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Chinese SME Entrepreneurs in Finland
From a cultural perspective

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>China presently holds the position of the second largest investor world-wide, and its external levels of foreign direct and indirect investment has become a global phenomenon. Besides Russia, China is the second biggest trading partner of Finland. This research reports the described experiences of a small sample of Chinese entrepreneurs who are doing business in Finland. The research describes cultural aspects from both Chinese and Finnish cultural perspectives, and therefore is beneficial for current and future Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland.</p> <p>Five in-depth interviews were conducted for the study. The participants are Chinese entrepreneurs who started their business in Finland. The main findings of the study are: Personal motivation is an essential characteristic needed for starting and running a business in a foreign land; Challenges such as language, finance, law and regulations are important parts of the business process that must be understood and complied with; Chinese entrepreneurs are typically highly enthusiastic, and their persistence constitutes an important coping strategy; and Confucianism, one of the traditional Chinese philosophies, drives many Chinese entrepreneurs in their business life and personal life; The well-known typical Chinese networking concept of Guanxi was not described as being that important at the early stages of starting a business in Finland because the Finnish system is quite fair and transparent. However, the concept of Guanxi did emerge when running the business.</p> <p>For future develop of the company, certain concerns about the economy and policy were reported, but all the Chinese entrepreneurs are optimistic about their business. The report concludes with recommendations about the future study of entrepreneurship in Finland by Chinese immigrants.</p>		
Keywords Chinese entrepreneur, entrepreneurship Culture, inter culture, Confucianism, Guanxi, SMEs, Finnish Culture		
Miscellaneous		

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1 Introduction

The first chapter of this study introduces the researchers' motivation for choosing this certain topic, explains the aim of the study and the structure of the study, and identifies the research questions and how are they have been formulated.

1.1 Motivation of choosing this topic

Entrepreneurship is an important business topic in today's global society. Growing to be the world's second biggest economy, China has experienced rapid economic and social development. China presently holds the position of the second largest investor nation worldwide, and it's outward foreign direct and indirect investment has become a global phenomenon. According to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Outside the EU, China is the second biggest trading partner of Finland (the first one is Russia). (Finland's China Action Plan 2010). At the same time, Finland is a target of Chinese oversea investment. As more and more exchange and cooperation develops between the two countries, nowadays China is a hot topic in Finland.

But this study is not about large scale cooperation and investment between two countries, its focus is the Chinese expat living in Finland and chooses to start their own business in Finland. Examining these entrepreneurs from a cultural perspective is beneficial for current and future Chinese entrepreneurs who choose to locate to Finland. The outcomes of this study illuminate the challenges and opportunities of Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland, and should be of interest to those Chinese investors who are interested in investing in Finland and of course those Chinese immigrants in Finland who are interested in starting their own business.

From the lens of culture, people from diverse cultural backgrounds may interpret things differently. Cultural diversity also applies in business contexts, particularly in entrepreneurship, which is the area explored in this report. Regarding the cultural differences between Finland and China, how do Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland deal with problems and embrace the opportunities they are facing every single day? How did they come up with the idea of starting a business in a foreign land?

The author herself is a native Chinese who has around two years' working experience in China before she moved to Finland to study. These experiences mix cultural and business perspectives from China and Finland. Different perspectives are beneficial for this study, and it is extremely interesting and worthy to find out more from other individuals, comprising the participants in this study, who have more professional experience in business contexts.

1.2 Aim of the study

The study focuses on the current situation of Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland. It aims to identify their motivation to start the business in a foreign land and the challenges and opportunities they have met, how they coped with them, and what kind of role does Chinese culture play in this entrepreneurship.

Understanding culture is a key element when it comes to starting a business in a foreign country. How to adapt one to another, apply it in a totally new business environment, and how to adapt in today's fast-changing economy is quite interesting and important to study so that it can be applied into people's working and daily life.

To deepen the research perspectives, the chosen participants operate in different business sectors. Various aspects of entrepreneurship and cultural differences will be explored, categorized, analyzed, and summarized and the results hopefully can be applied to future research.

1.3 Structure of the study

The first chapter gives reader a general idea of the study. It introduces what motivates the author to choose this research topic. Then the author outlines the aim of the study and the expecting outcomes of this study. The overarching objective and research questions are identified, limitations of the study described, and recommendations for future studies are presented.

The second chapter provides the theoretical framework of this study. A review of the literature introduces Chinese culture in general, Finnish culture in general, and Chinese entrepreneurship culture and Finnish entrepreneurship culture.

The third chapter shows the research methodology of this study which provides the material and methods employed.

The last chapter includes the findings and discussion of this study. The report concludes with the suggestions and recommendations for future study.

1.4 Research questions

According to Statistic Finland foreign citizens 2015, there are thousands of Chinese living in Finland, among those 15.8% are share entrepreneurs. Therefore, around 1000 Chinese immigrants here in Finland are entrepreneurs or at least doing business in a cooperation way.

What motivates Chinese entrepreneurs, and what is the advantage and disadvantage of doing business in Finland as a foreigner? What can people learn from their entrepreneurship?

Research questions of this study:

- 1) What motivates Chinese expats in Finland to become entrepreneurs?
- 2) What challenges do these Chinese entrepreneurs experience in Finland?
How do they handle these challenges?
- 3) How does Chinese and Finnish culture influence entrepreneurship by Chinese expats in Finland?

2 Theoretical framework

This chapter provides the theoretical base of the research. It aims to identify some of the relevant theories that exist about cultural differences, entrepreneurship, and expat Chinese entrepreneurs. The literature review moves from general cultural differences between China and Finland towards entrepreneurship, expat entrepreneurship and then gradually focuses more specifically on Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Finland.

2.1 Chinese and Finnish Culture Comparison in General

According to Geert Hofstede, culture is “the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede 2005, 264.) Different culture backgrounds help us to understand different people, different organizations, and different behaviors. A deeper understanding of the cultural differences between China and Finland is the first step to understand Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland. Fundamental understanding of the cultural differences is an asset to analysis entrepreneur s’ motivations, behaviors and capabilities etc....

