LAMK **Lahden ammattikorkeakoulu**
Lahti University of Applied Sciences

International Student Recruitment Process

Case: Lahti University of Applied Sciences

Lahti University of Applied Sciences Ltd
Degree Programme in International Business

BISTA, NEERAJAN   International Student Recruitment
            Case: LUAS

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ABSTRACT

The Internationalization at Home (IaH) program becomes impossible without international students. An effective recruitment process is necessary to enhance the number of international students. Marketing is the best way to reach prospective students. Marketing and recruiting carries two different principles but they work together when potential enrolment is needed. The aim of this thesis is to develop an effective recruitment plan for case company.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods and approaches as well as inductive and deductive reasoning have been utilised at different stages of study. Data was collected through primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were interviews and surveys and secondary information has been collected from various sources of research articles, books, and reliable internet sources.

In this research, theories are a key source for understanding the marketing process. SOSTAC, MARKETING MIX (4P'S & 4C'S) and development theories from various researchers are key theories to gain the understanding of marketing principles. The main goal is to develop a marketing plan for the case company, therefore, SOSTAC Analysis has strongly supported exploring all the facts.

The key findings from this research indicate that the case company needs to establish an effective marketing plan for maintaining the number of international students. The key challenges for the case company is to maintain the number of international students for internationalization process.

Key words: marketing, internationalization, development plan, recruitment methods

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ABBREVIATION/ACRONYMS

CIMO	Centre for International Mobility
ICEF	International Consultants for Education and Fairs
EAIE	European Association for International Education
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
FUAS	Federation of Universities of Applied Sciences
HEI	Higher Educational Institute
LAMK	Lahti ammattikorkeakoulu
LUAS	Lahti University of Applied Sciences
IaH	Internationalization at Home
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
NAFSA	National Association for Foreign Student Advisers

1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the thesis topic and provides sufficient background information and notion of the thesis. It provides readers in-depth information about topics and research methodology. It is important to provide details of ideas on the research objectives and procedures of data collection methods for the successful completion of research. All information concerning this thesis has been included and explained separately.

1.1 Research Background

Education transforms life, therefore, education is a human right for all throughout life and access must be matched by quality (UNESCO 2016). Education is considered as a component of the globalization process. Since the European Union was formed, countries of the European Union have reformed their education systems and improved education policies. Thus, more students have started to study in European countries. Especially higher education students started to move to other countries for better understanding of the education system and experiencing new knowledge. After 1970, more international student mobility has happened between Asia, Europe, America and Africa. Therefore, the student mobility has been growing significantly in the last few decades. (Dang 2012, 1-2.)

The high demand for studying abroad has become a potential business opportunity for institutions worldwide. The global education market is going to be 6.3 trillion USD in 2017, and it was 4.5 trillion USD in 2013 (Cavanagh, 20133). Education is not only a service but also the world's fastest growing business. It is considered as a social service business. Day by day, educational institutions are spending huge amounts for branding and recruiting students onshore and offshore to meet the business target. This has proven that marketing policies are the base of business promotion. It can be practised in some various ways. (Hanover Research 2010, 8.)

Finland is looking for highly educated labour to reform and internationalize their economy. According to the Ministry of Education, to reform society, Finland needs highly educated labour force and foreign intelligence resources (CIMO 2013). This is why Finland needs more international students for internationalization at home, which also supports reforming their economy. Therefore, numbers of international students have significantly increased from 8000 students in 2003 to approx. 20000 students in 2012. This number will be doubled by 2020. (CIMO 2013.)

"*The goal of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture is that Finland is in the Vanguard of Knowledge, participation and creativity by 2020. Therefore, CIMO supports to achieve this goal making for Finland to become more international, it benefits everybody*" (CIMO 2013.)

After getting to know about international student's trend to study in Finland, the author of this research has examined and explained how this trend will be affected after development of new rules of paying tuition fees for international students. This report provides sufficient information to understand the possible impact on student enrolment in Finland after 2017. Therefore, it is important to understand what factor is making them to come to Finland for studies, or what is discouraging them as well. Now, it is important to study the impact after implanting tuition fees for international students. It supports the establishment of a further marketing plan to build up an effective marketing and recruitment system. The goal of this report is to prepare a marketing plan to recruit prospective students from the offshore market. The case is based on international students, who have been studying at Lahti University of Applied Sciences (LUAS) in Lahti, Finland.

The author's previous work experiences in the field of marketing and promotion have motivated him to build up this thesis. The plan is to make an effective marketing model to recruit international students for the case company (Lahti University of Applied Sciences). The development of a new policy has increased

the threat of the possibility of there being less enrolment of international students, therefore the plan for making a diversified university and internationalization at home may be affected.

This report is based on international students, who have been studying at LUAS and their feedback. It is important to understand the international students, what will happen and where it affects after the development of tuition fees for international students. Therefore, the trend after new rules and its direct effect on recruitment process should be studied. LUAS has been looking for more prospective international students in upcoming days to make it diverse, multicultural and multifunctional or international at home. For this reason, it is very important to create an advanced concept to recruit the prospective student ahead without decreasing the current number of international students at various faculties. (LUAS 2016.)

1.2 Thesis Objectives, Research Questions and Limitations

This thesis aims to provide deeper knowledge about international the student recruitment process. International students are one of the sources for education business. It is helping Finnish students to know about the world for understanding their cultures, concepts and competition in terms of education and business, this process is also known as internationalization at home. The final goal of this thesis is to develop an effective marketing plan and understand the marketing.

To prepare this report, the author has also followed what are the current trends of international student enrolment in the UK, the USA and Australia. The main purpose of this research is to provide sufficient information to know about how other countries have been recruiting international students effectively. Thus, this report shows the final plan for international marketing to promote Lahti University of Applied Sciences worldwide.

In the research question, the open-ended questions are supportive questions for qualitative methods. Such questions can be answered freely, and they should not be answered within a range of options. Nevertheless, closed ended questions should be answered within a range of options so that it is known as quantitative, in other words, those answers can be converted into numbers. However, Qualitative research answers why and how questions of the research topics, but quantitative research answers questions such as how many, how often, or how much. (Atlast 2016.)

Choosing the right question for research is a difficult part of thesis writing but the following question carries the whole theme of this thesis. The key research question is based on **"Why is it important to improve the marketing plan for international student recruitment process at LUAS?"** Survey questions have been prepared based on the above research question to verify the related information.

Research is based on the research question; it is really a difficult job to collect all this information during the data collection process, various questions were asked with international students at LUAS on the same topic to understand their understanding. First, the motive is to know their impression of Finland and the Finnish education system. Second, it is important to know, why and how they have chosen to study with LUAS via various questions to fulfil the research questions, which are as follows:

Why do they want to study in Finland?

How did they hear about LUAS?

Are they willing to pay tuition fees?

Did they choose Finland as a first choice to study or second?

What factors did influence them to come to Finland?

Those are the key questions to understanding of the issues to have further research on the topic. The above listed questions provide valid information about

international students. These students have provided information based on research questions. Therefore, research provides valid information for the case company to make an effective marketing plan to recruit international students. The significant promotional plan will be described later in this research report.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

This research is based on international students to understand the trend of studying in Finland. Due to the limitation of the thesis, the author has concentrated on creating a recruitment plan based on the marketing and recruitment plan for Lahti University of Applied Sciences.

First, the aim of this research is to understand how and why international students are studying in LUAS. Second, based on their information a further marketing and recruitment plan would be recommended later in this research. Therefore, the author is figuring out what could be an effective marketing plan and its positive effects on recruitment of international students. At the same time, it will be compared with international practices from other countries, where already international students studying trend is more popular than in Finland.

During the research, there will be implementation of popular marketing terms such as Marketing Mix (4P's+4C's) and SOSTAC, there are also other relevant marketing theories to understand the trend and practice, those will be adding to the value of theoretical knowledge side by side. The best part of this research would be exploring the question, why international students are willing to study in Finland, what are the features here for them to choose to study. Similarly, other existing opportunities and weaknesses will be explored after evaluating the survey report and data based on international students.

At the end of this research, a developed plan for recruitment method will be recommended to recruit prospective students. It is based on data analysis and the popular marketing practices around the world. This plan has to be directly helpful to maintain the flow of international students.

There are various ways to define marketing principles, but SOSTAC planning has been considered a useful tool to understanding and creating effective marketing plans. Therefore, it will be explained thoroughly as an outcome of this research. This model is a proven model for marketing planning and business development for case companies. (Smith 2016.)
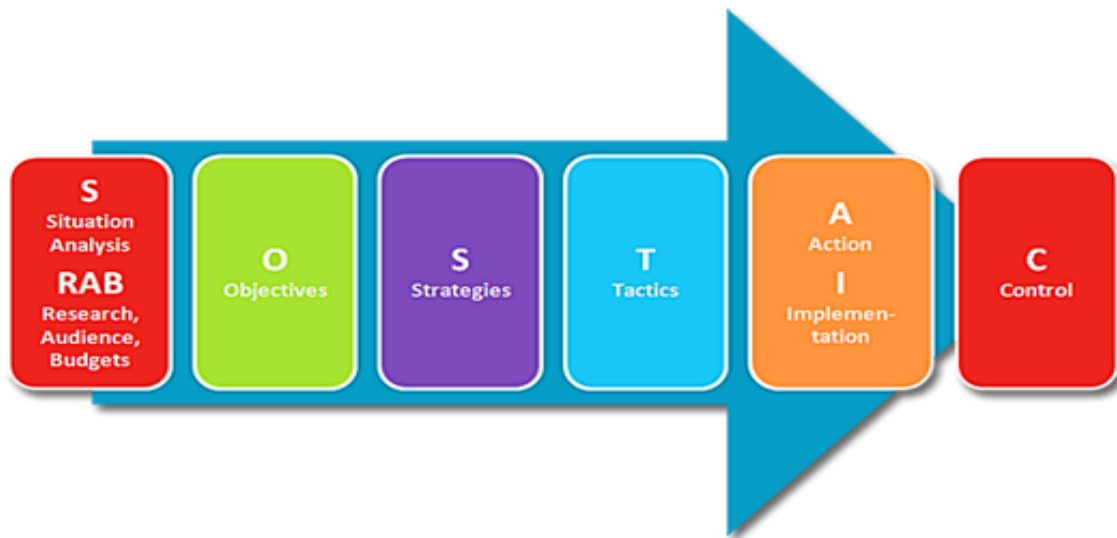
FIGURE 1: SOSTAC MODEL

1.4 Research Methodology and Data Collection

Maanen (2000) refers in his book, Qualitative Research in Management, that *"Qualitative methodology and case studies provide powerful tools for research in management and business subjects, including general management, marketing, organization, corporate strategy and more".*

In the business studies, case study research is popular and considered an effective approach to dealing with marketing, strategy, and organizational management. By case studies, it is easy to collect the right amount of references. Nevertheless, it needs thorough analysis of the specific subject. In the qualitative research method, case studies are essential, which makes participants share and provide appropriate information. (Maanen 2000, 83-84.)

Case studies and surveys are different tools for collecting information, but sometimes these two work together for better result findings. Survey helps to find out the facts; therefore, it is also known as fact-finding study, whereas case study is a comprehensive study of a person, an organization, program or an institution. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 1-7.) In this research, both case studies and survey have been implemented for the fact finding.

Searching for answers to the research question is called data collection. Data can be collected from two specific sources such as primary sources and secondary sources. Primary source for data collection is to find out first-hand information for fresh questions, whereas secondary sources are readily available sources or previously used information for other research purposes. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 84-88.)

Research means creating scientifically obtained knowledge by using objective methods and procedures (Welman & Kruger 2002, 2). As the goal of this research is to find out the best marketing plan and understand the trend of international students, an ideal marketing method for the case company will be designed; therefore, both research methodologies have been implemented to create effective planning. Similarly, research method can be conducted with two different approaches such as deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning method is helpful to do further research on actual matter and inductive reasoning method is to develop the topic and do further research. (Maanen 2000, 1-4.)

There are various ways to collect data but the author has implemented quantitative methods for data collection, but to verify the fact, qualitative methods have also been used. Both methods should be used where they are appropriate, otherwise, research hardly provides necessary information. Some research needs both research methods, especially in management subjects, therefore both research methods have to be treated equally. However, this is totally

depending on ways of thinking or it totally depends on the personality of the researcher. (Maanen 2000, 3-4.)

