

Birgitta Niemi

Employers' Intention to Hire
Highly Educated Foreign Workforce
in the Kokkola Region

Implications for Higher Education



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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

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ABSTRACT

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Finnish Summary

The rationale for this research is to find out the intentions of employers to hire highly educated foreign workforce in the Kokkola region. The research analyses how employers have prepared themselves for meeting the diverse needs of future employees, how strongly and on what basis employers are committed to recruit a foreign workforce, how many they have recruited so far, and what the contribution of Centria University of Applied Sciences could be to improve recruitment of a foreign highly educated workforce in the region. Internationalisation of higher education in Finland has led to the fact that degree programmes offered in English both in traditional universities and in universities of applied sciences have increased and now there is available a foreign highly educated workforce on the labour market. When graduates are employed on the local labour market Centria University of Applied Sciences meets the "Third Mission". A brief presentation of human resource management of today and recruitment is presented to find out employers' recruitment plans. The theoretical framework covers intention and research findings are analysed from commitment, behaviour, action, and change aspects. This is a qualitative research with a hermeneutical phenomenology aspect. Employers are interviewed and the informants form a case study. The empirical results are analysed based on employers' recruitment strategy, commitment to employ, recruitment process, perceptions, experiences, preparations, and the picture of available foreign workforce in the region. The research findings show that recruitment plans strongly influence the intention to employ a foreign workforce, but if no commitment is involved there is nothing guaranteeing that intention will lead to behaviour. This research has also implications for higher education, both related to programme curricula and cooperation with local companies.

Keywords: Commitment, Employability, Foreign Workforce, Higher Education, Intention, Recruitment

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The accomplishment of this research is a great step for me personally and from here I can proceed to meet new opportunities and challenges. I would like to express my sincere thank you to all connected.

Kokkola, October 2015

Birgitta Niemi

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| EEA | European Economic Area |
| ESF | European Social Fund |
| FINNIPS | Finnish Network for International Programmes |
| CIMO | Centre for International Mobility |
| CSM | Case Study Methods |
| CSR | Case Study Research |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HEI | Higher Educations Institution |
| HR | Human Resources |
| HRM | Human Resource Management |
| ICT | Intentional Change Theory |
| ISP | International Student Barometer |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| SHRM | Strategic Human Resource Management |
| TM | Talent Management |
| UAS | University of Applied Sciences |

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1 INTRODUCTION

“Earth is my home – Mankind my family” Kahil Gibran

With the quote above I wish to see possibilities for foreign graduates to find their way into the Finnish society, and despite a different cultural background be welcomed by employers in the Central Ostrobothnia region. My belief is that with a positive attitude to new cultures innovation will increase, economy flourish, and living conditions improve.

The globalisation of markets, the opening up of financial markets, the liberalisation of free trade, the expansion of international operations in corporations, movement of people, and the growth of direct foreign investment have created a need to understand national differences in economies. As a result employees’ and employers’ cultural competence has become a central competitive factor for companies in their internationalisation process; a broader and deeper knowledge of culture is needed. Knowledge of foreign cultures is also needed today on the home market due to migration. Multiculturalism has been described as a situation where many different cultural, linguistic and ethnic groups appear simultaneously (Forsander, 2002, 25-28). Multiculturalism also refers to political programmes in which governments and other institutions take into account the specific needs of different cultures and guarantee their rights, both to create equality and to avoid conflicts. As the Ministry of Education and Culture is providing foreigners with higher education in Finland free of charge, there are also well-motivated reasons to give foreign graduates a chance to contribute with their knowledge and skills to the development of the economy, internationalisation of companies, and to improve the companies’ competitiveness on the markets.

When looking at Kokkola and the surrounding region there are people with different ethnic backgrounds. Students are one group, but there are also those who have moved here due to uncertainties in their home country, those who moved due to marriage, and those who have come due to work. All these talents should be approved and given a chance to contribute to the economic development of the region. Kokkola and the surrounding area have interna-

tionally oriented companies, export and import businesses are important, and contribute to the wellbeing of the area. Economic development in the Central Ostrobothnia area shows, that there is a need for people with higher education, as the figure for people with completed higher education degrees was the second lowest in Finland in 2012. A study also shows that the export value in the area per inhabitant is the sixth highest in Finland, which also should provide a possibility for foreign degree students. Development in Central Ostrobothnia and Kokkola shows positive figures: when it comes to employment figures, development of Gross Domestic Product (hereafter GDP), and new jobs, which should favour possibilities for a foreign workforce too. When analysing the strength of a region one of the important dynamics is knowledge, research and development, and here Centria University of Applied Sciences (hereafter Centria UAS or Centria) could contribute in the development of the surrounding area (Aro, 2015).

1.1 Rationale for the Research

The interest for conducting this research arose when I saw the challenges foreign degree students faced during their study time in Finland. I was Head of the Degree Programme in Business Management, in English, in Centria UAS from year 1999 until the end of 2012, and I experienced an increasing number of foreign students in the programme, which posed various challenges. Both lecturers and students had to adapt to new situations with different cultures involved. Foreign students had to adapt to a completely new society, where English is not an official language, and where the norms are different from what they were used to. During their studies, the first big challenge related to studies outside the university that students faced was finding a work placement; the next was finding an assignment for their bachelor's thesis, and a third finding employment in Finland after graduation. Many of the foreign students were also looking for part-time jobs to finance their studies.

There have been gradual but slow improvements in companies' willingness to give foreign students opportunities and to hire them, but clearly we lose a lot of talented people in the field of business if employers do not intend to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. The university has tried to introduce Finnish working life to foreign students in many different ways; by inviting company representatives to speak about their companies, by arranging excursions to companies, by arranging employability and recruitment seminars and fairs, by taking part in national projects, e.g. Eximin: Export Import Innovations, focusing on the African markets, funded by European Social Fund (hereafter ESF). In this project the African students could participate. One of the interviewed employers in my research had also participated in the project. Seminars were held and students received assignments for their bachelor's thesis. This project was running during the years 2008 - 2011. Another national project was Valoa, promoting the employment opportunities of international students in

Finland. This project was also partly funded by ESF. Employability, which refers to an individual's ability to find work, to keep the employment and progress in the career, is what Universities of Applied Sciences (here after UAS) should also focus on in the curricula of their degree programmes.

In order to explore and hopefully influence the employment possibilities of foreign degree students, *this research aims to find out the intentions of employers to hire a highly educated foreign workforce in the Kokkola region*. At the same time, the research can help Centria UAS to find out if the university provides the companies with the right skilled workforce. By improving cooperation with companies in many different ways and by finding out what companies need in order to contribute to the development of the area and to be a provider of a skilled workforce for the local job market, UASs can meet the requirements and expectations of the Ministry of Education and Culture. By finding out employers' views on the necessary knowledge and skills, the programme curricula can be developed accordingly, which could improve foreign degree students' opportunities to be employed in Finland.

Regarding work placement, a total of five months is included in the degree programme at UASs, during which foreign degree students can get acquainted with Finnish companies. Already during their studies they have experienced the challenges of finding placement opportunities in their field. Work placement time could also be a good possibility for companies to experience a foreign workforce and maybe find their future employees. By providing work placement opportunities, both the employers and employees at the company can benefit from having experience of a foreign workforce, and improve their cultural awareness in an internationalisation process.

During the first years when the degree programmes in English started it was almost impossible for foreign students to find employment in the area. The companies were very reluctant to give foreign students even a try. The main obstacle and excuse in the beginning was the language. Students without knowledge of the Finnish language were easily rejected. The university soon realised this problem and incorporated four compulsory courses in Finnish for foreign students, corresponding to 12 credit points. The Finnish courses start already in first year in the autumn semester. There is evidence that after these courses students who are determined to can speak the Finnish language and understand Finnish culture better. Many of the foreign students show great interest already at the beginning of their studies to stay and work in Finland after graduation. Optional courses in the Swedish language, also improve foreign degree students' opportunities to find a job in this bilingual region. The students' intention to stay and work in Finland after graduation meets the policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The main problem seems to be that the demand for a workforce and the supply of a skilled foreign workforce do not meet in the region and therefore, it is important that Centria UAS should find out how it could contribute to improve the situation and what should be done.

A study made in 2011 revealed that in the Central Ostrobothnia region the problem of finding a workforce is slightly smaller than the average in Finland, but in the future there might be a slight decrease in an available workforce, which would mean better opportunities for foreign degree students. (Alatalo et al., 2011) This also puts pressure on Centria's degree programmes in English for foreign students and cooperation with companies.

As the definition of a foreign workforce is rather wide, I have limited it in this dissertation to refer to highly educated students, who have a different cultural background. The word immigrants could also be used as a definition of a foreign workforce. With immigrants in general it is meant all foreign citizens in Finland, who have moved here permanently due to different reasons. Permanently refers to at least one year's stay in Finland. If they get Finnish citizenship they are no longer classified as immigrants (www.tilastokeskus.fi). I did not want to use the word immigrants because the aim was to find out what the chances were for degree students from Centria UAS to become employed in the area.

The situation in the surrounding region shows that immigrants' work contribution is important for small and medium sized companies in Ostrobothnia. Today the foreigners' share of the workforce is 3.1 per cent in the area and it is the second largest in Finland. (Österbottens tidning, 24.10.2012) This is also a good reason to provide education in English thereby improving the knowledge level and contributing to the development of the economy in the region.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

With this research I wanted to find out if there was a connection between higher education in Centria UAS, a highly educated foreign workforce, and employers' intention to hire foreign degree students in Kokkola. In addition to that, to find out how employers have prepared themselves for the future need for employees, how strongly and on what bases they are committed to recruit foreign workforce. I also wanted to find out how many foreign employees they have recruited already and their experiences of a foreign workforce.

The contextual framework for the dissertation is the development of higher education in Finland and internationalization. The theoretical framework is how intention and companies' recruitment strategy are connected, when and if employing a foreign workforce. The main theoretical part is on Intentional Behaviour, but the research also tries to find out what kind of relation there is between a company's recruitment strategy, commitment, and intention.

The research contexts in this research were degrees given in Centria UAS, educational policy from the Ministry of Education and Culture, and employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. If there is no connection between degrees delivered and employers' intention to hire higher graduated students, Centria is not contributing to the development of the region as it should, especially when it comes to degree programmes in English and foreign

students. The key words in the research are; Commitment, Employability, Foreign Workforce, Higher Education, Intention, and Recruitment.

My plan was to find as much information as possible, on the companies' intention in the Kokkola region to recruit a highly educated foreign workforce. I had to focus on what I understand of the research phenomenon, where I can get information, and how I can with the collected empiric material reply to the research questions. The research focused on finding answers to the questions underneath:

The central question was:

What are the intentions of employers to hire a highly educated foreign workforce?

The sub-questions were:

How do employers in the region prepare themselves for meeting the diverse needs of their future employees?

How strongly and on what bases are the employers committed to recruit a foreign workforce?

How many foreign employees have the employers recruited so far?

How could Centria UAS contribute to recruitment of a foreign workforce?

The answers to these research questions can also help UASs develop the international degree programmes, to better meet the requirements of the labour market. There are however external factors to Higher Education Institutes (here after HEIs) such as; social background, gender, age, ethnic affiliation, job search behaviour, and labour market conditions, that are increasingly been believed to affect the employability of graduates. (Pavlin, 2010)

1.3 Parameters and Boundaries

This dissertation focused on finding out what the situation of foreign students graduated from Centria UAS was, and if there was any likelihood to be employed in the Kokkola region after graduation. All degree programmes in Centria are planned together with enterprises in the surrounding area and therefore, I considered it relevant to make the research in this region. The main campus of Centria is in Kokkola and the majority part of its students study here, therefore, the research area was limited to Kokkola. In the area there are; big, medium-,

and small- sized companies dealing with international trade and the degree programmes in Centria focus on supporting the companies in the development of their business. In the area there are also companies dealing with businesses related to all the programmes offered in English. Centria has also so called negotiation groups for all programmes provided, consisting of representatives from the companies in the area, in order to have the latest views from the companies and organisations.

The Ministry of Education and Culture expects Centria UAS to prepare a report on advantages with providing education for young people leading to degrees only at the Kokkola campus; thereafter there would be only adult education in Jakobstad and Ylivieska (www.minedu.fi). This expectation was also a reason why the interviews were limited to companies and organisations in the Kokkola area, even though the surrounding labour market is larger and many of the graduates look for job opportunities in other parts of Finland. As I chose this limited area I also found it easier to suggest cooperation with the companies as they are easily reached and meetings can be arranged on short term notice. My own experiences in finding job opportunities for the foreign students were from the Kokkola area.

The part covering recruitment strategy is focusing only on human resource management (hereafter HRM) not any other part of strategy. I looked at HRM from a very narrow aspect, recruiting from outside the company the right workforce related to knowledge and skills. By analysing recruitment strategy I aimed to find out if the companies have plans to hire a foreign workforce. The available foreign workforce is also considered a resource for developing the area, by working in Finland or for Finland in another country. There are already examples of companies that have hired students from Centria to work in their home countries for a Finnish company. The graduated students can contribute to developing the area also by working in e.g. another country for the company; this is also something the research took into consideration. The chapter on HRM and recruitment strategies focuses mainly on; need-driven, opportunity-driven, and capability-driven reasons to hire people and their effects on the employability of a foreign workforce.

1.4 Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of seven main chapters and the outline is as follows:

The introduction chapter presents; how new cultures come into the society and the internationalisation of companies in the area, briefly about economic development in the area focusing on workforce, the rationale for the research, challenges foreign degree students meet, research aims and objectives, and parameters and boundaries. The challenge today and in the future for the university is to meet the demands of the Ministry of Education and Culture to develop and support the economic growth in the region.

Chapter two, which briefly presents the development in higher education and internationalisation, foreign workforce, changes in education policy, the development of internationalisation in Centria UAS, describes the context of education. The chapter presents the development of higher education and also how the university has tried to support students in finding work placement and jobs, students' intention to stay in Finland after graduation and the employment situation of a foreign workforce. The development of the amount of foreign students in the university is presented. Degree programmes have also been updated and adapted to meet the companies' requirements. This chapter also gives the reasons for having degree programmes in English in Centria UAS.

The third chapter describes recruitment in companies and employability of foreign degree students, human resource management related to recruitment decisions, securing a future workforce by talent management, and challenges and benefits in hiring a foreign workforce. As the research also tried to find out if there was any connection between recruitment strategy and intention to employ a foreign workforce, I considered recruitment strategy an important part and foreign students' possibilities among the job applicants that are screened and interviewed. The research tried to find out what actually influenced the decision making.

The fourth chapter presents the main theoretical framework and focuses on the philosophy of intention, intention and commitment, intentional behaviour, reasoned action, and intentional change. With this theory as a base I have tried to analyse the influence upon employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce. The theory in this research was analysed in order to find out the importance of intention and its effect on decision making.

In chapter five the research design and methodology are presented. The research has a hermeneutic phenomenological approach and it tried to find out a shared meaning of the experience and intention of employing a highly educated foreign workforce. The dissertation is a qualitative research and data was collected by interviewing seven companies in the Kokkola region. These seven companies are treated as one case. The intention was to explore the set of factors surrounding the central phenomenon and present the perspectives and meanings the interviewees hold. The interviews were face-to-face discussions and based on semi-structured thematic questions. The reliability and validity of the research is also discussed.

In chapter six the empirical research results are analysed and presented in relation to employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. I have looked at the influence of employers' intention, employers' preparations for future need of workforce, employers' commitment to recruit a foreign workforce and if they have already recruited a foreign workforce. A summary of the main research findings are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter seven covers conclusion and discussion on research findings, reflections, a critical evaluation of the study, contribution of the dissertation and suggestions for future research.

2 HIGHER EDUCATION AND A FOREIGN WORKFORCE: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

With this chapter I wanted to put my research into the context where higher education conducted in English is today and why. I have acquainted myself with the background for having English degree programmes in Centria UAS and the development of internationalisation of HEIs in Finland. I have also looked at the situation of a potential highly educated foreign workforce in Finland and the Kokkola region. There is a short description on why and how internationalisation of education started in Finland and its influence on the internationalisation in Centria UAS. With statistics is shown the development of foreign students in number and their completed degrees in Centria UAS (App. 1). During years 2005 - 2014 total 391 students had graduated from degree programmes conducted in English in Centria. Related to students in number the figure might look small, but it has to be remembered that figures containing students in number also include students that have never started their studies due to different reasons. One reason is that foreign students tend to study only for one year in Centria and then transfer to other UASs in Southern Finland as there are more job opportunities. The students that have graduated from Centria are a potential workforce for the surrounding area and can also support the companies in their internationalisation process. These students have stayed in the area and adapted themselves to the community. Local companies can benefit from these foreign graduates by employing them to work in the local company or to work for the local company in another country. In this chapter previous research concerning employability of foreign graduates is also briefly presented. I have looked at competences needed for working in Finland and with this I tried to find out if the degree programmes offered in English in Centria UAS should be developed in order to give the graduates better opportunities to find work in the area. Foreign students' intention to stay in Finland after graduation was presented to have a picture to see if they actually are available for the local job market.

The so called “Third Mission” of universities is not only the services provided to markets, but also a way to evaluate the universities’ activities from the economical and societal aspect. There have been discussions and seminars on the topics; what is meant by the third mission of universities? Such as: University education and third mission, University research and third mission, the commercialisation of research, and the regional influence of the universities’ third mission (Kankaala et al., 2004; Rauhala et al. 2006, 27-40; Vähäpassi, 1999, 7-13). A study in the Nordic countries was conducted on how universities work as instruments of regional development through specific initiatives, through education, research and cooperation with the society. Some good practices came out of this research and important was that there is a match between education offered and the regional labour force demand. Project or problem-based learning and student outplacement is one way of including the surrounding society. For example at Jönköping University entrepreneurship programmes are developed to encourage firm formation in the region and another way is to provide up-skilling and life-long learning approaches to ensure increased competence levels for the regional employees (Hedin, 2009). According to entrepreneurs in the Central Ostrobothnia region it is very important that there is a UAS, which can contribute with new innovations and a skilled workforce. This workforce can contribute to a positive development in the area (Centria Open 2014). With my own research I wanted to find out if Centria met the “Third Mission”, how employers saw Centria’s role, and what could be done to improve its contribution and activities.

2.1 Finnish Higher Education and Internationalisation

Under this heading I wanted to bring forward the reason for internationalisation of Finnish higher education. At the end of 1980s the internationalisation of education in HEIs received a central role, this due to Finland’s involvement in the European integration process. The internationalisation of education was a result of the rapid, large-scale changes in the need for expertise because of the opening of the society and economy to international cooperation. The polytechnic system was created in the 1990s and internationalisation was one of the main goals of the reform. A special funding was channelled into the development of instruction given in a foreign language, improvement of the administration of international affairs, and establishment of international relations. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2001) states that: “Finland cannot keep out of international competition and, as part of the international community it must bear its responsibility for immigrants and refugees”. At the same time the need to increase the international visibility and competitiveness of Finnish HEIs, was emerging in part from the existing shortage of a labour force in certain industries. When studying in Finland students are taught about the country and they are more bounded to Finnish society and working life than other immigrants. The Ministry of Education and Culture also stresses that foreign stu-

dents coming to Finland should also be offered enough courses in both the Finnish and Swedish language in order to improve their employability (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001; Aalto, 2003).

Attracting foreign students is a challenge for Finland, being peripheral and with a small population and language. When it comes to attracting foreign degree students, Finland was at the end of a list of OECD-countries in 2003 with only 7 400 foreign students studying here. When looking at foreign students' share of all students in Finland at the same time, again we are at the end of the row, only 2.5 per cent. The study field attracting foreign students is technology; Finland was at the top in 2003. English, German and French speaking countries attract most foreign students; therefore, offering programmes in English in Finland played an important role. Still Finland has to improve a lot in order to attract talented foreign students. (www.tilastokeskus.fi)

The Finnish government under former Prime Minister Vanhanen's second programme regarded foreign students in Finland as being immigrants, degree students and exchange students. The statement was that Finland belongs to everyone; irrespective of settlement, living situation, mother tongue or ethnical background. All citizens should be guaranteed the right to influence, to take part in and to be part of decision making (www.minedu.fi). The development of the workforce in industrialised countries is changing; the ageing of population is increasing and the working population between 15 - 64 years is decreasing. In Finland the decrease in workforce is exceptionally pronounced; the development compared to other EU-countries is more unfavourable. According to earlier estimations in the year 2015, Finland will be in the most unfavourable situation of the then EU-15 countries. This development will continue for several decades, and shows that the development of the population in Finland is unbalanced (Alasoini, 2010, 21-22). This development of an ageing population also supports having degree programmes in English to secure a reasonable workforce.

Finland attracts foreign students due to the reputation of the high quality of education in HEIs, but Cai (2012, 12) stated at the same time, that unless the foreigners are employed they do not find Finland attractive. Multiculturalism is often seen as a challenge instead of as a possibility. Employers and employees should more prepare themselves for multiculturalism as research shows that team working skills in multicultural surroundings is becoming more important (Henriksson & Kauppila, 2012). The companies in the region have good possibilities to prepare themselves for a multicultural environment as Centria has students with different cultural backgrounds and work placement is part of the degree.

The mission of Centria UAS is to contribute to the development of the area, improve competitiveness and well-being with education, research, development, and innovation activities concentrating on providing a skilful and entrepreneurial workforce for export/import oriented working life. The strategy of Centria is profiling by strength in cooperation with enterprises and internationalisation (Centria strategy 2016, Centria strategy 2020). The increase of

knowledge and skills among the population is promoting the national and regional development of the economy. The Finnish government also requires that the knowledge and expertise from HEIs is transferred to the labour market. Here Centria UAS together with the Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius have an important role. It is proved that especially higher education attracts knowledge based enterprises to the region (Mukkala & Tohmo, 2012) and if Centria can provide a skilled workforce there are possibilities for new enterprises in the area.

In order to influence the development of the regions, it is important that the regions strengthen their own readiness and knowledge. With education, science, technology, and innovation policy also the development of the regions should be supported. The challenge is the use of knowledge and skills that are available in order to meet international competition on the market. Hereby the importance of universities and UASs in the region is stressed (Valtion tiede- ja teknologianeuvosto, 2003).

According to research, made by Centre for International Mobility (hereafter CIMO) foreign students have found their way to Finland. Some 20 000 foreign students complete their degree in Finland in universities and UASs. Almost 10 000 international students studied in UASs in 2013, which is equivalent to 6.9 % of their total student population (CIMO, 2013). This is possible as there are now over 300 degree programmes in English (Garam, 2009). The majority of the foreign degree students come from outside Europe. This research also showed that Finnish companies can meet international competition by employing the international workforce available on the Finnish market.

The working situation of today and the organisations have become knowledge intensive innovation centres, where collaborative work, networking, and transformative, and creative learning are the key concepts. Recruiters today highlight the importance of team work, sector-specific skills, communication skills, computer literacy, and ability to adapt to new situations (European Commission, 2010). HEIs should in addition to academic skills prepare the foreign students for the labour market and the world of work in general, and then it would be easier for them to be integrated and employed (Majakulma, 2011). Here we can find a reason for the UASs and HEIs to improve and adapt their programmes in order to meet the employers' demands. With this research I also hope to find out how employers see the role of Centria, and then programmes can be developed accordingly.

The renewal of the Governmental Accreditation for UASs stresses a deepening of the contacts with working life and influence on developing the surrounding area; quality and internationalization are also the base for financing (Sirén, 2012). This updated policy from the Ministry also put stress on UASs to more actively take part in improving the employment possibilities of their students. The strategy of Centria also focuses on meeting these requirements (Centria strategy, 2016, 2020).

A study has been made among students in some European countries about their expectations, evaluations on HEIs, education, and work possibilities;

also students from Centria UAS participated in the research. In 2012 some 166 Centria students participated in the study and in 2013 some 149. Of these 149 students 60.4 % were female and 39.6 % male students. Some 85.7 % of the students considered themselves, having the right qualifications for the labour market, 78.8 % of them were very optimistic about finding a job and only 33.3 % were worried about their future career. In this research both Finnish and foreign students from Centria took part. Willingness for moving to another place was not very high only 30.5%, which means that the surrounding area is very interesting for the students and that Centria UAS should provide the companies with the right workforce (Trendence Institute, 2013). This research also confirms that students want to work in the region and that the supply of a workforce should thereby be secured.

International Student Barometer (ISB) research made by CIMO showed that foreign students are very satisfied with the education and facilities in Finnish universities, but the problems seem to be integration into the Finnish working life, finding a permanent job, and getting a residence permit after graduation. They did also say that they did not get enough support for entering the job market and that connection to Finnish companies should be improved. When they have problems in finding work experience during their studies it is more difficult to integrate into the society and finding a job after graduation (CIMO, Fakta Express, 1/2012). This research by CIMO proved the importance of focusing on integration of foreign degree students into the society and working life at an early stage.

The trend in population growth in Finland shows that the number of foreigners is increasing and a large percentage of them want to study and work in the country. Finnish enterprises are offered an increasing pool of global talent. When enterprises want to deepen their internationalisation they do not have to spend money, time and effort on recruiting from overseas. The investment in providing education to foreign degree students is wasted if the students are not integrated into the society and offered jobs. The trend that Finns retiring exceeds the number of people entering the labour market meaning that there will be a gap to be filled and therefore, Finland will have to start convincing skilled immigrants to stay (Vehaskari, 2010). It is important that the companies should start focusing on and preparing themselves for foreign workforce and here UASs and HEIs have an important role.

When foreign students started to come in bigger numbers into the English degree programmes in Centria UAS, this meant challenges also for lecturers. Lecturers' intercultural competence skills had to be improved and today intercultural competence skills are also needed among entrepreneurs, in order to fill the future gap in the workforce. Employers cannot afford to overlook intercultural competence and ignore employing foreign graduates; this was stressed at the International Affairs seminar 20 - 22.5.2013 at Levi in Finland. At the same time the students union pointed out that the UASs should market to companies the importance of international skills (www.cimo.fi). This is part of the demands that UASs face when trying to contribute to the development of compa-

nies and surrounding areas. Timonen (2011) has in her research analysed and interpreted the meanings of international competence and intercultural learning in a working community and especially the demands on educators. The title of the dissertation is: *Internationalise or step aside?* A rather dramatic title and it also puts stress on lecturers in HEIs. Timonen's main finding is that international competence can be interpreted in many ways and therefore, weakens the possibilities to support the learners' intercultural learning. UASs should support forming a common understanding among lecturers, degree students and employers.

Internationalisation Strategies of Universities of Applied Sciences 2009-2015 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009:21) and Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009-2015 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009:23) support the internationalisation of universities and local companies. Changes in the international operation environment and the increasing multiculturalisation of society create expectations of HEIs. The Ministry pointed out that internationalisation promotes diversity in the society and business community, international networking, competitiveness as well as improves the well-being, competence, and education of the citizens. The Ministry also mentioned in its strategy the importance of internationalisation as a means to attract a foreign workforce to meet the future lack of workforce due to the ageing population.

Without sufficient GDP growth the basis for the welfare society is under threat. Discussions related to globalisation have been rather critical during the beginning of 21st century; Finland can however manage better than many other countries due to a high level of education. The main issue is how to use the advantage so that some 5 million inhabitants with their high knowledge can secure the welfare of the society (Alasoini, 2010, 27-30). The society is under change when it comes to skills, expectations, and management. The uncertainty avoidance level is however higher in Finland than in the other Nordic countries (Alasoini, 2010, 31). This fact may also influence entrepreneurs' willingness to employ a foreign workforce. In a global economy more and more multicultural values and multicultural competences are needed and also the option of giving space for risk taking. This does not break the Finnish work culture if its own value base is strong enough (Alasoini, 2010, 57).

Today there are also studies made on what internationalisation of HEI really means. Söderqvist (2007) has made a research on Internationalisation and its Management at Higher-Education institutions. The aim was to find out what understandings are there of HEIs internationalisation and how did the middle management of internationalisation of HEIs understand the management of HEIs' internationalisation. Söderqvist stated that there was room for improvement regarding the understanding of the process and the dynamics of internationalisation in HEIs. The findings also showed that more management training would be needed to increase the overall competence. Handling international relations was not equal to internationalising the whole institution. The challenge has been changing the HEIs from a domestic institution to an internation-

al institution (Söderqvist, 2007). This is also something Centria UAS has to work on. Foreign degree students need the support of all teachers and administrative personnel in Centria, not only those teaching them and personnel from the international office. If there is an understanding among lecturers and other personnel of the importance of foreign degree students for the university and the companies in the area, the support and integration of these students is more efficient.

There is a commitment from the Ministry of Education and Culture which UASs have to follow in order to be financed and have a future. There is no way back to the old time, internationalization is now part of our everyday life. At the same time information received from different studies shows that the internationalisation of HEIs can be challenging for the education institutions but beneficial for the development of Finnish economy.

2.2 Centria UAS and Internationalisation

Centria UAS started its first degree programme in English in 1996, the Degree Programme in Business Management at bachelor level. A study of about 200 companies in the surrounding area was conducted in order to find out what knowledge and which skills were needed in a small and medium sized company. The programme also focused on the internationalisation of the companies, as there were many companies in the Ostrobothnia area dealing with exports and imports. After this first programme in English, Centria UAS has introduced other programmes in English, such as in Chemistry, Information Technology, Nursing, Industrial Management and Tourism, also a MBA programme in English in International Business is offered. These degree programmes in English are planned to support the companies in the area and meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Of these programmes Tourism in English is not offered any longer. The programme in Chemistry and Nursing have new intakes every second year.

Centria UAS has as its target to have an international profile and focus on entrepreneurship in its education (OKM, 2010). In addition to foreign full-time students the number of foreign exchange students has developed very positively when the degree programmes in English started. This has also a positive influence on students in the Finnish degree programmes as Centria's environment is very international, which improves the Finnish students' internationalisation at home. According to an outsider evaluation of the degree programme in Business Management in November 1998, the strengths of the programme are; focus on companies in the area and their tight relations with Sweden, the modular structure of the programme focusing on entrepreneurship, internationalisation and work placement (Tella et al., 1999). It is also common that Centria regularly contacts companies in the area to hear their opinions about the programmes and how the curricula could be improved. Centria UAS has had

the policy to regularly improve the programme curricula and try to meet the requirements of knowledge and skills that companies need.

CIMO has made a study of international activities among the regions in Finland. During the time 2008 – 2010 Central Ostrobothnia was one of the most active landscapes measured by number of students and applications for grants. The study also looked at how internationalisation is noticed in the plans and programmes of the landscape. According to interviews made, the role of enterprises and the education sector is central in the internationalisation of the regions. The most important measurements for internationalisation of the landscape are immigration, exports and student exchange numbers of schools. Internationalisation is not that much dependent on money as on attitudes and activities (CIMO, 2013).

The mission of Centria UAS has been to increase the knowledge and skills level and strengthen people's proficiency to be successful in a changing surrounding and readiness for continuous learning. Centria's aim is to support the success of companies in the area, to create new enterprises, and to take into consideration the needs of an agricultural economy. The bases for Centria's activity are sustainable development and commonly approved values, which are customer centricity, respecting individuality and differences, valuing cooperation and common targets, openness and continuous learning (Kallioinen & Jokela, 2002). This strategy is a cooperation of Centria UAS and the University Consortium Chydenius, which also supports the idea of HEIs' contributing to the development of the area. Briefly it can be stated that the updated Centria strategy 2013-2014 continues to focus on the development of the area, entrepreneurship and internationalisation (www.centria.fi).

Centria's strategy is part of the Botnia strategy 2015 and the Botnia area covers Oulu-South, Central Ostrobothnia and the Jakobstad area. It has been counted that the main part of students graduating from Centria UAS will be employed in this area, therefore, it is important to keep the development of the area in mind when planning and developing the education. The exports of the Botnia area stand for 12 % of Finnish export in total. The retiring workforce by 2025 will be 35 658 persons, the share of persons under 14 years will be 20 % and when it comes to education 5.9 % will have a UAS degree. This means that the level of higher education is rather low, which stresses the importance of HEI's role. The share of entrepreneurs in the area will be 17.7 %, which is very positive, when it will be in all Finland 10.4 % (Centria UAS 2013 - 2020).

