

Susanna Laari

**CONCEPTS OF NURSING EDUCATION  
EXPORT**  
Experiences from nursing educational institutions in  
Finland

Faculty of Social Sciences

Master's thesis

January 2021

# ABSTRACT

Susanna Laari: Concepts of nursing education export – experience from different nursing educational institution in Finland

Master's thesis

Tampere University

Master of Health Sciences, Nursing Science

January 2021

---

Education export is a phenomenon of the modern globalization striving for economic benefit to the exporter. Education exporting activities have developed only in recent years towards more systematic and routinized plans of action and nowadays MINEDU (*Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture*) has developed a progressive branding plan to have internationally competitive education exported to the world. The field of nursing is still quite new area for exportation of education in Finland and the experiences from it yet to be discovered in many ways. The aim for this research is to find out which dimensions of nursing education export are relevant for professional work as personnel in nursing educational institution in Finland. Research question in this thesis was "What are the key themes related to nursing education export according to personnel of nursing educational institutions?"

Data were collected as a cross-sectional study from fifteen participants (N=15) from seven different universities of applied sciences and four vocational schools located widely around Finland. Online questionnaire was used, and the participants were different professionals from the personnel, among other things managers, teachers or coordinators of international affairs. Four main themes were identified and discussed: 1) Special characteristics of nursing education export, 2) Requirements for implementing nursing education export, 3) Challenges in exporting nursing education and 4) Personal motivation for participating in nursing education export.

Nursing education export was seen as unconventional activity due to its economic aspects. Most of the participants found Finnish nursing education to be high-quality product for export, but that required vast amount of resources, knowledge, support network and personal characteristics. For the future work within nursing education export, one possible direction could be the development of co-operation between different educational institutions to provide better peer support, and to accelerate the process of designing export products in the field of nursing.

Keywords: education export, nursing education export, nursing care

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

# TIIVISTELMÄ

Susanna Laari: Ammattikorkeakoulujen ja ammattikoulujen henkilöstön kokemuksia hoitotyön koulutusviennistä

Pro gradu

Tampereen yliopisto

Terveystieteiden maisteri

Tammikuu 2021

---

Koulutusvienti on modernin globalisaation ilmiö, jossa pyrkimyksenä on saavuttaa taloudellista hyötyä vientituotteesta. Koulutusvienti on vasta lähivuosina muuttunut systemaattisempaan sekä rutiinimaisempaan suuntaan; nykyään Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriöllä on kehittyvä brändäyssuunnitelma, miten saada kansainvälisesti kilpailukykyistä koulutusta vietyä maailmalle. Hoitotyö on edelleen suhteellisen uusi alue koulutusviennille Suomessa ja kokemukset tästä vasta karttumassa. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus on selvittää, mitkä osa-alueet hoitotyön koulutusviennissä ovat oleellisia oppilaitoksissa työskenteleville ammattilaisille. Tutkimuskysymyksenä tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassa oli "Mitkä ovat hoitotyön koulutusviennin avaintemoja oppilaitosten henkilökunnan mielestä?"

Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin poikkileikkaustutkimuksena viideltätoista osallistujalta (N=15) seitsemästä ammattikorkeakoulusta ja neljästä ammattikoulusta eri puolilta Suomea. Kysely oli täytettävänä sähköisesti ja tutkimukseen osallistui henkilökuntaa eri ammattiryhmistä, muun muassa johtajia, opettajia ja kansainvälisten asioiden koordinaattoreita. Tutkimuksessa tunnistettiin neljä avaintemaa: 1) Hoitotyön koulutusviennin erityispiirteet, 2) Vaatimuksia hoitotyön koulutusviennin toteuttamiselle, 3) Haasteita hoitotyön koulutusviennissä ja 4) Henkilökohtainen motivaatio osallistua hoitotyön koulutusvientiin.

Hoitotyön koulutusvienti nähtiin poikkeuksellisena toimintana sen taloudellisten näkökulmien vuoksi. Suurin osa tutkimukseen osallistujista piti suomalaista hoitotyön koulutusta korkealaatuisena vientituotteena, mutta tämä vaati onnistuakseen resursseja, tietotaitoa, tukiverkostoa ja osallistujien henkilökohtaisia kykyjä. Tulevaisuudessa hoitotyön koulutusviennissä voisi kehittää yhteistyötä eri oppilaitosten välillä, jotta olisi mahdollista saada vertaistukea, sekä edistää hoitotyön vientituotteiden kehitystä.

Avainsanat: koulutusvienti, hoitotyön koulutusvienti, hoitotyö

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck – ohjelmalla.

# Contents

1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2	REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	3
2.1	Education export: a way to compete internationally.....	3
2.2	Cultural diversity and ethics concerning nursing education export.....	5
2.3	Nursing education export: making world a better place.....	6
3	AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION .....	8
4	RESEARCH MATERIAL AND METHODS .....	9
4.1	Study context and procedure .....	9
4.2	Participant recruitment .....	9
4.3	Research participants .....	10
4.4	Data analysis .....	11
5	RESULTS.....	13
5.1	Special characteristics of nursing education export .....	13
5.1.1	Unconventional activity .....	14
5.1.2	Mutually beneficial .....	15
5.2	Requirements for implementing nursing education export.....	16
5.2.1	Comprehensive understanding.....	16
5.2.2	Continuous assessment .....	17
5.2.3	Utilization of experts .....	19
5.2.4	Personal characteristics.....	20
5.3	Challenges in exporting nursing education.....	20
5.3.1	Alterations in approach .....	21
5.3.2	Insufficiency in support network .....	22
5.3.3	Work overload .....	23
5.4	Personal motivation for participating in nursing education export .....	24
5.4.1	Making a change.....	24
5.4.2	Personal development .....	25
5.5	Future of nursing education export .....	26
6	DISCUSSION .....	28
7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	31
7.1	Ethical implications of research .....	31
7.2	Trustworthiness and authenticity in research.....	31
7.3	Limitations of the research .....	32
8	CONCLUSIONS.....	33
	REFERENCES.....	34
	APPENDICES	

## **List of Abbreviations**

EEA – European Economic Area

EU – European Union

MINEDU – Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture

MSAH – Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OKM – Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö (Ministry of Education and Culture)

OPH – Opetushallitus (Finnish National Agency for Education)

PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment

TNE – Transnational nursing education

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Education export is one of the fast-growing phenomena of globalisation, as educational institutions have been aiming to be international for centuries. However, exporting education has not developed until recent years towards more systematic and routinized plans of action. (Korhonen & Alenius 2018.) This research seeks to shed light to different themes held by teachers and managers of nursing educational institutions about nursing education export.

Internalization is a way for the educational services market to get away from the disadvantages of being dependent on a single country's demographic fluctuations or incomes of population (Treshchevsky et al. 2019). In Finland education is free for Finnish and EU/EEA (*European Union / European Economic Area*) citizens, however, in 2016 amendment regarding to gather tuition fees from individual students coming from outside of the EU/EEA regions was implemented in higher education institutions (HEIs) (University of Applied Sciences Act 2014/932 § 13a; Universities Act 2009/558 §10). It was seen as a way to “*expand the traditional educational mission in foreign language degree programme*” and “*to strengthen the co-operation between HEIs and the economy as a way to commercialize innovations*” (OPM, Finnish National Agency for Education, 2016).

Being able to attract applicants from abroad has its financial benefits for the educational institution, but also in the long term for the country if students find employment in Finland (paraphrasing OECD, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2020). Nowadays paid provision of educational services is more common for modern universities (paraphrasing Healey 2017), but education export has expanded from mainly tuition incomes to, among other things, the mobility of persons, equipment, curricula, or educational programs (Juusola 2020).

Education export can be seen as an entrepreneurial and market-like behaviour aiming for financial benefit, but Lönnqvist and colleagues (2018) argues that when exporting education, it might be possible to transfer intellectual capital. That way education export can help to make a societal impact in the receiving country (Lönnqvist et al. 2018). Transnational education can provide better educational opportunities for countries that do not have adequate resources on their own and

that way it may improve, for example, the prosperity and wealth of the developing countries (Delahunty et al. 2018, Lönnqvist et al. 2018, Naidoo & Nokuthula Sibiyi 2019, and Schatz 2016). Nursing care can promote a nation's well-being and nursing education export can ensure properly trained professionals to the receiving country (Naidoo & Nokuthula Sibiyi 2019). Still there are only a few studies on nursing education export.

Research question in this thesis was "What are the key themes related to nursing education export according to personnel of nursing educational institutions?" The research objective is to produce information so that it is possible to form a total picture about different concepts in nursing education export (paraphrasing Eriksson & Koistinen 2005).