The following figure defines how the research approach and methods are conducted in this thesis.
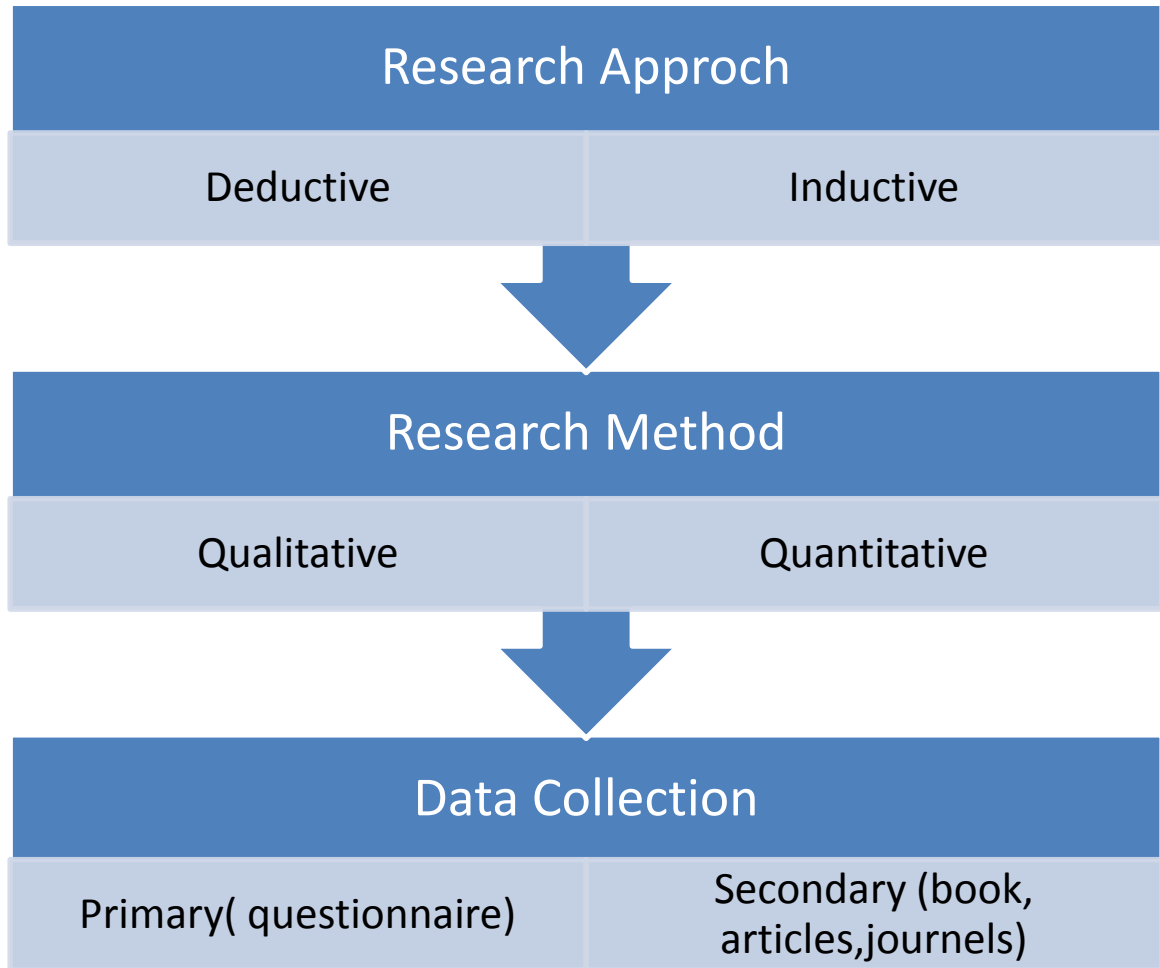
FIGURE 2: Research Methods

In this research, qualitative research provides the up-to-date information based on articles or written form. Similarly, Quantitative research method provides the statistical figures to evaluate the current trend of further studies. However, both

research methodologies have been used to collect data and information. Therefore, both methodologies are combining to compare or relate the outcome of the research. There are two ways to collect data, and those are primary and secondary. Primary sources are those, which appear during the research and secondary sources are differing from primary sources because it has to be collected from the published sources. (Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis 2009, 256.) Both data collection methods have been used in this research to fulfil the requirement of case studies.

1.5 Thesis Structure

The structure of thesis has presented in following steps.
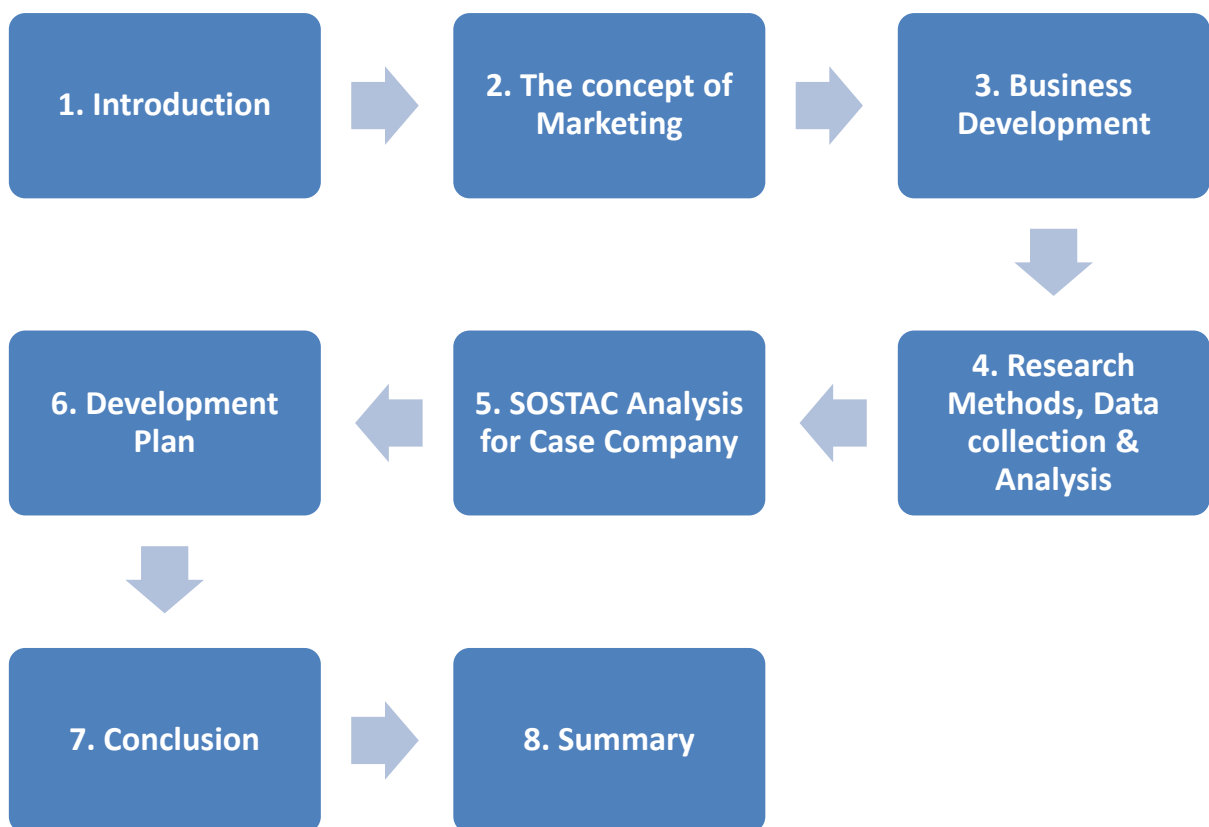
FIGURE 3: Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of eight chapters; Introduction is the first chapter; it provides the idea of the thesis. It presents the purpose, research objectives, data collection procedure, and conclusion. The research background presents the theme of this thesis, that section describes why it is important to do research on that part. The objective describes the purpose of the research and provides guidelines for the thesis objectives.

In the second chapter, the author has explained the principle of marketing with standard marketing principles such as 4P's, 4C's of marketing and SOSTAC Analysis. In the third chapter, business development principles are explained. The author has identified current education business trends, where the popular markets are.

The fourth chapter introduces the research methods, data collection and analysis for this thesis. There, the reader finds the data and analysed information based on the research methods. The chapter five defines SOSTAC analysis with the case company.

Later, in the chapter six, the development plan for the case company has been provided. This plan is based on the information received from research and data gained from the empirical part. It contains various theories and explanations based on the empirical part. Thusly, this chapter explains how to improve the recruitment plan for the case company. Lastly, the seventh and eight chapters of the thesis consist of the conclusion and the summary part of the research respectively.

2   THE CONCEPT OF MARKETING

Marketing is being considered as a tool to promote any products and services. Effective marketing is core concept of this thesis for program promotion and student recruitment process. As per Richard C Leventhal (2005) *"An effective marketing effort is based on upon information, which can be used in terms of developing sound business strategies to increase your return- on – investment. It allows for more successful innovation, and leads to better branding efforts that increase the effectiveness of your promotional efforts and strengthen your web marketing efforts".*

In the modern marketing concept, it has declared that everybody is looking for new information about product and services, that has to be fulfilled by marketing. Each one of us is tempting to get new information every now and then. So only marketing could satisfy them to fulfil their optimism. (Leventhal 2005, 5.)

Frank Bradley from University College Dublin has stated that International marketing means identifying needs and wants of customers, providing products and services to give the firm a differential marketing advantage, communicating information about any product and services, and distributing and exchanging them internationally through one or a combination of foreign market entry modes. (Bradley 2002, 12.)

The best marketing concept mentioned by Kotler & Armstrong is marketing mix. Marketing mix is a tool to define and create marketing strategies based on the products and services of the company. The core concept of the marketing mix defines 4p. That represents as Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 47-48.)

Product	Price	Place	Promotion
• The goods or services the company is offering	• The amount of money a customer have to pay to purchase the product	• The location where the product or service is available	• Activities that refer to promoting the products such as advertising
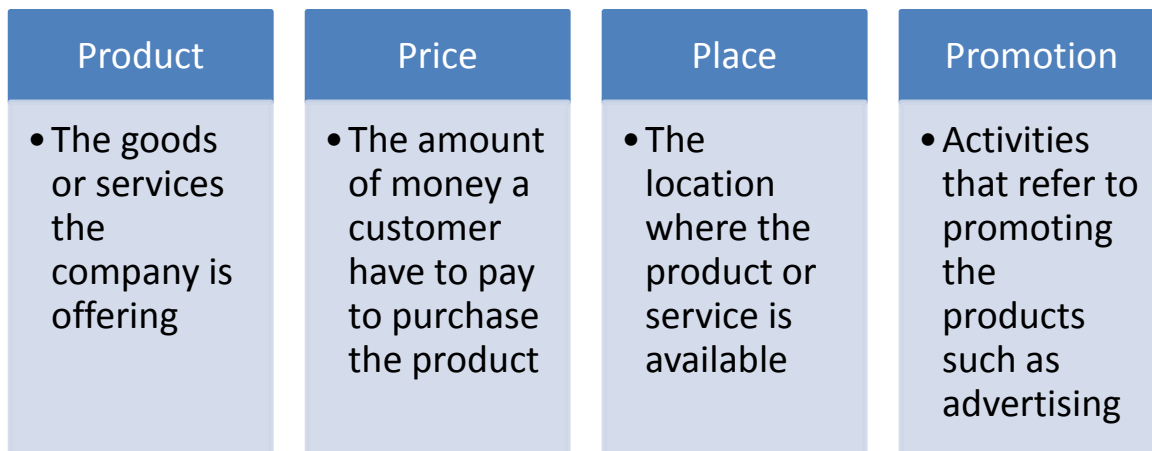
FIGURE 4: The 4ps of Marketing Mix (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 51)

2.1 Customer- Driven Marketing Strategy:

All are our customers but service provider should evaluate how potential customers they are. For long run and sustainability, marketing strategies are the most important part for a service provider. After successfully market segmentation, it helps to keep and grow the market without difficulties. Both parties will enjoy by greater value, that brings customer satisfaction. It is only possible after sound marketing plan and requires a smart customer analysis. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 47-51.)

2.1.1 Market Segmentation

The Market is a vast zone. It consists of many types of sellers, buyers, producers, and customers. Each of them have different motive, some sells the product and some buys that, and some of them need it. In the service selling

business, everybody would like to have more facilities in order to fulfil their requirements. Such needs can be understood based on the geographical, demographical, psychographic and behaviour factors. According to this dividing the market into distinct groups of buyers should be done as per their needs, behaviours and characteristics, they might need different service and product to fulfil their needs. In this situation, new marketing strategies might require for services such needs is called Market Segmentation. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008,47-48.)

2.1.2 Market Targeting

After successfully analysing of market segmentation, market targeting remains essential for any marketers. Then, it needs to evaluate each market based on segments. The service provider should target the market so that it should profitably generate the high volume of customers. Market segmentation narrows the market but it gives more opportunity to sell the product and services in high value. In a competitive market, market segmentation is essential for all producers and marketers to understand the value of market. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 47-48.)

2.1.3 Market Differentiation and Positioning

After successfully completion of market segmentating and targeting, company needs to know which market to enter and provide service. Each segment requires different services. How to achieve targeted customer will be based on the designed services. That is known as customer value for service provider. Positioning refers to placing our service clearly to the customer in the segmented zone as per the market segmentation and. Designed of the service for those customer makes them to understand why they need our service and product. This could be effective differentiation of market offering so that it gives consumer more value. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 48-50.)

