



Outdoor environments for elderly people with different cultural backgrounds

– An interview study based on individual experiences

Lisa Asp

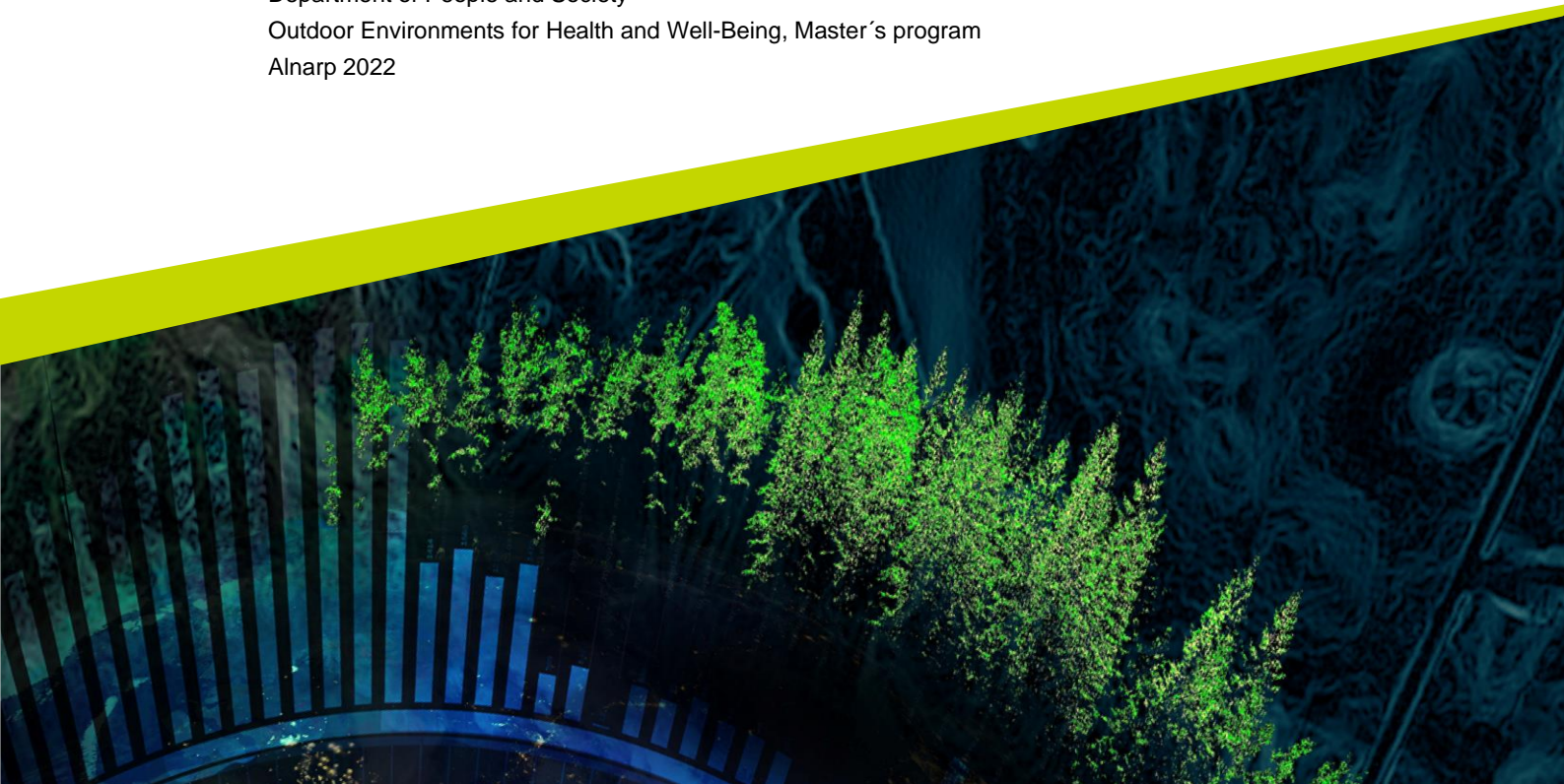
Master Thesis (30 hp)

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU

Department of People and Society

Outdoor Environments for Health and Well-Being, Master's program

Alnarp 2022



Outdoor environments for elderly people with different cultural backgrounds

-An interview study based on individual experiences.

Utemiljöer för äldre människor med olika kulturella bakgrunder

-En intervjustudie baserad på individuella erfarenheter.

Author's name Lisa Asp

Supervisor: Anna Bengtsson, SLU, Department of People and Society
Examiner: Elizabeth Marcheschi, SLU, Department of People and Society

Credits: 30
Level: A2E
Course title: Master Project in Landscape Architecture
Course code: EX0858
Programme/education: Outdoor environments for health and well being
Course coordinating dept: Department of People and Society

Place of publication: Alnarp
Year of publication: 2022

Keywords: health promoting landscape architecture, intercultural design, perception, place attachment, nursing home

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Department of People and Society

Publishing and archiving

Approved students' theses at SLU are published electronically. As a student, you have the copyright to your own work and need to approve the electronic publishing. If you check the box for **YES**, the full text (pdf file) and metadata will be visible and searchable online. If you check the box for **NO**, only the metadata and the abstract will be visible and searchable online. Nevertheless, when the document is uploaded it will still be archived as a digital file.

If you are more than one author you all need to agree on a decision. Read about SLU's publishing agreement here: <https://www.slu.se/en/subweb/library/publish-and-analyse/register-and-publish/agreement-for-publishing/>.

☒ YES, I/we hereby give permission to publish the present thesis in accordance with the SLU agreement regarding the transfer of the right to publish a work.

☐ NO, I/we do not give permission to publish the present work. The work will still be archived and its metadata and abstract will be visible and searchable.

Abstract

There is a lot of solid research on how to design the outdoor environments in nursing homes to benefit the users general well being and place attachment. In this thesis the emphasis lies on the experiences of elderly people who identify themselves with a distinct culture and are deeply involved and attached with its traditions and beliefs. The aim is to understand how culturally influenced experiences can be used to promote a sense of place attachment, specifically a sense of continuity, for elderly people through an adapted design of the outdoor environment. This study has shown that culture is an important factor that should be included in the planning of the outdoor environments in nursing homes to benefit the resident's wellbeing. To gain an awareness on how peoples background might have influenced their perception of their daily environment and understand their individual cultural needs and wishes, an interview study has been conducted. Five qualitative interviews have been used as a basis for a result that is divided into three steps: individual experiences, common themes that are valid for the whole group of participants and finally a design framework. The common themes explored are attitudes, memories, needs, wishes, traditions and holistic view. This study shows that there are two different reasons why considering cultural variations when planning an outdoor environment for elderly people is beneficial: 1) Perception is influenced by experiences and upbringing and affects our feelings and impression of a place. 2) Humans have a need to be seen as who they are, including their cultural background. As a result, a design framework has been created that highlights four variables that are considered important to take into account when planning for people with different backgrounds: Variation, flexibility, influence, and education. The essentiality of those was discussed by taking support in existing evidence and theories. Further these variables were exemplified using the knowledge gained from the interviews.

Keywords: health promoting landscape architecture, intercultural design, perception, place attachment, nursing home

Abstrakt

Det finns omfattande forskning om hur man kan utforma utomhusmiljöer på äldreboenden för att gynna de boendes generella välbefinnande och platsanknytning. I denna avhandling ligger tyngdpunkten på erfarenheter från äldre som identifierar sig med en specifik kultur och är djupt involverade och knutna till dess traditioner och övertygelser. Syftet är att förstå hur kulturellt påverkade upplevelser kan användas för att främja en känsla av platsanknytning, särskild en känsla av kontinuitet, på äldreboenden genom en anpassad utformning av utemiljön. Denna studie har visat att kultur är en viktig faktor som bör ingå i planeringen av utomhusmiljöerna på äldreboenden, för att uppnå ett ökad välmående. För ökad medvetenhet om hur människors bakgrund kan påverka deras uppfattning om sin dagliga miljö och förstå deras individuella kulturella behov och önskemål, har en intervjustudie genomförts. Fem kvalitativa intervjuer har använts som underlag för resultatet uppdelat i tre steg: individuella upplevelser, gemensamma teman som gäller för hela deltagargruppen, och slutligen ett designramverk. De gemensamma teman som utforskas är attityder, minnen, behov, önskemål, traditioner och helhetssyn. Denna studie visar att det finns två anledningar till att det är fördelaktigt att ta hänsyn till kulturella variationer när man planerar en utomhusmiljö för äldre: 1) Uppfattningen påverkas av upplevelser och uppväxt, vilket i sin tur påverkar våra känslor och intryck av en plats. 2) Människor har ett behov av att ses som den de är, inklusive deras kulturella bakgrund. Som ett resultat har ett designramverk skapats som lyfter fram fyra variabler som anses viktiga att ta hänsyn till vid planering för personer med olika bakgrund: Variation, flexibilitet, inflytande och utbildning. Det väsentliga i dessa diskuterades genom att ta stöd i befintliga bevis och teorier. Dessa variabler exemplifierades vidare med hjälp av kunskapen från intervjuerna.

Nyckelord: hälsofrämjande landskapsarkitektur, interkulturell design, perception, platsanknytning, äldreboende

Preface

Han hade lämnat bakom sig de människor han älskade, sitt språk som han vördade, sin stad som visserligen bedrog honom med alla turister men som han fortsatte att dyrka: dess torg och gränder, de enkla tavernorna där det doftade basilika och oregano. Han hade kort och gott lämnat allt som var hans liv och man frågade honom om han saknade solen.

Theodor Kalifatides

My journey to this research question was a long one. I have for many years known that I am interested in the relationship between mental health and the outdoors in care facilities.

I have a background in social work and at the different workplaces I have been I saw with my own eyes the importance of the outdoors. I tried to incorporate walks in the nature and gardening in my work with the people I cared for, and experienced positive changes in the wellbeing of the participants. As I started to do some reading and research I stumbled upon articles and books about the Alnarp rehabilitation garden, and similar projects within Sweden. This led me to study landscape architecture, and later chose environmental psychology as my master.

When it comes to elderly people and their bond to nature, I have personal experience of my late grandmother, who had dementia, but still could remember flowers and where they were placed in her garden. Even though it saddened her, that she was no longer able to take care of the garden, the flowers continued to be her holding point both in place and time. Place attachment is a topic that has interested me due to my living in a country that is not my home country. I have often noticed how culture/life philosophy reflects how we perceive situations and places in our everyday life and how some of these cultural conditions gain importance when your surrounding no longer share them. Even though I am not religious, some of the religious traditions from my childhood have formed me, and still are a part of my annual rhythm. Whenever I hold freshly picked chestnuts in my hand, I will remember the lantern walks we did in November to honour Saint Martin. Another memory is the smell of incense, that will still make me feel calm and a bit nostalgic. For me it is of great importance to convey some of these traditions to my children and thereby contain a connection to my own roots.

During contact with geriatric care facilities and during my internship at the National Board of housing, building, and planning the question of how varying cultural backgrounds will impact the sense of coherence and further the way we design care homes, and its outdoor spaces has come up frequently. I felt an urge to learn more about that and use the possibilities a master thesis evokes to learn more on the subject.

Table of contents

List of figures.....	10
1. Introduction.....	11
1.1. Background	12
1.2. Problem formulation	13
1.3. Aim.....	14
1.4. Limitation	14
2. Theory.....	15
2.1. Important terms and their meaning in this thesis.....	15
2.1.1. Culture and religion.....	15
2.1.2. Nature	16
2.1.3. Perception.....	16
2.1.4. Place attachment	16
2.2. How culture influences our perception of nature and place attachment	18
2.2.1. Cultural influence on perception	18
2.2.2. Place attachment, symbolism and age	19
2.2.3. Reasons to consider cultural differences when designing for elderly people	20
3. Method.....	22
3.1. Empirical phase	24
3.1.1. The selection of the participants	24
3.1.2. The interviews.....	25
3.2. Analytical phase	26
3.2.1. Analysis on an individual level	26
3.2.2. Analysis on a group level.....	27
3.3. Interpretive phase.....	27
3.3.1. The common themes	27
3.4. Theoretical phase	28
3.4.1. The design framework	28
3.5. Ethical consideration	29
4. Results.....	30

4.1.	Introduction to the individual experiences	30
4.2.	Common themes	33
4.2.1.	Attitudes	34
4.2.2.	Memories	36
4.2.3.	Needs and wishes.....	38
4.2.4.	Traditions	39
4.2.5.	Holistic view	40
4.3.	Design framework.....	41
4.3.1.	Variation.....	42
4.3.2.	Flexibility	43
4.3.3.	Influence	44
4.3.4.	Education	44
5.	Discussion.....	46
5.1.	Reflection on the individual experiences	46
5.2.	Reflection on the common themes	48
5.3.	Reflection on the design framework	51
5.3.1.	Variation.....	52
5.3.2.	Flexibility	53
5.3.3.	Influence	53
5.3.4.	Education	54
6.	Conclusion	56
6.1.	Further research	57
7.	References	58
	Acknowledgements.....	61
	Appendix 1	62

List of figures

<i>Figure 1. Methodical process description</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Figure 2. Three steps within the inductive approach of my results from small to wider validation range</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Figure 3. Structure of the results within the common themes</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Figure 4. Variables within the Design framework</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Figure 5. Illustration, an example for variation</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Figure 6. Illustration, an example for flexibility</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Figure 7. Illustration, an example for influence.....</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Figure 8. Illustration, an example for education.....</i>	<i>45</i>

1. Introduction

This thesis is based on a collection of individual stories about cultural influence on one's perception of nature and how those may differ depending on one's background. It also tries to find a way of implementing those differences in Swedish geriatric care to benefit the residents place attachment, without departing from the principle of inclusive/universal design.

