of it: networks (Guanxi), humanism and familism.

2.2.1 Networks (Guanxi)

‘Guanxi’ is a very important Chinese concept that refers to both personal relationships and social networks capital. In Chinese culture a sound social network is indispensable for entrepreneurship and the abuse of social networks might undermine the entrepreneurial spirit. Guanxi plays a critical role in business operation for all Chinese entrepreneurs, particularly when building business connections (Wang 2012, 80).

Bielby (2008) claims Guanxi is one of the most significant terms used when discussing the differences and challenges to do business with or within Chinese entrepreneur circles. Historically for any Chinese entrepreneur, Guanxi has been one of the biggest deciding factors whether a new venture can survive smoothly and then run successfully (Bielby 2008, 6); As a popular saying goes, Guanxi means, “Who you know”, the detailed explanation is, “Who you know is more important than what you know.” “Who you know” refers to “personal connections with the appropriate authorities or individuals” (Yeung & Tung, 1996, 54.).

Why do Chinese entrepreneurs take Guanxi as such a vital core value? Why are Chinese so keen to build and maintain social networks with interdependent selves? Several reasons could account for fact behind this phenomenon that such connections repeatedly play a crucial role in achieving business success.

The first and the most important reason is tradition. Due to the tradition of Chinese society which is full of unpredictable officialdom’s behavior, ordinary people are full of sense of insecurity. They might even have to obtain scarce resources or to avoid distress through social networks. Thus building and maintaining Guanxi generally becomes a survival strategy to Chinese. As time goes on, even in recent decades living conditions have improved greatly, Chinese still get used to copy this traditional strategy – keeping on using Guanxi (Wang 2012, 80.).

The second reason is the weak laws and rules in Mainland China. Growing up in such circumstance Chinese believe that laws and contracts may not be always effective or necessary. Therefore, in their minds “Who you know” should be more important than laws/rules and they hold an idea that business is essentially carried out by people’s interaction. As a result when Chinese entrepreneurs open business overseas they brought such rooted-concepts overseas too. They believe that social networks will be pivotal for entrepreneurship in any culture. In fact in some places of Australia it is proved to be true that certain groups of Chinese who are good at utilizing networks

did gain advantage in business ventures and did achieve noticeable success (Brandstätter 2011, 222-230).

The last reason is humanity: Guanxi does have its advantages which coincide with humanity. Like most things, business takes time to develop but the time spent forming and developing business is often critical to success. Strong Guanxi can accelerate process, reduce unnecessary procedures and avoid risks sometimes. It takes time and energy to build Guanxi but if only it is built most people will enjoy the benefits of it and naturally be addicted into it. Guanxi do each other favors in a reciprocal form although on many occasions, although such favors are even performed illegally or unethically. (Bielby 2008, 6.).

2.2.2 Humanism

Humanism also proposes a series of core values to serve the research topic. For Chinese, humanism has been applied thousands of years as an important Confucian value concerning human-centeredness, which covers several items as courtesy, magnanimity, good faith, kindness, diligence and thrift (Gao & Kotey 2011, 7.). There is a very interesting phenomenon that, Confucianism, which is the cultural cornerstone in every Chinese community worldwide, is actually fundamentally hostile to entrepreneurship instead of promoting it. It is because traditionally Confucianism disparages merchants and business activities; originally Confucianism concepts and philosophies are created for educational purpose mainly: rote learning, or learning for careers in government bureaucracies (Lam et al. 1994, 205-217). However, as time goes by, in recent decades more and more merchants and entrepreneurs utilize Confucianism concepts and philosophies into business field and gain success (Wang 2012, 78.).

Although there are several characteristics in Confucian values, in Chinese entrepreneurs circle two dominant entrepreneurial characteristics that stood out particularly strong to differentiate Chinese entrepreneurs from their competitors of other countries (Bielby 2008, 9.): diligence and thrift.

Diligence, in Chinese vocabulary is called 'Chiku Nailao', basically refers to endurance and persistent hardwork. In detailed way, it means working hard and doing one's absolute best, taking special care by doing things step by step; Diligence helps people to get things done with excellence and enthusiasm and leads to success (Fan 1995, 5-7). Diligence is also based on a kind of modern insecurity of Chinese because they have desire to make lives better and better otherwise they will feel risky since China now is a too-fast-developing country.

Diligence has been regarded as a typical Chinese entrepreneurial spirit for long decades but it was also challenged by modern society and western culture. Recent years overseas Chinese entrepreneurs have increasingly frequent conflicts with local residents due to their 'over-diligence', especially in European countries. Local complain that Chinese entrepreneurs' behavior of working 7 days per week and over 15 hours per day strongly weakens the competence of local enterprises. If local enterprises want to survive, local owners have to give up all holiday, entertainments and sport.
(www.cye.com.cn)

Another crucial Confucian value influences Chinese overseas entrepreneurship is thrift; In Chinese, it is call 'Jie jian'. Although most entrepreneurs are lean and be economical when starting up businesses no matter where they are from, Chinese entrepreneurs have taken it to a whole new level. Chinese prefer save over 40% of income, most of which for future to provide for their children; and still worry whether the proportion is too low. They believe in an old Chinese saying "Thrift ensures survival." (Bielby 2008, 9).

However, Chinese style thrift also brings problem appeared as two phenomena: short-term oriented business behavior and few ethical considerations. Chinese style thrift includes in important feature: lower the cost as much as possible. To make cost lower, entrepreneurs become unwilling to make long-term business operation decisions lest their investment be in vain, since long-term business often need persistent financial input. Which means, business behaviors become more short-term oriented or even speculative. As a result, the short-term orientation is detrimental to the entrepreneurial

spirit. Simultaneously, due to same reason ‘to lower cost’, Chinese business owners or managers are more likely to make low-quality goods (fake or shoddy goods) secretly with fewer ethical concerns. Finally a vicious circle appears: such practice of Chinese entrepreneurs will ruin people’s perception and do harm to the development of long-term entrepreneurship reputation (Wang 2012, 84.).

2.2.3 Familism

Familism is another crucial core value of Chinese style entrepreneurship because Chinese overseas entrepreneurs do have prevalence of family businesses worldwide. As an essential feature of Chinese culture, familism means that family interests are placed above those of individuals, of society, and of other groups within it (Lau 1982, 25.). The particular form for Chinese overseas entrepreneurship is, to pursuit the familism values, Chinese owners prefer to recruit family members, relatives, and friends, so that the majority of overseas Chinese SMEs are family owned (Zapalska & Edwards 2001, 286). The familism style favored by Chinese culture results in the prevalence of family businesses, which has both positive and negative effects on entrepreneurship (Wang 2012, 81).

Both advantages and disadvantages for entrepreneurship of family-based business structure are listed and analyzed as below. The first advantage is that families could provide sufficient financial support in businesses starting-up process, which is crucial for the success of business ventures since most newly founded small firms usually have difficulty in acquiring external financing. The second advantage is the majority of entrepreneurs are family members or relatives, thus interaction are built on basic of mutual trust; as a result, the internal transaction costs are strongly reduced. (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1995).

However, familism also has a lot of disadvantages to discourage entrepreneurship. The family-based structure negatively affects the development of businesses in the following respects (Wang 2012, 80.):

- 1) Restricting the size of enterprise because the number of family members are after all limited.

- 2) Result in nepotism which distorts the allocation of human resources and make talented people out of favor.
- 3) Paternalism may too much influences decision-making processes, which is harmful to the creation of innovative ideas.

2.3 Chinese SME entrepreneurship in Helsinki region

This section will concentrate on a more detailed and specific field: What kind of concepts, factors, values and policies will help to increase the Chinese SME entrepreneurship in Helsinki region? In several researches it is found out that both Finnish government and local organizations have been paying great attention to support SMEs in several aspects. They hold an idea that SMEs has a central role to reach all kinds of long-term goals of the Finnish economy. They treat all foreign SME owners equally as a whole, do not distinguish Chinese SME entrepreneurs from other nationalities, and do not have any big difference between Helsinki and other regions either. Probably because Chinese are still a minority in Helsinki even in Finland, Chinese entrepreneurs are not be treated separately although Chinese have relatively unique culture. Chinese entrepreneurs enjoy the benefit and support along with other SME entrepreneurs together. Thus, following paragraphs will demonstrate in detailed ways: What are the key issues for Finnish government and main civil organizations to support SMEs? What are the core values they emphasize to increase the entrepreneurial capabilities?

OECD has given Finnish government high praise in its research and report book *Globalisation and small and medium enterprises (SMEs)* on its effort and contribution to support SMEs. Finnish government sets major goals definitely of SMEs supporting policy which includes following (OECD 1998, 80.):

- To enhance real competitive abilities of SMEs;
- To improve in production activities;
- To better develop in business environment.

Therefore, the initial main proposals for governmental activities in order to reach the goals cover several aspects as following:

- Formulating financial policy: Finnish government realizes the common financial difficulties of SMEs, thus it takes care of it with special government operations and collateral help, even tax legislation could be changed and adjusted in favor of highly geared SMEs.
- Supplying indirect personnel cost: The foundation for the financing of social security should be widened and the proportions of government, employer and employee shares should be modulated and optimized.
- Focusing on labour market: most SME entrepreneurs request for more flexible legislation on working hours, conditions of employment.
- Providing chance of education and development: Simultaneously, nice communication and closer collaboration between businesses and educational institutions is required.
- Streamlining administration: Bureaucracy better be decreased.
- Promoting public procurement: It is also emphasized that to develop the ability of SMEs to utilise public purchasing.

Finally, after collecting several years' experience, the common influencing factors and core values were summarized as three following aspects (OECD 1998, 81.), which will be demonstrated in a more detailed way then. Finnish government believes that these three aspects take the crucial responsibilities in increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of SMEs:

- 1) Government support
- 2) Entrepreneurial training
- 3) Networks of relative circles and fields

The first and the most important core value recognized is government support, which contains systematic and broad coverage of Finnish government support covering all major functions: finance, guarantees, consulting help and marketing communication services.

