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A MOMENT IN NATURE

Diverse nature experiences as part of the wellbeing of elderly immigrant women

ABSTRACT

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A Moment in Nature - Diverse Nature Experiences as Part of the Wellbeing of Elderly Immigrant Women

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This thesis aimed to familiarize aging immigrant women with the versatile Finnish nature and improve their wellbeing by offering three workshops in three destinations in the capital area during spring 2023. There was a need to develop activities for the NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) elderly service users; therefore, the project was planned, carried out, and evaluated. This work aligns with earlier research showing nature's positive impacts on mental health and wellbeing (Salonen, 2020, p.17); thus, a nature-related development project was seen as a pilot project opportunity for the NGO.

The two main objectives of this thesis were to introduce the versatile Finnish nature to elderly immigrant women and create activities to help them experience positive emotions in Finnish nature. The objectives were assessed with the help of the SMART objectives. Further, a risk assessment and analysis were conducted with the help of the SWOT analysis. The operation for the workshops was client-oriented and inclusive, and the methods used in this thesis were based on observation and participatory methods.

The workshops were evaluated with the help of lead discussions, open-ended questions, feedback from the participants, observation, and self-reflection. Further, the SMART objectives and the SWOT analysis were evaluated. In conclusion, the workshops were done as planned on schedule, and the outcome was in line with expectations set in the beginning. The need for the workshops was clear, and the evaluation supported their success.

Keywords: Diversity of nature, wellbeing, an elderly immigrant woman.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of this thesis is A Moment in Nature - Diverse nature experiences as part of the wellbeing of elderly immigrant women. Research shows that nature positively impacts our mental health and wellbeing (Salonen, 2020, p.17). With the help of this thesis, we, as future social sector professionals, want to share information on the effects of nature and bring versatile use of nature and urban nature among aging immigrant women through the series of workshops organized in spring 2023. We also want to promote the position of vulnerable individuals, in this case, elderly immigrant women, by organizing activities aimed merely at them. The workshops were organized once a week, lasting altogether two weeks. This thesis focused on the nature in the capital region, varying from parks to forests, while the activities varied from relaxation exercises to planting of flowers.

This thesis topic is important to show nature's recreational benefits and encourage elderly immigrant women to embrace it as part of their daily lives. The natural environment may seem foreign, threatening, inaccessible, and even dangerous to the immigrants because they might not know the nature of the country where they reside. In this case, reducing fears was considered as one aim when getting to know nature (Kivelä, 2019, p.28). By introducing some activities that can be done in nature, we hope the participants feel comfortable enough after the workshops to enjoy nature by themselves.

Previous studies confirm that community spirit is essential for many immigrants; thus, working together and peer support are emphasized when getting to know nature (Jokela & Uusitalo, 2019). We had to consider this while planning the workshops. Furthermore, according to research, social behavior and the sense of social belonging also improve in nature. Research also states that a green living environment and the proximity of parks relate to social behavior (Kivelä, 2019, p.13).

Only a few activities are exclusively meant for elderly immigrant women in the capital area. There are a few municipal senior centers, as well as the JADE activity center, that organize activities for the elderly immigrants in the capital area. However, the activities are for both women and men. We wanted to arrange a series of workshops exclusively for elderly immigrant women so they could have something of their own and get peer support from women their age. This could also lower the threshold to participate in nature activities when the participants belong to the same age group and gender.

According to statistics, over half of Helsinki residents between the age of 55-74 years, name as the most common reason for their active participation their wish to have meaningful and developing activities in their life. Many younger seniors want to learn new things and make new friends. For older people, it is important to belong to a group, meet others in the same situation and have peer support. (Ikääntyneet Helsingissä, 2017.) This was important for us to consider while planning the workshops for our target group.

2 KEY CONCEPTS IN THIS THESIS

To fully understand the subject and the aim of this thesis, the key concepts need to be explained. It is essential to have a clear definition of the key terminology that will be frequently used to ensure the clarity of the thesis. The key concepts are who is considered an elderly person, who is an immigrant, what is meant by diversity of nature, and what is wellbeing. When the key concepts have been explained and defined, the concepts will be further described from the thesis's point of view. This will further clarify the key concepts and what they mean in this thesis.

2.1 Diversity of nature

To define the meaning of nature or to summarize it is perplexing. One way to define it is by saying that nature entails the atmosphere, water, earth, and all the animals and plants. The area should also be as intact as possible (not modified by humans). It is not easy to give an exact definition because factors such as culture and context impact how the term is defined. (Tieteen termipankki, 2019.) Urban nature also plays a significant role in this thesis. Urban nature is neither wild nor intact nature; it is the opposite. It is nature added to the cities, for example, parks, roof gardens, and street trees, or green areas/nature elements that cities have been built around, such as rivers and cliffs. (Hoyle, n.d.) In this thesis, urban nature refers to manufactured parks and gardens in the capital area.

This thesis focuses on the wild and urban nature elements. The workshops were conducted in both type of nature to ensure that the diversity of nature was fully utilized since research has shown that nature in all shapes and forms contribute to improving our wellbeing: it can be anything from watching nature-inspired landscapes to spending time outside (Delegran, n.d.). In this thesis, wild nature means the wild nature of Finland. Wild nature refers to the forests and the ocean. When this thesis refers to urban nature, it refers to parks and gardens in the capital region. We will also focus on the relationship with nature, which refers to a

person's emotional, functional, and experiential relationship with nature. The relationship with nature also changes with time (Haverinen et al., 2021, p.17). The environment and its relationship with it are usually received unconsciously and without evaluation. The person to whom the environment is unfamiliar faces it differently, wanting to see something new and comparing it to what he or she has experienced before (Jokela & Uusitalo, 2019, p.25).

2.2 Wellbeing

Wellbeing can be defined as the ability and capability to function well and feel good doing so. It can be divided into objective and subjective wellbeing. Objective wellbeing is based on basic needs, such as access to enough food. This thesis defines subjective wellbeing as personal wellbeing. Personal wellbeing is something that can be found out by simply asking the person in question how they feel. This type of wellbeing includes positive emotions. (Hardy, 2021.) This thesis aimed to provide the target group, the elderly immigrant women, with positive experiences in diverse nature settings that positively impact their personal wellbeing by for example evoking positive emotions. In this thesis, positive emotions refer to feeling good and having fun while participating in different nature-related activities.

It has been shown that both mental and physical wellbeing are better when nature is a part of one's daily life. Activities such as planting or outdoor exercise help to reduce stress and relax and it allows meeting new people as well as getting to know the community one stays in. (Mind, n.d.) Exposure to nature has been linked to essential advantages for physical and mental health. The presence of nature in the home has been linked favorably to improved self-reported health and decreased morbidity, mortality, obesity, and cardiovascular and respiratory disease. (Bell et al., 2017.)