Results complement the field of nursing science by adding knowledge on different dimensions for nursing education export. This study aims to conjoin experiences from different nursing educational institutions so that the information can be utilized when developing more efficient and creditable exporting programs in the future. Research also provide an insight to nursing educators' and school managers' experiences and motivation to exporting nursing education across national borders.

## 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This following literature review was conducted from different computerised databases (CINAHL, Medline Ebsco, Social Science Premium Collection ProQuest, Emerald, Education Collection ProQuest, Education Research Complete Ebsco, ScienceDirect Elsevier) using different search words and combinations. Similar key words used concerning *education export* were *cross-border education, transnational education, and internationalization of education and exporting of education*.

### 2.1 Education export: a way to compete internationally

In recent years interest in exporting of education has risen dramatically as globalization as a phenomenon have taken bigger and bigger root (Schatz 2016). OECD PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results have putted Finland on the education map (Juusola 2016; Shatz 2016) and in 2016 MINEDU developed a progressive branding plan to have internationally competitive education exported to the world (OPM 2016). The competitiveness as a national object has been leading the way to developing international education opportunities, but in the EU the joint vision has also been to harmonize the degree structures through the Bologna Process and to offer keen student markets (Jokila 2020). Education export has expanded quickly since the first branding plan was made and interested locations importing Finnish education are currently Latin America, Gulf States, South-East Asian Nations, China, South-Africa, and India (OPH 2020).

Education export is a so-called empty concept because it needs to be defined based on context in what it is being used (Schatz 2016). In this research education export is referred as *a for-profit educational service aiming to offer certain competence area or education ensemble to overseas clients* (Juusola 2018). Both Healey (2017) and Juusola (2020) stress the concept of linking export activities and further internationalization to the educational institutions' strategic planning.

Nowadays English is seen as a lingua franca for education, but Jokila (2020) argues whether that development step is strictly positive or enabling the



dissipation of national languages and weakening the quality of education. Lönnqvist and colleagues (2018) questions also the ethicality of applying the cultural models and practices from developed countries to developing countries. Moral dilemma behind exporting education is that educational institutions have previously had only the mission to do good by creating and providing knowledge through teaching and research (paraphrasing Healey 2017, Juusola 2020, Lee 2020, Lönnqvist et al. 2017). In the case of HEIs, for example, the aim to have the Finnish education as a profitable export product (MINEDU 2010) added pressure to the institutions to not only educate domestically and nationally, but at the same time compete internationally against the market leaders Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as other OECD and non-OECD countries (paraphrasing OECD 2020).

Education export has been validated among other things through development policies attempting to “*ensure open, equal and high-quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all*” (OPH 2020), but Juusola (2016), Schatz (2016) and Simpson (2018) challenge the reasoning on whether the justification is seen because of global hyper-branding of Finnish education without ensuring the quality. According to Juusola (2020) the quality of education export is an important step to acknowledge when implementing education export, but at the same time it is assessed by various stakeholders, such as exporters, receivers and different policymakers.

Experiences from the teaching staff implementing education export divided in Juusola’s and Rähä’s research (2018) into two groups: load factors and professional development factors. Different aspects in education export were causing extra work or challenges, for example heterogeneity of the student group and intensiveness of the program. Delahunty and colleagues (2018) found main obstacles for education export as communication challenges, issues with administration, lack of resources and. Communicational challenges concerned adequate language skills and dissimilarities in cultural communication styles. Challenges with co-operation were found in both native and partner country, for example cooperation within different units of university in Finland was complicated and there was only small interest on participating to export activities. (Delahunty et al. 2018.) On the other hand, education export made possible to develop professional skills and grow as an individual (Juusola & Rähä 2018).

## **2.2 Cultural diversity and ethics concerning nursing education export**

The debate over whether there is universal ethics or not, circles mostly round relativism on culture and society. Impressions in what is right or wrong and what kind of values to cherish as virtues differ from culture to culture. (Konishi & Davis 2006.) When bearing nursing in mind, cultural values, beliefs and expectations of patients vary across cultures and those aspects need to be met during nursing process to be therapeutically effective (Leininger 2002). That might cause contradiction to how much value are put to the quality control of nursing education. On the other hand, for example the human process of ageing is quite the same regardless of ethnic background, so the physiological challenges to overcome are much alike (Rosendahl et al. 2020).

In the recent study of Paija and colleagues (2019), nurse educators teaching in Finnish universities of applied sciences estimated that their cultural competence is mainly in high-quality level, when five dimensions of competence were taken into consideration. Cultural awareness sub-scale had the highest mean value, compared to cultural knowledge, skills, encounters, and desire. Cultural knowledge and cultural encounters sub-scales were the lowest i.e. nurse educators were indecisive about if they have knowledge in different aspects of cultural diversity, or if they encounter enough people from different cultural backgrounds. (Paija et al. 2019.)

In Lee's (2020) research, participants found healthcare and health culture different from country to country, and that way they could not offer homogenized export strategies. The fundamentals of transcultural nursing build on knowledge to identify and provide for different cultures. To have success in nursing education export, nursing educational institutions' teachers and managers must be able to transform uniculturally based health practices to more towards multicultural way of providing safe and meaningful care to people. (Leininger 2002.)

Lönnqvist and colleagues (2018) introduces the idea that through education export it is possible to transfer intellectual capital and that way offer educational success to wider group of recipients. In order to be able to do that, the provider has to have intellectual capital for transfer purposes and Lönnqvist and colleagues (2018) divides this to three main perspectives. Human capital is

composed of individuals' abilities, know-how and experiences, structural capital of organization's processes, culture and systems, and finally relational capital comprises of the relationships and image of the organization (Lönqvist et al. 2018).

As the social world evolves, populations are transforming more and more toward multi-culturalism. Health, capacities and dependencies varies especially for the aging part of humankind and therefore in nursing there are definite demand for cross-cultural expertise. (paraphrasing Rosendahl et al. 2020.) In fact, Healey (2018) introduces an idea that all students should have “*an international learning experience*” and exporting education is one proportion of it. Nursing professional that have a trans-national education could become at their best critical culture-brokers translating differences in cultural traditions, views and values in care settings (Rosendahl et al. 2020).

### **2.3 Nursing education export: making world a better place**

The education export alone is controlled by different regulations and legislations defined nationally (Juusola 2020), but furthermore nursing education export has its own unique twist on that because of nursing care's educational, professional and governmental regulations (Lee 2020). In healthcare education the goal is to provide professionals that can navigate themselves in diverse hospital and community environments (Lee 2020). As Lönqvist and colleagues (2018) describes, via education export, it might be possible to do good to the world and what would be considered a better way than to be able to educate skilled professionals for developing countries.

Still being a competent nurse isn't necessarily the same thing as being 'good' nurse. Competence is not just the clinical and technical knowledge of nursing, but also communication skills and problem-solving capabilities. To have a problem solved correctly, ethical judgment is also needed in brain work. (Leino-Kilpi 2003; Gallagher 2006; Cannon & Boswell 2012.) Communication skills can take you far, but some personal attributes make a big difference too, such as compassion, kindness and being supportive (Nicholls & Webb 2007). These attributes all rise from the six ethical principles, which are autonomy, veracity, non-maleficence, confidentiality, beneficence and justice (Cannon & Boswell 2012), not just the

personal characteristics of a nurse. That way it is possible to better oneself through contextual understanding, but that requires help from a skilled nursing educator (Leino-Kilpi 2003; Mei-che Pang 2006).

Skilled nursing educator in national framework might still need some extra effort to succeed in international field, especially when taken into consideration about the different cultural aspects of nursing. The pedagogy of international education includes not only changes to curriculum, but also evaluating learning practices to be fit to the partner in cooperation. (Naidoo & Nokuthula Sibiyi 2019, Weil 2018.) Exporting nursing education to a different cultural setting was found demanding according to Lee (2020).

When building a transnational nursing curriculum, differences were found in learning, teaching, pedagogy and processes of quality assurance, and participants stressed communication, creative thinking, mutual dedication and staying within deadlines as the aspects of success (Lee 2020). Naidoo & Nokuthula Sibiyi (2019) stressed the importance of determining distinct quality guidelines beforehand and the cultural sensitivity when providing TNE (transnational nursing education), but also paid attention to the challenges in accreditation and recognition due to differences in educational systems.