Secondly, the entrepreneurial training is also taken as an essential core value.

Entrepreneurial training is focusing on extensive entrepreneurial and export training;

moreover, in recent years it has been generally taken over by non-government organizations. It is believed that sufficient and qualified trainings will be very beneficial to develop managerial skills.

Thus, Finnish government began to proactively finance and support entrepreneurial training from 1965, introducing grants for entrepreneurs of small industry to stage budget. Nowadays, entrepreneurial training covers a wide range of activities proposed by public, private, civil and academic organizations. A great deal of educational institutions from vocational schools to universities also participate in and play more and more important roles. For example, the MIF (The Management Institute of Finland), merged by FINTRA (the Finnish Export Institute) and the JTO School of Management and Infor on July 2nd 2012, is one of the most representative institutes providing extensive entrepreneurial and export training. Such institute aims at the growth of professionals in business by training foreign personnel in several aspects: export seminars, international business training, language training, and export management. Since MIF has been cooperated closely with Finnish industry, certain departments of Finnish government, central business organizations and universities, it has great advantage of reacting to the changing needs of customers and introducing a wider variety of activities. (<http://www.mif.fi/en>)

Last but not least, Finnish government also helps to build networks of relative circles and fields to enhance the competitive abilities of SMEs. There are 2 kinds of networks, one is the networks of foreign trade advisers, joint export managers and export circles; the other is networks of trade commissioners and industrial attaches. Both of them gave SMEs great support in practical aspects.

In summary, government support, entrepreneurial training and networks of relative circles and fields are regarded as specific core values of this part and are playing important roles in increasing Chinese SME entrepreneurs' capabilities in Helsinki as successful as they benefit other SME entrepreneurs in Finland. (OECD 1998, 82.)

2.4 Conceptual framework

This study is an exploratory research mainly based on qualitative approach, thus the conceptual framework is illustrated as the below figure. Since the research goal is to increase entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region, to achieve this goal researcher begins with reading relative literatures and then gradually narrows down the knowledge range from large to small topic, from general to specific issue. Researcher starts from the broad and general topic ‘entrepreneurial capabilities (SMEs)’ and then concentrates onto ‘Chinese style entrepreneurial capabilities’ which is strongly influenced by Chinese culture, and eventually focuses on a specific group and specific research topic of ‘Chinese SME entrepreneurship in Helsinki region’. As a result of this process, the preliminary core values of theoretical aspects will be identified.

Afterwards, the first round interview (semi-constructed interview of Appreciative Inquiry, shorten to AI) will be proceeded to identify the core values from target research group interviewees themselves. Integrating on the above mentioned core values identified from both approaches, the expansion of core values will be made to design more detailed, particular and categorized interview questions

Based on above more detailed interview data collected, thematic analysis of data will be processed by matrix form and possibility propositions will be brought forward next. Finally the implementation will be proceeded and be measured to achieve the original research goal.

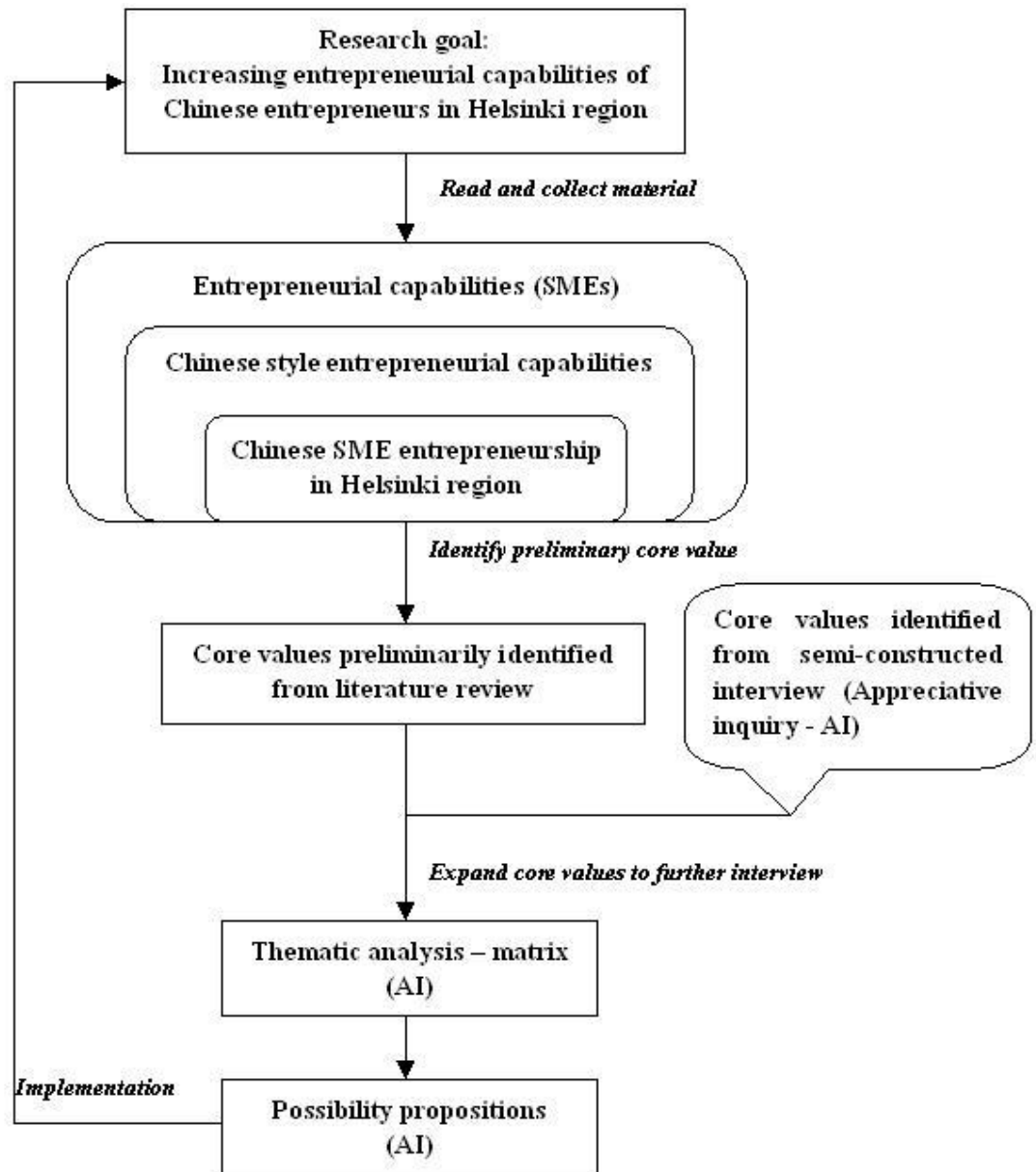


Figure 3. Conceptual framework

3 Research methodology

This chapter will focus on what is already known about this phenomenon and the method to further observe and research the phenomenon; in more academic expression, will illustrate the ontological and epistemological hypothesis of the study. The chapter begins with describing research philosophies and research strategy, and then will discuss research approach and detailed research method which is Appreciative Inquiry. To explain the research method clearly, the advantages and particularities of Appreciative Inquiry will be depicted. The last part of this chapter will concentrate on data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Research philosophies

Saunders et al. (2009) define research philosophy as the development of the research background, research knowledge and its nature (Saunders et al. 2009, 304). Research philosophy could also be defined with supplement of research paradigm. According to the explanation of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), research paradigm is the broad framework, which comprises perception, beliefs and understanding of theories and practices to conduct a research. Its characteristics include precise procedure, involving various steps through which researcher builds a relationship between research objectives and questions (Cohen et al. 2000, 55-60).

Research Paradigm includes three components: epistemology, ontology and methodology (Easterby-Smith et al. 2002, 22.). Research methodology will be demonstrated in later sections, here the epistemology and ontology will be explained first.

Epistemology refers to common parameters and assumptions associated with the excellent way to investigate the nature of the real world (Easterby-Smith et al. 2002, 25.). The epistemology of this research is positivism since its concept is directly associated with the idea of objectivism. The positivism philosophical approach is

mainly related with the observations and experiments to collect data and information. In such philosophical approach, researcher will give viewpoint to comment the phenomenon by the help of objectivity. Researcher will collect information and data from a certain sample group (in this research the sample group is Chinese entrepreneurs who work in Helsinki) instead of focusing details of research. Thus, researcher's own beliefs will not have any value to affect the research study.

Ontology means common assumptions created to understand the real nature of the society. Blaikie (1993) describes ontology as "the science or study of being" and develops this description for the social sciences to encompass "claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other". In short, ontology describes the view including both claims and assumptions on the nature of reality. The ontology of this research is interpretivism since the research object of this topic focusing on practitioners' feelings, opinions, comments and attitudes instead of facts. This kind of philosophical approach understand specific business situation (Kasi 2009, 276.).

3.2 Research strategy

Coopers and Schindler (2006) define research strategy as a plan of action that gives direction to researcher's efforts, enabling the researcher to conduct research systematically (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 115.); while Saunders et al. (2009) define research strategy as "the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions" and describe research strategy as a general orientation to research's conduct by providing the overall direction of the research including the process by which the research is operated (Saunders et al. 2009, 600-602).

This research, "increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region" is a typical exploratory research. It aims to conduct a problem that has not been clearly defined before and it is undertaken when not much information is available on similar problem and not much analogical research issues have been solved before (Saunders et al. 2009, 544). Thus, Appreciative Inquiry which belongs to Action Research will be taken as research strategy.