As this thesis is particularly focused on program promoting and marketing, therefore promotional factors are an essential in this thesis. Promotion activities bring all customers together. Some customers would be essential for further promotional references. Therefore, market segmentation and positioning is considered as an important element of the 4P's model. The core idea of promotion is to reach new customer or market area, where we can get new costumers so that we can provide more services throughout the session. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 48-50.)

2.2   Marketing Mix

The Marketing Mix is the set of marketing tools for any service providers to produce optimum response from the customers. It consists of various analyses so that customers could get desired satisfaction, and service provider would get potential customers in order to fulfil their desire or vice versa. There are four variables, they are product, place, price and promotion; it controls demand and supply of services. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-51.)

An effective marketing consists of all the marketing mix elements. The effective utilization of marketing mix elements into integrated marketing program helps to achieve the objectives of any service providers, and then the customers should get desired services and satisfaction as per the needs.

Some critics think that the four variable of marketing mix are designed to achieve the target for producers or service provider, it is more concentrated towards the service providers rather than customers. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-51.)

Product

The product can be services and goods or combination of both. As per the marketing mix, after understanding market segmentation producer should provide the services. The product can be categorized into variety, quality, design,

features, brand name, packaging and services. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-52.)

Price

All Customers have to pay money to obtain the products and services, but the price should be designed as per the purchasing power of the customer. Based on the service and features price would be different. Customers have to pay extra for other services. In service business, each customer should pay for extra services based on the time and value of the product and services. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-52.)

Place

The place is a geographical location where company provides services for the customers. In the particular geographical location, customers will get the product and service. The market segmentation guides any service providers for service providing in that particular place. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-52.)

Promotion

Promotion means the direct or indirect communication between customers and service providers. Service providers tend to provide more information to fetch the prospective clients. The customers try to get the service or product to fulfil their optimism. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-52.)

There is another concern, it says that 4c marketing model is considered as the updated version of 4P model and it relates direct link with consumer. 4C model represents consumer wants and needs vs. 4P concept takes the seller's view of the market. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 50-52.)

Table 1: The 4C model of marketing (Roy 2012)

Consumer	Costs	Convenience	Communication
• Consumer wants and needs (vs. Products) • With out Consumer wants and needs it is useless to develop product and sell them to a mass	• Cost to satisfy (vs. Price) • proper price of the product and service that must satisfy the consumer	• Convenience to buy (vs. Place) • how market prefers to buy the product and service or convenience to buy instead of place	• Communication (vs. Promotion) • Communication is the professional manupulation, it requies give and take between buyers and sellers

2.3   Marketing Mix- 4C Model

As we are describing the 4c model, the details provide necessary information for marketing concentration towards customers. Whereas 4P model is concentrating on external factors, but 4C entirely focuses on internal factors to make customer satisfied. After comparison between two models, 4C carries strength to satisfy customer. Therefore, it should provide all the information to fulfil the needs of customers. (Hanlon 2015.)

Consumer

It is believed that service provider should focus on customer-oriented service instead of focusing on product; it should be profitable for any service provider in long run. In service providing business, 4C model provides eye opening

information. Therefore, it encourages seller to know what customers want and need instead of what we want to sell. Marketing professional needs to understand that different consumer needs at different time. It brings clearity and accuracy. Therefore, the product must be something unique and different from the rest of the competitors. (Hanlon 2015.)

Cost

The cost is the details of information about the total amount goes on production of any goods or services, it includes all of the industrial and official expenses. One can put any desired price for any product but that should be cost effective. Hence, cost should be applicable and affordable. Only the 4C marketing mix model could be capable to do this. (Hanlon 2015.)

Convenience

Thesedays, technology has totally changed the perception of convenience. Customers wants information easily, they would like to browse and search necessary information via email and internet. The required information should be clearly provided and defined into the online information. This is why service provider should understand the nature of demand from the customer. After sell service and upfront information should be provided effectively, therefore marketing professionals should figure out the barrier between customers and service providers before or after the sell service. (Hanlon 2015.)

Communication

The technology has made communication extremely easier than last decade. Everybody would like to best use of his or her communication devices. Hence, it would be topmost important factors to provide information for customer ontime. Service providers should provide necessary information according to the needs of customer. The motto of this information is to make customers to buy our services. Therefore, Communication could be a bridge between customers and service providers. (Hanlon 2015.)
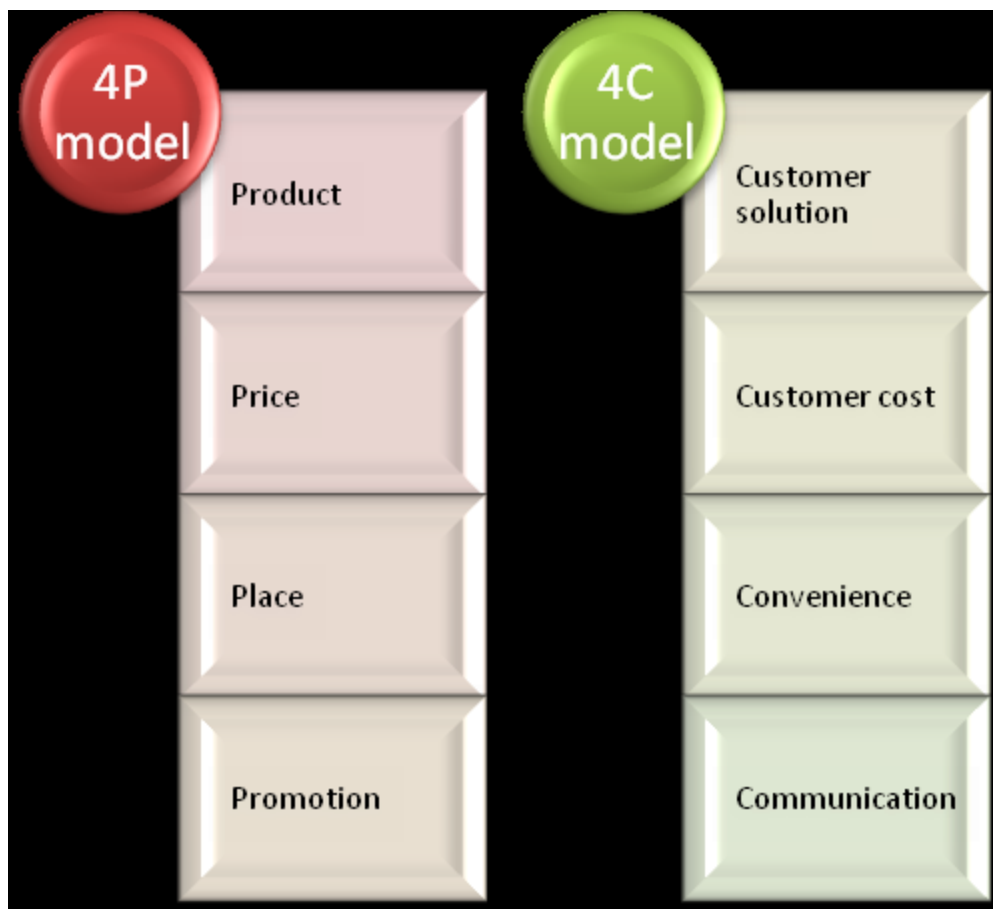
FIGURE 5: The difference between 4P & 4C model (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 51)

In this picture, Kotler and Armstrong have mentioned the difference between two models. They focus on different sector but both of them are essential for marketing programs. 4P model is considered as physical model and it analyses the external factor of marketing. However, 4C model concentrates on internal sector but it is considered as accurate analysis for marketing, therefore it is more customer service oriented model.

2.4   Service Marketing

Service marketing is an extended marketing mix concept of 4Ps. It defines 7P's instead of 4P's. The extended marketing mix consists of three different elements from 4P model, they are People, Process and Physical Evidence. It could be needed for any business. Especially Service marketing is essential for this thesis due to being a service-orientated case.

People

People are the key resources in the service marketing. Here people means employee. It means how the employee should work towards customers. It defines the process of service providing by the employee towards potential customers. In the service business, service provider should act as per the need of customer to make them satisfied. Without customer satisfaction, it could be difficult to meet the desired target. (Hanlon 2015.)

Process

The process could be the method for reaching to the potential customer by service, there sould be various process but it could depend on blueprint of the company. Each company possesses own blue print for the customer service. The end process for reaching to the customer is known as process in marketing mix. (Hanlon 2015.)

Physical Evidence

Service is intangible in nature but to provide customer service some tangible elements could be needed. Physical evidence should make easy for customers to receive services. Therefore, service providers should provide various facilities for customers during service providing to provide them optimum satisfaction of facilities, such facilities could be essential for any service provider. (Hanlon 2015.)

2.5   Service and Product Marketing

Marketing for either service business or product business are similar. Either way customer should be satisfied. Products and services should support each other. In the developing process of the product or service, it should define the use of the product and service to fulfil the needs for both designers and users. There are some similarities and differences between product and service marketing. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 223.)

FIGURE 6: Comparison and contrast of Product and Service Marketing (Marritt 2014)

2.6   SOSTAC

The best practice of marketing is impossible without SOSTAC planning and analysis. Whenever we think promotional planning in business, it would be important to understand the details of market. The various factors for market could be understood via SOSTAC analysis. It would be an advance model for business planning.

SOSTAC is the abbreviation of Situation, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics, Action and Controls. It was developed in 1990 by PR Smith. It became worldwide popular. The creative business and marketing planning strategies could be one of the reasons. Both in marketing management and benchmarking, SOSTAC is the first competitive tool to solve the problems. In this research, the author of this thesis is using this model to create a best marketing management analysis on the mentioned case. Being one of the best models for business planning, it could provide necessary ideas for marketing planning, promotional planning and business planning. (Smith 2009.)

Situation- Where are we now?

Objectives- Where do we want to go?

Strategies-How do we get there?

Tactics- Details of Strategies

Action- Who does what and when?

Control- Measurements and controls

FIGURE 7: SOSTAC Planning System (Modified Smith 2015)

There are other means, which support SOSTAC model to be completed for achieving desired success such as time, manpower, and investment. These supporting factors should help anyone to understand the actual process of SOSTAC model in the business promotion.

Situation

- Analysis- Where are we now?

In order to answer this question, there has to be done lots of research based on internal resources. Situation analysis shows the current ability and the potentiality of the project for future advancement. For better project planning, situation should be the major step to go through into the actual analysis, it would provide the highest role in any project analysis. (Smith 2009.)

As Smith has mentioned on his book, Situation analysis comes first to implement the marketing plan. It could be based on certain framework, that could support for setting out the goal. According to the situation Analysis, there should be interact between who we are, what we would like to do and achieve after this. Such analysis could provide success on analysising. Otherwise, external and internal factors could influence the business strategies. (Smith 2009; Smart Insights 2016.)

Objectives

– Where do we want to go?

PR Smith says there are two types of objective, they are short-term objectives and long-term objectives. Therefore, it is always considered as mission of the organization, that should help forming further strategies for the company.

The hierarchy of objectives in a business
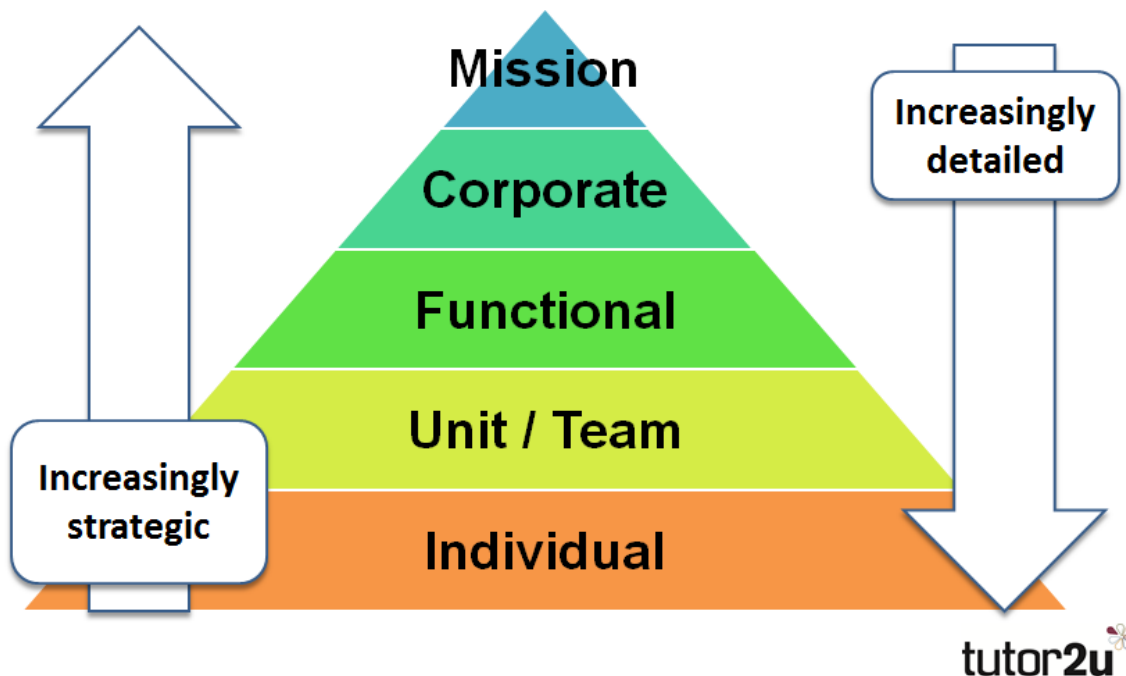
FIGURE 8: The hierarchy and objective in a business (Tutor2u 2016)

In the above diagram, the mission is a form of objective in a business; it carries the vision and future of the organization for long term that would be followed by corporate department to fulfil the mission and objective. Corporate objectives concern functional mechanism therefore functional objectives come from lower level, where business would be functioned in various ways such as unit or team. These units or team are traditionally called Administrative department, Finance department, Production department, Human resources department, and Marketing Department. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008; Nguyen 2015, 24-26.)