When looking at statistics of students graduated from Centria UAS and foreign degree students' part, one can see foreign students in number is a considerable part. During the intake years 2008 – 2013 the share increased considerably, but from 2014 the estimated intake is 360 foreign students. Appendix 1 shows the figures for students in the English degree programmes. It can be noticed that from 2010 there has been a change in the amount of foreign students completing their degree in Centria. What needs to be considered is also the fact that the students in number consist of both students present and absent. The reason for students being absent might be that they have not received a resi-

dence permit from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but have not cancelled their study place. Students can keep the study place for two years when they sign up as present even if they have not started their studies. The foreign students' share of total amount of students in Centria UAS in 2012 was 15.2 % and new foreign students also 15.2 % and the percentage of totally completed degrees by the foreign students' share was 11 % in 2012. The foreign students in Centria UAS cover a considerable part and are very important for the university. When analysing the figures of students in number and degrees completed, it should also be noticed that there are 3.5 years programmes and 4 years programmes at bachelor's level and also a 2 years programme at master's level. By 2014 some 391 foreign students had graduated from Centria's degree programmes in English. The estimated decrease in students in number from year 2014 is due to the fact that the degree programme in Tourism is not offered anymore, and that the programmes in Chemistry and Nursing have intakes every second year.

The former Minister of Education and Culture Mr. Gustafsson was of the opinion that Finland needs more foreign degree students. The reason for this is that internationalisation is a central criterion when it comes to the quality of HEIs. In proportion of students Centria UAS had the biggest number of foreign students in 2011 (Helsingin Sanomat, 22.9.2011). Centria UAS is the most international UAS in Finland with regard to foreign students. The number of foreign degree students was highest in Centria.

Keski-Pohjanmaan Yrittäjät (2013) has made a survey on their members' internationalization level and intention to expand their activity to export/import business. In total 114 companies participated, which was 11.26 % of the target group. Companies from the Kokkola area covered 46.5 % of the respondents. Of the companies 63 % were micro companies with maximum 5 employees and of those 34 % had a turnover between 100 000 – 500 000 €. Of these companies 32 % were already involved in export/import business. Those who had plans to go into export/import business said that the following facts limited their possibilities; marketing resources 46.2 %, finding customers 44.1 %, finding partners 42.9 %, language skills and cultural knowledge 24.3 % etc. These answers reveal that there should be a possibility for foreign students to become employed if the companies used the skilled labour force offered (Keski-Pohjanmaan Yrittäjät, 2013).

Another survey concerning generational shift or succession and the need to find people to continue the business showed that about 13 % of the SMEs will be in this situation in the near future. In the Central Ostrobothnia area 54 % of the SMEs have difficulties in finding someone to continue the business. The companies see possibilities in the cooperation with Centria UAS as strength, but threats in getting people to continue, as they move out from the area. With the right kind of cooperation there could also be a possibility for the foreign degree students to become employed (Kuvaja & Saurio, 2009, 109-115).

As a conclusion it can be said that the international students in Centria UAS are very important for the university, and that internationalisation and

development of the SMEs in the area also support having degree programmes in English in Centria.

2.3 Research Related to Foreign Graduates and Employment

Today more effort has been put into research on employability of foreigners in Finland and what happens to international students after graduation. Research of international graduates' employability is yet quite new in continental Europe where HEIs have traditionally been tuition fee free. Previous studies stressed that in coming to Finland to study students want to start a life here rather than just to obtain a degree (Shumilova & Cai, 2011). In order to get a good picture of what has been found concerning foreign graduate employment I have been trying to form a picture from some studies made in this field. The general picture is that the main problems foreign degree students face when applying for a job are: language barrier, relatively small labour market in Finland, discrimination, access to job information searching, lack of right contacts, lack of relevant work experience, wrong field of study, and residence permit restrictions (Cai, 2012, 21).

Kyhä (2011) has in her research focused on how educated immigrants are employed in Finland, in what types of jobs and how they have managed to find jobs corresponding to their education. These are people who have received education in their home country. Usually they have come to Finland due to marriage, expatriates and refugees. Kyhä has also investigated how the living conditions and circumstances in their home country have influenced their working career here in Finland.

Education is a channel to the labour market, but still HEIs' promises about good employability are not the same for foreign degree students as for Finnish students. The biggest problem for foreign students has been finding a job corresponding to the level of their education. Research has been made on foreigners employability based on statistical figures, but Kyhä (2007, 21-31) tried to give a more complete and diverse view of foreigners employability. She divided the jobs into three categories, job corresponding to education, partly corresponding to education, and not corresponding to education. Kyhä's conclusion was that the foreigners are a heterogenic a group and their labour market situations vary. Foreigners with higher education are a resource for Finland and this resource should be used. Foreigners with higher education should at least be on the same starting line as Finns with higher education. Foreigners should be supported to get their degrees certified, and getting a work permit is also essential (Kyhä, 2011). Based on these results UASs have to improve their connections to the labour market and consider possibilities to help foreign degree students.

Kähkönen (2013, 63-72) concluded in her report that foreign graduates brought new ideas and views into companies. Employers had positive experiences of a foreign workforce and this also helped recruitment of other foreigners. About half of the employers who had had experience of a foreign workforce

said they would recruit foreigners also in the future. The employers saw the benefits in international trade by hiring a foreign graduate, they contributed with such skills that the companies did not have. Those employers who were more sceptical of a foreign workforce were looking at the unemployment situation in Finland and they were also concerned about customers' attitudes to a foreign workforce. Language and professional skills were emphasized and the background of the worker did not matter that much. Kähkönen also pointed out that internationalisation started in HEIs already in the 1990s, but not that early in the companies. This is also a reason why support from HEIs for foreign degree students and cooperation with companies are important.

Raunio (2013) focused in her research on immigrants coming to Finland for work and if employers got the skilled workforce they desired. Her research questions were; what kinds of challenges do immigrants, training centres/ teachers, and employers face in labour migration: How can these challenges be answered? Are the ESF-funded projects a solution or a burden? How is it possible to develop the processes of pre-departure training? Raunio's main findings were that there are a lot of feelings and contradictions involved in labour migration. She stated that it is important that the pre-departure trainings should be effective learning and quality training. Her results showed that employers' role is significant when planning the content of training and integration services should be developed. Intercultural training should be given in workplaces and intercultural understanding should be promoted. By employing foreign degree students employers would get a workforce that has been living in Finland for between 3-5 years, who are used to Finnish culture and way of life, this would be a benefit compared to taking in somebody directly from abroad. Raunio's research confirms the importance of the fact that the companies also have to prepare themselves well when employing a foreign workforce.

According to the report Evaluation of HEIs' social and regional impact (Ilmavirta et al., 2013); it is important that the HEIs define their task of exerting social impact. Social impact should be seen as a separate profit area and cooperation strategies and management of customer relationship, and partnership should be developed. The cooperation with business life, the public sector, and between HEIs should be increased. Here Centria has a good opportunity to improve cooperation with the University Consortium Chydenius. Cooperation contracts have been signed and there is cooperation in different projects.

The strategy of internationalisation in higher education has been aiming at having by the year 2015 some 20 000 foreign students. The development has been rather fast, in year 2006 there were 6 000 foreign students, in year 2010 over 15 700 foreign students. The biggest group of foreign students come from China, Russia, Sweden and Estonia. There has been an enormous growth in students coming from Africa and Asia. There would be a good opportunity to give these students an opportunity and benefit from their knowledge in Finnish working life. The Statistical centre of Finland has figures on foreigners employed by the end of year 2008. Figures show that many foreign students stay in Finland after graduation, which correlates with the many studies made on for-

eign students' wishes to stay in Finland after graduation. Looking at the educational system in total, more foreign students from UASs stay in Finland after graduation. Research also showed that there was a difference between nationalities getting a job (CIMO, Faktaa Express 2/2012, CIMO, Facts Express 5B/2014).

Research on skills needed in working life showed that we need to manage more languages today. Future increasing language needs are Russian, Portuguese, and Chinese etc. (EK, 2009). These findings also support employing foreign students as the biggest groups come from China and Russia. By employing these foreign graduates the companies would have native speakers in the organization and this would give the companies competitive advantage.

A study of recognising internationally skilled workforce, which is needed in Finland, has also been completed. Here is stated that the megatrends are changing in working life, and if companies want to be successful they have to realise this. There are a lot of new international experts, but utilising their potential skills should be improved. The research also stated that the employers do not pay attention to this workforce when recruiting, even though they valued these characteristics. With the global megatrends, competition increases and persons who understand these trends are needed. The trends are; scarce resources, changing population, global economy, and technological planetariums (Leppänen et al., 2013).

Samok (The Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences) has researched if UASs' foreign degree students would like to stay in Finland after graduation. The main part of foreign students who replied, 41.9 % said that they would like to stay in Finland if they could get a job, 31.8 % said that they do not know yet, 22.8 % intend to move to another country, 20.4 % will continue their studies in Finland, 7.2 % had already got a job in Finland and only 17.5 % said that they will go back to their home country. This research shows that there is a huge potential of skilled foreign workforce available. The students were concerned about finding a job after graduation as they had already experienced difficulties in finding work placement. Foreign students from Centria UAS also took part in this research and the answering percentage was 29 % which was of the total 1.7 % (Samok, 2008).

Research on foreign students' integration into Finnish society and intention to stay in Finland after graduation showed that 76 % would like to stay in Finland if they could get a satisfactory job. Students, who absolutely would stay after graduation, have expressed following reasons; family 57%, Finland is now my home country 33%, and job 23% (Kinnunen, 2003).

The research made among students in traditional scientific universities in Finland show even more positive figures about their intentions to stay in Finland after graduation. I will stay in Finland after graduation said 20 %, I would like to stay in Finland, and it depends on if I find a job said 45 %, only 16 % were sure to go somewhere else and 19 % answered that they do not know yet. This also shows that the students do not come to Finland only because of free education (Niemelä, 2008, 99).

Majakulma's (2011) research shows that only 13 % of all graduates from English programmes have left Finland based on statistics from 2008. The employment rate of international graduates was 59 % and unemployment rate 8 %. Foreign graduates often proceed in their studies after having graduated from a UAS; they proceed with their master's studies and doctoral studies. Majakulma (2013) presented figures on employability of international UAS graduates and figures from 2012 show that 77.9 % of foreigners had settled in Finland after graduation. The relevance of current jobs showed that 64.3 % had been employed at the same level as their education. This means that there is a good chance that foreign graduates are employed corresponding to their educational level. Her research shows that skills and competences affecting employability are; proficiency in Finnish, understanding and knowledge of Finnish society, personality, professional competence, working experience, cultural competence, job seeking skills and social networks.

The aim of UASs should be that employability should be a set of achievements that can be added to the curriculum, a broad area which would encourage students' personal development to enable them to become more effective more rapidly within a work situation. The students should continue to grow and change within their working lives when they meet new situations. Many students have the skills and knowledge that employers want, but they do not have the self-awareness or language skills to express themselves in interview situations (Moon, 2004). When it comes to foreign degree students' employability, it is even more challenging as they have to cope in a new culture. In this research employers' perception may reveal facts that can help Centria develop the curriculum of degree programmes in English to support employability of foreign degree students.

In May 2009 foreign degree students in Centria UAS contacted the rector and heads of programmes with a communicate about their situation in the university and in Kokkola. They stated their wish to be integrated into the city of Kokkola and in that way contribute to the economy of Kokkola. This activity among foreign students also showed their interest in staying in the area after graduation. In 2009 there was an internal survey in Centria UAS on; how foreign students have adopted themselves to the university studies and their well-being? The response percentage was about 30 % in all English degree programmes and totally 144 foreign students took part in the survey. To the question; which reasons made you apply to Centria UAS, 28 % replied; prospect of working in Finland. At the same time some 70 % saw lack of part-time job opportunities as stressing. Of first year's foreign students 14 % had a part-time job and of those who had studied for more than one year 43 % had a part-time job. Here one could see really how active the foreign students were in finding job opportunities. When they were asked what could be improved their reply was; finding jobs and integration into the society. When asked about their plans after graduation about 28 % said they would try to find work in Finland. Another survey made in January 2011 in Centria UAS among foreign degree students in the unit of Technology and Business in Kokkola confirms that students would

like to work and stay in Finland. A total of 59.6 % said they would like to stay and work in Finland, 18 % would like to complete master's studies in Finland. The response rate was 26% (Centria Eximin survey, 2011).

A research team in the VALOA project made a survey of the employment of international students graduating from 15 Finnish HEIs during the period 2009-2010 and the result was rather positive. It showed an overall employment rate of 70 % in spite of challenges (Shumilova, Cai & Pekkola, 2012).

The number of international students who complete degrees mainly in English in HEIs in Finland is increasing. In 2009 there were in total 14 907 foreign students, of which 7113 were studying in UASs, that is 5.2 % of the student population and of 6984 in universities, which corresponds to 4.1 % of the student population. Foreign students' share per region was in 2010 in total 2% and in 2005 1% in Central Ostrobothnia. Completed degrees per region, in Central Ostrobothnia in 2010, were in total 55, corresponding to 2.5% of total degrees, whereas in year 2005 a total of 5 corresponded to 0.4% (CIMO, 2011).

2.4 Summary

As a result of the policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture, traditional universities and universities of applied sciences have introduced more programmes in English, which has led to an increasing number of foreign degree students in Finland. This has forced universities to develop their strategies concerning the intake of students, the training of personnel and lecturers, improving students' and personnel's connections to companies, and assisting students in finding work opportunities. The "Third Mission" of universities also made them focus on the development of the surrounding economic area. Programmes offered, teaching methods, and research should contribute to the development of the area. Centria UAS has had to focus more on these demands to survive and prove its necessity. The challenge due to Government policy does not only influence the development in HEIs, it should also influence development in the regions, and therefore Centria has to more actively go out and cooperate with the enterprises. UASs are evaluated based on their contacts and influence on the surrounding area. Studies show that students are prepared to stay and work in the region.

When it comes to the internationalisation of HEIs this change has also led to several studies related to the internationalisation of higher education, students' employability opportunities, companies' perceptions of and attitudes to a foreign workforce, and employment strategies etc. The studies show that there is a skilled highly educated foreign workforce available on the market, which is actively looking for job opportunities. A high percentage of foreign degree students have planned to stay and work in Finland after graduation, but the foreign students need more support in finding jobs. The Finnish education system has a good reputation but the foreign students find the employment situation challenging.

The ageing population in Finland will require a rethink in companies when it comes to employing a new workforce, even if it might take some time to get used to the fact that a foreign degree student could be the best solution. By employing a foreign workforce employers and personnel have to prepare themselves for new cultures; therefore, cooperation with Centria UAS would be a good start. The highly educated foreign workforce could also improve the local companies' competition on international markets.

As the internationalisation started in 1996 with full-time degree programmes in English, Centria has already several years of experience of international students. Centria's strategy is to meet the demands of the local labour market by providing companies with knowledge and workforce. Statistics on graduated foreign students show that there is an available skilled foreign workforce which could and should be used on the local labour market.

Due to internationalisation of HEIs also research on foreign graduates and employment increased in Finland. The different studies focused on skills needed for entering the Finnish labour market, benefits of employing a foreign workforce, challenges of a foreign workforce, recognising a foreign workforce, willingness to stay in Finland after graduation etc. My interpretation of these studies was that there is a certain worry that Finland may miss something if the foreign degree students do not stay in Finland after graduation. The reason for this research was to find out employers' actual plans and intentions concerning a foreign workforce, as my experience is that only a few of the graduated foreign students are employed in the area.

3 RECRUITMENT IN COMPANIES

When looking at the population figures in Finland at the end of 2012, the situation was 5,426,674 inhabitants of which over a quarter of a million are foreign-language speakers. The exact figure is 266,949 which means 4.9 % of the population. The growth of population for that year shows that the share of foreign-language speakers was 87%. The dependency ratio at the end of 2012 was 54.3 which means at its highest in 48 years. In Central Ostrobothnia the ratio was 61.3 at the end of 2012. Dependency ratio is the number of those aged 15 or under and 65 or over per 100 working age persons (Statistics Finland, 2013; Volk & Nivalainen, 2009). This means that the population in the area is ageing and there will be demands on the workforce in the future. In Kokkola the share of inhabitants of foreign origin is only 2.1 %. It would therefore, be an advantage if the foreign graduates could be integrated into the society and employed, in order to secure and develop the economy in the Kokkola region. Even if the companies are internationally oriented, my experience was that they are very careful when thinking of hiring e.g. a trainee from another culture.

The Chamber of Commerce in Ostrobothnia has made a survey on the economic situation among companies and the figures for 2014 were rather optimistic. One fourth of the companies informed that they intend to recruit personnel in the next few months, every fifth company could not find the needed workforce, and 43 % believed the turnover would grow; these figures also spoke for possibilities for foreign degree students' employability (Ostrobothnia Chamber of Commerce, 2/2015). According to Mukkala and Tohmo (2012) students with higher education seldom move from bigger cities to smaller towns and countryside. The companies in the Kokkola area have an available workforce ready among students that have graduated from Centria UAS and are already located here and my experience is that this resource could be used better. To be successful companies have to be able to attract the right persons, keep them in the company, and motivate them to good work results (Haitala, 2005).

This chapter focuses on human resource management (hereafter HRM) and recruitment strategies, and starts with a brief presentation of HRM today and the development that has taken place. After that the focus is on talent man-

agement, employability of a foreign workforce, recruitment decisions, finding the right workforce and the challenges and benefits employers see within hiring a foreign workforce. The main focus in this chapter is on employability and recruitment strategy of a foreign workforce, which are the factors I have focused my research on. I wanted to take HRM and recruitment strategy into my research as one focus of analysing and interpreting employers' comments. I also wanted to find out how committed employers were with their intentions and what would lead to employment of foreign degree students.

3.1 Human Resource Management Today

Labour market conditions include unemployment levels, labour diversity, and labour market structure; these external conditions influence the supply of a workforce. Today companies compete for talent and those who are able to attract, retain, and motivate good employees are more likely to gain and sustain a competitive advantage. HRM today covers: planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. HRM is shaped by today's trends; technological advances, nature of work, demographic and workforce, globalization and competition, leverage and deregulation, and economic challenges. The trends again shape companies and they have to be; more competitive, faster and more responsive, more cost-effective, human-capital oriented, more scientific, and make right decisions. Therefore, HR managers need new competences; focus more on strategic goals, new ways to provide HR services, talent management approach, manage employee engagement, manage ethics, measure HR performance and results, use evidence-based HRM, add value, understand HR philosophy, and have new competences (Dessler, 2015, 34-57; Gómez-Meija, et al., 2012, 29-65). My research covers only staffing and finding the right workforce has become more important for companies and therefore, HRM today has increased interest in personnel and its quality. HRM has to consider the business environment and demands as well as the company's strategy and goals. HRM must be able to choose the most suitable employees, which best support the company's activities. Companies want to create such work places for which a skilful and highly educated workforce can apply for. When a company manages to reach this level, personnel are motivated, committed to the tasks and company, and the working atmosphere is good. This demands good communication and that all workers feel they are important for the company (Järvinen, 1996, 89-91). At the same time the discussion of employees' entrepreneurship has increased, which means that employees have to adapt themselves to new situations, have problem solving skills, be innovative, and be active in their work etc. In performance and result-based HRM everyone is his own entrepreneur and committed to tasks, this demands that the company has a flexible organisational structure and that the recruitment process has a clear picture of what is required of the employee (Sumetzberger, 2005). To be successful in recruiting people surveying of knowledge is important and useful. Unplanned behaviour, unskillfulness, and

time pressures appear in companies, and they apply for a workforce at a late stage. When the competition for a workforce increases, the image of a company becomes more important. You cannot talk about the lack of a workforce before you are looking for a workforce and do not get any applicants, even then one has to ask if the employers' criteria were realistic (Kokko, 2005).

Successful HRM takes both internal and external organizational environment into consideration. The shaping of an organization is reflected in its structure, culture, systems, HRM, and is affected by the context of the specific organization. HRM focuses on the strategy of an organization and the HR strategy. The internal organization has a unique history, administrative heritage, and culture, and by interviewing key persons in the companies I tried to find out and understand how these factors would influence on employment decisions (Boselie, 2014, 18-47). When analysing employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce I have kept a reversed approach to create a HR value chain in mind. Boselie (2014, 50 - 65) presents the chain as starting from: Competitive advantage - Critical success factors - Employee attitudes and behaviours, which lead to HR practices. If positive aspects are found within these stages there are reasons supporting intentions, which again support intentional behaviour. The three main critical goals for HR are according to Boselie: labour productivity meaning cost-effectiveness, organizational flexibility and social legitimacy.

There has been a development in HRM from personnel administration to strategic human resource management (hereafter SHRM). People are viewed as having the potential to grow and develop and they form a resource pool of various skills and knowledge. SHRM includes a proper identification, development, promotion, and reward of key personnel. An effective use of HR involves every line manager in the organization, selection, promotion, and placement identify the available talent, but knowledge and skills have to be continuously up-dated (Hax & Majluf, 1996, 347-376). SHRM involves the internal integration of personnel policy and the external integration with the company's strategy. SHRM can develop to be the driving force with regard to the development of organisation in the company. In order to be successful core competences need to be identified; employment has become a strategic choice (Baker, 1999). The business strategy and a creation of organizational capabilities are the core of conceptualization of HRM, especially when it comes to companies dealing on international markets. SHRM means that the company formulates and executes HR policies and practices in order to produce the skills and behaviours among employees that the company needs to reach the strategic aims (Dessler, 2015, 92-115). HRM of today has to facilitate organizational realignment to be able to respond to changes in external environment and strategy. HRM also needs to anticipate the future. The workforce should contribute to high productivity and also be flexible, when it comes to meeting working hours and meeting market demands (Evans et al., 2011, 42-76). Therefore, it is important that the management helps employees fulfil and develop their potential within the needs of the company.

SHRM of today should consider the members as a source of competitive advantage, the skills and learning of the workforce is an important asset. Two main questions for HRM are: what kind of people will be needed to manage and run the business in the future and how can HRM programmes deal effectively with environmental contingencies and pressures? Companies are often surprised by unpredictable events and sudden threats, which makes HRM even more strategic. Dessler (2008, 77-124) describes strategic human resource management as; "formulating and executing human resource policies and practices that produce the employee competences and behaviours a company needs to achieve its strategic aims". Dessler also indicates that there are three basic challenges of SHRM; the need to support corporate productivity and performance improvement efforts, employees play an expanded role in employers' performance improvement efforts, and HR units must be more involved in designing the company's strategy. This puts pressure on the fact that HRM should be a central part of strategic management as HRM mainly supports the implementation of intended strategies, but may in practice encourage formulations of unplanned activities. These unplanned activities may also open up new opportunities. The human resources available may predict strategic management, as well as vice versa, strategy may predict the necessary human resources (Routamaa, 1991). It would be beneficial and important for the companies to have a close connection between the strategy and personnel planning.

In practice HRM is involved in two basic planning roles; strategy execution and strategy formulation. If employers have not planned to hire a foreign workforce, strategy formulation may lead to opportunities for foreign graduates in the future. Strategy formulation also reflects the reality of today, increased globalisation and competition, which requires improved performance by competence and commitment of employees (Dessler, 2008, 89-97). Today the view of human resource management has changed and companies have to continuously develop their competences and human resources. HRM can roughly be divided into; need-driven, opportunity-driven and capability-driven (Luoma, 2000, 69). As I was interviewing I was also informing employers about available workforce, and my research tried to find out if there were any of the above mentioned reasons that would influence an employer's intention for hiring a foreign workforce.

Human resource development should be integrated with the strategic viewpoint of the company. The challenge may be the lack of qualified people, wrong combination of competences and that the competence level may not be high enough, and therefore, competence has become a critical strategic factor for companies' success. A clear idea of where the company is heading is needed. Competence is the strategically important capital to manage competition. In addition to human capital, knowledge, skills and experience, social capital, social interaction, networks, and human relationships are needed (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007, 7-28). Human resource strategy is a long term plan in order to ensure the right workforce to develop the businesses' strategy. The strategy is supported by a personnel policy and responds to; what kind of per-

sonnel is needed, how the recruitment should take place, and how are the competences secured and developed. Competence-based HRM focuses on finding out e.g. what kind of people are needed, how can the competences be acquired, how should the best people be recruited, how to safeguard and develop the personnel's competences, and how to reward people for their competences (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007, 38-43). An essential part of good HRM is to predict future requirements of knowledge and skills.

The competitive landscape is changing and HR has to adapt to new models and also deal with the challenges ahead. Today globalisation is dominating competition therefore, it is of importance to attract, retain, and measure competence and intellectual capital. If the company wants to be successful, hiring the right personnel that is comfortable on global markets has become even more important. The new models of competition mean that you have to focus on organizational capabilities e.g. speed, responsiveness, relationships, agility, learning, and employee competence. If the companies are looking into the future, management of strategic human resources is part of the process. The responsibility for SHRM is often shared between HR professionals and managers, foremen (Ulrich, 1997, 2-44). The foreign students graduating from Centria could be the human resources companies need and the research wanted to find out how employers look at future demand on a workforce.

Today's organizations are facing demands for being different and the competences needed must arise from the company culture i.e. the ethos, beliefs, values, traditions, expectations, and precedents. The environmental conditions influence on competences needed which the company is operating; e.g. competitor activity, changing marketing requirements, and economic factors. This means that in recruitment processes the competences have to be defined clearly in order to get the best available workforce (Lindsay & Stuart, 1997, 326-332). Managing diversity has become a key element in internationalization. Diversity refers to human characteristics that make people different. Managing diversity has become a source of competitive advantage, which are; greater creativity, better problem solving, flexibility, and better information (Gómez-Mejia et al., 2012, 165-162). By giving foreign degree students work placement possibilities, temporary jobs, and thesis assignments the local companies can improve their skills in dealing with a diverse workforce, and at the same time managers can experience at new set of challenges. With this in mind I also wanted to hear about employers' experiences of a foreign workforce.

The part SHRM, in my research related to finding the right competences for the companies and also to find out how the companies have prepared themselves for employing foreign degree students in the future. I considered Luoma's (2009) division of need-driven, opportunity-driven, and capability-driven strategy as essential for finding the right competences and for a foreign workforce to be employed. A need-driven approach is strategic in the sense when HRM wants to implement a company's strategy, and my thoughts were that the foreign degree students could be a good solution if companies plan e.g. to enlarge their international contacts and markets. An opportunity-driven ap-

proach to HRM would be that there is a skilled foreign workforce available on the local market which could be utilized. The advantage here is that this workforce has the competences related to international markets but also have knowledge of the local culture which they have acquired during their study time. A capability-driven approach to HRM can be seen as using the foreign workforce already employed to improve the company's competitiveness (Luoma, 2009, 51-64). Companies' strategies or plans may be broad visions too, but that might indicate adapting to changes in the environment (Mintzberg, 1994, 107-114). If there were such features in the interviews, I could assume that there would be possibilities for the foreign highly educated workforce. I asked the interviewees to briefly describe the policy of hiring personnel, what they focus on and what possibilities does a foreign degree student have if there are two equal applicants, a foreigner and a Finn.

3.2 Talent Management

Talent management (hereafter TM) has been the topic in HRM during the last few years, and is one of the key themes in multinational companies. In addition to HRM and SHRM the current topic for companies on international markets is TM. TM lacks a precise definition and clear boundaries, but Cappelli (2008) describes TM as a matter of anticipating the need for human capital. Due to the ageing population in Western countries, increased competition caused by globalisation and the increase in international mobility, TM has become a current issue in HRM. Dessler (2015, 118-124) describes TM as; "The goal-oriented and integrated process of planning, recruiting, developing, managing, and compensating employees". When it comes to recruitment: skills, knowledge, and abilities (competences) are applied to TM (Boselie, 2014, 210-222). TM however means different things to different people. In my research I tried to find out employers' views on talent management if companies experience that there might be lack of a skilled workforce in the future, and how they have prepared themselves for employing a foreign workforce. If they have prepared themselves for a foreign workforce I could assume that they may have considered that there will be lack of a skilled workforce or that a workforce with special talents is needed. Many of the foreign degree students could contribute with their knowledge and skills to the development and improving the competitive position of the companies. TM is important as there is a shift to knowledge economy, changes in demography, globalization, and an increasing demand on individual mobility (Evans et al., 2011, 255-263).

TM is a commitment to implementing and integrating, strategic and technology based approaches to HRM in order to improve employee recruitment and retention rates, and for employee engagement. In order to find the right talent demands are put on strategic requirements of HR functions. HR has to translate the business strategy into talent strategy and by managing talent the business performance is improved. There is also a need to forecast supply and

demand for talent and finding the gaps in organizational capabilities and filling them. Planning of a workforce is important, because companies look for increased revenues and productivity (Farley, 2005; Evans et al., 2011, 264-267). The importance of TM comes from the fact that TM ensures the successful acquiring and retaining of needed talent, and that these employees are engaged (Hughes & Rog, 2008). Influencing TM decisions are according to Vaiman et al., (2012); talent shortage, demographics and social trends, corporate social responsibility, diversity, increasing mobility, permanent shift to knowledge based economy, and the growing importance of emerging markets. A new approach is that TM takes into account the uncertainty businesses face today. TM also considers creating succession plans in companies by forecasting talent needs. TM deals with uncertainty on both demand side as well as supply side. TM is also described as activities and processes involved in understanding key positions in a company and these key positions contribution to the company's competence advantage, and develop a pool of high talented persons which are committed to the organisation (Collings & Mellahi, 2009).

An organisation's most important resource is its personnel and talent is the product of ability, such as competence, education, training and experience, when again motivation refers to engagement, satisfaction, challenge and well-being. When talking about individual talent, a person's power, influence and capability to achieve results is indicated. What is important to realise is that people work for more than just money, traditional recruitment and retention strategies are not sufficient, and learning is an integral part of every-day work. Dijk van (2008) states that TM will become the umbrella for the integration of HRM function, and this includes talent recruitment, management development, and talent mentoring. It is of importance that companies tailor their recruitment strategies to attract talent. TM is a very challenging issue that European employers face. For some the boundary between international assignments and domestic sources is not clear, because sourcing and developing talent for the global market has become more common. International migration has an impact on recruiting for the domestic market too. Managing demographics has also influenced the recruitment of a foreign workforce (Wilson, 2008, 5-10). Collings and Mellahi (2009) present a strategic TM, which is formed from a differentiated human resource (hereafter HR) model. A company's TM strategy is the activities and processes that identify key positions, which contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage and the development of a talent pool.

Companies have to identify, secure, develop, and manage relevant talent to meet their long-term strategic needs. Therefore, it is of importance to understand how to adapt and develop training and practices to be successful. Talent is often associated with employability competence, which foreign students have to realise (Nilsson & Ellström, 2012). In order to create a talent pool the employers can evaluate their internal labour market and the external labour market, both are most likely needed to create a talent pool to meet competition on the global market. By creating a talent pool the company needs to look at the cen-

tral positions and what the outcome would be; work motivation, organisational commitment, and extra-role behaviour and how they would lead to firm performances of the employed. One way to form a talent pool and to manage the challenges with recruiting a foreign highly educated workforce is for the companies to co-operate with e.g. Centria UAS, in the Kokkola region. Therefore, this research also tried to find out what the companies expected from Centria, how could and how should Centria contribute to this issue. In order to improve the cooperation between higher education and companies, there should be an active dialogue and information flow.

In order to secure a future workforce companies have to work on the company brand and image to be attractive to the employees. By securing the right workforce, companies develop and are more competitive in the market. Chhabra & Sharma (2014, 48-60) have made a study of Employer branding: strategy for improving employer attractiveness and their main findings are on preferred organizational attributes such as corporate culture, brand name and compensation. Employer branding has become a strategic tool to attract a skilled labour force. The companies should be able to communicate the image to potential employees. If a company wants to give an international picture of itself, maybe employing a foreign workforce could be one option. Also, having a good brand and reputation attracts employees and makes it easier for companies to find the right workforce. Recruitment intention of today, to hire foreign workforce, may help the company reach its enlargement strategy in the future.

Guthridge et al., (2008), state in their research that companies are unprepared for the challenge of finding, motivating, and retaining capable workers, even though they consider employees their biggest source of competitive advantage. The problem seems to be that companies do not see TM as a part of long-term business strategy. Today the new generation look upon their professional careers as two- to three-years and then they are willing to move to another company. Companies must do more to have access to the supply of talented people, in order to improve their competition position in the market. HR must translate the business strategy into a detailed talent strategy so that the needed workforce and talents are secured. This was something I wanted to find out from the research, if the employers would see some specific talent among the foreign workforce that would be of strategic importance for the business. If I could find out what kind of talents they required it would be of importance for Centria UAS to develop and up-date the programmes accordingly.

