



55+ Learning, Methodologies and its Effects on Workplace and Beyond

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Abstract

The age of population is increasing at a rapid space. While this is true, the older adults are not actively engaged in learning and learning activities. The reasons for this are multiple and complex. Among them are prior expectations, use or neglect of use of pedagogy for older learners (also referred as geriatric pedagogy or andragogy), presence or absence of empathy, the degree of use of methods and lifestyle patterns that combat the impending decline of cognitive abilities and self-confidence by the learner. This paper examines the effects of lifelong learning activities on aging along with the development of ability to learn as we age.

Based on research, old age is happier and healthier if seniors are engaged in learning activities. It improves self confidence, brings joy and removes segregation from surrounding society. Lifelong learning is shown to slow down dementia and improve memory.

University of Helsinki Palmenia is developing pedagogy specifically aimed at senior learners. In case with seniors, we have found the recognition of the existing skills and capabilities of the learner conducive to learning. When the approach is appropriate, learning occurs.

University of Helsinki Palmenia Centre of Continuing Education pilot project on increasing and improving opportunities for lifelong learning and active citizenry among senior citizens is conducted in a remote area of Finland. This village has a senior population over 60%. The pedagogical approach used for engaging the senior population in lifelong learning activities is to build upon and valorizing what they already know. Successful engagement in lifelong learning, civic activities and volunteer work has been shown to bring joy to the lives of seniors leading segregated lives in this area. In addition to improving their general wellbeing, it has introduced a feeling of pride of their own heritage and region. Consequently, this pilot has succeeded in enforcing the feeling of "I matter" with this target population.