Distance or online education programs were found challenging because there were no face-to-face contact that complicated linking theory to practice. Instructor's concrete presence was found useful providing guidance, support, and advice. (Lee 2020, Naidoo & Nokuthula Sibiyi 2019.) When working overseas, instructors' satisfaction was higher when they had proper facilities and on the other hand adequate support system furthered not only export providers' but also foreign partner institution's gratification. For the students, the possibility to have experiences in different culture and nursing culture helped them to learn adaptability, increased personal growth and awareness on cultural diversity, as well as self-efficacy. (Naidoo & Nokuthula Sibiyi 2019.)

### **3 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION**

The aim for this research was to find out which dimensions of nursing education export are relevant for professional work as personnel in nursing educational institution in Finland. The term “nursing educational institution” in this thesis refers to either university of applied sciences or vocational school that educates students in the field of nursing. Research question in this thesis was “What are the concepts of nursing education export held by teachers and managers of nursing educational institutions?”

The research objective was to product information so that it was possible to form a total picture about different concepts in nursing education export (paraphrasing Eriksson & Koistinen 2005). Inductive qualitative research makes it possible to respect and deepen the information that rises from the gathered data. By using qualitative methods different dimensions of the study issue can be conceptualized, which will help to develop the field further, especially when thinking about nursing education export that is still a new phenomenon in Finland. (paraphrasing Kiviniemi 2015, Juusola & Rähä 2018.)

## **4 RESEARCH MATERIAL AND METHODS**

Because of the COVID19-pandemic, as a precaution instead of interviewing, the research material was collected via open-ended online questionnaire. Questions were sent to different teachers and managers working in institutions offering nursing education. Open-ended questions enabled respondent to answer spontaneously without bias from the researcher (Flick 2014).

### **4.1 Study context and procedure**

Data were collected as a cross-sectional study. Online questionnaire was executed in Finnish. Native language was chosen to make sure that there are no barriers of saying something because of missing vocabulary in English. (Eriksson & Koistinen 2005, Holloway & Freshwater 2007.)

Qualitative research method was chosen because the research question is deeply connected to the participants' personal experiences and outlook on nursing education. Interpretation of nursing education at the end of the day is a product of one's surrounding culture, and different concepts linked to that a subjective and strong experience as an individual. Nevertheless, the world around us still defines the term and gives it a meaning, so the context itself is involved in the research. (Vuokila-Oikkonen et al. 2003, Syrjäläinen et al. 2007.)

The semi-open questionnaire was based on outline of questions (see Appendix 1) to help keeping within the subject (Holloway & Freshwater 2007). Demographic data included name of the institution, professional title, length of working years in the institution, length of possible educational experience and experience with education export.

### **4.2 Participant recruitment**

Research data were collected from the personnel from different nursing educational institutions. The criterion to be eligible to participate was that the respondent had first-hand experience in nursing education export. Teachers and managers involved directly in exporting some form of nursing education were

good representatives in these criteria and were contacted via email. (paraphrasing Nicholls & Webb 2007.)

Recruiting was done by contacting to liaisons in universities of applied sciences (N=23) and vocational schools (N=35) in Finland that teach nursing care. They were asked for a contact information to a potential participant and gathering more respondents as a snowball effect. In doing so the aim was to find all potential nursing educational institutions that export their knowledge somehow and are willing to participate in this research.

Thirteen vocational school liaisons replied that they do not perform education export in the field of nursing. After the first contact round, 19 follow-up letters were sent to institutions that hadn't replied, asking for potential participants. In the end five vocational schools and thirteen universities of applied sciences did not reply at all.

### **4.3 Research participants**

Detailed information including research question, methods and a link to the online questionnaire were sent to agreed institutions (N=12). As recommended by Flick (2014), research request was directed to people responsible for authorizing the research and who were asked to forward the link to questionnaire to all potential respondents. Permission to conduct research were applied on request to four institutions (two universities of applied sciences, two vocational schools).

From those 12 institutions, 18 personnel members answered to questionnaire. Three responses were excluded from the research because their responses were outside of the scope of this thesis, explaining only institutions' process of exchange programs of either nursing students or teachers. Eventually 15 participants (N=15) were counted into the research.

Participants (N=15) were from seven different universities of applied sciences and four vocational schools located widely around Finland (See Table 1). Hence, there were more than one response from some of the participating institutions. From among the participants, six of them were teachers. Two participants were coordinators of international affairs when one of which was also working as a teacher. One participant was an expert in the field of administration. The rest of

them were in a managerial position such as a project leader, chief customer officer and a chief of education export. The mean length of working years in the institution was 13.1 [2; 26] and the mean years of experience in education was 14.9 [2; 30].

Table 1. Participating institutions in this research, U stands for University of Applied Sciences and V stands for Vocational school

Institution	Number of participants	Occupation	Years of working in institution	Years of education
U1	3	Project leader Teacher1 Teacher2	18 20 2	25 30 11
U2	1	Manager	14	13
U3	1	Chief customer officer	2	2
U4	1	Manager	14	4
U5	3	Coordinator of IA Teacher1 Teacher2	15 10 26	15 12 26
U6	1	Chief of education export	25	-
U7	1	Expert in administration	3,5	-
V1	1	Teacher & Coordinator of IA	10	10
V2	1	Manager	15	10
V3	1	Teacher	5	5
V4	1	Manager	17	26

Participants had been operating in versatile projects that had been lasted from two days up to multiple years. They had produced training material, educational know-how and digital learning solutions to be exported outside of Finland. They had acted as instructors, experts and lecturers in educational visits as well as trained further foreign teachers, nurses, and managers both in Finland and abroad. Participants had worked as Finnish educational ambassadors providing curriculum design for foreign students overseas. Bachelor's degree nursing program had been planned to provide in Finland and a joint program in master's degree with the partner university. Among other things, partner countries had been Kazakhstan, Uganda, Kenya, Germany, and China.

#### 4.4 Data analysis

After the respondents completed the questionnaire, data were analysed using qualitative content analysis inspired by Graneheim and Lundman (2004) and Bengtsson (2016). Content analysis enables meanings, possible intentions or



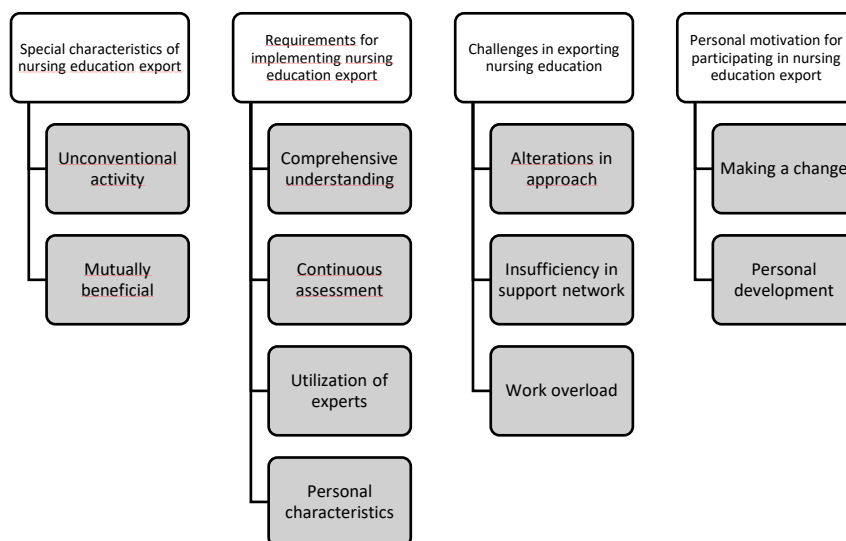
consequences, and context to be found, not just the description of the mere data content (Latvala & Vanhanen-Nuutinen 2001).

When analysing the content, the gathered data were reduced and summarized so that the study issue could be described shortly and relations between different concepts were able to be seen (Latvala & Vanhanen-Nuutinen 2001, Averill 2015). First, the data were read through multiple times, then meaning units were identified and condensed without altering the core message of the unit. After that the coded meaning units (N=349) were sorted to different categories that describe the data well. Different categories were then abstracted to subcategories and similar subcategories abstracted to main categories, which finally evolved to four main themes in line with Rosendahl and colleagues (2020).

## 5 RESULTS

Results from the content analysis of concepts regarding nursing education export are presented as a whole in Appendix 2. They are based on four main themes (see Figure 1): *Special characteristics of nursing education export* which gives a basis for how the subject is viewed by personnel in educational institutions in this study. The second main theme; *Requirements for implementing nursing education export* shows the insight into personnel's' knowledge of what it takes to internationalize, globalize, marketize and commodify professionally regulated programs. The theme *Challenges in exporting nursing education* examines different aspects of barriers to overcome when attempting to profit from educational domains and the final theme *Personal motivation for participating in nursing education export* provides a background on what brings participants to be involved in a more commercial process than the previous non-profit international education.