While the first part of this thesis, the preface, explained my personal interest in the topic covered and why I consider it to be important, the background and problem formulation deals with why it is relevant even in a wider perspective.

In the theory section I explore relevant theories and research in environmental psychology, landscape architecture and religious studies. It starts with an explanation of how important terms are used in this study and how they are understood by the author. Further it lists factors on how culture influences our perception of nature and place attachment.

The next part of this thesis explains the methods that I used, starting with the empirical phase, the analytical phase, the interpretative- and finally the theoretical phase. The results are presented in different steps from individual experiences to common themes and finally concluding in a design framework valid for a wider group.

In the discussion I reflect upon my results by comparing them to some of the existing theories, introduced in the theory part of my thesis.

In this thesis religion and culture are used indistinguishably, as I noticed that in daily life those two are often woven together, and to differentiate between those two it would need another kind of study. The term culture is used as a unification between those two and can in this thesis be defined as a description of a particular group's characteristics and knowledge, including beliefs and traditions, that are passed down from generation to generation. Even if this is a simplification it appears to me as sufficient when exploring the aim of this study.

1.1. Background

In Sweden the number of elderly people that live in care facilities is rising, as well as the number of elderly people with mental health issues (Gifford, 2014). The number of people with another cultural background than the protestant Swedish is also increasing, due to a growing number of immigrants (Migrationsverket, 2021).

We know that it is a big adjustment and a source of stress to move to a care facility, which might lead to a weaker mental health. The social relations that one might have had become disrupted and get lost or change severely. (Scannell & Gifford, 2014)

One important factor in the promotion of one's wellbeing is nature. There is a wide range of evidence that shows that spending time outside and being exposed to fresh air, daylight, green views, and the potential for increased physical movement has a positive impact on our health and wellbeing. Especially on vulnerable groups, as the elderly, the benefits are apparent as one can see a reduction of stress and a better restoration of the patients, a greater personal development, and a stronger feeling of home (Whear, et al., 2014). People that are outside more often self-rated their health as better than people that would not visit the outdoors as frequently (Rappe, et al., 2006). Research has shown that the many positive sensory experiences nature gives leads to reduced pain, reduced stress, and overall increased satisfaction (Cooper Marcus & Sachs, 2014).

It is today of common knowledge that one's potential to combat stress and promote health depends on one's sense of coherency (Antonovsky, 1979). The more a person can comprehend, make sense of, or manage an experience or situation, the greater the individual's possibility to cope with the situation successfully and the lesser the experienced stress and mental illness. Therefore, the accessible environment needs to be meaningful and appropriate for the user (Eggertsen Teder, 2018).

This knowledge has led to a growing body of evidence that supports the incorporation of gardens and natural environments in geriatric care facilities and one can assume that gardens will be a stronger element of future care (Whear, et al., 2014). To achieve the best results, the outdoor environments need to be designed in a way that supports both the physical and mental needs of the user. Experiences and activities offered in the environment must be in harmony with the user's background and health (Stigsdotter & Grahn, 2002) but also provide a balance between challenges and comfort in the environment (Bengtsson, 2015) and a feeling of coherency (Cooper Marcus & Sachs, 2014).

If designed in the right way adapted environments surrounding care facilities can act as a support, and facilitate place attachment, as they make the most of people's remaining strength (Cooper Marcus & Sachs, 2014).

1.2. Problem formulation

According to the Swedish government, older people should as far as possible be able to continue living based on their individual identity and personality even on the day it becomes relevant with interventions from elderly care. In order to meet the need for dignity in this sense, there must be a conscious approach in elderly care that takes into account both the individual's need for a dignified life and an overall well-being (Värdighetsutredningen, 2008).

Fragile and older people are extremely dependent on the environment being adapted to their needs for it to be able to provide the desired health-promoting effects (Bengtsson, 2015).

In research so far, much effort has been put into investigating how to design an outdoor environment in nursing homes as inclusive as possible regarding different physical and cognitive needs. Knowledge about needs that promote the connection that derives from one's cultural background are, however, harder to find. Often the responsibility to contribute with cultural presupposed influences is placed on the staff. As their expertise seldomly lay in design, the most featured aspects are food and music that promote the different cultural backgrounds of the residents. In a description of person-centred care, food adaptations are mentioned as elements for adapting to the individual (Wijk, 2008).

Culture and environmental design are intimately related and therefore cultural differences must be considered when planning for health beneficial effects and design requirements (Altman, et al., 1980). Even Marcus and Sachs (2014) highlight the fact that a design intended for the elderly should be flexible and allow for modification over time, both when it comes to an adaption of physical challenges, but also individual needs. Given that many nursing homes in Sweden become increasingly multicultural, an understanding for subtle differences between cultural groups and how to express those in design would be useful, so that the residents can relate to their everyday environment.

1.3. Aim

The aim of this thesis is to gain an understanding of how insights of culturally influenced experiences can be used to promote a sense of place attachment, mainly its function of providing a sense of continuity.

To reach my aim for this thesis I need to 1) learn about individual cases where culture has formed peoples' experience with nature and thus had an influence on their place attachment, to see if I can find common themes that might be important for a larger group of people 2) develop a framework of how those common individual experiences could be used in designing outdoor environments for nursing homes.

Originally this thesis was meant to investigate how an adapted environment in a nursing home effects place attachment, but due to the global pandemic of COVID-19, it concluded in design suggestions through a design framework. The goal is to highlight that there is a variety of different aspects that can be useful to consider when designing outdoor environments for nursing homes.

A definition of how the term culture is used in this study can be found in the introduction and theory sections.

1.4. Limitation

I did not exclude any of the many cultures in this world actively, the people willing to be interviewed just identified themselves with the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith.

Regarding place attachment in this thesis, I focus mainly on the aspect of sense of continuity and coherence.

I am not trying to define design ideas that facilitate for any religious practise but find religiously influenced aspects that contribute to place attachment. It was my plan to only interview people living in care facilities, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions this was not possible. Furthermore, the amount of people I interviewed was limited, which affected the significance of the picture of what elements benefit the feeling of place attachment for people from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, I am not able to make a general hypothesis, my conclusions will be based on my study objects individual experiences.

Language barriers led to a couple of situations where I as the interviewer needed to interpret what was said, which obviously meant that my own understanding of the situation and cultural backpack played a wider role than anticipated.

2. Theory

This section will cover relevant theories and research in environmental psychology, landscape architecture and religious studies. The study is based on the assumption that culture affect one's perception. Further, one's perception affects place attachment and vice versa. The focus here lies on describing and defining aspects that are important in order to understand what people can experience when encountering a garden belonging to a nursing home, and how different backgrounds can influence those experiences. The importance of the existing of a garden space and its benefits on health, as well as arguments that strengthen the need of taking cultural aspects into account when designing those, are also stressed. In the last paragraph factors that have proven to be beneficial for place attachment in nursing homes without the cultural aspect are introduced. Those theories confirm that there might be a connection between culture, perception, place attachment and well-being and thus the validity of the aim and will act as a theoretical standpoint for the rest of the study.

2.1. Important terms and their meaning in this thesis

2.1.1. Culture and religion

Depending on how the terms culture and religion is used, they can mean different things. In daily life, at least within this study, I have noticed that those two are often woven together and used indistinguishably. For my aim it does not matter if the influence on perception is founded in mainly religious or cultural roots. Trying to differentiate between those two terms was found to be impossible and contra productive when interviewing people about their individual experiences. Therefore, in this thesis I use only the term culture and define it as a description of a particular group's characteristics and knowledge, including beliefs and traditions, festivities and foods, that are passed down from generation to generation. In the summary of the interviews and in some of the citations the term religion is used, as that was the word the participant had used.

2.1.2. Nature

The term nature in this study is used with a very wide meaning. It can be seen as a differentiation to manmade hard spaces and refers to the natural environments of an area, but also parks and other manmade green areas. In this study, however, the focus lays mainly on gardens and areas around ones living area. Gardens, places for cultivating and outdoor environments designed for special user groups are defined with respective term.

2.1.3. Perception

Perceptions are complex, meaningful experiences of objects and events (Mather, 2016). It generates information, not only of the aesthetics of the environment, but also its possibilities (Kaplan, 1988). Even though we look at the same things or experience the same situation, we perceive it differently, as perception always involves selection and filtering. The different backgrounds of the people involved in this study implicate, that they use different filters and therefore experience objects and events in multitude ways.

2.1.4. Place attachment

This is one of the major aspects used in this study. During our whole lifespan a safe and balanced attachment benefits our wellbeing, both physical and mental. Even if the nature of our attachments changes from primary caregivers during childhood years to other attachment objects, it does process even in adulthood (Gruneau Brulin, 2019). For this study it is important to be aware of the different characters place attachment can show. From being attached to a certain geographical site to using social memories tied to an object or symbol. To understand the influences of place attachment on elderly people, one must understand the basic theory behind it first.

Place attachment is the psychological theory behind what makes a house a home or a space a place. It tries to explain the subjective emotions we experience towards our surroundings (Altman & Low, 1992). No people experience a place the same way, and often it is even difficult to explain what characteristics of a place awoke our positive or negative emotions towards it. This placemaking, that forms our attachment with a place, happens during the interplay of people, their feelings, and the designed environment (Eggertsen Teder, 2018).

To continually form attachments serves as an evolutionary function as humans have a need to seek and maintain contact with perceptual objects, to form meaningful relationship experiences (Counted & Watts, 2019).

Scannell and Gifford (2014) have defined place attachment with a person, process, place framework, which gives insight to who, how and to what the attachment is related. The who describes the person attached and the nature of the attachment (individual or collective or both), the how describes our behaviour towards a place, how we express and experience our bond. The third element, what to, defines the place and its physical and social components.

There are three dimensions of place attachment: 1) The emotional attachment awakes positive feelings when going to or thinking of a place. 2) The cognitive attachment occurs when one is tied to a place because of knowledge about the place, fond memories or a belief that makes the place meaningful. Furthermore, one can want to pilgrimage to a place or try to create a new place that resembles an attachment place, which is called 3) the behavioural attachment. (Scannell & Gifford, 2014)

Place attachment can either have an individual or a collective origin, which means a place can be special to you either for personal reason, memories or personal history or it could be special for many people at the same time, for example due to it having a religious meaning (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). The attachment to a place can source in its social or physical qualities (Karlsson, 2001), which means that the place fulfils either your social or physical needs and wishes.

It is believed that place attachment serves different functions, this thesis focuses mainly on the sense of continuity (Scannell & Gifford, 2009). Places are more than just locations on a map, they are a dynamic context of social interaction that benefit wellbeing and a feeling of connectedness (Counted, 2019). When a place matches one's personal values, traditions and beliefs it is easier to connect to it (Scannell & Gifford, 2009). By this, the place bond helps to maintain a sense of identity and wellbeing, and to facilitate successful adjustments in old age. A sense of belonging gives meaning and security and support in times of difficulty, reduces stress, and benefits personal development (Wiles, et al., 2009).

The sense of continuity can be closely linked to the sense of coherence developed by Aaron Antonovsky. He found out, that the more a person is able to comprehend and manage a situation, as well as find meaning in it, the greater is the person's wellbeing and potential to cope with stress (Hammond & Niedermann, 2010). If you find clues that remind you of your past and help you connect to your culture in your surroundings (sense of continuity) it also gives you a stronger sense of coherence as it makes it easier to navigate within the pre-known aspects of the surroundings.

Both those theories confirm that an adaption of the everyday outdoor environment can be beneficial for wellbeing and stress resistance.

2.2. How culture influences our perception of nature and place attachment

2.2.1. Cultural influence on perception

There are two main theories on why we seem to prefer a certain type of environment. The first one has shown, that, regardless our background, there are some remarkable similarities in our perception and preference, possibly due to our common evolutionary heritage (Kaplan, 1988; Ulrich, 1999). It is known that people show an instinctive preference for landscapes that provide prospect and refuge opportunities. Even coherence and complexity are necessary in a moderate amount, but it is legibility and mystery that seems to influence perception most positively (Kaplan, 1988). As we have spent most of our evolutionary history in natural elements, we have learned which types of environments are good for us and offer us a greater chance of survival. We also have an inherent need for connection with our natural environment and the other forms of life within (van Heijgen, 2013).