For elderly people, social isolation and loneliness are significant but sometimes ignored social determinants of health. Our mental, physical, and overall wellbeing depend on having strong social ties. (World Health Organization, n.d.) Due to the

strain of migrating and acculturation, immigrants frequently have an increased risk of developing depressive symptoms. This higher risk may be influenced by loneliness, a known precursor to depression. The difficulties of adjusting to a new and unfamiliar environment, which increases their susceptibility to both loneliness and depression, may cause older immigrants in particular, to feel higher degrees of loneliness than their younger counterparts. (Jang & Tang, 2021). In addition to their cultural background, elderly immigrants are individuals with unique needs, aspirations, and life histories that must be considered while interacting with them (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2021). As future professionals in the social field, cultural diversity and sensitivity are essential when working with the participants, as these individual variations may affect how they experience the workshops.

2.3 An elderly immigrant woman

The thesis's target group is elderly immigrant women. To better understand what is meant by an elderly person in our thesis, the term needs to be defined. The United Nations defines an elderly person as someone over 60 (UNHCR, n.d.). In Finland, the definition is more complex. The Finnish legislation states that an elderly person is someone whose ability to function has diminished because of age-related issues (such as age-related diseases). Then again, when the Finnish legislation refers to the elderly population, it refers to people over 65 due to their right to pension. (Terveyskylä.fi, 2023.) The term elderly has changed with time due to the change in life expectancy and healthier living habits (Sinykin, 2021).

When talking about aging and elderly immigrants, the age limit is more problematic. In countries without a pension security system, old age begins earlier than 65. Aging is also connected to each country's life expectancy, which is significantly lower among people with refugee backgrounds compared to Finns. Therefore, when talking about elderly immigrants, it is good to lower the age to those aged 55 and older. (Linderborg, 2008, p.26.)

Immigrants are people who live in a country that is not the same country they were born in. The time the person has lived in the (new) country does not matter since the person will still be an immigrant whether they have stayed (in the new country) for one year or ten years. (Bolter, 2019.) An immigrant in this thesis is a person that is not born in Finland but lives permanently in Finland during the workshops. They might have come to the country at a later age; therefore, they might not speak Finnish well.

3 BACKGROUND AND WORKING LIFE PARTNER

This chapter will introduce the background for this thesis and who our working life partner is. We will start by presenting previous research and projects, further explaining the need for our thesis. Lastly, our working life partner will be introduced. We will explain why we chose this target group and the importance of providing our workshops for them.

3.1 Previous research and projects

Little research material is available on nature experiences and wellbeing effects of aging immigrant women in Finland. There is literature and research available about immigrants' relationship with nature in general; for example, the Masters' study *Luontosuhteita paikallisessa ja transnationaalissa kontekstissa* studies the relationship women with an immigrant background have with nature as well as what it means to them (Turunen, 2014). According to Turunen's study, aging, lack of company, and uncertainty about moving alone in the forest are the reasons for little movement in nature environments or outdoors; for them, nature appears concretely as plants in the home or as a part of the landscape (Turunen, 2014, pp.107-108). The experience of the barrier of transition from one culture to another affects the immigrants' relationship with nature. Based on previous experiences, immigrants like Finnish nature, of which parks, fields, meadows, lakes, and rivers are perceived as the most pleasant (Jokela & Uusitalo, 2019, pp.25-36). There is also literature about nature's impact on wellbeing (Kivelä, 2019 & Salonen, 2020), how it positively affects sleep quality, reduces stress symptoms, and many physical diseases (Kivelä, 2019, p.13).

During our previous studies, we noticed that elderly immigrants, unfortunately, seem like a forgotten group. The *Talentia* magazine article *Ikääntyneiden maahanmuuttajien määrä nousee lähivuosina nopeasti* also emphasizes that claim (Talentia, 2018). According to the article, elderly immigrants who are left out of working life and have few contacts with society are an invisible group. Some

services are offered to elderly immigrants, but it is difficult to reach them and, therefore, poses a challenge to the municipalities' service system. (Talentia, 2018) The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare has also raised the same issue regarding Elderly immigrants (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2021). According to the website, elderly immigrants have been invisible in services; therefore, they must be provided with more information about aging and the services that belong to them; this would encourage them to join the services (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2021). That is why it is essential to raise the topic and provide a workshop series to help elderly immigrant women navigate Finnish nature and enjoy it.

Monikko Ry has been managing a project called the Paloma-activity since 2013. Their activity aims to prevent the marginalization of the elderly native population and the elderly immigrants aged 55 and above, improve their overall wellbeing, and increase their participation in society. Their activities include, for example, exercise, arts, Finnish courses, and excursions. All the activities are free of charge. (Monikko, n.d.) Jade (2013-2015) and Jade II (2016-2017) projects preceding the forming of the JADE Activity Center are also worth mentioning in this context. The projects aimed to provide peer-support groups for the elderly immigrants in their native language and provide them with wellbeing activities. (Käpyrinne, n.d.) These projects show a need to acknowledge the elderly immigrants and provide them with activities and peer support.

3.2 Introducing our working life partner

Our working life partner is a small non-governmental organization (NGO) founded by women who immigrated to Finland. The NGO is focused on providing courses, trips, and programs for immigrant women. During the summertime, the NGO organizes different outdoor activities, such as trips to different destinations. The activities have been popular among the aging clientele.

The NGO's activities aim to strengthen the wellbeing of immigrant women in Finland and their families, especially those in a vulnerable position. The NGO's

approach is client-oriented. In social services, client orientation refers to a way of working and thinking where the client's needs and wishes are at the center of the operation. Client orientation is awareness of the client's overall wellbeing, and the basis of it is respect for human dignity and equality. (Hujala et al., 2020, pp.243-244) We wanted to ensure that our participants remained anonymous and unidentifiable; hence, we did not share the name of our working life partner. Confidentiality plays a vital role in the relationship between the service provider (the NGO) – and the service user (the participants); therefore, we only reveal the age group of our participants. This specific NGO does not have enough courses aimed at our target group; therefore, we had a mutual understanding with our working life partner about the need to provide a workshop strictly to this group.

With the workshops, we wanted to provide our working life partner with a new working model they could use to improve their elderly service users' wellbeing and help them find ways to incorporate nature into their service users' everyday lives. Our workshops were a pilot project for them. The working life partner participated in the development process by contacting their current service users and telling them about our upcoming project. Our working life partner provided us with feedback during the entire process. At the beginning of the process with our working life partner, we learned that there had been an influx of elderly immigrant women joining the events. We also learned that there was a demand from the elderly service users for a program or workshop directed strictly to them since a great deal of the existing programs were for mothers with young children. This meant there was a need for a workshop like this for the specific target group, and we had the means to provide it.