Figure 1. Main themes related to nursing education export according to personnel of nursing educational institutions



### 5.1 Special characteristics of nursing education export

Compared to Finnish education system in the field of nursing, participants found education export as unconventional activity due to business ideology behind it and because of differences in pedagogy. Exporting nursing education was also seen as mutually beneficial to both parties involved.

### 5.1.1 Unconventional activity

Nursing education export was seen to benefit providing organisation economically. According to participants, salary being consisted mostly of external funding and gaining an advantage from entrepreneurial attitude meant that they were part of the business activities as instructors or teachers. Because of the business aspect, they found exporting commercialized action different from normal education, since exporting was guided by principles of earning and productization and funding was needed. The process didn't differ per se from other exportation in their opinion.

*I view the issue from the business perspective while considering the ethical and cultural aspects linked to nursing. They (phenomena involved in nursing education export) are complicated things but doesn't depart from other export such as it is [U2M]*

Participants found Finnish nursing education as a high-quality product for export. They felt that the education is of top-quality because the quality of nursing and nursing education in Finland are top-notch. In their opinion Finnish education know-how was worthwhile to be exported, valued abroad and high-quality enough even for mobility in the EU. Participants felt that Finnish nursing education is noted abroad and defining of education competences interests elsewhere, therefore appreciated according to participants.

*In my opinion we have so much and such a good know-how in Finland that I'm definitely in favour of education export [V2M]*

The participants viewed that it is important to offer key areas of nursing education according to the customer's wishes. Participants felt that product for export should be planned to certain customer and it is not necessary to develop new solutions for each customer. In addition to being tailor-made, participants felt that the product offering should form coherent and compact whole. According to them, not everything has to be provided, simplification was vital, and offering single things in Finnish education was enough.

*Because the quality and methods in Finnish nursing are top level, it is enough to simplify it and offer just single things [U5C]*

Nursing education export was also seen as unconventional activity because of the differences in pedagogy. Materials used in education were often based on research knowledge instead of textbooks, and subject matters rested on latest information available. Differences were identified in academic governance: participants argued that in Finland bases of the National Curriculum is tied to Finnish society and the process of curricula design explicit, and in their own institutions they have collectively updated and shared materials. Education export wasn't seen as traditional education that is founded on curriculum updates done at two-year intervals.

*The process of nursing education is strongly controlled by MOEC (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture) and MSAH (Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health), and the bases of curriculum are orders, therefore inherent in Finnish society [V4M]*

All participants felt that nursing education is culturally biased in some way and on this account, culture took the centre stage when exporting education.

*Education is always strongly bound to cultural aspects ... if you don't have knowledge of this other culture, it creates own challenges to the pedagogy [U1T1]*

Multi-cultural factors were more on display and shown at interactions. Provider had to be aware of cultural diversity and sensitivity; nursing phenomena got a new perspective in education export according to participants.

### **5.1.2 Mutually beneficial**

Nursing education export was found mutually beneficial to both provider and receiver. Partner country was able to have development co-operation; participants felt that education export made a societal difference. By exportation, provider was seen as socially responsible, sharing good practices and know-how, as well as improving pedagogy and cultural understanding while keeping the development of nursing in focal point. Participants found education export especially important to developing countries and saw it as a form of development aid. Exporting was seen as necessary action, way to develop know-how of nursing personnel and to improve the position of women in society. Participants felt that it was important to be able to share knowledge on the spot.

*Absolutely necessary when considering receiving country and development of nursing personnel's' know-how [U1T2]*

On the other hand, exporting of nursing education was found to advance Finnish society as it offered more educated workforce to be capitalized on.

*We have big opportunities in education export to have educated labour into Finnish society especially in welfare and health sector, where there is shortage of workers [U4M]*

Especially in the field of welfare and health, participants felt that education export could alleviate the shortage of workers in Finland. Exporting was also seen as a way to integrate to society and have a chance to a fresh beginning, as well as to assimilate student to new country.

## **5.2 Requirements for implementing nursing education export**

Participants identified different requirements when implementing nursing education export. Comprehensive understanding of the receiving country was seen important, as well as continuous assessment during the process. Effective utilization of different experts was considered beneficial, but also participants' personal characteristics helped the education export implementation.

### **5.2.1 Comprehensive understanding**

As a part of comprehensive understanding participants found important to do extensive assessment of the receiving country's situation. Clients' starting point needed to be considered relative to export planning, and provider had to be aware of differences in countries' initial situations. Education needed to be tailored to fit the receiving country, especially when implementing export in developing countries due to differences in setting. Participants felt that learning objectives should have viewed critically. Current situation in the partnering country as well as history, but also future prospects should have kept in mind throughout the process, and network in receiving country to attain that.

*During planning it is especially important to take into consideration the different starting points, legislation, and vision of the future in different countries. [U7E]*

Understanding of the country's cultural aspects meant in participants' opinion that the provider had to gather cultural knowledge, observe cultural differences in operation and acknowledge cultural impact behind nursing care. It was seen beneficial to recognise and therefore know the receiving country's culture as well as its customs. Networking in the receiving country was found important when gaining cultural knowledge. Exporting education meant that the provider faced different customs and had to pay attention to receiving country's culture and took multiculturalism into account when managing student groups. Participants found that it was important to explore the cultural norms in nursing in the receiving country and to integrate nursing phenomena into cultural context. It meant that the provider had to understand the local nursing culture and conceptualize nursing reality to multicultural target group.

*Nursing phenomena: people, nursing care, environment and health receive new perspective in education export. Phenomena simply must be transformed to different culture and environment. [V1T]*

Having administrative knowledge was also required when implementing education export. Academic governance often differed from the providing country and knowledge of the local education system was demanded. Networking in the receiving country to gain enough information promoted a detailed familiarity about the system and context, and therefore helped to localize curricula to attain receivers' demands, but also to gather information about directive laws.

*Understanding of the local context to localize curricula to attain receiver's demands ... Local, trustworthy contacts so that they can manage the juridical aspects when implementing education export. [V1T]*

Knowledge of the statutory laws was seen important because education export calls for legislative know-how and acumen, especially during planning phase. In nursing education export participants stressed furthermore the demand of knowledge about the health care services and public health care in the receiving country.

### **5.2.2 Continuous assessment**

Continuous assessment was required in participants' opinion, first when drawing up comprehensive forethought all the way to assessing the export activity

throughout the process. Starting point for the nursing education export should have been agreed in advance, meaning that both sides should have had clear idea about the task and the means to accomplish them. In degree programmes it was demanded to map out previous know-how. The groundwork for the education export should have laid beforehand. Participants felt that background work was especially important when pursuing long-lasting partnerships. Products had to be prepared and visits in the receiving country were seen beneficial pre-export.

Clients' wishes should have asked in advance to survey potential export partners and their demands. Joint planning could have ensured clients' understanding beforehand. For the execution it was required to draw a meticulous plan and in participants' opinion it took a lot of time and patient work. Planning of the exported educational product was seen crucial and both sides had to have distinct understanding of the shared goals. In addition, participants felt that mutually agreed and sharp timetable should have put together and therefore avoid the hassle. The planning of the timetable took time, and in the end, education export had to be executed in accordance with clients' wishes.

*It is important to prepare collaboration diligently with all the export participants in order to have clear view on what we are doing, in what kind of goals and ways and in which timetable. Careful planning, drawing up a schedule and agreeing on process takes a lot of time. [U1PL]*

The export activity should have monitored throughout the process. Participants found that via feedback conversations it was possible to ensure clients' understanding, quality of action and the progress of nursing know-how. Continuous checking was made also in nursing practicum assessment and in training situations.

*Education export has also meant doing extensive literal reports about the themes under way for the buyer. [U1PL]*

Education export required overviews of the situation in forms of following up on working hours, content reviews and literal reports for the buyer. Through reporting it was possible to ensure clients' understanding.

### 5.2.3 Utilization of experts

Participants found the effective utilization of different experts important for the success of education export. Two-way collaboration was seen as a requirement. Education exporting demanded cooperation in both native and receiving country. Implementation needed good team and capable personnel for the process, and therefore abilities to carry out educational activities together. Participants found it useful to co-operate with other educational institutions in Finland. Collaboration with the receiving country required persevering work, careful planning and clear cooperative agreement to produce a functioning co-operative relationship. Participants found it important to have local partners dealing with juridical aspects and overall to have trust in partner's expertise.