Action Research is a form of research in which practitioners reflect systematically on practice, implementing informed action to bring about improvement in practice; which is very suitable and practical to this topic since the researcher is suggested to better to work as a part of the objective research organization. One of the characteristics of Action Research is involving the process of actively participating in an organization change situation whilst conducting research (Mills 2007, 3.). The action research cycle consists of following four steps and researcher will also follow them - planning, acting, observing and reflecting:

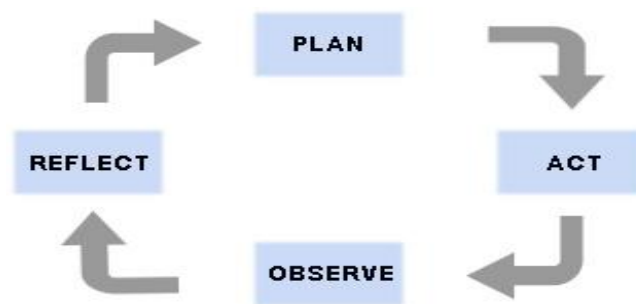


Figure 4. Action Research cycle (Richards & Lockhart 1996, 12.)

3.3 Research approach

Saunders et al. (2009) explain that when starting a research, first the researcher should choose between two main following research approaches (Saunders et al. 2009, 125):

- 1) Deductive approach, which means to create theory based on collected literature, as well as existing findings and test it through observation; Saunders et al. (2009) argue that compared to inductive approach, deductive approach involves much higher degree of certainty due to the fact that the researcher is moving from specific observations to a broader theories and conclusions (Saunders et al. 2009, 139).
- 2) Inductive approach, which means first researcher makes the observation, then devises theory as a result of the data analysis. Blaxter et al. (2006) advocate that adopting the inductive approach involves depth understanding and competent knowledge about the research idea, which provides the researcher much

opportunities to reveal different alternative explanations of the problem (Blaxter et al. 2006, 23.).

This research does not clearly belong to one of the two above approaches since it is not testing any academic theory; however, it has some features related to both of the two.

As deductive approach, the research approach begins with reading abundant material, collecting plentiful information and then locating and summarizing certain core values of the research idea of increasing entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs; although such reading will provide very effective help for future research, it does not lead to a direction of testing theory or making hypothesis. Thus it is a bit close to deductive approach since a lot of collecting academic material including a series of theories beforehand is needed.

Then, interview, investigation and observation will be proceeded which will provide concrete and solid foundation of ongoing research. As a result, abundant data analysis closes to inductive approach in some degree. However, research mission is not devising theories but to present researcher's own conclusion, so it is not exactly an inductive research either.

3.4 Research method

The research method applied for this topic is a qualitative research called Appreciative Inquiry, which is shortened to AI. In this section AI will be explained step by step in 4 parts: First, the definition, theory and operational method of AI will be demonstrated; Next, AI's advantages will be introduced; then, particularities of AI will be explained to show why AI is used specifically for this research topic; Finally the research process will be described in the last part: data collection and analysis.

3.4.1 Appreciative Inquiry

In this part the concept and definition of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) will be presented first, and then the details of AI operating process will be introduced. AI is not only an innovative change management and modern organizational analysis tool, but also has several other important functions. AI could both be applied as a method of action research and regarded as a theory of how organizational realities develop; it is an experiment to generate a collective figure of future by exploring the positive aspects of ‘what is’ and ‘what has been’ (Thatchenkery 2003, 2.).

How to define AI? According to Cooperrider & Whitney (2005), AI is the cooperative, coevolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It covers systematic discovery of what gives “life” to a system or an organization when it is most effective and most capable in economic, ecological, and human terms.

Moreover, AI includes the art and experiment of asking questions concerning on enhance an organization’s capacity to dig out and increase positive potential. Difference from previous research methods which are more focusing on “Problem-solving” which are full of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis; In AI, intervention is replaced by imagination and innovation; in AI, there are more discovery, dream, and design. AI hypothesizes that every active operation has undeveloped, abundant and inspiring potential of positive aspects. Thus it connects the positive change core directly to possible change agenda, and changes which were never considered possible before could be suddenly and democratically mobilized. (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 8.) Furthermore, AI is about an act of exploration and discovery of valuing and recognizing the best in people or the world around us; it will affirm past and present strengths, successes, and potentials via analysis of answered tailor-made questions.

Cooperrider & Whitney (2005) introduce the 4-D cycle of Appreciative Inquiry phases of following figure (figure 2) which consists of 4 phases: discovery, dream, design and destiny. The figure instruct clearly how to proceed a typical AI research.

AI "4D" Cycle

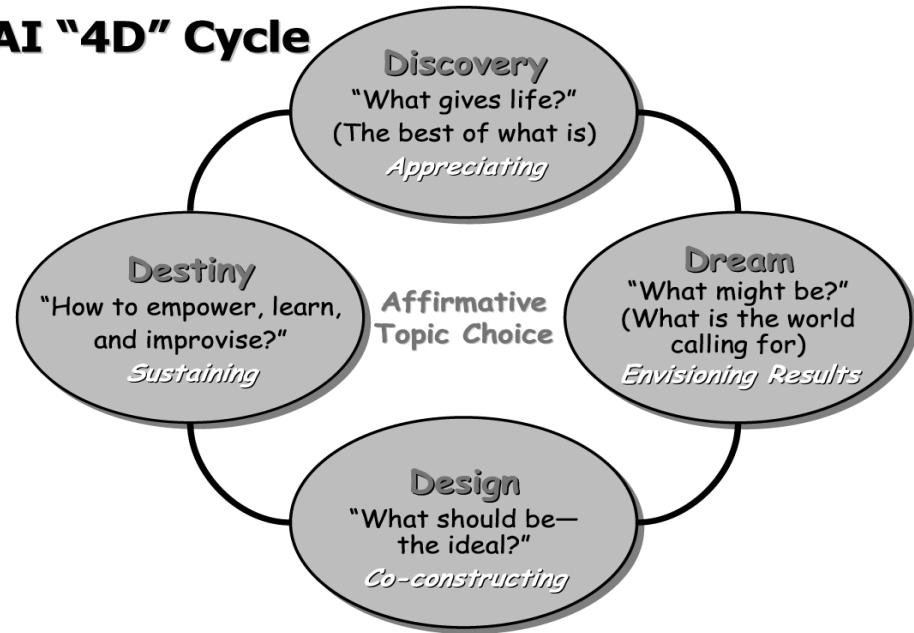


Figure 5. Appreciative Inquiry 4-D cycle (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 15.)

Research begins with 'affirmative topic choice' which locates at the center of the cycle, it is the focus of any AI process and covers most strategic aspect. Choosing affirmative topics is a chance for any member of a system/organization/community to set a strategic course for the future. In this research, the affirmative topic choice is decided as: The quality and inspiration of help and support that Chinese entrepreneurs acquired. The idea is digging out and understanding the factors make Chinese entrepreneurs feel best to improve their capabilities; and how to consolidate such elements in future.

The following table briefly outlines the four phases of the AI 4-D model, which is a step-by-step coherent process, from the first phase ‘discovery’ to last phase ‘destiny’.

Table 1. AI 4-D cycle phases

Phase	Focus on	Participants
Discovery – What gives life?	Mobilizing the whole group by engaging all participants in the articulation of strengths and best practices. Identifying "The best of what has been and what is"; Mobilizing a systematic inquiry into the positive change core.	Engaging in appreciative interviews; Responding to interview highlights
Dream – What might be? What should be the ideal?	Creating a clear results-oriented vision to discover potential and to organize questions of higher purpose; Assume the greatest potential for optimistic influence and impact.	Describing dreams that gathered during the interviews; Creating and introducing dramatic enactments
Design – How can it be?	Suggesting feasible propositions of the ideal organization, linking a system design that capable to people, and magnifying the positive aspects to recognize the newly expressed dream; Crafting a system in which the positive change core is activated in strategies, processes, systems, decisions, and cooperations.	Recognizing obviously influential design factors; Making a design; Making provocative propositions incorporating the positive change core.
Destiny – How to empower, learn and improvise?	Enhancing the affirmative capability of group, enabling it to establish hope and sustain factors for ongoing positive change and high performance; Inviting action inspired by the results of previous process: discovery, dream and design.	Announcing intended actions and ask for supply; Choosing groups and plan next steps.

Simultaneously, Thatchenkery (2003) simplifies and specifies AI processes to practical items as following 6 steps, thus research could apply it in a more operational way:

Step 1, To identify life-giving forces (LGFs) or core values;

Step 2, To extend LGFs or core values by applying appreciative interviews;

Step 3, To make thematic analysis of the data to conduct organizational analysis;

Step 4, To refer feasible propositions;

Step 5, To validate the propositions;

Step 6, To organize an implementation team

3.4.2 Advantages of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry has many advantages in this study. As well as accelerating change of all kinds, increasing the rate of improvement and the speed of attainment of goals or results, it still has a number of powerful effects. In this part the advantages of AI will be demonstrated in two aspects: opinions from scholars/researchers and opinions gathered from AI participants.

Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003) claim Appreciative Inquiry adds great value to organizations and communities by consistently and dramatically liberates people's sense of individual and collective power. They believe that Appreciative Inquiry give people both the experience of personal power and collective power by providing people the practice exercising power and certain responsibility to do things for the good of the whole. When participants experience the liberation of power and realize the effect it has on their lives and the environment, they will feel permanently transformed. Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003) also discover that for some people, Appreciative Inquiry could enhance self-esteem and self-expression; For others, Appreciative Inquiry permanently and positively act on their careers and career potentials. Thus, the liberation of power generates a self-perpetuating momentum for positive change. (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom 2003, 266.)

In this research, self-esteem and self-expression are extremely important to Chinese restaurant entrepreneurs since most of them do not really regard themselves as a part

of local entrepreneurs, they feel a bit isolated although they have been living and working in Finland for several years. AI is very suitable to encourage them to speak out their real minds and seek positive change.