Hofstede’s Six - Dimension Model will be used in this chapter to develop a general idea about the cultural differences between China and Finland. Only by comparison, can we deepen our understanding of “what” the differences actually are, hopefully explaining “why” the differences exist, and then hopefully ideas and approaches about how to cope with different interactions between Finns and Chinese. Figure 1 below presents a comparison of Finnish and Chinese culture according to the six dimensions.

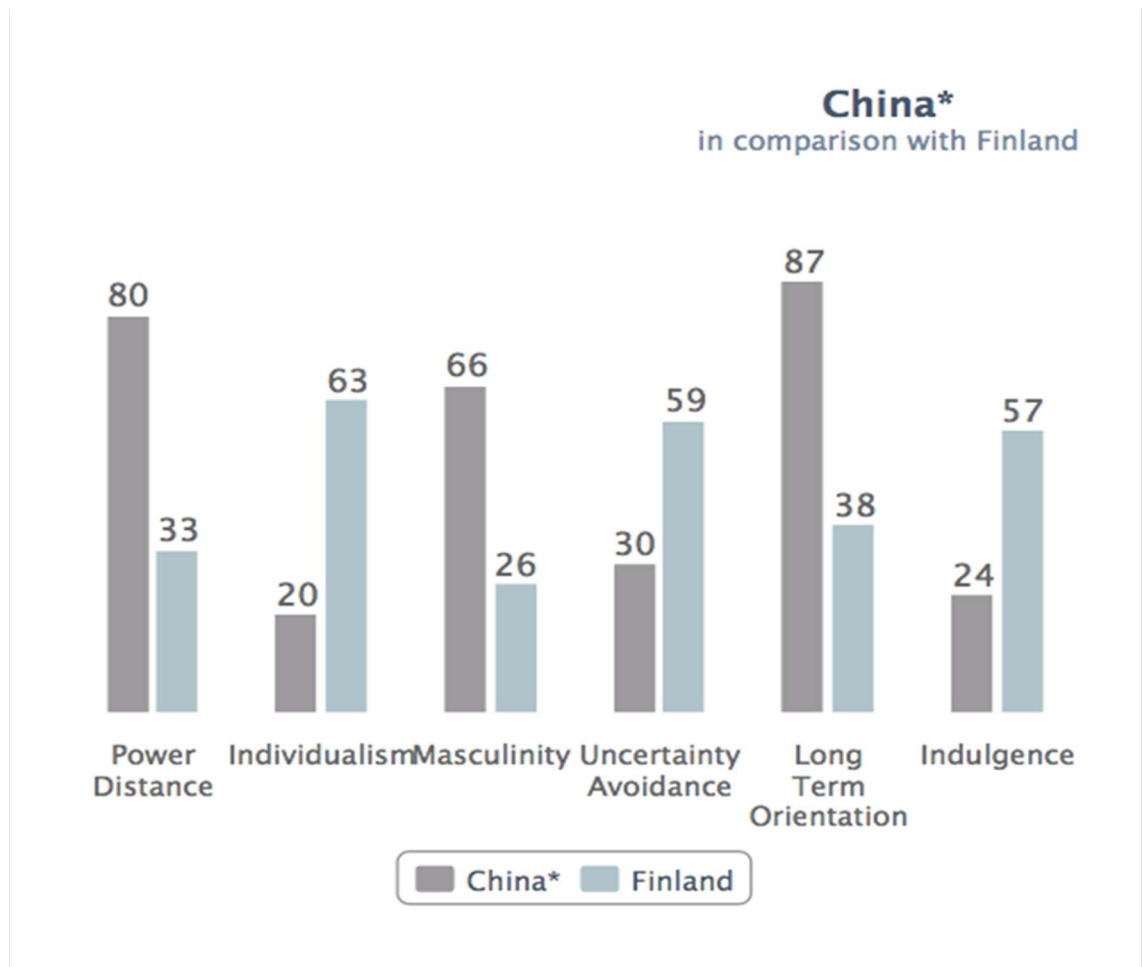


Figure 1. Chinese cultural dimension compare with Finland

Power Distance

Power distance refers to people who has less powers accept that the power in this country is not equal.

China scores much higher in this ranking compared to Finland. This indicates China is a hierarchy country, where individuals are influenced by the authority, superior exists and there is no defense against the superior. Communication is indirect in China, the Chinese language itself is ambiguous; The situation is quite opposite in Finland. Power between individuals is fairly equal, people are independent, power is decentralized, and communication tends to be direct and dialogic.

Individualism

Individualism refers to people who see themselves as “I” or “we”. In individualism society, people tend to be more independent and are expected to take care of themselves and their direct family. In this case, China is a highly collective society which means Chinese people pay more attention to group and family interests over own personal interests. Chinese people tend to network heavily, and employment can be dependent on network. Management in China is hierarchical, and power is typically centralized. With a score of 63, Finland is rather an individualist society. Finnish people place emphasis on “I” (oneself) as compared to Chinese. Finns take care of themselves, their direct family first. Employment relationships in Finland are typically based on mutual benefit, and management is about the management of oneself as an individual.

Masculinity

The Masculinity and Femininity dimension refers to a society which is driven by achievement and success or driven by the caring of quality life. In this dimension, China is rather a masculine country which means competition, achievement and success are the motivation of individuals in the society. These value system starts at school with students and extends to organizations and companies. In contrast, Finland is quite a feminine country, the society is driven by the quality of life and caring for others. To stand out is not an admirable thing, the quality of life is a sign of success. People work in order to live, this is a totally different perspective from the Chinese desire to live for work. Unlike the Chinese centralized decision making, in Finnish society, decision making is spread throughout the organization.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty Avoidance refers to the attitude the society holds toward an unknown future. China scores low on uncertainty avoidance which means Chinese people are comfortable with uncertainty, they do not fear the future but more flexible. This might be due to Chinese history and the developing of the country. Chinese laws and regulations are not yet fully developed and it is still developing all the time. The Chinese language itself in fact is ambiguous, in

some contexts, to make a point, it might seem that they speak in circles. Chinese people are more open to what is coming or changing in the society and country. There is also a phenomenon that the young generation are embracing new things, and would like to experience new more; On the other hand, Finns, in terms of uncertainty avoidance tend to avoid changes because, according to Hofstede's model, Finnish people may fear changes. For time concept, Finns are punctual and precise. They are strongly rule oriented, time is money for Finnish people, and they tend to be busy.