*Together with other educational institutions we think about reasonable collaboration in either educational or research, development and innovation activities. [U5T2]*

In exportation, expertise was demanded in the area of the economy which included business and marketing know-how. To be profitable, nursing education export required knowledge, strategic thinking and correct pricing in direct selling. Participants found it crucial to have a business professional as a fellow worker when exporting education. Success in direct nursing care selling demanded sufficient references, and on the other hand persistent work in marketing Finnish education export and nursing know-how. All that called for adequate resources, meaning personnel resources, supporting framework in native country and funding especially when exporting to developing countries.

*To be able to do systematic and time-consuming sales business, it would need more time and also financial resources. [U6CEE]*

In addition to economic issues, expertise was required in the area of education itself. Nursing education export required academic expertise referring to professionalism in the development of curriculum framework, organizational skills, and independent working method.

*Similarity can be found in the teaching development that are guided by objective, planning the methods and contents, figuring out pedagogic manuscript, and planning feedback and assessment. [U1PL]*



Participants found profession of a teacher similar compared to pedagogy in native country, especially in degree programmes. Similarity was found in designing curricula and in teaching methodology.

#### **5.2.4 Personal characteristics**

Personal characteristics that supported education export included personnel's ability to react in changing circumstances. Participants were required to have the ability to act in rapid-fire situations; have the rapidity to answer to client's request, talent to change plans quickly and be prepared for unexpected events. The relationship to trainees were felt to be different due to high turnover. Fearlessness when it came to education export helped the success, but that took courage, boldness and eagerness to plunge into different situations. Adjustability to client's wishes was seen as agility and flexibility.

*Nursing education export is challenging and fast-moving work in which you learn a great deal and can use creative problem-solving capabilities. [U7E]*

Capabilities that were needed in the exporting process contained proper language skills. Making sure that the exporter has adequate language proficiency was one of the most essential requirements, but just as important was to being considerate to civilian life behind the process in participants' opinion.

*Participation and commitment to education export should be based on teachers' own choice. Also staying away from work in question must be feasible to teachers without further explanations. [U1PL]*

Family situation needed to make it possible to work overseas. Participation in education export should have left to personnel's discretion and opting out should be possible without explanations.

### **5.3 Challenges in exporting nursing education**

Challenges concerning nursing education export comprised of alterations in approach between providing and receiving country, and experiences from insufficiency in support network when exporting and work overload compared to operating in the native country.

### 5.3.1 Alterations in approach

Participants felt that alterations in approach resulted from differences of views over diverging cultures. They found discrepancy in courses of action, such as differences in working methods. Unfamiliarity to teaching methods that in teacher's opinion seemed similar, prohibited it from working ideally; dialogic learning was seen as harder due to cultural reasons. Participants found it difficult as a westerner teacher to go and change customs that have been around for thousands of years. Different cultural views challenged the export activities when the training recipients couldn't adopt something that they did not have reference points in common. For example, conceptions of working hours and deadlines differed; concept of time as well as order of priority in Africa was dissimilar from western world. Education was in general more demanding to the personnel because of unfamiliarity with the new culture. For instance, in an Arab country it was difficult to organize training to different genders in a same group.

*You can't export education with "Copy-Paste" approach, but it always must be tailored to fit to receiving country. For example, cultural differences effect also, and it can be hard to sell education to Arab country if you train men and female in a same group. [U3CCO]*

Differences in procedures challenged arranging export activities. Value conflicts were seen in questions concerning reliability of partners, also when building mutual interests and creating joint vision. Reassessment for cooperation was necessary during preparation period, on the other hand participants felt that they could not condemn old customs as a westerner teacher. When it came to nursing, it was seen important to forge concurring views. There was a demand to recognize central themes in global nursing to be able to provide education export product based on Finnish nursing degree. Participants found it challenging to harmonize the level of nursing internationally, when at the same time taking the nursing ethics into account.

Different procedures contained also challenges due to administrative issues when organizing education. Studies were dissimilar from country to country and it was complicated to compare nursing qualifications. In Finland universities divide into two pillars (university and university of applied sciences) that challenged planning of export compared to receiving country's one-pillar model.

*Building educational export products from the foundation of Finnish degree needs identification of those phenomena that are globally main areas of nursing and designing from there. [V4M]*

System differences made it also more demanding to train local work instructors. When providing degree programmes in Finland to foreign students, the functionality of student health care was hindered by place of domicile rights. Finally, the protocols of receiving country were in addition seen as a challenge for working procedures. The bureaucracy, payments traffic, time-consuming visa applying process, contract law and corruption were serious challenges.

### **5.3.2 Insufficiency in support network**

Insufficiency in support network was a consequence of an incomplete designing of education export because development was only in the early stages. Nationally export development had been slow in participants' opinion, there were no clear strategy and insufficient investing in education export. Challenges were found on providing adequate know-how for the nursing exporting activities, because there weren't enough experience or personal knowledge on how to commodify education and lead the exporting project. Participants felt that it was hard to find decent expertise from just one educational institute and on the other hand challenging to have peer support from other education organizers.

*Challenging because in our institution we haven't put effort to the education export, and we don't have a clear strategy. Mostly we have answered to potential inquiries. [U6CEE]*

Insufficiency was also seen since education export had extensive call for resources. Educational institutions had only limited amount of financial resources and therefore had to compromise on objectives. Time-consuming sales business would have required more funds because direct selling was too expensive. Participants felt that the financial resources would have always come to an end or institutions had a persistent lack of resources. Nursing education export was also temporally challenging because of time pressure involved in the project: a lot of time had to be used to coming to an agreement and overall participants felt that it would need more time to do systematic sales work.

*We have a clear shortage of resources and perhaps the management isn't that motivated about education export. [U6CEE]*

In other words, participants found it difficult to be motivated to exporting activities, when personnel and even the management did not seem that interested in it or personnel's' interest was only partial.

*However, the idea is also that you are truly in the "exportation side" as an instructor, so I think I probably shouldn't be too critical about whether I learn something myself or not – the amount is rather small especially for the substance part. [U5T1]*

Finding motivation was also seen as a challenge when the instructor did not feel like progressing during export process. Participants felt that their own substance learning when exporting nursing education remained rather minor, but on the other hand they stressed the thought process of not being too critical about self-development.

### **5.3.3 Work overload**

Compared to operating in the native country, participants felt that they are overloaded with work. Physical factors were involved when working in the receiving country. Differences in environmental aspects; weather conditions, climate changes, different hygiene level, non-air-conditioned teaching rooms and power cuts took their toll, as well as attention to safety factors when staying abroad. Austerity of the local setting and aids, especially in developing countries, challenged the instructors, because it was hard to offer the same level of education in insufficient circumstances. Taking educational material abroad was difficult.

*Big challenge is the local environment + equipment. I'm currently negotiating among other things about ... education in ... Africa and the challenge is that it is too expensive to arrive in Finland, but our instructors have hard time on offering same level education in local deficient conditions. [U3CCO]*

Implementing education export both overseas and in native country meant unusual professional activity since participants were working in an unfamiliar culture. Locally the challenges rose from differences between cultures inflicting cultural shock. When working outside of own cultural environment, it was seen

as extremely demanding in participants' opinion. During education export there was a need for sudden changes concerning timetables and execution designs, causing hecticness. Due to COVID19-pandemic, educational institutions had to alter plans for the execution, switch over to online teaching or postpone implementation to later future.

*We have discussed with the Pakistani about education cooperation, but it has now come to a stop because of coronavirus. [U6CEE]*

Finally, work overload meant broader personal competence requirements. Complexity of pedagogy was seen in participants opinion challenging since students' learning abilities called for instructors' investment, teaching had to be prepared properly and they were more demanding and laborious. Teaching material had to be translated into English and using an interpreter meant that the length and content of the class were different.

*Work is carried out in foreign language that is as such different compared to teacher's rudimentary teaching. [U1PL]*

Requirement for adequate language skills was also a challenge when teaching language differed from native tongue. Participants felt burdened when proficiency in a foreign language wasn't adequate or there were problems because of language barrier.

#### **5.4 Personal motivation for participating in nursing education export**

Despite challenges in exporting nursing education, participants found reasons to be motivated during the process. They were able to identify both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors, when participants were able to make a change in the world but also have personal development.

##### **5.4.1 Making a change**

Receiving country's development was made possible through personal work, meaning rendering change but also development of welfare. Creating new with the team, and to be able to see the progress from education to work, motivated, as well as being an instructor and accomplishing knowledge objectives that were tailored to area's need. Participants felt that they can influence receiving country's

practices and village community's wealth sustainably. Doing so, young educated person could improve community's well-being further with their nursing know-how.