Besides the above ideas of professional researchers, what do AI participants think about it? Some opinions of benefits of AI have been collected as below. People attend AI projects identify the reason companies would like to use AI. (Judy & Hammond 2006, 4-5)

- 1) Inspiring motivation and energy: AI creates motivation and energy amongst the people who participate. By grounding participants in the best of the past and inspiring visions of a more-hoped-for future, AI generates creativity, ownership and motivation.
- 2) Maximizing participant's input: It strengthens communication, understanding, trust and relations, even where these have been difficult or fractured on certain aspect, e.g. cultural aspect. It is empowering and supplying people confidence to take risks in future.
- 3) Creating positive environment: Different from the more traditional problem-solving approaches, it creates a positive atmosphere for change and avoids the resistance and loss of hope for a better future. It makes working a more enjoyable experience, promotes enthusiasm and enhances productivity.
- 4) Strong practicability: AI always generates naturally a renewed commitment to any organizational change and easily translates it into action.

Thus, Appreciative Inquiry is chosen as detailed and specific research theory.

3.4.3 Particularity of applying Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry still has certain particularities which appear to be very suitable for the research. First, AI encourages people to talk and dream about positive aspects instead of criticizing negative aspects, which is coincident with a theme of traditional Chinese culture “talking good of people, not talking bad of people”; second, as a part of immigrant entrepreneur groups, Chinese entrepreneurs have serious distrust

problems which could also be solved by AI process. Both aspects will be demonstrated as below.

First of all, according to traditional Chinese culture people usually avoid to talk negative aspects about a person, a community or an organization. Chinese believe that such ways could save 'face' for others; criticizing a person or a community will cause 'face-off' for others, then will make them hating you or against you. In Chinese culture, 'face' is regarded as a very important aspect in social life and business activities; it is the respect, pride, and dignity of an individual, or the reputation, reciprocity, response and respect for a community (Leung & Chan 2003, 1575 – 1598.). Treasuring 'face' is necessary to survive in social environment and losing or hurting 'face' will cause trouble and bring disaster.

The theme of AI is to encourage people to discuss positive aspects rather than to complain; AI focuses on discovery, dream, imagination and innovation rather than problem-solving. This specific theme is very close to Chinese culture. Most Chinese hold an idea that complaints be recorded to research is very risky and will do great harm to community, so they often deny to give negative comments in interview. However, praise, dream and discovering good aspects are considered to be pleasant and encouraged by Chinese culture, so they don't mind to explain as much as they could and participate in happily.

Secondly, as a part of immigrant entrepreneur groups, Chinese have serious distrust problems as other peers from various countries. Aaltonen and Akola (2012) claim that immigrant business owners face the problem of lacking of distrust of locals, language skills and cultural knowledge; the later two aspects even deteriorate the former. In Finnish local market, most customers are from target country, but immigrant entrepreneurs are often lack of relational and cognitive local resources and social capital to get into surrounding culture. Being short of identification to local groups results in significant barriers to trust. Simultaneously, since there are still language and cultural distance, the building of trust appears to be more difficult and time-consuming. As time goes by, such distrust will increase in certain degree; thus immigrant

entrepreneurs turn to be more conservative and silent; begin to gradually keep distance with local and get used to such situation. (Aaltonen & Akola 2012, 8-9.)

Thus, traditional, stereotype and fixed interviews are not very effective to them and is not capable to collect high-quality and valuable response. Entrepreneurs perfunctorily answer interview questions without any interest or input. Even when facing an interviewer who is also an immigrant from same country and speaks same mother language, they still show impatient attitude and give possibly unreliable answers, if the interview forms are full of formalisms questions.

However, AI could best settle this problem by encouraging face-to-face and one-to-one communication. AI research style encourages interviewees to talk about their own story and dream about a lot of things, which creates a relaxed talking atmosphere; and such way could make entrepreneurs/interviewees to show positive and patient attitude to really share their points of view. The questions of AI are designed more open and comprehensive than traditional method. In AI process people can be enlightened to think, dream, make example, and communicate with interviewers by relaxed discussions instead of simply answering 'Yes' or 'No'. Thus AI has unique function in such investigation.

3.4.4 Data collection and analysis

This part will display the detailed ways of data collection and data analysis that how Appreciative Inquiry was applied to research the phenomenon. First will demonstrate data collection both in general and detailed way; then data collection will be proceeded to the data categorization, data analysis process and follow-up steps (Thatchenkery 2003, 6.).

Appreciative Inquiry typically starts with identification of core values and life-giving-forces (LGFs). The researcher first needs to identify core values by reading and analyzing abundant and various sources of information, knowledge and material including both academic literatures/publications and several instructions, manuals/previous interviews/experience based on Chinese restaurants entrepreneurs

who work and live in western countries. All above are listed systematically in Chapter 2, the literature review part. Thus, the preliminary dimensions and LGFs could be located.

Next, further identification, modification and supply of LGF will be proceeded by adopting three basic AI interview questions as below and these questions will be illustrated in more detailed way in Chapter 4, Finding and discussion part.

- Can you recall some very positively useful experiences from training and working?
- What was the moment you feel best appreciated by others during training and working?
- Considering all your classmates/colleagues/peers, you appreciate whose working ability most? Why?

Therefore, summarizing above two aspects, the common themes of LGFs will be got.

The next step is to extend LGFs and explore core values by applying the more categorized questions based on each LGFs. The interview took place in Helsinki in early 2013 and the 12 interviewees are all Chinese restaurant owners. The interview period was chosen between Finnish New Year (Jan 1st 2013) and Chinese New Year (Spring festival, Feb 10th 2013), since Chinese entrepreneurs were not very busy during the period. Moreover, nearly all Chinese restaurants' location have convenient transportation so that it is very easy to visit there, then interviews were taken place in their restaurants.

The interview form was chosen as 'Face-to-face' for certain reason. Talking to Chinese entrepreneurs is a slowly warming-up process, interviewees need time to relax and chat with interviewers especially when they know that their answers will be recorded as research material. To begin a conversation with Chinese – even a professional interview, it is important to first randomly chatting about their family, children, holiday at beginning; then friendly talking atmosphere is created, formal questions could be brought out and discussed. Thus, a face-to-face interview is necessary and plays an important role to guarantee data quality. Meanwhile, according to the educational

degree, gender, age of interviewees, different and flexible attitude should be applied: After getting familiar, high-educated and young interviewees prefer direct and clear questions while elders prefer gentle and slow-paced style; females prefer interviewers who can chat with them a few minutes before professional interview while males prefer Q&A directly and sharply. In result, answers will be filtered, organized and categorized to research data by manual process. The following table explains properties of interviewees.

Table 2. Properties of interviewees

No	Age range	Gender	Educational degree	Restaurant location	Date	Interview form
1	50~60	Female	Bachelor	Bus/tram/railway station	01/02/2013	Face to face
2	50~60	Male	PhD	Bus/tram/railway station	01/02/2013	Face to face
3	50~60	Male	PhD	City center	01/02/2013	Face to face
4	50~60	Female	Bachelor	City center	01/02/2013	Face to face
5	40~50	Female	Junior college(Poly)	City center	04/02/2013	Face to face
6	40~50	Female	Bachelor	Residential area	04/02/2013	Face to face
7	40~50	Male	Junior college(Poly)	Residential area	04/02/2013	Face to face
8	30~40	Female	Junior college(Poly)	City center	04/02/2013	Face to face
9	30~40	Male	Bachelor	Residential area	08/02/2013	Face to face
10	30~40	Female	Bachelor	City center	08/02/2013	Face to face
11	30~40	Male	Poly	Residential area	08/02/2013	Face to face
12	30~40	Male	Bachelor	City center	08/02/2013	Face to face

The following steps are data analysis part, consists with thematic analysis of the data to conduct organizational analysis and referring feasible propositions. It means, after

having the answers ready, data will be categorized and analyzed academically by each LGFs by matrix etc which will be explained in more specific way in Chapter 4, too.

4 Findings and discussion

In this chapter the research finding of this study will be demonstrated and analyzed based on the collected data, and then certain discussion will be presented. First of all the data analysis result of Appreciative Inquiry will be introduced and proposition will be constructed on increasing the entrepreneurial ability and business running performance of Chinese entrepreneurs of Helsinki region; next a unique finding will be narrated: The influence of Finnish culture working on this target research group. This specific finding did not appear in literature review collecting process because relative literature is very limited and previously very few researchers have ever noticed this group; however, the influence does exist and is indeed working on research group; it gradually appeared during interview procedure. It is not categorized in Appreciative Inquiry research result because it differs from the four Appreciative Inquiry LGFs (Life-Giving-Forces) defined.

4.1 Appreciative Inquiry analysis

When being applied as a research methodology in interview process, Appreciative Inquiry starts from following three main questions and their sub-questions as the first round questionnaire. These questions are used to activate the participating desire and describing ability of interviewees; and to get a sense of what truly attracts or attracted interviewees. Thus interviewees could proactively explain their own idea. Friendly and cooperative atmosphere of initial communication could provide solid basis for further interview and follow-up data analysis. The sub-questions will be demonstrated in following section: Discovery section. The starting main three questions are as below:

- Can you recall some very positively useful experiences from training and working?
- What was the moment you feel best appreciated by others during training and working?
- Considering all your classmates/colleagues/peers, you appreciate whose working ability most? Why?

4.1.1 Discovery

The first step of Appreciative Inquiry in this research is the identification of core values/life-giving-forces (LGFs). Due to the busy schedule and irregular working hours for interviewees who are Chinese restaurant owners attended entrepreneurship training courses, researcher need to identify organization's core values beforehand by reading and analyzing abundant and various sources of information and material; not only the academic literatures and publications, but also several instructions, manuals and previous interviews/experience by Chinese restaurants who work and live in western countries. All above are listed systematically in Chapter 2, the literature review part. Thus, the preliminary dimensions and organizations' core value could be demonstrated as below in four ranges from broad to specific one:

Core values of entrepreneurial capabilities

- Discovery and creativity
- Knowledge and resources
- Experiences and perceptions of opportunities
- Motivation, characteristics, capabilities

Core values of SME's entrepreneurial capabilities

- Social innovation
- Culture (networks, role models, attitude towards risks and failure)
- Knowledge flows
- Entrepreneurship skills

Core values of Chinese style entrepreneurial capabilities

- Networks (Guanxi)
- Humanism
- Familism

Core values of Chinese entrepreneurial capabilities in Helsinki

- Government support

- Entrepreneurial training
- Networks of relative circles and fields

Then, further identification and modification of LGF will be proceed by adopting questions to further detailed interviews as suggested by Cooperrider & Whitney (1999) and Thatchenkery (2003). Interviewees are required to dig out the positive cores of the topic. Following questions were adopted as table 3 below:

Table 3. Questions and follow-up question of further identification and modification of LGFs

Question	Follow-up sub-questions
Can you recall some very positively useful experiences from training and working?	1, What made it happen? 2, What made it a significant positive experience? 3, What did you learn from it? 4, What was the positive aspect about your own role?
What was the moment you feel best appreciated by others during training and working?	1, Describe the moment in detailed way. 2, What made it happen? 3, Why you felt so appreciated?
Considering all your classmates/colleagues/peers, you appreciate whose working ability most? Why?	1, What did you admire in him/her? 2, How has the action positively contributed to others, or influenced others?