In the hierarchy of objectives, corporate objectives are the functional objectives. Therefore, the purpose of objective shoud help making it possible to achieve the corporate mission of the organization.

Strategies

- How do we get there?

Business strategies could be a road map for any organization, that should provide details of information such as how and where we should spend our resources to grow our business. It would show direction to a company. Therefore, marketing strategies would mention same thing such as where you should take your business and where could be the target market (Stannage 2016).

In the figure 10, Tim Stannage has mentioned his marketing strategy process that could help establishing proper marketing strategies. It has to be followed step by step. There are seven areas, which could be essential for any business such as Understand Customer, Analyse Market, Analyse Competition, Define Marketing Mix, Determine Marketing position, Marketing Budget, as well as Execution Plan. Thereafter, strategies should come from various levels of business. (Smith 2009.)

FIGURE 9: Marketing strategy process (Modified Stannage 2016)

Marketing strategy process should help deciding where to use company's resources on. In the service selling business, marketing strategy could play vital role to achieve the desired success. Tim's seven stages for marketing strategy could help building tactics to recruit and re-recruit more customers. Therefore, all his stages refer to the practical benefit of the company or organization. (Stannage 2016; Smart Insights 2016.)

Tactics

– Details of Strategies

How exactly should we get there? Tactics defines to be there. PR Smith says marketing mix should define the actual model of tactics for service-oriented business. After completion of marketing strategies and objectives, then another level should begin, that is called tactics. Therefore, tactics should require lots of planning and details for marketing and promoting. 7P's of Marketing Mix could help on objectives to focus on tactics. Therefore, Tactics should provide the foundation to meeting the objectives of the strategy. (Smith 2009; Smart Insights 2016.) The purpose of 7P's of marketing mix should support todevelop marketing tactics. Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical evidences are the elements of 7P's. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 78.)

FIGURE 10: 7P's of Marketing Mix (ICT Business and Society 2016)

The above figure defines the process and steps of the 7P's of marketing mix. Further discussion regarding marketing mix of LUAS has explained later in this thesis.

Action

– Who does what and when?

Action phase should be helpful on how to bring a plan to life, it should make it actionable. This section covers what should be achieved during the operation of services. In this phase, it defines where all the efforts should be put from the very beginning. The proper responsibilities should be divided and distributed to all the responsible departments. There should be schedules for certain objectives. The responsible department should act according to the strategical plan for fulfilling the objectives of the organization. (Smart Insights 2016.)

ID	Task Name	Predecessors	Duration
1	Start		0 days
2	a	1	4 days
3	b	1	5.33 days
4	c	2	5.17 days
5	d	2	6.33 days
6	e	3,4	5.17 days
7	f	5	4.5 days
8	g	6	5.17 days
9	Finish	7,8	0 days

FIGURE 11: Gantt chart for Action Plan (Gantt Chart 2016)

Gantt chart could be an example. It would be helpful for project timeline. It is a computerised model, it needs computer and excel program to carry out Gantt model of action plan.

Controls

– Measurements and Controls

The control would be the final stage of SOSTAC plan, it could monitor and measure the performance based on the objectives and strategies of organization. It should not only monitor the achieved progress also prepare for the next step. Therefore, this stage should carry the similar ideas as above stages. (Smart Insights 2016; Nguyen 2015.)

 For monitoring the achieved progress and external risk 3X3 matrix could be helpful to evaluate risk from low to high level.

			Consequences		
			Minor	Moderate	Major
			3	2	1
Likelihood	Probable	A	Yellow	Red	Red
	Possible	B	Green	Yellow	Red
	Improbable	C	Green	Green	Yellow

Key	Green Low Risk	Yellow Medium Risk	Red High Risk

FIGURE 12: Risk Matrix (Riskagenda 2016)

In the above figure, Risk matrix could be helpful in monitoring board to ensure that business is on right track to meet the objectives. As indicated in the figure, major consequences could be less likely to happen, minor and moderate consequences could be more likely to happen such consequences should be acceptable but closely watched. If moderate and major consequences show highly possible to happen then instant action would be required. (Riskagenda 2016; Smith 2009.)

3   BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, the author would like to explore the best practises for international student recruitment process. The focus remains on International student recruitment for Lahti University of Applied Sciences. Since the late 1980, Finnish Higher Education Institutions have focused on international students and teachers exchange program in order to attract foreign students to Finland. The solo aim of this program was designed for Internationalization of Finnish education due to the global demand of competitive education throughout the world. (CIMO 2009.)

The growing demand of international education lies in developing countries, where educational market is created for universities from developed countries like Europe and America. High quality of education that draws international students, that helps to fulfil the growing demand of work force. Most of the students from developing countries would like to make their educational destination in developed countries. Each year millions of students have studied abroad. This has made a competition between universities to provide effective education system. (CIMO 2009.)

Education market is rapidly booming. English speaking countries like USA, UK, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, and NEWZEALAND have already successfully designed education system. Due to the global demand of English, majority of the students are willing to study in English Speaking countries. Non-English speaking countries are also developing their education system for international students. Recent data shows Japan is one of the pioneers in Asian Market. German is leading in Europe because of being free education system and their size of the economy. Demark, Sweden and Finland also effectively designing education system for international students. (Hanover Research 2010.)

By 2017, Finland is going to implement tuition fees for international students. It might be problem for Finnish Universities for getting sufficient number of

international students. The Internationalization at Home (IaH) program might be effected due to the lower number of international students.

International student recruitment in Finland has solo aim to create an atmosphere of internationalization at home. Education provided in foreign language is the process of internationalization at home of Finnish Higher Education. European Union has cooperated with European member states for common education policy for internationalization of education in Europe. (CIMO 2016.)

Bologna process is channelizing European member states for internationalization of education. The motto of Bologna process is to create compatible and transparent education system in European member states. Erasmus is the part of bologna process, so it has supported thousands of international students for their further studies and research programmes in European Union. (Bologna 2016.)

In 1990's Finnish Education Ministry initiated a massive program to bring international students in Finland aiming to make an international atmosphere at Finnish Universities. The key objective was to create diverse and multicultural atmosphere for understanding the international education system for innovation of effective education policy. Finnish Government started funding institution for education development and design in foreign language to meet the need and standard of other English-speaking countries education system. Finnish government launches various programmes taught in foreign language at University of Applied Sciences to support this programs. (Bologna 2016; Ministry of Education 1994.)

The Finnish higher education policy is to bring number of international students in foreign language taught program. So, it sould meet the global needs and challenges. To fulfil these needs, Finnish universities need more students that are international. This is only possible after effective marketing and promotional planning.

The Finnish Universities provide academic and research based education system at highest level. The bachelor's degree consists of 180 credits with around three years of studies, while master's degree consists of 120 credits with around two years of studies. The Universities of Applied Sciences are also known as polytechnic institution; they fulfil the needs of labour market. The educations provided by UAS are considered as practical education. They engage in practical training and skill development of students. They provide bachelor's degree in various streams, and some of them even provide master's degree. There are 28 polytechnic institutions which are known as Universities of Applied Sciences. (CIMO 2009.)

Since 1990, Finnish education system has started to becoming internationalization. International student recruitment has massively activated for one and half decade. Finnish educationists have also focused on creating and developing new education system based on English language instruction. The massive educational modification has made possible to increase foreign students at Finnish institution. But growing number of competition between Asian, European and American universities, Finland needs to develop a strong marketing policies for international student recruitment, which has to support for internationalization of finish education. (CIMO 2009.)

3.1   Internationalization at Home

The purpose of recruiting international student is to make Internationalization at home. Globalization process is reshaping the concept of business. The principle of business has also modified due to the technical advancement, it has forced changes in economy, culture, lifestyle, education system, and societies. Therefore, internationalization is being an important aspect of education for learning and sharing the knowledge. It helps students get to know each other, their needs, lifestyle, and culture that brings them to understand the world. Last two decades, student mobility is rapidly increasing; especially developing countries are sending more students abroad for education. These nations want to

learn more about other culture to bring positive changes in their economy, because knowledge is being the best commodity these days. (Dang 2015, 1-2.)

Internationalization has become a popular term in higher education. It is a process of integrating international and multicultural ideas, which will affect domestic students for learning and discovering other cultures. This is how domestic students able to learn and share new ideas so that it could be a process of connecting the world. Hanover research (2010) says without proper guidelines and recruitment blue print, it is almost impossible to recruit prospective international students for higher studies. Majority of the institution have been recruiting without proper plan and services. Therefore, all institution needs proper blue print for international student recruitment process and practise to ensure the quality. (Hanover Research 2010.)

3.2   International Student Friendly University

Finnish education system is being popular around the world; it is being known for the best education system. Each year number of international students are coming to Finland for further studies. The trend of coming to Finland is rapidly increasing and the internationalization process also effectively moving ahead. It is necessary to maintain the constancy, which is possible when educational institution becomes international student friendly. (Hanover Research 2010.)

One of the leading educational service providers IDP has suggested few simple steps to achieve that'

- Student Accommodation (On campus or off campus)
- On campus or off campus part time job opportunities
- Cultural friendly indoor and outdoor activities
- Student Counseling service

Similarly, Education USA is a leading international student recruitment body in the US, has recommended few steps to follow to create international student friendly campus such as,

- Special Website page for international student
- Educating and providing training for admission team and international student department to deal with international students correctly
- Finnish, Swedish and English Language Facilities
- Well prepared orientation program for new comers
- Local host family

It has recommended to provide at least one well-trained staff for Visa and Residence Permit information. Each institution has to understand the needs of international students because international student advising network provides best practise for developing student friendly University. (Hanover Research 2010, 44-45.)

3.3   International Admission Office

All university requires international student office. They require to have well trained staff for international admission and student office. It is one of the sensitive departments of any universities because they need lots of administrative work and skills to bring prospective international students. Student office is the key source for international students. They have responsibilities to bring prospective and scholar students to the university. Their skill for enrolment, recording and monitoring should always have maintained up to date. As a part of admission process, student office should organise arrival information, orientation, educational workshops and supporting social events. Student office should provide proper counselling and information on cross-cultural workshop, employment workshops, language program, cultural celebration program, field trips and other relevant weekly and monthly activities. (Hanover Research 2010; CIMO 2016.)

Hanover research recommends that each university should organise discussion forums to understand the international students and their problems. Such kind of interaction activities will help both national and international students to know each other and their values. Some universities around the world practise such

forum once a month inside the university, this is why it is recommended to have proper platform for all students to discuss their ideas and issues inside the university. (Hanover Research 2010, 45-47.)

3.4   International Enrolment Growth

The author made research to know the growth of international student at various higher education institutions around the world. This section examines the trend of studying by foreign students seen in various Anglophonic countries including German, France, China, Japan and Finland.

America is the pioneer in this business. They have language benefit because English is widely spoken. Students from non-English speaking countries are also looking for English speaking destination. Being a language of international communication, it is easy and everybody at least understands some level of communication. The data shows more students are willing to study in English Speaking countries than non-English speaking countries. (ICEF 2015.)

Last two decades, non-English speaking countries are also developing rapidly their educational syllabus into English medium of instruction. Now, Some EU countries have implemented education in English medium, therefore, students are willing to study in those European countries. Bologna Process has made common agenda to build up common education and grading system in European Union Countries. (Bologna 2016.)

ICEF (2016) is a well-known educational event management organization, who organises various educational workshops and seminars to bring together all the educators, education consultant and educational professionals. They work as a bridge between education service provider and educational institutions worldwide. Based on the research done by ICEF, the survey report presents the number of students recruited by the top ten countries in 2015 are as follows.