4 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS THESIS

This chapter will introduce the purpose and aim of this thesis. After the aim and purpose are explained, the two objectives will be presented with the help of the SMART method. SMART stands for specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. It is thought that if the aims of an activity are written down as SMART statements, it makes it easier to implement the action itself. (Ogbeiwi, 2017.)

This thesis aimed to acquaint aging immigrant women with Finnish nature and its versatility by offering three workshops in different destinations while encouraging them to move in nature daily. The purpose was to show the participants both the wild and urban nature (to broaden their view of what nature is) and how engaging with nature can improve their everyday wellbeing by evoking positive emotions.

This thesis has two main objectives: 1) to introduce Finnish nature and its versatility to elderly immigrant women (TABLE 1) and 2) to create activities that help the participants experience positive emotions in Finnish nature (TABLE 2). To evaluate these objectives, we used the SMART method.

TABLE 1. SMART objective 1: to introduce the Finnish nature and its versatility.

SPECIFIC	To introduce elderly immigrant women to Finland's diverse nature by offering three workshops in three locations in the capital area.
MEASURABLE	The three workshops were planned and scheduled with the work-life partner.
ATTAINABLE	The workshops will be organized in accessible locations (easy to commute to), and the activities do not require prior experience.
REALISTIC	There was a need for activities for the elderly immigrant women.
TIME-BOUND	Workshop 1 (Oodi): 27.04.2023. Workshop 2 (Roihuvuori): 03.05.2023. Workshops 3 (Vuosaari): 09.05.2023.

TABLE 2. SMART objective 2: to experience positive emotions in the Finnish nature.

SPECIFIC	Client-oriented approach. Participants needs are considered, and we are prepared to alter the program.
MEASURABLE	Asking for feedback after each workshop. Facilitating the group. Observing the participants gestures, facial expressions, and body language.
ATTAINABLE	Low threshold activities (for example games with simple rules and options to choose from). We are flexible and make changes accordingly.
REALISTIC	Making the setting as inclusive and encouraging as possible by being professional, supportive, and open.
TIME-BOUND	Workshop 1 (Oodi): 27.04.2023. Workshop 2 (Roihuvuori): 03.05.2023. Workshop 3 (Vuosaari): 09.05.2023.

TABLE 1 and TABLE 2 show the objectives we set for our workshops. We aim to introduce elderly immigrant women to Finnish nature through three different workshops. We needed to schedule months ahead, considering it was our time in question, the NGOs, and the participants. Considering the NGO's operating time, we knew the workshops had to be organized in the morning. We also had to consider the locations since many participants did not know how to maneuver through Helsinki alone.

Considering our client-oriented approach, it was important to tell the participants that their needs were considered. We had to be able to modify the program if needed, to ensure the workshops would be successful. Feedback was asked from the participants after the workshops. We made sure that the activities were low-threshold activities. We chose activities with simple rules and explained them in Easy Finnish. We considered our target group and any limitations they might have. The aim was to have fun together while getting to know the Finnish versatile nature. The SMART tables will be evaluated later in the evaluation chapter.

5 PROCESS DESCRIPTION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

This thesis is a development project, a series of nature-related activities that were part of a three-part workshop. The workshops were carried out over two weeks in April and May 2023. In the following chapter, we will describe our process for this development project.

Previous studies show that familiar nature activities, the environment, and the seasons affect how immigrants relate to nature activities (Jokela & Uusitalo, 2019, p.39). For this reason, we scheduled the workshops in late spring because cold and harsh weather could have made the nature experience less pleasant (Jokela & Uusitalo, 2019, p.53). The workshops were organized in three locations in Helsinki: the park outside of the Oodi library (urban nature), the Roihuvuori Cherry Park (urban nature), and in Uutela, Vuosaari (wild nature). All the workshops had different themes and sets of activities, which will be further presented in the following chapters. The planning process, the meeting chart, and the SWOT analysis are presented first; after that, the implementation of the workshops and activities will be described.

5.1 Planning

It is crucial to identify the necessary improvement or change and its justification at the outset of every project (Spolander & Martin, 2012, p. 25). We discovered our thesis topic while we were having our mental health course during our second year of studies. We noticed that there were no mental health services strictly meant for elderly immigrants who reside in the capital area. The idea of nature-related workshops for elderly immigrant women came to our minds because we were aware of nature's wellbeing effects. When we presented the idea to the NGO, they liked the idea. Their service users enjoy outdoor activities, and they recently had an influx of elderly people joining their events who wished to have activities strictly meant for them, so we started to work on the thesis topic and the workshops.

The targeted group is immigrant women aged 55 and above residing in Finland. We settled for this age group based on our discussions with our working life partner and the literature explained in the Key Concepts chapter. Some participants have lived in Finland for many years, while others recently moved to Finland. In addition to the immigrant background and age, the participants were united because they all desired to get in touch with nature. Dealing with the issue on a concrete level through practical exercises is helpful for elderly immigrants (Säikkä, 2018, p.13). This creates an opportunity for us to render enough assistance to each participant; hence, the maximum selection of 10 participants.

As a team, we had multiple meetings during spring 2022-spring 2023, where the three of us discussed the workshops. The aim was to plan, develop, and implement a new pilot project related to nature and wellbeing for the NGO. We prepared for different outcomes and scenarios as thoroughly as we could. After each workshop, we had a brief discussion about our workshop and if there was anything we needed to consider for the next workshop (any changes, any adjustments, or anything else that could be important to know for the next workshop). We communicated openly, listened to each other, and gave everybody equal opportunities to have a say in the planning process.

5.1.1 Planning with our working life partner

To ensure that our plans aligned with our working life partners, we met with them during the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. During the meetings, we discussed, for example, what the workshops will entail. We also got valuable feedback from them about their elderly clientele and what practices with them would be helpful, like meeting in central locations and traveling to the workshops together. The communication with our working life partner was through Teams and phone. To clarify how our planning process proceeded with our working life partner, we made a table (TABLE 3) that shows everything from when the initial contact was made to when the final thesis will be presented to them. The first column is for the date, the second presents the event (meeting or other event), and the third column gives a more detailed description of the topic discussed.