According to interviewees' answers, the LGFs of inquiry and investigation procedure could be summarized as below:

- Attitude (This core value appears several times in face-to-face interview although was not frequently found during literature review)
- Entrepreneurial training
- Chinese traditional culture
- Social networks
- Local government support

Therefore, based on above core values identified from both aspects (literature and interview), the final LGFs could be identified and then be expanded. The final LGFs of this research are as below four points and the LGFs could be expanded as below table 4 questions for interviewees. All further discussion will be presented based on this section.

- **Entrepreneurship training (Skills and knowledge etc.)**
- **Networks**
- **Chinese culture**
- **Attitude**

Table 4. Follow-up question of LGFs expansion

LGFs/core values (Life-giving-forces)	Follow-up sub-questions
LGF 1: Entrepreneurship training (Skills and knowledge etc.)	1, What kind of training have you accepted? 2, What kind of training you wish to have in future? 3, What kind of training is important or useful to you, why? 4, Please describe the positive aspects you summarized from training, thanks. 5, What is your dream training contents and training styles?
LGF 2: Networks	1, Please describe how networks is working in your career, thanks. 2, What are the positive aspects of networks? 3, How to make networks more help ful in future, in your opinion?
LGF 3: Chinese culture	1, What is the most influential Chinese culture core value make you successful? 2, How can Chinese culture values benefit your career as a Chinese entrepreneur in Helsinki?
LGF 4: Attitude	1, Please describe the attitude helps you best in career, in which period and how it works, thanks. 2, What kinds of attitude you appreciate from your colleagues/classmates of Haaga-Helia's training courses?

4.1.2 Dream

The second phase is dream phase, which is concentrating on answering a question: What might be? In this phase of Appreciative Inquiry, researcher need to cooperate with participants to create a clear results-oriented vision to discover potential and to organize questions of higher purpose; simultaneously, to assume the greatest potential for optimistic influence and impact. The ‘task’ of participants is describing dreams that gathered during the interviews, creating and introducing dramatic enactments (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 15.). Therefore, the question and sub-questions are designed as below and was asked along with the first round 3 main questions:

How will you describe the bright future of the training/entrepreneurial help?

- What is your dream status of training/entrepreneurial help?
- What would you like to contribute to make that happen?

The feedback from interviewees is very positive and described as below:

- 1) Systematical Finnish language training, both on academic aspect and practical aspect: Each interviewee wishes to study as much language as they could and would like to be both ‘teacher’ and ‘student’ to share with others, since most of them could speak basic and practical restaurant field Finnish, although not professional. Moreover, they prefer systematical and formal language training more than only practical daily use sentences because they wish to walk out of their small restaurants, entering mainstream world and accept more local culture. Obviously language training concentrating only on restaurant language fields is not enough.
- 2) Getting to know more locals and entering local mainstream society. Interviewees have strong desire to have more opportunities to communicate and cooperate with locals instead of only staying in their own Chinese circles. This phenomenon is different from other Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Italy and Spain who always keep themselves in their internal Chinese circle stubbornly. Interviewees in Finland long for more knowing more Finnish culture, getting more help from local governments (i.e. some staff of local government departments) and acquiring more useful information. It is interesting that the support and help they require doesn’t

include financial aid. The main reason is that according to Chinese traditional culture, Chinese prefer to use their own savings instead of loans. Loans make them feel strongly being short of sense of security.

In summary, the core of their dream is: Entering mainstream society with still retaining their Chinese cultural characteristics.

4.1.3 Design

Design is a phase to answer the question: How it could be? This phase focuses on suggesting feasible propositions of the ideal status, linking a system design that capable to people, and magnifying the positive aspects to recognize the newly expressed dream; thus, participants of this phase will be required to cooperate on crafting a system in which the positive change core is activated in strategies, processes, systems, decisions, and cooperations. Finally, researcher would work to recognize obviously influential design factors, make a design and making provocative propositions incorporating the positive change core (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, 15.).

Based on the both rounds interviews LGFs have been defined, expanded and analyzed in a form of matrix as following table 5, by three different growing phases and one crucial situation of an enterprise.

Table 5. Matrix of thematic analysis

LGF/Organizational aspects	Entrepreneurship training	Networks	Chinese culture	Attitude
Starting phase	Survival Finnish language; Common sense in Finland	Survival and settle down; Resources and info;	Diligence; Thrift	Optimistic; Perseverance
Developing phase	Business experience sharing	Developing opportunities; Role model	Law-abiding; Familism	Patience; Psychological balance
Well - running phase	Knowledge of management and Entrepreneurship	Friendship (making friends with locals); Helping others	Honesty; Cautiousness	
Problem – solving moments	Law and tax knowledge	Supports on two aspects: psychological aspects and professional aspects	Good faith; Kindness	Bravery and confidence

Therefore, from the above table 5, it could be identified easily what is most important and mostly required from an enterprise if it aims to reach its LGFs in each phase/crucial moment. Consequently, certain possible propositions in table 6 will be made one by one according to table 5 matrix.

Table 6. Matrix of propositions

LGF/Organizational aspects	Entrepreneurship training	Networks	Chinese culture	Attitude
Starting phase	Language and basic common sense training	Help building immigrant social networking	Advocating diligence and thrift	Encourage: Optimistic; Perseverance
Developing phase	Business knowledge training	Providing and teaching them to find developing opportunities and resources	Encouraging law-abiding and guiding Familism properly	Adjust: Patience; Psychological balance
Well - running phase	Training courses on management, Entrepreneurship	Creating activities with both locals and emigrant entrepreneurs, Praising them on helping others	Encouraging honesty and cautiousness	
Problem – solving moments	Professional help: legal and tax aspects	Providing supports on psychological aspects and professional aspects	Praising good faith and kindness	Encourage: Bravery and confidence

Therefore, according to the matrix above, certain propositions are designed as below aspects:

- 1) Propositions of increasing entrepreneurship training: Proper and specific training could be provided from low level to high level, from language training and basic Finnish social common sense training, to further business knowledge training and management/entrepreneurship training. For those who need some personal help or professional help, the legal and tax training could be provided to enhance their entrepreneurial capabilities.
- 2) Propositions of increasing networks function: Entrepreneurs have desire to build a valid and effective social networks, this is not only a part of Chinese culture but also universal in every culture. Network plays such an important role in business field that helping building an effective networks for emigrant entrepreneurs becomes crucial. Simultaneously, providing and teaching them to find developing opportunities and resources is also very important to increase their abilities to run business successfully. Moreover, most entrepreneurs especially those with experiences would like to help other new comers, such actions should be praised and supported. Experienced entrepreneurs who have been living in Finland for long time also wish to make more friends in local circles and other emigrant entrepreneurs from other countries, thus, creating such communicational activities could be very helpful. Last but not least, certain supports on both psychological aspects and professional aspects are also required in building networks.
- 3) Propositions of positive Chinese culture aspects: Some certain aspects of Chinese culture values could be promoted due to different business phase. In business starting period, diligence and thrift qualities should be advocated best to guarantee the survival of small, newborn enterprises; in business developing period law-abiding concepts should be strongly emphasized since in that period owners may tend to save cost by lowering quality and raising prices; Simultaneously, Familism tradition also need to be guided properly due to case to case, family to family.

During business-well-running phase, honesty and cautiousness should be encouraged to ensure the business running. If business is in trouble and falls into problem-solving situation, the quality of good faith and kindness must be concentrated on to help enterprise to overcome difficulty since most cases if a Chinese SME entrepreneur falls into trouble it is because of the loss of credit, good faith and kindness.

- 4) Propositions of guiding attitude: The attitude of entrepreneurs is the last but not the least value to notice. In beginning period, the optimistic and perseverance qualities are required most and need to be cultivated; When business is operated more and more smoothly, a mentality of patience and psychological balance becomes more important; in problem-solving case, bravery and confidence are the most crucial and most required prerequisites.

4.1.4 Destiny

Destiny phase aims to answer a question: How to empower, learn and improvise? This phase is focusing on enhancing the affirmative capability of group, enabling it to establish hope and sustain factors for ongoing positive change and high performance; also, concentrating on inviting action inspired by the results of previous process: discovery, dream and design. Finally it is required to announce intended actions, to ask for supply, to choose groups and to plan next steps.

The implementation of this research need to be proceeded by Haaga-Helia University's future training courses. On the other hand, the courses also need to be revised, utilized and improved according to research result. However, the courses are not provided every semester although it is an on-going one, the next course will be scheduled according to budget and other factors (i.e. schedules of Chinese SME entrepreneurs' schedule).

Thus, the destiny of research will be fulfilled by following steps ultimately:

- 1, Formulating a detailed implementation plan which also combined with the following local culture impact sections (4.2), and then will be demonstrated in detailed way in Conclusion Chapter (5.1 section);
- 2, Plan will be submitted to project leader and program manager for processing and reference;
- 3, Plan will be adopted in future years and the follow-up procedures will be proceeded by project manager, and the research result will be applied in several aspects in future.