TABLE 2: Student recruitment by top ten countries (ICEF 2015)

Country Name	No of student recruited in 2014/2015
USA	974,926
UK	493,570
China	377,054
Germany	301,000
France	298,000
Australia	464,787
Canada	336,497
Japan	184,155
Malaysia	135,000
New Zealand	110,198

In 2015, many countries aggressively have promoted their education to increase the mobility of international student. Over the past decade, student mobility is rapidly increasing into Anglophonic and European countries but some Asian countries like JAPAN, MALAYSIA and CHINA also significantly improving. The following countries have significantly improved their international student recruitment in 2014/15.

USA - The ICEF (2016) report shows "The US always remained the world's leading educational destination in 2015. The number of international students enrolled in US educational institution has grown by 10% in 2014/2015". Approximately, one million international students enrolled in the US universities

and colleges. This has contributed US nearly $ 30.5 billion for US economy. (ICEF 2016.)

GERMAN- One of the leading countries in European Union, it has increased international student enrolment by 7% in 2014/2015. The total number of enrolment has reached 301,000 with fourth largest country in the world. The recent development in English taught programmes have helped them to increase number of international students. Tuition fees for international students are either affordable or non-existent. (ICEF 2016.)

FRANCE-France is the second leading country in Europe for international student enrolment at higher educational institution. In 2014/2015, the international student admission rate has increased by 13%. This incensement has contributed $5.1 billion in 2014. France has hosted nearly 298,000 students. France has designed new program for international student recruitment to increase up to 470,000 within 2025. (ICEF 2016.)

CHINA-Chinese students are the source of number of European and US universities. Now, the situation is changing because China is increasing foreign students at their universities and has become the third largest study destination in the world. The 377054 students enrolled in 2014/2015 that was 15% growth comparing to 2012. Their aim to attract half millions of students by 2020. (ICEF 2016.)

JAPAN- Japan is a popular educational destination for South Asian and South East Asian Countries. Japan has rapidly increased international student enrolment and enrolled 184,155 international students in 2014. This has remarkably changed their economy. They are planning to enrol three hundred thousand students by 2020 for higher education. (ICEF 2016.)

Finland –CIMO has provided information on student mobility to Finland from abroad in 2003 to 2013, if we look into the data in 2003 the total number of incoming students from abroad was 6000, but in 2013, this number has

increased to nearly 20000. This number is significantly growing in the ten years' period. Due to the free educational policy for international students, it seems that the inflow of international student is increasing year by year. (CIMO 2013.)

3.5 International Student Recruitment Strategies

In the previous chapters, the author has discussed about international student admission and development. In the following pages, the author wants to bring attention for international student recruitment strategies. International student admission process is impossible without effective admission strategies, now case company has to focus and invest for prospective international student recruitment. Due to the limited marketing and admission policy, Finnish education system is popular among limited students. New marketing and promotion strategies might be necessary for Finnish higher educational institution for effective recruitment campaign. (CIMO 2016.)

In the last two decades, education-marketing strategies are changing every day. It has to build up separate marketing strategies by one institution, because each institution can build up their own assessment policy based on what type of international student it is likely to attract. Based on institutional academic reputation and academic programs marketing and recruiting process should be implemented.

Presently, South-Asian and South-East Asian countries are sources for international students, therefore based on geographical location, traditional and modern marketing methods have to be implemented for recruitment. In developing countries, students are still depending on limited sources for information, these students are looking for right information at right time. A potential market is the source of prospective student and business. Therefore, each institution has to develop their own recruitment plan for further educational promotion that will motivate their prospective international student to study at their institution. (Hanover Research 2010, 20-23.)

Hanover Research (2010) shows there are various ways to do effective international student recruitment, such as by adding recourses or implementing new marketing strategies. There are common practises educational institution have been implementing for recruitment such as,

- New international programmes

- Collaboration with international institutions

- Funding for international trip

- Funding for marketing and promotion

- Tie up with international recruitment agents

Source :(IIE 2016; Hanover Research 2010)

4 RESEARCH METHODS, DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

This chapter makes the reader familiar with the empirical research part. It explains how the study was formulated and designed for research. It analyses the results gained from the research. First, it explains research methods for data collection and moves to explain the data acquisition.

In this part, the author has explained research methods first, it is followed by data collection procedures and at the end of the chapter the data are analysed. The empirical part consists of a survey conducted among international students at LUAS and interviews with LUAS officials. Survey questions and interview questions will be listed in the appendix. Both survey and interview will be analysed later in this chapter.

Empirical research has been done based on observation and experiences gathered during the research. The research could be carried out in two different methods such as qualitative and quantitative methods. In this thesis, both research methodologies have been implemented. In the empirical research, primary sources are based on data and survey, and secondary sources have been collected from various sources. The main motive of this research is to find out how to bring more prospective international students to LUAS. It is based on marketing principles but it has also focused on recruitment. Therefore, marketing and recruitment practise is coming together in this thesis.

TABLE 3: Research Plan

International Student Recruitment	Present studies and future plan	Student enrolment and admission
Research Methods	Quantitative Method	Qualitative Methods
Research Technique	Survey and Questioners	Interviews and Recommendations

4.1 Quality of qualitative research

The quality of qualitative research depends on the outcome of the research and process of the research. Quality of the research could able to figure out by internal and external validity. Mainly, these two mechanisms ensure the quality of research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that the quality of the qualitative research remains on the trustworthiness and the outcome of the result, and it should be the same. Mills & Briks (2014) refers that *"Regardless of how you choose to manage your data, your system should be logical and secure"*

Qualitative data relate to concept, opinion, values and behaviour of people. These data can be found from the observation, interviews and previous research documents and articles. Qualitative data analysis means the process of interpretation or some form of explanation on collected information and data. In the process of case studies, it happens to be deductive approach. That information comes from materials, and memos based on our research. Ultimately, that information should be explained based on the theories and themes. Therefore, qualitative research describes information based on data with the mass point of views, perceptions and ideas. These meaningful interpretations keep close interaction with data. It happens in three different forms such as thinking about things, collecting information about things, and finally noticing about the things. (Nigatu 2009.)

The quality of qualitative research relates with the experience and expertise of the researcher, thus it is a major factor, which influences the quality of qualitative research. (Mills & Birks 2014, 221.)

Individual interviews are effective approach to collect primary information, and case studies for secondary sources. Therefore, both data collection methods can be used as per the need of information for research question. Both are considered as an effective way to get the proper information; this helps researcher to figure out pinpoint of the problem. Observations could be done in some cases but it takes long time and process. Some research needs actual

observation for long time. However, individual interview or survey is the perfect way to deal with any situation; therefore, it is always popular among qualitative researcher. (Maanen 2000, 10; Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 87-88.)

Concept of reliability and validity

There are two different kinds of sources for information, one is primary information source and other is secondary information source. Primary sources are interviews, and data collection. Secondary sources consist of research papers, books and official websites. In this case, the reliability and validity of secondary sources are high. In the primary source, the reliability and validity reduces due to the authors own interpersonal explanation and views.

The validity is the truth. The outcome of the research should be valuable; therefore, all research leads to find out the valuable information. In qualitative research, it is the process of finding the true and accurate information and the purpose of the research should represent the accuracy and reliability. Validity not only provides authenticity also reliability on research. (Holloway 1979, 159.)

In qualitative research, reliability defines the process of coming with same research result, if another researcher follows and conducts the same case study. Therefore, the goal of the reliability is to bring accuracy in the research. (Yin 2014, 48-49.)

Internal Validity

The process of presenting the correlation between the theory and research outcome. There should be presented exact information or relation between outcome of research and data collection. Then, the research leads to the truthful outcome. Internal validity majors the thoughts of the participant during the research process and the theme storyline of the thesis. The process of providing evidence of finding from primary or secondary sources to the theory of the research. (Holloway 1979, 159-161.)

External Validity

When the reader reads and finds the information, it should be trustworthy and should reflect the reality. In qualitative research, research becomes specific and accurate; there research should be useful for further research in similar circumstances. This is also the value or validity of the research paper. Therefore, reader has to build up trustworthiness while reading the research. It is only possible when reader finds the truth, accurate, details of description, and figures out the result of the research. (Holloway 1979, 159-161.)

Construct Validity

Construct validity can be defined in various ways, but the ways to implement strategies to get the accurate information to support the outcome of the research can be said construct validity. Construct validity defines and correlate with internal and external validity. Therefore, identifying the correct operational process is necessary to do the research from multiple sources of evidence. After that, the process of establishing a chain of evidence is also the process of data collection for constructing validity in qualitative research. (Yin 2014, 46.)

Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of validation of various researches finding to answer the research questions. Information can be found from various sources, any of them are completely true, but all of them are part of the truth. Therefore, the elements of the truth can be found by cooperating with multiple prospective sources. This correlating process is called triangulation in qualitative research. (Carter 2014.) Triangulation should improve the validity; it helps to investigate the same problem from various prospective. It helps researcher to look into problems from various ways. Therefore, triangulation helps to build up accurate notion for researcher. (Holloway 1979, 157-158.)

4.2   Questionnaire Design and Data Analysis

At first, the survey with international students was conducted and it helped to discover why they have chosen LUAS for further studies, and to prepare the students preferences. Meanwhile, the author conducted semi-structured interview with the international student admission staff and Tutor. The interview questions were related with international student recruitment. However, some information collected from small number of participants, but it provided enough and strong information about international students studying at LUAS. That helped for the author for developing ideas in this thesis preparation.

A paper based questionnaire was prepared first to get the feedback from the international students. The data collection process was conducted at three different campuses of Lahti UAS. It was conducted between Business, IT and Nursing students from various countries. The question types were based on Why, What, How, Where, Which and Yes/No questions. All questions were related with their study options. The data collection process was done manually. First, the question sheet was designed in A4 paper, printed the entire question in English medium, and distributed during the class hours with the permission of Lecturers and Professors from various departments. The survey needed international students and their feedback therefore it was most effective to do the survey manually to fetch as bigger a number of international students as possible.

In total, 80 International students completed the questionnaire. The response rate was more than expected. Apart from the questionnaire, the author conducted semi-structured interview with a tutor and an admission staff employee in order to get more information regarding international student enrolment.
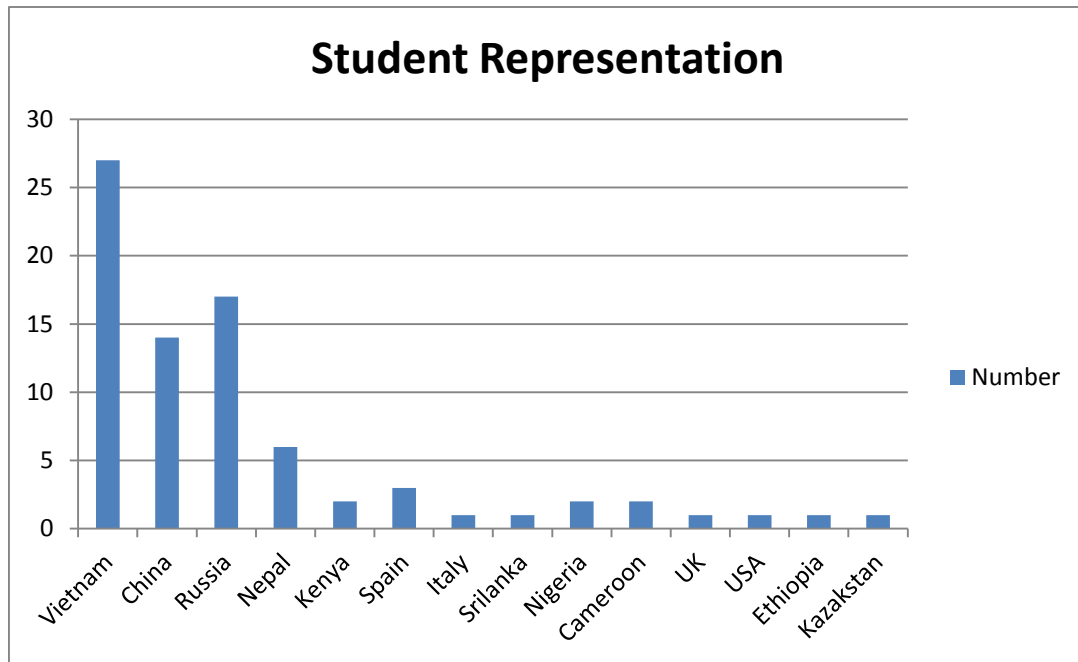
Student Representation

FIGURE 13: Student participants during research survey

4.3   Result of the Survey

In this section, the author has discussed empirical results and findings. The discussions and recommendations are based on collective views from surveys and interviews among international students, and staff of the case company. There are few ideas which has recommendation based on the author's own knowledge and experience in student recruitment and marketing.