Long Term Orientation

Long term orientation refers to how a society priorities the present and future. With a score 87, China has a very pragmatic culture where education is seen as the way to prepare for the future. This national attitude also leads to criticism in Chinese society that there is too much pressure for kids and teenagers. The competition focus on Children's education. With a score of 38, Finnish people have a strong concern of building the fact, they respect traditions, and normally people do not save for the future, and while focusing more on the present.

Indulgence

Indulgence dimension refers to people in the society control their desire and impulses or not. With a low score of 24, China is a restrained society, which means Chinese people do not spend too much time on leisure and indulging themselves make them feel somehow wrong; With a score of 57, Finland is a rather indulgent country. Finnish people place a higher degree of importance on leisure time, on personal space, on their own free time, and they are pleased to spend money as they wish.

To sum up, China and Finland have extremely different cultures. From the comparison of Hofstede's Six - Dimension Model, the differences of power distance, individualism, masculinity, the uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence are huge. Therefore, when the two cultures meet each other, there are a lot of efforts should be prepared to adapt one another.

2.2 Entrepreneurship & Entrepreneur

Entrepreneurship was not considered as an academic field of study in the past, because it was believed that people cannot simply go to university to study the concept of entrepreneurship, it has to be learned during practice. Nowadays, entrepreneurship has been a popular topic in business schools. Many researchers have been trying to define Entrepreneurship. There are some examples:

Entrepreneurship consists in doing things that are not generally done in the ordinary course of business routine; it is essentially a phenomenon that comes under the wider aspect of leadership. (Joseph 1959, 255.)

Entrepreneurship, at least in all non-authoritarian societies, constitutes a bridge between society as a whole, especially the noneconomic aspects of that society, and the profit-oriented institutions established to take advantage of its economic endowments and satisfy, as the best they can, its economic desires. (Arthur 1959,27-28.)

In entrepreneurship, there is agreement that we are talking about a kind of behavior that includes: 1) initiative taking, 2) the organizing or reorganizing of social economic mechanisms to turn resources and situations to practical account, and 3) the acceptance of risk of failure. (Albert 1975, 187.)

In history, at every downturn of the economy, it is entrepreneurial spirit that brings us back, it has been proven that entrepreneurship is the base of our economy. In modern society, entrepreneurship is not just creating business, but also represents that one views the world with an innovative perspective. Entrepreneurs bring innovative ideas to society, they create business and jobs, they see things with innovated mindset and they bring fresh blood to the world. And it is entrepreneur, who builds companies, creates jobs, produces new commodities, increases the country's tax revenues and eventually national wealth.

According to Kao, an entrepreneur is a person who undertakes a wealth-creation and value-adding process, through developing new ideas, assembling resources and making things happen. (Kao 2002, 42) There are different definitions of entrepreneur, but there is one thing in common which is entrepreneur

is the one who has the ability to identify business opportunities and make a growth of the business.

According to all these definition, an entrepreneur can be described as one who:

Initiates his / her own business

Identifies new business opportunities

Is creative and innovative

Can manage the business and make a profit

Has the ability to finance the business

Is willing to and able to take risks

2.2.1 Expat Entrepreneur

An expat is typically an individual as an immigrant who is residing in a country other than his/her own citizenship temporarily or permanently.

From expat, expat entrepreneur can be defined as an individual who as an immigrant initiates a business and has the ability to create and maintain the business and keep it growing.

Nowadays expat entrepreneurs play an important role in the society and global economy. According to Forbes, 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Not only do expat entrepreneurs strength the economy, but also, they bring the variety of cultural aspects. They view the world with innovative eyes, they see things differently and they embrace diversity.

There are several studies about the elements which lead to expat entrepreneurs' success. Below are some key elements:

1)Curiosity

Eagerness to learn is a very important aspect for starting a new life in a new country and initiating a business. Cultural differences, in a way, increase the

curiosity. It is easier for expat entrepreneurs familiarize with non-familiarities, as they have already experienced in life by moving to another country. And indeed, these familiarities and non-familiarities become curiosities in daily life and business life. Most importantly, curiosity can lead to great motivation for conducting a business or building a career.

2) Cultural Sensitivity

Lots of great business comes from the fusion of ideas and experiences. Thus, an open-minded immigrant who embrace the cultural diversity, who are comfort with different traditions and customs are more likely start a company through a self-created worldly perspective. These worldly perspectives are mixed with diversified views, advantages of culture differences are chosen carefully and the disadvantages will be gotten rid of when it occurs in the new situation /environment by these immigrations.

3) Adventurousness

Adventurousness is in the blood of an immigrant. As an expat entrepreneur, probably they have already gotten used to that lonely and stressful moment in life. But deep down inside they know they will always find a way to cope with it and get through it. No matter how hard and how dark it is, they will never give up. This kind of spirit helps them to build the business and develop the business. This kind of spirit is indeed the spirit which people need in modern society.

2.2.2 Finnish Entrepreneurial environment

Entrepreneurship is actively encouraged in Finland. A GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2015.) study affirms that Finland is a business-friendly country. With Finland's well-developed and well-functioning support system for entrepreneurship, it is rather easy to start a business for both foreign and local companies/entrepreneurs in Finland. People can easily find different assistance to start a business in Finland. The GEM study also shows that highly educated people have more entrepreneurial activities at early stage. Business can be conducted differently, for example a general partnership, a limited partnership, a limited liability company and a cooperate or an entrepreneur.

There are over 6500 Finnish businesses have been established by people who are expats. Expats can find all kinds of assistance, guidance and service from different sectors.

For example, people can find all the information they need as an expat, or as an entrepreneur on Infopankki and expat Finland.

2.2.3 Finnish Business Culture in General

According to Infopankki's information about Finnish working culture, there are several typical Finnish businesses culturally -based concepts that have been categorized into the following parts:

Equality

People in Finland are equal at the work place, regardless of women and men. Equality is a principle value that is promoted across the nation. Everybody has a voice no matter man or women.