4.2 Local culture influence – Finnish culture

Compared to the famous influential Chinese culture which has a history over 5000 years, it seems that Finnish culture is weak which has little influence on immigrants. In fact, in other European countries such as Germany, France, Netherlands and Italy, local Chinese emigrant entrepreneurs always tend to keep themselves in their own culture business circle and reject to be affected by local culture, no matter how many years they have already been living there. There are several Chinatowns or Chinese intensive living area in these countries (www.news.xinhuanet.com).

However, situation in Finland is different. No Chinatown or Chinese intensively living area in any part of Finland even in Helsinki. During the interview it is found that Finnish culture influences local Chinese entrepreneurs deeply in several aspects and even alters their ways of running businesses. Such influence was not mentioned in literature review chapter because previously very little relative material has presented it; the phenomenon emerged gradually during the second round interview when researcher and interviewee moved to deeper discussion. Chinese living in Helsinki more like to adopt Finnish culture and be accepted into local mainstream.

4.2.1 Commitment

Finnish impress new coming Chinese emigrant entrepreneurs most deeply by their great emphasis on commitment. In Chinese business culture an oral business agreement or commitment is not taken serious or weighty, sometimes it is just a form

of courtesy and need not to be fulfilled, but in Finland even oral commitment is valid and will be taken seriously.

For a lot of Chinese emigrant entrepreneurs, Finland is a unique country where considerable weight is attached to the spoken word; thus, words are chosen carefully and for the purpose of delivering a message. Since Finnish place great value on words, their words are important and their commitments are regarded serious instead of joking or courtesy. It is fair to say that Finns have a special attitude to words and speech: words are taken seriously, and people are held to what they say. "Take a man by his words and a bull by its horns," says a Finnish proverb. Finnish are very responsible for their verbal commitments and take the 'small talk skill' which Finnish are notoriously lacking as foxy trick instead of social manner (www.finland.fi/public).

At first most Chinese emigrant entrepreneurs did not get used to such national character, but as time goes by they become its advocates. They are fully attracted by this and enjoy the benefits of 'Finnish commitments'. After all, working and running business in an environment full of reliable commitments is much better than a society full of false courtesy.

Therefore, according to the feedback of interviewees, it is very interesting that they often astonish and 'embarrass' their Chinese domestic relatives and friends when communicating with them. A Shanghai entrepreneur said that he would definitely reject some impossible business cooperation proposals from domestic relatives of his hometowns – even face to face, and actually he already did several times. Even his parents in China complained and suggested him to 'Just randomly agree and keep on nodding, don't refuse so directly! You can tear up the commitments some months later! At least leave some face to your relatives!' However, as a person living and working in Finland for over ten years, he regarded oral business commitments as real solid commitments too, thus he controlled his words seriously. He regarded 'randomly agree first and then change minds to tear up commitments' as a kind of cheating and lying, and he would fulfil what he had promised as business commitments. It is not an issue concerning personality; it is more concerning on Finnish business culture which

already rooted in his hearts. When discussing this phenomenon with friends, most of domestic Chinese thought this Shanghai entrepreneur is too stubborn but most Chinese who live in Finland long time and Finnish responded that they understood and even appreciated this Shanghai interviewee.

4.2.2 Restrained on the surface and intensive inside

Chinese emigrant entrepreneurs have such impression of Finnish: Finnish are restrained on the surface and intensive inside. In front of strangers Finnish are usually very silent and rarely enter into conversation with strangers, unless a particularly strong impulse prompts it. In fact Finns are not cold, they just warm up slowly but actually are very friendly and warm-hearted. For example, a visitor clutching a map will have no trouble in getting help in any other public place because the hospitality of Finns easily overrides their customary reserve. When getting familiar, Finns tend to be direct and frank in conversation.

Chinese entrepreneurs gradually learnt such Finnish way of restrained on the surface and intensive inside and then alter their own style of running business. Chinese entrepreneurs in Spain are doing business by a bit exceeding enthusiasm (to attract new customers and sell stuff by peddling loudly on street or in restaurants or in other business places i.e.), but in Helsinki, Chinese entrepreneurs are more restrained, quiet, polite, slow-pace and warm up slowly when facing new customers. They tend to listen than to speak, and seldom interrupt others' speech. Their talking speed and pace is as slow as local Finns after several years' working and living in Finland. They could be excited and voluble only by given the right situation, but most cases they are reserved and taciturn as local Finns.

Every nation has its own national character, but surprisingly few have such strong influence on Chinese immigrants as Finns. Most Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Helsinki have friends, acquaintances, relatives and natives from same hometown also run restaurants in Southern Europe but the cultural influences are very different. According to their descriptions, Southern Europe locals are more passionate, open and out-going so it seems Southern European culture should have influenced Chinese

emigrant entrepreneurs more, but in fact the result is Chinese living there basically only live and function in their own Chinese circle and don't care making friends with locals or not. They are very little influenced by local business culture or local national characters, in Spain and Italy a lot of Chinese even don't feel they are really 'living in Europe' since their neighbors are mostly Chinese too; they don't have strong desire to study local language either. They don't refuse to be accepted into local mainstream but no one proactively works on it. Therefore they keep most their Chinese style entrepreneurial way, working over 15 hours everyday and working 7 days whole week, and even using some foxy tricks on accounting and tax. They don't quite like the national characters of Southern Europe locals and sometimes feel excluded and isolated by locals, in heart they regard themselves as 'foreigners living in Europe'. Actually their children as the second-generation immigrants who grow up in Europe accept local culture but they don't have the desire to change themselves as the first-generation immigrants.

Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland are totally different from those in Spain and Italy. They obviously accept and apply a lot of Finnish business ways to run their restaurants: honest, law-abiding, paying great attention on reputation, warming-up slowly. When communicating with local customers they are not over-enthusiastic but they would like to build friendship or long-term relationship with local customers; when facing new customers they prefer to warm up slowly and seldom make friends randomly. As staying longer in Finland, they are more and more synchronized by local Finns. It seems more like that they are not only studying Finns business ways but also become Finns at heart. Moreover, Chinese entrepreneurs show evident appreciation to Finnish national character which is also very different from their peers in Italy and Spain.

4.2.3 Great attention on life quality

Chinese SME emigrant entrepreneurs all over the world have a fame of 'no holiday, diligent working groups'. It is very common for Chinese entrepreneurs in Spain, Italy and Portugal to work 7 days per week and over 15 hours per day without any holiday, entertainments and sport. (www.cye.com.cn).

However, in Finland the situation is different. Chinese restaurant owners told researcher that how much they care life quality while still keeping quality of diligence and thrift. They treasure summer vacations as much as local Finns and they think it is important for health and life quality is much more important than money. They are strongly influenced by the life attitude of local Finns. Some of Chinese restaurant owners claim that they cannot work well at all without enough vacation to relax during summer; vacation gives them entrepreneurial energy. It is very interesting that Spanish, Italian and Portuguese cannot influence ‘stubborn’ Chinese SME entrepreneurs that much but Finnish could. It might because in Finland Chinese SME entrepreneurs live scattered instead of living together in a Chinese circle such as Chinatown, they are more easily to be affected by locals.

As explained in previous sections, most Chinese restaurant owners in Helsinki have a lot of friends or relatives working in same field in Southern Europe (i.e. Italy and Spain). From the anecdotes and stories they shared with researcher, there are a lot of interesting contrasts between them: One group cares about life quality while the other group cares about making more money. The following table 7 demonstrates such differences which appeared gradually during the chat and further discussion period of the second-round AI interview. Such ‘random chat’ makes interviewees more relaxed and more willing to share stories and experiences with researcher. The data collected is not very appropriate to be categorized to systematical AI analysis but the findings are very natural and valuable. Many topics are raised by interviewees proactively (since they really want to find some reliable person to talk) but not designed in questionnaires.

Table 7. Comparison between Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Finland and Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Southern Europe (Italy and Spain)

	Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Finland	Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Southern Europe (Italy and Spain)
Working purposes	Live better, more holidays and more spare time with family, healthy and happy life.	More money, solid financial basis, a lot of savings in bank.

	Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Finland	Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Southern Europe (Italy and Spain)
Is social status important?	Extremely important, want to enter the mainstream of society.	Don't care that much, but the status in Chinese circle is crucial since mainly stay in Chinese internal circle.
Is holiday important?	Very important, cannot work well without holiday.	Holiday is a waste of time, so it should be used to earn money.
Do you want to study more?	Yes. Art and sports courses besides entrepreneurial skills. Actually if possible want to study for a degree as middle-aged locals.	Don't want to study anymore. Would rather support children to study financially.
Expectation on kids	Let kids have more opportunities to choose to study what they really want. Educational degree is not that important.	Educational degree, the higher, the better. If kids don't like to study for high degree, better be a businessman.
Attitudes to locals	Making friends with locals proactively, so have a number of local friends.	Do not have many local friends, most close friends are Chinese.
Do you have pressure?	During winter especially polar night periods we have a little depression (very similar as local Finns), actually first year arriving at Finland we only feel curious about polar nights and depression start just from second year, another pressure is generation gap with children.	Operating income not enough, Conflicts and quarrels with family members.

	Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Finland	Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Southern Europe (Italy and Spain)
How to relieve stress?	Ask help from psychological counseling; find local friends and Chinese friends to talk.	Earn more money, ask help from other Chinese friends, or just wait passively.
How do you think of psychological counseling?	Normal treatment, as to cure flu or annual health examination in the hospital; very helpful to improve entrepreneurial capacity and social capacity	Only patients with mental illness need to have such treatment, it is shameful if we go to hospital for that.
The sources of security sense	Health on both mental aspect and physical aspect	Accumulation of money

4.3 Reliability and validity of the research

This section will analyze the reliability and validity of this research and make further detailed explanation. Winter (2000) claims that reliability and validity are tools of an essentially positivist epistemology (Winter 2000, 3-4). The reliability and validity of qualitative research is actually a weakness for several reasons, such as knowledge produced might not generalize to other people or other settings (i.e., findings might be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study), difficulty of building standard procedures as quantitative research, and results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies. However, such disadvantages could be made up in certain degree and the reliability and validity of this research could be guaranteed.

