Bridging Partnership Establishment Needs between the Finnish and Vietnamese HE Institutions: A Case Study of Motivation, Interested Partnering Activities and Challenges of twenty nine Vietnamese Key Universities

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Bridging Partnership Establishment Needs between the Finnish and Vietnamese HE Institutions: A Case Study of Motivation, Interested Partnering Activities and Challenges of twenty nine Vietnamese Key Universities

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Abstract

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The era of HE transformation, globalization alongside with internationalization of HE phenomena have given impetus for world-wide HE institutions to transform themselves by means of giving HE internationalization the top priority in their management at all levels. The Finnish and Vietnamese HE institutions have also been influenced under these changes in HE. Both of them have acknowledged the importance of internationalization of their HE systems and implemented strategies to facilitate domestic HE institutions towards dynamic internationalization. While Finland needs to increase their HE attractiveness, Vietnam aims at improving their quality of teaching, learning and doing research within HE institutions to meet up the increasing demand of the burgeoning population. Establishing HE institutional partnerships between Finland and Vietnam is considered the very first starting point of their internationalization process by both parties. This research study aims to bridge the partnership establishment needs between Finnish and Vietnamese HE institutions by investigating the motivations in establishing partnerships with foreign HE institutions, the recognition of the Vietnamese universities towards Finnish HE institutions, the interested partnership activities, the key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnerships with the latter. Recommendations for both Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions are also presented. It is hoped that this research may serve as one of very first practical handbooks for Finnish cross border education if the Finnish HE institutions are willing to do so.
Acknowledgement

Conducting a survey within limited four-month timeframe is both an interesting and challenging research experience. My data collection actually started on 22nd of February, 2011 ended on 15th of March, 2011. Within that limited data collection time length, I received 29 responses out of the total 30 participants. I owe my deepest gratitude to the Director of CIMO, Pasi Sahlberg, and the Deputy Director of CIMO, Samu Seitsalo. Such data collection miracle would not have been possible without their valuable agreement that I could collect data from the Vietnamese universities using CIMO as the representative of my survey.

I am also indebted to the Vietnamese universities who enthusiastically and actively participated in the survey within such limited time of notice.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>RMIT</td>
<td>Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>The Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEM</td>
<td>Asia-Europe Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEF</td>
<td>Asia-European Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>The Australian Government's overseas aid program from Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIED</td>
<td>The Institute of International Education Training Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>VND</td>
<td>Vietnam Dong</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEA</td>
<td>The European Economic Area</td>
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<td>ACHP</td>
<td>Advanced Curricula HE Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAFSA</td>
<td>Associations of International Educators</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIMO</td>
<td>Centre for International Mobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECTS</td>
<td>The European Transfer and Accumulation System</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINEDU</td>
<td>Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Students Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAU</td>
<td>International Association of Universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
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<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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Introduction

Under the forces of globalization, the 21st higher education (HE) century has transformed in volume, scope and complexity and moved towards greater international involvement. Alongside with globalization, the growth of using English as the main lingua franca for scientific communication, cross-border HE export, international market for scholars and scientists, international communications, technology and cooperation among multinational firms, etc. have all contributed to the ever-growing of knowledge economy. Universities have transformed. The days when universities stood isolated as “ivory towels” have gone, and given ways to more dynamic changes, cooperation and partnerships. While Clark’s triangle features the interrelation between “academic-state-market”, the triple helix model of “university-industry-government” innovation has later been promoted by Etzkowitz (1998). It is claimed that the relations between the three components either in Clark’s triangle or Etzkowitz’s innovation model have been varied, diversified, and complicated depending on the contextual application of each country. It is also implicated that once grouped together in a relation, the key stake holders, “academic”-“state”- “market” or “university”- “industry”-“government”, establish their cooperation, collaboration and partnerships in either loosely or closely manners. In globalization era, there is an increasing need for all of the stake holders in HE to cooperate with each other and establish partnerships for mutual benefits and sustainable developments. Albatch and Knight (2007: 291) claimed that wealth, knowledge and power are concentrated in those who have already possessed these three elements and known how to reap the benefits of globalization. Partnerships in HE bridge all of the powerful actors and less powerful ones together. Whereas the more powerful ones may need to establish partnerships to help the less-powerful players or compete against other powerful ones in HE market to reap financial benefits, the less powerful ones demand more partnership establishment to strengthen their HE power and develop their knowledge-based economy.

1. Literature review

1.1. Definitions of globalization, internationalization and partnerships

Knight (2004: 5) clarified the two concepts “globalization” and “internationalization”: “internationalization is changing the world of higher education, and globalization is changing the world of internationalization”. Knight stated that “internationalization” is a term that is being used more and more to discuss the international dimensions of HE and even postsecondary education. It can mean differently to different contexts and different people, which constitutes its conceptual confusion. For example, while some people think it means “a series of international activities such as academic
mobility for students and teachers; international linkages, partnerships, and projects; and new, international academic programs and research initiatives”, others think it is related to “the inclusion of an international, intercultural, and/or global dimension into the curriculum and teaching learning process”, or “the delivery of education to other countries through new types of arrangements such as branch campuses or franchises using a variety of face-to-face and distance techniques”, etc. Knight & deWit (1997: 6) defined “globalization” as “the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, and ideas . . . across borders”. Globalization is considered to create the environment in which forces more changes and transformation of HE internationalization. According to Knight (2004), HE partnerships are positioned as one of the movements, series or activities in internationalization of HE. Furthermore, HE partnerships are considered to represent the expansion of international activities and internationalization is an inevitable result from the environment of globalization (Ayoubi and Al-Haibaibeh, 2006: 380). Mullinix (2002: 77) claimed that partnership, a signification step beyond cooperation and collaboration, is becoming an indispensable component of educational transformation and a powerful tool with great potential in HE. Therefore, partnership strategies are reported to be important in international, bilateral and multilateral relations between HE institutions and agencies at supranational, national and institutional levels. It is, however, complex to define the term partnership exactly because its definition varies depending on the contexts and involved partners.

1.2. Partnership–A Transdisciplinary Concept


Partnership is positioned as “an association between two or more persons, groups, or organizations who join together to achieve a common goal that neither one alone can accomplish. This association is characterized by joint membership rights, by democratic participation, and by shared responsibility. Each member agrees to contribute resources to the partnership with the understanding that the possession or enjoyment of the benefits will be shared by all. Partners work hard to strengthen each other and to endure conflict and change, because they recognize that their shared goal extends
beyond the reach of any one member” (Poole, 1995: 2). According to Mullinix (ibid), in comparison to partnership in business sector in which partners are responsible for sharing losses and benefits proportionally, this definition indicates broader meanings in which the involved partners are responsible for strengthening each other. This definition embraces the “social partnership” definitions. Saleebey (1992, cited in Mullinix: 2002) in social work and McKnight (1994) in health mentioned partnership approaches in terms of the benefits of focusing on strength and capacity rather than deficiency and weakness as well as the problem-solving capacities latent in communities.

The definition of partnership in HE has also embraced a diversity of contexts, the characteristics and the number of partners involved. The term, partners, indicates the stakeholders who are involved in the governance or financing of a partnership (Maroitt and Goyder: 2009:16). Draxler (2008:16) presented that partnership, associated with other terms such as “multi-state holders” and “public-private”, “can be used to mean a pure contractual arrangement, a loose agreement between different parties to work together, a highly structured and governed set-up, or can merely a term indicating an attitude of reciprocity in development programmes between donors and recipients...” According to Draxler (ibid), partner and partnership can be used interchangeably and created for advocacy, pooling and managing of resources, contributing to the expansion and enhanced quality of education, for providing supports in terms of infrastructure, services, expertise, etc. The definition of multistate holders go far beyond that of public-private partnerships in their transparent and explicit focus on broader and longer term of public, private and civil society stakeholders than just merely the public (governments) and the private (companies, non-governmental actors, non-profit civil society organizations) sectors (ibid).

In the Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Partnership for Education, Maroitt and Goyder (2009: 20) categorized a number of stakeholders who are involved in the consensus-based process in any sort of coordination, management or governance capacity at any levels ranging from supra-national, international, national, institutional and individual levels. Their roles can vary from partnership conveners /brokers/facilitators/managers who are representatives of a prospective partner – government, business or NGO –involved in coordinating a partnering exercise, whether in the early establishing phases or the later implementation phases, to partnership evaluators who are independent third-party companies or consultants who undertake evaluations of multi-sector partnerships. In addition, partner representatives are the individuals who represent partner organizations, responsible for ensuring that their organizations are extracting sufficient value/benefit from the partnerships in
which they are participating in terms of their own needs and expectations; managers of partner/beneficiary/funding organizations relate to the individuals who manage organizations with an interest and stake in the outcomes of a multi-stakeholder partnership, who are interested in evaluating the performance and impact of the partnership as a whole. Directors of partner/funding organizations include the individuals of those organizations commissioning cross-sector partnerships, who are interested in comparing partnership approaches with non-partnership approaches.

Maroitt and Goyder (2009: 24) presented a six-phase model of partnership from pre-partnership, partnership building, partnership inception, partnership implementation, partnership reviews, partnership transitions. The focus of this research is on the pre-partnership phase in which detailed attention is on scoping the challenges, opportunities, expectations, risks, strengths and weaknesses of the established partnership and the involved partners. Maroitt and Goyder noted that multi-stakeholder partnership for education has proved to be more flexible and successful in overcoming the problems associated with classic public sectors in the field of education. By their voluntary nature, multi-stakeholders are more flexible, responsive than other more conventional arrangements and simply inefficient government. Due to the absence of legal sanctions to hold those involved in multi-stakeholder partnerships to their agreed roles and responsibilities, Maroitt and Goyder (ibid) stated that “monitoring and evaluation offers an effective way to pin down partners’ roles, responsibilities and expectations”.

According to Butcher et al (2010), HE partnership can be categorized as transactional or transformational or both. Transformational and transactional partnerships are both based on genuine engagement, common goals and mutual benefits. However, transformational partnerships differentiate from transactional partnerships in purpose, nature and strategies. Butcher et al (2010) used the examples of universities and schools/school systems relationship. They may need to establish partnerships with each other for the pursuit of individual purposes. For example, schools and systems may need universities to provide them with particular expertise, and professional development, etc. Universities may need partnerships with schools and systems to get access to practicum places, research sites, or future students; etc. Both the two partners in this case may need each other, so they are ready to make exchanges, but their institutional goals, aims and objectives remain fundamentally unchanged. Burns (1978, cited in Butcher et al, 2010) identified them “transactional”. In transactional

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1 Figure 1 illustrating the six-phase partnership phase in education can be found in appendix 1 (Maroitt and Goyder, 2009: 24)
partnerships, economic and social exchanges occur for institutional specific goals or purposes rather than promoting institutional changes and transformation (Lussier and Achua, 2004: 358). Unlike transactional partnerships, transformational ones are established with a moral dimension (Starratt: 2004). Both partners come together to “pursue common purposes and create the possibility of generative growth and change through mutual interaction as they apply their resources to addressing complex problems” (Brown et al. 2006, cited in Butcher et al, 2010). Transformational partnerships manifests “a commitment to long-term collaboration in goal setting and to sharing of perspectives, capacities, and resources is integral to university-community or university-school partnerships designed to make a difference (Butcher and Egan: 2008; Dhillon: 2009; Holland and Gelmon: 1998; Howard et al: 2007, cited in Butcher et al, 2010). The HE institutional mission of community development is one of the examples of transformational partnerships (Mullinix: 2002). The transformational partnerships require long-term commitment with “openness to change not only in the nature of the partnership but in the organizations themselves” (ibid).

In conclusion, the definitions, characteristic, and the number of involved stakeholders can be diversified contextually. In the changing context of HE reforms and transformation, the benefits, stimuli, challenges, risks of partnerships have received much attention.

1.3. **Stimuli driving internationalization and international partnership**

Since HE partnership is positioned as one of the series of activities of internationalization, they share similar drives or motivations. There has been a plethora of research studies on the rationales driving internationalization in four groups: social/cultural, political, academic, and economic (de Wit: 1995, Knight & de Wit: 1997, 1999, Knight: 2004, 2005, etc). Furthermore, the changes in rationales both within and between these four groups have also been studied by de Wit (2000, 2002), van Vught, van der Wende, & Westerheijden (2002).

Knight (2004: 21-28) presented a thorough analysis of the rationales behind all partnership establishments and internationalization. Knight suggested adding one more new category, *branding*, which means the drive to develop a strong international reputation. It is claimed that HE institutions are trying to compete against each other in terms of ranking, academic standards, international profiles, etc. HE is now considered a product that can be traded in the HE market. In the competitive HE market, HE institutions, organizations and companies consider domestic and international students like customers. They compete against each other for market share in the recruitment of international fee-paying students, for-profit education and training programmes, selling education services like language testing
or accreditation, etc. In an attempt to achieve international profile of world class reputation in education and training, many HE institutions have included partnership establishment in their internationalization strategies to enhance their research initiatives and development. Therefore, *branding* should be added to the existing drives of internationalization, and partnership of HE should be considered as one of the methods or strategies for HE institutions and bodies to achieve more desirable positions for competitive advantages in HE market. Knight (ibid) argued that the drive for international branding should be considered integrated into the four existing groups of rationales.

Table 1 presents the four categories of existing rationales as updated by de Wit (2002) cited from Knight (2004: 23). Knight noted that the framework of rationales does not distinguish between national- and institutional-level rationales, and there seems to be blurring rationales between and among the categories because they are closely related to each other. Besides, the framework does not illustrate the supra-national and regional rationales for partnership and internationalization. For example, there have been many scholarships and academic exchange programmes by European Commission for international students. One of the rationales behind these programmes is to strengthen positions and the attractiveness of European HE world-wide. Similar rationales can be found in scholarships and exchange programmes like Fulbright in the U.S, The Australian Government's overseas aid program from Australia (AusAID), etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationales</th>
<th>Existing—National and Institutional Levels Combined</th>
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<tr>
<td>Social/cultural</td>
<td>National cultural identity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural understanding</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Citizenship development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social and community development</td>
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<td>Political</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National security</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peace and mutual understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National identity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Regional identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Economic growth and competitiveness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Labour market</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Financial Incentives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>International dimension to research and teaching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Extension of academic horizon</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Institution building</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Profile and status</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enhancement of quality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International academic standards</td>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Of Emerging Importance—National and Institutional Levels Separated</th>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Human resources development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategic alliances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Commercial trade</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nation building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social/cultural development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>International branding and profile</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Income generation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student and staff development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategic alliances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Knowledge production</td>
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Table 1. National and institutional rationales of internationalization and partnership in HE (cited from Knight, 2004: 23).
1.3.1. National-levels of internationalization and partnership in HE

As can be seen from table 1, the four emerging themes for national-levels of internationalization and partnership in HE are human resources development, strategic alliances, commercial trade and nation building. Knight (2004) presented the justification for each national-level rationale. Firstly, in terms of *human resources development*, Knight stated that because of the signs of heightened pressure and interest to recruit the brightest students and scholars from other countries to strengthen scientific, technological and economic competitiveness, HE institutions have supported national strategies of human brain power attraction by enhancing the international dimension of teaching and research. Domestic students and academics are therefore given more opportunities for personal, professional and citizenship development. Secondly, partnership establishment enables the international mobility of students and academics, and conditions more collaborative research and education initiatives. There are examples of countries try to achieve *stronger economic and political alliances* by means of increasing their international activities on a regional basis. For example, by giving scholarships to developing countries from Pacific region, Commonwealth region and others, New Zealand Aid contributes to New Zealand’s missions of sustainable economic development, developing closer geopolitical ties and economic relationships. Thirdly, HE is increasingly now considered a *commercial trade industry* which generates more economic and income opportunities. There has been an increasing number of foreign offshore campuses, double or joint-degree programmes, new franchise arrangements, online courses, international fee-paying students, etc. For example, education services are Australia’s largest services export industry ahead of personal travel services ($12.1 billion) and professional and management consulting services ($3.3 billion). International education activity contributed $18.6 billion in export income to the Australian economy in 2009 (International Research and Analysis Unit, 2011). Fourthly, *nation building* is one of the very important rationale in countries where there is a lack of physical/human infrastructure and can not afford to offer HE opportunities to the increasing demands of their citizens. International partnership establishment is becoming an important tool enabling more international development work based on mutual benefits or commercial purposes. Lastly, Knight mentioned the *social and cultural development* rationale for partnership establishment. Although more emphasis has been given to economic and political rationales than to social and cultural ones, the latter still holds its importance concerning the clashes within and between nations stemmed from social and cultural issues and challenges.
Since the focus of this research study is on institutional level of partnership establishment, the next section will discuss more institutional-level rationales in details. Knight (ibid) stated that there is a close liaison between national-level and institutional-level rationales, but the emphasis on each type of rationales may be diversified. In countries with top-down process, HE internationalization and partnership establishment at national levels is given more emphasis while more focus is on institutional-level at countries where bottom-up process is employed. Furthermore, there may be the combination of both where HE institutions function as satellite centers supporting regional partners domestically or internationally with neighboring countries.