On the other side, there are studies that confirm the preferences of nature depending on our upbringing and our culture (Adevi & Grahn, 2012). The type of place and landscape where we live in as children are the kinds of places where we feel most at home and tend to settle in even as adults. Many strong place bonds root in childhood or adolescence (Chawla, 1992). Even though there are some landscape qualities that we prefer due to evolution (Ulrich, 1999) people often prefer qualities connected to childhood landscapes. During our early years in life, we form an understanding of the world around us and learn how to interpret the meaning of our surroundings both emotionally and intellectually. Thereby landscape becomes transformed into symbols (Adevi & Grahn, 2012). Those symbols create mental filters that we later on use to make sense of our environments and to navigate within them. A mental filter is one type of cognitive distortion. It is a subjective way of thinking about us or the world around us. The brain has not enough capacity to analyse every stimulus, which leads us to mainly focus processing resources on pre-known features, objects, and events (Karlsson, 2001). The way we perceive landscape is always a combination of objective facts, memories, and expectations (Wöbse, 1982). When looking at a landscape our brain is drawn to the stimuli that it recognizes and can comprehend due to earlier experiences and knowledge. Humans have a capacity to hold on to about five larger groupings of information in their working memory. If one finds clues in the perceived environment, that match with one of those groupings, the comprehension process will be easier (Kaplan, 1988).

2.2.2. Place attachment, symbolism and age

Rowles (1983) suggests that there may be quite different ways of relating to place through the life course. He argues that, while older people may appear to have small or shrinking life worlds, their imaginations expand into spaces that are formed by nostalgia and even spatial, as they engage with experiences and events of friends and family far away (Wiles, et al., 2009). The connection to the past and the philosophical increases in meaning as you get older and taken out of your usual context. This kind of attachment is more than security seeking, it includes the need for identity formation.

In all the main cultures one can find descriptions of landscapes and natural settings that are of great symbolic value (Counted & Watts, 2019). For the Christians it may be the mountain Sinai or the river Jordan, in Hinduism the river Ganges is of great symbolic importance and Muslims have Mecca as a place that influences their traditions and culture. Those places become important to a whole group of people, who are enculturated with a set of values and beliefs which embody ideals (Altman, et al., 1980). They can even influence one's activities, as they invite to pilgrimage, traditional rites, and storytelling. Even places not as well known, can bring people together and radiate meaningfulness as they have a certain symbolic value, instantly understood by people belonging to this certain culture. One example can be holy houses, as churches, mosques, and temples. Even if one has not visited that particular place before, one can experience a feeling of belonging and coherence, as one knows what to expect, how to behave and can read the hidden symbolism (Gruneau Brulin, 2019). Those places have a significant effect on peoples physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being (Agyekum, 2019).

Sometimes the symbolism of a place is so strong, that even a picture of it or a souvenir can bring great comfort to the owner. In other cases, it does not even have to be a physical object that gives comfort or a feeling of coherence, singing a song, sharing a symbolic meal or the smell of herbs used in one's culture can fulfil this purpose (Counted, 2019). One can also find examples of differences in perceiving nature when looking at religious texts. One example is the different approach the Koran has on nature in comparison to the Christian view. Due to the Koran nature is being a reflection of God's words, which is regarded as well-organized and managed; consequently, it is important to take good care of nature, which in this circumstance means to cultivate wild landscapes, while the Christian point of view is more of an arcadian approach (Buijs, et al., 2009). When having this point of view, one advocates for a harmonious relationship between nature and humans, where the humans should care for, but try not to dominate nature. This kind of attachment bond, that persists even if a person must leave the place itself is a cultural sense of place, even called an ancestral sense of place, as this bond can

continue over many generations through storytelling, traditions, and rituals (Gifford, 2014).

2.2.3. Reasons to consider cultural differences when designing for elderly people

When growing older life often changes, physical or social circumstances can lead to the need for more care and support. Often it includes moving to a nursing home, which means a major adjustment with stress, new or lost contacts, and a renewed and more often negative image of oneself (Gifford, 2014). Mental health can in such situations decline, and it is therefore of the utmost importance that it is supported in as many ways as possible. Therefore, it is of great significance to strive for a design outlay that benefits the feeling of home and attachment. A home should establish a feeling of safety, sense of identity, calmness and belonging. Nevertheless, healthcare facilities, even nursing homes, are often environments where people face a high degree of stress (Cooper Marcus & Sachs, 2014).

Architecture can be a powerful tool for meeting current societal challenges as an aging population. It plays a crucial role in creating environments that support good health, well-being and security (Boverkett, 2020). To enable the residents in nursing homes to thrive and benefit from the outdoor environment, the designer has the responsibility to form the space in a way that the future users will be able to make it to a place (Eggertsen Teder, 2018). The garden environments itself have a great potential to improve the residents feeling of home. Outdoor environments can cause a connection to the past, when they offer conditions that the residents can relate to and that bring about memories (Bengtsson, 2015). It is important that the residents feel an involvement in the community and a social interaction (Scannell & Gifford, 2014). The outdoor environments can be a source for joyful and meaningful activities (Bengtsson, 2015). Further, the design and atmosphere of a place can affect how we feel about it and ourselves. If the garden resembles our image of a well maintained and beautiful garden, we feel more drawn to it and feel better. But if our standard of a garden is dismissive to the garden provided, we feel resent to it. Consequently, finding objects and symbols in a nursing home that remind us of our old home or cultural background, is important as they can serve as a link or a symbolic representation between the nursing home and the old home and minimize the feeling of displacement (Scannell & Gifford, 2014). To affect changes in one's emotional state, humans' consciously or unconsciously adapt their relationships with the attachment object. How the individual handles this is based on the character of the first attachment experience (Counted, 2019). Both culture and place are seen as transitional objects. Especially in challenging situations they have psychologically significant characteristics and function as substitute for human attachment. In monistic religions God sometimes becomes an attachment figure

having the characteristics of a safe haven and a secure base (Counted, 2019). Apart from place attachment, even religious attachment can benefit ones feeling of belonging and safety. To be able to fill the role of the primary attachment figure with a proximity as culture, the brain needs to be mature and more cognitively developed (Counted & Watts, 2019).

3. Method

The aim of this thesis is to gain an understanding of how insights of culturally influenced experiences can be used to promote a sense of place attachment, mainly its function of providing a sense of continuity.

To reach my aim for this thesis I need to 1) learn about individual cases where culture has formed peoples' experience with nature and thus had an influence on their place attachment, 2) develop a framework of how those individual experiences could be used in designing outdoor environments for nursing homes.

For me, it is of great importance that this work does not convey an image that I overlook the complexity of the subject or simplify religious and cultural structures so that they fit into my previous understanding. The way I strive to reduce this risk is to base my work on individual stories, as well as to connect to information based in various scientific fields, such as landscape architecture, environmental psychology, and religious studies.

In this project I assumed that there is no objective perception on nature or a specific culture, thus I am interested in the responding individuals themselves and their own thoughts and narrations. The interviews were preformed as a conversation to capture the participants experiences and understanding of reality, as that is the truth, I build this study on. From those individual experiences I form more general theories that have a wider validation range. Thus, my overall methodological approach is qualitative, phenomenological and inductive (Kvale & Brinkman, 2020).

When preparing the interviews, I intended to differentiate between cultural and religious influences regarding the participants attitudes and experiences of nature. I noticed immediately that those two aspects, culture, and religion, are woven together and that it would need another kind of research to understand the differences between those two. Therefore, culture and religion are used indistinguishably in this thesis.

I broke up my work into four different phases visualised in figure 1.

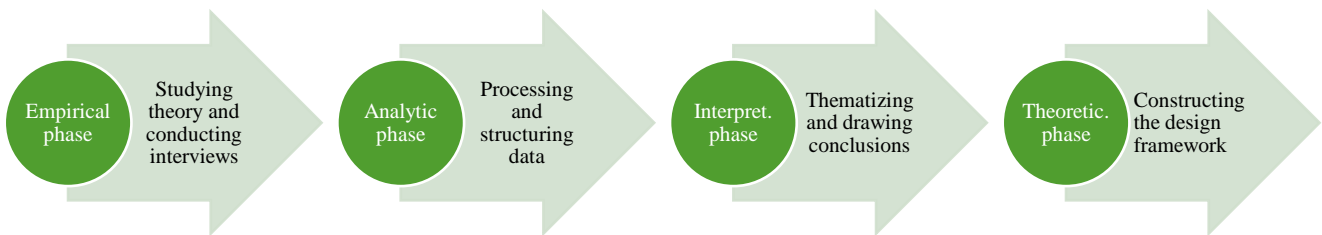


Figure 1. Methodical process description

In the first phase I studied relevant literature and collected raw data through interviewing relevant people. The analytic phase describes and groups the data. After that, in the interpretative phase, the grouped data is used to define themes and draw conclusions that are valid for the whole group of participants. In the theoretical phase I used the knowledge gained in the theory section of this thesis and my perspective as a landscape architect student to develop the results from the interpretative phase and turn it into a framework.

From individual to group level

As I am using an inductive approach, which means that I try to formulate more general theories from specific and individual experiences, I noticed that I had to split my results up into different steps, see figure 2. While learning about the individual cases in the empirical phase, I understood that this was knowledge only valid to the one individual participant. I needed to transform the raw information the interviews offered into structured data, which also could be thematically organized. This was done by structuring the individual experiences into groups, which lead to a step called common themes, which is valid on a limited group level, before I proceeded to a design framework which is meant to be valid in a wider context and therefore practically useful.

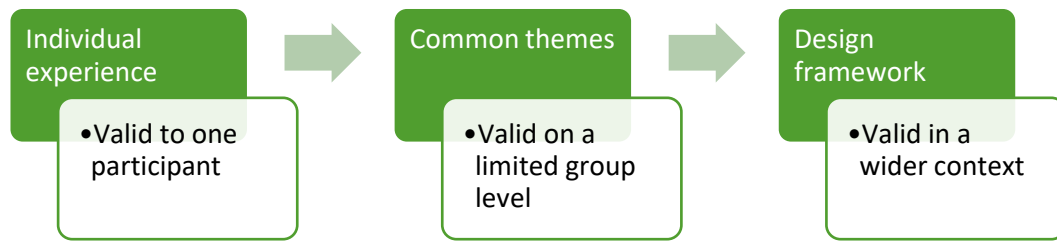


Figure 2. Three steps within the inductive approach of my results from small to wider validation range

3.1. Empirical phase

While reading existing theories and research helped me to understand the basics in perception and place attachment, and also culture's role within the topic, I needed to understand how perception can be influenced by culture on an individual level. Based on the theoretical standpoint from the theory section, I formulated interview questions, with the intention of studying some individual perspectives on perception and place attachment relevant for elderly people.

3.1.1. The selection of the participants

Due to Robinson (2013) one needs to consider four aspects when looking for study participants. Firstly, one needs to define a sample universe by specifying inclusion and exclusion criteria for the participants. I aimed for people with different backgrounds, who officially identified themselves with a distinct culture and are deeply involved and attached with its traditions and beliefs. Further the age was of importance, as the aim of the study concerned the experience of elderly people. Due to COVID-19 restrictions it was not possible for me to meet more than one person living in nursing homes, which would have been my preferred common variable. Therefore, I tried to only interview people within a relevant age group, so I chose the oldest five of the respondents (age 57-76). The people who volunteered to participate in my study identified themselves as either Christian, Jew, or Muslim. Secondly, one needs to decide upon a sample size considering epistemological and practical concerns. I believe that five participants are a reasonable number for my study. As there are many variables that influence how a person experiences a place and even understands the aim setting of this study, it was important to me to have a number great enough to offer some variation, but as the interviews and their analysis were quite time-consuming, I needed to limit the number for practical reasons.

Thirdly selecting a sample strategy. Within my sample universe I decided to proceed with a selection due to convenience, which means I chose participants that were easily accessible and willing to participate in my study.

The fourth aspect Robinson (2013) mentions is sample sourcing. To find relevant participants I contacted religious associations in Skania, wrote to “Världen i Lund”, an organisation focusing on integration and socialisation for people with different cultural backgrounds, and used my own network via social media. Of the around ten respondents I chose five to interview.

3.1.2. The interviews

To gather relevant data for my study, I conducted qualitative interviews. I chose this kind of method, as I was interested in understanding the world through the eyes of the people participating. I was eager to learn about their experiences and thoughts. I wanted to understand the topic from the lived everyday world, namely how the interviewee themselves perceive how his or her culture affect the view of nature and gardens. The interviews I conducted were of a descriptive nature (Kvale & Brinkman, 2020) because I tried to map key aspects of the interviewees' world of life.

Due to COVID-19 and language barriers the interviews were of different characters, some in person interviews, some over the phone and some with an interpreter. The timeframe of the interviews varied from 30 minutes to over three hours, but mostly around one hour. I recorded all the interviews with my phone and also made notes during the conversations as I in that way could include my own thoughts and observations. For the first interview I conducted I had only prepared a few, broad questions regarding the participants understanding and attitude towards the hypothesis of culture influencing one's perception of nature. I noticed that I assumed that the interviewee had as much theoretical background knowledge as myself and was therefore forced to change my interview arrangement. I also tried to formulate my questions in a way that the answers would be useful in a nursing home context. In order to get more relevant information about the participants life and memories, I updated my interview guide to include more personal questions like:

Did your family have a garden? Or maybe a terrace/balcony? What kind of memories do you have to that place? What was the garden used for? If you could design your own garden now, what qualities would you want to include and why? Can you think of any differences in how people in your cultural group use gardens and how people in Sweden use them? What kind of role do you think a garden can play in your life when you get older and more fragile?