First the aspect of reliability will be presented. Joppe (2000) claims that the most important criteria to value reliability is data quality (Joppe 2000, 1.). To guarantee the research interview data quality, the research sample groups are chosen very cautiously. Even from quantitative viewpoint, twelve Chinese restaurant entrepreneurs are selected

as interviewees from 43 registered Chinese restaurants in Helsinki region, so it already covers a relatively reasonable range and convincing number and rate. Additionally, most of these Chinese entrepreneurs are experienced ones and also attended the specific entrepreneurial training provided by Haaga-Helia University. Therefore the data collected are stable and consistent over time which could be regarded as high-quality one, and the interviewee group also could be recognized as an accurate representation. If other research methodology is applied on this research group, the results won't differ dramatically from one to another.

The second issue is demonstrated is validity. Winter (2000) argues that the concept of validity is not a single, fixed or universal concept, but “rather a contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of particular research methodologies and projects”, and crucial indicators to measure validity is maximizing trustworthiness and generalizing the result (Winter, 2000). Such criteria must be grasped and controlled by researcher carefully and attentively. Although the interviewees of the research are very cooperative, have very strong desire to increase their entrepreneurial capabilities and would like to spend long time to share experiences and feelings with researcher, they also like to complain negative aspects and express their unsatisfaction or disappointments. However it deviates from the core values and thinking of research methodology which is Appreciative Inquiry requiring positive recognition and feedback. Abundant data doesn't equal to valuable and valid data. Thus, it is very important for researcher to be professional and guiding beside patient only. Then conversation of interviews could proceed on a professional way to guarantee the validity of research.

4.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter the research result of this study is explained section-by-section based on the collected data. First section introduces the data analysis result of Appreciative Inquiry and proposition is presented according to each LGF (Life-Giving-Forces) by form of matrix aiming to increase entrepreneur' capabilities of research group.

Then, the influence of Finnish culture on this target research group is listed as supplement. This unique aspect has not been noticed by many previous studies but it does affect Chinese entrepreneurs working in Helsinki. It is not categorized in Appreciative Inquiry research result since it differs from the four Appreciative Inquiry LGF (Life-Giving-Forces) defined.

Finally, the reliability and validity of the research is discussed to evaluate how much the research result could be accepted and applied. It is proved that certain control could increase the reliability and validity of qualitative research on this topic.

5 Conclusion and recommendations

This study is an exploratory research aims to increase entrepreneurial capabilities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki region. Thus, it is based on the Chinese restaurant owners group who participate training program courses organized by Haaga-Helia University to try to best improve their abilities of running business. To increase systematic knowledge on vital aspects to improve this group's entrepreneurial capabilities, this whole research starts from general introduction, to theoretical literature review, to empirical analysis and finally make conclusion in this chapter to apply research result in actual operation in future.

As a summary and generalization of whole research, this chapter will be presented by three sections: Implementation and suggestions, Reflections and Recommendations for future research.

5.1 Implementation and suggestions

Increasing Chinese entrepreneurial capabilities in Helsinki region requires consistent long-term actions and the benefit of them is not visible right away. Hence the detailed implementation plan is designed first according to previous chapters research and analysis:

- 1) Classifying Chinese entrepreneurs to give them different supports. Majority of them are running business in developing phase and well-running phase, but two minority groups of them are special and must be treated in different way: One group is full of new comers of this field and another group is consist of those whose businesses are in trouble (problem-solving phase). These two special groups need special training and supports, so there is no obvious effect to have them be treated as the majority group. Their required training should be specially designed for them.
- 2) As for the new comer group, entrepreneurs in this groups need psychological counseling to help them adjust to good status: optimistic and perseverance. They also demand basic Finnish language training and fundamental Finnish business culture cultivation. Simultaneously they need to be accepted into a social network

to settle down themselves and to make their business survive. They also require resources and info to help them adapt to the community and society. Additionally, diligence and thrift qualities are necessary for them but law aspect training is also crucial especially labor law (i.e. overtime working should be forbidden).

- 3) As for the other group whose members are in problem – solving situation, they need very specific law and tax knowledge, they need to know where and how they could get help and also need specific psychological instruction. Supports from both professional aspects and psychological aspects are indispensable. They need to build good faith and kindness concepts at heart and need to have brave and confident mood as well by positive leading and guidance.
- 4) As for people whose enterprises are in developing and well-running phase, what they require is relatively simple and similar: systematic knowledge of management and entrepreneurship. They need systematic and theoretical knowledge since most of them have abundant experiences to share but little theory to support. ‘Integrate theory with practice’ is vital to them. Moreover they are eager to seeking developing opportunities and making friend with locals. Most of them would like to help others and they do have such ability but don’t know what to do, thus they need correct guidance. The language training they require is special, few on restaurant aspects (most of them need only one time such basic course although personally they like to participate such restaurant vocabulary courses), more on systematic, in-depth Finnish grammar courses. Their law-abiding concept need cautious and positive instruction too since most of them are a bit foxy in the period. Their Familism concepts need to be paid attention too. Sufficient and effective communication between family members should be encouraged since the cultural difference is indeed too big.
- 5) The original courses are: management accounting, management & leadership, marketing & customer relations, service quality and design, product design, Finnish language and labor law. After research and analysis, original courses could be modified, part of them could be removed directly since they are too professional to

be useful, i.e. product design; three courses should be strongly suggested to add in: Psychological counselling, Finnish business culture and in-depth Finnish language (better systematic grammar could be taught). One course should be emphasized: labor law. Additionally, some social activities could be added in as well: interact with local entrepreneurs, with local government staff and with professional legal practitioners and psychiatrists (or psychological counsellors).

5.2 Reflections

The implementation of this research results need to be processed in Haaga-Helia University's future training courses and the courses also need to be revised, utilized and improved based on research result. However, the training project is not running every semester although it is an on-going one, the next course-training period will be scheduled according to budget and could not be decided yet. Therefore, the immediate evaluation and validation of possibility propositions and implementation plan could not be listed right now.

However, when showing possibility propositions and implementation plan to a number of interviewees who participated trainings, a great deal of positive feedback were received.

- Useful in daily work
- Helpful in future business capability training courses
- Practical in increasing personal entrepreneurial ability
- Some points we didn't think of it by ourselves, but they were caught by researcher, it's wonderful.
- It is the details what we exactly need
- Hope the propositions could be implemented as soon as possible

5.3 Recommendations for future research

Defects are unavoidable for every research and this research has its own disadvantages as a typical qualitative research. The interview samples are from twelve Chinese restaurant owners of Helsinki region which is a relatively limited scope to restrict in-

depth, comprehensive approach to data gathering. Moreover, the interview was made face to face which is a relatively expensive labor intensive one.

For this research, the research methodology was revised specifically, thus it has to admit that knowledge produced could not generalize to other settings that easy, replicability is difficult. Another drawback is the little possibility of building standard procedures as quantitative research.

Lastly, subjectivity may lead to some procedural problems. As a Chinese herself, when interviewing and analyzing Chinese interviewees, researcher unavoidably still keeps subjectivity and builds in unaware bias although trying best to be objective. Consequently, results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies.

Bibliography

Aaltonen, S. & Akola, E. 2012. Lack of trust - the main obstacle for immigrant entrepreneurship? pp. 8-9. University of Turku. Finland.

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, East Asia Analytic Unit. 1995. Overseas Chinese business networks in Asia. URL:
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/catalogue/ocbni.pdf> . Quoted: 08.01.2013.

Brandstätter, H. 2011. Personality aspects of entrepreneurship: A look at five meta-analyses. *Journal of Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 51, 2011, pp. 222-230.

Barringer, B. R. & Bluedorn, A. C. 1999. The relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and strategic management. *Journal of Strategic Management* Vol. 20, 1999, pp. 421-444.

Bielby, S. 2008. Student projects/outputs of Entrepreneurship. China Europe International Business School. Shanghai.

Blaikie, N. 1993. *Approaches to social enquiry*. Oxford: Polity Press. Oxford.

Blaxter et al. 2006. *How to research*. 2.ed. Open University Press. Buckingham . Philadelphia.

Chinese entrepreneurship instruction 2012. 中国企业家最勤奋 [Diligent Chinese entrepreneurs]. URL:
<http://www.cye.com.cn/dianping/201301091055736.htm> . Quoted: 10.01.2013.

City of Helsinki. Restaurant numbers in Helsinki. URL:
<http://www.helsinki.fi/en/index/matkailu/ravintolat.html> . Quoted: 10.01.2012.

- Cohen, L. & Manion, L. & Morrison, K.R.B. 2007. Research methods in education. 6.ed. Routledge, London.
- Cooper, D.R. & Schindler, P.S. 2006. Business Research Method. 9.ed. McGraw-Hill Irwin. Boston.
- Cooperrider, D.L. & Whitney, D. 2005. Appreciative Inquiry - A positive revolution in change. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, San Francisco, California.
- Driessen, M. P. & Zwart, P. S. 2010. The entrepreneur scan measuring characteristics and traits of entrepreneurs. University of Groningen. URL:
<http://www.entrepreneurscan.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/E-Scan-MAB-Article-UK.pdf>. Quoted: 13.12.2012.
- Easterby-Smith, M. & Thorpe, R. & Lowe, A. 2002. Management Research: An Introduction. 4.ed. SAGE Publications Ltd., London.
- Eriksson, P. & Kovalainen, A. 2008. Qualitative Methods in Business Research. 1.ed. SAGE Publications Ltd., London.
- European Commission. 2005. The new SME definition. User guide and model declaration. pp. 5. Enterprise and industry publications. URL:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/sme_definition/sme_user_guide_en.pdf. Quoted: 10.04.2013
- European Commission, Eurostat. 2012. Entrepreneurship determinants: culture and capabilities. pp. 110. European Commission. Luxembourg.
- Expat Finland 2012. Business Development & Finance in Finland. URL:
http://www.expats-finland.com/entrepreneurship/development_and_finance.html
 Quoted: 13.12.2012.
- European Union. 2003. Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC.