1.3.2. Institutional-Level Rationales

Institutional partnerships can originate from a variety of rationales from which partners decide which activities they would like to develop with each other. Firstly, HE institutions are noted to aim at high ranking of *international profile and reputation* by attracting the brightest of scholars/students with high-profile research and training projects, which are used for branding purposes to attract more students domestically and internationally. Secondly, thanks to the established partnership, *students and staffs* are given more opportunities for personal, cultural, and professional development at supranational, national, regional, institutional levels. They can have these opportunities with either HE at-home-internationalization partnership or abroad internationalization one. Thirdly, since HE institutions are facing the decreasing public funding but increasing institutional operation costs, the drive for *income generation* is more obvious and complicated. There have been serious attempts to establish more HE partnership among institutions since it is considered as one of the bridges of reaching and attracting customers in the local HE market with cross-border delivery of education programs and services. Fourthly, HE institutions have been devoted more to strategies to develop alliances or *international institutional linkages*. There linkages, according to Knight (2004), help to multiply the opportunities for academic mobility, benchmarking, joint curriculum or program development, seminars and conferences, and joint research initiatives, etc. The last but not least important rationale for partnership establishment and internationalization is *research and knowledge distribution*. In the globalization era, it is important for interdisciplinary HE partnerships to be established at international, national, regional, and institutional levels, which enables feasible solutions for many global problems such as those related to environmental, health, and crime issues, etc.
All in all, HE partnerships are one of the series of internationalization activities and share the same national and institutional rationales driving of internationalization. These rationales can be diversified depending on the contexts of each institution, region, country, and international community.

Examples of rationales for HE partnerships can be found in a number of research studies. Canto and Hannah (2001) studied the academic partnership between the UK and Brazil, which covers postgraduate levels, research projects, and staff exchange. The rationales for Brazilian partners were that they can receive from joint research, curricula, training of staff, pure financial or infrastructure support and the possibility of academic contacts. The UK partners can develop their research profiles, and internationalize their curricula and international liaisons with developing countries. Saffu and Mamman (1999: cited in Ayoubi and Al-Habaibeh, 2006) stated that strategic alliances as collaborative relationship between a local university and an overseas counterpart, which may be public or private, enable more agreements to co-operate in joint activities such as the development of onshore or offshore offerings, teaching, research and consultancy, technology and, marketing new or existing courses to a new market. Similarly, Poole (2001) finds that HE partnership establishment can serve as the starting point for more institutional activities such as students exchange and curriculum matters, joint-degree programmes, etc. These institutional activities can in turn strengthen the partnership and eventually help HE institutions achieve their institutional motivations.

Once all of the HE institutions of a country know how to collaborate with each other to reap benefits of the institutional HE partnership they have created with potential partners, all of their efforts can help the whole nation achieve their national motivations in partnership establishments. The partnership establishments between Australian universities and other HE institutions in developing countries can be learned as good examples. Thanks to such cooperation, they can form joint-degree programmes or offer educational services for profit purposes. The institutional reputation of Australian universities is then strengthened, which helps them to attract more fee-paying international students to come and study. Furthermore, thanks to the reputation and trust they can earn from the top governments of some partner countries, they are allowed to build their own off-shore campuses and reap the benefits. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Vietnam is a clear example of how successful Australian government and RMIT Australia are in their partnership establishment with the Vietnamese government.

Furthermore, HE institutions also seek for more international HE partnership to be able to compete against each other (Chan, 2004). Karran (1998) argued that HE institutions are both competing
against each other, especially between public and private providers. They also try to establish more partnerships with other universities, both to pool expertise and develop critical mass to compete within an international arena.

Harper (1995) found that the motivation of partnership establishment between EU-USA universities is to develop joint educational projects and a joint degree program in international business and marketing which covers some HE activities such as student exchanges, staff exchanges, curriculum development initiatives, joint educational projects and development in distance learning. In their study of overseas partnerships activities within Australian universities, Saffu and Mamman (2000) found that the surveyed universities are interested in four activities of with their partners ranking from the most important to the least important one: study abroad and student exchange, collaboration in research and consultancy, twinning and staff exchange, and offshore programs.

Knight (2005: 22-25) presented a list types of programme activities and organizational at institutional levels. HE institutions can establish partnership activities on reference of their motivation and rationales. As can be seen from table 2, there are four types of activities: academic programmes, research and scholarly collaboration, domestic and cross-border activities, and extra curricular activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Academic programs | • Student exchange programs  
|                   | • Foreign language study  
|                   | • Internationalized curricula  
|                   | • Area or thematic studies  
|                   | • Work/study abroad  
|                   | • International students  
|                   | • Teaching/learning process  
|                   | • Joint/double degree programs  
|                   | • Cross-cultural training  
|                   | • Faculty/staff mobility programs  
|                   | • Visiting lecturers and scholars  
|                   | • Links between academic programs and other strategies  
| Research and scholarly collaboration | • Area and theme centers  
|                   | • Joint research projects and publications  
|                   | • International conferences and seminars  
|                   | • International research agreements  
|                   | • Research exchange programs  
|                   | • International research partners in academic and other sectors  
| Domestic and cross-border activities | • Community-based partnerships with NGOs or public/private sector groups  
|                   | • Community service and intercultural project work  
|                   | • Customized education and training programs for international partners and clients  
|                   | • International development assistance projects  
|                   | • Cross-border delivery of education programs (commercial and noncommercial)  
|                   | • International linkages, partnerships, and networks  
| Extracurricular activities | • Contract-based training and research programs and services  
|                   | • Alumni abroad programs  
|                   | • Student clubs and associations  
|                   | • International and intercultural campus events  
|                   | • Liaison with community-based cultural and ethnic groups  
|                   | • Peer support groups and programs  

Table 2. Institutional-Level programs for partnerships in HE internationalization (cited in Knight: 2005, 22-25).

1.4. Challenges in establishing HE partnerships

Knight (2003: 13-14) reported that HE institutions face many obstacles to the successful and sustainable implementation of internationalization and partnership. The key obstacles are the lack of policy/strategy to facilitate the process (1), the lack of financial support (2), the administrative inertia or difficulties (3), the institutional competing priorities (4), issues of non-recognition of work done abroad (5), the lack of reliable and comprehensive information (6), the lack of opportunities (7), the lack of understanding of what is involved (8), and the insufficiently trained or qualified staff to guide the process (9). According to the report, the most challenging factor is lack of financial support. The second next obstacle is the lack of a policy/strategy and competing priorities. Other organization
factors were perceived to be the third challenge which included the following four: 1) the difficulty to get heads of departments and faculties committed to support internationalization (Europe), 2) in view of the increasing workload relating to internationalization, insufficiency of administrative staff at central and departmental level (Europe), 3) lack of an efficient and compatible credit transfer system with, and within Latin American HE institutions, 4) bureaucratic structures and the resistance to change (Africa).

1.5. The present context of internationalization and partnership of HE in Vietnam

Among the Southeast Asian countries, the Vietnamese HE displays the similar trends of internationalization. HE sectors in Vietnam are growing more and more diversified of HE institutions. Fundamental financial problems in the Vietnamese HE stem from the past Vietnam wars and the present situation of burgeoning student enrolment rates. After gaining their independence in 1975, the Vietnamese continue their struggle against poverty and corruption. The post-war aftermaths demands the government to fundamentally invest on infrastructure development. At the present time, realizing the importance of return rates of HE, the government has decided to invest more by improving the salary rates for teachers and lecturers, equipments for HE institutions, and giving more scholarships for teachers and lecturers, etc.

However, since Vietnam is a developing country with the population of over 85 million people, the cost of sharp increasing student enrolment has remarkably contributed to exacerbate the financial subsidy situations of the government for public universities. When current limited sources of national revenues do not match with the cost for HE per student, heavier costs have been shifted to the Vietnamese students and parents. The tide of fee-paying students grows relentlessly from four to five times larger compared to the number of students sponsored by the government (Vneconomy, 2010). The number of HE institutions has increased dramatically, from 153 in 1999 to 369 in 2008. Enrollment numbers have also been increasing sharply from 1,540,201 students enrolled in the 2006-2007 academic year to 1,719,499 in 2008-2009 (MOET, 2009). The burgeoning population of 85 millions in Vietnam has caused the imbalance between supply-demand of HE market in Vietnam. Such growing demands have been somehow met by the establishment of foreign-owned universities, joint-programme partnerships between foreign HE institutions and the Vietnamese ones. HE in Vietnam has witnessed strong demands in establishing more partnerships with more-advanced HE institutions overseas.
1.5.1. The Vietnamese HE system

There are two types of universities in Vietnam: public and non public. Public universities consist of specialized universities with focus on a specific field such as people’s military army, navy, seafood industry and multi-disciplined universities formed by merging some specialized universities. The non-public universities have many categories: semi public institutions, people-founded institutions, private institutions, private-foreign collaborated, foreign owned and institutions that work in collaboration with foreign bodies. Semi-public universities are formed and operated by the government, but students cover the operational costs of the institutions. People-founded institutions are established by NGOs or private organizations where students pay nearly full-cost fees. Private institutions are owned by individuals who charge students full cost fees. Some public, semi-public and people-founded institutions also collaborate with foreign universities to establish joint programmes in which students pay full foreign costs. There are foreign owned institutions in Vietnam such as RMIT and Victoria University of Wellington. Under the regulation of open market policies (“doi moi”), the Vietnamese government has adopted the cost-recovery approach for domestic HE institutions who can charge tuition fee under the government’ tuition fee policies.

1.5.2. Weaknesses in HE system

The government has identified three causes of the weaknesses in HE system. Firstly, the governmental policy of “education is the top national policy and motivation of the development process” has not been managed well, due to the lack of acknowledging the important role of HE many ministries, sectors and localities have not given priority to create adequate conditions and allocate sufficient funding and budgets for educational development. Secondly, while there have been profound changes and reforms in socio-economic situations in Vietnam, Asia and the world, Vietnam HE is stagnated with inappropriate mechanisms for management of education while massification, marketization and privatization have been popular in the Vietnamese HE market. The Vietnamese thoughts of the significance of obtaining HE degrees has inevitably led to the “false achievement sickness” in the national HE system. It is noted that some HE institutions fail to nurture the passion for learning and knowledge and students’ creativity and capability due to their passive teacher-student one way teaching methodologies. Thirdly, the government also acknowledges that state management of HE is so heavily bureaucratic and inadequate which limits the institutional autonomy, creativity and sense of responsibility. The state investment for HE lacks effectiveness in which the structure of educational
budget is not reasonable and state investment on professional research activities is largely negligible. These weaknesses have posed many challenges to the Vietnamese HE system (MOET, 2009).

1.5.3. Challenges

The strong growth of revolution in science and technology in the world widens the gap between the knowledge economy of Vietnam and other countries, so Vietnam is in danger of lagging behind in terms of innovation, science technology and development. Furthermore, HE internationalization in Vietnam not only creates opportunities for educational development, but also poses the risks of low-quality education products and services imported to Vietnam HE when the Vietnamese capacity for management of transnational education is weak, lacking many policies and appropriate solutions to closely guide local HE institutions in their initial stage of partnership establishments. Moreover, the wealth gaps between different population groups and the development gap between regions is increasingly clear. This situation may increase inequality in access to HE between regions. To be more specific, students from poor and remote areas in Vietnam may have fewer chances to enter universities because they can not afford to pay the increasing tuition fee rates in Vietnam. The most challenging task for Vietnam at the present time is the high quality human resources. To grow beyond the group of low-income countries, Vietnam has to restructure the economy, the development of high technological products and services. This process requires Vietnam to have sufficient skilled manpower. Although 62.7% of the Vietnamese population is in their working age, the levels knowledge and professional skills of the workforce is still low compared to many countries in the region. Vietnam still lacks high-level manpower in various fields. Therefore, the urgent needs of trained manpower are increasing in both quantity and quality with reasonable structure creates enormous pressure on the HE system (MOET, 2009).

The growing student enrolment rates in Vietnam HE is one of the challenges that the HE is facing. The fact that Vietnamese HE quality remains low has been a major concern for the government and the whole society. It is claimed that the new graduates from HE institutions do not meet the rising demands of the job market in Vietnam. The cause for these problems can be traced back to the quality of teaching staffs (Nguyen, 2009). It is should be noted that the teaching staff is weak in terms of both quantity and quality. There are 5879 teaching staff with Ph.D. and 17,046 with M.A. degrees in the total of 41,007 teaching staffs in all HE institutions. It can be seen that there are 18,030 teaching staff with B.A. degrees working at these institutions (MOET, 2009). Because of the low monthly salary and the low working conditions, many of them are left no choice but to engage in income-generating
activities and leave scientific research behind. Furthermore, curricula and teaching methodology in Vietnam HE system are considered to be out-of-date and in slow process of review and modernization. Besides, the infrastructure like libraries, laboratories, and teaching facilities in some universities is old and out-of-date (Nguyen, 2009). Tran (2005) noted that the central planning and management system in Vietnam makes the whole system more bureaucratic and pose more constraints on innovation and development in all education aspects.

The present challenges, weaknesses in Vietnam have provided much impetus for the Vietnamese government to call for help from foreign HE institutions. As a result, more and more HE partnerships between Vietnam and foreign partners have been established at supra-national, national and institutional levels.

1.5.4. **Partnership establishment in supra-national and national levels**

Among Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam has played a role in supporting other less developed countries in the region improve their HE system, such as Laos and Cambodia. For example, the conference "three principal universities of Vietnam - Laos - Cambodia" was held at National University in Hochiminh City to come to an agreement of establishing a network and partnerships between the three countries’ universities. All partners agreed that the establishment of the Indochina university network will open more opportunities for student exchange, faculty, joint training, and scientific research cooperation between the three countries. The Director of Vietnam National University stated that this network partnership will provide opportunities to develop and promote cooperation between universities in the region in a concrete and effective manner, enhance solidarity and traditional friendship between the three countries. The Chairman of the Committee of Culture and National Assembly of Socialist Republic of Laos also thinks that forming such partnership network of universities in the three Indochinese countries will contribute significantly to human resource development of each partner country. Indeed, the cooperation and training and student exchanges have been made for years. For example, Laos has sent thousands of teaching staff and students to study in Vietnam. There will be eleven participating universities in which there are four Laotian universities, three Cambodian ones, and four Vietnamese ones. The leaders of three countries also expressed their desire to strengthen cooperation between universities of the three countries to support and help each other to develop. Funding to maintain the operation of the network will come from three sources, the state budget, the international organizations and other sources. However, many delegates expressed their concern over the issue of funding the operation of the network. Clarity about funding is very much
needed to maintain the partnership operations in addition to the language barriers (Giaoduconline, 2010). Vietnam has been supporting Lao and Cambodia to develop their education. For example, Vietnam has supported Laos to establish several upper secondary boarding schools in Sekong and Champasac provinces and a dormitory for foreign students in Vientiane National University (MOET, 2005a, cited in Nguyen, 2009).

Promoting and strengthening cooperation with Southeast Asian and East Asian countries is also considered to be one of the priorities in Vietnam’s international cooperation strategies, both at the national and institutional levels. Delegation from MOET attended the two conferences, "Round Table of Ministers of Education ASEAN - China" and "Week of educational exchanges and cooperation of ASEAN - China" held in Guiyang City, China. According to the Minister, the success of this conference will contribute to promoting cooperation in education field between ASEAN countries and China in general, between Vietnam and China in particular. The Minister said that education and training cooperation and partnerships between ASEAN and China in the current context will further enhance understanding, friendship and solidarity between countries, and contribute to improving quality and productivity results in the training of human resources, promoting economic development, trade, services, scientific research, contributing to strengthen peace and stability in the region (Giaoduconline, 2010). Another example for the role of Vietnam HE in supra national levels can be seen in the partnership and cooperation between Asia and Europe. Established in March 1996, Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) at the present time consists of 48 partners including Vietnam across Asia and Europe. ASEM promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. In the past 13 years, over 500 projects have been implemented, bringing together more than 15,000 direct participants and reaching out to an even wider audience in Asia and Europe (ASEF, 2010).

1.5.5. Partnership establishment at national levels

MOET has officially approved 135 joint training programmes established between 50 Vietnamese HE institutions with foreign partners (the Institute of International Education Training Projects, 2010). According to the latest report by the Institute of International Education Training Projects (VIED) funded by the Vietnamese state budget, there are about 60,000 international Vietnamese students studying overseas. More and more students apply to study at universities in the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Singapore, China, etc. Among them, more than 4,000 students are funded by the State budget under the state scholarship project 322. Several thousands of students
receive scholarships from foreign government, non-governmental organizations, universities, etc. The rest of the students studies overseas by ways of self-funding.