TABLE 3: meetings with the working life partner

Date:	Topic:	More:
Spring 2022	Initial contact	We contacted the NGO to ask if they were interested in working with us. We presented a general idea of what we had been thinking of doing.
Autumn 2022	Deciding on the first meeting.	The NGO suggested by email dates that suited them for a first meeting.
25.1.2023	First meeting.	During the first meeting we discussed the thesis topic, and the working life partners wishes and/or restrictions.
27.3.2023	Presenting our workshops to the clientele. Enrollment for the workshops started.	A PowerPoint presentation of the workshops. (A PowerPoint will not be added to the thesis, due to NGOs anonymity.) Flyer (Appendix 1) to be given to the participants who enrolled in the workshops. The flyer presents the days and locations of the workshops.
14.4.2023	Confirming enrollments.	Confirming how many participants, enrollment closed.
24.4.2023	Meeting 2	Meeting before the workshops to confirm that everything is on track.
27.4.2023	Workshop 1 Oodi	Will be further elaborated in chapter 5.2.1.
3.5.2023	Workshop 2 Roihuvuori Cherry Park	Will be further elaborated in chapter 5.2.2.
9.5.2023	Workshop 3 Vuosaari	Will be further elaborated in chapter 5.2.3.
22.5.2023	Meeting 3	Meeting after the workshops to go through the workshops and the outcome.

29.6.2023	Feedback	Getting feedback on our manuscript
2.10.2023	Sending our ready thesis to the working life partner.	The working life partners wished to have our thesis in their files so that they can get back to it if they apply for funding or plan events related to our thesis topic.

As the chart shows, we immediately made contact with our working life partner when we knew what topic we were interested in. During the first meeting, we presented our idea and got positive feedback from them. We presented the workshops and the program we had planned. We decided on the dates the workshops would be conducted as well as the time. The NGO gave us valuable information by sharing the participants timetables to ensure they would not clash with ours. The workshops were introduced to the NGO's service users with the help of a PowerPoint presentation. After the enrollment closed, the participants were handed a flyer with more detailed information about the workshops. By making a flyer, we wanted to ensure that it was clear to the participants where and when the workshops would occur.

During our second meeting, we confirmed that everything was on track, and we were excited to hear that the participants were looking forward to participating in our activities. The NGO confirmed that all the service users who enrolled in the workshops would participate. During the two weeks, we had effective communication with the NGO. After the three workshops, we had our third meeting with our working life partner. We went through each workshop in detail, explained what we observed, and gave insight into the workshops. We were pleased to hear that the NGO was happy with our work and saw the opportunity to use our findings in the future. We sent our manuscript to them after the seminar presentation and got their feedback at the end of June 2023.

5.1.2 SWOT analysis

Before our workshops started, we conducted a SWOT analysis to figure out the possibilities our workshops had and what could be the falling points. SWOT is a tool used in projects that measures the external and internal conflicts and forces in the project. SWOT is an abbreviation of words, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Applegarth & Posner, 2019, p.23). TABLE 4 presents the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats we found relevant before our workshops started.

TABLE 4: SWOT analysis done before the start of the workshops.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the participants know each other. • Peer support. • Multiple instructors.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No common language. • Not knowing the group beforehand.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know Finnish nature. • Meeting new friends. • Possibility for our working life partner to utilize the results.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsh weather. • Tight schedule. • Need to change the program. • No participants coming to the workshops. • No one wants to participate in the activities.

As the SWOT chart shows, as strengths we listed that the participants know each other prior to our workshops. Therefore, this could make it possible for the participants to feel peer support and encouragement from one another during the workshops. There will be three of us instructing the workshops, which can benefit the participants even more. This will allow us to help each participant if needed.

As a weakness, we mentioned the possible lack of communication between us and the participants, in case there is no common language, because we have yet to meet the participants in advance. The workshops offer opportunities such as getting to know Finnish nature and making new friends for the participants and the possibility for the working life partner to utilize the results in future activities. When it comes to the threats, we can minimize the threats by thorough planning. We plan different activities for the workshops so that there is a greater chance that all the participants will find some activity they like or can participate in. Unfortunately, we have no control over the weather. Due to weather uncertainties, the participants can only be advised to dress accordingly for each workshop.

5.2 Implementation

Implementation is the phase where the planning is coming to action, and the focus should be on achieving the objectives (Applegarth & Posner, 2019, p.82-83). As mentioned before, we organized three workshops in three different nature-related locations. This chapter focuses on describing those places, why they were chosen and all the activities that we organized. The common factor between the places was that they were all easily accessible and located in Helsinki. We intentionally chose places accessible by public transportation to ensure that getting to the locations would not be an issue. In addition, we chose to conduct these workshops in spring since the weather is usually warmer and there are more sunny days.

During the workshops, we encouraged the participants to learn about the Finnish diverse nature. We helped them to find ways to utilize it by offering a relaxation exercise in the park and planting flowers in the forest. The elderly immigrant women who participated in the workshops are women between the ages of 55 and 70 and have moved to Finland from various parts of the world. In the first workshop, we reviewed each participant's relationships with nature through play. Everyone got to tell us something that they liked about nature. A relationship with nature may often be related to an emotional connection with nature, the natural environment as part of an individual's identity, or a perception of belonging to

nature (Haverinen et al., 2021, p.19). After the last workshop in Uutela, we further discussed with the participants their nature relationship and whether they felt that the workshops were a terrific way to spend some time in nature.

5.2.1 Oodi

We chose Oodi Central Library surroundings at Töölönlahti as our first workshop location. We intended to start by introducing the participants to urban nature settings because of its low threshold. We wanted to highlight the diversity of nature in the first instance and raise the participants awareness about the possibilities inherent in urban nature. The surroundings of Oodi also provided the perfect setting for getting to know each other and playing outdoor games.

The duration of the first workshop was one and a half hours. The workshop started with an introductory round about us, the project objective, and the plan. After that, we filled in the consent form (Appendix 2) with the help of one of the Finnish-speaking participants, who we knew in advance would be participating in the workshops. After the official part, we moved on to planned activities.

The **first activity** was a name game where we introduced ourselves and shared one thing that we like about nature. The **second activity** was a nature statement game, where each of us made statements about nature, and if the participants agreed with the statement, they moved forward. This also generated much discussion about likes, such as planting and walking, and dislikes, winter and cold. The **third activity** was playing the traditional outdoor games Mölkkö (Picture 1) and Pétanque. Many participants had already played these games, so it was easy and fun for them. To conclude the day, we had a small reflective discussion at the end of the workshop, where we discussed the day's activities and told the participants more about the next workshop.



Picture 1. Traditional outdoor game Mölkky

5.2.2 Roihuvuori Cherry Park

Roihuvuori Cherry Park (Picture 2) was our second workshop location. The Roihuvuori Cherry Park was chosen because the cherry trees blossom in the springtime, and the park is at its finest. The blooming park provided good opportunities to use art-based methods with the participants by relaxing and drawing. We knew the trees would not be in full blossom at this time of the year, but we saw it as a terrific opportunity to be creative and use our imagination. The park was also chosen as the second location because it displayed another type of urban nature setting.