At first, all the theories related with marketing were collected, which has already presented in the previous chapter. After theory was written, data was collected from primary and secondary sources. Then after, findings and information were formulated together. All the information was analysed and put together for final findings. Hereby, the findings of the data are explained on the following paragraphs.
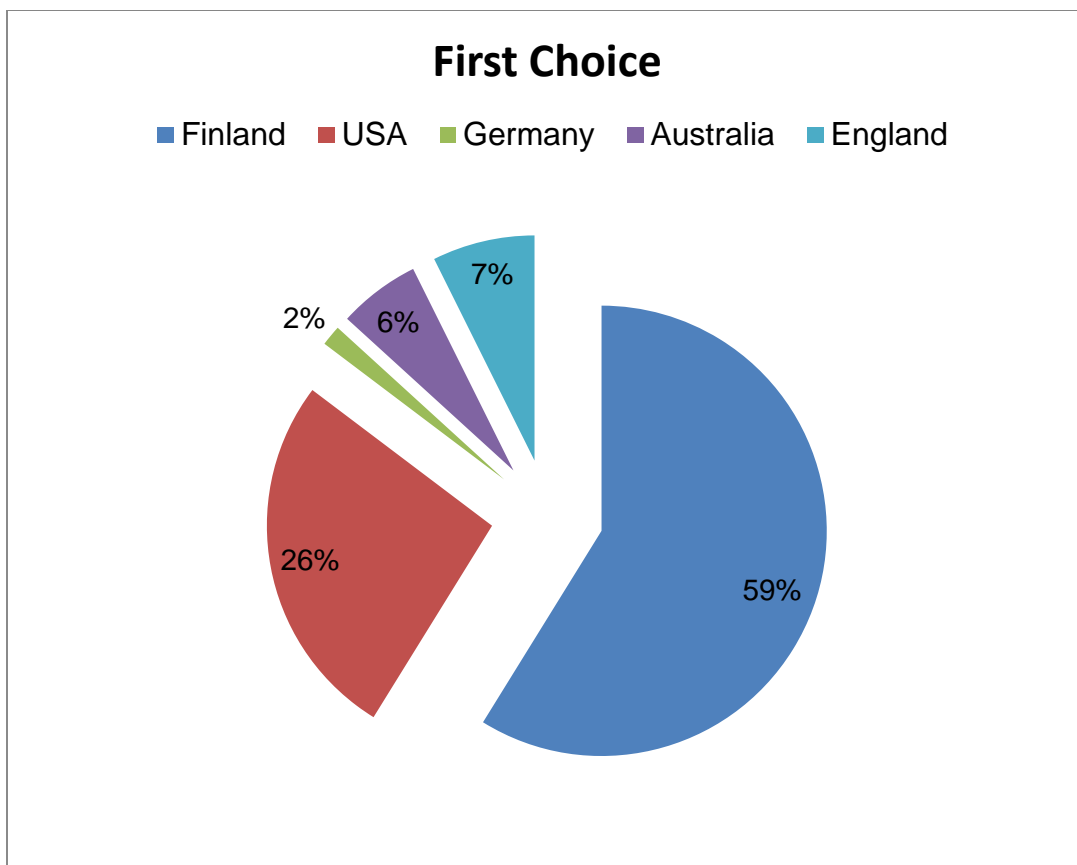
FIGURE 14: First choice to study as per survey

The survey was conducted in Lahti University of Applied Sciences. It was conducted among international students who have been studying in a Bachelor's Degree program in various faculties. As per the author's data collection, nearly 59% of the students have chosen Finland as a first choice and prefer to study in Finland. Nearly 40% of students have not chosen Finland as their first choice. The survey shows that nearly 30% of international students have USA and Germany as first priority. Therefore, Finland needs to compete with these two nations in the future for student recruitment.

Finland has huge competition with developing countries because the source for Finnish students, i.e. from China and Vietnam, is rapidly developing their own

education level and services. Therefore, Finland faces lots of competition when it comes to recruiting international students. This might be another topic to think about before problems arise. The data reveals that nearly half of the students are studying at LUAS because of the free education.

2nd Choice

Finland · Germany · USA · Spain · Canada · Australia · Russia

Finland 52%, Germany 13%, USA 6%, Spain 8%, Canada 8%, Australia 10%, Russia 3%
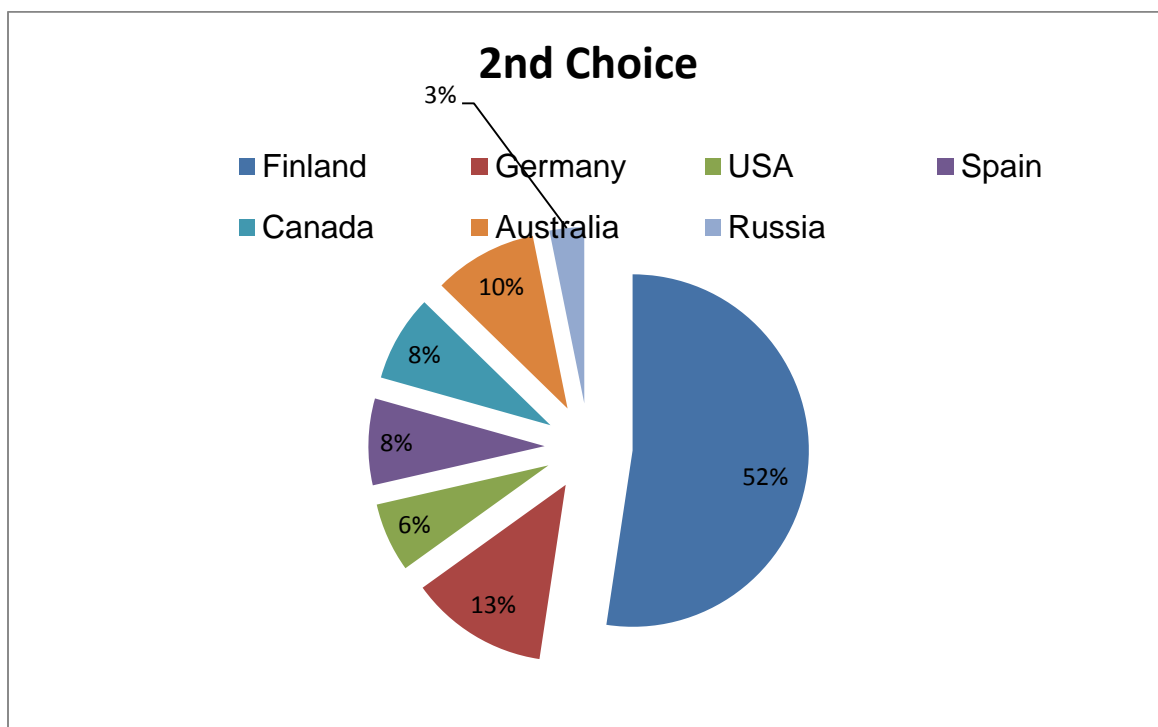
FIGURE 15: Second choice to study as per survey

As per the survey, it revealed that 52% students want to continue their studies in Finland, but still those students have considered Finland as a second choice, which shows that nearly half of the students have been studying in Finland as a second choice.

However, 51% of the international students still want to continue their further studies after Bachelor's Degree in Finland. But more than forty percent of students would like to go to other countries after graduation. Still more than 10% of them have not decided yet.
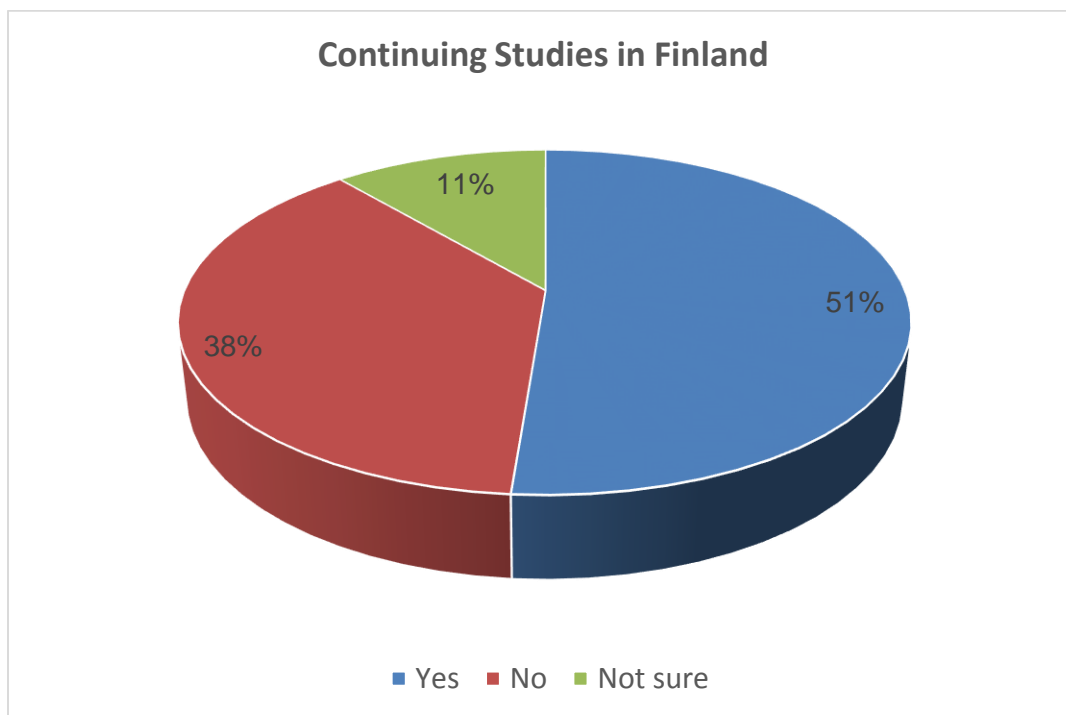
Continuing Studies in Finland

FIGURE 16: Continuing studies in Finland

This confirms that more than half of the international students would be leaving after their graduation, not just in a particular faculty. This has raised a question on the effectiveness of recruitment policy for prospective international students. Lack of marketing and selection of prospective students are the strong reasons why a number of students have chosen Finland just because of free education.

According to the research, only 36% of international students like Finland because of the education system but 31% like the nature and 27% like the society. On the other hand, a majority of students did not know about the Finnish culture and Language. The lack of cultural understanding has been creating

confusion to choose the right path. Therefore, inter cultural education is urgently needed at first so that students can learn many things about cultural differences. Language is yet another challenge for international students. It is difficult to communicate in other than mother tongue. This could be a reason why international students hesitated to communicate with domestic students.

In the survey, Students have problems with new language, culture and climate. Therefore, it could be easily understood that the majority of the students were unaware of Finnish language, culture and climate. Based on the survey and own knowledge of the author, Lahti University of Applied Sciences should provide pre information regarding language, culture and climate This would not only deliver information but also boost the Finnish education system.

4.4   Interview Analysis

Interview with the International Student Office and tutor was conducted at last to know their feedback based on their experience. The interview was conducted on the same question with two different persons face to face. The topic was based on international students and the specific question was "Why is it important to bring international students to LUAS?"

The outcome of the interview with two different persons was the same. Both were happy to have more international students; they would like to have multinational students at LUAS. They mentioned that international students should make LUAS more internationalized, classes could be more multicultural and international students could be supporting for LUAS branding internationally. Multicultural and multinational students could make domestic students think internationally or it encourages them to build up a new way of thinking and career learning experience with international students. Therefore, it is clearly understandable that LUAS needs more international students, which could be possible after successful marketing practise internationally.

5   SOSTAC ANALYSIS FOR CASE COMPANY: LUAS

In this chapter, the author has described the case company at first, and then SOSTAC Analysis of the case company.