MOET has issued the Strategy for Education Development 2000-2020 outlining the policy targets in which Vietnam is determined to achieve the following objectives in HE. Firstly, the population of students aged 18 to 24 going to colleges and universities will reach 40% in 2020. In order to meet the demand from the increasing local students’ population, more expansion of the non-public HE institutions will rise until 2020 to meet the 30% -40% of student enrolment rates nationwide. Furthermore, about 15,000 foreign students enrolled in courses at universities in Vietnam by 2020. Secondly, HE quality and efficiency must be improved up to regional and international standards. Graduate students are expected to obtain up-to-date modern knowledge, professional and practical skills. They should be capable of creative work, independent thinking, critical and problem-solving, adapt well to high volatility of the labor market, and use English in academic, research and work after graduation. By 2020, at least 5% of students graduate from HE institutions with degree-levels as excellent as those at leading universities in ASEAN. 80% of the graduates are expected to meet the requirements of the job market. Furthermore, alongside with the improvement of overall quality of the mass of students, the training and fostering talented students will be expanding to prepare workforce for high qualifications, language proficiency, and competitiveness compared with that of the region and the world. By 2020, Vietnam must rank among the top 50 on the competitiveness of human resources.

MOET also aims to enhance human resource power of the HE system by stating that by 2020, 35% of teachers in vocational colleges must have M.A. degree level or higher; 80% of teaching staff in colleges must have M.A. degree level or higher of which 15% must have Ph.D.degrees and 100% of university lecturers must have M.A. degrees or higher with 30% must have PhDs degree level. The training project for teaching staffs of universities and colleges from 2008 to 2020 will be implemented with three options of training: (1) training in the country, (2) overseas training and combined training at home by joint degree training programmes between Vietnamese HE institutions and foreign partners and (3) abroad. The state training budget focuses on teaching staff and of major universities and researchers from some major research institutes in the country. Special focus is on Ph.D. training programmes in which MOET invites a number of professors from the prestigious universities in the world to supervise the Ph.D. Vietnamese students.

To achieve their strategic plans in strengthening local human resources, MOET has realized the importance of establishing partnerships with more advanced foreign HE institutions around the world.
Therefore, on one hand, MOET creates all necessary conditions to foster the partnership establishments between the Vietnamese HE institutions and foreign partners. On the other hand, MOET employs “open-door policies for HE”, which means the rights and legitimate interests of organizations and individuals in the country, the Vietnam residing overseas, foreign organizations, foreign individuals who invest in education are encouraged and protected legally in Vietnam. Furthermore, MOET encourages and facilitates the establishment of high quality universities with 100% foreign capital in Vietnam, which creates convenient conditions for foreign providers who wish to enter the open Vietnamese HE market.

Furthermore, MOET’s determination in strengthening their human resources can be seen in the “State Funding Project 322” (Training Scientific and Technical Cadres in Institutions Overseas with the State Budget). The project has been implemented since 2000 to train and cultivate leading science and technology staff for key sectors and HE institutions. 100 billion Vietnam Dongs of the national budget is spent yearly to send 450 students overseas, of which 200 cadres will study in doctoral programs, 100 in master degree programs, 60 to study engineering and 40 to study some priority scientific training and research fields like telecommunications, information technology, biological technology, and new materials. This policy combines two training methods, full-time courses in foreign countries and sandwich courses. This is the first time Vietnam has used a part of the state budget expenditures to send its staff overseas for training. MOET is determined to train 20,000 Ph.D. by 2020 in order to provide universities and colleges with qualified lecturers and researchers. These newly trained professors are expected to make up 25 percent of the total lecturers in the higher training network, meeting 50 percent of the country’s demand for lecturers at this level. Up to 2007, 3,212 students and cadres had been sent to study abroad on state funds, of which 2,050 were postgraduate students and 1,162 were undergraduates (MOET, 2007a, cited in Nguyen, 2009).
Bar chart 1. Top Seven Countries Chosen for Postgraduate Studies by State-sponsored Vietnamese Students (extracted from Nguyen, 2009).

As can be seen from the graph, the top seven countries chosen for the postgraduate studies by state-sponsored Vietnamese students are Australia, the U.S., Germany, the UK, France, Thailand and Japan. Australia and the U.S. are the top two HE providers of MOET at the present time thanks to the good bilateral relationships between the Vietnamese government and the top governments of the providers’ home countries. MOET will sign contracts with foreign countries and establish partnerships enabling 10,000 junior faculty members to study abroad. Among those countries selected, MOET will send 2,500 faculty members to the United States; 1,000 to the United Kingdom; 1,000 to Germany; 1,000 to Australia; 1,000 to Japan and 700 to France, as well as a host of other countries (Nguyen, 2009).

1.5.6. **Partnership establishments at institutional levels**

**Foreign education programs**

As mentioned above, MOET has enabled and facilitated the establishment of foreign education programs, managed either entirely by foreign universities or through some forms of joint venture. Two policies were instrumental in enabling this progress are Decree No. 06/2000/NDCP (March 6, 2000) and especially, the issuance of Decree No. 18/2001/ND-CP (May 4, 2001) on the —Establishment and Operation of Foreign Cultural and Educational Agencies in Vietnam (Nguyen, 2009). To protect domestic learners and assure the quality of educational services provided through foreign education programs, MOET issued the 2004 Circular requiring domestic HE institutions to send their application for permission to perform the joint training programmes. Moreover, foreign organizations and partners who wish to operate in Vietnam must submit an accreditation license of quality from their home country to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MOET. MOET hopes to facilitate the process of
partnership establishments and prevent the establishment of “ghost organizations” or “diploma mills” that do not exist outside of Vietnam. MOET has also encouraged foreign institutions to develop training programs for scientists, technicians, managers and experts in economics, technology, natural sciences, the environment and culture (IIE, 2005, cited in Nguyen, 2009). There are 135 joint training programmes officially approved by MOET. There is a tendency that this number is increasing sharply since the Vietnamese HE market is completely open for foreign providers and investors.

The legal favorable legal conditions created by MOET have turned Vietnam HE a lucrative market for providers from Australia, UK, US and New Zealand. This trend is forecast to grow. For example, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) established in Vietnam in 2004. The student population in RMIT Vietnam has been growing to more than 5,000 at the two university campuses in Ho Chi Minh and Ha Noi. Foreign students accounts for around 10% of the total number of students at RMIT Vietnam and that the Saigon South campus would be a duel campus of the university in Asia (The Saigon Times, 2009).

Staff and student mobility

Compared to other countries in Asia and the world, Vietnam is one of the top countries who send more students study abroad through partnership programmes funded by the Vietnamese government, foreign governments or self-funding students. To illustrate, the National Center for Education Statistics (2009) stated the ten top countries of origin for international students studying in the U.S. in 2007-2008 accounting for over half of international student enrollment are India, China, South, Korea, Japan, Canada, Taiwan, Mexico, Turkey, Vietnam and Saudi Arabia. Similarly, Department of Immigration and Citizenship in Australia in 2009 reported that a total of 269,308 student visas were granted which represents a decrease of 15.8 per cent when compared to the 2008-09 figure of 320,330 visas. The major source countries of overseas students are from India, China, North Korea, Nepal, Thailand, Brazil, Malaysia, United States of America, Vietnam and Indonesia. In New Zealand Education Statistics in 2008-2009, there were 28,604 international students coming to study in New Zealand in which the top students’ countries of origins are India, China, South Korea, USA, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Japan, and Thailand. Among the importers, Vietnam is considered the 13th largest market for New Zealand in 2009 with 1517 fee-paying students. Compared to 922 students in 2006, the

\[ \text{For more information, please read the article “Marketness of the Vietnamese HE” by Trinh Truong which is under consideration in Social and Management Research Journal of University Technology, Malaysia.} \]
2009 has increased 1.6 times (Education New Zealand, 2009). The number of Vietnamese students studying overseas continues to rise.

According to MOET, the number of Vietnamese students and staff studying abroad has increased sharply from 1,139 in 1990 to 25,505 in 2005 and 60,000 in 2009 as can be seen from the follow graph.


This remarkable change in Vietnamese student mobility can be attributed to a number of factors (Nguyen, 2009).

First, it can be attributed to the implementation of the open-door policy since 1991 when Vietnam supported a policy of diversification and multi-lateralization of external relations, including significant support for international integration. MOET has been expanding the international relationships with a wide range of countries, international organizations and institutions from all over the world in all sectors, especially in HE.

Secondly, there is also an increasing effort to support the Vietnamese students and staff mobility study overseas so that they can benefit from the educational and cultural experiences of overseas study and professional development programmes (UNESCO: 2006). Australian government has provided the Vietnamese students 150-200 yearly scholarships. Similarly, Indian government provide 110 scholarships per year and other countries, such as Sweden, Netherlands, France, the US, the UK, Canada, Japan and Korea (Tran, 2000, cited in Nguyen, 2009). Another example is the
Erasmus Mundus scholarships supported by European Union for the Vietnamese students and staff. The European Commission approved the selection of 44 Vietnamese students and staff to receive Erasmus Mundus scholarships for the next academic year (2008-2009). They can attend one of 103 Master courses which cover a wide range of disciplines such as Aeronautics and Space Technology, Economics of International Trade and European Integration, Strategic Project Management, Higher Education, etc. The students can study in any of the countries in which the universities belonging to an Erasmus Mundus consortium are located, giving them the opportunity to familiarize themselves with European lifestyles, cultures and languages. A total of 146 Vietnamese students and scholars have been awarded Erasmus Mundus scholarships since 2004. The number of selected Vietnamese candidates has been increasing from only 3 Vietnamese students in 2004/2005 to 44 in 2008/2009. The Delegation of the European Commission to Vietnam hopes that for the academic year 2009-2010 even more Vietnamese students will be selected (EU, 2008).

Nowadays, more and more Vietnamese students pursue studies abroad without financial support from the governments or external donors thanks to the increase in living standards and family incomes. MOET (2005c) estimated that there were 3,600 Vietnamese self-financed students studied abroad in 1991-2000 and the figures increased to 7,133 in 2001-2005. While some other students choose to study in other countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the U.S, U.K, etc, many of these students chose to study in Asian countries like Singapore, Japan, China, Korea, Malaysia, or Thailand, where educational quality has been upheld and recognized by universities worldwide. The students are attracted to these Asian neighboring countries because of competitively low tuition fees, affordable living, as well as close geographic proximity and better opportunities for employment after graduating.

Foreign students in Vietnam

In the past few years, Vietnam has also welcomed an increasing number of foreign students to its HE sector. According to UNESCO (2007), the number of foreign students in Vietnam is slowly increasing. There were 600 students from 12 countries came to Vietnam to pursue their studies and research under bilateral agreements from 1998 to 2000. The number increased to 2,053 in 2005 and 3230 in 2009. The Vietnamese government recognizes the need to enhance the presence of foreign students in their HE sector. However, in order to attract more foreign students, it is necessary to increase the number of educational programs offered in English so that these students can have more study choices. MOET is determined in internationalizing their curricular by establishing partnerships with more advanced foreign providers and then import the partners’ curricula.
Internationalization of curricula enhanced by partnership establishment

Funding this 2008-2015, MOET aims at specific objectives which are improving the quality of the Vietnamese HE in terms advanced and innovative teaching curricula, to attract domestic and foreign learners and avoiding the risk of state’s losing HE market share compared with the foreign providers. The Governmental Decision 14/2005/NQ-CP in 2006 enabled a pilot Advanced Curricula HE Programs (ACHP) in which seventeen major Vietnamese universities are chosen to partner with nine foreign HE institutions. Table 2 illustrates the names of the HE institutions and the partnered curricula.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ord.</th>
<th>Vietnamese Universities</th>
<th>Programs, Starting year</th>
<th>Partner Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The University of Architecture of HCM City</td>
<td>Urban Design, 2008</td>
<td>Oxford Brookes University, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Hanoi University of Technology</td>
<td>Biomedical Engineering, 2008</td>
<td>Duke University – Durham, USA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mechatronics Engineering, 2006</td>
<td>California State University-Chico, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Material Science and Engineering, 2006</td>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>University of Transport and Communications</td>
<td>Civil and Structural Engineering, 2008</td>
<td>University of Leeds, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Water Resources University</td>
<td>Water Resources Engineering, 2008</td>
<td>Colorado State University, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Thai Nguyen University of Technology</td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering, 2008</td>
<td>State University of New York at Buffalo, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Nong Lam University</td>
<td>Food Science and Technology, 2008</td>
<td>University of California - Davis, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Hanoi Architectural University</td>
<td>Architecture, 2008</td>
<td>University of Nottingham, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Can Tho University</td>
<td>Aquatic Culture, 2008</td>
<td>Auburn University, Alabama State, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Biochemistry and Molecular Biology / Biotechnology Major, 2006</td>
<td>Michigan State University, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>National Economics University</td>
<td>Finance, 2006</td>
<td>California State University - Long Beach, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Foreign Trade University</td>
<td>International Economics, 2008</td>
<td>Colorado State University, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Hanoi University of Agriculture</td>
<td>Agricultural Business Administration, 2008</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin - Madison, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crops Science, 2006</td>
<td>University of California - Davis, USA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Embedded computing System, 2008</td>
<td>University of Washington, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electronic Engineering, 2006</td>
<td>University of Washington, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Hue University</td>
<td>Physics, 2006</td>
<td>University of Virginia, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Hanoi University of Science</td>
<td>Mathematics, 2008</td>
<td>University of Washington, USA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chemistry, 2006</td>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh University of Science</td>
<td>Computer Science, 2006</td>
<td>Portland State University, Oregon, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh University of Technology</td>
<td>Electrical and Computer Engineering (major in Power and Energy System), 2006</td>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>University of Information Technology</td>
<td>Information System, 2008</td>
<td>Oklahoma State University, USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Advanced programs being implemented in Vietnamese Universities and Partner Universities (extracted from Nguyen, 2009).
As can be seen from table 3, 17 key Vietnamese universities are chosen to partner with 3 universities from UK and 20 from the U.S.A. The criteria for selecting foreign partners are that these universities must belong to the top 200 universities in the world rankings (Webometrics, US News, Academic Ranking of World University of Shanghai, and Times Higher Education). The training programmes of these partners must belong to the 20% of the best training programs in the rankings. Furthermore, these programmes must be consistent with the direction of economic and social development of Vietnam.

The ACHP is implemented under the close guidance of MOET in which the 17 Vietnamese universities agreed and signed contracts with partnered universities. The Vietnamese universities can use of training programs, and send teaching staff for training to teach the programmes. Professors from partner universities are invited to come to Vietnam and teach these programmes with the Vietnamese staff. The training plans, specifications the academic and management training are all imported 100% and are taught in English. Therefore, the students who are admitted to the programmes must obtain the required English proficiency. The ACHP is implemented from 2008 which poses MOET and the Vietnamese universities a number of difficulties. Firstly, the state’s plans for financial support for are not clear and there has been no guidance for the use of funds for the ACHP. Secondly, the facilities in the Vietnamese universities are still limited in which the classrooms in some universities are still narrow, noisy, and there is no proper computer rooms with high-speed network, etc. The limited English ability of the Vietnamese teaching staff also poses another challenge for the success of the programmes. The teaching timetables are still irrational because the professors from partner universities just teach in Vietnam in 2 or 3 weeks and then leave, so it is hard for students to absorb the knowledge and for the Vietnamese teaching staff to co-teach and to schedule the teaching timetables for the whole period. MOET has proposed a number of solutions to overcome these challenges. The most difficulty is the instability of the funding. There has been no specific plans and clear state mechanism for funding the ACHP. To ensure the successful implementation of ACHP, MOET is urgently drawing up the detailed budget plans for ACHP, thereby creating a needed legal framework, a specific mechanism and a flexible budget support from the State. ACHP is considered one of the most important step, a breakthrough for the implementation of educational innovation in the Vietnam HE. ACPH is also idealized as the first step in the development of world class HE in Vietnam. Whether ACHP can help Vietnam HE achieve the intended objectives or not is still a big question. However, it demonstrate the state determination in internationalizing the curricula and quality of some HE
programmes by means of establishing partnerships with more advanced foreign partners (MOET, 2009).

With regards to internationalization of their curricula and the trust in the quality of HE provided by the U.S, UK, Australia and New Zealand, Vietnam is very much influenced by the tradition of these Anglo Saxon HE systems, in which competitive approach is effectively employed to win the HE market shares in comparison with the cooperative approach used by European HE system (Wende, 2001: 254-258). The next section will explore the European responses and approaches to global challenges of HE compared to those of Anglo Saxon countries.

1.6. Competitive paradigm of the Anglo-Saxon countries and cooperative paradigm of the European countries

According to Wende (ibid), it is interesting to discuss the increasing international competitive paradigms employed by the Anglo-Saxon countries. Compared to the US, UK, Australia and New Zealand, Europe seemingly has lost their leading positions as the destinations for study abroad. This can become a serious issue when European population is aging and failing to attract the international skilled talents, and may eventually lose their knowledge economy power. For example, thanks to the active support from their governments in terms of international marketing and immigration strategies, some of the Anglo Saxon countries have won their HE popularity and world class ranking by employing their flexible degree structures, more student-centered approaches, off-shore delivery modes, their differential fee systems, the advanced use of information and communication technology (ICT), the tradition of public-private partnerships, and the availability of venture capital for investments in the education industry, and the partnership establishments with other HE institutions and research centers. They have gained lots of financial benefits and turn HE into an industry. Australia can be used as an example of benefits that they have received from exporting international education.