The language used in the interviews varied between Swedish, English and German. The interview with the translator was conducted in Arabic, whereas the interpreter used Arabic and Swedish.

3.2. Analytical phase

This phase was about getting an insight in attitudes and experiences ranging from an individual level to a level valid to a wider group of people. I needed to transform the raw information from the interviews into organized data by structuring it into groups.

3.2.1. Analysis on an individual level

This phase started after each interview. I aimed to describe the experiences and attitudes of the participants from their point of view. My method of analysing the interviews was qualitative and eclectic (Kvale & Brinkman, 2020). I did ongoing analyses, which means that I worked on a first analysis immediately after I conducted the interview. I listened to the interviews and wrote down my first impressions and thoughts. This made it easier to remember how the person said different things or how he used any body language. In this way, you get an idea of what you may need to change before the next interview (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). I also summarized each interview to give a wider description of the participant and the interviews characteristics and give a better understanding for what I later founded my interpretations on. This can be found in the part introduction to the individual experiences. To try to only describe what the participant had told me directly after the interview was conducted made it easier to understand each participants perspective without jumping into directly making conclusions.

As my interview technique meant that there were long conversations, which in the beginning revolved more around the method or general conversations to build trust and get to know each other, I needed to evaluate which parts were relevant to my study. I was also searching for patterns and meanings on an individual level. This I did by listening to each interview a couple of times and then transcribe the parts I found important. In this kind of research, a main part of the analysis is based on interpreting feelings and reading between the lines of what the interviewees said. Therefore, it was of great importance that I asked for further explanation if I was afraid of misunderstanding what was said and got back to the first transcriptions and descriptions of the interviews to make sure that my own views and feelings influenced the outcome as little as possible.

3.2.2. Analysis on a group level

The next step was to organize and group the data. Along with the summaries I worked on generating themes that are valid on a group level. I looked through the initial patterns and meanings including all examples of cultural influence and experience that I had found on the individual level and tried to gather those into groups. I reviewed the outlines of the groups quite a few times, in hope to minimize the probability to get stuck in any improper conclusions. I worked with mind maps and tables.

3.3. Interpretive phase

In the interpretive phase, one tries to understand how the personal individual experiences can be understood in a wider meaning. To be able to do this I needed to zoom out and think in concepts. I tried to find the essential characteristics in the results of the analytical phase, the data organized into groups to draw conclusions regarding cultural influence on perception of nature that were valid for the whole group of participants.

3.3.1. The common themes

With time, I chose four headings that helped me structure and understand the content of the interviews. This step landed in the main common themes that were found in all the interviews. In this step I learned what was important not only for each individual, but the whole group of participants. A table where I gathered the individual answers relating to the main common themes can be found in the appendix. In a later phase of writing this study, I added a fifth theme, containing an aspect that had followed me through the whole process, but not found a title or format until the end. I formulated a general definition of the themes and fortified those with strategically chosen quotes.

The transcription is done in the language the interview was conducted in, but later, when including quotes in my thesis I translated them into English. I did my best to capture the original implication. Quotes are reproduced in formal written language and are chosen to give the reader as good an impression as possible of the content of the interview. I took help of a translation program as well as a neutral reader with good knowledge of the English language to try to make the translation as fitting as possible.

3.4. Theoretical phase

In this phase I aimed to transform my results into something that is practically useful. I formulated design-hypotheses for nursing homes, that might be helpful when striving to achieve a stronger place attachment for people with varying cultural experiences. This phase was rather a creative phase. I used my perspective as a landscape architect student and combined it with the knowledge I gained in the theory section. Also, my experience of working in care homes was helpful, as it gave me an insight of what might be possible to implement. I took help in literature, reading about other design frameworks, looked through gardening books and visited parks and other public environments to gather ideas of how to implement the common themes in actual design work.

As I did not have an actual place to work with, my goal was to create a tool that can be used for future informal planning of spaces regardless their requirements.

3.4.1. The design framework

This work started after formulating the common themes, as I started to draw conclusions from my results. In the interpretive phase I gained an understanding of how my results from the analytic phase can affect the design of outdoor environments in nursing homes. I ended up with four variables, that can be used as guidelines when designing an outdoor space. The essentiality of those was discussed by taking support in existing evidence and theories. Further I exemplified those keywords using the knowledge I gained in the interviews. My conclusions cannot be generalized but can be used as a starting point for a hypothesis applying to a more general group of residents within this research question.

3.5. Ethical consideration

My thesis strives to lift the importance of the dimension of culture when designing adapted outdoor environments in nursing homes. When considered, this dimension may contribute to a better wellbeing of the residents.

According to Patel and Davidsson (2011) one needs to fulfil four different requirements to ensure a good ethical implementation in a study like this:

- 1) The information requirement
- 2) The consent requirement
- 3) The confidentiality requirement
- 4) The utilization requirement

All participants in my study were informed about the aim and setup of this thesis before agreeing to be interviewed. The partaking in my studies was voluntary, and the participants were informed that they could drop out of this study at any time. I tried at all stages to seek for the participants' consent and did my best to make them feel comfortable during the whole project. This was done by letting the participants choose how and when the interviews were to be conducted and what language they preferred as the interview language. All recorded data and un-anonymised information were stored in a way so that unauthorised people could not gain access. No names of participants are mentioned in this thesis.

4. Results

As I stated earlier, to understand how culturally influenced experiences can be used to promote a sense of place attachment in nursing homes, one needs to learn about individual experiences. To give the reader a better understanding of the different individuals and their personal experiences, I summon the interviews I have conducted. This also highlights the individual relations every participant has towards nature and his or her culture. This part equals the first of the three steps the result is divided into (figure 2), namely the individual experiences that are only valid to the one participant. Proceeding from the participants descriptions and memories I settled for five common themes, that I investigated a little more rigorous. The validity of these themes is wider, as it corresponds to the whole group of participants. When trying to figure out how these themes can be integrated in the design of outdoor environments for nursing homes, and thus be practically useful for a wider range of users, I realized the need of four different characteristics that led to a creation of a design framework.

4.1. Introduction to the individual experiences

This section contains a short introduction of each participant and a summary of their individual experiences.

Person 1: 72 years, lives in her own flat, Jewish, active in the Jewish community

Interviewee 1 was very interested in the topic as she has been working in a hospital and has had the feeling that more and more green spaces disappear, which has led to that there is nowhere to go for the patients, where they can find calm and feel secure enough to listen to their inner thoughts. She is an active member of the Jewish society in her town and interested in sharing her insights of her culture with others.

At first, she was unsure if religion has a collective impact on one's experience of nature, but soon started to remember some Jewish traditions that include nature in some way, for example much of its festivities are based on natural seasons. But she also wants to strike, that all humans are a part of nature and therefore dependent on it, as we need water to grow our food or else there will be a bad harvest. During wintertime a lot of the Jewish traditions' emphasis on time for reflection.

When talking about if she has some examples of plants or natural elements that are used within the Jewish culture, she remembers some citrus plants, palm leaf and

pomegranate, which cannot be found in Sweden, that played an important role in Jewish narratives she has heard as a child. Another important tradition, that can admittedly be found in different cultures is the harvest festival. As a Jew one is special thankful even for new born children and food produced by animals, such as milk. The colours of flowers can represent different saints, blue for instance often represents Mary. On Saturdays one uses a bowl filled with spices to stimulate the senses after fasting, this is called Havdalah. One can use different spices such as cardamom or cinnamon. Due to the Jewish culture, it is very important to remember that only God can be perfect, this can be symbolized in varying ways when working in the garden or building a house.

She is concerned that, when needing more support in life she will be seen only as a burden without human traits and value. This makes it very important for her that there will be easily accessible areas where she self-sufficiently can find inspiration and a feeling of belonging.

Person 2: 67 years, just moved to an apartment belonging to a nursing home, originally from Germany, catholic

Interviewee 2 grew up in Germany, first in a smaller town and later in Berlin. Her family was catholic and went to church regularly. Here in Sweden, she does not go to church anymore, because she feels it would take too much effort to become a member of the catholic community here as there is none in the village she lives in now. She lived close to a forest when younger, now she lives in an apartment block for elderly people. When she grew up, her parents always had a garden, which especially her mother took care of, but sometimes she was asked to help as well. They, as a family, did a lot of the initial landscaping, as they built a new house. The garden was filled with flowers and berry bushes, but no vegetable patch or animals. It was a place for play and leisure time. She remembers bringing friends and having picnicks.

If possible, she would love to have a place where she could pick berries and sit in the sun for the rest of her life. She would enjoy the solitude and the connectedness with nature but would not want to have any responsibility for taking care of the space. She remembers her childhood gardens as very well taken care of, and stricter in the design, with accurate cut edges and no weeds. She does not need a lot of space but hopes to be able to sit outside and enjoy the sun even when physically weak.

She remembers traditions as going out to the garden and picking flowers to decorate the house or the church, but also festivities as Corpus Christi. Even though it is not a concern for her that she is not able to attend such festivities anymore, she lights up when talking about how she is reminded of those situations when for instance seeing

flower petals on the ground, and that she sometimes picks them up just to sprinkle them on the pathways in her apartment block.

Person 3: 76 years old, stays with her daughter in a flat, originally from Syria, Muslim

This interviewee grew up in a suburb of Damascus, Syria, where the landscape was marked by farmers. She remembers a lot of fields, trees and crops and the smell of jasmine and roses. In her memory herbs and fruit grew literally everywhere, it was possible to pick ripe dates in the streets and the gardens were full of grapes and pomegranates. She and her family lived in a flat with a balcony, that was used for growing herbs and flowers and was a very social place. Knowledge about nature and traditions was shared from generation to generation while doing chores or cooking. She misses the warmth and social gatherings of her homeland. Even if there is a place for gardening with a bench close to her flat that could be a social place, she finds it hard to feel a connection with other residents in the area. One does not meet, chat, and cook together as naturally as she is used to. She does not know if this is a result of language barriers or her being an active Muslim, which might awake incertitude in her neighbours.

As a Muslim she prays five times a day and follows the traditions of her faith closely.

She remembers a feeling of meaningfulness and belonging when thinking of her childhood, preparing food that was grown nearby or celebrating holydays as a community. She has still a strong attachment to her childhood neighbourhood and would like to take me there when the war is over. Her eyes are shining, and she talked with her whole body. During the interview she even starts to prepare some food, as she wants to share some of the memories with me.

Person 4: 65 years old, lives in a flat, originally from Syria, Muslim

This interview was first conducted on the phone, but then we decided that I would send some questions to him by mail, as it was difficult for him to express everything he wanted without having enough time to translate and think about it. This resulted in that I am not as aware of his feelings regarding the answers I got.

He grew up in Syria but has lived as a refugee for some years before coming to Sweden about one year ago. In Syria he has lived with his Muslim grandparents, that owned a house with a garden. For him the most vivid memory is the smell of basil, the red soil, and cooking food on a fireplace. He spent a lot of time helping his grandmother in the garden but enjoyed it even with friends.

The garden contained of 1500 m² of farmland with a great variety of trees. They even owned some smaller animals. The providing of food was the greatest benefit

of the garden, but it was also used as a social place and for relaxing. He longs to be able to have a garden of his own, where he can grow some food, spend time with his grandchildren and have something to do that gives his life purpose.

Person 5: 57 years, lives in a house, originally from Iceland, Christian

She grew up in different places outside of Reykjavik. She remembers that, wherever they lived, her mother has always had a lot of plants and was pottering around. She herself preferred numbers. After some years her mother buys a farm, including a little hill on the property that had high natural value. My interviewee never climbed that hill or understood why others would want to do that. She preferred to sit quietly and read books, which she nowadays enjoys doing in a hammock.

She has some strong memories of her mother trying to plant trees, but they never grew big due to wind and salt from the ocean. Her mother almost cries when she hears about that people in Sweden cutting down older trees because they do not fit the garden design or treat seedlings as weed. The weather was a strong force and defined their life in many ways. For example, if they made it to school in the mornings, if the post-box was still standing or if they were able to leave the house at all due to snow. She remembers festivities to celebrate the first day of summer or the national camping day.

She herself does not want to own nature and does not want to try to tame it or take care of it. The reason that she and her husband bought a house with a garden was plainly that her husband wanted one, and she thought it could be nice for her daughter to be able to be outside without supervision. For her a garden is an unnecessary extra workload. It is enough to go for a walk in the neighbourhoods, where one even can adjust the route to get different sceneries or more or less crowded streets. To walk in the forest is something she is not used to, as she prefers trails.

When looking into the future she really hopes not to end up somewhere where she only has access to the same lame park or garden as she puts it, as it is the changing scenery, rural or urban, that interests her.

Due to herself, being a Christian has not formed her traditions as much as the Icelandic culture has.