Initiative and Be responsible

People are responsible for their job, the supervisor in not typically ask how the employees are doing. Employees supposed to tell the supervisor if there is something wrong. Employees also have more freedom to make their own decisions in the work place.

Reliable and punctual

Trust forms the base of work. In some other cultures, before doing business people build trust first, here in Finland, people put trust first. Finnish people are very punctual, time is money for them and Finnish people have the tendency to be busy.

Direct communication

In Finnish culture, communication is direct and participative. In the work place, Finnish people tend to speak out. Problems supposed to be solved openly.

2.3 Confucianism

Confucianism is a traditional philosophy that started around 500 BCE, and is generally rooted in Chinese culture. It places emphasis on the importance of social harmony and one's family, and at the core of Confucianism is humanism. There are five constants that are promoted by Confucian ethics, and these will be presented in this study as a general introduction of Confucianism.

Humaneness - Ren

Ren is the most important virtue in Confucianism and forms the base of everything. It forms the base of all kinds of relationship, including love oneself, love others and love the society. This concept has been developed throughout time, Chinese people regard "Ren" as a daily life standard - to offer love, to be friendly and to treat others with compassion.

Justice - Yi

Justice may not be the best translation. Yi is the virtue of being responsible. Responsible for oneself, responsible for others and be responsible in society. It also places emphasis on 'giving' and 'offering', and not just 'getting'. It is more about being in good and responsible relationship with others.

Proper rite - Li

Li is the virtue that combines the entire interaction between humanity, and between humanity and nature. But at the very beginning, Li is the hierarchy standard for ancient society which the emperor used to control ordinary people, and it implies that different classes are supposed to have different standards. But as the development of society and civilization, it also means polite. To make it simple, Li requires people to follow the rules of being polite in everywhere, to be polite to people, to nature and to everything in the universe.

Knowledge - Zhi

Zhi is the wisdom of science, and the wisdom of humanity. It is bigger than learning the current tangible knowledge. It's things beyond visibility, it is the intelligence and the ability to distinguish what is in life, it is to gain knowledge and to help others to make things better.

Integrity - Xin

Xin is easier to understand. It is the virtue to be honest and integrate. It is the core of being a human being since Chinese ancient society. Being honest with oneself and being honest with others. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Saying matches the action, action reflects what you say.

2.4 Chinese style entrepreneurship

Grown to be the second biggest economy world-wide, China had its ups and downs. And China's rich history and diverse culture influence every aspect of each Chinese person. China has its own business culture. Chinese entrepreneurs and businessman get used to this certain culture. And those Chinese entrepreneurs who live oversea, who start their business overseas are influenced by this certain Chinese business culture. And this certain business culture reflects on their daily behavior and decision making. There are several main differences between Chinese and Western business culture in practice, the key Chinese business perspective will be presented below.

2.4.1 Guanxi/Network

Guanxi is one of the major dynamics in the Chinese society where business behavior revolves around guanxi. (Luo,1997,43) It is widely recognized as the key determining factors in Chinese business performance. Guanxi combines millions of Chinese firms into social and economic net. No matter whether it's a local Chinese company or a foreign invest company, Guanxi is inevitable. It is hard for a company to go far if it does not engage in the widely spread Guanxi in China.

In the west, relationships grow out of deals. In China, deals grow out of relationships. The cultivation of Guanxi is an integral part of doing business. (The China Business Review, May-June 2004) As Guanxi is an important ingredient in Chinese Business, it is necessary to understand why it is this important and apply it for inter cultural business. Why Guanxi is so important to entrepreneurs is explained below.

Cultural Heritage

Guanxi as one part of Chinese culture plays an important role in Chinese business, it is a cultural heritage. In the past, there are scarce resources in China, and business environment is not that open to public and to the world. So 'who you know' is way much important than 'what you know'. It is essential that one can develop a long-term and broader Guanxi network.

Legal framework and infrastructure

In the past, China lacked a well-developed law and regulation system, at the same time the constantly political landscape and policies constantly changed. This made ordinary Chinese people feel insecure, never the less business people. So, when business people want to go further about their business they prefer to get to know the insights. Only in this way they can predict or avoid unexpected conflict or risks. In order to do this, they are reaching out for connections- to be an insider, that is Guanxi. Also, knowing somebody can smooth the decision making, can easily get approval of company related process.

But on the other hand, Guanxi creates liabilities. Guanxi is also a form of interpersonal dependence, which means like any other relationships, it requires certain gives and takes. As one conflict result of these gives and takes, unethical relationships can also be an issue in employing Guanxi. But this outcome will not be elaborated in this research.

2.4.2 Oversea Chinese Guanxi

Overseas Chinese have a different relationship with Guanxi, because overseas Chinese has been influenced by both cultures, the Chinese culture and the foreign local culture. This kind of unique experience has different affect with Guanxi. Wilfried's study has been considered the best conclusion of overseas Chinese and Guanxi as below.

Overseas Chinese can play a role in building a guanxi network. They are (or should be) familiar with guanxi networks and protocol, and often they can reply on a traditional common basis. But one issue should be kept in mind: non-Chinese Westerners always have an extra degree of freedom over ethnic Chinese in the guanxi game. That extra degree of freedom comes from the very fact that they are foreigners; they have an excuse not to be totally familiar with the intricacies of relational ethics so important in social relationships in China.

Ethnic Chinese don't have that freedom; they are Chinese and they supposed to know. No face is lost when a Westerner makes a mistake; after all, he is a foreigner and doesn't know. The same cannot be said when an ethnic Chinese makes a mistake. (Wilfried R.V. 2004, 48-53.)

3 Research Methodology

The study focuses on the current situation of Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland. In previous chapters, information was collected and presented based on a literature review. This chapter will describe the methodology utilized in this research. The first part explains why the author chooses this certain research method. The second part describes how the author collect data during the research. The last part comes to validity and limitation of this study.