According to Australian Education International (2011), of the total export income generated by education services, $18.0 billion was from spending on fees and goods and services by onshore students and a further $589 million was earned through offshore educational activities. Educational service is Australia’s largest services export industry ahead of personal travel services ($12.1 billion) and professional and management consulting services ($3.3 billion).

As can be seen from graph 3, international education activities contributed $18.6 billion in export income to the Australian economy in 2009, which is the sum of international student expenditure on tuition fees, goods and services related to living in Australia and tourism associated with visits from relatives.

Similar to the Australian case, Associations of International Educators, NAFSA, (2009) presented annual economic impact statements on the amount of money international students contribute to the United States economy. It is estimated that international students contributed approximately $15.54 billion to the U.S. economy in the 2007-2008 academic year. Graph 1 outlines the growth of this economic impact over the last 30 years.

Graph 1. Economic Impact from International Students in the U.S.A (extracted from NAFSA, 2009).
Graph 1 illustrates the growing financial contributions of international students to the U.S. economy. In addition to the benefits that education, especially HE, contributing to the Anglo Saxon countries’ economy, talented and skilled international students and researcher are noted to increase stocks of knowledge of these countries.

OECD (2009) presented that among the OECD countries, the United States, Canada, Australia and France, in particular, are noted to have experienced strongly positive net inflows of tertiary-educated migrants. It is strongly proved that the United Kingdom and Germany have the highest number of skilled expatriates, while Luxembourg, Norway and the Slovak Republic have the lowest. In terms of the contribution of skilled immigrants and mobility, OECD concluded that “academic staff recruited from overseas are now a significant element of the university workforce in some countries and there is some evidence that their mobility is associated with higher-quality output”. Bar chart 4 shows the number of share of highly cited researchers with research experience outside of their home countries.

![Bar chart 4. Share of Highly Cited Researchers with Research Experience Outside of Their Home Country (extracted from OECD, 2009).](image.jpg)

In the internationalization and globalization, both private industry and academia can benefit “from foreign staff for their specific knowledge or abilities, their language skills and their knowledge of foreign markets”. The host countries can benefit from “the better international connections, increase collaborative research and overcome local constraints on research work”. OECD (ibid) illustrated the example of the increasing proportion of patent applications filed with the US office of the World Intellectual Property Organization which name foreign nationals as inventors or co-inventors from 7.6% to more than 25% between 1998 and 2006.
Therefore, the predominance of the Anglo-Saxon countries in reaping the financial and human resource power benefits from international students and skilled migrants is evident. What about the situations of HE internationalization in the European countries? As mentioned above, whilst Anglo-Saxon countries have chosen an explicit (and sometimes even aggressive) competitive approach to internationalization of HE, most continental European countries seem to, by contrast, pursue a more cooperative approach (Wende, 2001: 254-258). The European countries are proved to stay “aloof from a market and trade perspective on higher education” because they have different political and value-based perspectives. For example, in Finland HE is considered public goods and everyone is considered to have free access to HE. Therefore, the rationales of competitiveness for commercial and human power purposes may be absent and even undesirable in Finland. While some of the public HE institutions in Anglo Saxon countries have to compete against each other and receive parts of some limited state funding budget, Finnish HE institutions receive full funding from the state in which no tuition was charged to the students. Therefore, there were few incentives and no real options for competing internationally for international students in Finland. Furthermore, HE programmes such as Erasmus and Socrates by European Union (EU) strongly display the cooperative paradigm among European countries. Europe, however, feels the threat of competitive paradigm of Anglo Saxon countries. Wende (ibid) and Schenk (1997) showed their doubt towards the effectiveness of European cooperative paradigm in the extremely complicated contexts of diversified national structures, cultures, languages, etc. It is also noted that European HE may be too involved in Bologna process to feel the strong pressure from the international competition in the HE. It is stated that “the proof of their actual effectiveness in international competition is largely still hidden in the future”.

Among one of the European countries driven by Bologna process, internationalization of HE in Finland is under the cooperative paradigm. However, Finnish Ministry of Education Culture (2009) presented the strategies for the internationalization of HE institutions in Finland in 2009-2015 and the Finnish New Universities Act of 2009 in which universities can now charge students outside the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA) in some special M.A. programmes manifested a change in Finnish perspectives in HE cooperation and competitiveness. The following sections present the general HE in Finland and the changing contexts of Finnish HE in terms of their efforts to increase the attractiveness of Finland as a destination for HE.
1.7. The internationalization of Finnish HE and partnership establishment

1.7.1. Higher Education in Finland

The Finnish higher education system: universities and polytechnics

Finnish HE follows binary system in which HE is taught in two different types of institutions, traditional (academic) universities and vocational-oriented institutions or polytechnics. There are totally 29 polytechnics and 20 universities in Finland governed by Ministry of Education and Culture with the exception of a Police College administered by Ministry of the Interior and an autonomous polytechnic in Åland. Figure 1 displays the Finnish education system as followed.

The main functions of traditional universities are to do research and provide education based on their research-teaching nexus. Different from universities, polytechnics established since 1990s are more vocational-oriented providing students more skills for their future employment. The missions of polytechnics are to equip young people with more practical skills into the needs of business, industry and society (Garam, 2003).

1.7.2. Bilingual higher education and the use of English

There are two official languages in Finland: Finnish and Swedish in which less than 6% of the Finns speak Swedish as their mother tongue. The two languages are used in Finnish universities. There are two Swedish-speaking universities: the multidisciplinary Åbo Akademi University in Turku and the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration in Helsinki. The University of Helsinki, Helsinki University of Technology and the Arts Academies use both Finnish and Swedish. There are
four Swedish-language polytechnics: Arcada Polytechnic, Swedish Polytechnic, Sydväst Polytechnic and Åland Polytechnic. Moreover, in order to ensure equal opportunities for international students in Finnish HE system, English has been used in some joint-degree, foreign exchange and international M.A. programmes. Under the stipulation of the New Universities Act of 2009, Finnish HE institutions are allowed to charge EU/EEA students tuition fees in some M.A. programmes. The new fee regime has been introduced as a five-year experimental programme in which universities can decide on the fee levels from EUR 3,500 to EUR 12,000. Therefore, chances for English to be used as a means mode of communication between Finnish HE and international students are more intensified and popular (Dobson, 2010).

1.7.3. Degree system in higher education and admission to higher education

As a part of the Bologna Process in Europe, Finland launched a reform of her HE system in 2005. The two-cycle degree system with Bachelor’s and Master’s was adopted with the exception of medicine and dentistry. Further, the internal Finnish credit system was replaced with the European Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credit system. Full-time B.A. degrees with the total of 180 credits generally last three years. After the completion of B.A. degrees, students can study their 120 credit M.A. degrees which last two years. Studies in Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine at M.A. levels are called Licentiate which may last six years of full-time study. After obtaining the two-year M.A.s or Licentiatea, students can commence their Ph.D. which generally lasts 4 years. The specific details of M.A. and Ph.D. degrees can be found in relevant departments of the institutions that students wish to apply.

The basic requirement for B.A. entry in Finnish universities is an upper secondary education or equivalent degrees from abroad, and a vocational diploma (at least three years of training) in polytechnics. There is a tough competition in entering Finnish institutions. For example, there are four people competing for each place in universities and three in polytechnics. Each Finnish HE institution chooses their students, and only a limited number of students are admitted each year (Garam, 2003).

1.7.4. Distinctive features of higher education in Finland

Finland is a country where the government is committed to HE public funding. The total expenditure in 2007 for education and research including universities’ external funding for research is 1.806 million Euros which accounting for 18.1% the total expense for the whole Finnish education system (Statistics Finland, 2009). The development plan for 2007-2012 by Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2007) stipulates that globalization is the chance for Finland to promote national
and international well-being. Therefore, the mission for HE is to support the creation of more jobs and prepares for individuals and businesses more adaptable skills to the changes caused by globalization. There are five areas of priority in HE development:

- **Equal opportunity in education and training**

  This is the most distinctive feature of Finnish welfare society. Finnish HE must secure equal nationwide opportunities for quality education from early childhood to university education. The objective is to develop population’s educational skills and knowledge to the world top. Furthermore, life-long learning in terms of adult education and training ensures successful participation into “the society and world of work”.

- **Quality of education and training**

  Since the quality of education and training is the prerequisite for fruitful and production labor work force, special attention will be directed to enhancing quality and quality assurance at all educational levels, especially in terms of basic and HE.

- **Safeguarding a skilled workforce**

  Skilled workforce can be safeguarded when younger people can receive higher levels of knowledge and skills; adult citizens can maintain and develop their current skills, knowledge and educational levels. With these measures, then the two targeted groups can meet the constant changing demands from markets and the world. Talented immigrations must also be taken care of the guarantee their skills can be used to the utmost.

- **Development of HE**

  Universities and polytechnics in Finland are given more financial and administrative autonomy for the purpose of boosting the effectiveness and entrepreneurialship of HE institutions. Finish Government will invest financially and strategically more on high-quality research centers.

- **Teachers as a resource**

  Alongside with research incentives, Ministry of Education also identifies the important role of competent teachers. Teaching staff’s working conditions, and education will be further improved.

  In conclusion, with such distinctive features, Finnish HE system illustrates different perspectives on internationalization and its strategic objectives in comparison to those of Anglo Saxon countries.
1.7.5. Internationalization of Higher Education in Finland

Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2009) also provides strategy guidelines, goals and objectives of HE in 2009-2015: (1) providing a genuinely international HE community, (2) increasing the quality and attractiveness of HE institutions, (3) promoting the export of expertise, (4) supporting a multicultural society and, (5) promoting global responsibility. Finland is aiming at promoting the quality and reputation of their HE institutions. Finland indicates the strong distinctive features of a high-quality welfare society and Finnish HE follows the cooperative paradigm of European countries. For example, Finnish universities utilize their expertise ethically to support developing countries and solve global issues such as global warming. They also encourage more multi-cultural HE exchange as a source of “internationalization at home”. Moreover, although Finland has mentioned “export of expertise”, their message is quite unclear whether HE should be commercially traded or not. There seems no direct link between internationalization and export industry. In other words, although tuition fee may be charged in some universities in Finland, it is not necessarily to be considered that Finland is strategically and potentially moving towards exporting their HE. Internationalization of HE in Finland is associated with student mobility, development of administrative practices to support student mobility and recruitment of international students (Garam, 2003).

Under the stipulation of Finland's New Universities Act of 2009, universities can now charge students outside the EU and the EEA in some special M.A. programmes. The five-year experimental fee regime may lead to the new era of entrepreneurial universities in which the proportion of university funding may be increased from non-governmental sources such as students, bilateral cooperation with other institutions, etc. However, whether Finnish HE institutions are ready and supportive of the new fee regime is still unknown.

1.7.6. Finnish Education Export Industry Challenges, Strengths and Opportunities

Acknowledging the importance of education export as part of the global service economy and to earn good reputation of Finnish HE internationally, Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, MINEDU, (2010) issued the strategies for exporting Finnish HE system. Finland aims to be in the leading positions of education-based economies and turn HE into an industry by 2015. According to MINEDU, challenges that Finland is facing at the present time are limited resources of HE export and the current legislation which sets certain restrictions on the education export activities of HE institutes. MINEDU identified the strengths and the opportunities of Finland as follows:
Strengths
• The Finnish education system is internationally competitive. It is also known and has an excellent reputation in the world.
• The results obtained by Finnish students in the OECD PISA review have created a large demand for Finnish education in the world.
• Finnish operators have a good reputation as a cooperation partner in international projects.
• The educational administration, educational institutions and personnel in the field are used to, and largely prepared for, international operation.
• The foremost operators share a desire to develop educational know-how into a new export article.
• Educational research and evaluation are of a high quality in Finland.
• The administration is flexible and it is easy to set up joint action.

Opportunities
• The education market is growing and globalising.
• Many countries are investing strongly in the development of education and education systems.
• Finland has taken measures to make it possible for HE institutions to provide fee-paying services, and amendments towards greater flexibility in the legislation will give more latitude for operation.
• The HE institutions provide a wide range of education in English and there are good services for international students.
• The innovation system, teacher education, pedagogic knowledge and a culture of cooperation in Finland offer a good environment for developing and testing education innovations and processing them into products.

The content of the strategy documents from MINEDU manifests Finland’s determination in exporting their HE. They mentioned the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of HE export industry in the context of Finland. As mentioned above, it is doubtful whether Finnish HE institutions are ready to enter the tough competitive HE markets elsewhere in the world. However, the strategies do not analyze in details on the know-how strategies to win the market shares against the Anglo Saxon countries. Finland HE export industry may not be successful without the real understanding and knowledge of the markets. Therefore, research studies on HE markets, marketing and market segmentations are extremely important.
2. Research rationales

As mentioned above, there has been an increasing demand to foster and develop cooperation and partnerships between the Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions. It is considered that partnership establishment between the Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions can open up new opportunities for both partners at national and institutional levels.

Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland (2009) presented the strategies for the internationalization of HE institutions in Finland in 2009-2015. There are several ongoing reforms in HE in Finland aiming at increasing the strengths, quality and attractiveness of Finnish HE system and enhancing the quality of research. The reforms coupled with the increasing multiculturalisation of Finnish society have created expectation towards HE institutions. Finnish HE institutions should create a genuinely international HE community for high qualified researchers and students (1), increase the quality and attractiveness of HE institutions as destinations for internationalization, competitiveness and well-being (2), promote the export of expertise of Finland by establishing partnerships to achieve mutual benefits for both side (3), support a multicultural society (4) and promote global responsibility in which Finnish HE institutions ethically utilize their research and expertise to solve global problems and to consolidate competence in developing countries. The strategies by Ministry of Educations in Finland have mentioned the expectations towards Finnish HE institutions in responding to the national HE reforms and the internationalization of HE worldwide. To achieve their goals, Finnish HE institutions are guided to establish partnerships with other HE institutions in other countries, especially the developing ones.

Similar to the HE context of Finland, the Vietnamese government has provided the Strategies for Education Development 2001-2010 and Vietnam HE Renovation Agenda 2006-2020, which encourages the partnership establishment between Vietnam HE institutions and foreign institutions in developed countries. The rationales for such partnership establishment is to found high-tech centers and able to carry out joint scientific research projects (1), utilize the foreign partners’ advanced and modern training programs, curricula and materials which are suitable for Vietnam's development needs (2), improve the quality of research and training programs by attracting foreign researchers and students, while maintaining national identity and traditional values (3), develop relations by exchanging lecturers and students, joint training and research programs with foreign universities and continuing to send teaching staff and students overseas to study in key areas using state funding (4), develop mechanisms and policies to facilitate and encourage study abroad for self-financed students.
(5), establish clear and favorable principles and procedures to encourage foreign entities with experience, potential and high qualifications to establish education institutions with 100% foreign capital or joint ventures with Vietnamese partners in HE, vocational training and distance education, offering courses at regional and international levels, etc. The strategies developed by the Vietnamese government have proved their strong needs and demands in developing and enhancing the quality of the Vietnamese HE institutions by creating the legal conditions for partnership establishments with foreign partners.

Combined the two contexts of the Vietnamese and Finnish HE, both of them have acknowledged the importance of internationalization of their HE system and presented strategies to facilitate domestic HE institutions towards dynamic internationalization. While Finland needs to increase their HE attractiveness, Vietnam aims at improving their quality of HE institutions and research centers to meet up the increasing demand of the burgeoning population. The Vietnamese government has also welcomed more foreign investments in HE with their “open-door” policies. Establishing HE institutional partnerships between Finland and Vietnam is considered the very first starting point of their internationalization process. This research study aims to bridge the partnership establishment needs between Finnish and Vietnamese HE institutions. The objectives of this study are of fivefold:

1. To analyze the motivations in establishing partnerships with foreign HE institutions
2. To analyze the recognition of the Vietnamese universities towards Finnish HE institutions.
3. To analyze the interested partnership activities with Finnish HE institutions
4. To analyze the key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnerships with Finnish HE institutions
5. To give recommendation to both the Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions

The main research question: How do the Vietnamese key universities perceive their partnership establishment situations with foreign HE institutions and especially with Finnish HE institutions?

The main research question includes three subgroups of questions:

1. Is partnership establishment a priority among the Vietnamese HE institutions?
2. What are the Vietnamese universities’ reasons in establishing partnership with foreign HE institutions?
a. Why are Finnish HE institutions recognized or not recognized as important partners for Vietnam HE institutions?
b. What forms of institutional partnership with Finnish HE Institutions are Vietnamese universities interested in?
c. How do their levels of institutional partnership interests vary?

3.

a. What are the key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnership with Finnish HE institutions?
b. How do their levels of key challenges vary?