3.3 Employability of a Foreign Workforce

“Employability can be defined as: the relative chances of finding and maintaining different kinds of employment” (Brown et al., 2002). This definition corresponds to the labour market demands and definition of what employability is and which is sometimes difficult to understand what it in reality means. It is important that students construct and manage their employability skills for the

labour market. Employability is not only influenced by employers' perception of foreign students, but how students can present and reflect their knowledge and skills. Often students do not seem to have the self-awareness or the language to describe them when they are interviewed for a job. Employability can be described as: "a set of achievements – skills, understanding and personal attributes- that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations" (Moon, 2004). The role of UASs is important when it comes to preparing foreign degree students for the labour market in Finland. UASs have to keep a close contact with the companies to find out the companies' expectations. When employers are asked what kind of skills they expect from a highly educated foreign workforce the answer is almost always the same; right attitude to work and good language skills. Both criteria are difficult to define, what a right attitude is and how good should the skills in Finnish or Swedish language be. Sometimes employers' expectations are often over estimated and especially the demand on language (Heimonen, 2007, 49-53).

The concept of employability is closely linked to "professional success", which can be described both with subjective and objective indicators. Pavlin (2010) mentions indicators such as; 1) smoothness of transition from HEIs to the labour market 2) income and socio-economic status 3) position appropriate to level of education 4) desirable employment conditions, and 5) high degree of satisfaction. The ranking and evaluation of HEIs are influenced by the real contribution HEIs make to graduates' professional work by generating new knowledge. The economic crisis of today put a growing emphasis on the importance of graduates' employability. The feedback from individuals, effects on attracting more international students, which is also the policy of Ministry of Education and Culture and HEIs. From the students' perspective the employability factor is one of the key components associated with the quality of education. Therefore, it is important to investigate both employers' beliefs regarding the relevance of international graduates' skills and the graduates' perception of what skills are needed for a successful career in host or home country (Shumilova & Cai, 2011). Sorainen (2007, 179-181) presents the advantages with employing a foreign workforce as; basic for competition, enables entry on new markets, better service for multicultural customers, improvement of company image, and improvement of creativity and motivation of personnel. Although there are advantages with a foreign workforce the work environment might meet challenges such as; prejudices, insufficient communication skills, demand for flexibility, different perceptions of work tasks, time etc., experiencing threats of multiculturalism, and increase of conflicts.

A survey on the working capacity of immigrants was made by Holm et al., (2008). Their findings were that there are about 100 000 immigrants in Finland of working age and although the survey indicates that they have good or excellent working capacity the unemployment rate among them is some 20 per cent. Actually these immigrants are an underused employment resource with skills and knowledge that could be used in Finnish companies. In his report Raunio (2005) states that the foreign degree students are the future knowledge resource

and that they should work in Finland or for Finland is crucial. Finland needs to find skilful employees and also tie the working markets to the global networks and here the foreign graduates have an important position. There are several stakeholders and factors affecting the employability of international degree students. The core issue is employability and methods of transition from HEIs to labour market, the surrounding factors are the international graduates themselves, HEIs' strategy to enhance graduates employability, employers and their beliefs and other linking agents. All these factors are then influenced by the economy and labour market conditions; this is shown in FIGURE 1. This research focused mainly on the relationship between international graduates and the employers leading to employability (Shumilova & Cai, 2011). FIGURE 1 describes what my research is based on and the interviews also focused on the surrounding factors. Even though international graduates and employers are the main focus in this research, also HEIs and other linking agents play an important role in the employability of a foreign highly educated workforce. Even if economy and labour market conditions are outside the inner circle they are main actors regarding the development of the companies.

Recruitment strategies have an economic aspect and it is important for companies to find the right employees. One uncertainty is what the job demands and then another about the applicant's ability. The purpose of selecting employees is not only about productivity, but also whether the applicant is committing himself to stay in the company and is flexible in his work as well. Especially if the company has expansion plans flexibility is important. There has also been evidence that self-initiated recruits are of higher quality as candidates spend time and resources in investigating the job on their own (Russo et al., 1995, 3-13).

In order to be successful and sustain competitiveness, business organisations are forced to adopt major changes and seek strategies that are realized in varying, different cultural environments. The management is dependent on understanding different cultures and having skills to behave accordingly. The national culture also puts pressure on organisations; it can have a positive influence or a negative influence on development when a company employs a foreigner (Savolainen, 2007, 2013, 58-58). These statements also stress the importance of intercultural competence, which employers can improve by giving foreign students work placement opportunities during their studies. The companies' employees also have the possibility to improve their intercultural skills, if foreign students have the chance to do their work placement or are given part-time jobs in the company. Both parties can benefit if the situation is successful.

As companies today, in one way or another, are actors on global markets culturally diverse organisations are growing in number. The pressure on management and development will become real issues due to the increasing number of co-workers, supervisors, subordinates and clients with a foreign background. The reputation and security of a company, a responsible HRM and equal treatment of employees can become criteria for selecting a foreign work-

force (Sippola et al., 2006). The employability of a foreign highly educated workforce also put stress on the management as it needs to value and manage diversity. Valuing diversity and managing diversity corresponds to recognizing the contribution each employee can make in the work place. By employing foreign workforce the company better manages in competing on global markets, as the foreign workers may have the right cultural understanding. If the management realises the benefits of a diverse work environment the company can be successful on the market. It has been shown that heterogeneous groups are more creative and better at problem solving than homogeneous groups. Problem solving and creativity in decision making processes is the core skills needed for success (Egge, 1999, 24-28).

As shown in FIGURE 1 the demand for labour is closely related to the characteristics of labour market and the economic situation in the society. The labour demand is derived from consumers' demand for products and services. There should be an optimal level of employment that changes according to changes in the demand for the products and services the company offers. The required qualifications change constantly and therefore, there should be a close co-operation between companies and HEIs. Communication and co-operation are of vital importance (Russo et al., 1995, 3-13). When discussing employability, the economy and labour market situations are often forgotten; usually the capabilities of individuals are stressed. My research tried to find out the recruitment intentions of employers of a foreign workforce, if employers focused more on the labour market situation and economy than applicants' personal capabilities. With FIGURE 1, I wanted to show the factors affecting employability of foreign degree students and how important it is to realise the importance of cooperation between HEIs and companies. When there is an understanding between the two parties, the next step is to analyse the economic development and future need for a workforce. When looking at these factors one can realise that the decisions may change during the employment process.

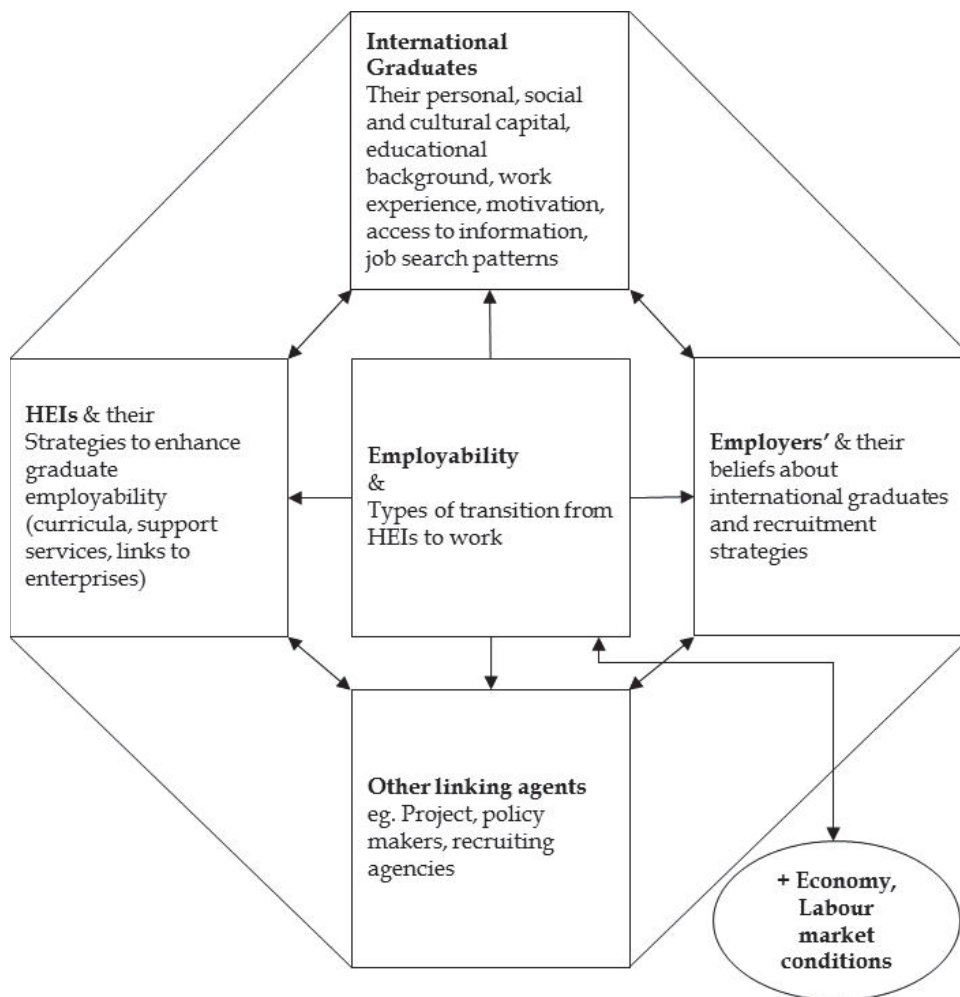


FIGURE 1 Stakeholders and Factors Affecting Employability

(adapted from Shumilova & Cai, 2011).

The environmental transformations in organisations require a reform of management paradigm and internationalisation is one major factor requiring change. The entire organisation pursues renewal and this also requires more communication between management and employees for building trust and succeeding in the recruitment of the right personnel (Savolainen, 2000, 318-326). It is of great importance that HEIs follow these transformations and develop their own organisations, and thereby can support foreign degree students' employability.

The conception of the world influences on the strategic starting points which lead to the strategy itself, as shown in FIGURE 2. My own experience was that the situation of the company today, its experiences of a foreign workforce influenced strongly future plans. When trying to analyse recruitment

plans and foreign students' possibilities for employment, it was very important to get a picture of the company's strategy. During the interviews the interviewees described their situation of today and how they look at the future. If there are a few points in the conception of the world that support employing foreign students, then there are more possibilities finding benefits in the strategic starting points, which may lead to an intention to employ foreign graduates. The research tried to find through interviews reasons in companies' plans that would support this and which would influence intentional behaviour. When interviewing representatives from SMEs it is not certain that they have a written strategy, but from discussions I tried to find out their plans.

By analysing the background and HRM regarding hiring a foreign workforce I tried to find out the reasons and what kind of intentions the employers have. According to Ala-Mutka's (2008) strategic starting points shown in FIGURE 2, I focused more in detail at the strategic starting points, which I assumed could be revealed during interviews, even though I did not focus on companies' strategies as such. By finding remarks related to strategy in the interview I could use them to help me analysing reasons for recruitment intentions and commitment.

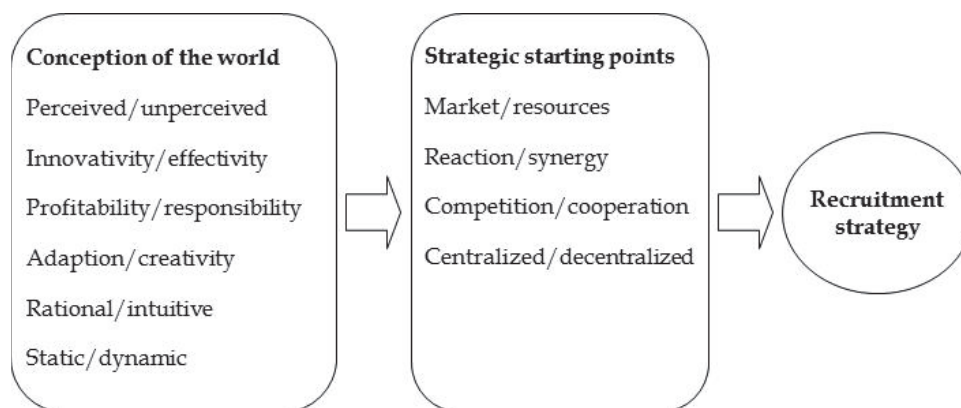


FIGURE 2 Strategic Starting Points Determine the Strategy

(adapted from Ala-Mutka, 2008, 54)

Nuncan, et al., (2005, 628-649) in their article "A strategy driven business process modelling approach" present a map representation system on intention-achievement strategies. This model claims there are two kinds of intention, source and target, and they are linked together in a strategy. Foreign graduates' position can also be looked at if the company base their strategy on present sources or if they would need foreign graduates to reach their target. The intention is a goal that can be achieved by performance of a process. Nurcan et al., state that strategy is an approach, a manner or a means to achieve an intention.

The research tried to find out which part the company emphasises or if it can be seen that they both play an equal role in the strategy leading to intention.

In FIGURE 3 source intention corresponds to internal environment and target intention to external environment, and here employing foreign graduates may be an advantage when it comes to e.g. a company's target to find new knowledge, or expanding and entering a new market. This is also the basic strategic HRM model for recruitment of people (Kane & Palmer, 1995). My research aimed at finding out how employers saw the foreign highly educated degree students' possibilities. Even if the companies in the Central Ostrobothnia and Ostrobothnia area are export oriented the problems are often finding the right personnel for their targets. FIGURE 3 helped me to analyse employers' intention to hire a foreign highly educated workforce. The foreign students may correspond to both intentions: the source intention and the target intention.

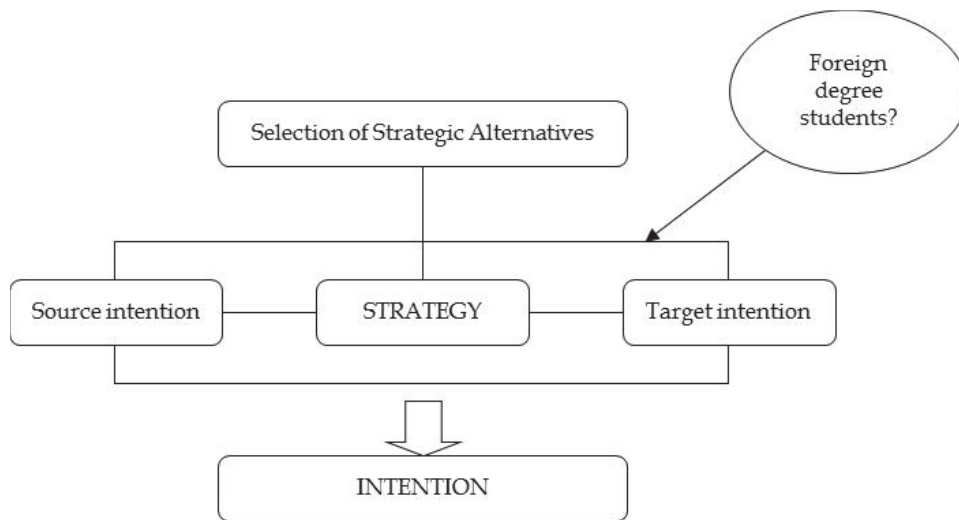


FIGURE 3 A Strategy Driven Business Process Modelling Approach

(modified from Nuncan et al., 2005)

In certain fields the supply of a skilled labour force may be scarce and this then puts stress on the employers to manage the situation. There are different practices of recruitment; active and informal recruitment, recruiting via the internet and formal recruitment, also temporary agencies test and interview applicants. This research does not analyse the different recruitment methods, but to get a background picture I asked during the interviews where and how the companies find the needed workforce, also a question if companies knew of the available foreign workforce there is in Kokkola. Students of today are very active internet users and they also present themselves actively on e.g. LinkedIn and corresponding nets, so employers using internet have access to finding a suitable workforce. Centria UAS has also joined other networks such as Job Step, in which students can put their CVs and companies also present job opportunities.

When the competition for a workforce increases, those employers are favoured who have consciously developed the recruitment of foreigners already living in Finland and prepared their work communities for employees with a different cultural background. Although there is a demand for a skilled workforce and foreigners with higher education would be a resource to use, it is still the employers who decide whom they choose and on what grounds (Työministeriö, 2017, 225). It is more challenging for those employers who have not had any experience of a foreign workforce when they are in the situation that need to employ foreigners. With this in mind the research question: How many foreign employees have the employers recruited so far was relevant.

It is also more likely that companies which have had a positive experience of a foreign workforce are more positive to employ foreigners in the future. Employment of foreigners is also promoted if employer's representatives have had international experience or if the business is internationally oriented. According to Söderqvist's research (2005, 17) companies which have foreign trade have benefitted from foreigners. Employers' perceptions of a foreign workforce influence strongly on their intention to hire foreigners.

According to Rouhuvirta (2010) there is a considerable positive effect in foreigners' services and skills in international trade. When investing in a foreign country the risks are higher if you do not have enough information on the country's economy, market and business culture, and here the foreign workforce can be of help. The foreign graduates can also find the right networks, when companies want to enter new international markets, as many of the foreign degree students have work experience from their home country.

Another study shows that just a small part of Finnish SMEs practice actively international trade, although there is a strong need for internationalisation. The interviewees' opinion was that the biggest advantage with hiring international students was their language skills and knowledge of their own culture (Tiuraniemi et al., 2010, 15).

When looking at international management and cross-cultural perspectives the employers' initial beliefs about employability of foreign graduates can cover certain aspects. As positive aspects management considered: cross-cultural perspectives, professional capabilities, language skills and other soft skills. As negative aspects the following were considered: overqualified for work requirement, cultural disadvantage, poor quality and lack of work experience (Cai, 2012, 123-131). The research also looked at employers' beliefs related to employing a highly educated foreign workforce. Cai (2012) points out that employers recruitment decisions are dependent on their existing belief systems. The message from HEIs is that they need to engage with employers in order to gain a grounded understanding of how their beliefs about graduates' capabilities are evolving. Work experience required from UAS students should give the foreign students a good possibility to influence employers' beliefs. How employers make recruitment decisions is to a great extent based on their beliefs.

Challenges for foreign students in finding jobs in Finland might be e.g. language barrier, small Finnish labour market, discrimination, access to job in-

formation searching, lack of right contacts, wrong field of study and residence permit restrictions (Cai, 2012, 123-130). Employers' beliefs and challenges affect the employment ability of foreign students. Here HEIs and UASs have a mission to complete in order to improve foreign degree students' possibilities to find job opportunities and to influence employers' beliefs. This means that the employability of foreign degree students demands action from Centria in three directions: students have to get the right knowledge and skills, and be prepared for Finnish labour market culture, companies in the region have to get the right information on foreign degree students and the degree programmes must be developed to meet the market requirements and the personnel be activated in the process of improving employment opportunities for foreign degree students'.

3.4 Recruitment Decisions

Even though there may be high unemployment rates recruiting qualified personnel might be challenging. By being attractive employers, chances to have more qualified applicants are bigger. This research tried to find out what was happening in the recruitment process when it has been decided that the company should employ somebody for a certain task. The actual interest was to find out employers' reaction to applications from foreign degree students and to ask them to describe what may change and influence their decision to employ a foreign workforce during the process and why. When screening the applications there is the possibility for a foreigner either to proceed in the process or to be excluded from the process. If the foreigner proceeds in the process I tried to find out step by step how the Theory on Intention and the company's planned Intention influenced the choice at different stages. In the interviews I also asked the employers to describe their recruitment process, how it is arranged, and describe the foreigners' situation in the different stages.

The next step was to focus on employers' attitude and behaviour in the interviews, and decision on recruitment and here again how intention and SHRM influenced the situation as well as if there was a change of strategy or change of intention. The screening and preselecting process was most crucial for foreign graduates; if they did not get further from this stage they had not any possibility to prove their knowledge and skills. During the interview I asked the employers to describe interview situations in detail. If however the employer was planning to expand into new international markets the foreign graduates might have better possibilities to proceed. If expansion was the reason for recruitment intention and strategy both played important roles. When it came to interviews and recruitment decisions several factors were involved. If the employers were not convinced by the applicants, changes both in intention and strategy may take place.

There are several factors that influence hiring foreign degree students, which makes the situation for them challenging in finding job opportunities.

From my own experience there have been situations that have led to a negative reply when foreign students apply for jobs. Usually no explanation can be given to employers' change of intention to hire foreigners. In general it is difficult to interpret employers' planned intention to hire a foreign workforce and they usually want to give a good picture of their recruitment process and attitudes to foreigners. As Ajzen (1991) in his theory on planned behaviour states that intention does not necessary lead to behaviour and the challenge was to analyse the level of intention and interpret it.

The research focused on finding out which recruitment criteria would influence most strongly employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce after the actual interview had taken place. The internationalisation level of companies' is described by Kalliomäki (2008) as follows: the recruitment processes - the focus on how entrepreneurs deal with applications from foreign graduates, screening and pre-selection, interview and decision on recruitment, this also follows the process Cai (2012) describes. The recruitment criteria are affected by - experience, foreign language, business ethics, ability to perform in a team, culture, vocational knowledge, the benefit arrangements - in-house training programs, external training programs and then the companies' experience, recruitment problems and success. There is the possibility that some of these criteria may be crucial for not employing a foreign workforce.

Transformational learning involves re-structuring assumptions to think differently about e.g. employing a foreign degree student. When a personal way of thinking is changed concerning other cultures and behaviour, both in work and non-work, a transformational learning has taken place. "Questioning their own assumptions, leaders can re-think the way they approach cross-cultural experiences, training and development, and action research". (Mathis, 2010, 8-10). It is beneficial if leaders develop an inclusive organizational culture, where each person's experiences are valued. This would mean that the cooperation between Centria and the companies in the region would be crucial in supporting employment of foreign degree students.

The recruitment decisions can also be influenced by the employee's work commitment. Work commitment can be looked upon in the assessment of the employee from; behaviour modality, referent, object, and range. Behaviour modality covers a cognitive aspect meaning identification and involvement. Also affective linking, instrumental, and value aspects are involved. When looking at referent aspect she/he and colleagues are involved. Recruitment decisions, based on an object look at the job, work, career and organisation, when again the range covers highly positive and highly negative to recruiting. As regards to behavioural modality, certain aspects of commitment are cognitive according to the authors, you identify yourself with the job, career and organisation. The referent is influenced by attitudes which influence commitment and decision making. The object assigned to a person may affect the behaviour of employees and the range of commitment (Carmeli et al., 2012). When looking at these commitments there are several factors that may influence the decision and the behaviour of employers usually change due to the situation. Employers' previ-

ous experiences of a foreign workforce and work commitment may have a strong influence on recruitment intentions of foreign degree students.

3.5 Finding the Right Workforce

Recruiting a workforce today seems to go through several stages and the applicant is interviewed and tested often several times before hired. Moy and Lam (2004) have made a research on the selection criteria and the impact of personality on getting hired. Employers expect to get high-value individuals to maximize the contribution, especially in today's economic situation. Unless companies learn to select new workers that correspond to their strategy they will miss opportunities to recruit the right people. The employers do not necessary know themselves their own decision making process and therefore, Moy and Lam have tried to find out and identify the applicants' personal characteristics, such as personality and practical skill dimensions related to their job performance. They also state that the hiring process needs a deeper understanding for recruiters' decisions behaviour. The decision making process is rather complicated and many factors influence simultaneously the process. Recruiters' intended and actual decisions do not always follow a certain plan.

With the hiring attributes of Moy and Lam (2004) I tried to analyse the employers' intention and information processing. The recruiters information processing is presented in FIGURE 4 and the Ideal 5 attributes were interesting information. Here conscientiousness stands for a person who is well organized, has high standards and strives to achieve goals, this would benefit a person that is high entrepreneurial. Moy and Lam contacted 209 companies and received feedback from 85 companies, 80 % of respondents were managers and held senior positions. This research would indicate that it is not necessarily the education but the person himself that is the base for the final decision. In the research of Moy and Lam, the language skills stand for English language, but in my research the language was mainly Finnish and Swedish in addition to English language. Agreeableness is interpreted as soft-hearted and cooperative and this was looked at in my research how employers' consider the applicants to fit into the organization. Openness to experience stands for creativity and broad interests. In my research I was not trying to measure these ideal attributes but to hear if employers mentioned them and how. The results of Moy's and Lam's research show that personal traits, conscientiousness, openness to experiences, and agreeableness are the factors that influence employability. This would mean that the language skills and academic performance are of minor importance.

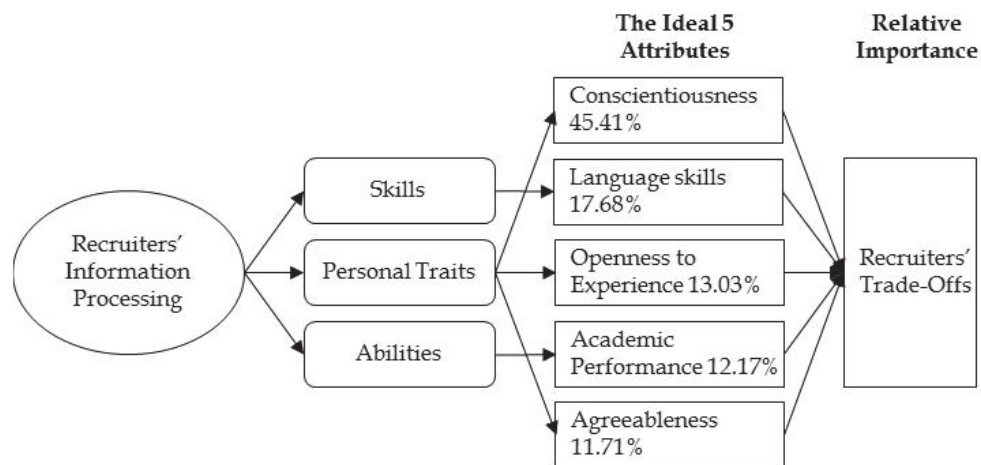


FIGURE 4 Hiring Attributes for new Graduates

(adapted from Moy & Lam 2004)

Research has been made on which competences foreign students need for becoming employed and working in Finland. Majakulma (2011) stated in her research that the work and its organisations have become knowledge intensive innovation centres in which collaborative work, networking and transformative and creative learning are key concepts. Recruiters stressed the importance of team work, sector-specific skills, communication skills, computer literacy, and the ability to adapt in new situations, ability in reading/writing and analytical and problem solving skills. When the companies have international contacts foreign language skills are stressed.

The responsibility of HEIs is to prepare their foreign students for the labour market. In UASs there is compulsory internship on the labour market, totally five months and if the students complete this internship on the Finnish labour market it is easier for them to find a job after graduation. Here it would be very important to guide the foreign degree students to focus on their personal traits and learn how the company and work environment function in addition to the skills they are supposed to improve. The foreign students have then some contact with the labour market and have worked in a Finnish company.

According to a research (Leppänen et al., 2013) there have been observations that new international professionals and their potential skills were not used, and that there was room for improvement. Employers did not notice international skills when recruiting people although they valued the skills which were related to internationalisation. Due to global megatrends, the competition among companies and national economies increases, therefore professionals understanding these trends are needed. The research also showed that following criteria influenced recruitment decisions; honesty, co-operation skills, communication skills, suitable education, problem solving skills, understanding the situation, decision making skills, ability to overtake new areas, skills to under-

stand the importance of the tasks and ability to look for and manage information. Employers connected the following qualifications with internationalisation; understanding foreign cultures, language skills, communication skills, tolerance, co-operation skills, interest in new things, adaptability, and net-working skills. Formal skills were equal with international knowledge, language skills, tolerance and cultural competence. Today internationalisation also means productivity, curiosity, and tenacity, which describe that more skills are needed today in order to manage in the international market. When looking at the requirements the HEIs have challenges in developing their programmes and learning methods.

3.6 Challenges and Benefits of Hiring a Foreign Workforce

When it comes to employing a foreign workforce, employers' beliefs and attitudes play a big role. Beliefs and attitudes are linked to employers' experiences of a foreign workforce. Hofstede (1991) has studied the influence of culture on attitudes and he has demonstrated that nationality accounted for a large part of the differences between attitudes of individuals. Hofstede classified the differences into five factors;

Power distance; that is the social distance between subordinates and their superiors. It is low for Northern Europe and high for Africa and Japan.

Uncertainty avoidance; that is the unwillingness to take risks

Masculinity/femininity; that is the extent to which a society was caring or quality oriented as opposed to results or quantity oriented

Individualism/collectivism; according to Hofstede the USA was very individualistic and Japan was collectivist

Short-term/long-term orientation; corresponds to short-term efficient and long-term quality

Employers see risks with hiring a workforce, and one of them is that the employees are not committed or engaged. Especially when it comes to a foreign workforce employers may consider this a challenge and think that the employees may stay only for a short period and just when they have learnt the job they leave. TM should lead to improved employee recruitment. Hughes & Rog (2008, 743-757) in their research defined TM as ensuring organizations to successfully acquire and retain essential talent; they also claimed that these employees are engaged. Hughes and Rog (2008) describe the benefits with engaged employees as follows:

“The more highly engaged the employee, the more likely he or she will be to say positive things about the organization, thereby contributing to the development of a positive employer brand; want to remain with the organization, thereby minimizing turnover; and regularly exert a superi-

or level of effort, thereby potentially influencing such variables as service quality, customer satisfaction, productivity, sales, profitability, etc.”

With the above in mind there are challenges with hiring a workforce and in a way employers find it even more challenging when they do not know the background and culture of a foreign workforce. Raunio (2005) stated that the problems are based on that, employers are not used to multiculturalism, employers' lack of language skills, but also the foreigners' weak situation to get into the Finnish network. Raunio said that employers and employees did not meet and that there was a “brain waste” when skilled potentials were not used. One of the research questions tried to find out employers' experience of a foreign workforce, by asking how many foreigners they have employed so far. Söderqvist (2005, 64) stated in her research that about 60 % of Finnish employers were of the opinion that a multicultural work environment produce more innovation than homogeneous environments. The companies she interviewed saw multiculturalism as positive and an advantage for the companies. Kähkönen (2013) came to the conclusion that HEIs should increase their information about foreign degree students to local companies and try to win the employers' trust. More precise information about the students' skills is needed. In my interviews with the companies I tried to find out about the employers' picture about the available foreign workforce in Kokkola and how Centria could contribute to the recruitment of a foreign workforce.

Research on the value of intercultural competence for multinational environments has shown that in today's business world intercultural competence plays a major role. It is recommended to improve the design of organizational development strategies and training approaches. Intercultural competence, cultural knowledge, skills, and personality orientation are learned phenomena and can be trained. There is a need for training (Matveev & Milner, 2004, 104-111). The companies in the Kokkola region have good possibilities in training their personnel in intercultural competence by giving the foreign degree student work placement opportunities and employment.

Savolainen (2013) has made a research on change implementation in intercultural context and her findings were; the elements for enabling change demand planning and scheduling, roles and responsibilities, communication, resources, and commitment related to trust, motivation, and involvement. Commitment of top management to change is important. Change implementation requires actions and steps and competitiveness is a forceful external pressure to renew organisations.

During my interviews I also asked employers to describe their opinion about benefits and challenges in employing a foreign workforce. There are both challenges and benefits with a foreign workforce, and the benefits might be the transfer of knowledge, innovation and competitiveness both within an organization and the economy in the area. The benefits with a foreign workforce can also be an improved public image and increased productivity. The challenges could be related to communication when there is a lack of knowledge and expe-

rience related to dealing with persons from another culture. There might be uncertainty about how people respond to communication and how to interpret their behaviour. Employers need to know about the cultural differences in order to monitor their own perceptions. Persons coming from another culture may also need more training in order to integrate into the company culture and surrounding society. Here the degree students in Centria UAS have had the chance to live in the society for 3 – 5 years, which is an advantage. There are researches made on managing cultural diversity in companies and Devine et al., (2007, 120-132) found out that the advantages with recruiting a foreign workforce are e.g. language skills and greater innovation and they were also considered important when growing the business. Devine's et al. research was made among hoteliers in Northern Ireland but I consider these findings important also when it comes to other business fields.