The duration of the second workshop was one and a half hours. We started the workshop by going to the location we had already picked. The **first activity** was a relaxation exercise. The relaxation exercise was played from the phone through an external speaker from the Mieli webpage (Mieli, 2022). The purpose was to find a relaxing place for everyone through relaxation. Relaxation helps the body to recover by reducing draining conditions of tension. Sleep and rest are of higher, more profound, and longer-lasting quality. Performance and general wellbeing will rise, and a calming metabolism will occur. The capacity to unwind might also momentarily alleviate stressful situations or sleep deprivation. (Mieli, 2022)

We had planned that the second activity would be to draw a picture of a dream place, but the weather was harsh. We had made an alternative game plan in readiness for any unpleasant weather conditions, and this came in handy. The **second activity** was walking in the park and the surrounding area. The participants themselves suggested walking in the park, so we made some changes to the program because of the requests. We familiarized ourselves with the park's surroundings and walked in the forest area behind the park. The participants enjoyed the walk and wanted to stay longer, but we had to head back to our original spot because of our time limit and the weather. '

Lastly, our **third activity** was making a circle among the cherry trees, and everyone either showed a picture of their dream place from their phones or told us about their place. The participants were excited to share different pictures of them in nature. After having our discussions, we told them more about our program for the next workshop and ended the day.



Picture 2. Roihuvuori Cherry Park

5.2.3 Uutela

Our last workshop location was in Uutela, Vuosaari. We got to visit the Skata farm that The Finnish Blue Ribbon currently uses for their nature-based activity, Vihreä Veräjä. The purpose was to acquaint participants with the wild nature; in this case, it meant a Finnish forest located near the city with proximity to the sea. The purpose of the last workshop was to offer the participants the possibility to enjoy nature's peace and silence and focus on their wellbeing for a while, away from all the hustle of the city, and just enjoy being together. We chose Uutela because we wanted to show that wild nature can be found near home and does not require hours of traveling.

The duration of the third and final workshop was four hours. Since we knew the walk from the closest bus stop to Skatan tila would be longer, we decided to start the workshop with a small break at the Uutela hut (Picture 3). We had coffee and tea by the fire in the hut. After that, we started with the activities. The **first activity** was conducted by the ocean. We walked to the shore, where everybody was instructed to collect a stone. The participants were instructed to project all their worries and sorrows onto the stone they chose and, when ready, throw it in the ocean. The symbolic meaning of this exercise was to let go of all the negativities by removing them from one's mind. When we started our first activity and walked to the sea, we saw many exciting things, such as a snake, and the discussion flowed well. The participants were eager to learn about the animals in the forest, eatable berries, and mushrooms, and we discussed Everyone's rights (Metsäkeskus, n.d.). Everyone's rights give anyone the right to walk in nature and use it freely and without payment, regardless of who owns the land. There shouldn't be any disruptions due to any reason. Some of Everyone's rights are laid down in law and some are based on the customs and traditions of the country. (Metsäkeskus, n.d.).

Some of everyone's rights are laid down in law and some are based on the customs and traditions of the country. On the way back to the hut, the participants showed much interest in the berries, mushrooms, and wild herbs that can be collected from the forest.

The **second activity** was a potluck at the hut. Everybody brought something to eat or drink. During the potluck, everybody had the chance to chat, warm up if needed, and sit down to rest. This setting was ideal for conversations and chatting. The **third activity** was planting flowers and herbs. Everybody got the opportunity to plant a flower and two types of herbs and take them home as a reminder that nature can be found everywhere. The activity ended in a reflection and discussion session in the Skata farm by the fire, where we discussed the entire workshop, the day in Uutela, and the general feeling the participants had about the workshop.



Picture 3. Uutela hut

6 FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

This chapter will review the evaluation and the participants feedback from the workshops. Firstly, each workshop will be evaluated separately, and the participants feedback will be presented. Secondly, the evaluation of the SWOT analysis will be explained. This will also help us to evaluate if the SMART objectives were met, hence why the objectives are presented last.

Our thesis is a development project. We operated the workshops by using a client-oriented approach. We used participatory methods to evaluate the participants relationship with nature and how it developed. Participatory methods are team-building exercises where people participate together, and the threshold for participation is lowered. The aim is to create a positive atmosphere and trust between the group members. In participatory methods, everyone can influence the content or direction of the activity if they wish to do so. (KSL ry. & KSL-opintokeskus, 2017, p.6.)

Observation was a valuable tool for us as well. Observation is a data acquisition method where human activities and behavior are monitored and observed (Jyväskylän yliopisto, 2015). During the workshops, we observed the participants facial expressions, gestures, way of talking, and how they participated in activities while spending time in nature. While observing, we made minor changes to our workshops to ensure they would be successful and enjoyable. We got valuable information about how to go forward while observing.

We used self-reflection as one evaluation method. Trusting one's expertise and experience is one of the central goals of self-reflection. It allows looking at the situation with new views and ways of thinking. In self-reflection, a person strives to comprehend the meanings that come from their experience through interpretation during reflection. These meanings are derived from sensory observations and mental representations created in guiding settings. (Ketola, 2010, p.16) After each workshop, we individually evaluated our input and actions. We reflected on

what worked and what could have been done differently. We used SWOT analysis as the basis of our evaluation to reach our SMART objectives.

We collected feedback from the participants during the workshops and after each workshop. Using participatory methods helped us collect participant feedback through conversations, open-ended questions, and leading the discussion. Open-ended questions allow clients to expand on their answers or provide more details about the problems that motivated them to seek help. Clients are encouraged to speak more freely and openly about the problems by using open-ended questions. (Blando, 2010, p.39). According to our working life partner, their service user's literacy skills were unknown. Therefore, we decided from the beginning to collect feedback only orally because we were unaware of each participant's literacy.

6.1 Oodi

The first workshop that took place in Oodis' surroundings was a success. This was based on the participation outcome and activities going as planned. As feedback, the participants shared positive experiences with nature, highlighting, e.g., the calming effect of plants indoors and outdoors and walking in nature, of which walking in the forest was mentioned. Many participants brought up how the weather affects being outside; they preferred to be inside in winter and harsh weather. Based on previous studies, it has been established that Finland's climate affects the use of natural areas by immigrants, especially in winter, and outdoor activities are avoided due to slippery conditions and coldness (Faehnle, et al., 2010, p.44). This also primarily influenced why the workshops were organized in late spring; therefore, it was a good decision.