3.1 Choice of research method

At the early stage of this study, literature relates to this topic are reviewed comprehensively. The theoretical part about Chinese SME entrepreneurs in Finland are Chinese culture in general, Finnish culture in general, and Chinese entrepreneurship culture and Finnish entrepreneurship culture. Literature was carefully chosen to be part of the research process so that the result of this research can be examined thoroughly.

According to Arbnor and Bjerke (2009), there are three different ways to get primary data, they are: direct observations, interviews and experiments. Due to the topic of this thesis, an experimental approach seems out of the option, but interviews and direct observations. The author made the decision to advance this study by interviewing those Chinese entrepreneurs in Helsinki area. During the interview, observation is also involved.

First of all, the interview target is Chinese entrepreneurs who are located in Finland, Helsinki to be precise. As a native Chinese, it's easy for the author to locate Chinese entrepreneurs here in Helsinki area. Meanwhile, communication seems easy for the author, as native Chinese know how to communicate with native Chinese in the same language and get the subtle meaning between the lines.

Secondly, due to the researcher's deep understanding of Chinese mentality, a questionnaire approach might not be an appropriate method for this research, as Chinese are more passive in interaction, if the researcher want to gain deeper perspectives, it's better to interact in person so that the researcher can observe more, question more and dig more.

For the result, all the answers will be organized and categorized into research data manually. Table 1 presents the basic info about those interviewees and their business area.

No.	Gender	Business Area	Date of Interview	Interviewing Form
1	Female	Specialized Chinese Restaurant	31.12.2016	Face to Face Interview
2	Male	Travel Agency	02.01.2017	Face to Face Interview
3	Female	Consulting Company	9.01.2017	Face to Face Interview
4	Female	Accounting Company	13.01.2017	Face to Face Interview
5	Female	Gallery + Catering	1.03.2017	Face to Face Interview

Table 1. Basic information about interviewees

3.2 Data collection and study design

The study focuses on the current situation of Chinese entrepreneurs in Finland. The experience of these Chinese entrepreneurs is critical to this study. To identify entrepreneur's motivation to start the business in a foreign land and the challenges and opportunities they have met, how they coped with them, and what kind of role does Chinese culture play in this entrepreneurship. The data was collected through semi-structured in depth interviews.

The interviewees were carefully chosen by the author. They include Chinese entrepreneurs, located in Helsinki, Finland, and all the companies are small or medium-sized enterprise. Lots of local Chinese companies are mainly in restaurant business in Finland, those companies are easy to find by the author. The restaurant business seems to be a traditional Chinese overseas business type, but if participants are from similar business sector it might be difficult to differentiate the challenges and opportunities of these SMEs. At the same time, big overseas Chinese companies like Huawei, Kaidi and other investment companies are not the research target. After thoughtful consideration and a lot of communication with those entrepreneurs, the author selected different types of companies. Those companies are in various business sectors: restaurant, travel agency, accounting, consulting and gallery. All the interviews are conducted face to face.

Face to face interview method is designed for certain purpose. As mentioned in the literature part, China is a high context culture which indicates that communicate with Chinese takes time and needs certain a warm-up process. The researcher prepared the warm-up section to make those entrepreneurs relax and be more open to talk to. To follow this strategy, normally the conversation started by the researcher introducing herself, chatting a bit about hometown, family, kids and holidays... When friendly and eased atmosphere is created, then the researcher starts to bring those formal and designed questions.

Interview questions are as below:

Interview Questions	
1	What is the motivation to start your business at the beginning?
2	Do you think your personal experience (life, career) affect being an entrepreneur?
3	Is it easy for you as a foreign to start a business here?
4	Have you ever met problems, did you get help? How did you solve them?
6	Does Chinese culture affect this entrepreneurship? from the starting point of this business, during the process.
7	How do you think or apply Chinese culture effect of your business?
8	What do you think the near future about your business area?
9	Any suggestions to offer for young generation who are interested to be an entrepreneur?

Table 2. Interview Questions for Chinese entrepreneurs

3.3 Reliability, validity and limitation of the study

A semi – structured or in-depth interview is the most appropriate method for two kinds of situation: Where the questions are either complex or open-ended; Where the order and logic of questioning may need to be varied. (Sauders et al. 2009, 324.)

One of the biggest difficulties in this study is to obtain updated literatures and relevant literatures. General Chinese culture aspects are easy to get, but as time goes by, as the country develops and changes, fresh thoughts shall be added into the study, not just the old theories but which at the same time forms the base of the cultural theoretical part of this study.

Another challenge in this research is to find the right type of Chinese companies in Finland. Some of the Chinese companies here in Finland are franchisee companies, some are Chinese subsidiaries and some are Chinese investment companies, but none of these comprise the focused research target. The research target in this study is Chinese entrepreneurs who are in Finland, and start their business in Finland and ideally their business are SMEs. The company background has been checked carefully, and all the five companies match the criteria.

Also, scheduling meetings with these entrepreneurs is difficult, because the interviews are most conducted around Christmas time. Christmas holiday and Chinese Spring Festival holiday are around the same time, so, it is not the best timing. On the other hand, all the Chinese entrepreneurs are very busy most of the time.

The validity of the data in this research is quite high, all the material are primary data gathered by face to face interview and then coded and analyzed by the researcher herself.

4 Findings and Discussions

The results are generated through the analysis of 5 in-depth interviews. The findings and discussions of this study will be demonstrated, analyzed and presented in this chapter. All these will be based on the data the author collected through the interviews when compared and contrasted to the theories gathered in the literature review process.

4.1 Results of interviews

The interviews cover the motivation to start the business in a foreign land and the challenges and opportunities entrepreneurs have met, how they coped with them, and what kind of role does Chinese culture play in this entrepreneurship, including both positive and negative perspective. All the entrepreneurs are from SME companies in Helsinki and most of the businesses operate in different sectors.

4.1.1 Motivation of becoming an entrepreneur in Finland

After the warm up activity, the first question of the interview asks about the interviewees' motivation to become an entrepreneur in Finland. The result has been categorized into two main parts: positive motivation vs negative motivation.

Positive Motivation	Negative Motivation
Personal interest	Dissatisfaction of current job
Working Experience	Insecurity of oneself
Financial Support	

Table 3. Motivation of becoming an entrepreneur in Finland

Positive Motivation:

There is evident a personal interest in doing business. Some entrepreneurs are influenced by family members, and relatives who are business oriented.

