The target of this study, conducted in October/November of 1997, is a polytechnic that had then been operating as a permanent polytechnic for some months. Four of its five educational units are the target of this study each representing separate educational fields.

The aim of this case-study is to explore how the ideal of a uniform polytechnic works out in practice. The study sets the experiences and views of the management and the personnel of the institution against the official aims of the polytechnic system, specifically multi-disciplinariness and deregulation, by taking into account the conditions for and the obstacles to cooperation causing by the cultural differences of the fields. An answer has been sought to the questions: How did the cultures of the fields confronted? Have they yet evolved a common culture? Do the cultures of the fields separate from one another? It has also been endeavoured to make comprehensible the complexity inherent in the implementation of the broad programmes launched by central administration, particularly, when many people participate in the implementation process.

The research method was thematic interview. Cultural themes have been sought by sorting the interview material employing the Grounded Theory by Glaser & Strauss. The differences between the educational units and the views within them have been grouped by themes utilizing the tripartition of cultural perspectives by Joanne Martin. The perspectives are integration, differentiation and fragmentation perspectives. By coding the material, the categories i.e. the cultural themes have emerged. The core category is “compulsive” multi-disciplinariness, i.e. the obligation brought by the polytechnic to cooperate multi-disciplinarily. As a common content and strategy has not yet been created for the implementation of this multi-disciplinariness, it still remains only “a coulisse”, an artefact. Exercise of power of the central administration, which is a uniting factor of the institution, is criticized by the units. Some units find that their position has weakened, others that it has strengthened during the polytechnic-status. Nevertheless, all want to continue in the polytechnic-system.

The theory of the study is also grounded on the works by Edgar Schein, Andrew Brown, Richard Geerz, Nohria & Eccles (eds.), Kickert et.al, Alasuutari, Harmon & Mayer, Spradley, Hirsijärvi & Hurme and Yin, just to mention a few. The legislation and other sources on the polytechnics are also important.

Avainsanat-Nyckelord-Keywords
polytechnics
educational fields
multi-disciplinariness
cultures -organizations
thematic interviews

Säilytyspaikka-Förvaringsställe-Where deposited
Muita tietoja-Övriga uppgifter-Additional information