*Social responsibility and that you can yourself have a sustainable impact on welfare of village community. [V1T]*

The positivity in the teaching situation motivated also when instructors were able to identify appreciation of their professionalism.

*Motivated applicants and students. [V3T]*

Local students showed respect towards the teacher, they had vocational esteem and were given good feedback from their trainees. Learning aspiration of the trainees were high, they were motivated, excited, and willing to learn. Positive experiences with the trainees were a motivational factor and it was possible to see students' enormous development during the process.

#### **5.4.2 Personal development**

Benefit gained to the provider was a development professionally. Education export challenged participants occupationally, when they were able to use creative problem solving and dare themselves to pedagogic encounters, but also gave them new viewpoints and inspired teaching. They participated nursing education export because they wanted to render continuous development, reinvent themselves professionally, gather competence capital and learn new things as they worked in a foreign culture. Participants were also able to utilize pre-existing knowledge and experience, summon up the old, and make versatile use of own know-how.

*I find it motivating when I can develop know-how continuously and have the possibility to get to know new kinds of operational environments and cultures. [U1PL]*

Overall self-development was a factor behind exporting motivation, participants were able to advance language proficiency as the skills grew. Education export made it possible to improve as a teacher in a foreign language. Exporting gave a chance to work internationally, learn from different nursing models and cultures, and therefore develop nursing, but also nursing education in global context. One

motivational factor was that participant's own English degree programme was easily linked to internationalism.

*Learning new and getting new experiences. Summoning up the old and reinvent myself professionally. [U1T2]*

In the end, nursing education export provided an opportunity for novel functioning: offered variation, new experiences and activities, a chance to acquaint with a new kind of operational environments and diversified organisational know-how. Being in touch with foreign culture, participants felt that they learned a great deal about themselves too.

### 5.5 Future of nursing education export

In the end of the questionnaire participants were asked to estimate what kind of future they saw for their respective educational institutions concerning nursing education export (see Table 2 and Appendix 1). All but one of the participants felt that they will certainly continue nursing education exporting in some way. For one participant the future was still unclear depending on whether the institution will invest on nursing education export or not.

Table 2. Division of answers among participants regarding question "How do you see the future on nursing education export?"

Option	Number of answers	Participants
Continue with current partners	5	U1PL, U1T1, V1T, U5T1, U7E
Expand to new forms of activity or areas of expertise	9	U1PL, U2M, U1T1, U1T2, U3CCO, U4M, U5C, V3T, V4M
Look for new partners with the same format	4	U1PL, U1T1, V2M, U5T2
Will not continue in the future	0	
It will depend on the future on where we would like to invest	1	U6CEE

For one university of applied sciences two participants out of three chose multiple options and saw that they will both continue with their current partners in cooperation, look for new ones with the same format, and expand to new forms of activity or areas of expertise. The third participant from the same institution agreed on expanding the exporting activities. Most of the participants felt that they will expand to new forms of activities or areas; most of which in that option group were from universities of applied sciences. Answers of participants from

vocational schools scattered quite evenly to different options concerning continuation of exporting somehow.



## 6 DISCUSSION

In the road map for education export 2016-2019 (OPM 2016), the internationalisation of vocational education in Finland was mainly seen as a more traditional non-profit mobility of students or functions in an international organisations, but in this year's roadmap 2020-2023 (OPH 2020) the situation analysis were that the vocational educations were one of the most sought-after export activities in Finland. Even so, Finnish educational institutions had not had much experience on international marketing or planning education export (Juusola 2020) let alone in nursing education export. This notion was also seen in the research when only fifteen participants from eleven different educational institutions answered to the questionnaire.

Major part of the participants was from universities of applied sciences, which is in line with OPM's (2016) statement that HEIs have longer experience working with international science community. Thirteen vocational schools from 35 overall replied that they do not perform education export in the field of nursing, while four vocational schools were included in this research so for 18 schools it remained unclear on whether they export nursing education or not. The likelihood on that is rather small considering the amount of negative answers compared to active ones.

Nursing education export was seen as unconventional activity due to its economic aspects. Most of the participants found Finnish nursing education to be high-quality product for export and they validated that by phrasing the quality of nursing and nursing education in Finland as top-notch. In their opinion Finnish education know-how was worthwhile to be exported and valued abroad, as Simpson's (2018) thesis and Dervin's and Simpson's (2019) research on global discourses showed. Juusola (2016), Schatz (2016) and Simpson (2018) still argue on being cautious when relying on Finnish educational hyper-brand and as Juusola (2020) stresses, the quality of education export should always be evaluated.

According to Lönnqvist and colleagues (2018) education export can be seen as a transfer of intellectual capital. Participants viewed nursing education export as beneficial to both provider and receiver, but the export process required different human, structural and relational capital from the provider institution (see Table

3). Themes in the table 3 were grouped according to the different intellectual capital perspectives suggested by Lönnqvist and colleagues. (2018).

Table 3. Intellectual capital requirements for the provider of nursing education export

<b>Human capital</b>	<b>Structural capital</b>	<b>Relational capital</b>
Expertise in the area of economy Expertise in the area of education Administrative knowledge Enough motivation to perform nursing education export Understanding of the country's cultural aspects	Adequate resources Cooperation in the native country Cooperation in the receiving country Having comprehensive forethought	High-quality products for export Export product planned to certain customer Finnish nursing education is appreciated

Comprehensive understanding included understanding of the country's cultural aspects and that supports Lee's (2020) finding on how exporters have to identify and understand the country specific contexts to be able to provide high-quality educational products. Work overload occurred during this process because of requiring broader personal competence. These competences included action done in instructors' secondary language that required adequate skills, but also the complexity of pedagogy when navigating between different learning styles and expectations, as also suggested by Lee (2020).

Participants had experiences with value conflicts when creating joint vision and stressed the importance of continuous assessment. For example, via feedback conversations it was possible to ensure clients' understanding, quality of action and the progress of nursing know-how. Juusola (2020) highlighted similar contradictions of objectives and information as a challenge for the quality assurance in exporting education.

Participants found the utilization of experts a requirement for successful implementation of nursing education export (supporting Delahunty et al. 2018). Delahunty and colleagues (2018) stressed the useful purpose of relevant ambassadors supporting the projects both in providing and receiving country. Raising also nursing education export project to a diplomatic level could ease the process of bureaucracy and legislation, with the additional help of local partner and coordinator.

Participants felt that background work was especially important when pursuing long-lasting partnerships. Personal characteristics such as having the ability to

react in rapid-fire situations and the adjustability to client's wishes were mentioned, supporting Delahunty's and colleagues' (2018) view on how to build two-way trust.

Supporting Naidoo and Nokuthula Sibiyi (2019), alterations in approach with different educational systems complicated comparing of nursing qualifications. Challenges were tried to solve beforehand by networking in the receiving country and gathering knowledge on local administration. In addition to that, different cultural views challenged the export activities and as Lee (2020) implied, also personnel in educational institutions found it as a requirement to understand country's cultural aspects and that way offer tailor-made export solutions.

Participants found insufficiency in support network in both national and regional levels. Designing of education export was only in the early stages (supporting Rosendahl 2020) and the personnel did not seem that motivated. Juusola (2020) argues that education export is a top-down organized activity and often planned separately from other educational institution's international activities. Healey (2018) suggests integrating internationalisation to the core of institutions' organisational culture, and that might also help to construct better support networks for the education exporters.

Naidoo and Nokuthula Sibiyi (2019) studied the experiences of students having TNE, and their findings on personal development after the process are similar to what the personnel exporting nursing education reported. They also felt progressing professionally (supporting Juusola & Rähkä 2018, Lee 2020).

## **7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Research ethics are needed to ensure that experiences and interests of those taking part in a study are protected and treated with respect (Flick 2014). Nursing education export circles around questions concerning not only concepts of nursing, but also concepts of education. In this research those concepts were gathered from individual experiences, so it was important to ground interpretations in the data (Flick 2014).

### **7.1 Ethical implications of research**

Aim for this research was to come up with results that can shed better light in different concepts when implementing nursing education export. Qualitative research is all about providing a rich and deep description of the research subject (Bengtsson 2016). During this research participants' autonomy was always respected and all people were treated equally. When recruiting participants, it was highlighted that taking part in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was asked. The participants were assured confidentiality and anonymity.

Overall justification for the research was made clear already in planning phase and was evaluated throughout the research design (Kylmä & Juvakka 2007, Flick 2014). Permission to conduct research was done on demand for four educational institutions. There was no need for preliminary ethical review, and this research was conducted following the guidelines outlined by The Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012). Data and the results were kept, analyzed, and reported reliably, and the participants' identity were kept confidential throughout the process (Data Protection Act 2018/1050). After the publication of this theses, all data concerning participant information will be destroyed.