Previous personal working experience makes oneself more confident in their own business. At the same time, previous working experience makes oneself more mature so that oneself can see through the opportunities compare to other individuals.

One of these interviewees also mentioned that age makes s/he financially ready of starting a business.

Negative Motivation:

Being unsatisfied with one's current job is also one of the motivations of starting the business in Finland. For example, concerning salary, lack of room to develop at that moment are the negative motivation of being an entrepreneur in Finland!

Insecurity about the future causes oneself to want to do something in order to control it.

4.1.2 The Positives and Negatives at the stage of starting the business

Positives	Negatives
Transparent system	Language
Motivated as a foreigner	Finance
	Business idea
	Business place

Table 4. The Positives and Negatives at the stage of starting business

Positives:

The Finnish business system is rather fair, transparent and easy. This makes it easy to establish a business in Finland.

As mentioned in literature review, key elements like curiosity, cultural sensitivity and adventurous leads to great motivation and success of expat entrepreneurs. Foreign entrepreneurs like Chinese entrepreneurs are more motivated, they have clear goals and they have the spirit of being persistence.

Negatives:

According to most of the interviewees, language is the biggest problem at the stage of starting the business in Finland. But there is one exception from the interviewees, s/he thinks that language is not the problem but would be a big plus for foreign entrepreneurs if they spoke Finnish, as English is widely used in Finland.

By analyzing the biggest problems – language, it leads to following problems for entrepreneurs at the starting phase of the business: the systematic way of doing business for example the taxation, recruiting process, employees' salaries, etc., some of the entrepreneurs think that the information provided in Finnish are more informative compared to the same information provided in English.

Meanwhile, for financial problems, half of the interviewees mentioned that they had difficulties when they were taking bank loans. One mentioned that s/he has so many business ideas at the starting stage, it was hard for her to settle on one idea and find good justifications for her business.

4.1.3 Positives and Negatives when the business is running

Good Aspect Entrepreneurs Recall	Problems Entrepreneurs Met
Help from others	Financial Problem
Patience	Law regulation / conflict with business partners
Active	Personal life sacrifice

Table 5. The Positives and Negatives at the stage of starting business

Positives:

Have had Finnish friends' / partners' help during the business process is one of the positive side.

Patience is needed during the whole process of running the business. Creating trust in business takes time in Finland. The long-term business cooperation can only be established step by step.

Maintaining a proactive attitude helps keep the business running. Finland has a rather transparent system for business and for many other things. Basically, entrepreneurs can get most of the kinds of help that they wanted, but the key element is they need to be very active!

Negatives:

Human resource problems. Due to the business area, some of the entrepreneurs need Chinese staff with special expertise. But it's hard for them to find qualified staff in a foreign country in this case here in Finland, and this also brings limitation to their business.

Financially, it's not that easy to keep the business growing fast at the first few years. Entrepreneurs may not have enough cash flow to promote their business during the early stages, and for some cases, in order to keep the business running, entrepreneur himself / herself does not have salary for a long period.

Personal life may suffer a lot when being an entrepreneur especially here in Finland. Entrepreneurs may have to work almost all the time. On one hand, it's their own business so that everything has to put under consideration by themselves. On the other hand, labor cost is very high in Finland, most of the cases, for the first few years when the business is running, to reduce the cost, entrepreneurs work extensively so that they won't need to pay extra labor cost.

Conflicts did happen with business partners during the business cooperation, whether due to genuine misunderstandings or simply miscommunications. Some conflicts ended up with lawsuits. But these also make a company grow, become more mature like human grow. At some point the entrepreneurs will be aware of that not all the companies or partners are trust worthy.

4.1.4 Chinese Cultural affect this entrepreneurship

Culture is in our behaviors sometimes even without being noticed by ourselves. Understanding culture is a key element when it comes to starting a business in a foreign country. When meet a new culture, culture's affect can be divided into two main parts. One is that it brings the awareness of the differences which can leads to motivation, to business ideas and to maximize the positive part. The other part is that due to the lack of recognition of cultural differences, one may find it's hard to assimilate into new culture. The results are categorized into positive and negative perspective to make it easier to be understood.

- General identity
- Personal Development
- Business Communication
- Business Differentiation

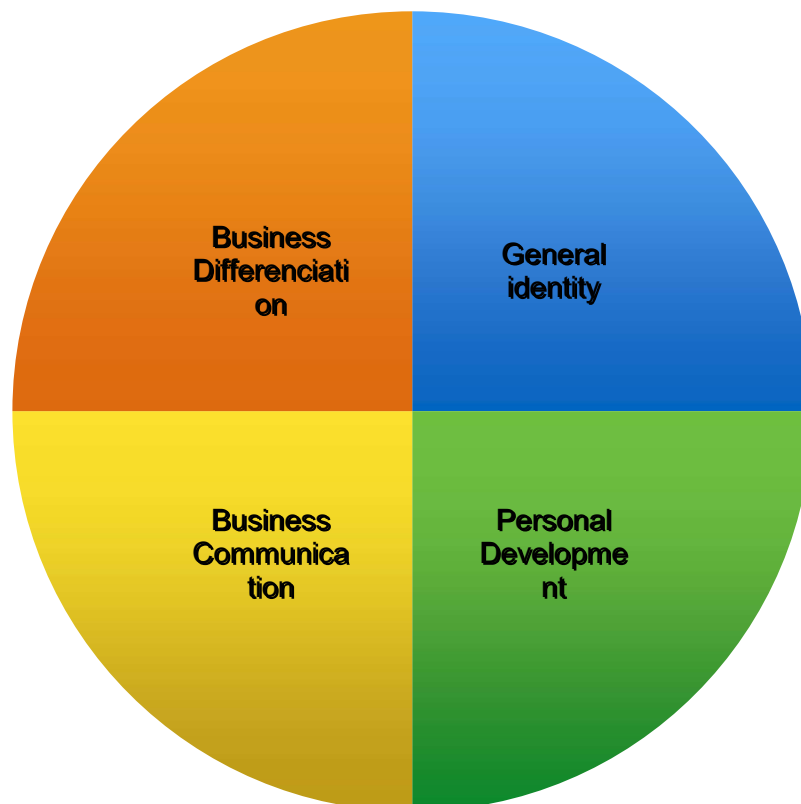


Table 6. Chinese culture affect

Positive:

General Identity

Generally speaking, Chinese as a nation is warm-hearted, where people are friendly and passionate. Chinese people are easy to communicate with. In business contexts, Chinese people are hardworking, it is also what they are famous for. Hard working seems to be in all Chinese people's gene. Most Chinese are goal oriented, they work hard to achieve the goals they set up ahead, and they are very persistent.