4.2. Common themes

After gathering the individual experiences into groups, I found some themes that seemed to be common. To get a clearer overview and to be able to compare the

participants individual answers I created a table (see appendix), divided into four themes, **attitudes, memories, needs/wishes, and traditions**. Later I added a fifth theme called **holistic view**. This helped me when re-reading the interviews and made it easier to understand and validate the common themes, that are examples of when cultural aspects might have shaped their experience of nature.

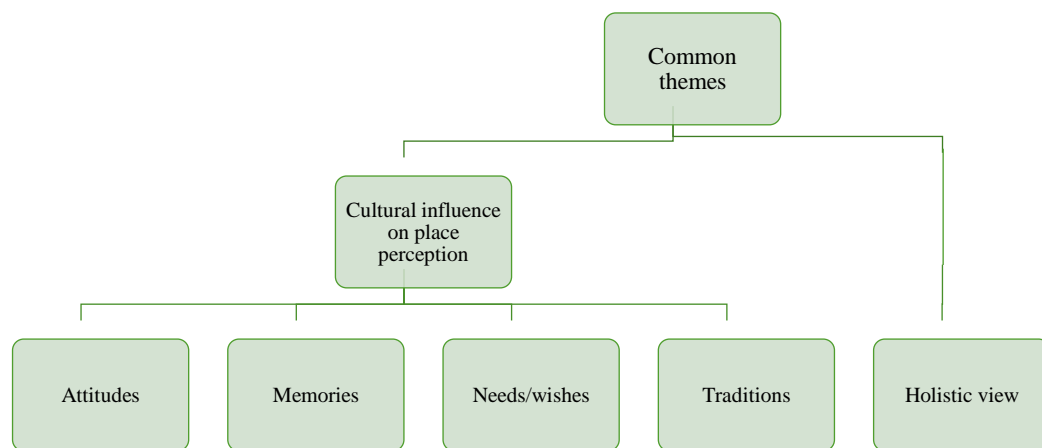


Figure 3. Structure of the results within the common themes

The first four themes (4.2.1. – 4.2.4.) confirm the affect culture has on perception. Perception is influenced by experiences and upbringing and affects our feelings and impression of a place. They often consist of specific and tangible aspects. In sum the interviews have shown that all people I have interviewed have memories regarding nature. The memories of senses as smell and taste seem to be the strongest. After that, memories of people and social interactions proved to be important. Even memories of traditions both those linked to culture, but also personal traditions made up in family are fond memories that shaped most of the interviewees needs and wishes related to the topic of this study.

4.2.1. Attitudes

This part describes the overall attitudes the participants had towards nature. It includes their views on how to take care of nature and their emotions connected to it.

The interviewees answers made it clear, that their experiences with nature were of importance for them. After some initial thoughts they spoke about their memories with engagement and emotions. During the interview they sometimes returned to questions I had asked, as new memories and emotions awoke while talking. Some

even put it into words, that they thought nature to be important for humans and an important part of their culture.

If one appreciates nature, I think, has to do with his or her personality. Or maybe it is a trait that we share just because we are human. - Interviewee 1

Religious traditions are strongly linked to nature as they often follow the seasons and reflect what is happening in nature - Interviewee 1

Here in Sweden, I can sometimes feel that there is humans and then there is nature, at home we were so very dependent on nature that it was hard to draw a line between what we humans wanted or what nature forced us to do. - Interviewee 5

The nature they talked about was cultivated land and gardens close to the house. In their memories gardens are an area for social contacts and fellowship. It is a place where one makes important memories that shape our view of ourselves. The garden can be seen as a place for farming and using for our needs, but it can also be seen as a place for leisure time and enjoyment. It is an extension of the living space and being and working in the garden is seen as fulfilling and meaningful.

The garden was an extension of the living space. For my mother the garden was more important than the house. The garden was home, the outside home one could say and that feeling I still carry with me. Interviewee 2

Taking care of a garden which is providing us with food gives us a purpose and it gives us an identity. This identity can be helpful when meeting new people as it can be used as a short description of who we are and as a base for connection and interaction.

At home we used to tend to the garden together, as a family or with the neighbors. In Sweden I go to a shop to buy my food, it is more anonymous. I just buy what I see in the shop, I do not have the same feeling to it. And I feel sometimes that I have lost a bit of my purpose. It was nice to use my hands and, together with others, see to the needs of the crops so that we had good food. - interviewee 3

When you are older you have a lot of time, but maybe not as much strength. But you can still water plants and pick weeds. That gives your life a purpose and keeps you alive. - interviewee 4

The way we view nature and gardens differs, some see a garden as an opportunity to grow crops, others want nice flowerbeds or want it to be as natural as possible.

Here in Sweden the gardens have more variety, they mix flowers and vegetables. And they are not as accurate as I am used to. I think they are nice to look at, sometimes it seems like someone has tried to paint a picture with the way they have arranged the flowers and maybe a bench and

a little table, but I wonder how often they really use it. It reminds me of an IKEA catalogue. I prefer it, when the gardens are not as decorated, plainer and tidier in a way. - Interviewee 2

The answers of one of the participants stood out, she grew up in a country where they were highly dependent on weather as it was a strong force that could disrupt daily life in many ways. She was the only one talking about the natural landscape and the weather forces, which seemed to have been more important in her life than the cultivated landscape. For this person nature is something wild and uncontrollable. However, she made it clear that spaces assigned for outdoor activities should be well taken care of. She remembered gardening as a lot of work, and flowers as unnecessary.

The problem is that it is so windy in the winter that only the strength of the wind kills the trees, it blows the bark of the trees. - Interviewee 5

Even though I think that the raspberries grown in my own garden taste better than the ones I buy in the local shop, and I do understand that it is a good idea to have locally grown food and to teach the children where fruits and vegetables come from, I feel that the work it needs is too much. I for myself would not miss the possibility of growing foods and berries. The only reason that we have some is because I thought it would be good for my daughter and my husband volunteered to take care of it. - Interviewee 5

Most of the participants (4 out of 5) want to live in similar settings as the ones they grew up in, even now, when being older.

4.2.2. Memories

This section is a summary of the participants regarding different memories on sensual experiences, social relations and events connected to nature.

Most of the participants had strong memories linked to their senses as smell and taste. This could be the smell of flowers, herbs, the soil or meals that were prepared in the gardens, a few people recalled roses, both for the smell and the possibility of making jam. A lot of memories were regarding the vegetables and herbs and fruit that were grown in the garden were used while cooking and then giving food to the neighbors and loved ones.

Where I grew up there were a lot of jasmine trees. Not the ones that grow here, others, we called them Syrian jasmine. They smell very strongly; it is a lovely scent. In my memory they grew everywhere. Jasmin is really the smell of home. - interviewee 3

I would never have thought that before, but when I see roses somewhere, I always smell them. And when it is a rose that smells, it gives me inner joy and makes me feel at home. - Interviewee 2

They recalled specific plants and crops, such as figs, grapes, pomegranates, walnut trees, and berries that they remembered from their childhood gardens. This was true both for the ones that grew up with a garden used for farming, and the ones that used their garden spaces for leisure time.

Peppers, zucchini, and dates. The dates grew everywhere you just picked them, they were so sweet and delicious not as the ones you buy in the store. - Interviewee 3

When I think about my childhood garden, the first thing that comes to mind is the colour green. I like that, and for me those memories are very comforting. It was quite a big garden and to me green is just something beautiful. In the middle of the garden, there were four beautiful birches on a bed of heather. That is a sight that I like a lot, wherever I see it. And then there were blackberries, still my favorite fruit to eat - Interviewee 2

Even social interactions together with the family and with neighbors played an important role in their memories. Most of the interviewees remembered that the land was used for farming or growing food even the flowers they used for example to make perfume out of roses and of course there was even vegetables and fruit trees. Some of the interviewees talked about memories how they cultivated the land together, whereas others remembered how they played with their friends, had coffee, or relaxed with a book.

As a child me and my brother always took friends with us to the garden. Later when I had children on my own, we went there and played ballgames, because there was a large meadow in the garden. We played a lot of different games, and in the summertime, we put up a paddling pool. Whenever we drank coffee or ate cake, and with my mom we did that quite often, we always moved the table somewhere nice, depending on the season and the weather. - Interviewee 2

Almost all of the people I talked to thought that social relations played a big role in their experience of gardens and nature. While being in nature it was easier to maintain social relations that were intergenerational. Often knowledge about food and farming was passed on from the older generation to the younger while being out and about. It often was hands on learning, that happened automatically while watching and listening to the more experienced people.

Sometimes my grandmother and I would go and pick salad in the morning. Very early, it was still humid. Everything smelled so nice. She would tell stories and teach me about the plants. - Interviewee 3

In some of the memories it was not the person itself, who had experienced an affection to the garden, but close relatives, which had formed a fond memory.

Whenever I hear the cackling of hens, I always think of my grandmother. I have an image of her walking through the garden and picking small herbs that she would give to the chicken. - Interviewee 4

Usually, it would have been my parents, mostly my mother, that took care of the garden. But sometimes, when there was a lot to do, like in the beginning right after we had bought the house, we all helped to clear the garden from small trees and bushes. That was so much fun, and it really brought us together as a family. And then on Fridays, sometimes I was allowed to go and pick flowers for the house. It always seemed like such a treat when my mother asked me to do it. Maybe it is because of those memories, that I still buy flowers on Fridays. - Interviewee 2

4.2.3. Needs and wishes

A lot of the needs and wishes regarding an outdoor environment in their older days, were similar to the ones already presented in the theory section. One can conclude that the basic needs are quite universal regardless of one's cultural background.

All the interviewees want nature to be included in their older days. To be able to visit an outdoor environment and feel welcome there was important. They expressed that they would like to be able to see the sky and feel the sun on their face. Places to sit and relax are important. Furthermore, they wish for plants that they recollect from their childhood such as berries, walnut trees, and roses was common. The garden needs to be easily accessed, even when getting physically weak.

I am an outside person, I like to be outside and since I can no longer make very long distances or drive somewhere, I need to be able to get to the garden. To be able to get outside without much effort and without planning is very important to me. I need to feel the air outside and feel the wind and the sun as that gives me a lot of energy. If I had to be inside all the time, that would be really affect me mentally. - Interviewee 2

I would like a nice, comfortable garden chair with a small table, maybe somewhere to put my feet up. It would be nice if that place could be placed under a tree, as trees give shade and add some coziness. I would like a little water bowl for the birds, and maybe a bird feeder in winter. I like to watch little birds and animals. I could also imagine having a walnut tree in addition to the fruit trees so that the squirrels come, and I can watch them. - Interviewee 2

I can not imagine myself sitting in the same spot every day. I need a change of scenery, so moving from the inside to the outside would give me some variation. - Interviewee 5

Some of the people I interviewed would like to be integrated in taking care of the garden and others do not want any responsibilities but like a place to sit and watch other people or animals. The wish to be able to pick berries, fruits and flowers was expressed often. Two of them would like to be able to grow spices that they can use in traditional dishes or ceremonies included in their culture.

Working with my hands has always been meaningful to me, I would like to continue with that as much as I can. - Interviewee 4

The possibility of using the garden as a place that creates a feeling of community was discussed, as the participants had memories that included many people taking care of the garden spaces. Doing activities together gives a stronger feeling of connection and belonging.

Doing the gardening together with others that live here, or my family could be nice. But it seems like people do not want to socialize as much. - Interviewee 3

Even the dream gardens often included places to grow food, both actively in farming vegetables and spices that need a lot of care but also Berry bushes and fruit trees that one does not have to tend to as much but still is able to harvest from.

4.2.4. Traditions

Traditions that the participants mentioned can be divided into those that are valid on a group level and those that were merely of personal character.

There are some traditions linked to nature and the cultivating of the land such as harvest festival's, picking flowers for special occasions and coming together as a family to help with farming during spring and fall. Traditions as picnics, picking bouquets on Fridays and learning of older generations are traditions by individual families.

There were some traditions linked to culture and therefore more on the group level such as Corpus Christi, the tree festival, decorating the church and leaving some crops in the ground for the poor. The use of spices to stimulate the senses after fasting was also discussed. But even traditions as celebrating new seasons or a national camping day

I was raised as a Catholic and on Corpus Christi we always gathered the leaves from the flowers, i.e., the petals that fell down and we put them in small baskets and then went on a procession. We were quite many children on the streets that sprinkled the petals. That's what I am reminded of, when for example roses lose all petals and they are allowed to remain in the flower beds without anyone coming to remove them. Sometimes I take the petals from flowers I bought in a flower shop and sprinkle them over the grass areas outside. I always feel a bit mischievous, as I do not know if the other residents feel like it looks improper. - Interviewee 2

Within Jewish faiths only God is perfect, to be reminded of that it is custom to leave small unfinished bits and pieces in whatever work one does. So even if you build a house or paint something, you always leave a small part unfinished. That does even apply when cultivating a field or tending to a garden. We call it to cut corners. - Interviewee 1

You go out and celebrate with other people, so it's mostly a social thing to celebrate the summer. it's a family party with music and dance. - Interviewee 5

4.2.5. Holistic view

This theme differs from the previous as it is of an emotional or conceptual nature, as it deals with the way we are seen by others and the recognition of one's culture. Humans have a need to be seen as who they are, including their cultural background. It consists of mindsets towards nature and a general appreciation of acknowledging the cultural dimension. It is validating the need of a holistic approach within human relations. All participants expressed positive feelings towards my research field and mentioned the importance of maintaining their culture and feeling that it is taken seriously.

