

Cultural experiences of older people in a nursing home

Key results of a bachelor's thesis

As a method, we used a semi-structured interview in the Thesis. We interviewed five older people at a nursing home in Southern Finland and analyzed four of them. There were recognized three main themes in analysis which were language skills, issues related to cultural habits and equality as a dominant phenomenon.

The interviewees felt that most of the communication challenges were due to lack of Finnish language skills. According to the results, it was remarkable that some of the interviewees found the lack of Finnish language skills problematic while the others did not find it significant. Problems related to lack of Finnish language skills were emerged unexpectedly in daily life. It was significant that some of the interviewees taught that even passable Finnish language skill was sufficient especially in the beginning of career. Also, non-verbal communication was seen as one of the solutions to the lack of common language.

Interviewees had only positive experiences of cultural habits of employees from different cultures. The openness of those from another culture was seen as a good thing. Furthermore, the interviewees experienced employees from different culture as persons with good working attitude. According to one interviewee, the cheerfulness and gratitude of employees from another culture for being able to work in Finland was reflected in their approach to work. Some differences were observed between the cultures, but these were seen as positive in terms of interaction.

Based on the interviews, older people saw employees from another culture as equal to Finnish employees. The interviewees described that they have received good care from the foreign employees and that there were not complaints about the care they provide. As a conclusion, a meaning of Finnish language skill is the most important issue which emerged according to the interviews. That should be considered also in future trainings for immigrants and encourage employees from different culture to use the Finnish language as much as possible. It is also important to encourage employees from different culture to be themselves and emphasize their own personality also from cultural perspective.