Business communication

Chinese Confucianism and other traditional Chinese philosophies influence every single Chinese a lot. Confucius philosophy runs in every Chinese blood. For these entrepreneurs, at certain points, they realize that their personal development is inspired by Confucius philosophy! Meanwhile as they operate their business in the western world, they are also influenced by western education, knowledge, information. They found out that somehow western success theory can be explained in Confucius philosophy which they started to learn when they were children!

There are three main aspects from culture affect that influence these Chinese entrepreneur's business attitude. Honesty is the basic and best policy according to Chinese entrepreneurs. According to one entrepreneur, honesty is the standard that s/he is following every single day, towards communicating with people and particularly in business contexts. Secondly, rich ideas. China is a nation with wisdom, people are good at doing business since ancient times. They get inspired, and they always have business idea along the history. Thirdly, flexibility. With all these wisdom and smartness of doing business, highly motivated and goal oriented personality, when it comes to business,

Chinese tend to dedicate themselves to solve all kinds of problems in order to get the business done. This kind of attitude that nothing shall be an obstacle, also makes Chinese flexible, and full of solutions all the time. But flexibility also has been considered has its downside.

Business differentiation

Due to the diversity of Chinese culture, Chinese business oversea can also differentiate themselves even when it comes to similar business area. We take restaurant business as an example, westerners may know all the Chinese restaurant food are Chinese food, but they can be differentiated as Sichuan food (spicy cuisine), Shanxi food (pastry cuisine), Zhejiang food (sweet sour cuisine) etc. The diversified culture and the huge market makes it easier to differentiate the business.

Personal development

Confucianism, one of the traditional Chinese philosophies, drives many Chinese entrepreneurs in their business life and personal life. Quoted from one entrepreneur in this research: "My traditional culture makes me examine myself every single day, it helps me to develop my inner self. In James Legge's Confucius Analect 1893, CHAP. IV. the philosopher Tsang said, 'I daily examine myself on three points: -- whether, in transacting business for others, I may have been not faithful; --whether, in intercourse with friends, I may have been not sincere; -- whether I may have not mastered and practiced the instructions of my teacher.' From this we can see how Chinese applied their traditional culture into their daily lives.

Negatives:

From the interview, entrepreneurs think that Chinese people do not promote Chinese culture so dedicatedly like other nations do. When it comes to business, Chinese tend to put personal or business benefit in front of culture promotion.

Chinese have the tendency of caring about others' feeling more, putting others' feeling ahead of their own. They always try to avoid conflict, so they will never

give strict forward opinion and only say the “nice part” when have been asked to.

Chinese have the tendency to talk about personal things to obtain the feeling of being “closeness” to others. In a way, it’s a typical Chinese style to make friends. But in the western world, it is invading personal space.

Another typical Chinese mentality is “Hard to say no”. It has been recognized as kindness of the Chinese, but this kindness has been taken advantage of by coworkers, or supervisors and competitors.

As the competition is high back in China, when a new business comes to market, it is easy that the idea will be copied, which leads to bad competition, lower price in the market, less creativity and less innovation.

Chinese flexibility mentality which is almost in every Chinese’ blood makes it hard for Chinese to strictly following the local rules in a new culture and country.

Chinese also have a “short- cut” mentality. As China is a masculine country, it has high competition environment, everyone is driven by success and achievement. People do not have the patience to wait for opportunities and wait for success. Some are always trying to find “short-cuts” for success, which was pointed out by most of the entrepreneurs during the interview “It won’t work in Finland”.

4.1.5 Suggestions for future entrepreneur

There are four main aspects of suggestions which all these Chinese entrepreneurs mentioned during those interviews.



Table 7. Suggestions for future entrepreneurs

Be motivated.

Young people who are interested in starting their own business need to have strong motivation. Personal motivation is an essential characteristic needed for starting and running a business in a foreign land. Being highly motivated makes oneself keep going.

Keep learning.

As we all know, learning is a lifelong process. Those Chinese entrepreneurs suggest that young people shall communicate more often with entrepreneurs,

try to learn from them, and learn from their success and their mistakes. As you stand on the shoulder of a giant, you grow fast.

At the same time, learn about Finland as a country, as a market area and learn Finnish culture! At the end of the day, even if most of actual business somehow connected to Chinese related businesses, it must be kept in mind that the business is conducted in Finland, and so one must evolve with and among Finnish people in the Finnish business environment. So, learn and adapt to Finnish culture is very important.

Be prepared

Be prepared for what is coming. Knowing ahead that it always will not be easy, and there will always be problems, one must be persistent, brave and tough. Meanwhile, learning develops the ability to predict the near future, and the direction of the company.

Set a clear goal

Set the right goal for being an entrepreneur. Think it through why oneself want to be an entrepreneur. The majority of people start their own business for economic reasons, to make more money. This is totally understandable, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, because we as human being needs to satisfy our basic needs first, but could there be higher goal except basic needs, it is worthy to think ahead.

There are also people create their business out of personal interest. Being able to do the things make oneself happy is another kind of goal of being an entrepreneur; Starting a business to make the world a better place to live is also a valid kind of goal.

So, set up a clear goal of what oneself really wants. It helps the business grow at certain point and gives oneself the direction of the business.

4.2 SWOT analysis of the interview findings

Strength

Typical Chinese characteristic like polite, patient and friendly... make Chinese as a nation very easy to get along with. This is good for network building, and expanding business.