3.7 Summary

In this part I wanted to give a short description on HRM, SHRM and TM today, and how the decision on recruiting can be influenced by different factors. HRM should react to the business environment and focus on company strategy. HRM should have a clear view of what is required of employees and an estimation of what is the optimal amount of personnel. HRM's main aim is to attract, keep and motivate employees, and then the company can select the best choice for the tasks. Successful SHRM is a central part of strategic management and supports the development of competences in the company and employment of a new workforce. It is important to up-date knowledge. This research has focused on the need-driven, opportunity-driven and capability-driven recruitments decisions, and intention to find the right competences. In HRM employment has become a strategic choice and this is also the reason I have focused on employers' intention to employ a foreign workforce. HRM has also to focus on the future and predict events and sudden changes (Baker, 1999). The competences seem to play an important role when recruiting, but at the same time employers may change their view on requirements during the interviews. This might mean that a positive intention to employ a foreign degree student does not necessary lead to behaviour and recruitment decision.

TM is a step further in recruiting personnel and looking for employing the right persons, which would lead to firm performance and improve a company's situation in the market. TM affects the strategic requirements of HR functions, planning is needed (Fairly, 2005). TM considers also uncertainty in society and deals with succession plans; there is a need for understanding the key positions in a company (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Employability is linked with professional success (Pavlin, 2010). Researches on employability of foreign degree students have shown that to find the right workforce employers also need to prepare themselves for foreign cultures. The recruitment decisions are also dependent on employers' existing beliefs. The new trend in HRM is now TM,

which is important for companies' survival and managing competition in markets. In order to find the right workforce companies also work on employer branding and thereby find applicants that are binding themselves to the tasks and are flexible in work. This then again leads to good productivity. The more benefits employers see and experience with a foreign workforce, the better the situation will be for a foreign highly educated workforce to become employed and be able to contribute with their skills and knowledge to the development of the economy in the area. The foreign degree students again would need the knowledge and skills to interpret employers' expectations concerning competences, and which personality skills employers value.

The recruitment decisions are in focus in this research and my experience has been that during the process unexpected changes may take place. Employers' open-minded attitude to a foreign workforce will improve foreign degree students' chances to become employed. With the interviews I have tried to find out what may happen and that might influence decisions taken. Employers' initial beliefs of foreign workforce is something what I wanted to find out and see if Centria UAS could contribute somehow, to improve the foreign degree students' possibilities for employment in the region

In today's economic situation finding the right workforce is the key element. Therefore, the hiring attributes are looked at to understand decisions taken. As there are challenges and benefits with hiring a foreign workforce I also wanted to hear the employers' opinion. It was very important for interpreting their intentions to hear about the challenges they experience. The more benefits they see the better the situation for a foreign workforce. I also wanted to hear about the foreign employees' commitment to tasks given as I considered this as having an affective influence on employers' intention and behaviour for recruiting a foreign workforce.

Evaluating what is the right workforce for a company depends on many attributes. At a certain stage in the recruitment process Moy's and Lam's (2004) research shows that the personal traits play a major role in the recruitment decision making. This can be very challenging for a foreigner to understand e.g. during an interview situation. This also puts pressure on HEIs and UASs when providing them with employability skills and supporting the foreign students to become employed.

4 INTENTION AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter sets out to study intentions and intentional behaviour at the conceptual level. By understanding the theories on intentional behaviour I wanted to get support in analysing the interviews with company representatives to be able to interpret and see if any conclusions could be drawn on their intentions to hire a foreign workforce. The interviews tried to find out if the employers followed a traditional choice when employing people, if there was any strategic intention to employ foreign graduates, or if one could interpret a negative attitude to employing foreigners. The attitude might also be based on employers' perception and a subjective norm not to employ a foreigner. The theory aimed at interpreting employers' behaviour to better understand the decisions they made concerning foreign degree students.

I have looked deeper into the theory under following topics; Intention as a philosophical concept, Intention and commitment, Intentional behaviour, Reasoned action, and Intentional change. My aim was to better understand employers' recruitment decisions, to be able to evaluate employers' actions and strategic intentions to hire highly educated foreign graduates. Interpreting employers' intentions might be challenging as they can be expressed in many different ways, and many factors influence on them.

4.1 Intention as a Philosophical Concept

Anscombe (1963, 1) said the philosophical perplexity about intention can be divided into three guises; Intention for the future, when one intends to complete something at a certain time, Intention with which someone acts, and Intentional action. The principal task of the philosophy of intentions is to uncover and describe the unity of the three forms. Can one classify theories of intention by: How do they find unity in the guises of intention? How do they understand the relation between intention and evaluative thought? (<http://plato.stanford.edu>). Intention is described as stronger than just having a desire or a goal, in-

tention is a kind of persistent goal. Research has showed that there is a rational balance between beliefs, actions, and intentions (Cohen & Levesque, 1990). My research analysis looked at Anscombe's three guises of intention of the interviewed employers and by the findings I could make interpretations of foreign degree students' possibilities to become employed in the region.

With this chapter my aim was to find out and understand the philosophy of intention and therefore, I have studied articles written related to the subject. Ajzen's (1991) Theory on planned behaviour, was an important theory for my research. In this philosophical concept I have looked more in detail into; *Intending as Doing*, *Intention in Action*, *Intention and the Good*, *Intentions as Plans*, and *Intention and Belief*. By understanding the philosophy of intention I considered that I could better interpret the interviewees' decision making and actions, in relation to employing foreign highly educated degree students. I considered it important to understand employers' behaviour to draw conclusions from the empiric material.

Attitudes and beliefs form intention, when again intentions affect directly on behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Intention is also presented as explaining how companies manage, develop, change, and grow, because intention defines an entrepreneur's goals, commitment, communication, and organisation (Bird, 1988). When analysing the behaviour of people Hunter (2009) said there is a difference between things one does that manifest agency, and things that merely happen to one or that are effects of one's agency. Hunter proposed that an agent was performing an action when she was guiding what she was doing. This included the thought that guiding what one was doing was related to being ready to adjust one's performance in case of obstacles and moving on to the next phase of the action when time was right. My research aimed to find out if the companies had any strategies that would involve hiring a foreign workforce. In that case, the strategies would have guided the actions. A positive attitude to hiring a foreign workforce could also influence more the guiding. Therefore, I also wanted to find out the employers' perceptions and experiences of a foreign workforce and how they would influence and guide employers' action.

Brass and Haggard (2008) described in their research that there are three components that influence on our behaviour; a component related to the decision about which action to execute, a component that is related to the decision about when to execute an action, and then the decision about whether to execute an action or not. They said behaviour is based on interactions between the environment and a person's own intentions. Brass and Haggard suggested that there are three kinds of information-generation; deciding what to do, deciding when to do it and deciding whether to implement one's decision or not. A crucial component when it comes to voluntary action is the different response alternatives offered. Brass' and Haggard's conclusion was that the intentional actions involve several decisions that are absent from stimulus-driven actions. These include deciding what action to perform and when to perform it. They also suggested that intentional actions may involve a final check whether the action should be performed or not. My research tried to find out when looking

at the recruitment process and different stages what the reasons were for the decisions and if there were any possibility that the employers would decide not to act. There was always the risk that you cannot interpret and see the differences.

By studying the topics: Intending as Doing, Intention in Action, Intention and the Good, Intentions as Plans, and Intention and Belief I have analysed the interviewees' replies and interpreted their type of intentions.

Intending as Doing: Davidson (1963, 5-8) described this in actions, reasons, and causes as a way of re-describing a person's primary reason and this was understood as pro-attitude towards actions having some feature. Davidson also stated that it was the relation to a primary reason that the actions were counted as intentional, therefore, the reason gave the intention with which the action was done. Davidson has unified intentional action and intention-with-which. Davidson (1978) also stated that there were also cases of "pure intending" where no steps were taken. This has led to the fact that one needs to seek unity in the forms of intention by explaining the others - intentional action and intention-with-which - in terms of intending as a mental state. There are researchers that do not acknowledge intention as a mental state. A simple version would just emphasize the "openness" of the progressive action. E.g. "He is doing A does not mean he will succeed". I have interpreted intending as doing, as employers' risk taking, openness, and positivity to foreign cultures, when intending to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. The intending as doing may however not lead to any employment; if the attitude was positive I thought it could be interpreted and seen as one step towards intention to employ a foreign workforce.

It has been stated that intention is not a mental state but "a form of imperfectivity or being a progress towards the intentional completion of an act, where the progress may be so vestigial or ineffectual or interrupted that it would be odd to remark". The theory of intending as being embarked on intentional action remains incomplete (Thompson, 2008, 91-92, 133-146). Intention as such was challenging to interpret, therefore I thought that combined with strategy and commitment, I would get a better interpretations of employers' intentions.

Intention in Action: One can assume that intentional action is done for a certain reason, and this reason can be identified, so doing one thing intentionally was done for reaching something else. The problem is that not all intentional actions are done for a further reason. Therefore, intention in itself is not enough, there has to be a causal relation. Pure intending does not mean there is an intention of doing anything yet. (<http://plate.stanford.edu>). Hunter (2009) states that; "when one performs an action one guides what one is doing". This meant according to Hunter that action statements both reported actual events and predicted possible ones. Hunter wanted to make a difference between the performing action and when things just happen. He meant there was a contrast between being active and being passive. Intended action may also result in consequences which were not planned. According to Hunter actions are sometimes intended;

meanings planned in advance, but were not invariably intentional. That is why all intended actions are actions, but not all actions are intentional (Hunter, 2009). The challenge in finding intention in action among the interviewed employers was that they expressed intention in action, but it could not be guaranteed that it would lead to employment of foreign degree students. There might also be the chance that a foreign degree student just comes in at a right moment, and then the action would not be intended. A company strategy on employing a foreign workforce might secure intention in action as there is then a clear reason for employing foreigners.

Intention and the Good: are beliefs about what one is doing, or what one is going to do, so call evaluative judgement. There is a matter of consensus in the philosophy of intention, that intending to do A includes wanting to do A (Anscombe, 1963, 68). Intending is a pro-attitude and Davidson (1978) stated that “one cannot intend to do what one believes to be impossible”. There was criticism against Davidson’s statement but if we wish to defend an evaluative theory of intention we need to clarify “what it was about the role of intention in intentional action, or in planning for the future, that required this sort of evaluation, and how did evaluation play this role?” In the research I wanted to find out if the employers saw any specific reasons for giving foreign degree students a job opportunity and how they evaluated this intention. I also looked at Sharma’s et al., (2003) types of commitment if there would be anything that would be referred to in employers’ replies that would correspond to intention and the good.

Intentions as Plans: “For Bratman (1987, 20), intention was a distinctive practical attitude marked by its pivotal role in planning for the future. Intention involves desire, but even predominant desire is insufficient for intention, since it needed not to involve a commitment to act: intentions are conduct-controlling pro-attitudes, ones which we are disposed to retain without reconsideration, and which play a significant role as inputs to (means-end) reasoning. Intentions are typically partial and must be filled out due to changing circumstances in the future”. Bratman (1987) argued that the advantages are best secured when intentions are consistent with one another and with our beliefs. Here I wanted to find out about companies’ HRM and strategic plans that would influence employers’ intention to hire a foreign workforce. E.g. the age structure and lack of a skilled labour force, market enlargements could be reasons for intentions as plans in employing a foreign workforce.

Intention and Belief: As beliefs influence attitudes, which again influence intention as shown in FIGURE 7, belief is important when analysing intention. “The unity of intention can be found in knowledge of belief about action. Assuming that knowledge entails belief, the basic thought in that intention in action involves the belief that one is doing A. Doing something for a reason involves a belief about one’s reason for doing it that constitutes intention in ac-

tion". To intend an action is to believe that one will perform it and to have an appropriate guiding desire. "If the claim that intention involves belief is to capture the essence of the will, not a superficial fact about the word intends, the belief must be implicated in the functions of intending and the explanation of action" (Bratman, 1987, 19-20). Hunter (2009, 93) stated that "doing something intentionally requires believing that you are doing it". Hunter also continued with saying that "what an agent believes is to say something about what she would do in various situations". According to Harman (1976, 168) "intentions are conclusion(s) of practical reasoning". Intention was later referred to as "an intention is a belief about what one is doing or what one is going to do that has the power to guide and motivate action through practical thought" (Harman, 1986, 375-376; Setiya, 2007a, 48-53). Anscombe stated that "there is a difference of form between reasoning leading to action and reasoning for the truth of a conclusion". Intention is justified by the former not the latter: by practical not theoretical reasoning (Anscombe, 1963, 57-62). (<http://plate.stanford.edu>). If I could interpret that employers have a positive attitude to foreign degree students, this could be expressed by employers that they believe they intend to employ a foreign highly educated workforce now or in the future. This again would improve the opportunity for the foreign degree students to become employed.

According to Bratman (1984) there are two faces of intention "we do things intentionally, and we intend to do things". The common-sense psychology used the notion of intention to characterize both our actions and our mental state. Intentions do not necessary lead to actions. The first approach to this problem is the desire-belief model, which sees action as action that stands in relation to the agent's desires and beliefs. The second approach is a future-directed intention or a present-directed intention this refers to the mental state at the time of action. Bratman saw intentions as distinctive and saw the intentionality of an action as dependent on its relation to such intentions. He spoke about the distinction between what one intends and the motivational potential of one's intention. Future-directed intentions are elements in larger plans, which help to coordinate activities over time. Intentions aid coordination of elements in larger plans. Bratman also referred to intentions of weakly consistence, strongly consistence and as relative to one's beliefs (Bratman, 1984).

I have tried to analyse how employers reasoned and what kind of intention was in question, and the strength of their intention. Even if employers said they intend to employ foreign degree students after their graduation, there was no certainty that they would act accordingly, and this is a challenge when interpreting their comments. I considered their intentions more realistic if they had had positive experiences of foreign degree students.

4.2 Intention and Commitment

This paragraph will focus on intention and commitment and their effects on employing a foreign workforce. What kind of commitment employers revealed and what it was based on, I tried to find out with my research. Sharma et al., (2003, 1-15), have focused their research on succession in family business, and have divided commitment into four types; affective commitment, normative commitment, calculative commitment, and imperative commitment. I used Sharma's et al. division of commitment related to recruitment strategy in my research.

The aim of the research was to analyse the commitments of employers to hire a foreign work force, to understand the reasons, and if they would lead to behaviour. From the interviews I tried to find out the form of commitment the employers had. Affective commitment, which is equivalent to good feeling, is one aspect that can occur especially when giving the foreign degree students work placement opportunities and assignments for thesis, but can it be a reason also when employing a foreigner. Normative commitment, corresponds to morally obliging, this can be seen from the aspect that employers would see it as their obligation to hire a foreign highly educated workforce in order to avoid the situation that the foreigners would have to e.g. to move from the area or lift unemployment support. Another reason for hiring foreign degree students based on normative commitment could be that they want to support Centria UAS as they consider higher education in the region important. Calculative commitment relates to benefit ratio and this could be seen as the most natural commitment when looking at a company's strategy and future plans. In order to expand their markets new knowledge and skills might be needed, which would result in calculative commitment. Imperative commitment again means no other option, lack of a workforce; this is the estimation when it comes to future workforce. If companies have realised this they may also have started to prepare themselves for employing foreign degree students. What could also be a reason for hiring foreign students is that foreigners in Finland and the Kokkola area also want to have service maybe in their own language or by people from a culture other than Finnish.

There is a difference in analysing commitment, when the aim is on one hand concerning succession planning in a family business and on the other hand employing people. I chose anyway to try to find out about the commitments; thereby I wanted to draw some conclusions on how binding the intentions are. I also consider that commitments influence strongly on how the company strategy is implemented. I had the different types of commitment in mind when listening to and analysing the interviews.

4.3 Intentional Behaviour

To get a deeper understanding of employers' intention I have studied theories on intentional behaviour. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) considered intention forming the point where beliefs lead to behaviour. Individuals form attitudes which affect certain behaviour. The probability that behaviour will occur is dependent on the intention of a person to engage in that behaviour. Intention is again moulded by the individual's attitudes and attitudes develop intention which again leads to behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The anticipated outcomes to the initiator, acceptability of the outcomes by a reference group, and the initiator's perception that the behaviour will lead to the desired outcomes, affect intention and behaviour (Sharma et al., 2003). To reach relevant results with my research it would be important to find from the interviews indications that would lead to behaviour.

Ajzen's (1991) Theory on Planned Behaviour is in social psychology explaining human behaviour defined in a context that the individual's intention is to complete certain behaviour. Intentions are proof of how much individuals are prepared to stake on completing certain behaviour. Theory on planned behaviour covers: Attitude toward the behaviour, Subjective norm, and Degree of perceived behavioural control. There is however no guarantee that a planned intention will actually lead to behaviour and I found this very challenging when analysing employers' intention, to interpret their intentions correctly. By using SHRM which includes plans can in this research be interpreted as leading to behaviour.

Mises (1996) takes up the term human ability, which means the ability to choose between different options see one as better than others, pass the other and act according to choice to reach the goal. The employers' ability to choose and find the best applicant for a job is important considering the company's future and meeting the strategy. In addition to personal factors, contextual factors such as; social, political and economic as changes of markets and their opening up, form the background of entrepreneurship (Bird, 1988, 443). By finding out employers' perceptions and experience of a foreign workforce, I interpreted they had experience of foreign cultures and options to reach the company's goals.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) have according to their book *Belief, attitude, intention, and behaviour*, an introduction to theory and research, changed the understanding of the relationship between attitudes and behaviour and laid the foundation to the theory of reasoned action and theory of planned behaviour. According to the authors there are shortfalls in the earlier research and they argue that the kind of social behaviour based on dependent variables is shaped by social forces and not only private preferences. They mean that our social behaviour is not always a perfect reflection of our attitudes as we are also subject to social influence. The influence of past behaviour has also been discussed and Ajzen's (1988) reasoning as having two kinds of influence on behaviour, one

indirect, via intentions and the other direct. The past behaviour control can be observed in two different ways, firstly reflecting the extent to which someone believes he/she has control over performing the behaviour and secondly the extent to which someone believes he/she has the ability to perform the behaviour. (Manstead, 2011). When analysing employers' replies and stories in the interviews I tried to find out based on their experience of a foreign workforce if there was any direct or indirect influence on their behaviour.

Intentional action is described as an action that is distinguished by the presence of specific developmental skills and by intent or purpose. According to Burks' findings intentional action is a social behaviour and a self-regulated behaviour influenced by both external and internal factors. Most actions are carried out with a purpose, which is initiated and controlled by the person, therefore the concept of intentional action is especially relevant for those who wish to change or maintain behaviour (Burks, 2001, 668-675). According to Burks (2001) an actor must be a conscious person who is aware of time and space, and have developmental skills necessary for intentional action. Burks also points out that the action must also be voluntary for the actor or agent. If there is a goal or intent prior to behaviour the result will lead to intentional action. The companies' strategies could correspond to a plan which is a design of action, which is why I have included HRM employment strategy into my research. One has to remember that there are both internal and external factors that influence and regulate the action through the actor's cognition. If there is a conscious execution of behaviour to accomplish the goal and intent intentional action is more likely to take place. The internal factors can be; attitudes toward the behaviour such as self-efficacy, motivational tendency, cognitive dissonance, values and expectancy. Also personality, volitional control and will power influence a person's intention action. The external factors can be; subjective norm and social pressure, resources for action or lack of resources such as family support, community agencies, groups as church and social groups, social motivation and new information from a variety of sources.

Malle (1999) has made research on how people explain behaviour, and has interpreted the difference in cause-reason explanations. According to Malle "reason explanations are people's explanations of an intentional behaviour that cite the agent's reasons for acting that way; cause explanations are people's explanations of an unintentional behaviour that cite the causes that brought about the behaviour". Many authors (e.g. Anscombe, 1963; Davidson, 1963) describe reasons as beliefs or desires and that they motivate and support reasonable action. In my research reason explanation corresponds to strategy and cause explanation to something that occurs during the recruitment process or that the employers have had a very negative experience of a foreign workforce. Malle also points out that if there is an intentional behaviour, the actor must have; a desire for an outcome, beliefs about a behaviour leading to the outcome, a resulting intention to perform that behaviour, the skill to perform the behaviour, and awareness to fulfilling the intention while performing the behaviour. The last point would mean that no change in the intention to hire a foreign work-

force would take place during the process. Malle also states that if the behaviour is going to be intentional there must be at least one desire and one belief. In his explanations of behaviour Malle has divided the explanations of behaviour as follows: generating factors, behavioural explanations, reasons, mere causes, reason explanations, and cause explanations. In my research I used these factors corresponding to the following; *generating factors* are the availability of a highly educated foreign workforce in the Kokkola region and lack of a future workforce, *behaviour factors* are employers' intentional or unintentional behaviour to employ a foreign workforce, *reasons* stand for recruitment strategies in my research, *mere causes* stand for behaviour that are not reasons, *reason explanations* are reasons for acting intentionally, and *cause explanations* are behaviour that are mere causes for unintentional behaviour. The aim of my research was to interpret employers' intention and behaviour and I have included Malle's theory in my interpretation. As Ajzen (1991), Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) stated in their conclusions on behaviour, there is no guarantee that intentions lead to behaviour and action, Malle (1999) describes his thoughts in FIGURE 5 by detailed factors leading and influencing intentional behaviour.

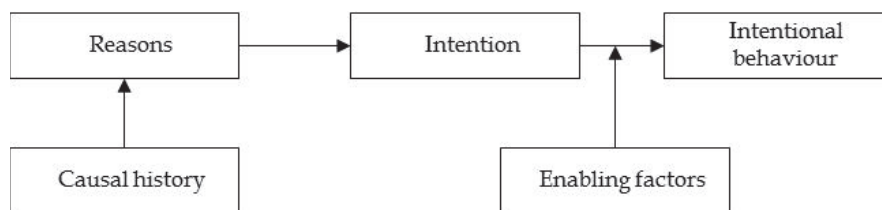


FIGURE 5 Causal History and Enabling Factor Explanations

(adapted from Malle, 1999)

FIGURE 5 helped me to analyse employers' intention by analysing also the causal history and enabling factors. As causal history is understood to be the context, background and origin of reasons, I interpreted as causal history in my research e.g. by employers' experiences of foreign workforce. The enabling factors I have interpreted as planned intentions which influence both intention and intentional behaviour. The planned intentions may relate to HRM of today, and TM, also recruitment strategies related to need-, opportunity-, and capability-driven factors within SHRM. The analysis of intention in the empiric data was related to Ajzen's (1991), Ajzen's and Fishbein's (1980), and Malle's (1999) models.

I have in FIGURE 6 shown the different aspects that can influence employers' intentional action and the main points that I have tried to analyse in my research. When analysing employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce I have looked at the decision making from two angles, theory on intention and SHRM. Here I also considered commitment as crucial for implementing intentional decisions. I have argued that if there is not commitment,

no intention and behaviour will lead to action. Beliefs and evaluation, influence a person's attitude, when again normative beliefs and motivation to comply, influence subjective norms. Both attitude and subjective norm influence the intention. A person's control beliefs and perceived behavioural control influence both intention and behaviour.

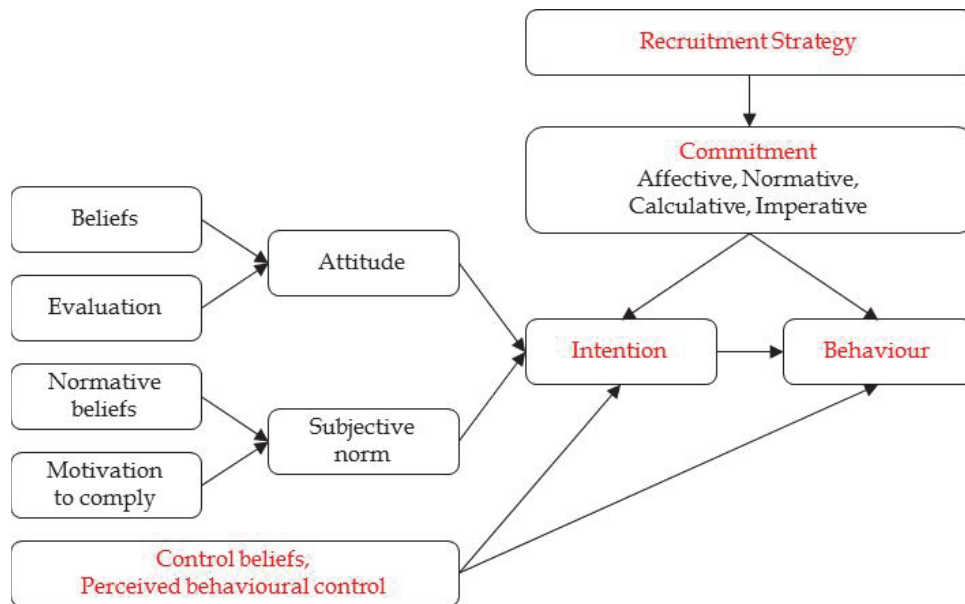


FIGURE 6 External and Internal Factors Influencing on Intentional Action

(modified from Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980)

The research questions formulated in this research aimed at finding out if there is a relation between a company's recruitment strategy, and the intention and behaviour for hiring a foreign work force. Entrepreneurial attitude is strongly linked to intention. According to Grundstén (2004) research results show that the development of entrepreneurial intentions is a complicated process, in which external factors influence the process in different stages. With this research I tried to find out if the employers' could mention factors that would change their intention to hire a foreign workforce. Crant (1996, 42) found in his research that entrepreneurial intentions are deeply dependent on sex, education, family background, and having a proactive behaviour and readiness for changes. I considered entrepreneurial attitude and intentions as important factors for the development of the company and thereby, also possibilities for the foreign degree students.

4.4 Reasoned Action

In 1980 Ajzen and Fishbein presented the theory of reasoned action, predicting the intention to perform behaviour from two predictors. The first predictor being attitude towards the behaviour, measures the extent to which an individual has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question. The second predictor being subjective norm, measures the influence of other people in respect of the behaviour (Thompson & Panayiotopoulos, 1999). By acting for a reason Hunter (2009) describes as that the agent has a further goal or aim in mind. Hunter still points out that something being an action is not the same thing that it is done for a reason or purpose. By looking at employers' strategic recruitment intention to hire foreign highly educated degree students the aim was to find out what was behind their action.

In the theory of reasoned action, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) present a model that predicts intention to perform behaviour, from an individual's attitudinal and normative beliefs. People form attitudes that influence their behaviour and these attitudes are based on beliefs that certain behaviour will lead to certain results. In FIGURE 7 the chain from beliefs to behaviour as reasoned action is presented. Intentions are based on attitudes and form the behaviour of people. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) describe the relationship as follows:



FIGURE 7 Reasoned Action

(Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980)

When the chain is consisting of three parts before behaviour takes place this means then also that building up trust among employers to hire foreign degree students can sometimes be a long process. Correct information should be given to build up trust and form employers' beliefs. The beliefs form employers' attitude, which can be either favourable or unfavourable, and then attitudes influence intentions. "The first predictor, attitudes towards the behaviour, measures the extent to which an individual has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question. The second predictor, subjective norms, measures the influence of other people in respect of behaviour" (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). During the interviews I listened carefully to employers to be able to interpret their beliefs and attitudes, which could have an important effect on their intentions.

The theory of reasoned action has been developed and tested over many years, but not without criticism. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) the best predictor of behaviour is a person's intention to perform the behaviour, but this can be interrupted by the passage of time, unforeseen events or new information. The research aimed at getting a picture of employers' behaviour in the

employment recruitment process, as there are many incidents that may change their reasoned action. The theory is specifically concerned with behaviours where individuals consider the implications of their actions before deciding whether or not to act (Thompson & Panayiotopoulos, 1999).

4.5 Intentional Change

With intentional change I wanted to find out if changes had taken place in employers' attitudes and intention to hire foreign degree students. The interpretation of change was based on my own experiences of the employers interviewed. I had been in contact with these employers earlier during the years Centria UAS has had foreign degree students. Therefore, one of the research questions was also how many foreign degree students they have employed so far. I wanted hear about their experiences and interpret if there had been a change. If I could interpret a change to the positive I could see better opportunities for the foreign students to become employed in the region.

The ideal self is the driver of intentional change, and international change is composed of three major components; an image of desired future, hope (its constituents, self-efficacy and optimism), and a comprehensive sense of one's core identity (past strengths, traits and other enduring dispositions). The proposition is that the ideal self is the driver of intentional change in one's behaviour, emotions, perceptions, and attitudes. The ideal self being the core mechanism of self-regulation and instinct motivation, leads to a personal vision. Hope is the affective driver; it has brought people together and built relationships, it assumes openness to the future and imagination, it is an "ultimate concern" of human nature, and hope feeds creativity. Self-efficacy beliefs again may vary on three dimensions; particular difficulty of the goal, certainty of the person about performing particular level of goals (strength dimension), and generality across contexts and situations (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). I considered it important to understand employers' intentions and what was driving them to make my interpretations.

The core identity is the compilation of the person's enduring dispositions. Their unconscious motives, traits, roles taken consistently in social settings, and other habits become the basis for their core identity. (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006) The reality and smooth continuous change seldom meet with the experience of most people. Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) describe a theory of change that has produced demonstrable results at an individual level, and is believed to explain change at other level of human and social organisation. With this theory they explain sustainable change at all levels of human and social organisation. If change had happened it was important for me to know the reasons for my interpretations, but also for Centria in providing education for foreigners.

Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) explore three features of complex systems and complexity theory; non-linear and discontinuous dynamical systems, including tipping points and catastrophic change, self-organizing into patterns of

equilibrium or disequilibrium in which emergent events start a new dynamic process through the pull of specific attractors, and fractals or “multilevelness” and the interaction among these levels through leadership and reference groups. “Intentional change at an individual level describes the essential components and process of desirable, sustainable change in one’s behaviour, thoughts, feelings and perceptions”. The change may be seen in a person’s actions, habits or competences. A desirable, sustainable change may also include the desire to maintain a current desirable state, relationship or habit. In order to understand employers I had to include change of intentions into my understanding of the phenomenon.

Boyatzis (2006) takes up five discoveries of intentional change theory:

- the ideal self and a personal vision
- the real self and its comparison to the ideal self-resulting in an assessment of one’s strengths and weaknesses, in a sense a personal balance sheet
- a learning agenda and plan
- experimentation and practice with the new behaviour, thoughts, feelings or perceptions and
- trusting or resonant relationships that enable a person to experience and process each discovery in the process

The first discovery according to Boyatzis (2006) is; catching your dreams, engaging your passion. An image of a desired future; hope that one can attain it and aspects of one’s core identity, which includes enduring strengths on which to build for this desired future. This can be related to employers’ intention to hire a foreign workforce when looking into the future. This change might also happen during the recruitment process with either positive or negative consequences for the foreign applicant.

The second discovery is the awareness of the current self, the person that others see and with whom they interact is elusive. The uncertainty of employing a foreigner might lead to a change in decision making, which can be difficult to explain and understand.

The third discovery: mindfulness through a learning agenda is seen as development of an agenda and focusing on the desired future. The third discovery mindfulness might be influenced by employers’ experiences of foreign workforce.

The fourth discovery; metamorphosis; to experiment and practice desired changes. Acting on the plan and towards the goals involves numerous activities.

Here I interpreted employers' risk taking when employing a foreign workforce to give the foreign students a try and a chance.

The fifth discontinuity; relationships that enable us to learn: our relationships are an essential part of our environment. The most crucial relationships are often part of groups that have particular importance to us. Here I saw the building up of a good relationship between Centria UAS, foreign students on work placement as important for intentional change among employers.

Boyatzis (2006) concludes with the statement that people change and that they change in desired ways but not without intentional efforts. Teams, organizations, communities and even countries can change in desired ways. Through intentional change theory one can understand how individual, groups, organizations and communities can bring about desired changes in a sustainable way. This would mean that there are possibilities for foreign graduates if Centria and the students managed to market the students' knowledge and skills as desirable e.g. for companies entering new markets.

According to Ajzen (1991) and Sutton (2002) the stronger the intention and planned behaviour's control towards behaviour, the more likely one is to take the intended action. Behaviour change is therefore a result of changes in cognition that closely correspond to the behaviour for change. Research has also shown that intention is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for performing a new behaviour. Therefore, the majority of intentions to adopt new behaviours do not automatically result in behaviour change (Sheeran, 2002). This fact I had to take into consideration when interpreting employers' intentions.

According to Sniehotta (2009) the theories on reasoned action and planned behaviour have advanced the understanding of motivation, but have had limited contribution to the science of behaviour change. Sniehotta states that research does not propose the means of changing behaviour does not account for successful non-motivational behaviour change techniques and suggests that change is achieved by targeting beliefs. This means that even successful intervention on beliefs have very small effects on behaviour.