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This is a case study design in which both quantitative and qualitative data analysis is used. A case study is “the basic idea is that one case (or perhaps a smaller number of cases) will be studied in details, using whatever methods seem appropriate. While there may be a variety of specific purposes and research questions, the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible” (Punch, 1998: 150). Case-study implemented in this study is descriptive in nature investigating the sample of 30 Vietnamese HE institutions in terms of their partnership motivation, interested partnering activities, and challenges. The information will not be subject to the truth or falsity but “can be subject to scrutiny on the grounds of credibility” (Merriam, 1988: 30). Theoretical review and official documents of Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) are analyzed, which serves prior development of theoretical propositions to design the survey content, to guide data collection, and to develop framework for qualitative data coding and analysis (Yin, 1994:13). This research study aims to analyze the priority of partnership establishment among Vietnamese HE institutions, their recognition of Finnish HE institutions, their interests in establishing partnership with the latter, the key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering. The results are used to draw appropriate recommendations in promoting Finnish HE institutions into Vietnam HE market by means of institutional partnership establishment.

In terms of the characteristics of case study design, this research would fall within type four, multiple embedded case. Yin (1994:39) presents four types of designs which are single (holistic) designs, single-case (embedded) designs, multiple-case (holistic) designs, and multiple-case
(embedded) designs. While a *single* case study targets only one single, rare and unique experiment, a *multiple-case* contains more than one single case. If a case study examines only the global nature of a programme or an organization, a *holistic* design would be used. A *multiple-case* is used when the case contains more than one unit of analysis and subunits. This study will investigate 30 cases at the same time in terms of their current contexts of partnerships, interests and challenges in establishing partnerships with the Finnish counterparts. Reliability is the strength of this research. The research findings can be replicated at any time and with any HE markets, which may provide the Finnish HE better understanding of the targeted HE markets they wish to penetrate.

### 3.2. Research instrument

There will be two research instruments: content analysis and survey.

#### 3.2.1. Documentary content analysis

Written policy documents of Finnish Ministry of Education, CIMO, KOTA (The Statistical Database on Universities), Statistics Finland, and the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training and official missions, goals and objectives of the 30 Vietnamese universities are reviewed and analyzed, which enables more in-dept rationales for HE partnership establishment between Vietnam and Finland. Moreover, reviews of some primary and secondary documents (official texts and publications) on transnational or cross boundary HE export industry by Knight (1999, 2000, 2003, 2004, and 2005) would enable the researcher to build the conceptual framework. Content analysis will provide data triangulation for the questionnaire results. The data obtained from content analysis will be virtually unobtrusive. In spite of its ineffectiveness in testing casual relationships between variables, it will be backed up by data gained from questionnaires (Berg, 1989: 125).

#### 3.2.2. Survey

In addition to content analysis, survey is used to gather information from the 30 Vietnamese universities. Survey is an appropriate data collection tool because of its three features, versatility, efficiency and generality (Schutt, 2001:209-210). In fact, survey is considered versatile in covering a wide range of topics that many other methods can not deal with. Since the research purposes are to investigate the reasons, interested forms of partnering activities, and challenges, survey taps all of the three different themes of partnership establishment. Survey is also an efficient method of data collection of large sample at low cost and time-saving. All of the 30 Vietnamese universities are invited to participate in the survey by emails. They can choose to send their information back to CIMO at any
time before the 15th of March deadline. The generality characteristic of the survey allows a representative picture of all of these Vietnamese universities.

There are two basic ways in survey research data collection: questionnaires and interviews. This research survey employs questionnaire research instrument.

**Questionnaires**

**An assessment of questionnaires: advantages and disadvantages**

Monette et al (1994: 169-170) listed a number of advantages and disadvantages of using the technique of survey research. Firstly, data can be gathered more inexpensively and much more quickly than interviews. Data collection in this survey research takes six weeks. Secondly, since the Vietnamese universities are geographical dispersed, mailed survey proves to be appropriate. Thirdly, the respondents may tend to provide more accurate and honest answers when they do not have to face-to-face with the researcher. For example, generating income and financial aids may be one of the main motivations for some of the respondents. They may not be willing to speak “the truth” out, but they may find it easier just to tick the box in the questionnaires. Last but not least, data gained interviews may be distorted by what the interviewer says, or her tone of voice, etc. Emailed questionnaires do not encounter such interview bias.

Some disadvantages are listed such as low levels of English proficiency of the respondents, fewer opportunities of checking who answers the questionnaire and the problem of non response bias may be high (Monette et al, ibid). These disadvantages do not affect the research study results because the questionnaires are translated in both English and Vietnam. Then all of the respondents who filled in the questionnaires are Heads, Vice-Heads of International Offices or Deans, Vice-Deans of the universities. Thanks to CIMO cover letter and the official status of CIMO, the problem of non response bias is resolved.

**Questionnaire types**

There are two basic types of questions used in the questionnaires: closed-ended and open-ended. Closed-ended questions provide the respondents with a fixed set of alternatives from which they are to choose. The alternatives are transparent and clear multiple choice questions in which the respondents are undoubtedly familiar (Monette et al, 1994:155).

Closed-ended questions are suitable for this research survey because theoretical relevant responses to the questions are determined in advance and the number of possible responses is limited. For example, the question relating to whether partnership establishment with foreign partners is a priority in the
respondents’ universities would almost certainly be treated as closed-ended question. A known and limited number of answers is possible: Yes or No. However, closed-ended questions may sometimes restrict the respondent’s wishes to give more answers than the available options in the questionnaires. Further, it is impossible for the researcher to predict all of the possible answers to a question in advance. Suppose that the researcher wants to know the reasons for establishing partnership with foreign higher education institutions. So many possible reasons exist that this question has to be treated as open-ended question. Therefore, the option of “Others, please specify” is also employed in the questionnaires. This option is actually a nice request for respondents to write more of their responses if appropriate and necessary. The respondents may find this option more satisfying, especially when the respondents of this research study are well-educated professionals (ibid).

Questionnaire description and levels of measurements

Questionnaires are designed and adapted on reference to the 2003 International Association of Universities (IAU) questionnaires. IAU investigated the key issues, trends and areas of growth, the practices and priorities of internationalization at the institutional level, the rationales, risks, benefits, issues and trends of the international dimension of HE. Section 3 and 4 of the IAU questionnaires are then used and adapted in section 3 and 4 in this research questionnaire. Furthermore, Knight’s theoretical framework on HE internationalization and partnership establishment in 1997, 2004 and 2005 is also employed to design the section 1 and 2 in the research questionnaire.

Questionnaires are translated into Vietnamese and English and sent by emails to 30 Vietnamese key universities. There are four sections in the questionnaires. Section one aims to investigate whether HE partnership establishment receive top priority among the Vietnamese HE institutions or not. Section two explores the motivations why the Vietnamese HE institutions are interested in establishing partnership with other foreign HE institutions. Eleven representations of motivations of partnership establishment are listed from items a to k. Level of measurement in section two falls in nominal type in which the respondents’ answers are sorted into two categories either “yes” or “no”. Item 1 is open-ended, which the participants can provide more information if it is necessary. Section one and two provide background information for the next third and forth sections.

Section three focuses on the interests in establishing partnership with the Finnish HE institutions in which the recognition of Finnish HE institutions as important partners, their overall impressions of the Finnish ones, their overall impression of the promotional activities from the latter, and their preferred channels to obtain information on the latter. Questions one to three in section three can be measured in
**Questionnaire structure and design**

**Directions**

This research questionnaire is constructed in the precise directions for respondents. For example, the respondents are told precisely and transparently what they should do for each question. For closed-ended questions, they are told to tick one of the boxes to their choices. Open-ended questions provide them the option of “Others, please specify” in which they are asked to write more in details.

**Order of questions**

The ordering of questions is constructed carefully in which ordering of questions can help to increase the respondent’s interests in answering the questionnaires. Section 1 aims to investigate whether HE partnership establishment receive top priority among the Vietnamese HE institutions or not. Once the respondents complete section one, they are more likely to complete section two in which they provide the reasons why they are interested in establishing partnership.

Section one and two serve as intriguing questions for section three. They may or may not have established partnership with any Finnish higher education institutions, so they may be likely to provide information of their interests and specific interested forms of partnership activities with the latter. Section three bridges the respondents to complete the section four which they provide the challenges they may be encountering in their partnership establishment with Finnish higher education institutions.
**Response rate**

In order to improve the response rates, CIMO cover letters are sent to the respondents. The cover letter is carefully drafted to include the information that the respondents want to know and encourage them to complete the questionnaires.

**Cover letter**

CIMO is introduced in the cover letter as an organization operating under the Finnish Ministry of Education, and CIMO attaches great importance to the internationalization cooperation and partnerships between the Vietnamese and Finnish HE Institutions. Since CIMO is an official governmental agency, the questionnaires may have beneficial effects on the response rate.

The cover letter informs the respondents how they are selected for the questionnaires, the purposes of the research and the benefits the respondents may receive once participating the survey. CIMO stresses that there are a number of benefits for the Vietnamese HE Institutions to participate in this survey. Thanks to the provided information, CIMO can analyze the current contexts of partnership establishment among the Vietnamese universities, the recognition of the Finnish HE institutions, their interests in establishing partnerships, and the key challenges the Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnerships with the latter. Then CIMO can utilize the survey results as resources to facilitate the partnership establishment between the Finnish Higher Education Institutions and the Vietnamese universities. CIMO strongly believe that partnership establishment between the Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions can open up new opportunities for both partners at international, national and institutional levels. The cover letter is a direct appeal for the Vietnamese universities’ cooperation, utilizing the approach “your views are important to us” (Monette et al, 1994: 165). The Vietnamese universities may then find it important to participate in the survey.

**Length and appearance of the questionnaires**

It is reported that when as the length increases, the response rate declines (Monette, 1994: 167). The questionnaire is kept at six pages long and would take approximately twenty minutes to fill out. Great care has been taken that all of the questions are essential to the investigated hypothesis (Epstein and Tripodi, 1977; cited in Monette, 1994: 167).

**3.3. Ethical issues in this survey research**

Survey research may pose ethical dilemmas for the respondents. Methods of data collection should ensure that the participation is voluntary and the participant’s confidentiality and anonymity (Schutt, 2001: 253). Consent forms are sent to the participants to ask for their permission for CIMO to collect
data on the motivation, recognition, interests, and key challenges of their institutions. On references of the collected information, CIMO can then use the information as resources to facilitate the partnership establishment between the Finnish HE Institutions and the Vietnamese universities. The participants’ confidentiality and anonymity are highly preserved in which only numbers are used to identify the respondents in their questionnaires and the names of these respondents are kept in a safe and private location. Also, no identifying information is displayed in the research to link the respondents with their responses.

3.4. Description of the research sampling

There are two types of sampling methods: non-probability and probability. While non-probability sampling methods let us know in advance the likelihood of participants selection, probability ones allow participants to be chosen on a random or chance (Schutt, 2001:117). Non-probability sampling method, purposive sampling, is appropriate for this research study because the 30 Vietnamese universities can not be chosen by chance but the purposes of the research. The purposive sample of the research, the 30 universities out of the total 147 Vietnamese universities, is particularly knowledgeable about the interests and key challenges in partnership establishment with Finnish HE institutions. They are also the comprehensive representatives of the ranges of points of view. The people who fill in questionnaires are the Heads or Vice-Heads of international offices, the Deans or Vice Deans of the Vietnamese universities. Therefore, the data collected from the sample of 30 Vietnamese universities are exactly needed in the case of partnership establishment between the Vietnamese universities and Finnish HE institutions.

This sample method can be disadvantageous in terms of larger population generability. The research results can only be generalized to the Vietnamese universities. Therefore, further research would be required among all of the Vietnamese universities and other groups of colleges or academic institutes to see how extensively results could be generalized (Monette et al, 1994: 142). Purposive sampling method, however, leads to a number of advantages. Firstly, the sample size is considerably large, covering all of the key Vietnamese universities. Therefore, more confidence can be gained in the sample’s representativeness. Secondly, the sample size is homogeneous in which all Vietnamese universities, both public and private, are selected. Other HE institutions such as national academy institutions and colleges are excluded.

List of the key positions of the sample participants can be found in appendix 3.
3.5. Sample description and sampling administration procedure

Questionnaires are sent to 30 Vietnamese universities. These universities are public-owned and non-public. 10 universities are in the North, 12 universities in the Central and 7 universities in the South of Vietnam. The positions of the contact persons can vary from top management positions such as Deans, Vice Deans to senior positions such as Heads or Vice Heads of International Offices. Despite the differences in their working positions, they are responsible for internationalization activities within their institutions. Details of the positions of the persons who filled in the questionnaires can be found in appendix 3.

CIMO will send invitations to these institutions to participate in the survey by means of attached emails or direct call phones. Once the agreements can be reached between the participating universities and CIMO, questionnaires and consent forms will then be sent to them via emails. The participants sign the consent forms. After filling the questionnaires, they can send the questionnaires and the scanned consent forms via attached emails to CIMO.

3.6. Justification of the sample size

Floyd (2009:43-47) presented three misconceptions in deciding sample size. Firstly, the bigger the sample size it, the better the sample is likely to describe the population. Therefore, the choice of the sample size based on the fraction of the population, like 1% or 5% or 95% or some other percentage of a population may not guarantee the reliability of the sample. The second misconception is that sample sizes are reliable if the decision is based on the “so-called standard survey sample sizes” in some “so-called standard survey studies”. Floyd noted that the choice of sample size should be based on the sampling error estimates, and must be made on case-by-case basis in which researchers must consider the research goals and other aspects of research designs. The third wrong approach, according to Floyd, is to calculate the sample size on reference to how much margin of the error estimates is. For example, researchers can measure how much precision is required for the margin of error estimates and decide the sample size needed to achieve “the desired level of precision”. Floyd explained that “sampling error is not the only or the main source of error in a survey estimate”. Bias can be caused by the sample errors, response rates, question design, and the quality of data collection, etc.

The sample size in this survey is 30 key Vietnamese universities. The choice of these 30 key Vietnamese universities out of the total 147 ones are decided based on the research questions and the allotted time frame for data collection.
Approach based on research questions and aims

The research questions aim to investigate the key Vietnamese universities instead of the whole Vietnamese university population. They are considered as the key universities in the North, the Central and the South part of Vietnam by MOET. Since this research study aims at investigating the key Vietnamese universities, such sample size fits into the goals of this study. Although the comparison among sample shows that they are different in terms of the quantity of training programmes, of internationalization activities with foreign partners and the length of institutional history of establishment, they are similar in their activeness in partnership establishment. Therefore, they can be considered the potential partners for Finnish HE institutions. Since this research study aims at recommending the most appropriate strategies in promoting Finnish HE institutions into Vietnam HE market by means of institutional partnership establishment, this sample size is adequate, enabling further generalization of the research results.

Approach based on allotted time frame for data collection

The limited research time length is another reason for the choice of 30 rather than 147 ones. The total research time length is 4 months starting from January, 2011 to April, 2011 and the Vietnamese traditional holidays started from 1st of February to 12th of February, there has been a delaying in getting responses from the participants. Furthermore, in order to collect data, the researcher had to call the 30 universities which inevitably lengthened the data collection time length. One last reason attributing to the limited research time is that Vietnamese universities, especially the key state-owned ones, are heavily hierarchical. Therefore, it takes the researcher longer time to be able to receive the responses from these universities. Due to such time limitation, the length of data collection is limited starting from 15th of February to 15th of March, 2011. Such data collection time length can reduce a number of responses from the respondents. Also, the researcher had to call the Vietnamese universities so that better communication between them can be reached. Data collection process actually started from 22nd of February, 2011 ended on 15th of March, 2011. However, since the 30 respondents are the comprehensive data frame, the validity of sample can be maintained.

3.7. Controlling types of errors in the survey

Floyd (2009: 11-16) presented three types of errors in surveys which are errors associated with who answers, error associated with answers and recapping the nature of errors in surveys. Firstly, errors associated with who answers consists of sampling error and sample bias. Sampling errors happen when data are collected from a sample rather than from every single member of the
population. Sample bias involves sample frame, process of selecting and failure to collect answers from everyone. Sample frame can be biased “if some people in the targeted population do not have any chance at all to be selected for the sample and if they are somehow consistently different from those who do have a chance to be selected” (ibid: 13). Then in the process of selecting if those who are selected different from the whole target population. Finally, failure to collect answers from everyone may also pose bias to the sample because they may be unwilling to answer or unable to answer. These errors are not present in this research study because every single member of the 30 Vietnamese universities is selected and framed carefully. According to MOET, they are key universities, so they can be considered the representative of the whole Vietnamese university population. Furthermore, key persons in each Vietnamese university filled in the questionnaires.

Secondly, errors can occur with answers which do not correspond well to the truth or invalidity. Reasons for these errors can be diversified: misunderstanding the questions, not having the information needed to answer or distorting answers to look good, etc (ibid, 15). Such errors do not happen with this survey because the questionnaires are translated into both English and Vietnamese in which the respondents can have a choice of the survey language option. Since the respondents do not have chances to establish partnership with Finnish HE institutions, they may be motivated to provide the “truth”.