Culture affects the whole person and is part of your personality. Sadly, people often see only the Muslim in me, because of me covering my hair. They forget that there is so much more about myself and the way I live and what I do and like. But as people assume that they know who I am just because I am obviously practicing the Islamic faith. I think it is good that you try to understand a bit more about Islam and that you ask questions. When people show an interest and make an effort, I feel seen and appreciated and not as lonely anymore. We are many people that live as Muslims and we have a lot in common regarding our faith, but we are still individual human beings. - Interviewee 3

This confirms that one has a need to be seen as a complex being with a history, experiences, and emotions. When you get the feeling that you are interesting enough for the care staff to pay attention and recognize your individual needs, you grow as a person and your self-esteem becomes much more positive.

4.3. Design framework

The creation of the framework is the attempt to lift the individual opinions to the level where they are relevant for a wider group. With the common themes as a starting point, I found four variables, that are inevitable from a planner's point of view, to create an environment that benefits place attachment. I go more into detail regarding the variables and its relation to the individual experiences and common themes in the discussion part.

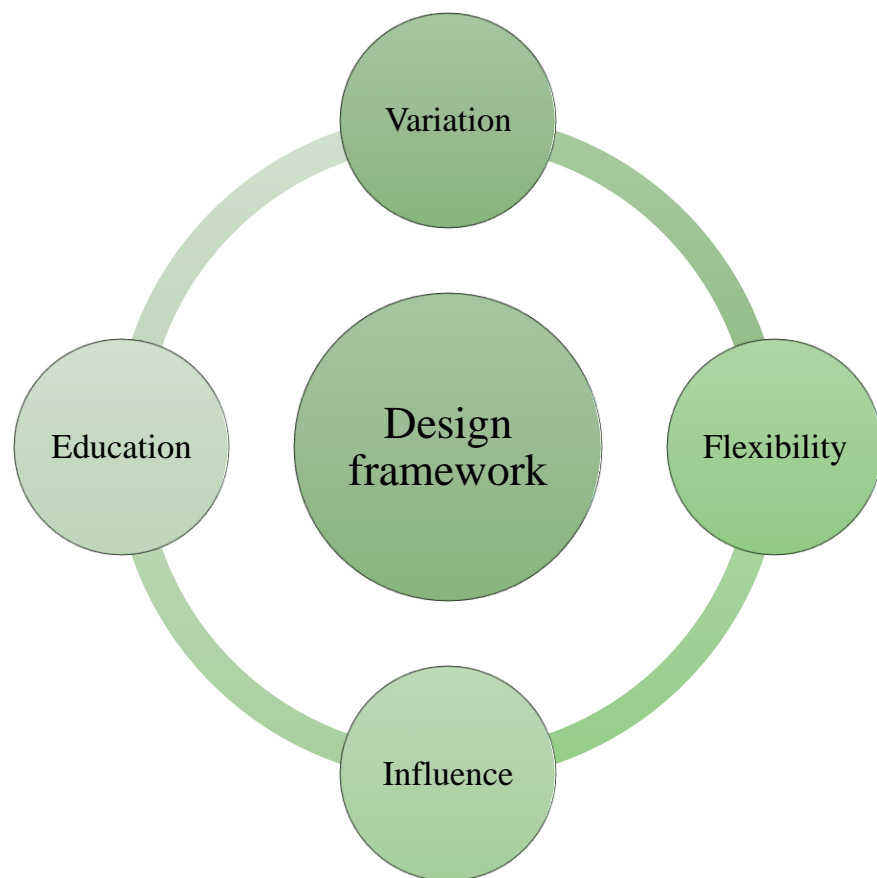


Figure 4. Variables within the Design framework

4.3.1. Variation

Depending on who we are and what we have for cultural background we have slightly different expectations towards the outdoor environment surrounding our home. As our image of nature and our filters through which we perceive our surroundings, are formed during our early years and of the context we live in, we appreciate different types of environments. To be able to meet as many residents' expectations as possible, and thereby benefit place attachment, the outdoor environment in a nursing home should include a variation of different areas.



Figure 5. Illustration, an example for variation

Examples for different areas could be a variation of built and natural spaces, representing well-trimmed areas, those with a wilder character and areas that are inspired by an agricultural environment. Even the built areas should include varying materials, as stone, wood, and marble. A greenhouse to be able to cultivate plants that need a warmer climate could also serve as a place for sense stimulating activities and a cosy space to sit in when the weather is colder or rainy. Sitting arrangements that offer solitude and those that encourage social gatherings and even offer the possibility of celebrating different festivities are a good idea.

4.3.2. Flexibility

As nursing homes are homes for a changing group of residents with shifting needs and backgrounds it is to prefer that there is a flexibility in the usage of the outdoor environment. Further the aim of this framework is not to create an environment adapted to one specific culture, but one that can in an overall attempt meet as many needs as possible. Flexibility also increases the involvement of the residents, as it allows to adapt the space according to current interest and need.



Figure 6. Illustration, an example for flexibility

This can be achieved by, for example, using tall vases, that can be filled with different kind of flowers or branches and raised gardening beds that are easily planted with whatever flowers or herbs preferred by the residents. Allowing for some areas to be used in a changing way according to traditional customs, without it disturbing other residents. Simple examples of this could be, having an area where one is allowed to sprinkle petals without it risking to trouble people with for example impaired vision or leaving some apples on the trees according to Jewish custom. Designing the place in a way, that it is possible to have visitors at different hours of the day, if it supports the feeling of being a part of one's culture, for example being able to share meals with family during the month of Ramadan. A shielded and muffled sitting area in the outdoor environment, as for example a green house could be used in that purpose as well.

4.3.3. Influence

It is important for the residents to feel like they are in charge of their homes and lives in as many ways as possible regarding their mental and physical status. A feeling of independence is highly beneficial for ones wellbeing and place attachment.

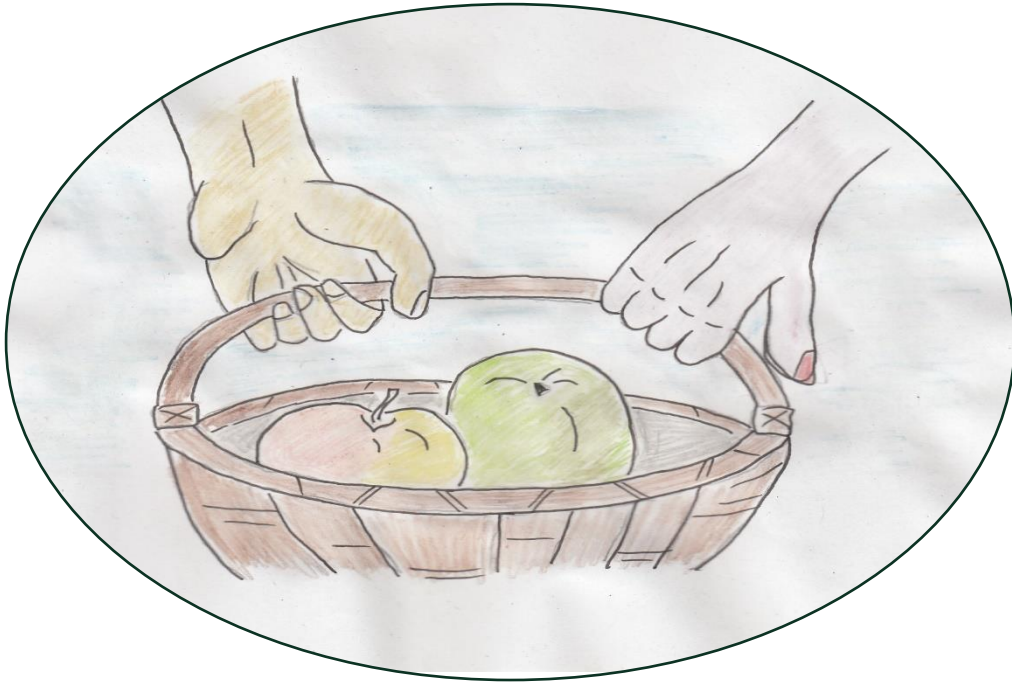


Figure 7. Illustration, an example for influence

To give the individual residents as much influence as possible without getting in the way for each other requires a lot of planning and understanding of the staff. Designated areas where it is allowed to express one's individuality need to be created. This could be the immediate outdoor areas belonging to each room, the possibility of being in charge for certain plant beds or being involved in the planning of festivities.

4.3.4. Education

Knowledge is a source of integration and tolerance. As I see it there are two groups of people that need to be educated for a successful integration of different cultural traditions in nursing homes. The staff is the group with the most influence on the atmosphere in the home. They need to be aware of the benefits of seeing not only to the mental and physical health of the residents, but also their emotional, social, and spiritual desires. The second group are the users of the environment. If one understands the intention of customs or activities, one is more likely to have a

positive attitude towards it and might even want to participate or at least not try to interfere.

Education is also a way of involving different residents, may it be by making them feel more at home as there is an understanding for where they come from, or by them educating others.



Figure 8. Illustration, an example for education

Examples that are easily usable in an outdoor environment are signs, that give a general background on different plants and their usage or symbolism. Those signs can also be used as invitations to join festivities or customs. Even in the design one can encourage education by offering places that promote group activities and through that share knowledge.

5. Discussion

The discussion is divided into sections, reflecting the phases described in figure 2. Namely the steps of data analysis from individual experiences to information valid on a wider level. Each section contains reflections on the results and the methods used in the particular step. I chose this set up, as it allows me to go more into detail, and as the method affects the result in different ways.

By interviewing, I started with gathering individual experiences remembered by elderly people with different cultural backgrounds. I filtered those quite specific experiences and assorted them into five common themes: attitudes, memories, needs and wishes, traditions and holistic view. Those themes are discussed regarding relevant theories mentioned in the theory section. Finally, I translated those themes into a framework that can be used when designing for the purpose to benefit place attachment for elderly people with different cultural backgrounds. I found those steps very helpful, as it made the gap between the analytical, the interpretative and the theoretical phase smaller and ensured that the results were build upon the interviews and not my own opinions.

5.1. Reflection on the individual experiences

The character of the five interviews I conducted was quite different from each other, depending on language barriers and the way they were performed.

Due to COVID-19 only half of the participants agreed to meet in person, from which one preferred to sit outside in quite cool weather conditions. The other two I met in their homes. The remaining two interviews were done by phone. Two of the phone interviews had no language difficulties, whereas the third needed some follow up by mail, so that the participant was able to do some translation without getting stressed. Some of the interviews took quite some time as the interviewee enjoyed talking about memories and experiences or as it became because language difficulties meant that I had to explain my questions in different ways before we understood each other. Cultural differences also played a role, in one case I was offered several different dishes, which were partly cooked while we talked. Others were shorter, either because the person had a different lifestyle, or because of

language barriers that led to a feeling that the participant did not feel so comfortable speaking in Swedish. Those difficulties can sometimes arise when interviewing in different languages or when using an interpreter, because one does not recognize differences in language, gestures, or cultural norms (Kvale & Brinkman, 2020).

Through a brief introduction, I tried to get the person to talk freely about my subject and then adapted to his stories. The introduction contained questions about the person's background and experiences, as well as some specific questions to take the interview further in the direction my essay required. A conversation interview provides better opportunities to get answers that you do not expect, and therefore, mirror the participants' opinions more than your own expectations. Such interviews also provide a good opportunity to follow up on those opinions with more questions, so that you can understand the background to the answers (Esaiasson, et al., 2007).

As expected, the interviews made clear that the experience of nature and memories one has connected to those experiences is very individual. It was not easy to always find the right way to get the participants to talk about their place attachment. The interviews turned out to be more about memories, but in my understanding, the way the participants talked about some of their memories and the fact that they chose to share them with me, gave me a good picture of what they were attached to. To ensure that the attitudes and needs in a higher degree are of a cultural origin instead of personal, more interviews need to be conducted.

The positive aspect of the interviews being merely unstructured memories and experiences and the participants not knowing too much about the idea of place attachment was that they freely shared their thoughts and emotions, which granted a higher level of everyday live content.

One of the difficulties I met during my interviews was to ask questions, that provided me with answers regarding attitudes towards and needs in outdoor environments beyond what is already practiced in evidence-based design. The needs for basic aspects as safety, accessibility and security was clearly communicated of my interviews. Often it was the way the interviewees spoke about their outdoor environments and the character of their memories that gave me an inside glimpse into the subtle differences.

Maybe it would have been easier to meet in the outdoor area belonging to their homes, as we in that case had been able to discuss the benefits and neglects of a physical place. The most perfect situation for my study would have been to meet with people with different backgrounds living in the same facility, as that would have given me the possibility to compare how individuals perceive the same environments in different ways. This might even have led till discussing those

differences with the participants and giving them a chance to see if they can see a cultural origin in those differences.