5.1   Case company

In this research, the author has considered LUAS as a case company, because this thesis is based on the case company. Therefore, international students are the key factor of this thesis and marketing principles are based on how to recruit prospective students.
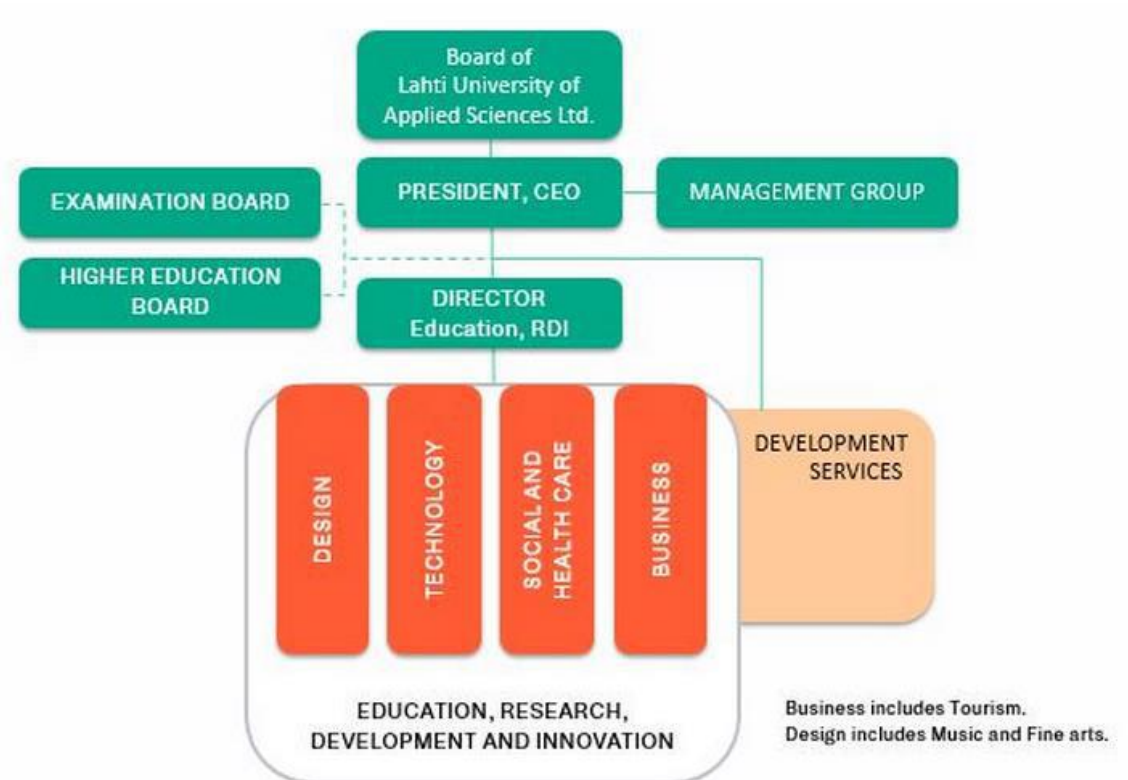

FIGURE 17: The organizational structure of Lahti UAS (LUAS 2016)

The Lahti University of Applied Sciences is also known as LUAS, was founded in 1991, and was a municipal university of Lahti. Since 2015, Lahti UAS became

Lahti UAS ltd. Now, 12 people are board members and the president of the board members is a CEO of Lahti UAS Ltd., and manages it. It has four different faculties and each year, it has been enrolling nearly 5300 students and 400 teachers and other staff members. Nearly 10% of the student population are international students. Business and hospitality management, IT, Nursing and Fashion Designing are the existing faculties. Each Faculty has its own dean. (LUAS 2016.)

LUAS needs networks with national and international educational institutions for education development and exchange programs. The case company has more than 200 partner universities around the world. Therefore, both domestic and international students should get opportunities to go on exchange at those universities. (LUAS 2016.)

Since the establishment of Lahti University of Applied Sciences, it has been providing excellent education for domestic and international students. Recently, LUAS has been popular among international students and has been enrolling hundreds of international students each year. The majority of the international students are coming from South Asia and South East- Asia. The number of Russian students is significantly higher in each faculty because of being a neighbouring country. Therefore, if we consider Russian students also international students, the percentage of international students is approx. 20%.

Due to the recent development in admission procedures for international students, there might be impact on enrolment of international students. Therefore, not to decrease the current percentage of international students at LUAS, up to date marketing or promotional strategies are required. Otherwise, it is clear that the number of international students would be decreasing soon.

Lahti UAS has a mission to contribute in the development of Lahti region by 2020. The mission is set to develop internationalized education system, innovative teaching and learning. In fact, Lahti UAS has aimed to build up skilful graduate to fulfil the needs of the regional advancement. (LUAS 2016.)

5.2   SOSTAC Analysis

Situation - **Where are we now?**

LUAS has huge potentiality for developing its educational program worldwide. The modern facilities, teaching methodologies, English medium of instruction, IT facilities, up-to-date online information and library facilities are available for students. These key factors are important for any educational institution to promote their education, which is available in LUAS

LUAS is already popular among international students; it has every facility to fulfil the requirement of students. Upon successfully implementing service and facilities, internationalization at home could be possible for Finnish students. Thousands of international students have already graduated from LUAS. This is one of the bestselling points to bring more students that are international. Therefore, it will fulfil the gap between international incoming students and Finnish students abroad going. The current Finnish student mobility is lower than the international students coming to Finland.

By autumn 2017, international students have to pay tuition fees that are the major concern now. It could be another challenge for the case company to maintain the level of international students; therefore, the case company has to understand the situation to bring in more international students.

Objectives – **Where do we want to go?**

Objectives are the clear plan of any organization for future destination. Student retention could be the objectives of any educational institution. It has been clearly mentioned that LUAS would like to enrol prospective students from all over the world. Therefore, every student is valuable, the objective is to provide him or her modern and practical education. It could be the role for internationalization at home.

Internationalization of LUAS is a part of development objectives; it can be seen in the education system, which is already becoming popular in the world. Therefore, LUAS has already defined its objectives to establish a multinational and diverse university with number of prospective international students.

Strategies- **How do we get there?**

There are seven different stages, which define marketing strategies. The most important part is to understand the customer. In this research, students are the customers for LUAS and the markets are located in various regions around the world. Competition already remains everywhere to enrol the prospective students due to global competition. Marketing position lies in Asian markets, especially in China, Vietnam, and Nepal. The majority of the international students are coming from those countries to the case company. Therefore, it is easy to enter into those markets for further promotional activities. Marketing value depends on the marketing budget of LUAS. Timely execution of marketing plan depends on the marketing strategies of the case company.

The strategies for the case company has already been designed, and is known as STRATEGY 2020. It has already underlined that Lahti UAS would like to connect with new international partners and networks worldwide in the near future.

Tactics – **Details of Strategy**

When strategies are made to be implemented, then tactics should be a more precise method of how to get things done. It leads to fetching the target market. Then, it would be the clear purpose of the marketing mix to get the desired position in the market. There are four different components, which are essential in establishing necessary tactics. It defines how to get into the market.

The case company has enough strength to compete in the market. It has to build smart admission and recruitment plans for maintaining standards of the recruitment process.

TABLE 4: 4P Analysis

Product	Price	Place	Promotion
Lahti UAS has been providing educational services for prospective students	Strategy to fulfil the required needs of the organization	Location and channels for promotion of the product or services	Advertising and brand promoting or it could be form of promotion

Action **– Who does what and when?**

The Company should make an effective plan to act as per the need of the situation. Situation differs from place to place therefore; action should be done according to the plan. Therefore, pre-marketing strategies could help any organization to solve the problems. The management team should allocate proper planning and responsibilities as per the need of the market. Only then, could required success be fetched.

In the marketing management, effectiveness of marketing plan could be possible for measuring the success and achievement. It should be guided as per the marketing plan; otherwise, it is impossible to get into it. LUAS has already planned for further marketing strategies; therefore, it has to be implemented into action. Action has to be defined to build up corporate responsibilities, it is a major concern in any organization. It has to be distributed as per the responsible departments. It is necessary for all departments to follow the guidelines and corporate rules to fulfil the objectives. In the process of continuous action, all departments should act precisely.

Controls **– Measurements and Controls**

Controls are to monitor the organizational activities. It deals with who monitors what and when. Especially, it controls all the components of SOSTAC. The major responsibilities of control departments are to figure out such things as, where are we now in the competition, where do we want to be in a certain time frame, how do we get there, who does what and when. In the organization, it has to be clear in all the departments for further success to achieve the desired mission established by organization. Therefore, LUAS has already established a modern management system, which has been effectively implemented as well. It would be better if there could be done some organizational research to create optimum success. In such manner, the case company has to build up strong controlling mechanism to fulfil the STRATEGY 2020.

6 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

When research is based on marketing, some research is done to develop a perfect plan to establish standard marketing policies for a case company. The development plan is done based on the empirical research and other references from similar kinds of business, which have been practised by other universities or nations in Europe and beyond.

A few countries have their own education and cultural promotion centers around the world. Those organizations are representing their nation for the development of education and culture worldwide. Few other nations have already established education centres for educational promotion in foreign countries. Below are a few organisations that are the authorised centre for educational information for their countries. They help in national and international student's mobility. These are the British Council- UK, Education USA Centre or Fulbright Centre- USA, GOETHE INSTITUTE – German, and Alliance Francaise – France have been promoting their education and culture throughout the world. Therefore, these countries have huge influence in the education market. These organizations are actively engaged in promoting their countries and education via languages programs, cultural exchange programs, education seminars and education fairs.

6.1 Education Promotion Policy

The outcome of the research shows that the case company needs to step up for marketing policy. It has already created international learning environment but, that it is impossible without international students. It is clearly understandable that after 2016 the number of international students coming to Finland for further studies may be decline. Due to the new policy, all Non-EU students have to pay tuition fees. Until autumn 2016, all student experienced free education. If international student number will decline, it might affect the internationalization program of the case company.

LUAS has been attempting to create an international learning environment. It is impossible to get that without international students. This is the right time to think about this situation. The exchange opportunities for domestic and international students should be provided effectively. However, all bachelor's degree programs get such opportunities to go on exchange, their academic curriculum also includes an exchange program. Those programs are designed with international and intercultural dimensions. (LUAS 2016.)

LUAS has recently designed PEDAGOGICAL Program 2016-2018 as a part of strategies. The Pedagogical program has been designed to support quality education & learning and promoting education. The aim of this program is to promote quality education on shore and off shore. Therefore, Pedagogical Program could be a selling point to enrol international students in the coming future. (LUAS 2016.)

6.2   Recruitment Efforts

Bologna process represents the quality of the European education system. The aim of Bologna is to bring common educational standards in the European Union (Bologna 2016). Finland is an example of a nation which has developed from an industrial nation to a model knowledge economical country with the help of modern education system. International students always look for learning at reasonable cost abroad. The reasonable cost and best education policies have reformed the Finnish education system. It is based on equality, innovative and professionally advanced education systems.

The education market is the leading business in the world. Especially, English speaking countries are highly taking benefits from education business. They provide many educational programs for international students along with English; this could be a reason why students would like to pursue their further education in English medium or in English speaking countries (Anglophonic countries). (Hanover Research 2010.)

The Finnish education system is changing day by day and it is being international. Since they have been providing education in English, it has become one of the popular destinations in Nordic Countries. The education system is free until December 2016; thereafter, all international students have to pay tuition fees for further education in Finland. Due to the change in policies, there might be some changes in students' flow, but this country has already been popular in China, Vietnam, Nepal, and some African countries, therefore students from these countries could be coming in upcoming days as well.

China and India are potential markets; there are millions of students who wish to pursue their further education abroad. Promoting Finnish education could be a right step to increase the student flow from China and India. Recent data shows, the largest number of international students come from China.

Efforts to recruit international student depend on geographical location. The market depends on current trends. If we look into the past record, Asia is the prime source for students. Developing countries in Asia are a major market for education recruitment. Asia generates 62% of international students for US institutions. The rapid economic development, students from Asian countries are willing to pursue their further studies abroad. This is not only helping them to build up their prospective career, these students are also the source for current labour market, and these graduates are fulfilling the demand. Due to the value of European and North American degrees, the majority of students go to Europe and America for further studies and for a better future. (Hanover Research 2010.)

The leading countries for sources of International Students for US universities are listed below. This information was collected from the Hanover Research (2010), therefore the figures are based on 2010.:

TABLE 5: Source for international students (Hanover Research 2010)

1 India 15.4%	2 China 14.6%	3 South Korea 11.2%
4 Canada 4.5%	5 Japan 4.4%	6 Taiwan 4.2%
7 Mexico 2.2%	8 Turkey 2.0%	9 Vietnam 1.9%
10 Saudi Arabia 1.8%	11 Nepal 1.7%	12 Germany 1.4%
14 Thailand 1.3%	15 United Kingdom 1.3%	16 Hong Kong 1.2%
17 Indonesia 1.1%	18 France 1.1%	19 Colombia 1.0%
20 Nigeria 0.9%	21 Malaysia 0.9%	22 Kenya 0.9%
23 Pakistan 0.8%	24 Russia 0.7%	25 Venezuela 0.7%

The current student's statistics of Lahti University of Applied Sciences also give clear picture of international students. The majority of international students are from Asian countries or the developing countries like Russia, China, Vietnam, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Srilanka. African countries are also economically changing rapidly, so Africa is also an emerging market. Nigeria, Ethiopia and Ghana have already become attractive markets for student recruitment. Latin American countries have list participation in this competition.

Single country target is unusual in education business but sometimes a university focuses on a specific country for student recruitment. In such situations, a bilingual counsellor might be needed for student counselling and recruitment process. It provides proper communication between student and admission department. (Hanover Research 2010.)