The workshop activities went as planned; the participants enjoyed the games we had planned, and the discussions were vivid. There was also room for improvement. We could have started the workshop after lunch. Even though we took breaks, some snack breaks would have been in order. After spending time with the participants, we modified the next workshop by starting it later.

6.2 Roihuvuori Cherry Park

The second workshop in Roihuvuori Cherry Park was a good learning experience. Participants were eager and happy to participate, but unfortunately, the chilly weather and rain affected their willingness to participate in the planned activities; hence, we had to make some changes. However, the intention was that the experience would be positive and joyful for everyone; therefore, we were more than happy to modify the program. As mentioned earlier by Jokela & Uusitalo (2019), sharing nature experiences and community spirit is essential for many immigrant women. We noticed that the participants enjoyed each other's company and being together. After the relaxation exercise, the participants courageously told us that they were feeling cold and would prefer it if we could go for a walk. We needed to consider their wishes and needs according to the NGO's approach. They expressed excitement about revisiting the Roihuvuori Cherry Park when the trees fully blossom.

The location was perfect since the bus dropped us right in front of the park. We did not have to walk much to get to the park. We needed to find a spot where the participants could sit; therefore, we found a place at the top of the park under the trees. We also thought the shade would help us if it started to rain. We could only do some of what we had planned, but we thought about the risks beforehand, such as harsh weather. We knew how to maneuver if the weather would be harsh. The participants surprised us when they suggested walking before we could start our program fully. They had even more energy than we anticipated since we thought they might be tired after having their gymnastics class just before our workshop. Unfortunately, our workshop got cut short because of the harsh weather; however, they participated in the activities to the best of their ability. They showed us cooperation skills and patience and even encouraged us with their positive comments about the workshops.

6.3 Uutela

The third workshop was in Skata farm, Uutela, Vuosaari. The weather was sunny and warm, so we were up to a good start. While drinking the morning coffee at the hut, the participants excitement was evident throughout our initial introductory session. They were keen on knowing more about our planned activities. We used our phones to show pictures when we could not explain something well enough; for example, when talking about nettles, we showed a picture of the nettle and how it is spelled in Finnish, and they translated it on their phones to their native languages. This advocated the low threshold for our way of working. During the potluck, we continued our exciting discussions, and the participants shared that they have had an enjoyable day and would like to participate more in events like this.

Lastly, we sat by the fire in Skatan tila and discussed the workshops and nature in general. The participants showed genuine interest in wild and urban nature, and it was clear that it is an integral part of their lives. As mentioned before, Jokela & Uusitalo (2019) stated that previous studies show that peer support is important for immigrants when getting to know nature. One of the participants emphasized that she likes to walk in the forests but does not like to go alone since she thinks it is scary. She only goes with her friends or family. Thus, she enjoyed the day in Uutela.

While summarizing the workshops and asking for feedback, the participants said they enjoyed all our previous workshops; however, Uutela was their favorite. The participants had become familiar with us during our workshops; therefore, they were opening up to us. The atmosphere felt like it was a safe space for everyone. As time passed, our conversations got even deeper while sitting by the fire. We were happy to see how excited they got while sharing their stories and participating in our activities. Overall, the day in Uutela was a great end to our nature workshops.

6.4 Evaluating the SWOT analysis

Before the workshops began, we used SWOT analysis as a method to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats our workshops might encounter. In this chapter, we will reflect on the outcome of the workshops with the original SWOT assessment we made. TABLE 5 evaluates the original strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats after the workshops.

TABLE 5: SWOT analysis done after the workshops.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the participants knew each other. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Familiarity among the participants proved to be an advantage for the success of the workshops. This was useful in all three workshops.</i> • Peer support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>This was seen as a great strength in all three workshops, and it lowered the threshold to participate.</i> • Multiple instructors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>This was useful in all three workshops. We were able to help the participants equally.</i>
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No common language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Language disparity between the participants and us was not a major hurdle.</i> • Not knowing the group beforehand. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Lack of familiarity about the group beforehand poised not to be a challenge. The group dynamics worked seamlessly.</i>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know Finnish nature. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Participants got to know diverse nature in all three workshops and gained multiple new experiences.</i> • Meeting new friends. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Since all the participants in the group knew each other beforehand, this was not a viable opportunity. Meeting new people (us instructors) on the other hand was.</i> • Possibility for our working life partner to utilize the results. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Our working life partner saw an opportunity to utilize our workshops and findings in the future.</i> - <i>Opportunity for a new project for elderly service users.</i>

Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsh weather. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>We experienced harsh weather during Roihuvuori workshop. The participants were cold; therefore, we modified the initial program.</i> • Tight schedule. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Organizing three workshops in two weeks was not a threat due to proper planning.</i> • Need to change the program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>This was realized during Roihuvuori workshop. The participants suggested that we could take a walk around the park instead of the initial program.</i> • No participants coming to the workshops. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>This did not prevail.</i> • No one wants to participate in the activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>This did not prevail.</i>
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The strengths we evaluated were that some participants already knew each other beforehand. It became apparent that peer support was crucial for the participants. This was a great strength throughout all three workshops, and it lowered the threshold for the participants to participate in the activities. As mentioned, participants enjoyed each other's company by coming together and exploring nature. This also emphasized the importance of peer support. An additional strength was that there were three instructors. Right after the first workshop, we realized that this was important. We had more resources and time to help the participants when needed. This also allowed us to have more backup plans for unforeseen circumstances like sickness.

As we evaluated, the weakness that stuck out the most was that we did not share a common language with the participants. During the workshops, we realized that this was not a problem. Participants tried their best to explain their thoughts. Some participants used their mobile phones to help with translations. One weakness we considered was that we did not know the participants before our

workshops. However, as future social service professionals, we acted professionally and dialogically in interaction situations, and we were able to create a confidential atmosphere, and everyone participated in good spirits. Luckily, the participants were open and gladly participated in the activities.

Evaluating the opportunities, participants gained multiple new experiences by visiting three different nature locations. Even though the participants knew each other before the workshops, they learned more about each other and deepened their friendships. For our working life partner, this was a terrific opportunity to utilize our workshops and findings in the future and to start a new nature project for the NGO.

We minimized the possible threats impacting our workshop through planning and risk evaluation. One threat, harsh weather, was one that we could not impact. The harsh weather was only a minor setback in the Roihuvuori Cherry Park, where we had to alter the program. We had listed altering the program as a threat, but we could turn it into our group's strength due to proper planning and backup plans. A tight schedule was a threat since we had a schedule to keep. With proper planning and scheduling, we did not perceive it as a threat.

6.5 Evaluating the SMART objectives

We will evaluate the objectives and explain the outcome to ensure that the SMART objectives were met. This thesis has two objectives that will be evaluated separately. Our first objective (TABLE 1) was to introduce the Finnish nature and its versatility.

