Are psychosocial symptoms and self-rated health early and shared risk factors for physical disability and cognitive decline in old age?

Post doctoral research project
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Objectives of the research

- To investigate early psychosomatic symptoms and self-rated health in relation to cognitive decline and physical disability in old age.

The main research questions:

- Are stress symptoms in midlife associated with cognitive decline or physical disability in old age?
- Are negative motivational reactions to work in midlife associated with adverse health outcomes in old age?
- Does poor self-rated health or fitness earlier in life predict physical disability or dementia in old age?
- Are stressful life events accelerating the process of cognitive decline?
Methods
Study data and subjects

Mainly two large, existing datasets from Gerontology Research Centre, University of Jyväskylä, Finland and from Aging Research Centre, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden, will be used for conducting the present study.

1. The follow-up study on Finnish municipality workers (FLAME)
2. Cardiovascular Risk Factors, Aging and Dementia (CAIDE)
FLAME

• Collaboration between University of Jyväskylä and Finnish Institute of Occupational Health
• Baseline data in 1981 (N=6257, aged 44-58)
• Follow-up questionnaires in 1985, 1992, 1997 and 2009
• Data consist information about work, work ability, health, somatic and psychosocial symptoms, work strain, stress, lifestyle and leisure-time activities.
CAIDE

- Collaboration between ARC, University of Eastern Finland and National Institute of Health and Welfare, Finland
- Participants were selected from survivors of four population-based random samples (baseline examinations in 1972, 1977, 1982 or 1987), N=2000
  - Information about health, medical history, health behaviour
- First re-examination in 1998
- Second re-examination in 2005-2008
  - Re-examination included battery of cognitive tests.
Results and reporting

The post-doc research will consist of original articles, which will be published in international peer-reviewed scientific journals.

Additionally, the results will be presented in national and international conferences during 2011-2014.