Smith (2006) again states in his research that at the centre of the intentional change process is trust and supportive relationships. "The influence of relationships with others on our conceptions of who we are and who might become is likely to be experienced beyond the professional context, extending more holistically to other aspects of our lives as well" (Smith, 2006). Intentional change process can be used by individuals to develop their social capital to make changes in other areas of their lives. This would mean that if employers have had a positive experience of foreign degree students during e.g. work placement, trust has increased and can influence decision making during the recruitment process.

Taylor defines ICT (intentional change theory) "as the real self being the repertoire of competences a person is able to demonstrate, as accurately known by the person and seen by others from the combination of all of the life contexts in which that a person participates (i.e. at work, at home, in the community, at church, in volunteer roles etc.)" (Taylor, 2006).

Howard (2006) again points out in her research that “emotion plays a central role in intentional change. To excite our interest, focus our attention; alert us to the need for change and for us to change. Emotions also influence how we cope with challenge and threat, set new goals, learn new behaviour and draw on others for help or support”. “The positive emotional attractor triggers constructive cognitive and physiological responses that enhance an individual’s motivation, effort, optimism, flexibility, creative thinking, resilience and other adaptive behaviours. The negative emotional attractor triggers another process by calling attention to current social and environmental stressors that may compromise an individual’s effectiveness”.

Intentional change and reasons for it, was challenging to interpret as there were so many factors that influenced the behaviour. Even though employers say they are planning to employ foreign degree students, their plans may change due to some unexpected reason during the recruitment process. Even if attitudes and subjective norms would speak for employment of a foreign workforce the behaviour can be irrational.

4.6 Summary

The theory of intention and intentional behaviour was one of the main angles of my interpretation of employers’ intention to hire a foreign workforce. I supported my analysis with Anscombe’s (1963) division of intention into; intention for the future, intention with which one acts, and intentional action. From employers’ replies I tried to find out if there was base for any of these guises, then there would also be possibilities for the foreign workforce to become employed in the region. As attitudes and beliefs according to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) form intention, it was important to listen to employers’ experiences. A positive experience could be interpreted as an influence on future action. I have analysed the empiric material from the aspects: intending as doing, intention in action, intention and the good, intentions as plans, and intention and belief.

I also looked at employers’ intention related to companies’ recruitment strategy in combination with intention and commitment. My own experience has been that a commitment is important for an intention to lead to action. This research found calculative and imperative commitments more realistic in analysing employers’ intention to hire a foreign workforce.

Theory on intentional behaviour and reasoned action was important for understanding employers’ intentions and to find out when and if beliefs lead to behaviour. Ajzen’s and Fishbein’s (1980) model of reasoned action is used in my analysing model. The main challenge was to find out from the interviews if there could be something that would interrupt the chain and not lead to action and behaviour. Hunter’s (2009) viewpoint was that action for a reason has a further goal; therefore I tried to find out the background to the companies’ recruitment strategy. I had however to keep in mind all the time that the inten-

tional behaviour and reasoned action may not lead to employment anyway as change may happen during the process. The theories on intentional change and Boyatzis' and Akrivou's (2006) reasons to change have helped me to analyse the interviews.

In order to understand in more depth employers' intention and behaviour Malle's (1999) research on how people explain their behaviour supported my interpretations of the interview information received.

My interpretation was structured and based on FIGURE 6 with external and internal factors influencing actions. As a new angle to this view I have taken in recruitment strategy and commitments, the theory of intention is the main interpretation basis. Despite all research on intention and behaviour there is no straight forward model, which would describe employers' intention leading to behaviour. There are always uncertainty factors and risks for change in intention that may influence behaviour. As this is a qualitative research I found the theory of intention useful for my analyses.

5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In the previous parts my aims have been to give a base for the research; I wanted by presenting internationalisation of HEI give a context for the research, then again HRM and theory of intention, were the theoretical viewpoints for analysing the interviews. This chapter presents the design and methodology used and consists of following subareas; research approach, abduction as research approach, hermeneutical phenomenology approach, qualitative research, case study method, data collection, qualitative data analysis, and a summary.

5.1 The Research Approach

The research was a survey conducted by interviewing SMEs in the Kokkola region, representing different types of business fields, in order to find out how the English degree programmes in Centria UAS support the development of finding a workforce in the area. The research focused on interviews and the aim was to describe and understand employers' intentions and actions concerning a foreign highly educated workforce. With the results of employers' experiences I made my interpretations of their recruitment intentions and an understanding of their actions. The received material was analysed in relationship to the research questions. The research results may also help in predicting the future actions of the employers and at the same time get some indications on the necessity of how to develop the degree programmes in English in Centria UAS.

The choice of interviewees was guided by the aim to get them to open up, build up trust, and receive as much as possible information, and that the employers would openly speak about their experiences and perceptions of the research phenomenon. When I chose employers I had been in contact with earlier, the aim was that I could also make my own interpretation if there had been a change in their intention to hire foreign degree students. Before the collection of the empirical material I had to consider what I understood myself about the

research phenomenon, how to get the information, and how I could answer the research questions with the collected material.

The ontology in this dissertation claimed that the human being is an aiming actor, that organizations are purposeful systems and that the purpose of recruitment strategy is to help the company and actors reach their goals. Bryman (2001, 16-18) said that objectivism is "an ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors". Constructivism again "asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors". The characteristics of ontology is that the reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in the study. Relativist ontology is about our understandings and experiences related to cultural and social frames and being open to interpretations. That is why relativism is about social practices and interactive explanations how people are and live, meaning people are social actors. Critical realism is a perspective where behaviour and experience are a result of underlying structures e.g. biological, economic or social structures. These structures do not directly lead to certain behaviour, but may impact on our lives. Qualitative research is based more on critical realism and relativist approaches. This means that in social and interactive explanations for behaviour, interviewing people to get a picture of their social experiences would be related to the ontological position (King & Horrocks, 2011, 6-23). My aim was to find out how the social actors influenced on decisions concerning foreign workforce and the way employers looked at the situation. I wanted to find out how recruitment strategy influenced intention when employing foreign graduates, but also how employers experienced a foreign workforce. The ontological position affected the manner I undertook in my research as I had myself a certain view of the employment possibilities of foreign highly educated workforce.

The epistemology was that the best information is gained from people acting in the organization, but this also influenced what could be asked and what not. Therefore, I chose to interview people who were involved in employing people, saw the future demand for a workforce, and if there was a need for employing a highly educated foreign workforce. These people also had a good picture of the strategy of the company and could describe the influence of recruitment strategy on the employment process. As knowledge is forever changing I decided to interview people who I had been in contact with before, to find out if their experiences had influenced their opinions. By choosing employers that I knew from before I also wanted to lessen the distance between myself and those being researched. The research paradigm indicates that "an epistemological position that is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action" (Bryman 2001, 12-13). This influenced my choice to interview CEOs and HR managers in the companies chosen for interviews.

Grix (2010, 57-76) states that it is important for the researcher to build an interrelationship between the blocks in the foundations of research. He de-

scribes the blocks with actions through questions as follows: Ontology answers to What is out there to know, epistemology answers to What and how can we know about it, methodology answers to How can we go about acquiring that knowledge, methods answers to Which precise procedures can we use to acquire it, and sources answers to Which data can we collect. This process does not show the impact and influence of the questions one is asking and the type of project taken when choosing methods. My research was directly led by the research questions not the method. The choice to interview persons I had been in contact with earlier was made to find out about their experiences of having employed a foreign workforce, and also to find out if these experiences would influence their future decisions.

In this research the interactive model of research from Maxwell was adapted, his five elements were interconnected; research questions, purposes, conceptual context, methods and validity. There was no beginning from a certain starting point. This model described the qualitative research design which was rather flexible and which I had followed (Salovaara, 2011, 67). The purpose in my research was to get a picture of and interpret employers' real intention to hire a foreign workforce. I assumed I could get employers' views if Centria UAS provides the right workforce for the surrounding labour market, and thereby participates in the development of the economy in the area. The main research question was; Employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce, which effected the choice of methodology and also validity. The sub-questions intended to give a clearer picture of their actions which would help in interpreting their intentions.

5.2 Abduction as Research Approach

I have chosen abduction as a research approach, in which the main idea is that the researcher is interested in certain presumed important facts. Abduction can be characterized as finding the best explanation to a set of data. I went out from my previous experiences, studied the theory on intention and development of human resource management, and tried to find out the employment strategies in the companies interviewed. With the answers from the interviews, employers' experiences and reasoning, I tried to understand how the intention influenced employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. By these interpretations I tried to understand their actions and also understand the role of recruitment strategy on intentional acting (Kyrö, 2003, 75-78). The thematic interviews were more like discussions, had mainly semi-structured and open-ended questions (App. 1 and 2), and I acted as an external participant. I tried not to interrupt the interviewees, but listened to their plans and stories of experience.

Peirce's theory of abduction is analysed by Burks (1946) where Peirce claims that "abduction as an inference from a body of data to an explaining hypothesis". Later abduction was widened to include methodological processes

and also evidencing processes. According to Fann's (1970) analyses of Peirce's theory of abduction, abduction is a process where one is forming or inventing an explanatory hypothesis to account for the facts. By using an abductive approach new ideas can be introduced (Haig, 2005). Peirce's later theory on abduction (Fann, 1970) was widened to "The explanation must be such a proposition as would lead to the prediction of the observed facts, either as necessary consequences or at least as very probable under circumstances. A hypothesis then, has to be adopted which is likely in itself and renders the facts likely. This step of adopting a hypothesis as being suggested by the facts is what I call abduction". This means that abduction is reasoning from effects to cause and abduction can supply new ideas. Abduction is the first step and the process of forming an explanatory hypothesis, as induction is the concluding step when the hypothesis is tested. When induction is the method of testing hypothesis, deduction is forming theories based on facts received; then again abduction is a way of discovering possible hypothesis.

According to Reichertz' (2010) interpretation of Peirce's theory abduction "consists of assembling or discovering, on the bases of an interpretation of collected data, such combinations of features for which there is no appropriate explanation or rule in the store of knowledge that already exists." Nothing indicates in abduction that new rules would be found, but the likelihood is greater. Abduction cannot be forced into a specific procedure but can be induced into situations in which abduction fit. Peirce advice to let one's mind wander without a specific goal might bring forward new rules. Abduction is an attitude towards data and towards one's own knowledge. Reasoning from observations to explanations is the fundamental source of new knowledge. This can also be seen as so called backward reasoning, from observations to a cause. There is no claim that the hypothesis itself has to be true, but there should be grounds for assuming that the suggested hypothesis might be true (Haig, 2005).

I considered abduction as suitable for this research, as I have not set up any hypothesis as a starting point. I have looked at employment of foreign graduates from two different angles; HRM recruitment strategies and intention. Within intention I tried to interpret what factors would lead to behaviour. I have acquainted myself with theories and my aim was to find out if there is a correlation between the theories that would have a major impact on employing the foreign graduates. My starting point was the empiric facts, from which I went on to researching the experiences of employers. There were specific points I was interested in, to see what could affect employers' decision making. I have let my thoughts wander, without setting out any specific goals, in order to see where I would end up. By going backwards and forwards in my thoughts I wanted to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. My aim was to interpret the interviewed employers and to find an explanation for how strategic HRM and intention to employ a highly educated foreign workforce influence their decision and actual behaviour. This research aimed to find out the importance of recruitment plans in the decision process of hiring a foreign work-

force. I wanted to find out what the ground is for thinking that intention and commitment are needed for employers to employ a foreign workforce.

5.3 Hermeneutical Phenomenology Approach

In social science the aim is to understand the research object. When interpreting a human being one has to consider the ground for the action and also the actor's own perspective. The reality is of importance (Raatikainen, 2004, 85 -87). The hermeneutical phenomenology approach in this research aimed at finding employers' everyday experiences of a foreign workforce and interpreting their intentions to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. Their personal experiences and the company's recruitment strategy were assumed to be important factors when intending to employ people. This philosophical approach helped me as researcher to better understand the situation in the company and to draw conclusions and interpret employers' intentions.

According to philosophical hermeneutics the object of the study and methodology - truth and method - are inseparable. The hermeneutic call for deep understanding turns to an imperative that requires stretching outside the pre-thought paths. A hermeneutic approach is interested in analysing causes of practices or statements in order to find out what the backgrounds of statements are. (Frick, 2014, 42-43) A hermeneutic approach is a central interpretive philosophical direction and an ongoing process. In hermeneutics knowledge is produced by forming things and their context in relationship to each other and similar phenomena and the development of them. A detailed interpretation affects the interpretation of the whole phenomena and reinterpretation of them produces a wider understanding of the research object. Therefore, I have also tried to find out in the research employers' experiences of a foreign workforce and how this has influenced their intentions to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. The hermeneutical circle should be seen as a continuation, not as a closed circle. Understanding does not return to its starting point, but evolves; one has to imagine it as a continuation. The hermeneutic circle takes place within the limitations of the given language of the researcher. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to terminology. Language can contain power issues that might remain hidden if they are not explicitly thematised. Hermeneutics means in general research methodology that interprets and understands the phenomena or a situation. With hermeneutics one can mean the theory of understanding and interpretation (Laine, 2001, 29-30). The criteria for the right understanding are to understand how details fit into the complete picture. If they do not fit in, the understanding has not been successful. Hermeneutics does not regard prejudices as hindrance but an enabler to interpretation (Gadamer, 2004, 29-39). There are two types of prejudices, legitimate and those we should overcome, the so called correct ones we understand and the false ones we misunderstand. Gadamer points out that we should accept the limitations of knowledge production. The fundamental term "fusion of horizon" means in

hermeneutics merging of texts and an interpreter's horizon into an understandable whole, Gadamer calls this hermeneutic conversation (Salovaara, 2011, 39-52). This hermeneutic approach seemed natural to me as I considered having my own experiences of the situation and therefore, an understanding of it as well. I have also during the years experienced changes in companies' perceptions of foreign graduates, understanding, and an opening up for giving students opportunities for work placement as well as a job after graduation. Many of the companies that had a rather negative attitude to hiring foreign graduates later on gave them a try and had a positive experience. This would mean that the employers' and my own hermeneutic circle has evolved into a positive direction. So called improvement of foreign degree students' possibilities to becoming employed has happened.

Phenomenology as a philosophical movement is dedicated to describing the structures of experiences as they present themselves to consciousness. The starting point for a phenomenology analysis is the researcher's openness and the research object is approached without any specific assumptions, definitions or theoretic frames. Here it is a question of one's own experience and others' experiences. Phenomenology is an umbrella term for the naturalistic/ qualitative approach to research in social science. The concept of phenomenology means a belief in gaining an understanding of participants' own frames of reference. If we can understand participants' frames of reference we can better describe, explain and predict human actions. The phenomenology approach will involve exploring the beliefs of the social actors involved in a field of human action (Gibb, 1998). The challenges are to characterise, explore and interpret the beliefs found. This is also a study of employers' experiences, their shared meaning of experience of a foreign workforce (McCaslin & Scott, 2003, 447-461). Phenomenology based research includes interviews, conversations, participant observations, action research, focus meetings and analysis of personal texts (Lester, 1999). Phenomenology is a study of shared meaning of experience of a phenomenon for several individuals and to describe a "lived experience". "The understanding of meaningful concrete relations, implicit in the original description of experience in the context of a particular situation, is the primary target of phenomenology knowledge" (Moustakas, 1994, 14). It is important to form the purpose statement clearly and in the research process use words such as: describe, understand, develop, interpret, analyse, and discover (McCaslin & Scott, 2003, 447-461)

This research was based on phenomenology when describing and trying to understand the employers' beliefs and social actions. During the interviews also the interviewees were asked to describe their beliefs and actions in order to interpret the material in relation to strategy and intention. Since Husserl (1859-1938) founded the phenomenological approach it has treated the issue of "meaning" not from the perspective of a philosophical system but as a method which aims at re-establishing a genuine connection with the world-of-life that each one of us can experience every day (Fay & Riot, 2007). In phenomenology a persons' subjective experience and its meaning as a phenomena is stressed. In

phenomenology the structures of phenomena is researched. In the research I also wanted the employers to describe their experiences and what they have meant when employing a foreign highly educated workforce.

In my research I also followed the structure of a hermeneutical phenomenology approach, which according to Laine (2001, 42) is listed underneath step-by-step;

- The researcher's own pre-understanding and critical reflexion, which continues through the whole research. My pre-understanding is based on my own experience during the years I have been the head of the programme. I have also used my pre-understanding of the policy of the Finnish Government and Ministry of Education and Culture. During my time the degree programme has been updated according to information received from companies in the area. I have sometimes been critical of promises made by companies, as they according to my experience do not always follow them. These pre-understandings and experiences I have kept in mind when analysing the research material.
- Collection of research material. I chose companies from different fields in order to get information that all degree programmes in English in Centria would benefit from. The companies chosen, I had also been in contact with earlier and this fact also helped me to understand their intentions better and I could experience if there had been changes in their thoughts. The meetings and face-to-face interviews gave also possibilities to avoid misunderstandings.
- Studying the research material and understanding the situation. I have studied the research material related to strategy of employment, related it to the theory of intention, listened to the tapes several times, read the out prints, and tried to analyse what the employers really mean in practice. Companies' experiences of a foreign work force also helped to understand their decisions.
- Describing the most important findings and explaining them based on the research questions. After the analyses I went back to the research questions and summarized the findings accordingly.
- Finding the main messages, presenting them and analysing them. When presenting the main messages and having analysed them I had to be critical. Did the companies want to give a positive image of themselves, concerning hiring a foreign workforce or are they planning real actions. There was always the risk that the interviewees wanted to give a more positive picture of their intentions to hire a foreign workforce.

- Summarising the meanings and evaluating them as a synthesis. Here I had to go back to my main aim, which was finding out if and how strongly the companies HRM strategies influence intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce.
- Evaluating the new information from the aspect of practical applications, development ideas. One of the aims of this research was to find out what Centria should or could improve concerning the programmes and to support the development of the surrounding areas and the employment of a foreign workforce.

According to Hegel 1807 consciousness is an evolution of mind through several stages. The first stage is consciousness where everything observed is taken as fact-value; things are as they are experienced. According to Hegel the mind has to go through other stages too, he describes the process as; consciousness – self-consciousness – reason – spirit – religion- absolute knowledge. Hegel means that the first stage consciousness is rather unreflective and this stage is not the natural state or end-state. Continuity Hegel said is that whatever we observe can change this due to the movement of mind from one stage to another and the things observed do not remain the same for human understanding. What we realize reflects our own experience. Husserl recognized the central role of the human mind in structuring our own experiences. The things that we encounter according to Husserl are “the way we use them and the meanings that we attach to them take place within a human system.” How we define things are embedded in our culture, the context of our personal background, in aims and wishes (Salovaara, 2011, 34-37). When analysing the research material and going through it several times I have found new aspects of interpretation, which has also deepened the analysing process. My own reflections on previous experiences have also contributed to look at the material from different aspects.

5.4 Qualitative Research

I have chosen a qualitative research approach as I needed to find out and understand how and why employers intend to hire or not hire a foreign highly educated workforce. In researches concerning people a qualitative research method is used as meanings interpreted and qualities related to people’s actions and culture require it (Alasuutari, 1995, 13-18). Qualities cannot be changed into quantities by idealizing and rationalizing without losing their content (Varto, 1992, 14). The advantage with qualitative research is that you can look at the single problem from many different angles and the angles can also change during the research. Qualitative research describes the single cases based on participants’ views and the meanings that they have given the phenomenon. This

means in this research that I have looked at the problem from the employers' viewpoint. During the research process one is committed to detailed and in-depth questions and responses, and this also minimizes non-responses. There is a close connection between interviewees and researcher in qualitative research. I was using informants from a few case companies and described the results based on these persons' meanings and viewpoints. The main purpose was not to describe the situations but to interpret and understand how the employers experienced and functioned based on their beliefs (Koskinen et al., 2005, 30-36). Qualitative research is an entity, collecting information and analysing it cannot be separated and today a qualitative research method is not viewed firstly as a collection of material but rather as an analysis thereof (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2003, 70-72). As qualitative research focuses on the meanings that people have given to happenings and phenomenon and the researcher and interviewees are connected to the same entity. The interviews in this research focused on the employers' experiences and their intentions. The qualitative approach also supported my aim to find out the employers' views concerning a foreign workforce and their intention to hire them. Intention can be on several levels and I consider them not directly measurable, which is why a quantitative research would not be more suitable in this case. I also decided that I will get more information via a thematic interview with semi-structured questions. The main question is followed by four sub-questions which were related to and supported the main question, the focus is on the phenomenon; what the intentions of the employers to hire a highly educated foreign work force are. I was utilising exploratory verbs in order to create an understanding of the employers' situation.

I have used a social constructive approach in my research as I was part of the phenomenon, human interest was important, the explanations added understanding, the scientific progress was based on collecting material and analysing it, the sample covered seven case companies that were chosen for this purpose, and the generalisation was based on theory. Social constructive approach is an interpretative research, where people are interpretative creatures and cannot be researched based on causal assumptions as nature may. (Koskinen et al., 2005, 33-37) The viewpoints and practices of employers may differ as they have different subjective perspectives and backgrounds, and also the researcher's subjectivity and reflections became part of the research. Even though I considered myself as an outsider in the interviews, my subjectivity may have appeared in my pre-understanding of the phenomenon and my interpretations of employers' thoughts. This fact also speaks for a qualitative research method (Frick, 2014, 16-17). It is of importance that the researcher tries to stay neutral during the interviews and interpretation. My main aim was to discover and explore things not to test something. A qualitative research aims to find solutions or explanations to a phenomenon, by understandable explanations and referring to theories and researches, by producing observations and simplifying, concentrating, and combining the essential findings. The core for qualitative research is interpreting meanings and solving enigmas (Alasuutari,

1994, 22-45; Alasuutari, 1995, 19-22). My research aims at understanding the local situation.

For qualitative research, the features underneath are specific according to Eskola & Suoranta (1998). I have found them useful and followed them when planning and conducting the research.

- *Collection of material*; in this research I have collected the material by interviewing employers. The structures of interviews have varied in order of presentation depending on company, but all the main topics have been included in all interviews. I gave the interviewees the possibility to talk about the topics in their own order, as I thought I would get more out of the interviews then. The interviewees could speak more about the things they found important. The reason for interviewing as late as in 2014 was, that I wanted to find out if there had been changes in employers' beliefs and attitudes of a foreign workforce, which would support my choice of a hermeneutical phenomenology approach and my interpretation of the phenomenon.
- *Angle of research companies*; here I have chosen companies that I have considered being able to participate in employing foreign degree students. The interviewed companies have also been companies that I have contacted earlier when I have tried to help foreign students finding work placement or assignments for bachelor's thesis. By choosing these companies for the research I wanted to see if there have been changes in the employers' intentions, thinking, and attitudes to foreign students. I have also recognised my own subjectivity in choosing companies.
- *Research sample*; I have chosen to interview seven companies, but decided to analyse the answers in depth and as thoroughly as possible. I have interviewed only one person from each company, but the persons chosen are key persons when it comes to employment. The sample is rather small but I considered it enough when I interpreted them as one case. With this small sample I have considered having the possibility to describe employers' recruitment strategy and intention to hire a highly educated foreign work force related to the theory of intention.
- *Analysing research material*; I have analysed the material from the employers' level and in this way tried to get a picture of how the phenomenon works in relation to theory. The material has also been thematically grouped to support the interpretation.

- *Hypothesis*; in qualitative research hypothesis are not written down before the research and do not therefore, influence the research. There were of course previous experiences of the researcher that might have influenced the findings. As I had an abductive research approach my aims was to discover a potential or probable hypothesis based on received research material.
- *Researcher's position*; in qualitative research the position of the researcher is central, he/she has a certain freedom which gives space for flexible planning and completing of the research. This was also what I have used in my research, especially when it comes to the interviews, some of the interviews are more structured as open-ended questions and answers, and some are more open discussions and exchanging experiences around the questions.
- *Narratives*; some of the interviews included more narratives as I have tried to get the employers' to freely describe their thoughts and experiences, by examples of their feelings and thoughts when they have met and maybe employed a foreign workforce.

The questions were open-ended and the questions may have evolved or changed during the study but the theme remained the same in all interviews. This qualitative research was completed by interviews and interpretation methods. If needed, I could have had a second interview with the interviewees or check things in order to clarify certain aspects. I wanted to describe how entrepreneurs/companies experienced a foreign highly educated workforce and how they acted accordingly. The aim was not to only describe the entrepreneurs' intentions but also to understand their action and thus provide Centria UAS with useful information when it comes to up-dating the programmes for foreign students. The main purpose was to interpret people and build an understanding of their actions and motives according to Koskinen et al., (2005, 30-51)

The small sample gave an understanding of employers' thinking and the epistemology claimed that I got the best information from people involved in hiring a workforce. What also supported using qualitative research was that statistics would not give any deeper picture of employers' intention and commitment to hire a foreign workforce as intentions are a subjective phenomenon. The aim with this research was not to generalise but to get a picture on entrepreneurs' intentions and analyse the effects of them.

5.5 Case Study Method

Case study research (hereafter CSR) is one of several forms of social science research; others include experiments, surveys, histories, and archival analysis as

economy and statistical modelling. Case studies are preferred when the researcher wants to find answers to “how” and “why” questions, when the researcher cannot control behavioural events. CSR is often used when we want to know, understand, and explain individuals, groups, organizations, and social or political situations. CSR is used when the aim is to study a contemporary phenomenon. This research used the case study method (hereafter CSM), because my research questions tried to explain the circumstances in companies and employers’ intention to hire a foreign highly educated workforce. A case study involves empirical investigation of a phenomenon within real-life context and provides multiple sources of evidence. The aim of CSR which is an empirical inquiry is to get a broad perspective in order to describe, understand, and predict a phenomenon. A deep understanding is the main objective of CSR (Yin, 2014 3-11; Creswell, 2007, 73-81; Grix, 2010, 163; Woodside & Wilson, 2003).

I have studied literature, previous researches, and based on the theory of intention and recruitment strategy I have formed the research questions. The aim was to understand and interpret employers’ behaviour as individuals, as company members, and as social phenomena. Using the case study method in research has increased over the years, and this method can be found more often now in publications. As How? and Why? are questions that lay behind my own research questions and are more exploratory I decided to use CSM. I wanted to understand in-depth the social phenomenon for hiring a foreign workforce. A case study is defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident.” (Yin, 2014, 5-23). Case study analyses tend to be inductive, but I chose an abductive approach as I wanted to understand the interviewed employers and the situation in companies and employers’ intentions. My aim was not to test any theory. The advantage with case study is the close collaboration between interviewer and interviewee. My interview questions were also planned to find answers to the phenomenon of intention. Case studies are suitable when the aim is to study a complex phenomenon and which factors influence on it, and for finding explanations concerning behaviour of organisations (Nieto & Pérez, 2000).

CSM is common in qualitative researches in business studies and the core is how the research was planned and conclusion drawn. CSM aims at getting detailed information and that the explanation can be found from the material (Koskinen et al., 2005, 155-175). The method required a total understanding of companies involved. I considered my case study as a single-case study containing multiple informants as seven company representatives were interviewed. From the seven company representatives that I have interviewed, each company is a case, but the aim was not to describe, compare, and make interpretations of each single company, the single companies are considered as informants. These single cases form a larger case that would provide useful information after interpretations of their intentions to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. The interviews offer an insight and picture of the employers’ experiences

and explanations why they consider things to be as they are, and how they look at the future (Somekh & Lewin, 2011, 53-60). Case studies have been criticised for not being rigorous enough, but this can also be the case in other study methods. I have tried my utmost to report all evidence fairly. Another problem has been said that you cannot generalize from case studies, but my aim has not been to generalize but to interpret and understand circumstances that may have influenced on employers' decisions (Yin, 2014, 18-25). Each single case is like one test, but the final conclusion of a theory is based on all single cases forming the actual case. The advantage with case studies is that the researcher has to understand the case companies in a realistic surrounding. The main issue in case studies is not how you collect the material, but how you construct and draw conclusions on the research material.

5.6 Data Collection

Data collecting methods were done through qualitative research method and by interviewing employers during spring 2014. In this qualitative research, the intention was to explain and interpret the set of factors surrounding the central phenomenon and to present perspectives and meanings the participants hold.

The companies I have chosen for the research are also companies that have their office or head office in Kokkola, even though they might have subsidiaries in other towns or countries. This because I considered that the decisions on recruitment strategies are then made in the Kokkola area. Therefore, I have not interviewed the big companies in Kokkola, which have their head office elsewhere, even though they are important actors when hiring foreign degree students. With this choice of interviewees I consider that I came closer to the decision making process. The chosen companies represent different business fields and also differ in size, when it comes to turnover and number of employees. There are five companies that have international trade and two companies are not involved in international trade, but I considered them all as having possibilities to employ foreign degree students from Centria UAS.

The data was collected via interviews from seven companies in Kokkola, and the chosen companies represent different fields of business. By interviewing representatives from different business fields, I expected the research results to be useful for all programmes in English in Centria. Five of them had export/import operations and two of them were only operating on the local market. There were five manufacturing/service provider companies and two retail companies. They differed in size concerning turnover and employees, and the retail companies were the biggest. I interviewed only one representative from each company, five managing directors and two human resource managers; the interviews lasted between one hour and two hours, and were recorded. All representatives reacted very positively to the interview and were open minded. The reason for choosing these interviewees was that I had experienced that they influence strongly on recruitment decisions. The thing they had in common was

that I had contacted these companies and these persons before when I tried to find work placements and assignments for thesis for the foreign degree students. Although the interview sample is very limited I considered getting the best information by interviewing these persons I had been in contact with earlier. By choosing these companies that I had approached earlier, I wanted also to find out if I could experience any changes in their intention and attitude to employ foreigners.

I wanted to choose companies from different business fields as Centria has programmes and students that have the necessary knowledge and skills. In the report the companies' names are not mentioned as I promised that they would stay anonymous, this in order to get more open comments and answers. I have therefore, used A, B, C, D, E, F and G for the companies when reporting. The interviews took place during February 2014 - May 2014 and were all recorded and typed out, during the interviews I also made some notes. When littering the interviews I did not write out the hms, öhs and other sounds that occurred, nor did I mark the pauses in the interviews and my own comments. By this I wanted to keep the material free from my own ideas. I realised though that my own comments may have influenced the interviewees' replies, therefore I later listened to the tapes several times. The interview languages were Finnish and Swedish, in four companies the language was Swedish and in three Finnish. After I had typed out the interviews I translated the answers and discussions into English and grouped them according to the analysing themes. The main themes I grouped the data were; recruitment strategy and employers' intention, commitment to employ a foreign workforce, recruitment process, perceptions of a foreign workforce, and picture of available foreign workforce. I picked out phrases related to the themes and after that I analysed the employers' comments according to the research questions.

In TABLE 1 the basic facts of the companies the interviewees represent is shown.

TABLE 1 Basic Facts on Companies Interviewed.

| Company/ Personnel | Turnover million € | Business area | Foreign trade | Interviewee | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| A | 180 | 26 | Printing/Information | No | HR manager |
| B | 150 | 70 | Stevedoring | Yes | CEO |
| C | 66 | 14 | Metal/Electronics | Yes | Plant manager |
| D | 14 | 7.1 | Clothing/Equipment | Yes | CEO |
| E | 6 | 0.5 | Electronics | Yes | CEO |
| F | 1700 | 758.8 | Retail | No | HR manager |
| G | 1360 | 262 | Retail | Yes | CEO |

By choosing companies from different business fields, of different sizes regarding turnover and personnel I wanted to find out if there is any bigger difference when it comes to intention to hire a higher educated foreign workforce. I also wanted to have the views of companies that do not have any foreign trade and find out their intentions to hire foreign workforce. There are two bigger companies in retail business, but they differ from each other when it comes to foreign trade and also the market area their sales are covering.

The research was conducted through thematic interviews with semi-structured questions, which were refined during the study. The advantage with face-to-face discussion interviews was that they permitted detailed questions and responses and at the same time minimized non-responses. There were four theme topics in the interview, the first theme covers recruitment strategies and foreign students, the second theme topic was about available work force in the future and the role of Centria UAS, the third theme topic concerned companies commitment and possible advantages of hiring a foreign work force and the fourth final theme topic employers experiences of a foreign work force. Background information about the companies was important for the researcher to understand the companies' situation and possibilities to employ a foreign workforce. For my understanding it was important to make it possible to somehow compare the results between the companies and analyse the differences and similarities, and also reasons for them. In appendix 2 and 3 the main structure of the questions can be found. The Why and How questions will reveal employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce and also their experiences. The qualitative research is concerned primarily with processes and only secondarily with outcomes. By thinking backward one is able to identify the purpose of the study and recall answers to the question; Why is my study important? A well planned study continues asking and answering the questions Why? How? and Under what circumstances? (McCasling & Scott, 2003).