The SPECIFIC objective was to introduce the diverse Finnish nature to elderly immigrant women by offering three workshops in three locations. The objective was met in every workshop due to the number of participants and the success of every workshop. As a success, we define the positive feedback we got, the participants eagerness to participate in the activities, and the overall atmosphere. We were able to introduce three diverse locations and organize three workshops.

The MEASURABLE objective was that the workshops were planned and pre-scheduled with the NGO, our working life partner. The objective was met in every workshop. The cooperation and communication went well, and the schedule was kept.

The ATTAINABLE objective was to organize the workshops in commutable locations with low-threshold activities. The objective was met in every workshop. Before each workshop, we met at a central meeting point and went together to the workshop destination so everyone could find the place. All the activities were easy to participate in (simple rules, explained in Easy Finnish) since they did not require any previous experience. All our functions were planned inclusively, making it easy for the participants to participate in the activities. There was a short walk to the workshop spots, we had breaks, and we chose places with benches.

The REALISTIC objective was the need for the workshops. The objective was met. The NGO saw a need for the workshop series and had service users who would benefit from it. Participants brought it up several times that they had an enjoyable time. Peer support was seen as a great strength since it was easier for the participants to discuss even serious topics with peers of the same age and gender.

The TIME-BOUND objective was the actual workshop days. The plan was to have the workshops on three occasions: Oodi 27.4.2023, Roihuvuori 3.5.2023, and Uutela 9.5.2023. The objective was met. All workshops were held on the agreed dates.

Our second objective (TABLE 2) was to experience positive emotions in the Finnish nature.

The SPECIFIC objective was to have a client-oriented approach. The objective was met. We followed the NGO's way of working through client orientation. The participants needs were met, and alterations like modifying the program in the workshop in Roihuvuori were done.

The MEASURABLE objective was to ask the participants for feedback after each workshop. We needed to facilitate the group and observe the participants to collect feedback. The objective was met in each workshop. We asked for feedback after each workshop. We observed the participants gestures, body language, and facial expressions. We facilitated the group and directed the conversations through open-ended questions.

The ATTAINABLE objective was to organize low-threshold activities and be flexible. The objective was met in each of the workshops. The activities were simple and did not require previous knowledge of the activity. We were flexible and made necessary adjustments.

The REALISTIC objective was to create an inclusive and encouraging setting by being professional, open, and supportive. This objective was met in all three workshops. We made a safe and inclusive atmosphere by being professional and promoting opportunities for participants participation in diverse nature settings.

The TIME-BOUND objective was the actual dates for the workshops. The plan was to have the workshops on three occasions: Oodi 27.4.2023, Roihuvuori 3.5.2023, and Uutela 9.5.2023. The objective was met. All workshops were held on the agreed dates.

7 ETHICS AND RELIABILITY

One of the most vital principles in the social sector is ethics. It can be considered that the entire social service work is based on ethics and human rights as well as promoting human wellbeing (Talentiä ry, 2005, pp.5-7). The following chapter will review how ethics were considered in our workshops and how we created reliability for our work as future social service professionals.

We familiarized ourselves with the research ethics regarding research with human participants, such as the participants right to choose and refuse to participate in any research. (Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK, 2019.) Even though this thesis is project-based, we found some ethical aspects that could be implemented in this thesis as well. In practice, this meant that since we were unsure about the participants reading and writing skills, we told them orally in Easy Finnish who we are, what we do, and for what purpose.

We collected consent forms (Appendix 2) from our workshop participants at the beginning of the first workshop to ensure they understood what we were doing. We aimed to act sensitively, and the premise of all activities was confidentiality. Participants knew they had the right to participate, as well as to refuse to participate. As we mentioned, we wanted participation to be as easy and positive as possible so that the workshops would be a positive experience for the participants by promoting equality and diversity. It was also our first time meeting the participants, so we wanted to ensure it was a joyful experience for everyone and that everyone's needs were considered.

We were careful about any information we shared about our participants in our thesis since they are service users of our working life partner, and we wanted them to remain anonymous. We also considered using photos in the thesis; therefore, we considered the participants consent and willingness to appear in photos. We resorted to only taking pictures of the areas we visited rather than any pictures of where the participants would appear. We also had to assess carefully what information we would give about our working life partner. In the end, we

decided not to share the name of the working life partner since we wanted to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

When assessing the quality of our project, validity and reliability needed to be considered. One factor that impacts reliability is the grammar used in the thesis. It is essential to use professional language, correct spelling mistakes, avoid repetition, and use the right referencing style. For a thesis to be reliable, there needs to be consistency with what is written. (Middleton, 2019.) We ensured our thesis was clear, followed the guidelines, and was consistent throughout the thesis.

We have familiarized ourselves with the reliability of development work according to the Diak guidelines. When considering if the development project is reliable, aspects like documentation and methods are assessed. (Libguides, 2020) The development process was well documented, from the idea stage (idea paper) to the final product (thesis). The workshops were further documented from the need stage to the evaluation stage. With a client-oriented approach, the participants and their wishes were at the center of all our activities. Our working life partner and their wishes were considered. The chosen methods to assess the workshops and collect the feedback were valid, considering the participants' literacy was unknown to us. We wanted to provide low-threshold activities; thus, we did not want filling in evaluation forms to be the reason for not participating.

We further familiarized ourselves with the Diak guidelines about the validity of development work. The results' validity tells us how accurately and generally applicable they are, how well the concepts have been operationalized, and how they relate to the phenomena that are the subject of the investigation. (Libguides, 2020) Our objectives were to acquaint elderly immigrant women with Finnish nature and its versatility and to experience positive emotions. The outcomes of the workshops were positive, and nature evoked positive emotions among the participants. The findings align with research presented in Chapter 3.1., showing nature's positive impact on wellbeing. The methods used to evaluate the workshops were correct and justified in Chapter 6.

8 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This thesis process was a unique learning experience for all of us. Each of us gained new experiences and improved our professional skills. We got to use our expertise equally while planning and implementing the activities, and we were all seen as valuable group members. Even though we had been working together successfully during our studies, this was the first time we facilitated this target group. However, we reached our shared goal as a group, and the cooperation was smooth and enjoyable. Furthermore, it was an exciting process overall. We met some challenges, like harsh weather and lack of common language with the participants, but we found solutions to the issues at hand.

While conducting our workshops, we could put the theories we had learned during our studies into practice. We now better understand professional competence, working with diverse clients, cultural diversity, inclusiveness, professional ethics, and project work. We know the importance of time management, risk assessment, creating back up plans and flexibility. It was a good learning experience and strengthened our professional skills and competencies for future social service professional careers. In the following three sections, we analyze our individual professional development.