All the Chinese entrepreneurs are highly motivated to start the business, to run the business well and are determined to make success.

Aspects of traditional Chinese culture drives many Chinese entrepreneurs in their business life and personal life. It makes them resourceful, full of business ideas and persistent.

Chinese entrepreneurs apply Chinese culture into their personal development. This personal development makes them more mature in decision making, in keep business running and communicating with others...

Weakness

Language skills are indicated as a weakness all along the process of being an entrepreneur.

Lack of law & regulation information is also one of the repeated problems at the starting phase of the entrepreneurship.

Not being familiar with the Finnish business environment is also a struggling point mentioned by the entrepreneur.

The Chinese flexible mentality is not suitable here in Finland, as the rules, laws and regulations must be strictly followed in Finland so that things can work smoothly later on.

Chinese traditional culture of “putting others first” can be a weakness point as it may be taken advantage by others.

Opportunities

The large Chinese market includes many business sectors. Cooperation between China and Finland is growing, many opportunities will be created for different sectors and it is beneficial for Chinese overseas entrepreneurs.

Chinese government is making a big effort to promoting China. Chinese culture is getting known in global settings. Behind these phenomenon, lots of business opportunities have been created.

Threats

Entrepreneurs also worried that their business idea will be easily copied by other Chinese competitors here.

Chinese entrepreneurs worried about the Chinese economy, if the economy is getting down, less people will travel to Finland and it may lead to less business opportunities.

Chinese entrepreneurs worried about the policies made by Chinese government, and whether the policy changes it might affect the business and the cooperation between the two countries.

5 Discussion and Recommendation

This chapter is a summary and generalization of the whole research. The study outlines an overview of Chinese entrepreneur's current situation in Finland. It includes the general conclusion part, the limitation of the study and the recommendations for future study.

5.1 Discussion and Conclusion

According to the data obtained from those interviews, the result has generally been categorized into following parts:

Personal motivation is an essential characteristic needed for starting and running a business in a foreign land. It comes before any culture perspective. Positive motivation, taking a personal interest in business and doing things by oneself is an essential part. At the same time, negative motivations as might occur when things are viewed as not being "fair" in career situations also motivates Chinese entrepreneurs to start their own business in Finland. Motivation has been emphasized by all these entrepreneurs as being very important to start a business, it is not only just important for themselves, but also the suggestions they provided to young entrepreneurs. Persistence is also a key quality for starting and keeping a business going.

Challenges such as language, finance, law and regulations are important parts of the business process that must be understood and complied with; Chinese entrepreneurs are typically highly enthusiastic, and their persistence constitutes an important coping strategy. It takes time for Chinese entrepreneurs to cope with all these situation, but this certain kind of "take time" is totally different from Chinese mentality which is in search of quick response, quick solution and short cut. But with the enthusiastic and persistence Chinese national quality, they dealt with those challenges very well, this is also an important part which get them to where they are right now. It seems that these entrepreneurs are always optimistic.

Confucianism, one of the traditional Chinese philosophies, drives many Chinese entrepreneurs in their business life and personal life. It is like a modeling standard for cooperation and other personal behaviors. Chinese entrepreneurs

struggled from their own culture perspective in a new cultural environment, and yet also benefit from their traditional culture for business ideas, inspirations. Chinese entrepreneurs have had problems when starting their business and also the phase of running the business in Finland, but they coped those issues through their Confucianism philosophy during the process.

The well-known typical Chinese net-working concept of Guanxi was not described as being that important at the early stages of starting a business in Finland because the Finnish system is quite fair and transparent. However, the concept of Guanxi did emerge when running the business. When running and developing the business, Guanxi starts to show its importance as Chinese entrepreneurs mentioned Guanxi as a typical Chinese style, that they found out is also very important in Finland when it comes to business.

Last, for future development of the company, certain concerns about the economy and policy were reported, but all the Chinese entrepreneurs are optimistic and confident about their business. As the Chinese market is very large and the cooperation between Finland and China is getting more frequent, they see a lot of potentials in Finland.

5.2 Limitation of this study

Cooperation and direct investment between China and Finland is rapidly growing. But the number of Chinese starting a business here in Finland in various business sectors are relatively limited. Therefore, finding qualified interviewee is quite a laborious process. Since the existing qualified Chinese entrepreneurs here in Finland are limited, the five in depth interview sample is relatively small. However, every single participant of this research provided very valuable and interesting information about the research.

Four out of five (80%) of the interviewees are female. This makes the topic and study a bit more interesting, and a follow-up questionnaire about gender's role in entrepreneurship has been sent to all these participants. But no significant findings about gender of the Chinese oversea entrepreneurship have been found so far. Therefore, this is considered to be another limitation of the study. This part will be explained in detail in 5.3 recommendation for future study.

5.3 Recommendation for Future Study

When starting this research, gender was not chosen as a particular focus, but business sector and company size was cautiously selected. So, a follow up questionnaire about gender's role in the entrepreneurship has been sent to the interviewees.

1	Do you think gender has any influence in this entrepreneurship?
2	Does Finnish culture / environment influence this entrepreneurship as a Chinese woman?

Table 8. Follow up questionnaires

As the motivation part in the interview, all the entrepreneurs start their own business because of their personal interest and their personal situation at that moment. They have passive and active motivations to start their own business. But none of those has any connection with gender.

“Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: Men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.” “Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: Both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.” (Hofstede 2001, 297.)

When considering masculinity and femininity, we know that China is a masculinity country and Finland is a femininity country. Gender issues obviously have some affect here. The question in Table 8 was sent to those female entrepreneurs to get further understanding.

Finland is an equal country, and a fair system which was mentioned earlier having been repeated in their answers. At the same time, an interesting feedback that most of female entrepreneurs said that back in China, they do not need to be this hard working, because Chinese men provide most things in marriage or in a relationship. But in Finland, the women have to do a lot of things by themselves. Indeed, female entrepreneurs are influenced by Finnish culture as well, but according to the answers they provided, they are more individually interested in doing business thus decide to start the business here.

But gender is an interesting topic for entrepreneurship and foreign entrepreneurship. More aspects related to gender may be researched between these two countries in future studies.

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