5.7 Qualitative Data Analysis

In analysing qualitative research the main focus is on interpretation. Typically is that the research leads to a clear interpretation. When making qualitative research some basic choices need to be made, and they are usually made related to theories. The good thing with a qualitative research is that each single case and uniqueness gets a central position. The first phase is analysing the material, interpretation and argumentation. The second phase is making a structure of the material which supports the analysis as much as possible. In analysing qualitative data one should find a way which guarantees multiple interpretations and makes sure the researcher has also asked why a phenomenon is what it is (Koskinen et al., 2005, 229-252). My orientation of the qualitative data analysis was to describe and interpret a phenomenon, the strategic intention of employers to hire a foreign highly educated workforce. The analysis focused on the case including seven companies and the specific features of their replies. I wanted to identify features that might influence their decisions. When looking for explanations for their behaviour the result may influence and support the abduction research approach. Qualitative data analysis is an interpretation and classification of linguistic material in order to make statements about dimensions and structures of the meaning in the material and what is represented in it. The aim is also to develop a theory of the phenomenon from the empiric material. Interpretation of the material is the challenge in qualitative data analysis (Flick 2014, 370-383).

I have first made a rough analysis of the material and later a more detailed analysis trying to interpret the material to be able to draw conclusions related to the strategic intention of employers to hire a foreign highly educated workforce. The interpretation of received data tried to find out employers' experiences, thoughts, feelings and practices when employing a foreign workforce. I have picked out sayings and phrases related to specific topics, grouped them, and analysed them in relation to theory of intention and HRM strategy. By analysing the data in two different ways I got a clearer picture of the situation and could better interpret employers' intention. I considered I got a deeper understanding by the first theme analysing and that it prepared me for finding replies to the research questions.

5.8 Summary

A qualitative research is based on critical realism, and I wanted to understand the social actors, employers, meanings and interpretation of what is important when hiring foreign a workforce (Bryman, 2001). By interviewing managing directors and HR managers I estimated to be the best way of getting information when it comes to finding out what influences their decisions to hire a foreign highly educated workforce. The research was related to the research

questions and not to a specific method. The research was conducted in an interactive model (Salovaara, 2011). As the research had the abduction approach it was not related to any hypothesis. The abduction approach was used to get a better understanding and discover reasons for decisions made by employers (Burks, 1946; Fann, 1970; Haig, 2005).

The philosophy was a hermeneutic phenomenological approach as the aim was to interpret, understand and find out the experiences of the employers. The reality was important and finding employers' experiences and analysing them in relation to my own experiences and finding out if a development to a more positive attitude had taken place (Raatikainen, 2004; Frick, 2014; Gadamer, 2004; Gibb, 1998; McCasling & Scott, 2003). The research aimed at finding meaningful concrete relations that would speak for employing foreign degree students (Moustakas, 1994). The structure of a hermeneutical phenomenology approach as (Laine, 2001) had described was followed.

The qualitative research and qualitative data analysis aimed at finding meanings in employers' interview replies to be able to interpret them (Varto, 1992). I looked at the problem from different angles and as the structure of the interviews varied and I received information which could be analysed. The qualitative research was based on a case study, with several informants and information was gathered by interviewing seven company representatives. The reason for forming a case of the interviews was to be able to form a potential hypothesis as an abductive approach indicates. The reliability and validity of the research is based on multiple sources of evidence.

6 EMPIRICAL RESULTS ON INTERVIEWS

Studies have been made on foreigners' success in Finnish working life and it was confirmed that the strengths for success were; an open working society, functioning foreman work, support from co-workers and a good orientation to the job. Integration into the work society depended also on the foreigners' adaptability to the work place and learning its habits. The foreman's role was important as well as the co-workers' support. Successful integrations could be seen in efficient work contribution and profitability, as well as in professional development, and promotion of the foreigner. (Airila et al., 2013).

In this research I wanted to find answers to the research questions. The central question was: What are the intentions of employers to hire a highly educated foreign workforce? The sub-questions were: How do employers in the region prepare themselves for meeting the diverse needs of their future employees? How strongly and on what bases are the employers committed to recruit a foreign workforce? How many foreign employees have the employers recruited so far?, and How could Centria UAS contribute to recruitment of a foreign workforce in the region? I have analysed employers' interviews under following headings; recruitment strategy and employers' intention, commitment to employ foreign workforce, recruitment process, perceptions of a foreign workforce, experience of a foreign workforce, preparations for employing a foreign workforce, and picture of the available foreign workforce. Instead of using directly the research questions as an analysing base I considered getting more out of the interviews by using the suggested thematic headings. The analysis aims at interpreting and building explanations for the phenomenon and thereby finds the presumed set of causal links about how something happened. The logic analysing model describes a chain of occurrences or events over a time and matches empirically observed events to theoretically predicted events. Here e.g. employers' perceptions and experiences can contribute to the logic analysis. I was relying on the theoretical propositions; recruitment strategy and theory on intentional behaviour, as they guided the analysis (Yin, 2014, 133-173). From the answers I wanted to also find out how Centria UAS could help the companies in finding a suitable future workforce. I have included employers'

comments and analysed them in relation to the theoretical frame. As I have used abduction as research approach the aim was also to find explanations for the phenomena. After this analysis the main findings and answers to the research questions are presented in the summary. The interpretation of employers' replies are analysed in relation to FIGURE 6, External and internal factors influencing on intentional action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). FIGURE 6 shows how intention is formed and how recruitment strategy and commitments influence both intention and behaviour. If both intention and recruitment strategy speak for employing foreign degree students I have interpreted the possibilities leading to behaviour as stronger. I have presented and interpreted the findings first by company, and then written a summary on the findings, which represented results in my case study.

6.1 Recruitment Strategy and Employers' Intentions

During the interviews I listened carefully to the employers' comments and tried to find out if recruitment strategy had any influence on their intentions to hire a foreign workforce. I wanted to find out if there was anything in their sayings that would relate to; need-, opportunity-, or capability-driven intentions to hire a foreign workforce. When asked directly if they had any strategy to employ foreign degree students, their first reaction was a doubtful no, but during the discussions I could interpret that recruitment strategy had a rather important role. Underneath are comments given by the interviewed employers concerning employing a foreign workforce, and the discussion covered mainly highly educated foreign degree students, as the research focus was on them as a potential workforce.

Company A. We do not have any direct strategy to employ foreigners, but the good experience we have had of foreigners can contribute to employing them in the future, as the workforce is ageing and there is competition for a skilled workforce.

The company had a good experience of foreign employees and this has strengthened their positive attitude to a foreign workforce and they realised there might be challenges in finding a skilled workforce in the future. These experiences could strengthen the intentional behaviour, as even though it was not yet written in the strategy to employ a foreign workforce it was in their thoughts (Burks, 2001; Mises, 1996; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). From the SHRM view (Routamaa, 1991; Luoma, 2000; Mintzberg, 1994), this could be interpreted as opportunity driven. TM comes also into the picture and this thinking might lead to intention to employ and improvements concerning foreign degree students' possibilities in becoming employed (Cappelli, 2008; Wilson, 2008).

Company B. We have a strategy to employ a foreign workforce for enlarging the market and then especially Russians. Strategically Russians fit well into our business field.

Here the company's business strategy influenced on the reply and they realised that the best possibilities for enlarging the business with Russia, potential Russian students would be a good choice. It was already in their strategy and they were looking for a suitable workforce at the moment. Here the company's strategy was on market enlargement, SHRM and TM were closely linked together, and the company had a need-driven HRM view (Luoma, 2000; Farley, 2005; Nilsson & Ellström, 2012; Sorainen, 2007). The employer stated that the talents needed were knowledge of Russian business culture and skills in the Russian language, a native speaker. This strategy and strong intention would most likely lead to behaviour and possible employment of Russian degree students from Centria UAS.

Company C. As we are involved in the export and import business, foreign degree students are a potential workforce. We are working in the international markets, both in Europe and Asia; therefore a foreign degree student could be a good solution to find new customers and to keep old customers satisfied.

Even if the employment of foreign degree students was not in the recruitment strategy it would be natural to employ foreign students as they would be a good potential for the company to act in international markets. The attitude was positive to employing foreign degree students. In this company thoughts about market enlargement and HRM were linked. The HRM strategy could be interpreted as both need-driven as opportunity-driven decision making (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007; Dijk van, 2008; Luoma, 2000; Sorainen, 2007). There are enabling factors that strengthen intentional behaviour (Malle, 1999).

Company D. We are in import business and the market is tough. The hard working foreign students could keep up the work motivation in the company. The experience has been that the foreign students have had a positive influence on the other workers.

In order to meet the competition on the market the company saw foreign degree students as a good resource and the experience was that they have a good influence on co-workers. The strategy here was to manage the competition both on international as well as domestic markets, foreign degree students would be a benefit for the company (Ulrich, 1997; Dessler, 2008; Sorainen). The company had already employed a foreign student with a master's degree and she was taking part in negotiations with forwarding agents in international markets. The company specifically mentioned the positive influence on co-workers as a benefit of the foreign degree students. The company's positive experience was that employees were more motivated if different nationalities worked together, and motivated personnel gives the company better possibilities to meet competition. With this need- and opportunity-driven HRM strategy the company could better meet competition and increase motivation among workers. There were strong enabling factors which support intentional behaviour.

Company E. We are involved in both import and export business and very international. The strategy is and has been to have a foreign workforce too, as it gives a more international picture of the company and the foreign workforce may also have a better understanding of different cultures. Foreign degree student would also be

good as actors in certain areas, as agents, salespersons and retailers. There might be a need for a foreign salesperson for certain markets; this would avoid cultural misunderstandings. A foreign nationality would be beneficial.

Here the recruitment strategy was to employ foreign degree students to improve the international picture of the company and to get a better understanding of foreign cultures, which also would give them a better competitive position (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala; 2007; Mintzberg, 1994; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Sorainen, 2007). The employers' answers related to SHRM and TM meet the requirements to employ foreign degree students. These needs and strategies could be interpreted to have a strong influence on intention, which may lead to behaviour. The need-driven recruitment focused more on the future.

Company F. We do not have any strategy to employ foreign degree students, because we are not importing or exporting anything.

This company said directly that they do not have any strategy to employ foreign degree students and saw no benefits with employing them either. The experience has anyway been that foreign degree students have fitted well into the company's organisation, so there would be no reason for not employing them if they meet the requirements. Here I could make the interpretation that there are positive attitudes which would influence positively on intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), but the weak motivation to comply and no direct plans to employ foreign degree students would influence intention and behaviour.

Company G. We import products from different parts of the world and as we also consider the foreigners we have on the domestic market as important customers, our recruitment strategy is also to employ a foreign workforce. For example in Eastern Finland, we have customers from Russia, and then it is an advantage to have Russian speaking personnel employed. In Southern Ostrobothnia there are a lot of immigrants which could be served by foreign employees. We also see challenges in finding a workforce for both basic tasks and specialist tasks in the future and here foreign highly educated degree students could be a good source.

Here the employer saw benefits with having a foreign workforce serving foreigners and thereby strengthening their market position. The tasks suitable for highly educated foreigners would be related to; import, forwarding, and communication e.g. with China (Baker, 1999; Sorainen, 2007; Sumetzberger, 2005). The availability of a workforce in the future also supports foreign degree students' possibilities in getting a job. The recruitment strategy and HRM work on enlarging and keeping a good market position and therefore foreign highly educated students are seen as an important resource (Dessler, 2008). Recruitment strategy and the positive attitude in the company to a foreign workforce influence strongly the company's intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala; 2007; Mintzberg, 1994; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). From this reply I could interpret that there are need-, opportunity-, and capability demands to employ a foreign workforce (Luoma, 2000).

Summary of findings for case study

Factors influencing employers' strategic aspects supporting intention to employ foreign degree students were: lack of a skilled workforce in the future, enlargement of business on international markets, improved service on domestic and international markets, finding new customers, keeping the workforce motivated, improvement of company image and giving an international picture of the company, being an attractive employer, and giving better service to international customers. Looking at the strategic aspects of employing foreign degree students, enlarging markets or keeping market positions seemed to be the strongest reasons and which would also give the best possibilities for a foreign highly educated workforce to become employed. Some of the companies also saw changes on the domestic market and that service given by foreigners would improve their competitive position. Special knowledge and skills required were reasons, which would strongly influence employers' strategic intentions to hire a foreign workforce. These replies correspond to Luoma's (2009) division of HRM as well as Laakso-Manninen's and Viitala's (2007), and Sorainen's (2007) ideas on competence strategy. During the interviews the employers found good reasons for employing foreign degree students, even if such was not directly written in their recruitment strategy.

Following Ajzen's and Fishbein's (1980) factors influencing intentional action, both employers' attitudes and subjective norms would have a positive influence on the employability of foreign degree students. The feeling received was that HRM strategy influenced their intention and action strongly. According to FIGURE 6 it can be confirmed that both recruitment strategy and theory of intention influenced according to interviews employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce. The causal history of experiences of a foreign workforce improved reasons and intention, and the enabling factors also intentional behaviour (Malle, 1999). The replies indicated that it could be interpreted that the employers' intentions would lead to behaviour. The replies did not indicate any timing when a foreign workforce would be employed. Only one employer indicated that the company's strategy would lead to employment in the near future. As the employers said that they did not have any written strategy to employ foreign degree students, there still remains the uncertainty and therefore no conclusions can be drawn that the foreign workforce will be employed. When looking at the reason for having degree programmes in English in Centria UAS, it can be said that the university met the requirements from the surrounding area. This is due to the fact that so many companies are involved in export /import business and plan to strengthen their positions on the international and domestic markets. The challenge for Centria will be how to arrange that the demand for and supply of such a workforce will be met.

6.2 Commitment to Employ a Foreign Workforce

My own understanding and interpretation was that some kind of commitment is needed to follow the recruitment intention and HRM strategy which would lead to employing foreign highly educated graduates. I used Sharma's et al. (2003) division of commitment; affective, normative, calculative, and imperative commitments as analysing base. I have analysed and interpreted employers' comments, and I have analysed the commitments to be able to interpret how binding the employers' intentions were. If a commitment was found it could influence on both intention and actual behaviour.

Company A. We see no direct commitment in employing a foreigner, knowledge and skills determine.

The company's attitude was rather neutral when it came to commitment of hiring foreign degree students. They said foreign students have the same possibilities as other applicants. When they expressed no commitment I checked their answer related to recruitment strategy, where they mentioned ageing personnel and competition for a skilled workforce in the future. This could be interpreted that calculative and imperative commitments would influence the hiring process (Sharma et al., 2003). Sometimes the replies can be neutral when you focus on only one thing and not the whole picture; this was my interpretation of company A's reply.

Company B. The company is committed to employ foreigners to gain new customers and to better understand customers' business culture. The problem we have now is finding a foreigner willing to stay and live in Kokkola, if we employ someone who has not been living in Finland. We also see this as a good opportunity for Centria's foreign degree students as a potential workforce.

The company was committed to hire foreign highly educated people as they are operating in an international market and the experience was that native speakers are needed to be successful in the market. The problem seemed to be to commit applicants to stay in Kokkola if they came directly from abroad, the foreign workforce find Kokkola a too small place to live in. The advantage with employing one of Centria's students would be that they have already lived in Kokkola for some years. Both calculative and imperative commitments spoke for hiring Centria students (Sharma et al., 2003). Here I saw the importance of cooperation between UASs and companies.

Company C. We see international students as an important resource for the company and we will need to employ foreigners in the future. By employing foreigners the company image would improve and make it more attractive for job seekers.

The company saw the situation as challenging when it came to motivating employees to travel abroad and saw opportunities in hiring a foreign workforce. Their experience was that a foreign workforce would be more willing to travel.

The commitment was both calculative and imperative and could be interpreted as part of the company's TM strategy (Sharma et al., 2003; Farley, 2005; Cappelli, 2008). The aim was to be an attractive company for job seekers and here securing a future workforce by working on company image was seen as important. The foreign degree students would improve the company image according to the employer (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014).

Company D. We have seen a potential in foreign workers, improvement of international knowledge among employees. Committed to a certain extent, cannot say for sure.

The commitment in this case was more calculative than imperative (Sharma et al., 2003). The employer saw benefits of a foreign workforce and the positive perceptions would improve the foreign degree students' possibilities to become employed. Both causal history and enabling factors speak for intentional behaviour (Malle, 1999) but commitment is weaker.

Company E. We do not see any difference in commitment to employ a Finn or a foreigner, it is the market situation, skills and knowledge that determine who is employed.

From the interview the company saw benefits of a foreign workforce when acting in international markets, but said they were not ready to commit themselves to employing a foreigner before a Finn. My interpretation was that the positive causes and enabling factors support, but only calculative commitment would influence employing a foreign workforce (Malle, 1999; Sharma et al., 2003). Only a strong need-driven strategy would improve foreign degree students' possibilities to become employed for sure.

Company F. Cannot say that we are committed to employ a foreigner, a person's knowledge and skills influence employment decisions.

In this case I could not interpret any type of commitment for hiring a foreign workforce, despite their positive experiences. The company indicated that they did not see any problems in finding a future workforce either.

Company G. Employment is a big investment and risks with employing a foreigner are at first seen as bigger, but the values of the company influence commitment too. According to the equality report we have now 100 foreigners of 1500 employees.

Commitment in company G was reflected by their values and market situation. A slight influence of affective commitment could be found here, but the calculative and imperative commitments were stronger (Sharma et al., 2003). As the company already have employed some 100 foreigners, indicates that there are good possibilities for foreign degree students to become employed. The only problem might be to become employed corresponding to their level of education.

Summary of findings for case study

Commitment was challenging to analyse from employers' replies and I could not find any stronger aspect of affective or normative commitment. Only one employer's reply could be interpreted as based on the company values, that affective commitment would also have some influence on the recruitment process. Due to the economic situation and competition in the markets, there were indications that the calculative and imperative commitments were reasons for employing foreign degree students (Sharma et al., 2003). Analysing the replies from HRM and TM point of view the strongest strategic commitments are need-driven (Luoma, 2009). The employers saw the advantages of a foreign workforce in enlargement of markets, in customer service, and in motivating the workforce. If the plans of enlargements of markets would take place, the commitments to hire a foreign workforce would be mainly calculative, but also in some cases imperative. Securing a future skilled workforce turned out to be influencing employers' commitment (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). My own interpretations when it came to analysing commitments were that companies were very careful to express commitment. Maybe the word commitment as such is too strong, and therefore I have had to analyse commitment in relation to their replies related to recruitment plans. Centria UAS has a very important role in informing the companies in the region about the skills and knowledge the foreign students acquire in their studies. My interpretation suggested that foreign students have the best possibilities to become employed if they met the recruitment strategies and commitments of the companies.

6.3 Recruitment Process

When I asked the employers to describe the recruitment process I wanted to hear how the employers deal with the applicants that are invited to interviews and if a Finn was in a more favourable situation than a foreign degree student. FIGURE 6 presents the external and internal factors influencing on intentional action, and keeping this figure in mind I also wanted to know if there is a change in decision making when they have foreign students interviewed. The interviews tried to analyse what might occur in the decision making process that would change employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce. I have not covered the actual recruitment process in the theoretical part, but I wanted anyway to hear how the employers described the process and if I could find any indications on intention for hiring a foreign workforce.

Company A. Selection process when hiring workforce varies based on needed workforce.

I did not get a clear picture of their recruitment process and asked for clarification. When they were looking for filling a vacation at middle or top management level, the company used a recruitment company who tested and inter-

viewed the applicants. The company relied on a recruitment company and made their choice based on suggestions from the recruitment company. In this case it was difficult to get any picture of what really happened during the process. When it came to recruiting personnel at a lower level the company took care of the process itself and said that changes may take place during the recruitment process and interviews, which did not relate to the applicant but external reasons. What they meant with this was not clear for me, and they did not want to go into more detail either. Need-demand influences strongly on foreigners' employability (Luoma, 2000).

Company B. Applicants are tested by a recruitment company, but I want to see all applicants' papers and I interview them myself once more. Employment decision is based on tasks, language skills and education. No strategy or reason to employ a Finn before a foreigner or vice versa

The company also used a recruitment company who tested the applicants and interviewed them. Here the difference was that the managing director checked all applications and interviewed the applicants once more himself. He listened to suggestions from the recruitment company but stressed that he made the decision and hired based on his own experience and judgement of the applicant. In doubtful cases my interpretation was that the recruitment company could have a strong influence upon the decision. The interview also revealed that the knowledge and skills of the applicant was the base for the employment decision. If the causal history, reasons, intention are supported by enabling factors and good experience of a foreign workforce (Malle, 1999) I interpreted that foreign degree students have good possibilities to become employed.

Company C. A personality test is done by an outsider. Foremen take part in interviews. When a Finn and a foreigner are on an equal level, we look at the applicant's attitude to international thinking and travelling, and how they follow the development within the business.

In company C can be seen that they are looking for the right person with the right attitude to working in and for the company. As foremen also take part in the interviews they look for a person who they can work with and who would not be too challenging to cooperate with. The personal traits seem to be very important when employing. When I went back and looked at recruitment strategies and commitment I could see possibilities for a foreign workforce even if the comments above did not reveal any differences in employing a Finn or a foreigner. In this case the foremen' attitude and subjective norm influenced strongly on the decision to employ a foreign workforce (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Company D. I interview the applicants myself and decision to employ is based on my perception of the applicant during the interview. We have not employed so many people during the last few years, but the task itself and language skills are the base for the decision to employ a person. We have sometimes had to decrease on the demands of the skills set up for a task and choose the best possible applicant.

Here the employer interviews the applicants himself and the decision to employ is based on his perceptions. I interpreted the recruitment process as rather straight forward and if the requirements are fulfilled nothing says that a foreign degree student would not have the same chance as anyone else. Thus it can be interpreted that the employer has had positive experiences of a foreign workforce. As the employer takes care of the recruitment there is better room for Centria to contribute with information on foreign degree students. The problem they have had is finding employees skilled enough. The language skills referred to are Finnish. Need-driven recruitment strategy is strong when employment take place, but also opportunity-driven recruitment strategy influences (Luoma, 2000).

Company E. We have used an outsider to interview the applicants and received recommendations from him. We have had good experience with this. The next step is that I interview 2 - 3 of the applicants and then the decision is made. Finns and foreigners are competing for the job on same basis. Sometimes a foreign nationality can be an advantage depending on the tasks.

An outsider has been interviewing and giving recommendations, so after that the internal recruitment process starts. Employer's experience of a foreign workforce has an important influence on the decision. But when an outsider is making the first choice, there can always be a risk of misunderstanding or misinterpretation in the case of a foreign degree student. My interpretation was that if the skills and knowledge requirements are met, employer's experience for a foreign workforce had a strong influence and the need-driven recruitment strategy has a strong influence upon hiring a foreign workforce (Luoma, 2000).

Company F. We have an electronic application form and when foremen have found suitable applicants they interview them. If a Finn and a foreigner are on an equal level they are both interviewed and the one most suitable gets the job. Nationality does not matter but language skills are very important.

If a foreigner gets to the interview stage, the foreman's attitudes and experiences of a foreign workforce have a strong influence on how the process proceeds. Beliefs and evaluation form the attitude, which again influences intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The advantage here is that the employer and foremen have had good experiences of foreign degree students which correspond to enabling factors (Malle, 1999). To become employed demands, that the foreign students have adequate knowledge of the Finnish language, this again put pressure on degree programmes' curricula.

Company G. When we are looking for a person with higher responsibility we also use outsiders to test the applicants. Mainly we take care of recruitment ourselves. We interview and have personality tests. The most suitable one gets the job.

The employer stated that the most suitable applicant for the tasks is employed, nationality does not matter, meeting the need-driven recruitment strategy (Luoma, 1999). This would mean that there is no change in intention or strategy due to the applicant being a foreigner, meaning that the attitude to a foreign

workforce is positive and influences intention. It is however difficult to know if there is a change in intention during the recruitment process as outsiders are in charge for recruitment of more demanding jobs. This is then supported by Ajzen's and Fishbein's (1980) theory on external and internal factors influencing on intentional action. If the attitudes and subjective norms are positive they lead to intention and behaviour and the foreign degree students have the possibility to become employed on equal terms with Finns.

Summary of findings for case study

The employers did not reveal much about the recruitment process as such, only indication on how it is arranged and briefly what influence employment. According to the comments above, my interpretation was that foreign degree students have the same possibilities as Finns to become employed. The employers stressed that the most suitable one for the task will get the job. As the companies use outsiders to test applicants, this might influence whom the recruitment company suggests should be employed. I did not expect to hear that so many of the employers I had been in contact with earlier, even if they represent small companies, actually used recruitment companies to do the first screening and testing of applicants. My belief was that employers would be more involved in the recruitment process and this would then support the idea that closer cooperation between companies and Centria could help companies find the most suitable workforce. Even if outsiders tested and supported the companies in recruiting people, some of the employers also went through the applications and made their own interviews, which gave a foreign workforce the chance to compete on equal level with Finnish applicants. There were cases where a foreign nationality could be an advantage. The comments concerning skills in Finnish and Swedish language, were mainly related to co-workers and then of course managing on the domestic market. All employers wanted to point out that foreign degree students are treated equally when applications and interviews were screened, they stressed that it is the tasks, knowledge, and skills needed that they focused on. This would mean that HRM and intention focused on demand, no other reasons for employing influence the decision and that calculative and imperative commitment influenced strongly upon employment. The findings concerning the recruitment process was useful information for Centria, and this indicated that cooperation with recruitment companies was important and should be deepened. It is important that Centria provide recruitment companies with information on curricula in degree programmes offered in English and available foreign workforce. To get current information on the demand on workforce on the local market an open dialogue should be kept with the recruitment companies as well.

6.4 Perceptions of a Foreign Workforce

Employers' perceptions and pro-attitudes influence their behaviour when planning to employ a foreign workforce. It is of great importance for the UASs to provide the employers with information on the foreign degree students and their cultural background, especially if the employers have not had any experience of foreign degree students before. This is something I have experienced myself during my time as head of the degree programme in English, when trying to find work placement opportunities for the foreign students. I had also to prepare the students more in detail about the Finnish work culture and what is expected of them. FIGURE 6 (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) shows how perceptions influence attitude and subjective norms and either lead to intention and behaviour or not. All the interviewed companies had had some experience of foreign students and they were mostly positive. When looking at the comments underneath one can see that the employers have developed an understanding of a foreign workforce. Even if they had experienced something negative, they thought they could understand the reason. They also gave examples of negative experiences, but the positive ones seemed to influence more in the long run future employment possibilities. When it comes to the negative experiences the employers gave an explanation for them and thereby, I considered they understood and knew how to deal with these incidents, which can also be seen from their comments.

Company A. Foreigners are hardworking, but do not actively look for the next task, they expect the boss to tell them what to do, they need more guidance. The foreigners are reliable, want to work and complete their tasks. They do not always say if something goes wrong. Despite this we are positive to a foreign workforce. We have had some 40 foreign students working temporarily. We have not had any problems with the foreign workforce; they come to work on short notice, which has been good for the company.

My interpretation was that the employer realised the cultural differences and had learnt from them and understood now the foreigners better. Despite some small negative experiences the main picture of a foreign workforce was positive. The employer realised that there are cultural differences related to leadership and work tasks (Hofstede, 1991). As the company already has had several foreign workers they have come to a level, where foreign degree students can be an alternative when employing people. The experiences of a foreign workforce have led to a positive attitude, which influenced the company's intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Malle, 1999).

Company B. We have only experience of foreign degree students from Russia, one needs to know their culture, they must be led in another way compared to Finns, they are good workers, but have difficulties in admitting mistakes, punishment is normal in their culture therefore, they try to hide mistakes made. The employer has a positive attitude to foreigners and considered it important that Centria has education for foreigners. We have had 2 Russian degree students working for a longer time and 4 working for 1 - 2 years. The advantage with a foreign workforce is the language

skills, cultural knowledge, they are determined and active, and have adapted themselves to the work culture in Kokkola.

Here the employer has had experience of several Russian employees for many years already and understood the cultural differences. The manager himself had worked in Russia, had a personal experience of the culture and knew how to handle cultural differences in his company. The problems seemed to rise sometimes between the employees, but the fact was that the company was dependent on Russian employees and therefore, the Finnish co-workers needed to learn to understand the Russian culture better in order to avoid conflicts (Hofstede, 1991). The company supported training co-workers to understand and improve their intercultural competence. This was interpreted that the company is already investing in having a foreign workforce; both attitudes and subjective norms influenced intention, which has led and is leading to their behaviour to employ Russian employees. In this case I could draw the conclusion that, the company recruitment strategy, commitments, and intention would lead to employing foreign degree students (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, Malle, 1999).

Company C. We have only good experiences of foreign workforce, they are active, motivated and have integrated well. Foreigners have ambitions and are hungry for work, they have future plans which they strive to complete.

The company had experience of only three foreign employees, but was surprised by how good and active workers they were. As the employer said that they would look for personnel ready to travel abroad when needed, and as the Finnish workers were not so keen on that, he saw possibilities in the foreign degree students. My interpretation was that the hard working foreigners met the company's policy and management philosophy well and this will give foreign degree students a good position to compete for open jobs. The company saw potential in a foreign workforce for competing in markets (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Moy & Lam, 2003).

Company D. We have tried to employ foreigners too, and considered it good with international knowledge. Foreigners have an open nature and are easy to deal with and get in contact with.

As the company above had experience of only three foreign employees, which cannot either be interpreted as much experience, but they still commented they had received a positive picture of the foreign workforce. The foreign workers had adjusted themselves well to the company culture and also the co-workers had had positive experiences. Co-operation was good and the foreign employees motivated the Finnish employees to work harder. The employer saw no reason why he should not hire a highly educated foreigner with the right qualifications for a job. The employer said that he would give the foreign students equal possibilities when recruiting a workforce, the best one would get the job (Moy & Lam, 2003; Brass & Haggard, 2008; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Company E. Our experiences are in general positive. Foreigners' might have the boss-syndrome, but when you know it you can deal with it.

The employer had a positive attitude to foreigners and was also one of the first contacts I had in the beginning who gave a foreign student a work placement possibility. He said he had learnt a lot himself and the students were managing well with tasks given (Hofstede, 1991; Malle, 1999; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). After the first good experience of a foreign degree student, he had employed one more foreign graduate for a longer period.

Company F. We have employed many foreigners already and experience has been positive. The advantage has been that foreigners bring something new to the company culture, which the co-workers have experienced as positive too.

The overall impression was that the company had good experiences of foreign degree students on work placement and on temporary job occasions. They also had experienced positive attitudes among co-workers. This would mean that there would be good opportunities to be employed by the company (Malle, 1999; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In total the company had experience of some 10 foreign degree students.

Company G. The ethical values of the company are that different types of people are employed, and that foremen are also trained to meet and deal with differences. The company has foreigners both as customers and employees and has had positive experiences of a foreign workforce. Foreigners as employees have integrated well into the company, so well sometimes that you forget that they have a different cultural background.

This company's ethical values and experiences of a foreign workforce are positive indicators for foreign degree students to become employed (Malle, 1999; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The full-time employed foreigners have integrated so well that the manager had to think before he could say how many foreigners are employed. They have about 100 foreigners working for them at the moment, both full-time and part-time, men and women in different tasks, and the educational background varies.

Summary on findings for case study

As a summary it can be said that employers' perceptions of a foreign workforce were in general positive, and according to Ajzen's and Fishbein's (1980) form, both beliefs and evaluation of foreign degree students had a positive influence on their attitude to foreigners which would strongly influence their intention. From recruitment strategy's point of view employers' perception influence the calculative commitment (Sharma et al., 2003) and then again influence their intention and behaviour. Under this topic the importance of personal traits influencing conscientiousness, openness to experiences, and agreeableness turned to be of importance. My interpretation of the findings was that employers' generating factors, behavioural factors, reasons, and reason explanations support employment of a foreign workforce (Malle, 1999). Based on their perceptions employers described the foreign workforce as follows: hardworking, reliable,

come to work on short notice, language skills, cultural knowledge, determined, active, ambitious, open nature, easy to deal with, bring new thinking to the company, and have integrated well into the company after a while. The positive perception of the interviewed employers could be interpreted that foreign highly educated degree students have possibilities to become employed in local companies. These positive perceptions influence employers' attitudes and strengthen intentions leading to action. I could interpret that employers' cultural competence had increased based on their experiences for a foreign workforce (Hofstede, 1991).