Hanna - This thesis process has been an exciting and unique experience towards my professional identity. It has developed my skills as a social service professional. Authoring this thesis and especially the workshops have put into practice the essential skills I have learned during my studies that are needed as a social service professional. I have especially internalized ethical competence and competence in social client work and what it means in practice. The planning and implementation of the workshops and the cooperation with the working life partner have given me confidence for my future career in the social service sector. This journey has brought me closer to nature as well, and nature-based methods in social services would be something I would like to develop in my future career. Nature and its welfare effects should be used more in the social sector. The cooperation between the three of us has been pleasant and smooth, and we have

experienced many memorable moments while writing and planning the thesis together.

Susanna - This entire thesis process is a professional journey that has only just begun. I have put into practice what I have learned in theory during my studies. By authoring this thesis and conducting the workshops, I learned the importance of confidentiality and anonymity, both important terms in social work. When both are considered, there is room for trust and openness in the activities and discussions. I also got insight into what a project in the field of social work could look like: a need, planning, justifying, executing, and evaluating. Working with an NGO also developed my professional understanding of how a thesis (in this case, ours) could impact their activities in the future. Nature-related workshops and their impact on the client's wellbeing should be considered, and I hope it is something I can work on in the future. Writing and organizing the workshops gave me a good insight into how vital teamwork is, and luckily, it came easily in our group. We respected each other and valued each other's input. We all contributed equally to the writing and the entire thesis process.

Maryama - This thesis process has been quite an adventure. Since it was my first time authoring a thesis, I had no prior expectations going into it. I quickly realized that numerous factors are at play when authoring a thesis. For instance, in our case, it was the NGO and the participants. Luckily, our collaboration with our working life partner was smooth and effective. The workshops made me understand different participants and their needs. This process allowed me to be a great listener and, most importantly, to develop problem-solving skills. I also got to use different theories I learned during my studies. As a social service worker, everything must be based on a client-oriented approach. This is what we prioritized throughout our three different workshops. I enjoyed using nature-based methods and hope to use them soon. I observed the participants' reactions and how it caused them to reflect on prior times they had spent in nature, particularly in their home nations. One thing I was confident about while going through this process was my team members. Luckily, we have worked together multiple times prior; therefore, there were not any surprises. Effective communication, respect for one another, and a positive environment prevailed. This is crucial to have

while dealing with others. My teammates encouraged me to work harder, which allowed me to develop throughout the process.

9 DISCUSSION

In this last chapter, we will summarize the outcomes of our workshops and discuss how our project could be used in the social sector in the future. This thesis aimed to introduce the versatility of Finnish nature to elderly immigrant women and to help them find ways to experience positive emotions in nature. To ensure that the aims would be met, we used SMART objectives. The SMART objectives helped us reach our goal, and all the SMART objectives were met, further discussed in chapter 6.5. We also evaluated the SWOT analysis to determine the possible falling points and risks our thesis could encounter.

We organized three workshops in three locations with different activities. We were flexible with the activities, ensured a good atmosphere, and used a client-oriented approach. We considered the participants' wishes and aimed to make the workshops enjoyable for everyone. However, we discovered some things that we could have improved. For example, we could have planned a lunch break since the workshops were during lunchtime. Unfortunately, the chilly weather during the second workshop was nothing we could change, but it was a good learning experience for us on how flexibility is an important quality.

As mentioned earlier, the participants enjoyed the workshops and shared that they would prefer more nature-related activities. The importance of togetherness was also emphasized since moving around in nature alone was found to be scary. We recommend to our working life partner to organize nature-related activities for elderly immigrant women since it was something that they wanted. It would be beneficial if the working life partner would organize an event or course where the women would learn more about Finnish nature, beneficial vegetation, and Everyone's rights since the interest of it was brought up in the conversations. Our project proved the importance of nature-related activities for elderly immigrant women.

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3.1. the elderly immigrants might be excluded from services, and providing more information about possible services could

encourage them to get the services they need and are entitled to. Therefore, similar projects like our nature workshops aimed merely at elderly immigrant women with the same age, gender, and similar background could emphasize the importance of peer support as well as lower the threshold to participate in activities, and at the same time, promote movement in nature and improvement the wellbeing of the elderly immigrant women.

The social sector could benefit from similar nature projects in the future for diverse service user groups when considering the wellbeing effects nature offers, which this thesis also emphasizes. Co-operation with municipal services and Non-Governmental Organizations could raise awareness of the service system generally with elderly immigrants and promote nature's wellbeing effects widely with service users from different ages and backgrounds. Further research on nature's wellbeing effects on elderly immigrant women in Finland is highly encouraged since there is not much literature about this topic.

We hope that our thesis gives insight into how nature and its multiple opportunities can help people bond and have a good time, hence bettering their personal wellbeing. Further, we wish that our thesis showed that nature is more than just the wild forest located hours away; it is also the forests in the cities, manufactured parks, and the plants at home. We hope that in the future the social sector will organize low threshold nature-related activities that prioritizes client-oriented approach, to further encourage service users to enjoy the wellbeing effects the nature has to offer.

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APPENDIX 1. Flyer

LUONTO

Workshopit

27.4. OODI

Tapaaminen klo.11
Rautatien torin Kompassitaso
(metron liukuportaiden yläpuolella)

3.5. KIRSIKKAPUISTO

Tapaaminen klo.11
Herttoniemen metroasema
R-kioskin edessä

9.5. UUTELA, SKATAN TILA

Tapaaminen klo. 10.00
Vuosaaren metroasema



APPENDIX 2. Consent form

Diak

Kirjallinen suostumus opintokokonaisuuteen kuuluvan tehtävän hyödyntämisestä tutkimus- ja kehittämistoiminnassa.

Opintokokonaisuuden ja tehtävän nimi

Res 1-4, Bachelor`s thesis

Vastuuhenkilö/henkilöt

Susanna Alabi, Maryama Jama, Hanna Viuhko-Rami

Tulokset tullaan julkaisemaan kehittämisraportissa/ tutkimuksellisessa artikkelissa/ hankkeen jatkokehittämistyössä.

Minulle on selvitetty yllä mainitun tehtävän tarkoitus ja se, että kirjallista materiaalia tullaan käyttämään Diakin tutkimus- ja kehittämistyössä. Olen tietoinen siitä, että tutkimukseen osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista. Olen myös tietoinen siitä, että henkilöllisyyteni jää vain tutkijan/tutkijoiden tietoon.

Päiväys

Tutkittavan allekirjoitus, nimenselvennys ja opiskelijanumero