### **7.2 Trustworthiness and authenticity in research**

To improve credibility in qualitative research, interpretations and analysis must correspond transparently to participants view on research subject. Triangulation was used to strengthen the quality, in asking guidance from thesis supervisor and fellow students. That way individual bias was able to be reduced. (Kylmä & Juvakka 2007.)

When using content analysis, on the aspect of trustworthiness, the same interpretation but also abstraction levels was maintained throughout the entire work. This is also an aspect of dependability in addition to clearly describing how different categories were created. (Graneheim et al. 2017.) One aspect of trustworthiness was also to making sure that the core meaning from the data doesn't get lost during the translation process. The data collection was done in native language, but the findings are presented in secondary language, so the researcher had to take translation-related decisions due to idiomatic words and phrases. Significance to what was found, and possible explanations were kept in mind during the whole process to understand the phenomenon and to represent it as accurately as possible to integrate translation into research design. (paraphrasing Arunasalam 2019.)

### **7.3 Limitations of the research**

Nursing education export is quite narrowly studied subject so only limited amount of knowledge was available for background. Basic idea in content analysis is to recognize variation in content, so there must be enough data (Graneheim et al. 2017). Main limitation is on the small number of participants in this study. In Finland nursing education export isn't yet highly promoted export product especially for vocational schools, so it was be difficult to find suitable participants. The narrow selection of participants affected the transferability of results, and so generalization is problematic (Bengtsson 2016). As more educational institutions develop nursing education export, further studies should be undertaken.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

The key contribution of this theses is the identification of different dimensions of nursing education export from the viewpoint of an exporter. This perspective can help recognize main obstacles, but also core requirements for exporting. Formulating culturally, socially, and professionally fitting nursing education export product is not an easy task. It will require comprehensive understanding of the whole process requiring usage of different experts and continuous assessment from start to finish, as well as heaps of personal characteristics that will help the exporter to offer tailor-made solutions quickly and comprehensibly.

For the future work within nursing education export, one possible direction could be the development of co-operation between different educational institutions to provide better peer support, and to accelerate the process of designing export products in the field of nursing. That could also enhance the quality of nursing education export. Rosendahl and colleagues (2020) stresses the importance of multi-professional cooperation in gerontology, but the same concept can be expanded to the development of healthcare education export. Why not design export products that can offer for example areas of nursing, physiotherapy, social work, and public health at the same time according to client's needs and wishes? Inter-professional course, curriculum, or degree programme could offer new aspects of education for the exporting instructors as well and that way enable progress during the process.

This research did not receive any specific grant.

## REFERENCES

Act on Health Care Professionals 559/1994 (Laki terveydenhuollon ammattihenkilöistä)

Available from:

[http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1994/en19940559\\_20110312.pdf](http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1994/en19940559_20110312.pdf)

Arunasalam, N. (2019). Transcription, analysis, interpretation and translation in cross-cultural research. *Nurse Researcher* 27(29). 38–41.

Averill, J. (2015) Qualitative data analysis. In: *Nursing research using data analysis, qualitative designs and methods in nursing*, eds. De Chesnay, M., 1–10, Springer Publishing Company.

Bengtsson, M. (2016) How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. *NursingPlus Open* 2, 8–14.

Cannon, S. – Boswell, C. (2012) Ethics in teaching. In: *Evidence-based teaching in nursing. A Foundation for educators*, eds. Cannon, S. – Boswell, C., 87–110, Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Data Protection Act 1050/2018 (Tietosuojalaki)

Available from: <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2018/en20181050>

Delahunty, D. – Phusavat, K. – Kess, P. – Kropsu-Vehkapera, H. – Nizar Hidayanto, A. (2018) Globalisation and education: case demonstration and lessons learned from Finland's education export. *International Journal of Management in Education* 12(1), 25–42.

Dervin, F. – Simpson, A. (2019) Transnational edu-business in China: A case study of culturalist market-making from Finland. *Frontiers of Education in China*, 14(1), 33–58.

Eriksson, P. – Koistinen, K. (2005) Monenlainen tapaustutkimus. *Kuluttajatutkimuskeskus*, 4/2005.

Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012) Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland

Available from: <https://tenk.fi/en/advice-and-materials/RCR-Guidelines-2012> [visited 22.1.2021]

Flick, U. (2014) An introduction to qualitative research. Sage Publications Ltd.

Gallagher, A. (2006) The teaching of nursing ethics: content and method. Promoting ethical competence. In: Essentials of teaching and learning in nursing ethics – Perspectives and method, eds. Davis, A. J. – Tschudin, V. – de Raeve, L., 223–239, Churchill Livingstone Elsevier.

Graneheim, U. – Lindgren, B-M. – Lundman, B. (2017) Methodological challenges in qualitative content analysis: A discussion paper. Nurse Education Today 56, 29–34.

Graneheim, U. – Lundman, B. (2004) Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: Concepts, procedures, and measures to achieve trustworthiness. Nurse Education Today, 24(2), 105–112.

Healey, N. (2017) Beyond 'export education': aspiring to put students at the heart of a university's internationalisation strategy. Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 21(4), 119–128.

Holloway, I. – Freshwater, D. (2007) Narrative research in nursing. Blackwell.

Jokila, S. (2020) From inauguration to commercialisation: Incremental yet contested transitions redefining the national interests of international degree programmes in Finland. Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy, 6(2), 143–156.

Juusola, H. (2016) Lukukausimaksujen hegemoniaa ja myytti PISAsta - Diskurssiivinen analyysi kansallisesta koulutusvientikeskustelusta. Tiedepolitiikka 3, 23–34.

Juusola, H. (2018) Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland. In: Internationalisation and



transnationalisation in higher education, eds. Korhonen, V. – Alenius, P. *Studies in vocational and continuing education* 17, 101–124, Peter Lang.

Juusola, H. (2020) *Perspectives on quality of higher education in the context of Finnish education export*. Doctoral thesis, Tampere University Dissertations 300. Tampere University.

Juusola, H. – Rähkä, P. (2018) Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. *Comparative & International Education* 2018, Vol. 13(2), 342–357.

Kiviniemi, K. (2015) Laadullinen tutkimus prosessina. In: *Ikkunoita tutkimusmetodeihin 2 – näkökulmia aloittelevalle tutkijalle tutkimuksen teoreettisiin lähtökohtiin ja analyysimenetelmiin*, eds. Valli, R. – Aaltola, J., 74–88, PS-kustannus.

Kohonen, E. (2011) Narratiivisuus – vähän hyödynnetty lähestymistapa kauppatieteellisessä tutkimuksessa. In: *Menetelmäviidakon raivaajat – Perusteita laadullisen tutkimusmenetelmän valintaan*, eds. Puusa, A. – Juuti, P., 196–205, JTO.

Konishi, E. – Davis, A. J. (2006) Japan. The teaching of nursing ethics in Japan. In: *Essentials of teaching and learning in nursing ethics – Perspectives and method*, eds. Davis, A.J. – Tschudin, V. – de Raeve, L., 251–260, Churchill Livingstone Elsevier.

Korhonen, V. – Alenius, P. (2018) Introduction: International and transnational dimensions in higher education. In: *Internationalisation and transnationalisation in higher education*, eds. Korhonen, V. – Alenius P. *Studies in vocational and continuing education* 17, 15–37, Peter Lang.

Kylmä, J. – Juvakka, T. (2007) *Laadullinen terveystutkimus*. Edita Publishing Oy.

Latvala, E. – Vanhanen-Nuutinen, L. (2001) Laadullisen hoitotieteellisen tutkimuksen perusprosessi: sisällönanalyysi. In: *Laadulliset tutkimusmenetelmät hoitotieteessä*, eds. Janhonen, S. – Nikkonen, M., 21–43, WSOY.

Lee, A. (2020) An (interpretive) phenomenological analysis of nursing professionals experience of developing a transnational curriculum. *Nurse Education Today* 84, 104251.

Leininger, M. (2002) Transcultural nursing and globalization of health care: importance, focus, and historical aspects. In: *Transcultural nursing – concepts, theories, research & practice*, eds. Leininger, M. – McFarland, M.R., 3–44, McGraw-Hill Companies.

Leino-Kilpi, H. (2003) Hoitotyön etiikan perusta. In: *Etiikka hoitotyössä*, eds. Leino-Kilpi H. – Välimäki M., 19-29, WSOY.