6.5 Experience of a Foreign Workforce

As experiences strongly form a person's beliefs and attitude I wanted to hear about the employers' experiences of a foreign workforce. The interviewees were all in the same position as they had employed foreign students as a temporary workforce, for work placement or as full-time workers. I had also experienced during my years as head of degree programme that employers were very reluctant in the beginning in giving foreigners even a chance, when they did not know what it would mean having a foreigner in their organisation. As beliefs and evaluation are influencing attitude according to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) I found this topic important to evaluate and interpret employers' intentions.

Company A. No problems in the organisation. Foreigners are hardworking, but at the same time they need more guidance. Due to good experience work contracts have been prolonged. At the moment only two foreigners are employed, but when the new factory was started there were many foreigners. We have had experience of many foreign degree students.

Company A had learnt that guidance for a foreign workforce was essential and required more time but the result had been good. When they emphasised guidance in the beginning the result was good. Due to their positive experience they had also employed foreign students for full-time and temporary jobs. Their latest employment was employing a degree student as foreman in charge of newspaper distribution. There were many applicants, but this foreign student had been very determined in building up his experiences with Finnish companies and he spoke good Finnish too. The positive experiences have led to positive attitudes, intention, and behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Company B. Has had two foreigners working long term and four foreigners working short term, all with a Russian background. The experience is that Russian workers are active. The company has had positive experiences of a foreign workforce.

The experiences had been positive and the company actually needed a foreign workforce for its business and aimed at employing more foreigners in the near future. In this case the positive attitude and subjective norm influenced strongly

the employers' intention to employ more foreign degree students (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Nilsson & Ellström, 2012; Luoma, 2009).

Company C. The foreigners have adapted themselves well to the company culture and have been welcomed by the other employees. The experience is that international students are a good resource for the company and makes the company an attractive employer.

The company's good experience had formed the beliefs and evaluation of a foreign workforce to a positive attitude. The employer saw foreign students as an important potential, also for building up a positive image of the company to attract a skilled workforce (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014).

Company D. Good experience of a foreign workforce, they have high work moral, good skills in English and the personnel have liked them.

Interesting to see the positive attitude the company had of foreign workforce, as I very early experienced it as very challenging for foreign students to get into this company. I was many times in contact with the company without success. Now they have a fulltime foreign master's degree student with whom they were very satisfied. They have also had a temporary foreign workforce and were surprised how high their work moral was. When they needed more temporary help the foreign student suggested a friend of his, and they were both then working for the company. What first led to employing the foreign student for a temporary job was that he happened to come by and ask for a job at the right time. The attitude to a foreign workforce was positive and if there would be a need for employing more personnel a foreigner would have the same possibilities as a Finn. It was interesting to find out the development into a positive attitude to a foreign workforce (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Company E. Mainly positive experiences and varies between cultures.

Company E had due to positive experiences positive beliefs and attitude towards foreign degree students (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The employer said he had learnt also a lot from students on work placement and understood foreign work cultures better now (Hofstede, 1991). Even though the experiences have been positive I did not get the feeling that the attitudes were influencing strongly intention, which would lead to behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

Company F. The foreign workforce is more eager to get a job, but when they are too eager the foremen get suspicious. The foreigners bring with them a positive drive in the departments. There have been no problems due to cultural background. The foreigners have adapted themselves well to the company culture. Mainly positive experiences.

Here it was interesting to hear that despite good experiences of foreign workforce, foremen were still a bit suspicious. This would mean that their beliefs are not all positive, which again would lead to uncertain attitudes when it comes to

hiring a foreign workforce, as foremen take part in interviews too (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen, 1991).

Company G. Have had positive experiences and there have been reports in the personnel magazine about foreign workforce. The foreign workforce has integrated well into the work community and the co-workers reactions have also been positive.

Company G had a positive attitude to a foreign workforce and had gone further in the process, and had seen the importance to improve co-workers' attitudes to foreign workforce. There had been an article presenting a foreign worker in their personnel magazine. At first the manager did not remember this foreign person as he had integrated so well into the organisation and he was not seen as a foreigner anymore (Malle, 1999; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen, 1991).

Summary on findings for case study

As a conclusion and main findings it can be said, that according to employers' experiences of a foreign workforce, they now had more positive attitudes to a foreign workforce based on their beliefs and evaluation of the work contribution. The employers had also some negative experiences, but when they mentioned them, they said at the same time that they understood the reasons and had learnt from these experiences (Hofstede, 1991). Employers' attitude to a foreign workforce was more positive now than in the beginning. Their beliefs and evaluation had changed with their experiences of a foreign workforce. The results meant that development had taken place and employers had a more favourable intention and behaviour with regards to a foreign workforce when employing new personnel. Due to these positive experiences employers saw a foreign workforce as an option in recruiting new workforce (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Malle, 1999). The replies show that employers' perceptions and experiences of a foreign workforce had developed from uncertainty to a more positive opinion, which strengthens foreign degree students' possibilities to become employed by the local companies.

6.6 Preparations for Employing a Foreign Workforce

Under this topic I wanted to find out how the employers looked at the availability of a future workforce, if they saw that there will be a lack of a skilled workforce and if they already had some plans to meet this situation by hiring a foreign workforce. Even if the ageing of population was not that strong in the Kokkola area there might be challenges in finding a highly educated workforce in the future. As the education level was not that high in Central Ostrobothnia, it would mean that companies needed to attract a highly educated workforce from elsewhere in Finland; this would also speak for focusing on TM and analysing recruitment strategies based on need-, opportunity, and capability-driven factors. As the Finnish society has also become more multicultural, peo-

ple have to be able to cooperate and manage with different cultures at work. Employers have to improve their intercultural competence related to e.g. managing and motivating a multicultural workforce.

Company A. In the future we want to be an attractive employer. In general we have had no problems with foreigners. We can see that there are difficulties in getting a skilled workforce in the future. No special preparations for a foreign workforce.

Company A aimed at creating a positive image and thereby find a skilled workforce also in the future (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). No special preparations concerning employing foreign degree students could be found, but the calculative and imperative commitments (Sharma et al., 2003) might give foreigners a better chance to compete on the same level as Finns. Even though the company considers recruitment of skilled employees in the future a challenge, no special arrangements e.g. TM have been made. As Guthridge et al. (2008) stated based on their research companies do not tend to see TM as a part of long-term business strategy. This is also the case in company A. The company anyway anticipates for a demand of skilled workforce in the future (Cappelli, 2008). To become an attractive employer I considered intercultural competence on all levels important which would boost activity, motivation, leading to results. The company is operating only in the local area, and has no contacts and activity in international markets; therefore there are only a few jobs in the company where foreign graduates would fit it, e.g. programming within information technology, if their skills in the Finnish language are not good enough.

Company B. There is a demand for employing 5-7 persons in the near future. At least one who has Russian as mother tongue, due to transit transport. The problem is to find persons who are prepared to come to Kokkola and stay here.

Company B was looking for a new workforce in the near future, foreign graduates with a Russian background was the target group. The company has a clear strategy on how to manage on Russian market and also enlarge their market. This refers to strategic starting points (Ala-Mutka, 2008). The company's strategy met also Cappelli's (2008) description of TM. This was good news for Centria as there are Russian students studying in both business and IT programmes. As the company has Russian employees from before, it would be easier for the degree students and other company employees to adapt themselves to the new recruitments (Baker, 1999; Dessler, 2008).

Company C. There is a demand for new recruitments within one year. Want to develop a more positive atmosphere and make the company an attractive employer. International students are an important resource for the company. Considers, that after a time of training it can be very profitable to employ a foreigner. Sees the competition among employees as very positive for the company, you can choose the best one.

Company C has prepared itself for employing new personnel and also with the focus on improving the company image and sees foreign degree students as potential future employees. This reply meets Luoma's (2009) need-driven description of SHRM. The company's aim of creating an attractive company brand

improves their possibilities of finding skilful employees (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014).

Company D. Need more sales personnel at the moment for the domestic market. For import businesses foreigners can be employed. A right contact person for the forwarders is very important, and a foreign degree student handling import business has many advantages. At the moment we have very good personnel, but there are difficulties in finding new.

As company D is active in the import business and looking for new products and brands there are possibilities for a foreign workforce due to the good experience of them. New employments may take place in the near future (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014).

Company E. At the moment no specific need to employ people. As working in international markets the need for a foreign workforce is bigger, language and cultural knowledge can be used. Acknowledge that there might be a lack of a skilled workforce in this business field. A good way to find a suitable foreign workforce is to give the students work placement opportunities, and then both parties get a picture of each other.

The situation in company E was rather stable, at the moment no need for new employments. In the future a foreign workforce might have a better chance if entering new markets. Based on these comments I could not draw any specific conclusions.

Company F. No preparations taken. Does not believe there will be a lack of workforce.

Company F did not see any reason to prepare itself for the future as they do not see that there would be challenges finding a workforce.

Company G. Foremen are trained to handle differences. Are working on attitudes among employees into a positive direction. A foreigner has a positive effect on foreign customers.

Company G is preparing the whole organisation for employing more foreigners also in the future. They see the need for a foreign workforce for providing customers on the home market with better service and also improving their import business as they are importing from all over the world.

Summary on findings for case study

The general comment could be that the employers have not prepared themselves very much yet for the future; the employers did not actually worry very much about finding the right workforce. Only one company needed soonest a qualified foreign workforce and another company was aiming at employing in the near future and then foreign degree students would have good possibilities to be employed. There were however both positive attitudes and subjective norms that support intention when it comes to hiring a foreign workforce

(Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The strategies of the companies and calculative and imperative commitments support intention and behaviour as well. My interpretation was that although the employers gave positive comments about a foreign workforce, they are not really ready for employing a foreign degree student if a Finnish student meets their requirements. There were a few exceptions where a foreign student would be a better choice for the employer.

6.7 Picture of Available Foreign Workforce

I also wanted to have information on if the employers knew about the available foreign workforce in Kokkola, in order to find out if Centria UAS could do more for the foreign degree students and help them to become employed. The third mission of UASs and HEIs will face challenges if the companies do not have a clear picture of the available workforce and possibilities to cooperation.

Company A. Does not have a complete picture of foreign workforce in Kokkola. Centria's role is important. Does not know which programmes are in English and from which countries the foreign students come. E.g. we have a 10 person big computer department and here there would be no problems in hiring a foreigner, as the computer language is English. They could take foreign students for work placement.

The reply indicated that a closer cooperation between Centria and local companies was needed. The heads of the programmes should have a good picture of possibilities for foreign students in the companies. This would then also mean that Centria should have resources for lecturers to focus more on the job market. This company was willing to give work placement opportunities to foreign students studying information technology, but the lack of information has led to missed opportunities.

Company B. No knowledge of available foreign workforce in Kokkola. There should be a closer cooperation with Centria. The company's needs should be taken into consideration. Tailor made courses could be beneficial, as the company has invested in education of personnel.

The company wanted more cooperation with Centria and looked for tailor made courses for their personnel. This proved that activity from UASs among local companies was very important and would help foreign degree students finding job opportunities in the region and Finland.

Company C. Does not know the available foreign workforce in Kokkola. Centria should be active and provide companies with information. The global trend energy and environment should be seen in programmes.

The company wanted more information about Centria's degree programmes in English and also in Finnish. The employer gave ideas on programme content, which could help Centria develop the degree programmes to meet the require-

ments from companies. It would be important cooperation, in order to meet the third mission of higher education.

Company D. Cannot say that we know about the available foreign workforce. Centria should be more active as the employment office is rather passive. Have used own channels to find suitable workforce.

The company D would appreciate help from Centria with information on an available workforce. There had been situations when the company had called me as head of programme directly and asked for a suitable workforce. Teacher's networking with companies will be important.

Company E. Has got a picture via Centria. The role of Centria is very important. Work placement is a good way to get to know a foreign workforce.

The company had some information on the available workforce and appreciated work placement which they had good experience of. This company has been active in supporting Centria with foreign students by giving them work placement opportunities.

Company F. Has got information from the education field, cannot say that I personally know about the available foreign workforce, as foremen usually employ them. No clear picture of the foreign workforce in Kokkola. Centria's role is important.

The company's experiences of foreign students had given them a picture of the available foreign workforce in Kokkola, but pointed out Centria's role as important. The company representatives had also come to the university on several occasions and given students information about their company and what they required of students who come and look for a job. The company had been very open to cooperation with Centria and that was the reason why they had given many foreign students work placement opportunities and also part-time jobs.

Company G. Cannot say that we know the available foreign workforce in Kokkola. It would be good if Centria could provide the companies with a booklet on good experiences of employers with a foreign workforce. This could diminish the prejudices. Now word-of-mouth is the channel. Work placement involves costs for the employer and therefore, good experiences would improve the opportunities for the foreign degree students.

Company G went a step further in their thoughts about the available foreign workforce and they saw it important to give examples of good experiences in order to improve the opportunities for foreign degree students. The employer said that if you hear about success stories your interest will increase and you will become more aware about the situation. The interview gave me the feeling that they wanted to help, but first they have to get the right information.

Summary on findings for case study

The employers' replies were a surprise, after so many years of degree programmes in English and so many foreign students in the society; they clearly need more information from Centria UAS. To manage the situation with foreign degree students Centria should focus on the integration of the foreign students and also improve the intercultural competence skills among its personnel (Söderqvist, 2007). When the employees of Centria improve their understanding of foreign cultures they can also personally support the integration of foreign students into the society and thereby influence the students' opportunities to be employed. There should be resources to teachers to be more involved in supporting foreign degree students in getting work placement opportunities, assignments for thesis, and part-time job opportunities. This should not be considered as something extra to the ordinary work and it is the aim and purpose of UASs to contribute to and develop the surrounding society. One alternative to improve the situation was that Centria could have more activities and projects together with companies, which could lead to development of programmes and support students' possibilities to be employed.

6.8 Summary of Research Findings

In this chapter I have included the main findings of the research and how these findings could influence education given and Centria UAS's obligations when it comes to contributing and supporting foreign highly graduated students' employment possibilities. As employers appreciate transferable work skills, e.g., communication, initiative, ability to learn, decision-making and ability to tolerate ambiguity, UASs should provide the students with these skills (CIMO, Facts Express 5B/2014). The aim of the research was to find answers to the research questions and I have presented the main findings of employers' replies in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Replies were received to all questions and with explanations. The main indicators of employing a highly educated foreign workforce are presented in table form and derived from the interviews.

TABLE 2 Recruitment Strategy and Employers' Intentions

| Research question | Main findings |
|---|--|
| <p>Central question: What are the intentions of employers to hire a highly educated foreign workforce?</p> | <p>Need-driven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge of finding a workforce • Competition for a future skilled workforce • Enlargement of market • Find new customers in international markets • Foreigners are motivated and hardworking <p>Opportunity-driven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive influence on co-workers • Give an international brand to the company • Foreign highly educated workforce available in the area • Foreign nationality beneficial when operating in international markets <p>Capability-driven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign graduates competitive advantage when entering new markets • Future demand <p>In addition to the recruitment strategies the intentions are supported by the calculative and imperative commitments. Attitudes and subjective norms positive.</p> |

The research showed that the interviewed employers did not have any clear strategy to employ a foreign workforce. The main finding was however that recruitment strategy influences strongly intentions, as the employers found recruitment strategy reasons to employ a foreign workforce. The employers' comments revealed that they saw advantages with employing foreigners for certain tasks in the company. There were also situations where a foreign workforce was the only option and this would then reflect the reality of today and correspond to need-driven strategy (Luoma, 2009). It was also clear that their first strategic intention to hire a foreign workforce was related to international business, corresponding to opportunity-driven strategy to employ a foreign workforce (Luoma, 2009). The company's recruitment strategy supported by calculative and imperative commitments influenced strongly intention and behaviour (Sharma et al., 2003). There still remained the uncertainty that intention may not lead to behaviour despite all, and the risk for this was that the employers revealed that there was no written recruitment strategy to employ a foreign workforce. Changes in strategy and intention may occur during the recruitment process (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). My interpretation of the research findings was

however, that when there are strategic intentions it was more likely that companies will employ foreign workforce within a short period or in the future. I also experienced that if the recruitment intention was missing, changes during the recruitment process might happen more easily, especially when many of the companies used recruitment companies to test and make the first selection of the applicants. Both external and internal factors influenced the employment decisions; therefore it was unsure that actual behaviour would take place, even if there was a specific need. The research revealed that HRM planning seemed to be missing and this will be a challenge for Centria to contribute in finding the knowledge and skills companies would need in the future.

TABLE 3 Employers' Preparations for Future Diverse Needs

| Research question | Main findings |
|--|---|
| <p>Sub-question: How do employers in the region prepare themselves for meeting the diverse needs of their future employees?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No special preparations • Learnt from positive experiences • Want to develop a positive and attractive image of company Foremen trained to handle differences Investment in training of personnel |

Employers' positive attitude to a foreign workforce from the experiences they have had could be interpreted according the hermeneutical phenomenology approach that a development had happened (Raatikainen, 2004; Frick, 2014; Laine, 2001). Employers considered that their positive experience of foreign workforce had also prepared them for meeting the diverse needs of future employees. They understood that due to a different cultural background a foreign workforce needed more instructions in the beginning, it would also take time before the foreigners had adapted themselves to the importance of own activity, and to not try to hide things that went wrong. The foreign workforce may not be so active to come up with suggestions, therefore it is important to understand their behaviour and meet them half way. This depends on the cultural background and the need to build trust between employee and employer and vice versa (Hofstede, 1991). The employers saw that the cultural competence they had gained came from their experiences with having a foreign workforce in the company. The employers also found it important that the co-workers in the company developed their intercultural skills and understood different cultures, which would benefit the cooperation in the company.

TABLE 4 Employers' Commitments

| Research question | Main findings |
|--|--|
| <p>Sub-question: How strongly and on what bases are the employers committed to recruit foreign workforce?</p> | <p>Calculative commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlargement of market • Attracting new customers • Motivate co-workers • Company image • Customer service • Understand foreign business culture • Important resource for company • Foreign students attract talent • Improved intercultural competence among employees • Active, motivated workforce <p>Imperative commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a skilled workforce • Enlargement of market • Intercultural competence • Talent needed <p>Affective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company values • Equal treatment of applicants |

The commitments to a recruit foreign workforce were based mainly on calculative commitment and imperative commitment. The calculative commitments were the strongest commitment. Employers saw benefits with employing foreign degree students when they planned to enlarge their market share, enter new markets, in serving foreigners in Finland, finding new customers or agents in the international markets, improving the company image etc. Both calculative and imperative commitments show that there is a demand for workforce and would indicate that there are possibilities to become employed for a highly educated foreign workforce. The highly educated foreign workforce had knowledge of business culture, had negotiation skills, language skills, had maybe contacts already in the new market. The advantage was that the foreign workforce had already gained the knowledge and skills that it would take time for a Finnish employee to learn. A further advantage of a foreign workforce could be that serious mistakes due to cultural differences might be avoided. The imperative commitment was based on the reasoning that it is not that easy to attract a highly educated workforce in the future (Sharma et al., 2003). My interpretation was that the employers calculated carefully the advantages of hiring a foreign workforce. This was understandable as recruiting new personnel is expensive and employing the wrong person might lead to serious problems.

Employers realised that there might be lack of a workforce in their business field in the future and that they should soon start preparing themselves for this situation. Both calculative and imperative commitments are strong commitments, which indicate that employment of a foreign workforce will take place in the interviewed companies. There was indication on affective commitment, but I considered this as having a minor influence on employing a foreign workforce.

TABLE 5 Foreign Employees Recruited

| Research question | Main findings |
|---|---|
| <p>Sub-question: How many foreign employees have the employers recruited so far?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company A: several, about 40, both part-time and full-time and students on work placement • Company B: two long term and four short term 1-2 years, all with Russian background • Company C: two on work placement and one project worker • Company D: one full-time and two part-time workers • Company E: two full-time workers, who started as work placement workers • Company F: several part-time and work placement workers, some 10 workers • Company G: at the moment 100 workers • All informants had experience of a foreign workforce, which had led to a positive attitude. |

The replies to this question confirm that the employers had experienced a foreign workforce and more than with just one person. From this I could interpret that their positive attitude to foreigners was based on satisfaction with the foreigners' work contribution. This was actually a check-up question for messages in the interviews that related to intentional behaviour and reasoned action (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Mises, 1996; Hunter, 2009). This could also be explained by cause-reason, as employers have had positive experiences when they have hired a foreign workforce (Malle, 1991).

TABLE 6 Centria's Role in Recruiting a Foreign Workforce

| Research question | Main findings |
|---|---|
| <p>Sub-question: How could Centria UAS contribute to recruitment of a foreign workforce?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to local companies on available foreign students and international programmes • Close cooperation and integration with local companies • Projects with local companies which involve foreign students • Global trends should be noticed in programmes e.g. energy • Centria should be more active • Cooperation with local companies finding work placements opportunities for foreign students • Booklet with info on good experiences • Cooperation with recruitment companies and provide them with information on degree programmes and foreign students |

The employers came up with good suggestions for Centria UAS to react to. The general attitude was that companies wished there would be a deeper cooperation and they needed more information on the foreign available workforce. The suggestions should be noticed and acted upon, to meet the requirements from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2009:21; Sirén, 2012). The emphasis of UASs to support and participate in the development of surrounding areas, "third mission of HEIs" speak for a deeper cooperation (Kankaala et al., 2004). The follow-up on students' and employers' experiences of work placement will be important for Centria to see the opportunities and if problems have occurred. Sometimes minor misunderstandings can become big problems, which also underlines the importance of intercultural understanding (Hofstede, 1991). UASs need also to focus on intercultural competence of their employees and what internationalisation means in HEIs. Training of HEIs employees for new situations is essential for being successful, when it comes to supporting and integrating foreign students in the institution, surrounding society and local companies (Söderqvist, 2007).

Even if the employers did not always stress the language skills, Finnish and Swedish, they were considered to be important for the employability of foreign degree students. Centria should provide the foreign degree students with the necessary level of language skills in Finnish and Swedish. The findings showed that it was important to build up a network between employers and foreign students, then foreign students will get a better picture of the enterpris-

es and employers will get a better picture of the available foreign workforce. Here students in UASs have better possibilities to learn about the market as work placement is part of their studies, but it requires also an active role of the UASs. Good examples of this are work-related projects for the students, recruitment events, and alumni cooperation.

7 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This research has focused on understanding and interpreting employers' recruitment intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. The reason for the research was that the foreign degree students, who had graduated with high and good marks found it very challenging to become employed in the Kokkola region. My personal opinion was that the society was losing talented employees, who could contribute to the development of the local society with their knowledge and skills. The empirical part was based on a case-study, where seven local company representatives, informants, were interviewed forming one case. The aim was to get a picture of employers' plans and recruitment intentions to hire a highly educated foreign workforce, and what might happen during the recruitment process that would influence foreign degree students' possibilities to become or not to become employed in the Kokkola region. The research also wanted to find out how the employers in the region saw the employment situation and Centria's role, and how and if, they had prepared themselves for meeting the diverse needs of their future employees. In order to interpret the intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce, an essential part of the research was to find out how committed the employers were to recruit a foreign workforce. As intention leading to behaviour was also based on experiences of a foreign workforce the research needed to find out how many foreign employees the companies had recruited so far and how the employers had experienced a foreign workforce. The research found that the employers had a rather positive attitude to a foreign workforce.

In order to provide the foreign degree students with good possibilities to become employed in the area, the research aimed also at finding out employers' expectations on how Centria USA could contribute. As employability of graduates is important for financing of HEI, it was essential for Centria to have a clear picture, if the companies in the surrounding area had any plans to hire a foreign workforce and why. The research findings could also contribute to the discussions in general on having HEI programmes in English. Based on the research finding the aim was to form a potential hypothesis which later could be tested in an inductive research approach. The research received answers to research

questions, a picture of employers' recruitment intentions could be formed, necessary information was found, and a hypothesis could be suggested.

7.1 Conclusion and Discussion on Research Findings

Researches in social science do not produce the absolute truth, but interpretations of a phenomenon. This research wanted to add knowledge and improve understanding of employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign work force. As an abductive research approach was used the aim was not to test a hypothesis, but to present a potential hypothesis based on the interpretations and explanations received. The major criticism of case studies is that it is not possible to generalize from one or a small number of cases. The hypothesis does not claim to be true itself, but there are grounds for thinking that the proposed hypothesis might be true, and thereby the research meets the ground also for using abduction as research approach. My research questions were answered and the main question revealed that if there was a recruitment strategy and commitment in the employers' plans, the intentions would more likely lead to behaviour. My interpretation of the case was that I received information on which I could draw conclusions and present a hypothesis.

The potential hypothesis from this research would be that; recruitment plans influence strongly on employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce, if however there is not commitment involved, there is no guarantee that intention will lead to behaviour.

My research findings supported this proposed hypothesis. One of the informants had a very clear intention to hire a foreign workforce in the near future and was also committed to find suitable employees. The other informants' replies indicated that there was recruitment plans involved when hiring a foreign workforce. Commitments to hire a foreign workforce were found, but it was not clear how soon these commitments would lead to behaviour. The reality and findings in my research provided good information on possible employability of a highly educated foreign workforce in the Kokkola area. Information received can be considered useful for the foreign graduate students and for Centria, and should be taken into account when developing the degree programmes in English. The importance of close cooperation with the local companies was also revealed in the research, the employers did not have a clear picture of available foreign workforce. The findings also gave information on the importance of experience of a foreign workforce; employers revealed a positive attitude to a foreign workforce based on their experience. This indicated that work placement in local companies was important for improving foreign graduates' employability.

The aim was to find out which factors influenced employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce. In FIGURE 8 I have shown factors

influencing decisions taken, and I have chosen the three factors that were researched and analysed: Recruitment strategy, Intention and Commitment. I have not made research on economy and labour market conditions as I considered them as the base for the development of the companies and recruitment strategies. My assumption was that when economy and labour markets function, the other three factors, are key factors and are relevant for hiring a foreign workforce. I have however considered that the findings I have received can give a good picture of the situation on the local labour market. The findings are also relevant for Centria to analyse its challenges and possibilities for supporting employment of a foreign workforce in the Kokkola area. The theory and research design used, support the research aim and findings in this research. The hermeneutical phenomenology approach used in this research found also that due to positive experiences of a foreign workforce there has been a development in employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce. The starting point was my own experiences when the degree programmes in English were introduced. During the years employers have been more willing to give foreign students work placement opportunities, which again have led to employment. The research also showed that all informants had received experience of a foreign workforce way of temporary and longer time employments. This showed the importance of that Centria should focus and continue on cooperation with companies, so that employers' experience, attitudes, and beliefs become positive to a foreign workforce and lead to employment.

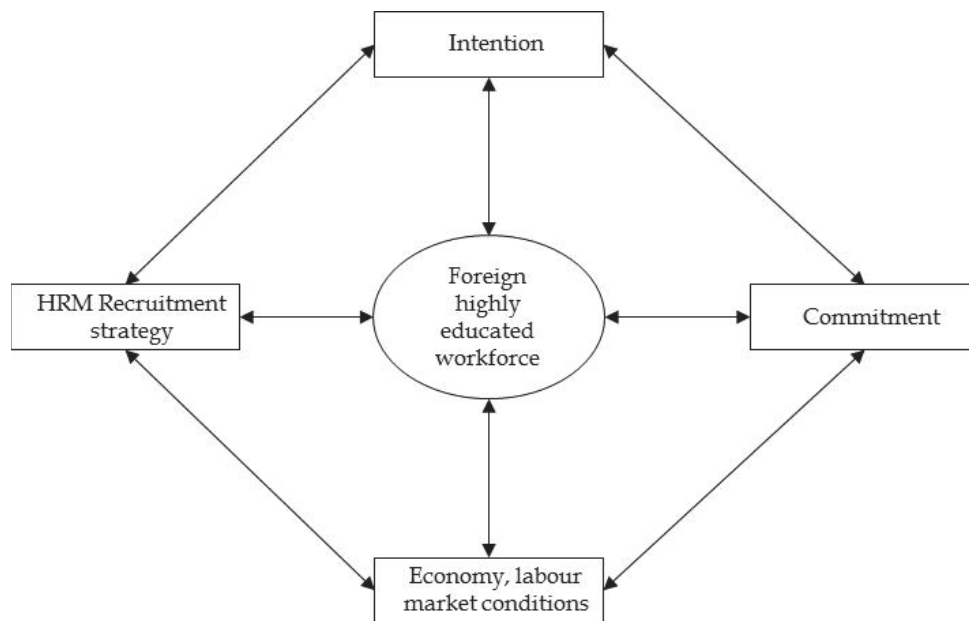


FIGURE 8 Employability of a Foreign Workforce Based on the Research

I have in FIGURE 8 showed what the research revealed to me and how challenging for a foreign workforce the recruitment and employers' decision process can be. Now I have put the highly educated workforce in the centre and the main influencing factors around. The arrows go between all boxes and to the centre, and in both directions. This meant that to become employed it was not only employers' decision to employ a foreigner that led to result; all other factors did also influence employment. Within each factor there were findings influencing decision making. I did not analyse economy and labour market conditions in my research, but I could find them as background in employers' intention to recruitment in general. The economic situation and labour market conditions cannot be excluded when analysing highly educated foreign degree students' possibilities to become employed, but they are also factors which Centria UAS cannot influence directly. The research findings were that when all factors were in harmony, foreign degree highly educated degree students had chances to become employed in the Kokkola region.

Starting from SHRM and recruitment decisions, the following factors influenced employability of a foreign workforce: *recruitment strategy* (Järvinen, 1996; Baker, 1999; Luoma, 2009; Dessler, 2008), *talent management* (Hughes & Rog, 2008; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Guthridge et al., 2008), *employability of a foreign workforce* (Pavlin, 2010; Hopponen & Lahtinen, 2008; Shumilova & Cai, 2011; Rosso et al., 1995; Sippola et al., 2006; Egge, 1999; Ala-Mutka, 2008; Nuncan et al., 2005; Kane & Palmer, 1995; Cai, 2012), *recruitment decisions* (Ajzen, 1991; Kalliomäki, 2008; Cai, 2012; Carmeli et al., 2012), *finding the right workforce* (Moy & Lam, 2003; Demos, 2013), and *challenges and benefits of a foreign workforce* (Hofstede, 1991; Kähkönen, 2013; Söderqvist, 2005; Devine et al., 2007). There was a difference when hiring a foreign workforce compared to hiring a Finnish workforce, as there was according to my experience and findings a deeper screening and evaluating of challenges and benefits with a foreign workforce. Employers' and co-workers' intercultural competence skills also influenced attitudes to a foreign workforce. My experience has been that foreign degree students have to be more active and work harder on their employability skills to get a chance to become employed. From the research I could not generalise that the informants would have looked at all factors involved in SHRM. The biggest lack was found concerning talent management, which indicated that the employers were not very much worried about future lack of a skilled workforce. As some of the informants also used recruitment services I could not for sure draw conclusions that the foreign applicants were treated equally with the Finnish applicants.

The philosophy of intention was covering three aspects: *intention for the future*, *intention with which someone acts*, and *intentional action* (Anscombe, 1963). Attitudes and beliefs form intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). There were three components influencing behaviour: decision to execute and action, decision about when to execute, and decision whether to execute or not (Brass & Haggard, 2008). Intention can also be divided into: *intending as doing*, *intention in action*, *intention and the good*, *intentions as plans*, and *intention and belief*. In-

tention was therefore difficult to measure and factors influencing employers' intentions may vary from moment to moment, and situation to situation. The findings related to intention were positive, all employers said that there was no reason for not employing a foreign workforce if the applicants met the requirements and had the right skills and knowledge. This indicated that the foreign degree students can be employed in the Kokkola region after graduation. The research found that the employers had a positive attitude and also the positive subjective norm indicated intention to hire a foreign workforce. The challenge was to estimate how serious and binding employers' intentions were and would they lead to behaviour. I had to make assumptions that they may most likely lead to behaviour, but the timing was another aspect. What employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce did not reveal was if they intended to hire in the near future or if these plans were for later in the future.