3.8. Data collection timeframe

Data real collection procedure lasts about three weeks from the 22nd of February 2011 to 15th of March, 2011. Data are then subjected to SPSS for quantitative analysis. The open-ended questions are analyzed qualitatively by the researcher. Table 1 illustrates the data collection timeframe in details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 29th –</td>
<td>Presenting detailed thesis proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 30th, 2010</td>
<td>Receiving comments and feedbacks from the supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sending the complete proposal to CIMO for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 7th, 2011</td>
<td>Sending emails with attached questionnaires to the Vietnamese key universities on behalf of CIMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22nd - 2011</td>
<td>Collecting data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15th, 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.9. Survey evaluation, survey implementation procedure and participation rates

Before the questionnaires are sent to the participants, they have been subjected to the examination of a group of sixteen M.A. students of HE knowledge field and a professor in Research Methodology in Aveiro University, Portugal. After receiving feedback from them, the researcher then reedited the questionnaires. The questionnaires were then presented in front of two professors in the thesis seminar in Aveiro, Portugal, for more critical feedback and comments on 15th of November, 2011. The revised and reviewed questionnaires were then examined by the researcher’s supervisor from Higher Education Group in University of Tampere for confirmation of the well-designed questionnaires on 5th of January, 2011. In order to be granted the permission from CIMO to collect data, the research submitted all of the research documents (the key Vietnamese university list and key contact deans, vice deans or heads of international offices, the questionnaire form, the consent form, the invitation and thank-you letter) to CIMO director. CIMO permission for data collection is granted on 7th of January, 2011. The questionnaires are then sent to the respondents on 8th of January, 2011. The deadline for data collection is 15th of March, 2011. In order to increase the number of response, direct phone calls from CIMO to the 30 Vietnamese key universities were made from 21st of February to 3rd of March, 2011. After the deadline, 29 responses are received by CIMO.

4. Data analysis

There are two parts of data analysis. Firstly, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to analyze quantitative data. Descriptive statistics, sum, frequency and percentages, pie and bar charts are used to illustrate the research statistical results. Secondly, qualitative data of item 1 (section 2), question 5 (section 3), and some “others, please specify in details” items are analyzed by the researcher. 29 out of 30 participants responded. The number of non-response on sample is one, so the effect of non-response on does not influence on the reliability and validity of the sample.
5. Results
This section reports the findings from the questionnaire survey conducted among the 30 Vietnamese key universities.

5.1. The Vietnamese key universities’ priority in establishing foreign partnerships with other higher education institutions
Pie chart 1 illustrates that all of the 29 participants agree that establishing partnership with other HE institutions is their top priority.

![Pie chart 1](image)

Pie chart 1. The Vietnamese key universities’ priority in establishing foreign partnerships with other foreign HE institutions

5.2. The Vietnamese universities’ motivation/reasons in establishing partnership with other HE institutions
Bar chart 5 illustrates the reasons, the choices of yes/no and the percentage of the reasons. As can be seen from the bar chart, the choices of yes/no of the respondents are diversified. All of them agree that offering joint academic programs with international partners, creating research projects and linkages with international partners, strengthening their international research collaboration, giving students learning mobility opportunities and faculties and professionals more opportunities of academic mobility are their top motivations and expected outcomes of partnership establishment with foreign partners.

While most of the Vietnamese universities show their preferences towards partnership motivation, some of them show their disagreement towards financial aids, reputation enhancement, transferring technology, educational projects, education projects and international teaching materials. In fact, 3.4 out of 100 percent of the Vietnamese universities confirm that utilizing international knowledge and teaching materials, creating educational projects and linkages with international partners, and
institutional development projects and linkages with international partners are not their priority. In addition, 6.9 out of 100 percent of the respondents do not agree that gaining reputation is their motivation for partnership establishment. 10.3 percent of the universities do not think they aim at transferring technology for teaching and learning with their partners. The highest percentage of disagreement with the financial motivation, 13.8 %, is manifested.

![Bar chart 5. The Vietnamese universities’ reasons in partnership establishment](image)

In brief, all of the reasons listed in the questionnaire survey fall into the main motivation of the Vietnamese respondents in their partnership establishment. Seeking for financial aids and transferring teaching and learning technology are not considered the main motivations of partnership establishment according to some HE institutions, which account for slightly higher than 10%. The next part displays the overall impression of the Vietnamese universities on the Finnish HE institutions, their promotional activities and the reasons for such impression.

5.3. The interests in establishing partnerships with Finnish HE institutions and reasons for their choices

As can be seen from bar chart 6, more than half of the respondent population, 65.5% out of 100%, regard that the Finnish HE institutions as their important partners if they are given opportunities to contact and develop institutional partnerships. While 27.6% think that the Finnish HE institutions are somewhat their potential partners, 6.9% find very little chance that the latter are their important partners.
The extent which the Finnish HE institutions are recognized or not recognized as important partners

In general, all of the Vietnamese universities consider the Finnish HE institutions their important partners in spite of the variation of their important recognition levels. The reasons for their little or somewhat recognition of Finnish HE institutions as their important partners is that they have not any opportunities to get access to the Finnish HE institutions, or they have too little information about the latter.

- **At the moment, Finnish HE Institutions is not recognized as important foreign partners for my institution because we do not have any Finnish partner. We hope that we could have chance to make cooperation with Finnish Institutions through exhibition event or support from government agencies of both countries...”**
- “**We have a little chance in cooperation and exchange of training and research activities between both sides. We have no opportunities to access to Finnish HE Institutions...”**
- “**We do have too little information about Finnish HE institutions. We hope we can have opportunities to be provided with contact persons, links and other information.....”**
- “**Currently, we do not have opportunities to meet with any Finnish Institutions. We hope to have a chance to meet with a Finnish institution in the future”...**

Furthermore, the latter are considered important partners by the majority of the Vietnamese universities because Finland’s well-known achievement in education and Finland is a developed country in Northern Europe. First of all, Finland is trusted and considered important thanks to the well-known PISA results and achievements in the Finnish education system.

- “**Finland: enthusiasm, reputation and quality”**
- “**We consider Finnish HE Institutions our future potential and important partners for several reasons: (1) Expanding and strengthening our international cooperation with Finnish HE**
Institutions in research and training and (2) Finnish HE institutions are highly qualified, professional and credible partner”

- “Finnish HE Institutions are recognized as potential foreign partners for our institution because Finnish HE has been recognized as advanced higher education system of the world in the fields of maritime affairs for example hydrodynamic design, ship structures, ship operation as well as environmental engineering, applied sciences…”
- “Finnish education as well as Finnish HE education system have had great achievement in their policies in teaching students (PISA results) and training teaching staffs…”
- “Finnish HE Institutions are recognized as important foreign partners for my institution because we can learn a lot of good experiences from Finland’s achievements of education…”
- “Finnish HE institutions are recognized important partners for us because Finland is one of the countries which have the best education in the world. Also, education Finland receives special support from the government such as tuition fee, modern research and study environment. Finland has also stable political and social system…”
- “The Finnish HE Institutions are considered our important partners because the system of Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland is very suitable with our institution’s future development…”

Secondly, Finland as a developed modern country in Northern Europe helps gain the trust that Finnish HE institutions are very potential partners.

- “Finland is now well-known of high quality education, high income and public welfare”
- “Finland is a developed country in Northern Europe and over the world. It has scientific, educational and cultural systems in the one of highest levels in the world. Finnish people and the government love peace and friendly.”
- “Education in Finland is recognized as important because Finland belongs to the developed area in Europe.”
- “Finnish HE institutions are well-known for their high quality in training and education. Finland is famous for their innovation systems in general and in particular Finnish HE institutions are contributing effectively to the Finnish national economics…”
- “The Finnish HE institutions have convenient study environment, advanced facilities for teaching, learning and research. The teaching staff is well-qualified.”
Similar to the qualitative findings, the overall impression of the Vietnamese Universities on the Finnish HE institutions manifests the high trust from the former.

5.4. **Overall impression on Finnish HE institutions**

The overall impression on the Finnish HE institutions is measured on the four levels which are “very well and fairly well”, “adequate”, “little and very little”, and “not at all”. Bar chart 7 displays very positive impression from the Vietnamese side. 79.3% out of 100% has very good impression on Finnish HE institutions while 20.7% shows their adequate level of impression. None of the respondents chose “little and very little” and “not at all”.

Bar chart 7. The extent of the Vietnamese universities’ overall impression of the promotional activities of Finnish HE institutions

The next section indicates the Vietnamese key universities’ overall impression of the Finnish HE promotional activities in Vietnam.

Bar chart 8. The extent of the Vietnamese universities' overall impression of the promotional activities of the Finnish HE institutions
In terms of the Finnish HE institutions’ promotional activities in Vietnam, “visible” option accounts for 58.6%, which is approximately twice higher than “not visible”. “Don’t know” accounts for 10.3%. In combination with the qualitative findings, these statistical results suggest that although Finnish HE institutions’ promotional activities are visible in Vietnam, the Vietnamese HE institutions still do not have opportunities to develop partnership with the latter.

5.5. Preferred channels of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar and cultural exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bar chart 9. The Vietnamese universities’ preferred channels of information

Regarding their preferred channels of information, the majority respondents, 27% of them consider Internet. Magazine is the second mode of information channel that they prefer, which is approximately twice lower than “Internet”. Exhibitions are the third mode of preferred information channels with 15% respectively. It is interesting to note that “teachers” are considered one of the reliable channels of information in Vietnam which accounts for 14%. The other modes are also considered important such as friends/relatives and TV. Seminar and cultural exchange meetings are found to be the least preferred channels to get information of the Finnish HE institutions among the Vietnamese respondents.

5.6. The Vietnamese universities’ interested forms of institutional partnership with Finnish HE Institutions and the variation of their levels of institutional partnership interests

As indicated in bar chart 10, all of the partnership activities are interested in spite of the variation in these interested activities. While academic programmes display some different ranking scales, research and scholarly collaboration receives most of the interests and attention from the Vietnamese universities.
As can be seen from the chart, the four activities, visiting lecturers and scholars, research exchange programmes, Vietnamese lecturers/staff to Finland, and joint degree programmes are the top four interested partnering activities. Firstly, 96.6% favor to have lecturers and scholars visit their institutions followed by 98.7% of interest in sending Vietnamese faculties/staff to Finland for further education and training. Research programmes and joint-degree programmes are ranked third in the interested cooperation activities with 86.2% respectively. The research findings also manifest that welcoming international students to Vietnam tanks fifth with 79.3% of interest. Contract-based training and research as well as joint research projects share the same percentage of interests, 75.9%. In addition, 72.4% of the respondents show their high interest in sending Vietnamese students to Finland and welcoming Finnish faculties/staff to Vietnam.

However, Finnish language study accounts for the lowest level of interest with 6.9% respectively although there is a minority of the respondents, 6.9%, showing their interest in this partnering activity. The next section explores the challenges that the Vietnamese universities are facing at the present time in their attempts to cooperate with the Finnish partners.
5.7. The key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnerships with Finnish HE institutions and the variation of their levels of institutional partnership challenges

Bar chart 11 indicates clearly the challenging issues of the Vietnamese key universities. While they have no problem at institutional level for partnership establishment, lack of financial support and lack of information of the Finnish HE institutions are the most challenging issues.

Bar chart 11. Key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnerships with Finnish HE institutions

In terms of key challenges, the findings display that the most challenging situation is lack of financial support. 82.6% of the respondents agree with this matter. Lack of reliable and comprehensive information of Finnish higher education institutions and Finland is the second challenge of the partnership establishment process with the 56.8% agreement rate followed by lack of understanding of what is involved in establishing partnership with Finnish higher education institutions with 41.4% of challenging level. The Vietnamese universities also admit that lack of policies and strategies as well as insufficiently trained staff to guide the process pose them challenges in their partnership establishment process. In contrast, they have no challenge with the interest by senior leaders, lack of policies and non-recognition of work-done abroad.

6. Discussions, recommendations, and limitations

6.1. Discussions
6.1.1. The internationalization and partnership establishment trend in Vietnam

All of the Vietnamese respondents agree that internationalization and partnership establishment is their top priority institutional policy. The result has received a plethora of support from research studies concerning HE internationalization (Knight: 2003, Healy: 2007, Mok: 2008, UNESCO: 2006, Stella: 2006, Bray and Li: 2007, Kim: 2009, Nguyen: 2009, Naidoo: 2009, etc). Similar the internationalization trend elsewhere in the world, the Vietnamese HE partnership establishment trend has also undergone the changes under the drives of massification, internationalization, marketization, institutional restructuring, academic restructuring and strengthening research capacities, etc (UNESCO, 2006).

One of the remarkable trends in the Vietnamese HE is the increase in great volume of the Vietnamese students. Similar to massification trend elsewhere in the world, HE massification in Vietnam also strives for the opportunities to transform HE systems aiming at ensuring mass participation across different social, income and geographical groups of the Vietnamese students. In addition, massification ensures greater opportunities for all to further their initial study and professional development at higher levels. Parallel with the HE massification, the need for more university study places, quality of teaching, learning and doing research, and institutional human sources enhancement is also escalating. Vietnam level of affluence is also growing since Vietnam has been recognized as a middle-income country since 2010. All of these changes have contributed the national focus on human capital development to sustain a knowledge-based society and the competitiveness in a global knowledge economy. At institutional levels, many Vietnamese universities have stressed on internationalization policies in which partnership establishment is considered of great importance. A closer look into the 29 respondents’ list of foreign partners and partnering activities in their institutional websites has revealed that they have established their partnership on an intensive scale, and there is quite a huge number of active partnering activities are happening at the present time. While the old Vietnamese universities are strengthening their available partnership and finding more potential foreign partners, the young Vietnamese universities are seeking for new foreign partners actively. Such tendency has created a competitive environment for partnership establishment. Among the foreign partners, Finnish HE institutions are considered the most potential ones thanks the reputation and trust Finland has been manifesting so far worldwide. Massification of HE in Vietnam has led to internationalization of HE which is then directly linked to the tendency of partnership establishment among the Vietnamese universities.
Internationalization of HE is studied in terms of four types of activities, academic programmes, research and scholarly collaboration, domestic and cross-border activities, and extracurricular activities (Knight, 2005: 22-25). Internationalization of HE in Vietnam can be manifested with the increasing tendency of the Vietnamese student and staff mobility, which has become commonplace. As mentioned in the literature review, the Vietnamese students flow among countries in Asia region and beyond continue to rise. The growth of transnational education and increasing number of foreign branch campuses, joint/double degree programmes have also revealed the recognition of partnership establishment importance between the Vietnamese universities and foreign HE institutions. Furthermore, the increasing needs of the Vietnamese universities to give their staff more professional opportunities have led to more institutional partnership establishment. It is concluded that partnership relations among the Vietnamese universities and other foreign HE institutions are operating on either competitive or cooperation paradigms (Wende, 2001). While the Vietnamese universities facilitate the student and staff mobility by means of fellowship and academic staff development programmes as part of wider strategic initiatives to develop the capacity of the higher education systems within Asian regions, especially the strategic development programmes between the Vietnamese, Lao and Cambodian HE institutions, they also establish more joint/double degree programmes to recruit more students. Partnership establishment is then marketized in which financial benefits between partners are involved (Healy and Lee, 2006: 4).

In addition to the attempts of creating additional HE opportunities, the Vietnamese government has tried to increase HE enrolments by marketizing the HE system. Marketization of HE has been a long tradition and has been enhanced by the pro-active governmental “open-door policies”. Vietnam HE has witnessed the establishment of offshore RMIT branch campus and hundreds of joint/double degree and international distance education programmes. The drive of market forces in the Vietnamese HE has also led to more entrepreneurial universities seeking for additional and new sources of funding through either traditional and/or innovative services as well as through partnership support activities. Therefore, there is a tendency in Vietnam HE that the universities are aiming at maximizing the commercial value of their physical assets, setting up commercial enterprises of their own, or establish joint ventures with their partners commercially. Similar findings have also showed that marketization of HE and the local and foreign/public-private partnerships in HE system in the world have started to take shape in different other countries (Klijn and Teisman, 2003; Broadbent et al., 2003, cited in Mok, 2008: 529). Under the drive of marketization, the Vietnamese universities have undergone restructuring in terms of
the institutions themselves, the academic and strengthening research capacities. The growing internationalization, marketization, privatization of HE has led to expansion of HE systems in which the Vietnamese universities are operating in a more competitive and market-oriented environment. More flexibility and quick responses to market signals and pressures are very much needed at the present time. Therefore, many academic leaders have started searching for ways to make their institutions more entrepreneurial and autonomous by placing internationalization and partnership establishment as their institutional top priority (Healy and Lee, 2006: 8-9).

6.1.2. The Vietnamese universities’ motivation/reasons in establishing partnership with other HE institutions

The research findings show that the Vietnamese universities are motivated in establishing partnership with other foreign HE institutions for a number of purposes among which creating research projects, enhancing research collaboration, establishing joint/double training programmes, opportunities for teacher mobility and student mobility accounts for 100% motivation agreement. Similar and contradictory research findings can be found in Smith (1985), Harper (1995), Audenhove (1998), Saffu and Mamman (2000), Canto and Hannah (2001), Knight (2004), and Ayoubi and Alhaibaibeh (2006), etc.