Since the interviewees are selected, beyond that they identified themselves with a distinct culture, according to availability, it can be difficult to draw too many general conclusions from the interviews. COVID-19 limited my choice of participants, but I feel that the outcome of the interviews was informative and relevant enough to continue with the study. It must be clear throughout the study that it is about individual experiences, which, however, are based on a background that can be considered important at group level. My results will therefore not be generalizations but several hypotheses. It was due to the interviewee's backgrounds, that my main focus in this thesis lays on Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions.

5.2. Reflection on the common themes

The common themes were an important step for me in analysing my data. I needed to group and organize the essences of the interviews in a way, so it made sense for more than one of the participants. When reading the interviews, my brain directly started to think about design possibilities that could reflect the special memories the participant had shared with me. I feared, that if I did not take smaller steps in the process from raw data to a framework, a lot of validity would be lost. I made several attempts to group the data before I settled with the final common themes. It was an educative process figuring out what was the background behind all the information I had gotten.

It is no news that outdoor environments are important for the residents (Bengtsson, 2015), but when diving deeper into the different attitudes I discovered small differences that can be linked to cultural influence and might be useful to be aware of when working with spaces intended for people that come from different places. As mentioned in the theory section, different cultures can promote different attitudes towards how an outdoor space should look or be used (Counted & Watts, 2019). As our working memory has a capacity of five different groupings that we understand or process easily, we tend to look for aspects in our environment that fit into one of our pre known groupings (Karlsson, 2001; Kaplan, 1988). I found that several participants requested environments that included objects or symbols that reminded them of their culture as it is a way of making a space to a place (Eggertsen Teder, 2018).

The choice of the common themes influences the outcome of the study. In the beginning, in an attempt to write something new and interesting, I tried to find

themes that were different from existing evidence on what is important for elderly people to experience place attachment. Fortunately, the early descriptions made in the empirical phase and the sorting into different groups in the analytical phase helped me to go back and validate my choice.

While it is most important that the basic needs of security, safety and accessibility are met, I think that culture play an essential role in forming a feeling of place attachment. Especially when considering that the number of residents with varying cultural backgrounds is rising in Sweden.

One of the most important pillars of my thesis is the assumption that culture affect one's perception. Further, one's perception affects place attachment and vice versa, if one is attached to a place, one's perception is shaped by those feelings. This is what I have called the first aspect, it deals with experiences and aspects in our upbringing that affect our feelings and impression of a place. Even though those features differ from person to person, in this study, they are often tangible, as they include a certain smell, plant, or physical feature.

How we perceive our environment is affected by our childhood and upbringing (Chawla, 1992), as it is during this time that we create a filter that helps us divide the millions of stimuli our brain receives into a manageable amount that we can pay attention to (Karlsson, 2001). We need to be able to read what our surrounding has to offer with body and mind and be able to interpret the meaning of them both emotionally and intellectually to understand the world around us. We develop this knowledge in interaction with our families and the culture we live in (Adevi & Grahn, 2012).

The environments my interview participants referred to when being asked about gardens were mostly the ones they knew during their childhood. As many of them grew up in countries outside of Scandinavia, their mental images were filled of plants, smells and climate aspects that are different from what they can experience in Sweden. One of the interviewees remembers the smell of the red soil in his home country, another one tells that it smelled like jasmine and Arabic basil when walking in the streets, a third recalls the taste of salt in the air, as she lived close to the ocean.

Even culture and the way it describes nature forms our understanding and expectations towards outdoor environments. An example of this is how the Koran or the bible describe nature. While Christians have an arcadian point of view, which means that they see nature as something idyllic, that they want to live in harmony with, and strive after a rich and diverse nature, the Koran encourages its followers to take good care of it, by cultivating it (Buijs, et al., 2009). I could find some evidence for this even in my interviews. The two participants coming from an

Islamic background put more focus on growing crops and using the land to provide food. Their memories were filled of farmed land, walnut- and date trees and a lot of herbs. The description of their gardens revolved around enumerating the different foods and animals that lived on the land. Esthetic descriptions were not made. Participant 3 instead found it most important to highlight the different color schemes and seasonal changes in the garden. Interviewee 1, on the other hand, who has a Jewish background, thought it to be important that even a designed garden or field should have an area that is not tended to, and thus not perfect, as only God himself is perfection. Interviewee 5 had a strong arcadian point of view, even if it, according to her, depended less on her Christian background, but the country she lived in. She did not understand the need to own any land or try to tame the nature by planting flowerbeds and trying to change nature's own beauty. During her childhood nature was a powerful force, that the inhabitants of her village needed to adapt to. What I thought interesting and controversial, is that she nowadays wants to be sheltered from wind and rain and even prefers well-constructed walking trails over walks in nature.

Place attachment can have individual and collective origins (Scannell & Gifford, 2014). When the origin is individual, it is based on memories or life events that one has endured. Certain landscape types can also evoke emotions and a feeling of connectedness as they have a great symbolic value in one's culture. In these cases, the attachment is of collective origin. Culture is an aspect that makes a certain place special to many people at the same time. How we are attached to the place, emotional cognitive or linked to memories, defines all behavior and experience towards the place. Place attachment can have a positive influence on our perception of the place, which in turn is important for the sensed well-being, memories, feeling of belonging and relaxation (Scannell & Gifford, 2014). The emotional connection interviewee 3 felt when seeing a walnut tree while walking through her new town has its roots in individual experiences. She grew up in a place with a lot of such trees and therefore was reminded of her hometown. Seeing this symbol of her past awoke so many emotions, that she had to stop and touch the tree and started crying. The attachment participant 1 describes towards citrus plants originates from a collective point, as such fruits are described in the Jewish torah. She has no practical experiences of those fruits, but as they have been mentioned in many of the stories she has heard during her childhood, the feeling of importance and connection has been rooted in her mind.

The two aspects within the common themes were a differentiation I noticed quite early in the interpretative phase. Even though the participants sometimes expressed an uncertainty if they had anything valuable to say to help me in my work, I was met by such an enthusiasm and joy when I asked them about their culture and experiences. I pondered for a long time how to capture the fifth theme, holistic

view, because at first it seemed like a layer that permeated all other themes and was not an independent valuable. The theme holistic view is more conceptual. That is the need of being seen as a whole human being, with needs that affect one's mental and physical health, but also one's emotional, social and spiritual desires. Included in this holistic view are also the individual's history and experiences (Wijk, 2008). Interviewee 3 mentioned that she sometimes has a feeling that people struggle to see her beyond the hijab. She feels the need of explaining who she is and what she beliefs in and how she practises her culture. This can create the feeling of a boundary between her and others, as it initially highlights the differences between her and others more than enabling to find common ground beyond culture. A counteraction could be to educate both the staff working in the nursing homes and other residents and visitors. A general knowledge about the positive effects culture has on the residents, should be given to the staff. If the staff is attentive to the different backgrounds and tries to implement aspects of those into the care homes daily life, one does not need to attempt big and costly changes in the outdoor environments. Also, the term person-centered care, which is used in care psychology, contains similar aspects such as the importance of recognition, respect and trust for the patient to experience well-being and health. The caregiver's role is to be responsive and curious about the patient's needs and life story and let them be the basis for the planning of the environment (Wijk, 2008). To implement a holistic and salutogenic view in a nursing home, the leadership plays an important role. The staff needs to be given time for reflection and dialog and needs to be supported in getting to know the residents beyond their physical or mental needs (Berglund, 2008). Interviewee 2 lets it show through, that she is afraid of staff not seeing her desire of being outside when her physical needs take over. Place attachment can show itself in more than an attachment to a geographical place, it can also be a context of social interactions and thus a feeling of coherence and understanding (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). This facet is covered by influence and education in the design framework.

5.3. Reflection on the design framework

When formulating the framework, I felt it to be a balancing act to create something broad enough to be able to adapt to different spaces and needs but differentiated enough to be helpful at all. Reading about other frameworks used in design literature helped me to get an idea of what was needed in regard of detail. Within this design framework I tried to bind together the four common themes discovered in the interviews and the two different facets of tangibility and conceptuality with my knowledge of design and experience of working in care homes. This framework is conceptual and on an abstract level, as it otherwise would not be usable on a great variation of environments. When designing, the most important task is to analyse

the actual site and needs of the users. There are a lot of aspects one needs to take into consideration when designing an outdoor environment for nursing homes, not the less the principal of universal design, comfortable and inspiring design (Bengtsson, 2015). This specific design framework is to be used as a tool, when analysing the environments possibilities in meeting people with different cultural backgrounds.

5.3.1. Variation

As Gifford (2014) has pointed out, there are some factors that benefit the feeling of place attachment in nursing homes. Firstly, it is important that there is an outdoor environment available for the residents. This is confirmed by such a large amount of research, that it does not require any more discussion. Given the topic of my essay, all my interviewees had access to an outdoor space. This study, like many others conducted before (Marcus & Sachs, 2014), has shown that people have different expectations towards an outdoor environment. As our feelings often are influenced by what we see, here cultural differences can affect how we perceive the outdoor space. One of my interviewees is used to clean cut grass corners and flowers that bloom during different seasons in the garden, another one judges an outdoor space by the amount of food grown there, which gives the space a whole different visible look out. And yet another of the persons I talked to wants nature to be wild and changeable. The wishes and needs of the interview participants for an outdoor environment included a lot of aspects that reminded them of their childhood. They enjoyed finding small clues that brought back happy memories from their past, both in taste and smell, but also aspects that reminded them of activities participated in during childhood. This agrees well with Anna Bengtsson results, that an outdoor environment that the residents could relate to and that therefore benefitted a connection to the past was beneficial for their feeling of being at home and belonging (Bengtsson, 2015). They wished for berry bushes, roses, herbs, and fruit trees. They also want to be able to experience the different weather elements. As many people with different cultural backgrounds living in Sweden come from warmer climates, it would be beneficial to have a greenhouse to be able to plant other greens and fruits. Plants that my interviewees remembered fondly were citrus fruits, pomegranates, dates, and different vegetables and berries. Even nuts and grapes were part of their image of a garden space.

A variety of areas with different characters would be preferable in an outdoor environment in nursing homes. Although they need to be designed in a way that ensures easy orientation and visibility, it is also important that one gets a feeling of enclosure and serenity when being in those places. Here one can implement some areas that are more nature like, others that follow a stricter and cleaner gardening attempt and others that are intended for active involvement or social gatherings. A

flexibility of the space for when one seeks solitude but also the possibility of it to be a social space. Both previous studies and my interviews agreed on that the outdoor environment should highlight the seasons, both the natural ones, but also different holidays if wanted.

Offering a variable environment requires an area big enough to be divided into different rooms, but an experienced landscape architect should be able to find ways of including varying aspects even to smaller areas, by for example using the entry areas or balconies.

5.3.2. Flexibility

The dimension of flexibility is connected to the previous variable of variation. As the outdoor environments in nursing homes need to be adapted to a great range of residents at the same time, flexibility in the layout and design are preferred. This does not only save space, as the same area can be adapted to different needs at different times, but it makes it possible to easily convert an area to new residents. As some of the needs and wishes were fairly individual it is preferable if features can be used in different ways to meet varying needs. Some features displayed in the outdoor environments might only be meaningful during a shorter period of time, as for example a Christmas tree or a midsummer pole. When an area is culturally neutral in its design, one can decorate and use it for different needs.

5.3.3. Influence

Furthermore, as stated earlier, the residents need to feel involved in the community and be part of social interactions (Gifford, 2014). This is an aspect that my interviewees have inquired after as well. They expressed the wish to be able to take part in the gardening, be involved in the choice of flowers and herbs planted in the garden and asked for possibilities to let some of their religious traditions be seen in the usage of the garden. The degree to which the interviewees wish to be integrated into the gardening work was different based on interest and physical abilities. To be able to go outside and feel part of the environment and not only a visitor of a park was important, to be able to put a chair where you want to, be allowed to pick some flowers and be able to influence what herbs to grow were some of the expressed wishes. Another desire was the possibility to uphold a religious tradition, like leaving some crops in the earth as practised within Judaism, without anyone disrespecting it. Additionally, it was of importance that it was possible to access the different areas of the garden independently. Herbs for instance are used for brewing tea or breaking ones fasting. It should be possible for a resident to gather whatever item without seeking help of staff. Both to ensure independence and a feeling of owning one's home.

It turned out that some of the residents felt displaced and had lost the feeling of belonging to a community after moving to their new residences. Interviewee 3 expressed that she missed the feeling of knowing everybody in her old neighbourhood. The community she has known in her old life, cared for each other, lent a helping hand when needed and tended to the farmland together. Gardening, growing food and cooking together with relatives or friends were activities that appeared meaningful and contributed to an improved wellbeing. She clearly expressed a need of being integrated in her new community and having influence over her new life.

Another argument for the importance of giving the residents influence is even if a person-centred environment is based on evidence and the staff's experiences, it is still the residents themselves and their expectations that the design and use of it should be based on.

5.3.4. Education

Sometimes no major adjustments in care home environments are needed to achieve a great effect on patients' well-being. So-called person-centred care communicates to the patient a feeling of being seen and respected as the individual they are (Wijk, 2008). This highly relies on the staff working at the nursing home, as it requires an empathetic and holistic view on the residents and a willingness to engage in other cultures and traditions. Humans have a deeply rooted strive of being seen as who they are. This includes ones physical and mental health, but also ones emotional, social, and spiritual needs. To be met in a way that does not require a constant explanation or translation of your feelings and needs promotes ones feeling of safety and concurrence.