From the interviews I could interpret that recruitment intentions were dependent on commitments. The four types of commitment: affective commitment, normative commitment, calculative commitment, and imperative commitment (Sharma et al., 2003) were used when I tried to find out which type of commitment could be interpreted from the interviews. When commitment was analysed, calculative commitment was outstanding, also imperative commitment influenced employers' intention. These commitments would strongly also influence behaviour. I considered the commitment aspect important and relevant for intention leading to behaviour. When adding recruitment strategy, intention, and commitment I could interpret a possibility for foreign workforce to be employed. My conclusion was that if there is a recruitment strategy and intention to hire a foreign workforce, there must also be a strong commitment before intention will lead to behaviour and action.

7.2 Critical Evaluation of the Research

The chosen research plan, questions and aim of the study had a strong influence on how the research process was constructed and carried out. The research process was based on a hermeneutical phenomenology approach, aiming at interpreting and understanding the phenomenon employers had experienced with a foreign workforce. The central question kept me on the track during the process and the sub-questions contributed to the interpretation and evaluation of employers' recruitment intentions to hire a foreign workforce. My own pre-experiences of employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce helped me during the interviews to focus on the research aim. There is however the risk that my pre-experiences influenced my interpretation. From the very beginning the decision was made to focus on a qualitative research method and not statistics, which are the traditional criteria for reliability and validity. There are always risks with a small size research, that factors which are not very common may be overlooked and then the opposite that a few replies can have a too large influ-

ence on the results. There is also the risk with a single-case study that it reflects uniqueness and artifactual conditions (Yin, 2014, 63-67).

No single universal set of tactics can test the overall quality of scientific research; the criteria should always be constructed and discussed specifically in relation to the features of a particular study. I described to the informants the purpose of my research and that they would remain anonymous, and my interpretation was, that I this way received more sensitive information. The informants chosen represented different business fields, and thereby provided Centria and the different degree programmes offered in English with useful information. My aim was not to describe recruitment intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce in different business fields, but the common phenomena related to hiring a foreign workforce. The reason for conducting the interviews at a late stage in the research process was to find out and interpret the development of employers' beliefs, attitude, intention, and experiences of a foreign workforce. The research questions were open and probative in nature and reflected the intent of the study. This research with its interpretivist approach aimed to find out how employers made decisions related to a foreign workforce and in finding the right workforce. The explanations may not be clear and simple; they may be open-ended (Grix, 2010, 77-87). The interpretivist paradigm in this research aimed to understand the society, employers and their perceptions of their role in employing a foreign workforce. Critics can be expressed that this was a too small-scale research. By choosing the companies I had been in contact with earlier I considered it possible to find out if there had been a change in employers' attitudes due to experiences of foreign workforce and hear their views on intention to hire foreign workforce, and thereby this small-scale research would defend its place.

Relevance

My research has a theoretical, scientific and practical relevance which are explained in the following chapter on contribution of the dissertation. The research has been of both personal interest and relevance, and thereby also motivated the researcher to proceed with the work. The theoretical relevance in the findings is related to HRM and recruitment, commitment and intention. There might be weaknesses in the research, but still there remains the theoretical and academic relevance of the research. The research issue was to find perspectives on a phenomenon or a process. The practical relevance can be seen from governmental aspect related to policy on education, and for UASs and Centria on curricula development, support to foreign degree students, and cooperation with companies. By getting a picture of employers' intentions and what would lead to action, Centria can better prepare the foreign degree students for working life in the local companies.

Reliability

Reliability is a concept which is used for testing and evaluating quantitative research, but the most important test of a qualitative research is its quality. In

Great Britain and Europe the terminology of reliability and validity are used in qualitative inquiry, there are authors who say reliability and validity can be applied to all research because explanations are central to all research (Morse et al., 2002). A qualitative research aims to understanding of a phenomenon or situation and has the purpose of generating understanding. To ensure reliability trustworthiness is crucial (Golafshani, 2003). As the research design was supposed to represent a logical set of statements the quality can be judged in relation to certain logical tests. The reliability of a research demands it should be possible to evaluate the research based on documented information (Koskinen et al., 2005, 253-277). To meet the reliability I have used study protocol and developed a narrative database of the recorded interviews. The narrative data in this research is the interviewees' stories, replies, and our discussions. The interviews were targeted and focused on the research topic; it was also insightful as there was room for interviewees' perceptions, attitudes, and meanings. Especially the sub-questions in my research gave possibilities for the interviewees' personal opinions. The general picture given by employers of a foreign workforce was positive, which could also be interpreted that they did not want to reveal too much, and this was something I had to take into consideration.

Validity

It has been said that the problem with qualitative research is that the researchers find what they want to find. The risks with qualitative research are; that you see relationships when there are none; you identify relationships inaccurately and reject them even if they are correct, and you may ask the wrong questions. The problems seem to be in assessing the validity of qualitative research, not to specify the link between studied relations and the versions provided by the researcher (Flick, 2014, 439-507; Butler-Kisber, 2010, 14-15). A qualitative research itself is open ended and less structured than a quantitative research. Johnson (1997) discusses the three types of Trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, and data dependability are concepts that should be met. Therefore, Yin (2014, 40-50) has identified tactics for dealing with this when doing case study research. As this study consists of only a qualitative study it constructs tests that are related to internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Luoma, 2000, 157-163). Internal validity, or liability means using several methods during research, and external validity, or transferability means describing the research so that the picture can be transferred and used in other researches (Koskinen et al., 2005, 253-277). In order to construct validity I have used multiple sources of evidence, the seven informants interviewed. The evidence received has formed a chain in order to draw assumptions on employers' intentions. My own experiences, the changes in attitudes and intentions, as well as the neighbourhood changes in society contribute to the validity of the research. I have also read studies related to foreigners' employability possibilities, and they match my topic. I have focused on internal and external validity; I have tried to do pattern making and explanation building as well as used theory in the single cases and used replication logic in the multiple-case study.

7.3 Contribution of the Dissertation

The research was in nature projective, which means that it could not produce the final truth about the phenomenon, but it is part of a bigger content (Varto, 1992, 18). The contribution of this research can be divided into three parts: theoretical and scientific contribution, practical contribution to understanding employers' intention to hire a highly educated foreign workforce, and practical contribution to education and development of degree programmes.

Theoretical and scientific contribution

This research has a strong practical orientation, but there are also factors that emphasise the theoretical and scientific contribution. The multidisciplinary approach and the research findings integrate the view of recruitment strategy and intention in the recruitment process. The study tried to find a new perspective in the recruitment process and decision making, where both the strategic business aspect and psychological behaviour are analysed. The research also analysed commitment and the types of commitment involved leading to intention to hire a foreign workforce. HRM of today has a wider aspect and when employing people the company strategy is of great importance, which means that strategic recruitment intentions and commitment strengthen employment possibilities. The research enriches views of the employers' intention to hire a highly educated workforce and interpretation of employability of this workforce.

The research produces a deeper understanding of intention and behaviour in recruitment situations which seem to be more challenging, when foreign degree students are part of the process. As Ajzen (1991) stated, planned intention does not necessary lead to behaviour. Even though the company may have a recruitment strategy to employ a foreign workforce, the result is also influenced by commitment. From the empiric material could be interpreted that commitment plays an important role if intention shall lead to behaviour. The main types of commitment found in the research were calculative commitment and imperative commitment. From the research was found that there are actually three factors influencing behaviour; intention, recruitment strategy, and commitment. The research adapts a general intention model in the context of recruitment, and the causal history and enabling factors according to Malle (1999) also proved to be important factors, if recruitment strategy and intention should lead to behaviour.

The contribution of this research offers stimuli to the talent management discussions. The lack of a potential workforce in the future may lead to introducing talent management as a part of human resource management in the local companies' recruitment strategy. This appears from the research when employers are planning to expand their markets into areas where cultural competence is one of the success factors. Here the employers saw possibilities for foreign graduates to be employed, but their HRM policy did not show evidence of TM strategy being introduced, instead the interpretation was that they only act

when there is a demand. My conclusion was that the interviewed employers should focus more on TM to secure the right workforce for future needs.

Practical understanding of employers' intention to hire a foreign workforce

The research gave many new aspects of employers' thoughts and intentions when it comes to hiring a foreign workforce. The main finding is that behaviour is not always rational even if the intentions are. There are many factors during the recruitment process that may change employers' behaviour, e.g. external factors such as the supply of workforce, economy, and competition on market. The internal factors also influence decisions, e.g. beliefs, experiences, co-workers' attitude, and intercultural competence of employer. The interviewees' cultural competence was based on the experience they had received from a foreign workforce, however no deeper understanding seemed to have occurred. In general the attitude among the interviewees were positive to a foreign workforce, but there is however no guarantee they employ foreigners.

The research revealed that if recruitment intention to a hire foreign workforce leads to behaviour, a HR plan and commitment improve the situation. That means that a larger aspect has to be considered to get reliable interpretations of the phenomenon. My research showed that a deeper integration between UASs and companies would meet companies' recruitment reasons related to need, opportunity, and capability and thereby improve foreign highly educated workforce to become employed.

The research provides information on employers' expectations and experiences of a foreign workforce and their influences on the recruitment processes and behaviour. The interviews revealed that employers' attitudes to foreign degree students were more positive now that compared to when the degree programmes in English started. The research showed that despite positive experiences and met expectations there are still many uncertain factors that influence employers' behaviour.

The dissertation produces additional understanding of the topic of available foreign degree students and a foreign workforce in Finland and Kokkola region. The research also showed the strong connection between commitment and real action in employing foreign workforce. In addition the findings show that companies continuously need information on available workforce and a deeper cooperation between UASs and companies is essential. Even though there are big changes in working life, the local companies do not employ and utilise the available international experts educated in Centria UAS.

Practical contribution to education and development of degree programmes

The research provides Centria UAS with good information related to expectations of employers in employing a foreign workforce. This again provides programmes with information that they should provide students with good knowledge and skills, but today also focus more on developing students' personal traits. The personal traits influence strongly employers' decision making during the recruitment process. It is also important to listen to companies'

needs and expectations related to knowledge provided by Centria. Programmes should regularly be updated to meet the requirements, and then the third mission of UASs would be better completed.

The employers in the Kokkola region do not have enough information on the available foreign degree students, which means Centria UAS, should have a closer cooperation with the local companies and provide them with more detailed information. As positive experiences of a foreign workforce improves possibilities to become employed, Centria should also focus on work placement and projects together with companies, where foreign students are part, and companies have the possibility to experience working with foreign degree students. This would improve employers' attitudes and enlarge students' network. Using good experiences of employed foreign degree students should be marketed more to the local companies. This would also influence building trust for employing a foreign workforce. Centria should actively focus on helping the foreign students to build networks with the enterprises in the region; this would be beneficial for both employers and students.

This research also adds information to discussions in the region concerning employment of foreign degree students, employers' views, and need of degree programmes in English to contribute to the development of the economy. Companies expect that foreign degree students meet their requirements and therefore, it is important that Centria has an ongoing up-dating of programme curricula. The current and right information is received from a close cooperation with the companies. In addition Centria should also have close contacts with recruitment companies and provide them with information on degree programmes offered in English, curricula of the programmes, and also information on foreign students studying in Centria UAS. Recruitment companies seemed to have an active and important role also in the interviewed SMEs' recruitment process.

7.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Since the increase of foreign students in Finland, research on topics related to foreigners in Finland has also increased and more information is available for companies and UASs. But still there are several aspects from which more research could be made. When working with my own research I found interesting research topics which would be useful to find out more information on. My suggestions for further research could e.g. be:

UASs and in this case Centria UAS should have follow-up research on employers' recruitment strategies and intentions to employ foreign degree students. It could be a case study, but now also involve more informants and on different levels from each company. By including also middle management broader information could be gained on attitudes concerning experiences and employment of foreign degree students. A new research could use an inductive research approach to test the hypothesis of research findings in this research.

The research could also include several case studies representing different study fields to get a comparison of the cases involved. Centria has to keep up-to-date with companies' expectation to provide a workforce for the market and contribute to the economic development. As part of financing from the Ministry of Education and Culture is based on the employment of students after graduation it is important to follow the development. The Government has planned tuition fees for students coming from outside European Economic Area (hereafter EEA) this would mean that foreign students applying for study places need to have information on work opportunities and employability after graduation. If there is a positive picture of employment possibilities it is also easier to attract talented foreign students (Cai, 2012).

One important research field would be to compare the employability of foreign degree students based on their cultural background. Hofstede (1991) and others interested in cultural competence have made research on differences in culture. UASs could use this information when marketing their programmes abroad and then also use employability as an advantage for studying in Finland. My own thoughts are that even if Centria is part of The Finnish Network of International Programmes (hereafter FINNIPS) and cooperate on planning entrance exams and joint admission, Centria should focus on marketing its programmes to students who are likely to be employed in local companies after graduation. This type of research would also support Centria and local companies in finding a suitable workforce.

As work placement contributes to employers' experiences of foreign workforce and improves foreign degree students building networks to local companies, a research on work placement could be relevant. Centria could make research on how its foreign students have experienced work placement completed in Finnish companies and how Centria better could prepare and support the students for the job market. Students' expectations and experiences compared with employers' perceptions and experiences, would be useful information for both parties. This could help in developing programmes and to improve students' employment possibilities and at the same time employers' experiences and cultural competence. This kind of research could also deliver more detailed information on employers' demands related to knowledge and skills.

Another research area could be local companies' recruitment policy and process related to TM and why the available skilled foreign workforce is not used, even if companies have enlargement strategies in international markets. My research covered TM only in the aspect how employers looked at lack of skilled workforce in the future. This research topic would also provide UASs with useful information and prepare them for developing a deeper cooperation with the companies, support them, and thereby meet the demands of the "third mission.

These suggested researches could also support UASs and Centria in their plans of exporting education. As the Ministry of Education and Culture is now opening the possibilities for HEIs to export education a marketing advantage would be to have deeper and genuine information on knowledge and skills which employers value.

FINNISH SUMMARY (SUOMENKIELINEN YHTEENVETO)

Yrittäjien aikomus palkata korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa Kokkolan seudulla – Vaikutus korkeakoulutukseen

Tutkimuksen lähtöoletuksena on, että yrittäjien aikomus palkata korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa edesauttaisi Kokkolan alueen yritysten menestymistä ja parantaisi kilpailukykyä. Siten vaikutettaisiin myös alueen taloudelliseen kehitykseen ja hyvinvointiin. Monikulttuurisuus, sen ymmärtäminen ja hyväksyminen ovat kilpailuetu pk-yritysten vienti- ja tuontitoiminnalle. Kokkolalaisille yrityksille on tarjolla osaamista ja eri kulttuurien tuntemusta Centria-ammattikorkeakoulussa opiskelleiden ulkomaalaisten tutkinto-opiskelijoiden kautta. Tärkeätä olisi, että kysyntä ja tarjonta kohtaisivat.

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on analysoida yrittäjien aikomusta palkata korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa. Samalla tutkimus auttaa Centria-ammattikorkeakoulua ymmärtämään, minkälaista työvoimaa yritykset haluavat. Tuottamalla oikeata osaamista työmarkkinoille Centria vastaa myös opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön ns. kolmannen tehtävän tavoitteisiin: koulutuksen tavoitteena on yhteiskunnallinen vaikuttavuus ja alueen kehittyminen.

Tässä tutkimuksessa halusin kartoittaa, onko olemassa korrelaatiota Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun antaman korkeakoulutuksen, korkeasti koulutettujen ulkomaalaisten määrän ja yrittäjien palkkauskäytösten välillä koskien korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa. Sen lisäksi halusin tutkia, miten yrittäjät ovat valmistautuneet tulevaan työvoiman tarpeeseen sekä kuinka voimakkaasti sitoutuneita he ovat. Se, kuinka monta ulkomaalaista työntekijää he ovat jo palkanneet, antaa kuvan siitä, millä tavalla yrittäjät kokevat ulkomaalaisen työvoiman palkkaamisen.

Tutkimuksen pääkysymys oli: Millaiset aiomukset yrittäjillä on palkata korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa? Alakysymykset olivat: Miten alueen yritykset valmistautuvat kohtaamaan tulevan työvoiman erilaiset tarpeet? Kuinka voimakkaasti ja millä perusteella yrittäjät sitoutuvat palkkaamaan ulkomaalaista työvoimaa? Kuinka monta ulkomaalaista yrittäjät ovat tähän saakka palkanneet? Miten Centria-ammattikorkeakoulu voi edesauttaa ulkomaalaisen työvoiman palkkaamisessa? Vastaukset näihin kysymyksiin voivat myös auttaa Centriaa kehittämään kansainvälisiä koulutusohjelmiaan. Tutkimusalue on rajattu Kokkolan seutuun, koska suurin osa Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun ulkomaalaisista tutkinto-opiskelijoista opiskelee Kokkolassa, ja suuri osa alueen yrityksistä harjoittaa ulkomaankauppaa.

Olen tässä tutkimuksessa kartoittanut myös henkilöstöhallinnon nykytilaa: Talent Managementia, palkkaamisessa tarvittavia ominaisuuksia, palkkauspäätöksiä, oikean työvoiman löytämistä sekä ulkomaalaisen työvoiman palkkaamiseen liittyviä haasteita ja etuja. Tutkiessani yrittäjien aiomuksia palkata ulkomaalaista työvoimaa hyödynsin henkilöstöhallinnon palkkaamisstrategioita.

Henkilöstöhallinnon tavoitteena on houkutella, pitää ja motivoida työntekijöitä ja siten voida valita paras mahdollinen työvoima. Tämä tutkimus on perustunut tarve-, mahdollisuus- ja kykyperusteisiin palkkaamispäätöksissä. Palkkaamispäätökset ovat tämän tutkimuksen keskiössä, koska omien kokemuksieni mukaan yllättäviä muutoksia saattaa tapahtua palkkaamisprosessin aikana. Yrittäjien avoin asenne ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita kohtaan edesauttaa opiskelijoiden työnsaantimahdollisuuksia. Vaikka tällä hetkellä ei ehkä koeta, että työvoimasta olisi pulaa, tulevaisuudessa Kokkolassakin työvoiman tarjonta pienenee ikääntyvän väestön takia.

Tutkiessani yrittäjien aikoja palkata ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita olen hyödyntänyt Anscomben intentio-filosofiaa, Ajzenin sekä Ajzenin ja Fischbeinin suunnitellun ja perusteen käyttäytymisen teoriaa. Anscombe jakaa intention tulevaisuuden intention, toiminnan intention ja intentionaaliseen toimintaan eli toiminnan suuntautuneisuuteen. Analysoin yrittäjien intentiota suhteessa heidän palkkaamisstrategiaansa yhdistettynä intention ja sitoutuneisuuteen.

Sharma et al., ovat jakaneet sitoutuneisuuden neljään tyyppiin: affektiiviseen, normatiiviseen, laskelmoivaan ja imperatiiviseen. Tässä tutkimuksessa ilmeni, että laskelmoiva ja imperatiivinen sitoutuminen ovat realistisia. Intentio teoriana edesauttoi ymmärtämään paremmin yrittäjien aikoja ja käyttäytymistä ulkomaalaisten palkkaamispäätöksissään. Tutkimukseni perusta on ajatuksessa, jonka mukaan ulkoiset ja sisäiset tekijät vaikuttavat yrittäjien aikomukseen ja käyttäytymiseen. Sisäiset tekijät ovat uskomukset ja arviointi, jotka vaikuttavat yrittäjien asenteisiin. Normatiiviset uskomukset ja motivaatio toteuttaa jotakin, vaikuttavat subjektiivisiin normeihin. Asenteet ja subjektiiviset normit vaikuttavat intention ja käyttäytymiseen. Näiden lisäksi vielä tarkastususkomukset ja odotetut käyttäytymistarkastukset vaikuttavat aikomukseen ja käyttäytymiseen. Uutta tässä tutkimuksessa ihmisten intention ja käyttäytymiseen liittyen ovat ulkoiset tekijät: palkkaamisstrategia ja sitoutumiset sekä se, miten ne vaikuttavat korkeasti koulutettujen ulkomaalaisten palkkaamisessa, jotka olen ottanut mukaan tarkasteluun. Aina on olemassa epävarmoja tekijöitä ja riskejä, jotka saattavat muuttaa käyttäytymistä.

Tutkimukseni on laadullinen, ja olen haastatellut seitsemää alueen yritystä eri toimialueelta. Haastattelu oli teemarakenteinen ja interaktiivinen, ja nauhoitin kaikki haastattelut. Informanttien vastauksista muodostui case-tutkimus. Haastateltavat olivat joko toimitusjohtajia tai henkilöstöjohtajia, ja tulkintani oli, että heiltä saan parhaimmat tiedot yritysten aikoista palkata korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa. Tavoitteeni oli ymmärtää sosiaaliset toimijat, yrittäjät, tarkoitukset ja tulkinta sekä se, mikä on tärkeätä ulkomaalaisten työntekijöiden palkkaamisessa. Tutkimukseni perustui tutkimuskysymyksiin eikä tiettyyn menetelmään. Tutkimusmenetelmä oli abduktiivinen, mikä antoi paremman ymmärryksen tutkimuksen tuloksista ja tulkinnasta. Lähestymistapa oli hermeneuttis-fenomenologinen filosofia, koska oli kyse vastausten tulkinnasta ja kehityksen analysoimisesta. Laineen (2001) rakentama hermeneuttis-fenomenologien lähestymistapa oli lähtökohtanani. Lähestyin ongelmaa useasta

näkökulmasta ja sain riittävästi informaatiota voidakseni analysoida sitä ja rakentaa mahdollista hypoteesia.

Empiirisen aineiston olen analysoinut seuraavien teemojen kautta: palkkaamisstrategia ja yrittäjien aikomukset, sitoutuminen palkata ulkomaalaista työvoimaa, rekrytointiprosessi, odotukset ulkomaalaisesta työvoimasta, kokemukset ulkomaalaisesta työvoimasta, valmistautuminen ulkomaalaisen työvoiman palkkaamiseen ja käsitys saatavissa olevasta ulkomaalaisesta työvoimasta. Näiden teemojen vastausten kautta pystyin analysoimaan vastaukset tutkimuskysymyksiini.

Vaikutukset rekrytointistrategiaan olivat seuraavat: puute osaavasta työvoimasta tulevaisuudessa, markkina-alueen laajentaminen, parannettava palvelu kotimarkkinoilla ja kansainvälisillä markkinoilla, uusien asiakkaiden löytäminen, motivoituneen työvoiman ylläpito, yrityksen imagon parantaminen, ja ollakseen kiinnostava työnantaja. Nämä tekijät vaikuttavat yrittäjien intention palkata ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita.

Analysoituani yrittäjien sitoutumista palkata ulkomaalaisia totesin sitoumusten olevan laskelmoivia ja imperatiivisia. Yrittäjät kertoivat, että ulkomaalaiset ovat samanvertaisia kuin suomalaiset rekrytointitilanteessa: paras hakija saa työpaikan. Tutkimuksesta ilmeni, että myös pienet yritykset hyödyntävät ja testaavat hakijat rekrytointitoimistojen kautta. Yhteenvetona voin todeta, että yrittäjillä oli positiivinen kuva ulkomaalaisesta työvoimasta perustuen työkokemuksiin. Vaikka myös negatiivisia kokemuksia tuli esiin, työnantajat sanoivat ymmärtävänsä ongelmia nyt paremmin ja että he olivat oppineet niistä. Yrittäjien asenne ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita kohtaan oli nyt positiivisempi, ja he näkivät ulkomaalaiset opiskelijat vaihtoehtona palkatessaan uutta työvoimaa.

Kehitystä oli tapahtunut epäröivästä kannasta positiivisempaan suuntaan, mikä myös vahvistaa Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun koulutettujen tutkinto-opiskelijoiden työllistymistä alueelle. Yleisenä johtopäätöksenä voin todeta, että yrittäjillä ei ollut selkeää strategiaa palkata ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita, eivätkä he olleet valmistautuneet tulevaisuutta varten. He eivät myöskään olleet huolissaan oikean työvoiman löytämisestä. Vaikka Centria-ammattikorkeakoulussa on voinut opiskella englannin kielellä monta vuotta ja ulkomaalaisia opiskelijoita näkyy yhteiskunnassa yhä enemmän, yrittäjillä ei ollut selkeätä kuvaa korkeasti koulutetun ulkomaalaisen työvoiman tarjonnasta. Tässä on nähtävissä selvä viesti Centria-ammattikorkeakoululle: tarvetta on tiiviiseen yhteistyöhön yrittäjien kanssa. Centrian tulee kertoa yrittäjille ja rekrytointiyrityksille koulutusohjelmista, niiden sisällöistä ja ulkomaalaisista opiskelijoista tarkemmin.

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli ymmärtää ja tulkita yrittäjien rekrytointi-intentioita ulkomaisten tutkinto-opiskelijoiden suhteen. Ne ulkomaalaiset opiskelijat, jotka olivat halukkaita jäämään Kokkolan alueelle, kokivat vaikeaksi tulla palkatuiksi. Oma mielipiteeni onkin, että alue menettää tästä syystä paljon osaamista.

Hypoteesiksi voisi esittää, että *rekrytointisuunnitelmat vaikuttavatkin voimakkaasti yrittäjien intentioon palkata korkeasti koulutettua ulkomaalaista työvoimaa, mutta ellei sitoutumista ole, ei ole myöskään takuuta siitä, että intentio johtaa käyttäytymiseen*. Vaikutti siltä, että intentiota oli palkata ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita, mutta ajankohta jäi epäselväksi.

Tutkimuksessani olen tutkinut henkilöstöhallinnon rekrytointistrategiaa, intentiota ja yritysten sitoutumista ulkomaalaisten korkeasti koulutettujen opiskelijoiden palkkaamiseen. Ulkopuoliset tekijät, kuten taloudellinen tilanne ja työmarkkinat olen jättänyt tutkimukseni ulkopuolelle.

Tämän tutkimuksen kontribuutio on kolmiosainen: teoreettinen ja tieteellinen; pragmaattinen ymmärrys yrittäjien intentiosta palkata korkeasti koulutettuja ulkomaalaisia tutkinto-opiskelijoita sekä pragmaattinen opetuksen ja koulutusohjelmien kehittäminen. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli yrittää löytää uusia perspektiivejä rekrytointiprosessissa ja päätöksen teossa, jolloin sekä strategista rekrytointia ja psykologista käyttäytymistä analysoitiin. Tutkimus tuottaa syventävää ymmärrystä intentiosta ja käyttäytymisestä haastavimmissa rekrytointitilanteissa. Tutkimus tarjoaa myös virikkeitä Talent Management -keskusteluihin. Pragmaattinen osio antoi monta uutta näkökulmaa yrittäjien ajatuksista ja intentiosta palkata ulkomaalaista työvoimaa.

Tärkein löydös oli, ettei käyttäytyminen ole aina rationaalista, vaikka aikomuksia on. Rekrytoinnin aikana monet tekijät voivat muuttaa työnantajien käyttäytymistä, sekä ulkoisia että sisäisiä tekijöitä. Jotta intentio johtaisi rekrytointiin, palkkaamissuunnitelma ja sitoutuminen edesauttavat tilannetta. Tutkimus tuottaa tietoa yrittäjien odotuksista ja kokemuksista ulkomaalaisesta työvoimasta. Lisäksi tutkimus antaa lisäymmärrystä saatavilla olevasta ulkomaisesta työvoimasta Suomessa ja Kokkolassa. Tutkimus antaa pragmaattista tietoa koulutukselle; sen kehittämiselle ja Centria-ammattikorkeakoululle. Tiedon levittäminen koulutuksen tilanteesta edesauttaa ulkomaalaisten tutkinto-opiskelijoiden työllistymistä Kokkolan seudulle.

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APPENDIX 1: GRADUATED FOREIGN STUDENTS

Foreign degree students in Centria UAS

| Year | Students in number | New students | Degrees completed | Degrees in % | Degrees in whole Finland in % |
|------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 2005 | 101 | 41 | 7 | 7 | 14 |
| 2006 | 130 | 54 | 11 | 8.5 | 12 |
| 2007 | 229 | 121 | 8 | 3.5 | 11 |
| 2008 | 414 | 210 | 18 | 4 | 11 |
| 2009 | 465 | 162 | 26 | 6 | 11 |
| 2010 | 522 | 168 | 57 | 11 | 12 |
| 2011 | 611 | 228 | 35 | 6 | 15 |
| 2012 | 665 | 232 | 94 | 14 | 14 |
| 2013 | 553 | | 65 | 12 | |
| 2014 | 550 | | 70 | 13 | |
| 2015 | 602 | | | | |

Source: Vipunen Opetushallinnon tilastopalvelu

APPENDIX 2: HAASTATTELUTEEMAT

Osa A

Kuvaile nykyinen tilanne koskien uuden työvoiman palkkaamista

Kuvaile yrityksen palkkaamisstrategia

Onko yrityksellä tarkoitus palkata ulkomaalaisia opiskelijoita

- Jos kyllä, miksi
- Jos ei, miksi ei

Kuvaile palkkaamisprosessinne

Mitä vaaditaan että ulkomaalainen pääsee työpaikkahaastatteluun

Jos teillä on kaksi samanarvoista hakemusta, toinen ulkomaalainen ja toinen suomalainen, mikä vaikuttaa valintaan

Minkälaisia etuja näette ulkomaalaisen opiskelijan palkkaamisessa

Mitkä ovat haitat tai haasteet ulkomaalaisen opiskelijan palkkaamisessa

Miten luulette yrityksen muiden työntekijöiden suhtautuvan ulkomaalaiseen organisaatiossa

Luuletteko että työhönottohaastattelu voi muuttaa kantanne ulkomaalaisesta

Osa B

Onko yritys valmistautunut turvatakseen tulevaisuuden työvoimaa

Näettekö että on tulossa puute osaavasta työvoimasta

Onko tiedossanne Kokkolassa oleva ulkomaalainen työvoima

Mikä on ammattikorkeakoulun rooli kun on kyse työvoimasta

Osa C

Kuinka voimakkaasti ja mihin perustuen sitoudutte palkkaamaan ulkomaalaisia työvoimaa

Voitteko kuvitella ottavanne ns. riskin ja palkata ulkomaalaista ja mikä vaikuttaa päätökseenne

Näettekö mahdollisuutta parantaa markkina-asemaanne ulkomaisen työvoiman kautta

Jos palkkaatte ulkomaalaisia, mitkä ominaisuudet korostatte

Osa D

Onko teillä ollut ulkomaalaista työvoimaa, montako henkilöä olette palkannut

Onko teille tullut hakemuksia ulkomaalaisilta

Minkälaisia kokemuksia teillä on ollut ulkomaalaisista työnhakijoita

Tietoa yrityksestä

Perustettu vuonna

Ala

Henkilöstö

Vienti/tuonti kauppa

Liikevaihto

APPENDIX 3: INTERVJUTEMAN

Del A

Beskriv den aktuella situationen ang. behov att anställa ny personal

Beskriv företagets anställningsstrategi

Företagets strategiska avsikt att anställa utländska studeranden

- Om ja, varför
- Om nej, varför inte

Beskriv er anställningsprocess

Vad krävs för att en utlänning skall få komma på arbetsintervju

Om ni har två likvärdiga ansökningar, den ena utlänning och den andra finländare, vad påverkar valet?

Vilka fördelar ser ni med att anställa utländska studeranden

Vilka är nackdelarna eller utmaningarna med utländska studeranden

Hur tror ni att företagets övriga anställda uppfattar en utlänning i organisationen

Tror ni att en anställningsintervju kan ändra er åsikt om en utlänning

Del B

Hur har företaget förberett sig för att säkerställa framtida arbetskraft

Ser ni möjligheten att det kommer att bli brist på kunnig arbetskraft

Känner ni till den utländska arbetskraften som finns i Karleby

Vad är yrkeshögskolans roll när det gäller arbetskraft

Del C

Hur kraftigt och baserat på vad förbinder ni er att anställa utländsk arbetskraft

Kan ni tänka er att ta en s.k. risk och anställa en utlänning, och vad skulle påverka det beslutet

Ser ni möjligheter att förbättra marknadspositionen via utländsk arbetskraft

Om ni anställer utlänningar, vilka egenskaper sätter ni vikt vid

Del D

Har ni haft utländsk arbetskraft, hur många har ni anställt

Har ni haft utländska ansökningar

Vilka erfarenheter har ni av utländska arbetssökande

Information om företaget

Grundat år

Bransch

Antal anställda

Export/import handel

Omsättning