6.3   Recruitment Methods

The recruitment method is a process of collecting and admitting prospective students for further studying. In this thesis, the author has recommended a few methods as per the findings based on empirical research and the common practice which is already popular among the Anglophonic countries and other popular educational destinations in Europe, Asia and Australia. Therefore, these methods could be effective ways to recruit prospective international students in the coming days.

6.3.1   Private Consultant Recruitment or Out sourcing

The theme of the thesis is to promote education, therefore to fulfil the required number of international students, LUAS has to outsource private consultants for international student recruitment. Counselling service is a process of providing accurate information for a person who wishes to have information related to the subject. Education counselling is similar to career counselling. The private consultants are popular in Africa, Asia, Latin America and East European Countries; those forms provide a complete package for visa processing and admission process.

Outsourcing can be done without wasting time and money. So, there are huge possibilities to get prospective students for further studies. This is how other developed countries have been practicing around the world. If we look into the student recruitment process implemented by English speaking countries, it is very easy to meet the required number of students without investing money.

Hobson's report (2015) shows that "Nearly half of the international students from Asia use an agent for admission process. There is slight variation in agent use. Forty-five percent of students from China prefer to use agents for their universities and colleges selection as well as admission procedures. Indian students are also comfortable using agents and 43% of them getting counselling and admission process support".

Hanover Research (2010) shows that nearly 50% of international students from China, India, Vietnam and Malaysia have used recruiters service for College or University admission, documentation and Visa process. Due to the number of paper works during college/ University admission and visa process, students from Asian countries prefer to use agents for instant services and information. These agents could provide services like ticketing, accommodation booking, airport pick up with minimum service charges. Students from South Asian and South East Asian countries think that information in the website sometimes not enough for the entire process. This is a good reason why students want to have support from agents.

6.3.2   Advertisement (Paper/Media/Social Media)

Advertisement is a process of direct marketing; it brings attention of the entire potential applicant. Nowadays, social media marketing or advertisement in social media reaches all over the world at a time. Therefore, it is highly recommended to participate in active promotional activities like advertisement in social media. Face book, twitter and YouTube are the key platform for promotional activities. Therefore, advertisement would be the best approach to do international marketing.

It is recommended that the direct marketing could be an effective process to participate in the recruitment process. In Asia, still direct marketing exists, where people buy newspapers for general information. Few daily newspapers are key source for direct marketing. Each day such magazine publishes various advertisements, and they are the source for their information.

The recent advancement in social media marketing is also an effective way to do marketing internationally. It provides direct information for the selected community, region and country. Therefore, social media marketing and direct advertisement in national newspaper could be effective marketing method for

student recruitment process specially in South Asia and South-East Asian countries.

In Hobson's report, he has mentioned that the largest group of students are willing to get their information within three weeks. These days' students are highly using social media to find out information about study destinations and institutions, Hobson's report shows students are looking for far more information than educational instructions have provided. Therefore, the traditional methods are slowly disappearing. In his research, overall students agreed that they use social media to get the admission assistance and to meet the students who are also applying for the same institution and course. (Hobsons 2015.)

6.3.3 Seminar

One of the most effective processes for student recruitment would be via Seminar. It brings academic institutions and prospective students together. Both parties could be benefited, students could able to get required information for further admission process whereas institution could find prospective students from huge mass. Therefore, the seminar would be an appropriate place for recruiting prospective students. Organizing seminars during the admission session at various countries to recruit prospective students could help to fulfil the desired number of international students. Seminar provides information and some trainings for students to have knowledge on admission process. Therefore, seminars are important for any institution to have direct approach to the local market, these could be a perfect process to recruit prospective students.

6.3.4 Education Fair

Education Fairs are good platforms for promoting education business. There are a number of popular education fairs happening every year in various regions worldwide. These education fairs have been particularly organized to bring educational institutions and educational consultants together. Education fairs

provide direct links with large numbers of students, consultant, recruiting agents together.

ICEF is the leading education fair organizer. They organize the largest education fairs in Europe. Similarly, BMI organizes education fairs in Asia and South-America. These two education fair management companies bring educational institution, educational consultant and educational specialist together for education promotion. Without the doubt, this could be one of the best places to lunch new academic program in the world. It could be yet another platform to have tie-up with educational consultant from all over the world.

6.3.5 Admission Campaign

Admission Campaign is a direct process of recruiting prospective students from their home country. Based on the requirement of admissions for the chosen program, students should meet the minimum requirements for admission process and they will be admitted. This process will help the institution to fetch with student directly. This process is already in practise at LUAS. Still, smart admission procedures are needed to uplift the existing process.

The current admission process has various stages such as application process examination, interviews and so on. That is a lengthy process for recruiting students, it should be easy and fast. Anglophonic countries have direct admission process. Their students have to follow strict academic and English proficiency courses. But, the admission process is completed within two weeks. This could be an easy process for admission process. LUAS has to research on this for quick and easy admission process in upcoming days.

6.3.6 Articulation Agreement

The effective practise between onshore and offshore institution to attract students would be articulation agreement between two institutions. It is also an indirect way of doing marketing to promote degrees internationally. Articulation

programmes give more advantage for students to get desired education without going abroad, but student may go abroad anytime during their studies after fulfilling the required credit and other proficiency requirements (Hanover Research 2010).

Articulation agreement is a mutual understanding and pathway between two or more educational institutions for their academic programs. It supports them to transfer students between one institution to another. In this program three parties would be benefited, they are student and two different institutions. Common curriculum and academic practise between institution supports students to have transfer between institution who has articulation agreements. Articulation agreement between offshore institution supports international students for getting international degree from their home country, on top of that transfer program between two different institutions could support students to explore their academic program internationally. (Moldoff 2016.)

7   CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the information together which were collected during the research process, and answers the research question and sub questions. The validity and reliability of the research outcome is presented later in this chapter. Lastly some suggestions for further research are explained.

7.1   Research Questions and Answers

In this research, the author has designed appropriate marketing methods for the case company. The empirical research has supported building up the plan. The findings from the research has answered the research question "**Why is it important to improve the marketing plan for international student recruitment process at LUAS?".** To support the research question, sub-questions were created and those questions are answered first as follows.

Why do they want to study in Finland?

This question is one of the most important ones in this research. It is important to know why international students are willing to study in Finland. Therefore, the question was raised. The response from the participant was interesting. The majority of the students came to Finland due to the free education system. However, a major concern remains. Will this trend be continuing in the future or not? The other factor which is going to affect this trend would be due to the recent development in the tuition fees. As per the new regulation, all the non EU/EEA students have to pay tuition fees. But the positive aspect is that polytechnic schools (University of Applied Sciences) in Finland are providing practical education, so that students could get opportunities in the applied fields.

In the survey, some of the students have chosen Finland for their further studies due to the outdoor activities, specially in winter and winter sports. Therefore, it could be one of the selling points for international students who prefer to have outdoor activities during winter.

How did they hear about LUAS?

Half of the students knew about Finnish education via their friends and recommended them for higher studies in Finland. Only 20% of them knew about LUAS via internet, and more than 30% percent of them used an agent for further visa processing. This question has given enough reason why LUAS has to promote their education abroad. Therefore, Lahti UAS has to develop social media marketing strategies and other supporting marketing methods for education promotion and recruitment.

In Asian society, still, students are depending on agents for visa process and university admission. Students are relying on consultants and agents in Asian counties due to the strict visa processing. Difficult documentation is one of the reasons why they would like to get support from educational agents. These agents are key sources for student recruitments.

Are they willing to pay tuition fees?

All the participants have responded well to this question because this question has direct link with the thesis question and other supporting questions. Therefore, it is noted that only less than 20% of them are willing to pay tuition fees and 80% of them do not want to pay, which is a truly alarming situation for the case company.

Asia, Africa and Latin America are the main sources for international students. Each year millions of student move from these regions. Students from developing countries are willing to pay tuition fees for further studies and have been paying in Anglophonic countries. Therefore, proper marketing and recruitment plan could help the case company for recruiting prospective students, who pay tuition fees for LUAS.

Did they choose Finland as a first choice to study or second?

During the survey, the report revealed that only fifty-nine percent of the students have chosen Finland as a first choice for further studies, nearly forty percent of international students have chosen LUAS as a second choice. It is clearly understandable that LUAS needs to do aggressive planning for student selection and have to recruit only the right students. Therefore, only needy students should get the right opportunity to fulfil their educational dream.

There are thousands of prospective and eligible students waiting for the right university to continue their education. Therefore, appropriate marketing plan and recruitment processing could help the case company in recruiting prospective and eligible students for their academic programs.

What factors did influence them to come to Finland?

The popularity of the education system is the major reason influencing them to choose Finland for their studies. More than 30% of them like Finnish Nature and society. Therefore, it is important to bring international students together with the local community. It may help them to basically understand Finnish Culture and society. Almost 80% of them have chosen Finland due to free education. A Part time job also plays a vital role in choosing the right country because students would like to engage in part time jobs during vacation. Job opportunity is also a reason for them choosing Finland. Data shows nearly 42% of them already have a part time job.

Why is it important to improve marketing plan for international student recruitment process at LUAS?"

In this research, the author found that the case company has to improve its marketing plan for international student recruitment process because, the present marketing plan exists only gives general information. It does not define core marketing values based on people and places. In the data collection and survey, the author found that the majority of the international students are from Asia. In Asia, still students depend on various channels for getting information, such as

local newspapers, recruiting agencies and education fairs which are considered to be reliable procedures to approach them. The recent development on social media has made everyone to browse news and information, therefore it could play some role in student recruiting and advertising. During the research, the majority of the students mentioned that they got to know about the case company via friends, internet and recruitment agencies. Therefore, the author would like to recommend effective marketing methods for successfully recruiting international students, such as, seminars, education fairs, education campaigns and direct marketing in local medias, Out-sourcing via authorised agents could be the effective way to recruit prospective students.

During the survey, half of the students either were recommended by their friends or have used local agents for admission process; therefore, the designed marketing plan for case company could be appropriate for educational promotion in Asian countries. The numbers of international students are from south Asian and south East Asian counties. All in all, the case company has to design some promotional activities as per the need of the local market. Which is already mentioned in development plan, therefore case company has to improve marketing plan for promotional activities in those part of the world.

Marketing and recruitment are two different terms in management, but these two sectors come together while recruiting students. Without proper marketing plan, it is impossible to promote any institution onshore and offshore. After successfully planning for marketing, there could be possibilities of having enquires for admission for the case company. Then, the team of experts have to be mobilized for recruiting prospective students. The teamwork between admission office and marketing departments should work together for recruiting the right students as per the institutional policy.

7.2 Validity and Reliability

The main purpose of this research was to find out the answer for the research question and supporting questions. Related information was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary information was collected from the authors previous work experience and the survey between international students. Apart from that interviews with international admission staff and International student tutor & student affairs. Secondary information was collected from the books, magazine, research articles and reliable internet sources. Therefore, it can be said that the research is valid and reliable.

7.3 Suggestion on Further Research

This research report was totally based on marketing sector; it has focused on international student recruitment. It would be good for case company to look into specific marketing plan based on geographical region. Therefore, further research is also suggested in the field of benchmarking or creating marketing policies based on countries to enrol prospective students in the coming future. Specific marketing plan will help the case company to conduct recruitment campaign more precisely.

8   SUMMARY

The purpose of the research was to find out the appropriate marketing method for the case company. The solo aim was to develop an appropriate plan to recruit prospective international students for internationalization at home. The plan was designed to help the case company to reform their recruitment plan after the development of new rules for international students to pay tuition fees.

At the beginning, the appropriate marketing principles were created and defined based on the thesis topic. The idea was to develop an effective marketing plan. Based on the marketing principle, the specific business development plan was developed, as the final goal was to design the marketing plan for recruiting the potential applicant.

The researcher wanted to find out why international students would like to study in Finland first and how they came to know about LUAS. Based on the theory and empirical part, a development plan was designed for the case company. It was recommended that the case company should follow the popular marketing methods for prospective international student recruitment. In that way, the case company could maintain the number of international students successfully.

In the student recruitment process, it was found out that other competitors had used direct marketing and outsourcing methods for student recruitment. During the survey, it was proved that the case company was not using appropriate marketing methods for student recruitment so that they could have reached motivated and potential students.

The final findings from this research is that, the importance of marketing by LUAS for recruiting students plays a key role in internationalization at home. Therefore, the case company should follow the right channels for effective marketing to fetch the prospective students for higher educational programs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Information collection with international students.

1. Are you willing to pay tuition fees for your studies?
2. How did you know about Finnish Education System?
3. What do you like in Finland?
4. What do you dislike in Finland?
5. Which country is your first choice for studying?
6. If Finland is the first, then which one is your second choice?
7. Will you be doing your further studies after your graduation in Finland? If no, where is your next destination?

APPENDIX 2. Interview with staffs at case company

1. Why is it important to bring international students at LUAS?