As mentioned in the literature preview part, Knight (2004: 26-28) listed the emerging rationales for institutional levels of internationalization partnership. The motivation of pursuing international profile and reputation have been given much importance in which the focus shift on high academic standards aims to help HE institutions compete domestically and internationally for branding purposes. In addition to the drive of reputation, HE institutions strive for student and staff development, income generation and strategic alliances. The Vietnamese universities manifest their commitment in enhancing their institutional reputation and strategic alliances by means of enhancing research collaboration and creating research projects. Since the weighting schemes for ranking scores in THE or Shanghai Jiao Tong include research output (the number of published articles and citations), it may be possible that the Vietnamese universities are pushed to strengthen their research output under the sub drive of HE rankings. In addition to their motivation in enhancing their rankings, teaching, learning and research quality improvement may also be another rationale for their partnership establishment with foreign HE institutions. Valley and Wilkinson (2008) stated that if the Vietnamese universities do not establish their strategic planning in HE quality, they lag behind even their undistinguished Southeast Asian neighbors. He noted that no Vietnamese institution appears in any of the widely used (if
problematic) league tables of leading Asian universities whereas many other Southeast Asian universities are ranked top in the list. The fact that the Vietnamese universities’ publication records in Publications of Peer Review Journals in 2007 (cited in Valley and Wilkinson: 2008) displays that they are largely isolated from international currents of knowledge\(^4\). In addition to the motivation for research enhancement, the Vietnamese universities show their recognition of the importance of student and staff mobility. This research finding is also found to be relevant in Knight (2004) in which internationalization and partnership establishment are emphasized as a means to enhance the international and intercultural understanding skills, knowledge and competencies for students and staff. Last but not least, partnership establishment also provides opportunities for the Vietnamese universities to create joint/double degree programmes with their partners. As positioned by Knight (2004), income generation or profit maximization are the other side of student and staff mobility. It is apparent that more and more HE institutions are increasingly seeking for economic development. The Vietnamese universities are caught in the meager public funding and the increased operational costs, the sharp increasing students’ population, all taking place in an environment of increasing internationalization of HE competitiveness and accountability. Vietnam is an emerging economy in which the Vietnamese parents are more financially capable of sending their children to study overseas. Joint/double degree programmes answer their needs and help reduce the training costs in which the students can spend half of their studying time in Vietnam and the other half at the partnering HE institutions. They can then be awarded the partner’s degrees which are much more recognized in international HE standards. Joint/double degree programmes are in fact considered the economical packages of foreign education. Therefore, joint/double degree programmes are the considered one of the top priority partnership activities among the Vietnamese universities.

Harper (1995), Saffu and Mamman (2000) and Canto and Hannah (2001) (cited in Ayoubi and Alhaibaibeh, 2006: 380-393) found similar research results. Harper (1995) found that developing joint educational projects and joint degree programs in international business and marketing is popular among overseas partnerships between EU_USA universities and their partners. On the same trend, Australian universities aim to create opportunities for studying abroad and student exchange, institutional collaboration in research and consultancy, twinning and staff exchange, and offshore programs with their HE partners. In the same context, Poole (2001) finds Australian universities establish partnership with overseas or local universities for the sake of these traditional strategies of

\(^4\) Table of publications in Peer-Review Journals in 2007 can be found in appendix 4.
recruitment of fee-paying by international students and strategies of establishing full offshore campuses and distance education programmes. Furthermore, Brazilian universities are found to have same motivation in which their institutional partnership establishment is driven by joint research programs and other mutually beneficial partnership activities with American partners (Canto and Hannah, 2001). In the study by Audenhove (1998), while HE institutions in the North America prioritize partnership establishment with a view to joint research, the possibilities of collecting data, the internationalization of education, financial and personal considerations and international solidarity with developing countries, HE institutions in the south may participate in partnership agreements for the sake of institutional development, joint research, and the support of courses, training of staff, pure financial or infrastructure support and the possibility of academic contacts. However, it would be tempting to conclude that joint/double degree programmes are driven on the for-profit basis. This type of motivation is growing more complicated as it is part of the larger questions of commercialization and mere HE internationalization for the sake of quality development. Therefore, rationales driving partnership establishment vary from “institution to institution, from government department to government department, from stakeholder to stakeholder, and from country to country” (Knight, ibid). The research findings are somehow contradictory to the above research findings in which 13.8% Vietnamese universities do not agree that financial aids are the motivation for HE partnership establishment. Similar findings are found in “transferring technology and enhancing reputation”. It may be interpreted that not all Vietnamese universities are in financial difficulties or have problems with teaching and learning technology. In the same manner, whereas the drive for reputation is popular in internationalization era, some local Vietnamese universities do not necessarily follow the same track. These results are interesting for researchers because the reasons behind these choices can be diversified. It may be interpreted that some Vietnamese universities do not wish to admit their current financial crisis or they perceive that their HE institution have been doing well in terms of financial and technological issues. Further research studies on these non-priority choices of some Vietnamese universities may reveal further interesting messages for foreign HE universities. Whereas more than half of the respondents recognize the Finnish HE institutions as their important partners, one quarter of them somewhat recognize the latter as important partners approximately. There is a minority of the respondents, 6.9%, who do not recognize the latter. Qualitative data provided in the result part have clarified the Vietnamese universities’ recognition. The next part will further discuss the underlying reasons for these matters.
6.1.3. The underlying reasons for high interests in establishing partnerships with Finnish HE institutions

As noted in literature review part, Finland is considered as a developed modern country in Northern Europe where they are believed to excel in the education system. In the same victory, the PISA results have brought the reputation of the Finnish education to the world. Vietnam and the Vietnamese key universities have considered Finland as a destination country for ideal education lessons and policies. The Embassy of Finland in Hanoi has introduced Finland as a giant among international rankings in terms of the most competitive countries in the world, the most successful nation in terms of education, the world’s least corrupt countries, freedom of press and the world’s most greenest most liveable and peaceful place (Embassy of Finland in Hanoi, 2008). Furthermore, in the eyes of the Vietnamese, the achievement of Finnish education system is worth admiration. In fact, Finland has been a consistent high-performer of PISA (Sahlberg, 2011). Tuoitre, one of the popular Vietnamese newspapers, analyzed the reasons of this achievement in which knowledge is considered the powerful resources of the country; teachers have obtained training standards and students are responsible in their studies; the main focus is for both weak and good students; and the students are less likely to be under pressure in their study. It is stated that such achievement is the daily dreams of every parent and student in Vietnam, and the calls for the Vietnamese Ministry of Education’s action plans and policies are urgent in the Vietnamese educational context (Tuoitre: 2008). Similar news on the miracle of Finnish education is presented in all of the Vietnamese newspapers such as Vietnamnet (2011), Baomoi (2011), etc. Such achievement has strengthened the trust from Vietnam on Finland as a developed Northern European country and on Finnish education system.

The Vietnamese HE institutions, however, stated that their “very little” or “low” interest in cooperating with Finish HE institutions stem from the fact that they have not any opportunities to get access to the Finnish HE institutions, or they have too little information about the latter.

6.1.4. The underlying reasons for low interests in establishing partnerships with Finnish HE institutions

Table 5 illustrates the total number of HE partnership activities between the Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions in 2010. There are currently 8 active partnering activities. As can be seen from the table, there are 6 Vietnamese HE institutions out of 147 ones who can establish partnership with the latter at the present time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Vietnamese HE institutions</th>
<th>Finnish HE institutions</th>
<th>Partnering activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hanoi University of Technology</td>
<td>Turku University</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions Institutional Cooperation Instrument (HEI ICI) collaboration projects⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cantho University</td>
<td>Kemi-Tornia University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hai Phong University</td>
<td>Lahti University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Quang Tri Teacher Training College of education</td>
<td>Jyväskyla University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>University of Hai Phong</td>
<td>Turku University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>NORTH-SOUTH-SOUTH Higher Education Institution Network Programme⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Can Tho University Pedagogical University of Dong Thap</td>
<td>Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>Master programme in Public Finance Management⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>National Academy of Public Administration</td>
<td>University of Tampere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>University of Hai Phong</td>
<td>Turku University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>Degree programme in Sustainable Development⁸</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. The total number of HE partnership activities between the Vietnamese and Finnish HE institutions in 2010

The qualitative data provided in the result part above has provided reasons for the non-recognition of the Vietnamese HE institutions. As mentioned above, the promotional activities of Finnish HE institutions in Vietnam are not very visible to the Vietnamese universities. Furthermore, they admit that they almost have no chances to get access to partnership establishment with the latter. Further research

⁵ Data are extracted from CIMO webpage: www.cimo.fi
⁶ Data are extracted from CIMO webpage: www.cimo.fi
⁷ Data can be found in University Tampere University website: http://researchandstudy.uta.fi/2011/03/03/the-university-of-tampere-doing-education-in-vietnam/
⁸ Data can be found in Turku University of Applied Sciences website: http://www.turku.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=53925
studies are encouraged to investigate the perceptions of the Vietnamese universities towards marketization and promotional activities of the latter. As mentioned in literature review part, whilst Anglo-Saxon countries have chosen an explicit (and sometimes even aggressive) competitive approach to internationalization of HE, most continental European countries seem to, by contrast, pursue a more cooperative approach (Wende, 2001: 254-258). It is more or less assumed that Finland, one of the European countries, stay “aloof from a market and trade perspective on higher education” because the rationales of competitiveness for commercial and human power purposes may be absent and even undesirable in Finland. However, Finland has recently started exporting their education expertise. The partnership establishment between Finland and Vietnam is the testimony for this current trend in Finland. There are some other entrepreneurial Finnish education organizations entering the education market such as EduCluster, Finpro, etc. EduCluster, a new generation expert organization specializing in education and development, has won the project “Strengthening Higher Education” financially supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported in Laos. Further, they have established partnership with the United Arab Emirates where they are running school-level operations in the two flagship schools and Finnish educators work closely together with the local teaching staff (EduCluster, 2010). Therefore, it is argued that the picture of promotional education activities in Finland is getting clearer. In the similar tendency of HE changes towards more material and ideological priorities of capitalism, Cheung et al. (2010: 439-445) presented the market entry strategies, the 4Ps, namely product, price, place, and promotion in which “product refers to tangible, physical products and services; place refers to the channels of distribution that serve as the means for getting the product to the target customers; price is the amount that target consumers are willing to pay for the product or services provided in the context of marketing mix; promotion represents the various aspects of marketing strategies”. Promotion is considered to have become the most important component among the 4Ps. Cheung et al. found that Hong Kong was not well known to the respondents in their target markets compared to other competitors who spend much budgeting efforts in promotional activities of their HE overseas. These changes in HE promotion in marketization have also been documented in a plethora of research studies (Kotler: 2003, Newman and Jahdi: 2009, Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka: 2006, Yudelson: 1999, etc). Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006, cited in Newman and Jahdi: 2009) that the majority of English-speaking countries have adopted market theories and concepts in educational world in which most of HE institutions have recognized the importance of marketing in a competitive HE market. Whether Finnish HE institutions have recognized the potential advantages of
promotional activities as part of HE marketing has still been unanswered. Further research studies are encouraged to investigate into the perceptions and readiness of Finnish HE institutions towards marketing in HE. The research results have pointed out that the favorite promotional activities in Vietnam are internet, magazine, exhibition, and teachers. It is hoped that such findings can provide helpful hints for Finnish HE institutions to consider in their attempts to enter the competitive HE in Vietnam and elsewhere in Asia.

Such attempts require Finland to at least have their educations products available, well-designed price, effective promotion of the programmes and deep knowledge of Vietnam HE market available in their strategies. The next part discusses the most interested partnering activities of the Vietnamese key universities.

6.1.5. The Vietnamese universities’ most favorite partnering activities


Reports by IAU (2003) also shed the same light in which the five indentified partnering activities above are considered the most important aspects of internationalization and partnership establishment. However, contrast to IAU finding that student mobility is ranked one of the most important aspects; the Vietnamese universities find that sending staff overseas and welcoming Finnish staff and international students to Vietnam are of their most priorities. Sending Vietnamese students to Finland is considered of less important level. Further research studies are encouraged to explore the differentiation in prioritizing foreign and local staff and student mobility among the Vietnamese HE institutions.

Naidoo (2009: 327) found that twinning programmes, articulation programmes, franchised (or licensed) programmes, and joint award programmes account for 50% of all of the HE trade services. These terms are currently used, often inconsistently, in the literature to describe the complex range of activity. These conventions are found lacking of conceptual clarity in Davis, Olsen, and Bohm (2000, cited in Naidoo, 2009). Naidoo (ibid: 314-316) employed the conventions of institution and programme mobility by Knight’s (2003) in which “institution mobility pertains to an institution that goes overseas for education purposes whereas programme mobility represents an educational programme that goes
A common form of institution mobility is the opening of satellite branch campuses”. According to Naidoo, Vietnam is considered the major importer of HE with little or no HE export activities. His findings have lent much support and explanation for the Vietnamese universities’ interests in establishing joint/double degree programmes with foreign partners. Similar trends of joint/double degree programme establishment can be found elsewhere in Latin American countries in the whole globalization and internationalization trends in the world (Holme-Nielsen et al: 2005, Thielier: 2005, Hans de Wit et al: 2005).

Stella (2006, 260-262) and Daniel et al. (2005) presented that establishing joint/double degree programmes is unlikely to help developing countries unless “it is accessible, available, affordable, relevant, and of acceptable quality”. Whether joint/double degree programmes between Vietnam and foreign partners is accessible, available, affordable, relevant, and of acceptable quality or not is still doubtful. The Vietnamese universities have been involved in recruiting domestic students for their established joint/double degree programmes so far. It may be assumed that the costs for these programmes are affordable for the Vietnamese students and these programmes are popular among the Vietnamese HE context at the present time. This research study does not canvass the exact estimation of the number of these programmes in Vietnam. Further research studies are encouraged to employ a comprehensive approach at the full estimation of all partnering activities between the Vietnamese universities and their foreign partners.

In the same manner, Healy and Lee (2006: 5-7) presented that Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam, are importers of transnational education in Asia on one hand, and this trend is forecast to grow. On the other hand, some countries like Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore have been growing as educational hubs in the region in which they export their HE to students from neighboring countries and set up institutions overseas. It is claimed that Vietnam may hope to follow the same track whereby the Vietnamese government provide incentives and governmental support to set up branch campuses in Vietnam, e.g. RMIT with two campuses in Hanoi and Hochiminh. Furthermore, the research findings show that the Vietnamese universities are very interested in recruiting international students to Vietnam, which show their interest in exporting their HE products to international students.

Student mobility is closely linked to staff mobility. As can be seen from the results, the Vietnamese universities are interested in dual direction staff mobility in which visiting scholars/lecturers from Finland and research exchange programmes are welcomed. They also show more concerns towards sending their staff to Finland for further training. As presented in the literature part, Vietnam is one of
the top countries in sending staff overseas through partnership programmes funded by the local government, foreign governments or self-funding students, etc. There has been an increasing effort in Vietnam in strengthening their human resource development (Nguyen, 2009). Thanks to the Decree No. 06/2000/NDCP (March 6, 2000) and especially, the issuance of Decree No. 18/2001/ND-CP (May 4, 2001) on the —Establishment and Operation of Foreign Cultural and Educational Agencies in Vietnam, foreign education programmes has been enabled and facilitated (Nguyen, 2009).

In addition to the Vietnamese universities’ interests in visiting lecturers and scholars and sending their staff to Finland, they also pursue research exchange activities in their partnership establishment. This research finding has received much support from research studies on rationales for HE partnerships. As mentioned earlier, Canto and Hannah (2001), Saffu and Mamman (1999: cited in Ayoubi and Al-Habaibeh, 2006), Poole (2001) found that strategic alliances as collaborative relationship between a local university and an overseas counterpart, between universities in developed and developing countries, open new horizons for a number of partnering activities such as the development of onshore or offshore offerings, teaching, research and consultancy, technology and, marketing new or existing courses to a new market, etc. Enhancing research exchange programmes are found to be one of the important drives of HE partnership establishment among the Vietnamese universities.

In order to achieve their interests in cooperating with Finnish HE institutions, the Vietnamese key universities are also encountering a number of challenges. As noted in the previous sections, they lack of financial support, information of Finnish HE institutions and understanding of what is involved in establishing partnership with Finnish HE institutions.