Lönnqvist, A. – Laihonen, H. – Cai, Y. – Hasanen, K. (2018) Re-framing education export from the perspective of intellectual capital transfer. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 22(4), 353–368.

Mei-che Pang, S. (2006) The principle-based approach to nursing ethics: a critical analysis. In: *Essentials of teaching and learning in nursing ethics – Perspectives and method*, eds. Davis, A.J. – Tschudin, V. – de Raeve, L., 67–79, Churchill Livingstone Elsevier.

MINEDU (2010) Finnish education strategy: Summary of strategic lines and measures

Available from: <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/75524>

Naidoo, V. – Nokuthula Sibiya, M. (2019) Graduate experiences with transnational nursing education: a qualitative enquiry. *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*, 32(3), 562–573.

Nicholls, L. – Webb, C. (2007) What makes a good midwife? In: *Reviewing research evidence for nursing practice: systematic reviews*, eds. Webb, C. – Roe, B., 188–209, Blackwell.

OECD (2020) *Education at a glance 2020: OECD Indicators*. OECD Publishing, Paris.

OPM – Ministry of Education (2016) *Koulutusviennin tiekartta 2016–2019*. Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön julkaisuja 2016:9

Available from: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-263-394-1>

OPH – Finnish National Agency for Education (2020) Koulutusviennin tiekartta 2020–2023. Opetushallituksen raportit ja selvitykset 2020:8.

Available from: <https://www.oph.fi/fi/tilastot-ja-julkaisut/julkaisut/koulutusviennin-tiekartta-2020-2023>

Paija, T. – Koskinen, S. – Hupli, M. – Salminen, L. (2019) Suomalaisten hoitotyön opettajien kulttuurinen kompetenssi. *Hoitotiede* 31 (4), 246–257.

Rosendahl, S. – Mattsson, K. – Yuwanich, N. (2020) Cross-cultural perspectives on gerontology in nursing education – a qualitative study of nurse educators' experiences. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education* 41(1), 109–120.

Schatz, M. (2016) Education as Finland's hottest export? A Multi-faceted case study on Finnish National Education Export Policies. Doctoral thesis, Research reports of the Department of Teacher Education 389, University of Helsinki.

Simpson, A. (2018) The dialogism of ideologies about equality, democracy and human rights within Finnish education – Many voices and many faces. Doctoral thesis, Helsinki Studies in Education 26, University of Helsinki.

Treshchevsky, Y. – Igoikin, S.L. – Shatalov, M. (2019) Internationalization of the educational services market through development of the system of remote education – Possibilities and barriers. *International Journal of Educational Management* 33(3), 478–485.

University Act 558/2009 (Yliopistolaki) §10: Fee-charging degree programmes

Available from: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2009/20090558>

University of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014 (Ammattikorkeakoululaki) §13a: Fee-charging degree programmes.

Available from: <https://finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2014/20140932>

Vuokila-Oikkonen, P. – Janhonen, S. – Nikkonen, M. (2003) Kertomukset hoitotieteellisen tiedon tuottamisessa: narratiivinen lähestymistapa. In:

Laadulliset tutkimusmenetelmät hoitotieteessä, eds. Janhonen, S. – Nikkonen, M., 81–115, WSOY.

Weil, M. (2018) Teaching in higher education: Is there a pedagogy of internationalisation? In: Internationalisation and transnationalisation in higher education, eds. Korhonen, V. – Alenius, P. Studies in vocational and continuing education 17, 177–194, Peter Lang.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Questions in qualitative questionnaire

- 1) Millaisia ajatuksia hoitotyön koulutusvienti sinussa herättää omien kokemuksiesi perusteella?  
What kind of thoughts do you have concerning education export based on your own experience?
- 2) Millaisia ilmiöitä/käsitteitä hoitotyön koulutusvientiin sinun mielestäsi liittyy?  
What kind of phenomenon/concepts are involved in education export in your own opinion?
- 3) Kerro, jos olet kohdannut haasteita hoitotyön koulutusviennissä. Millaisia?  
Could you tell if you have encountered challenges during education export process?  
What kinds of?
- 4) Miten hoitotyön koulutusvienti eroaa sinun kokemuksiesi perusteella muista hoitotyön opettamisen prosesseista?  
In what way does education export differ from other nursing education processes in your opinion?
- 5) Mikä motivoi sinua toteuttamaan hoitotyön koulutusvientiä?  
What motivates you to do education export?
- 6) Millaisena näet hoitotyön koulutusviennin tulevaisuuden?  
How do you see the future on nursing education export?
  - Jatkamme nykyisten yhteistyökumppaneiden kanssa  
We will continue with current partners in cooperation
  - Pyrimme laajentamaan hoitotyön koulutusvientiä uusiin toimintamuotoihin tai osaamisalueisiin  
We seek to expand nursing education export to new forms of activity or areas of expertise
  - Etsimme uusia yhteistyökumppaneita esimerkiksi uusista maista entisenlaisella formaatilla  
We will look for new partners with the same format for example in new countries
  - En usko, että tulemme jatkamaan hoitotyön koulutusvientitoiminnassa tulevaisuudessa  
I do not think that we will continue to export nursing education in the future

## Appendix 2. Themed responses

Main themes	Main categories	Sub-categories	Categories	
Special characteristics of nursing education export	Unconventional activity	Economic benefit for the providing organization	Being in the business side	
		High-quality product for export	Commercialized action	
			Nursing education in Finland is top-notch	
		Offering key-areas of nursing education	Finnish nursing education is appreciated	
			Export product planned to certain customer	
		Differences in pedagogy	Product offering being compact whole	
	Using different teaching materials			
	Mutually beneficial	Development co-operation to the partner country	Differences in academic governance	
			Culture taking centre stage	
		Advancing Finnish society	Making societal difference	
Form of development aid				
Requirements for implementing nursing education export	Comprehensive understanding	Doing extensive assessment	Offering more educated workforce	
			A way to integrate to society	
		Understanding of the country's cultural aspects	Identifying client's starting point	
			Awareness of the receiving county's current situation	
			Gathering cultural knowledge	
			Observing cultural differences	
		Having administrative knowledge	Acknowledging cultural impact behind nursing care	
			Having knowledge of the local education system	
			Having knowledge of the statutory laws	
			Having knowledge of the local health care systems	
		Continuous assessment	Drawing up comprehensive forethought	Agreeing on process starting point in advance
				Laying groundwork for the education export beforehand
	Asking for clients' wishes in advance			
	Drawing up a meticulous plan for the execution			
	Putting up mutually agreed timetable			
	Assessing the export activity throughout the process			
	Utilization of experts	Doing two-way collaboration	Monitoring the activity during the process	
			Doing overviews of the situations	
		Having expertise in the area of economy	Cooperation in the native country	
			Cooperation in the receiving country	
			Having business know-how	
		Having expertise in the area of education	Having marketing know-how	
			Having adequate resources	
	Having academic expertise			
	Doing similar work than in the native country			
	Personal characteristics	Having ability to react to changing circumstances	Having ability to act in rapid-fire situations	
			Having fearlessness when it came to education export	
			Having adjustability to client's wishes	
Having adequate language proficiency		Having proper language skills		
		Having enough language skills		
Being considerate to civilian life		Family situation allowing work overseas		
	Participation in education export being voluntary			

Challenges in exporting nursing education	Alterations in approach	Having differences of opinions over diverging cultures	Having differences in courses of action
		Having differences in procedures	Having different cultural views
			Having value conflicts
			Forging concurring views in nursing
	Insufficiency in support network	Development of the education export being only in the early stages	Facing administrative issues
			Struggling with the protocols of receiving country
			Incomplete designing of education export
		Having extensive call for resources	Having difficulty to have enough expertise
			Having only limited amount of financial resources
		Having hard time on finding motivation	Being temporally demanding
			Personnel having only partial interest
			Instructor did not feel like progressing during the process
Work overload		Physical factors taking its toll	Differences in environment aspects
	Being involved in unusual professional activity	Austerity of the local settings	
		Working in an unfamiliar culture	
	Need for sudden changes		
Personal motivation for participating in nursing education export	Making a change	Requiring broader personal competence	Complexity of pedagogy
		Being able to develop the receiving country	Requirement for adequate language skills
			Rendering change
	Personal development	Having positive experiences during teaching	Being able to develop welfare
		Chance to develop professionally	Finding professional appreciation
			Export activity being occupationally challenging
			Identifying high learning aspiration
		Chance to overall self-development	Developing professional knowledge
			Utilizing pre-existing knowledge
			Advancing language proficiency
			Having a chance to work internationally
		Providing an opportunity for novel functioning	