Official Journal of the European Union Vol. 124, 2003, pp. 36.

URL: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:SOM:en:HTML>

Quoted: 10.04.2013.

Fan, Y. 1995. Chinese cultural values and entrepreneurship: A preliminary consideration. Durham University Business School. Durham.

Gao, K. & Kotey, B. 2011. Chinese values and SME strategy in the Chinese economic transition: How close are they to the West? School of Business, Economics and Public Policy at the University of New England. Australia.

Gertler, M. 2003. Tacit Knowledge and the Economic Geography of Context. Journal of Economic Geography, Vol. 3, 2003, No. 1, pp. 75-99.

Joppe, M. 2000. The Research Process. URL:
<http://www.ryerson.ca/~mjoppe/rp.htm> . Quoted: 10.12.2012.

Judy S. & Hammond S. 2006. An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry. pp. 4-5. Silva Forest Foundation. British Columbia, Canada.

Kasi, P. 2009. Research: What, Why and How? A Treatise from Researchers to Researchers. 1.ed. AuthorHouse. Bloomington. Indiana.

Kor, Y. Y. 2005. Resources, capabilities and entrepreneurial perceptions. University of Delaware. URL:
http://www.business.uiuc.edu/Working_Papers/papers/05-0120.pdf. Quoted:
10.12.2012.

Lahti, R.K. 1999. Identifying and Integrating Individual Level and Organizational Level Core Competencies. Journal of Business and Psychology, Vol. 14, 1999, No. 1, pp. 59-75.

Lam, D., Paltiel, J. T., & Shannon, J. H. 1994. The Confucian entrepreneur? Chinese culture, industrial organization, and intellectual property piracy in Taiwan. *Journal of Asian Affairs*, Vol 20, 1994, pp. 205-217.

Lau, S. K. 1982. *Society and politics in Hong Kong*. The Chinese University Press. Hong Kong.

Leung, T.K.P. & Chan, R. Y. 2003. Face, favour and positioning - a Chinese power game. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 37, 2003, No. 11, pp. 1575 – 1598.

Michael, S.C. 1996. Investments to create bargaining power. The case of franchising. *Journal of Strategic Management*, Vol. 21. 1996, pp. 487-514.

MIF (Management Institute of Finland, former FINTRA). Traing principle for SMEs. URL: <http://www.mif.fi> . Quoted: 10.12.2012.

Mills, G. E. 2007. *Action research: a guide for the teacher researcher*. Pearson Education, New Jersey.

Minniti, M. & W. Byrgave. 2001. A dynamic model of entrepreneurial learning. *Journal of Entrepreneurship theory and practice*, Vol. 25, 2001, No. 3, pp. 5-16.

Mosakowski, E. 1998. Entrepreneurial resources, organizational choices and competitive outcomes. *Journal of Organization Science*, Vol. 9, 1998, No. 6, pp. 625-643.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 1998. *Globalisation and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) Country Studies*. pp. 81-82. Head of publication Service OECD. Paris.

OECD. 2005. *OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook*. pp. 17. Head of publication Service OECD. Paris.

Richards, J. C. & Lockhart, C. 1996. Reflective teaching in second language classrooms. Cambridge language education, Cambridge.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2009. Research Methods for Business Students. Fourth Edition. Prentice Hall, London.

Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. 2010. Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach. 5.ed. Hoboken, New Jersey.

Thatchenkery, T. 2003. A guide to appreciative organizational analysis. pp. 2-19. George Mason University, Virginia.

The Flame Centre 2012. 如何运用”欣赏式探询”创造绩效[How to create value by Appreciative Inquiry]. URL:
http://chinese.flamecentre.com/?page_id=1055. Quoted: 10.07.2012.

This is Finland 2010. A guide to Finnish customs and manners. URL:
www.finland.fi/Public. Quoted: 15.12.2012.

Wang, R. 2012. Chinese Culture and Its Potential Influence on Entrepreneurship. Journal of International business research, Vol. 5, 2012, No. 10, pp. 76-89.

Whitney D. & Trosten-Bloom A. 2003. The Power of Appreciative Inquiry - A Practical Guide to Positive Change. 2.ed. pp. 266. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, San Francisco, California.

Winter, G. 2000. A comparative discussion of the notion of validity in qualitative and quantitative research. Journal of The Qualitative Report, Vol. 4, 2000, pp. 3-4.

Xinhua 2007. 新移民成主力军 欧洲唐人街塑造中国新形象[New immigrants build new image for China by European Chinatown]. URL:

<http://news.xinhuanet.com/overseas> . Quoted: 10.12.2012.

Yeung, I., & Tung, R. 1996. Achieving business success in Confucian societies: The importance of guanxi (connections). *Journal of Organizational Dynamics*, Vol. 25, 1996, No. 1, pp. 54-65.

Yilong Traveling Agency. Travelling in Helsinki. [Photos of two Chinese restaurants introduction]. URL:

<http://trip.elong.com/u/1024309/b094qtr3.html> . Quoted: 10.01.2012.

Zahra, S. A. 2011. Entrepreneurial capability: opportunity pursuit and game changing. pp. 7-8. University of Minnesota. Minnesota.

Zapalska, A. & Edwards, W. 2001. Chinese entrepreneurship in a cultural and economic perspective. *Journal of Small Business Management*, Vol. 39, 2001, No. 3, pp. 286

Appendix

Appendix 1

Interview form No.1 and No.2

Interview form No. 1: 1st round questions and follow-up ones to identify LGF

Question	Follow-up questions
Can you recall some very positively useful experiences from training and working?	1, What made it happen? 2, What made it a significant positive experience? 3, What did you learn from it? 4, What was the positive aspect about your own role?
What was the moment you feel best appreciated by others during training and working?	1, Describe the moment in detailed way. 2, What made it happen? 3, Why you felt so appreciated?
Considering all your classmates/colleagues/peers, you appreciate whose working ability most? Why?	1, What did you admire in him/her? 2, How has the action positively contributed to others, or influenced others?
How will you describe the bright future of the training/entrepreneurial help?	1, What is your dream status of training/entrepreneurial help? 2, What would you like to contribute to make that happen?

Interview form No.2: 2nd round questions of expansion of LGF

LGFs/core values (Life-giving-forces)	Follow-up questions
Entrepreneurship training (Skills and knowledge etc.)	<p>1, What kind of training have you accepted?</p> <p>2, What kind of training you wish to have in future?</p> <p>3, What kind of training is important or useful to you, why?</p> <p>4, Please describe the positive aspects you summarized from training, thanks.</p> <p>5, What is your dream training contents and training styles?</p>
Networks	<p>1, Please describe how networks is working in your career, thanks.</p> <p>2, What are the positive aspects of networks?</p> <p>3, How to make networks more helpful in future, in your opinion?</p>
Chinese culture	<p>1, What is the most influential Chinese culture core value make you successful?</p> <p>2, How can Chinese culture values benefit your career as a Chinese entrepreneur in Helsinki?</p>
Attitude	<p>1, Please describe the attitude helps you best in career, in which period and how it works, thanks.</p> <p>2, What kinds of attitude you appreciate from your colleagues/classmates of Haaga-Helia's training courses?</p>

Implementation plan (Suggestions) to enhance Chinese SMEs entrepreneurial capabilities in Helsinki

- 1) Classifying Chinese entrepreneurs to give them different supports. Majority of them are running business in developing phase and well-running phase, but two minority groups of them are special and must be treated in different way: One group is full of new comers of this field and another group is consist of those whose businesses are in trouble (problem-solving phase). These two special groups need special training and supports, so there is no obvious effect to have them be treated as the majority group. Their required training should be specially designed for them.
- 2) As for the new comer group, entrepreneurs in this groups need psychological counseling to help them adjust to good status: optimistic and perseverance. They also demand basic Finnish language training and fundamental Finnish business culture cultivation. Simultaneously they need to be accepted into a social network to settle down themselves and to make their business survive. They also require resources and info to help them adapt to the community and society. Additionally, diligence and thrift qualities are necessary for them but law aspect training is also crucial especially labor law (i.e. overtime working should be forbidden).
- 3) As for the other group whose members are in problem – solving situation, they need very specific law and tax knowledge, they need to know where and how they could get help and also need specific psychological instruction. Supports from both professional aspects and psychological aspects are indispensable. They need to build good faith and kindness concepts at heart and need to have brave and confident mood as well by positive leading and guidance.
- 4) As for people whose enterprises are in developing and well-running phase, what they require is relatively simple and similar: systematic knowledge of management and entrepreneurship. They need systematic and theoretical knowledge since most of them have abundant experiences to share but little theory to support. ‘Integrate

theory with practice' is vital to them. Moreover they are eager to seeking developing opportunities and making friend with locals. Most of them would like to help others and they do have such ability but don't know what to do, thus they need correct guidance. The language training they require is special, few on restaurant aspects (most of them need only one time such basic course although personally they like to participate such restaurant vocabulary courses), more on systematic, in-depth Finnish grammar courses. Their law-abiding concept need cautious and positive instruction too since most of them are a bit foxy in the period. Their Familism concepts need to be paid attention too. Sufficient and effective communication between family members should be encouraged since the cultural difference is indeed too big.

- 5) The original courses are: management accounting, management & leadership, marketing & customer relations, service quality and design, product design, Finnish language and labor law. After research and analysis, original courses could be modified, part of them could be removed directly since they are too professional to be useful, i.e. product design; three courses should be strongly suggested to add in: Psychological counselling, Finnish business culture and in-depth Finnish language (better systematic grammar could be taught). One course should be emphasized: labor law. Additionally, some social activities could be added in as well: interact with local entrepreneurs, with local government staff and with professional legal practitioners and psychiatrists (or psychological counsellors).