To be able to share a tradition, or a simplified version of it, is easy to accomplish and can mean a great deal for the residents. Just the fact that somebody tries to understand one's faith or tries to recreate traditions can be more beneficial for a feeling of belonging than the customs itself. Often our perception is influenced by our knowledge and experience. If what we see appears meaningful and comprehensible to us, we tend to see it in a more positive light. Therefore, I suggest incorporating explanations of different attitudes or traditions in the garden. In that way, one does not only broaden one's horizon, but even learns how to approach aspects that are strange to us. It is a way of educating and ensure that different beliefs and traditions are respected. Seeing petals on the ground or left crops in a vegetable bed can be seen as if the area is neglected, but with some knowledge about the background, it may serve as an interesting topic to discuss or even encourage to take part as a community. The interviews made it clear that many residents have keen memories of fruit picking, as it stimulates many senses as

vision, touch, smell and of course taste. It also helps with physical activity and can be seen as meaningful. If there is a resident in a care home that might have a Jewish background it would be very easy to leave an apple or two on the tree as a symbol for the less fortunate. Even water features can serve many different purposes. It attracts birds and smaller animals, makes soothing sounds, and can have a great religious symbol.

6. Conclusion

The overall aim of this study was to gain an understanding of how culturally influenced experiences can be used to promote a sense of place attachment and especially a sense of continuity for elderly people.

The first part of this aim meant to gain insight in what attitudes and experiences people with varying cultural backgrounds have towards nature, and to develop an understanding of how this could affect the design needs of outdoor spaces. Does our cultural background affect our perception of nature? How does that influence place attachment?

This I feel was accomplished with the interviews conducted. Two different aspects were considered: 1) place perception is influenced by culture, and hence affecting place attachment 2) humans have a need to be seen as who they are, including cultural differences.

The second part of the aim was to see if it is possible to find general elements that can be of use when designing outdoor spaces adapted to elderly people with varying cultural backgrounds. The analysis of my results generated four general themes, that can be used as a guiding framework when designing outdoor environments for elderly people with an emphasis on different cultural backgrounds. Those themes are variation, flexibility, influence and education.

Even though this thesis is based on a small number of interviews, I think the concluding framework is a useful aspect when designing outdoor environments for people with varying cultural backgrounds. It can be used as mental checklist for the designer as it might be helpful when trying to integrate as many health beneficial aspects as possible in a limited space. Especially in the context of health care, designers should always strive after improving the environments to increase the users' living conditions and wellbeing. Therefore, it is relevant to gain knowledge about as many relevant dimensions as possible.

6.1. Further research

To be able to form a hypothesis with a greater credibility the framework should be tested in a wider range. Even the inclusion of more different cultural backgrounds is required. One would need to interview a larger quantity of people, preferably several groups living in different nursing homes. This could even give an indication of the necessity of the studied themes for an improved wellbeing. Further it would be interesting to see if one can find examples within those four different themes, variation, flexibility, influence, and education that prove to be more than individual preferences.

7. References

- Adevi, A., 2012. *Supportive Nature - and Stress, Wellbeing in connection to our inner and outer*. Diss. Alnarp: Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet.
- Adevi, A. & Grahn, P., 2012. Preferences for Landscapes: A Matter of Cultural Determinants or Innate Reflexes that Point to Our Evolutionary Background?. *Landscape research* 37, pp. 27-49.
- Agyekum, B., 2019. Religion, Well-Being, and Therapeutic Landscape. i: V. Counted & F. Watts, red. *The Psychology of Religion and Place*. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 203-218.
- Altman, I. & Low, S. M., 1992. Human behaviour and environment. Advances in theory and research. i: I. Altman & S. M. Low, red. *Place Attachment*. Boston: Springer, pp. 1-12.
- Altman, I., Rapoport, A. & Wohlwill, J., 1980. *Mänskligt beteende och miljö: framsteg inom teori och forskning*. New York: Plenum.
- Antonovsky, A., 1979. *Health, Stress and Coping*. 1:a red. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bengtsson, A., 2015. *From experiences of the outdoors to the design of healthcare environments: a phenomenological case study at nursing homes*. Diss. Alnarp: Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet.
- Bengtsson, A. & Grahn, P., 2008. Natur och trädgård i vårdsammanhang. i: H. Wijk, red. *Vårdmiljöns betydelse*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, pp. 229-254.
- Berglund, M., 2008. Ledarskapets betydelse för en salutogen vård- och boendemiljö. i: H. Wijk, red. *Vårdmiljöns betydelse*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, pp. 311-331.
- Boverket, 2020. *Arkitekturen som kraftfullt verktyg för att möta aktuella samhällsutmaningar*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.boverket.se/sv/samhallsplanering/arkitektur-och-gestaltad-livsmiljo/argument-nyttor/samhallsutmaningar/> [Använd 25 11 2021].
- Broberg, A., Risholm Mothander, P., Granquist, P. & Ivarsson, T., 2008. *Anknytning i praktiken, Tillämpningar av anknytningsteorin*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.
- Buijs, A., Elands, B. & Langers, F., 2009. No wilderness for immigrants: Cultural differences in images of nature and landscape preferences. *Landscape and urban planning*, pp. 113-123.
- Chawla, L., 1992. Childhood place attachments. i: I. Altman & S. M. Low, red. *Place Attachment*. New York: Springer Verlag, pp. 63-86.
- Cooper Marcus, C. & Sachs, N., 2014. *Therapeutic landscapes : An evidence-based approach to designing healing gardens and restorative outdoor spaces*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Counted, V., 2019. Religion, Place and Attachment: An Evaluation of Conceptual Frameworks. i: V. Counted & F. Watts, red. *The Psychology of Religion and Place*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 33-48.

- Counted, V. & Watts, F., 2019. An Introduktion to the Psykology of Religion and Place. i: V. Counted & F. Watts, red. *The Psykology of Religion and Place*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-12.
- Eggertsen Teder, M., 2018. *From Outsideness to Insideness - Placemaking in Public Space*. Diss. Trondheim : Norwegian University of Science and Technology.
- Esaiasson, P., Gilljam, M., Oscarsson, H. & Wägnerud, L., 2007. *Metodpraktikan*. 3:2 red. Vällingby: Norstedst Juridik AB.
- Gifford, R., 2014. *Environmental Psychology*. 5:e red. Coville, WA: Optimal Books.
- Gruneau Brulin, J., 2019. God and Place as Attachment 'Figures': A Critical Examination. i: V. Counted & F. Watts, red. *The Psychology of Religion and Place: Emerging Perspectives*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 183-200.
- Hammond, A. & Niedermann, K., 2010. Patient education and self management. i: K. Dziedzic & A. Hammond, red. *Rheumatology*. Amsterdam: Elsevier , pp. 77-97.
- Kaplan, S., 1988. Perception and Landscape: Conceptions and Misconceptions. i: J. L. Nasar, red. *Environmental Aesthetics Theory, Research, and Application*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 45-55.
- Karlsson, L., 2001. *Psykologins grunder*. 2:a red. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Kvale, S. & Brinkman, S., 2020. *Den kvantitativa forskningsintervjun*. 3:e red. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Marcus, C. C. & Sachs, N., 2014. *Therapeutic landscapes : an evidence-based approach to designing healing gardens and restorative outdoor spaces*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Mather, G., 2016. *Foundations of sensation and perception*. 3:e red. London: Routledge.
- Migrationsverket, 2021. Statistik. [Online] Available at: <https://www.migrationsverket.se/Om-Migrationsverket/Statistik.html> [Använd 20 01 2021].
- Patel, R. & Davidsson, B., 2011. *Forskningsmetodikens grunder - Att planera, genomföra och rapportera en undersökning*. 2:a red. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Rappe, E., Kivelä, S.-L. & Rita, H., 2006. Visiting Outdoor Green Environments Positively Impacts Self-rated Health among Older People in Long-term Care. *HortTechnology*, pp. 55-59.
- Robinson, O. C., 2013. Sampling in Interview-Based Qualitative Research: A Theoretical and Practical Guide. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* , 18 November, Volym 11, pp. 25-41.
- Rowles, G., 1983. Place and personal identity in old age: Observations from Appalachia. *Journal of environmental Psychology*, Volym 3, pp. 299-313.
- Scannell, L. & Gifford, R., 2009. Defining place attachment: A tripartite organizing framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 22 September, pp. 1-10.
- Scannell, L. & Gifford, R., 2010. Defining place attachment: A tripartite organizing framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, pp. 1-10.
- Scannell, L. & Gifford, R., 2014. The psykology of place attachment. i: R. Gifford, red. *Environmental Psychology: Principles and Practice*. 5:e red. Colville WA: Optimal Books, pp. 272-300.
- Stigsdotter, U. & Grahn, P., 2002. What makes a garden a healing garden. *Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture*, pp. 60-69.
- Ulrich, R., 1999. Effects of gardens on health outcomes: Theory and research. i: C. Cooper Marcus & M. Barnes, red. *Healing Gardens: Therapeutic Benefits and Design Recommendations*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 27-86.

- van Heijgen, E., 2013. *Human Landscape Perception*, Wageningen : Wageningen University.
- Värdighetsutredningen, 2008. *Värdigt liv i äldreomsorgen*, Stockholm: Regeringskansliet.
- Whear, R., Thompson-Coon, J., Alison, B. & Abbott, R., 2014. What Is the Impact of Using Outdoor Spaces Such as Gardens on the Physical and Mental Well-Being of Those With Dementia? A Systematic Review of Quantitative and Qualitative Evidence. *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*, pp. 1-9.
- Wijk, H., 2008. Presoncentrerad utformning av vårdmiljön. i: H. Wijk, red. *Vårdmiljöns betydelse*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, pp. 43-54.
- Wiles, J. o.a., 2009. Older people and their social spaces: A study of well-being and attachment to place in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Social Science & Medicine*, pp. 664-671.
- Wöbse, H. H., 1982. Landschaftsästhetik. Gedanken zu einem einseitig verwendeten Begriff. *Landschaft + Stadt*, pp. 152-160.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to all my interview participants for their time and willingness to share their experiences.

Special thanks to my supervisor Anna Bengtsson, for not stressing me when I needed to take a break from the studies, but then inspiring me to finish this thesis when I needed it. I am very grateful for all your feedback and time. Had I not read your doctoral thesis in the first years of my landscape architecture studies, I might never have made it this far, as it showed me how to tie together my background in social work and design.

Forever thankful to my husband, who believed in me, accepted my diffuse writing hours and held my hand in the last phase of the writing process when procrastinating wasn't an option anymore.

Appendix 1

Table of common aspects

Attitudes	Memories	Needs/wishes	Traditions	Holistic view
Interview 1				
Important for humans	Pomegranates	Being able to take in /grow herbs and spices	Harvest festival	to include a part of oneself, that is an important dimension
Wants to live in similar settings as she grew up	Citrus fruit	greenhouse	Fasting	
	Water plays a big role		Spices to stimulate senses	
			Do not harvest all – leave for the poor	
			Leave a part that is not perfect – only God is perfect	
Interview 2				
Extension of the living space	Blackberries	Birds and small garden animals	Picking garden bouquets on Fridays	Able to relive ones memories
Leisure time, enjoyment	Green	Places where one can be alone	Corpus Christi – sprinkle petals as a child	
No responsibilities	Places for coffee breaks, adaptable to the weather	Pick flowers, water plants	Decorated the church with flowers	

			on special festive days	
Wants to be able to visit similar settings as the one she grew up in	Smell of roses	To sit outside and see the sky		
	Sound of a little stream	Important to be able to get outside even if physically weak		
Interview 3				
Important part of culture	smell	community	Tree festival	Culture affects the whole person
Fond memories	Cultivating the land	To grow spices and vegetables	Being outside and learning of grandparents	Good to show interest
fellowship	trees		picknick	
Wants to live in similar settings as she grew up in	Smell of Syrian Jasmin			
	vegetables			
	Roses for making jam			
	walnut tree			
	pomegranates			
	dates			
	grapes			
	Talking to neighbours			
Attitudes	Memories	Needs/wishes	Traditions	
Interview 4				
Land for farming	Smell of basil and red soil	food	All family coming together to harvest	
fulfilling	Cooking food	animals		
meaningful	Picking fruit			
Social area	relatives			
Wants to live in similar settings as the	Kitchen garden			

ones he grew up in				
	figs			
	grapes			
	Pear and apple trees			
	Chicken and pigeons			
Interview 5				
A lot of work	Mother loves plants	berries	Celebration of the first day of summer	Needs to understand my background to understand my attitude
Nature was a strong force in everyday life	Strong weather forces	Calm place to read a book	National camping day	
Took the beautiful scenery for granted	The waves from the ocean	Going for walks, preferably changing scenery		
Flowers are totally unnecessary		Wants to be able to sit in the sun		
Leave nature alone, nobody owns it				
Leisure areas should be well taken care of				
Does not want to live in similar settings as the ones she grew up in				