6.1.6. The key challenges Vietnamese universities are encountering in establishing institutional partnerships with Finnish HE institutions and recommendation for both sides

In the eyes of the Vietnamese universities, their first challenge of the partnership establishment process with Finnish counterparts is the lack of financial support. Similar and dissimilar research studies worldwide have been found in UNESCO (2006), IAU (2003), Sirat et al. (2004), Ambigapathy and Aniswal (2005), Thieler (2005), Sirat (2006), Zolfaghari et al (2009), Hans de Wit et al (2005, 361-362), etc. According to IAU report in 2003, the successful and sustainable implementation of internationalization have been challenged by a number of obstacles ranked from the most challenging to the least ones. Lack of financial support accounts for 50% of the challenging levels followed by lack of policy/strategy to facilitate the process (18%), issue of non-recognition of work done abroad (16%), insufficiently trained or qualified staff to guide the process (10%). Lack of reliable and comprehensive
information and lack of understanding of what is involved were found to be the least challenging hurdles. Both IAU and this research study results have illustrated that the lack of financial support is clearly the most significant factor. Back to the context of the Vietnamese universities, while public universities are stated to receive financial support from the state, fully private ones receive no funding from the state. Semi public universities are reported to receive funding from the state for facilities, equipment and curricula while teacher salaries, maintenance and other operating expenditures are funded by charging student fees (UNESCO, 2006). Although all of the Vietnamese universities are charging tuition fee under the tuition fee regulations by the state, they perceive that institutional finance is the most challenging factor in their attempts to HE internationalization and partnership establishment. IAU and the research results, however, are contradictory in the Vietnamese universities’ lack of information of the partners and lack of understanding in what is involved in the process. The reasons can be traced back to the fact that the promotional activities of Finnish HE institutions in Vietnam are not very invisible, and to the Vietnamese universities have fewer chances to get access to partnership establishment with the latter.

Similar research findings of the financial challenge can be found elsewhere in HE institutions in Africa, Latin American, and developing countries in general. Zolfaghari et al (2009) presented a list of challenges for developing countries in which lack of financial facilities are considered the first hurdle. Knight (2002, cited in Sirat: 2006 ) argued that the sharp growing demand for HE in most countries challenges the capacity of the public sector and increases emphasis on market economy due to limited budget limitations. Sirat (ibid: 129-130) stated that all of these situations have applied in Malaysia. The Malaysia government has been involved in actions to fight against immediate problems like rising graduate unemployment, declining quality of graduates (in relation to current needs of the private industry), and inappropriate curriculum, and limited funding for HE institutions (see Ambigapathy and Aniswal: 2005; Sirat et al. 2004, cited in Sirat: 2006). Sirat noted that the Malaysia state funding does not meet the needs and interests of both private and public sectors. Similar to state modular funding in Vietnam, while public institutions are funded, private sector does not. It is traditional justified that private sector is “well-endowed” because of many sources of funding. However, it is currently argued that not all private education institutions are well funded or are able to manage their funding appropriately and successfully.

Funding situations in Latin American HE institutions shed the same light. Thieler (2005:107) reported that the lack of adequate funding for higher education is one of the serious obstacles to the
internationalization process in Argentina. Hans de Wit et al (2005, 361-362) noted that the decline in governmental financial support for public sector in Latin America has posed financial challenges and stimulated the expansion of private higher education institutions and attracting international private providers. Elsewhere in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico, some public institutions have been forced to supplement their income by charging tuition. Although the Latin American legal system is complicated and rigid, the new international providers have managed to force local institutions to undertake drastic transformations in governance, organizational structure, and modes of operation (Salmi 2001; World Bank: 2002, cited in Hans de wit et al: 2005). Initiating with the same financial challenges, the Vietnamese universities, however, has received legal support from the “open-door policies” by the state. Lacking of financial support and the consequential of marketization and privatization trends of the Vietnamese HE system have been found to be prevalent as many HE system elsewhere around the world. Although the Vietnamese government has been increasing funding in education and training from more than 13% to 20% of the total state funding in the past 12 years (from 1998 to 2010), the Vietnamese universities are still facing financial difficulties. Such situation has led to the over-charging tuition fee tendency among some universities and the increasing efforts in establishing joint double degree programmes with foreign partners (Dantri, 2011). Hundreds of programmes like those have been established in Vietnam. Further research studies are encouraged to document the exact number of partnering activities in which establishing joint double degree programmes are found to prevalent in the Vietnamese context.

In addition to lack of financial support, the Vietnamese universities also admitted the difficulty of in lack of understanding of what is involved in establishing partnership with Finnish HE institutions is another problem that counts. Since this research study does not aim at investigating the underlying reasons behind these challenges, it would nonetheless posit some of the valuable lessons recommended by a number of other research studies by Luu (2009), Duff and Dewey (2009), Fullan (1993), de Wit (2002), Jones and Brown (2007), Knight (2004), Olson et al. (2006), etc.

In his overview of the opportunities and challenges of Vietnamese Higher Education in the era of globalization, Luu (2009) pointed out that the roles of university leaders are of vital importance in the transformation of the Vietnamese HE. The Vietnamese university leaders should prioritize HE internationalization in their vision for future development, modify core values and establish new policies aiming at the efficiency of management and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of education. According to Fullan (1993, cited in Luu, 2009), school leaders must be the key ‘agents of
change’ in their attempts to bring about necessary transformation. Luu (ibid) also mentioned the vital roles of the Vietnamese government and educational leaders in “planning adequate investment and long-term strategic plans to complement and fulfill the goals of the country’s higher education, providing human resources that are capable of meeting the needs of social development in the information and knowledge era, enhancing competitiveness of universities to integrate into international education and reach standards of education accreditation, and assessment; and most importantly, equipping learners with the ability to ‘learn to know, learn to do, learn to live in harmony with other people ...’”

In their case study of faculty participants in the Schools of Architecture and Allied Arts International Initiatives Committee, Duff and Dewey (2009, 501-503) argued although a wholehearted commitment support to internationalization is not enough, there needs to be solid coordination between institutional goals and faculty initiatives in which “a more systematic approach to internationalization must comprise concurrent assessment of all institutional rationales, activities, outcomes, and processes” . Duff and Dewey (ibid) suggested that proper measure should be taken to enable more engagement from administrators and faculty in advancing comprehensive internationalization processes at their institutions (de Wit: 2002, Jones and Brown: 2007, Knight: 2004, Olson et al.: 2006, etc).

Back to the context of the Vietnamese universities, the claim that they lack of understanding of what is involved in the partnership establishment process should be reconsidered. As argued by Duff and Dewey (2009), passion for internationalization is not enough. If the Vietnamese universities prioritize internationalization, they should address their internationalization activities systemically and systematically and mutual understanding of institutional goals, rationales, and objectives of comprehensive internationalization are of great importance. The faculty, the administrators or the university leaders alone do not have the capacity to implement internationalization and partnership establishment successfully. A joint effort among all of the related key institutional stakeholders is very much needed and recommended.

In addition to the recommendations to the Vietnamese universities, this research study also tempted to give recommendations to the Finnish HE institutions that are currently going under the governmental encouragement on exporting their HE services.
6.2. Recommendations for the Finnish HE institutions

Maassen (2003), Olsen (1988), Neave and Van Vught (1991) and many other researchers in the field of HE have documented the changes in the relationship between the state and HE in which recent shifts in governance arrangements have been prevalent. The initial waves of governance reform displayed a number of deregulation governance elements enlarging the autonomy of HE institutions. Later governance reforms in early 1990s have carried with them market elements in which institutional leaders perceive as shifts of deregulation of governance from the government to the HE institutions. Such changes have consequentially led to phenomena of HE marketization, privatization, cross border education export industry, etc. This trend has also been well presented in Burton Clark (1998). He stated that universities have been pushed to transform themselves internally because of the deepening asymmetry between environmental demand and institutional capacity to respond. Traditional ways of universities become inadequate and insufficient. In such new context, universities must or have to respond to these changes selectively and flexibly. Universities successful in this period elsewhere in the UK, U.S.A, Canada, Australian and New Zealand, etc are doing so.

Similarly, Finnish HE institutions are influenced under transformation and changes in which the government is encouraging to export fee-based education services (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009). As mentioned in the literature review part, the most recent legislations have allowed Finnish HE institutions to charge tuition fees on a five-year trial basis for separate Master’s programmes from foreign students, provided that the arrangements include a scholarship scheme. Hölttä et al (in press: 14-16) have tried to document the readiness of Finnish HE institutions as exporters of education. The most challenges are presented in which the Finnish government and Finnish HEIs should clearly identify the challenges and find corresponding solutions (1); Finnish HEIs should be on action to obtain more experiences and competence in export education (2), and effective coordination at the national level is also required in the development of export education (3). Hölttä et al (ibid: 16) concluded that “the biggest challenge for the future of Finnish higher education export lies in the genuine willingness to invest resources in this sort of activity. This challenge calls immediate and decisive actions both in the level of policy-makers and HEIs. Otherwise, any further discussion about exportability and expected demand of Finnish higher education is fashionable policy”.

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9 List of M.A. programmes charged with tuition fee can be found in http://www.studyinfinland.fi/tuition_and_scholarships/tuition_fees
6.3. Limitations and strengths

There are some limitations in this research study. First, due to the limited data collection time frame, 30 Vietnamese key universities out of the total 147 universities are selected. Since the underlying reason for this research study is providing information of the Vietnamese key universities’ interests in cooperating with the Finnish HE institutions, further research studies are encouraged to cover a bigger sample, which helps provide stronger foundation for generability. Furthermore, it is presented in the discussion part that hundreds of joint/double degree programmes have been established in Vietnam. Further research studies are encouraged to document the exact number of partnering activities in which establishing joint/double degree programmes are found to prevalent in the Vietnamese context or elsewhere in Asia, and other continents.

In spite of the limitations, this research study is expected to contribute to enrich marketing resources for Finnish HE institutions and the scholarly existing literature in Finland related to exporting higher education services. This research study addresses Vietnam as one of targeted markets for Finnish HE institutions. The contribution of this research findings are listed as follows:

- Key contact persons of the Vietnamese universities are identified.
- The perceptions of the Vietnamese universities towards Finnish HE institutions and the latter’s promotional activities in Vietnam are well documented.
- The interested partnering activities and the challenges of the Vietnamese universities in their attempts to establish partnership with the latter.

If the Finnish HE institutions are interested in exporting their HE to Vietnam, then proper signaling from them should be sent. Proper strategic plans to obtain successful partnership establishment in the Vietnamese HE culture and context should also developed. Hölttä et al (in press) presented the idea of one of the participants, the Vice Rector of a Finnish university. He thinks joint ventures with other universities would be a good starting point for Finnish HE institutions rather than that they would start doing this by themselves. This research study may serve as a proactive prompt response, exploration, and speculation to the Vietnamese HE market. It is hoped it can be used as marketing resources for Finnish HE institutions after they have gained their genuine willingness to invest resources in export education activities. Furthermore, this research study is conducted under the permission of CIMO. Therefore, it is intended to serve as marketing resources in CIMO. It is also hoped that this research study alongside with that of Hölttä et al (ibid), Cai & Hölttä (2006), Hölttä, Pekkola & Cai (2009),
(Hölttä and Kivistö 2009) and Cai (2010) can serve as pioneers encouraging more scholarly discussion in Finland related to exporting higher education services.

7. Conclusions

This research has attempted to bridge partnership establishment needs between the Finnish and Vietnamese HE Institutions by studying the case of 30 Vietnamese key universities. Similar to HE trends elsewhere in the world, the Vietnamese universities show their whole hearted commitment in establishing partnership with Finnish HE institutions. Their most highlighted partnership activities manifest similar worldwide trends of HE era where HE is transformed, changed and challenged in the current context of globalization and internationalization. As Duff and Dewey (2009: 503) noted “...passion for internationalization is not enough. If it is an institutional strategic priority, internationalization requires resources, support, and strategic coordination. Second, internationalization must be addressed systemically and systematically...”, this research may serve as one of very first practical handbooks for successful Finnish cross border education if the Finnish HE institutions are willing to do so.
References


84. MOET (2005b). *Report on Total of Students Abroad*.

85. MOET (2005c). *Statistical Data of Vietnamese Students Abroad*.


Appendix 1

Figure 1 illustrates the six-phase partnership phase in education (cited from Maroitt and Goyder, 2009: 24)
Appendix 2

The survey questionnaire in English is provided below.

Institutional Partnership in Higher Education Internationalization - A Survey among Vietnamese Universities

Time needed for completion: 20 minutes

Institutional information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Institution:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of person completing questionnaire:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 1. Partnership establishment

1. Is establishing foreign partnerships with other higher education institutions a priority in your institution? Please tick (✓) one box.
   Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Please specify in details: the names of the active foreign partnered HE institutions and the names of the cooperation activities with those active partnered HE institutions
Section 2. Reasons for establishing partnership with foreign higher education institutions

Why do you wish to establish partnerships with foreign higher education institutions? Please tick one box (✓) only for each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. To give students more opportunities of learning mobility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. To give faculties and professionals more opportunities of academic mobility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. To utilize international knowledge and teaching materials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. To offer joint academic programs with international partners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. To transfer technology for teaching and learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. To strengthen international research collaboration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. To create institutional development projects and linkages with international partners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. To create educational projects and linkages with international partners (i.e. curriculum development or programme development projects)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. To create research projects and linkages with international partners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. To build up and enhance international profile, reputation and position</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. To generate income and/or financial aids</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Others: Please specify in details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 3. Interests in establishing partnership with Finnish Higher education institutions

1. To what extent are Finnish higher education institutions recognized as important foreign partners? Please tick (✓) one box below.
   - Very much
   - Somewhat
   - Very little
   - Not at all

2. To what extent is your overall impression of Finnish HE institutions?
   - Very well and fairly well
   - Adequate
   - Little and Very little
   - Not at all

3. To what extent is your overall impression of promotional activities of Finnish HE institutions?
   - Visible
   - Not visible
   - Don’t know

4. What are your preferred channels to obtain information of Finnish HE institutions?
   - Internet
   - Exhibition
   - Newspaper
   - TV
   - Friends/relatives
   - Magazine
   - Teachers
   - Others: Please specify in details

5. According to you, why are Finnish Higher Education Institutions recognized or not recognized as important foreign partners for your institution?

6. What forms of institutional partnership with Finnish Higher Education Institutions are you interested in?
   - Indicate the levels of interest of your choices- none, low, medium, high or not applicable.
Please tick one box (✓) only for each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional partnership interests</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Welcoming international students to Vietnam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Sending Vietnamese students to Finland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Finnish language study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Joint/double degree programs&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Welcoming Finnish faculties/staff to Vietnam for short educational or training courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Sending Vietnamese faculties/staff to Finland for short educational or training courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Visiting lecturers and scholars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Others, please specify in details:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Research and scholarly collaboration |      |     |        |      |                |
| a. Joint research projects and publications |     |     |        |      |                |
| b. Research exchange programs |     |     |        |      |                |
| c. Contract-based training and research programs and services |     |     |        |      |                |
| d. Others, please specify in details: |     |     |        |      |                |

<sup>10</sup> The lists of programme database on Finnish universities and polytechnics and all of the other related information can be found in the web page:  [http://www.studyinfinland.fi/](http://www.studyinfinland.fi/)
### Section 4. Challenges in establishing partnership with Finnish Higher education institutions

What are the key challenges your university is encountering in establishing institutional partnerships? Indicate the levels of challenges of your choices- none, low, medium, high or not applicable.

Please tick one box (✓) only for each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key challenges in establishing institutional partnership with Finnish higher education institutions</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Lack of policy/strategy to facilitate the process</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Little recognition or interest in internationalization by senior leaders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Lack of faculty interest and involvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Lack of financial support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Administrative inertia or bureaucratic difficulties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Competing priorities for time and resources in the institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Issues of non-recognition of work done abroad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Lack of reliable and comprehensive information of Finnish higher education institutions and Finland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Lack of understanding of what is involved in establishing partnership with Finnish higher education institutions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Insufficiently trained or qualified staff to guide the process</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Others, please specify:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

☐ Please tick (✓) this box if you are interested in having an interview with us later on.
Appendix 3
List of the key persons’ positions of the 27 Key Universities

1. Lists of universities, colleges and institutions in the North of Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>The key persons who filled in the questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>University A</td>
<td>Chief coordinator of International Training Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>University B</td>
<td>Director of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>University C</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>University D</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>University E</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>University F</td>
<td>Rector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>University G</td>
<td>Head of International Cooperation Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>University H</td>
<td>Head of International Cooperation Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>University I</td>
<td>Vice Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>University J</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Lists of universities, colleges and institutions in the Central of Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>The key persons who filled in the questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>University K</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>University L</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>University M</td>
<td>Vice Rector of University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>University N</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>University O</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>University P</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>University Q</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>University R</td>
<td>Vice head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>University S</td>
<td>Head Of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>University T</td>
<td>Head Of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>University U</td>
<td>Head Of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>University V</td>
<td>Director of International Relations Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Lists of universities, colleges and institutions in the South of Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>The key persons who filled in the questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>University W</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>University X</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>University Y</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>University Z</td>
<td>Vice Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>University AA</td>
<td>Vice Rector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>University AB</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>University AC</td>
<td>Head of International Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seoul Natl. University</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>5,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat. University of Singapore</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>3,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peking University</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>3,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fudan University</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>2,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahidol University</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chulalongkorn University</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Malaya</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Philippines</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam Nat. University (Hanoi and HCMC)</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Science Citation Index Expanded, Thomson Reuters