

DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES BASED ON CONTEMPLATIVE EDUCATION APPROACH TO ENHANCE WELL-BEING OF THE ELDERLY

Kittipat Wiyaporn¹

Wirathep Pathumcharoenwattana²

Pongsathorn Tantirithisak³

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Abstract: The purposes of this research were to 1) develop a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education approach to enhance well-being of the elderly; 2) study the results by using the developed model of non-formal education activities to enhance well-being of the elderly; and 3) study factors and conditions which are involved in implementation of the developed model of non-formal education activities. The activities and handbook of non-formal education activity are based on the contemplative education approach to enhance well-being of the elderly people. The activities were conducted using the elderly people whose housing was in Bangkok as the population. The samples were 42 elderly that reside in the area of Bon Gai, 20 were in the experimental group and 22 were in the controlled group. The data were analyzed by using pre-post-test process.

The major findings were as follows: 1) the activities model consisted of eight components which comprise of the following: a) contemplation b) compassion c) connection d) confronting e) continuity f) commitment and g) community; From the studies the researcher has found a new principle which was h) cheerfulness or delightful relaxation of confederate in the learning processes of activity. 2) by using the activities model the result shows the enhancement in well-being of the elderly in the experimental group. The subject means scores after experiment is higher than before the experiment at .05 level of significance; and 3) the implementation of activity model resulted in the supporting factors that were the deep-listening,

opened mind and experienced facilitator of contemplation, the participation of learners, and substance of the holistic well-being of learning factors. The conditions of the success for implementation of the activities were the physical health of learners, the understanding of assessment form, and natural environment of training place.

Keywords: Model of Non-formal Education Activities, Contemplative Education

Background and Significance of the Issue

Structural change in the elderly population to an aging society is an issue that should receive the attention of both nationally and globally because it affects both broad macro level and micro level. The macro level issues that affecting the government includes the effect on gross domestic product (GDP), per capital income, savings and investment, government budget, employment and labor productivity. The micro levels issues consist of an impact on various products and services, especially finance and health.

Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board expected that elderly population (over age 60) would increase more than three times from 4.02 million in B.E. 2533 to 17.74 million in B.E. 2573. If representing in ratio, it would increase from 7.36% to 25.12%. According to definition of an Aging Society, Thailand stepped into an aging society in B.E. 2547(Posttoday, 2009).

There are three aspects of the problems that are found in the elderly Physical Domain, Social and Psychological Domain.: 1) Physical Domain – the elderly physical found to be deteriorating these included every organ, bad health, getting sick easily; 2) Social – over time the social status and social role of the elderly found to be reduce or may be disappear, this cause the elderly to adapt to new conditions of living; 3) Psychological Domain – due to the changes of the body and social status of the elderly this affect mental stress, anxiety, depression and others (Bureau of Health Promotion, n.d.). In addition, it is found that more than 90 percent of the elderly who are in depression are going to be sad or depressed continuously. About 60-70 percent of the elderly with depression show symptoms of anxiety. Furthermore, 80-90 percent of the elderly have insomnia problem (Rewat Wisarutwad, 2009).

¹ Ph.D. Candidate, Doctoral Program of Non-formal education, Department of Educational Policy, Management, and Leadership, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

² Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Policy, Management, and Leadership, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

³ Ph.D. (Integrated Sciences), Director of Plukrak Institute, Thailand

The study on the needs of the elderly can be concluded that the critical needs of the elderly are physical and psychological needs. The elderly want to benefit others and society there for the elderly need knowledge and news about health to deploy in life that will lead to happily living in society (Porntep Monvucharin [2004] and Sarawanee Kitdet [2004]) which is in line with education gerontology which is suggested by McClusky (1975). McClusky stated that the elderly wanted to study or learned to meet basic needs in order to develop themselves and satisfy with the old age life (Penkhae Pachonpanchanuek, 2007).

Long-term goal of development for the elderly is not to cure the elderly from the deteriorating or sickness, as it's considered that it will be everyone's burden in the future to take care the elderly that are increasing day by day. There for the main goal of development of the elderly is for them to be a strong member of the society and participating in social development. That is to be done in addition to good health (Banlu Siripanich, 2007) which is in line with Elderly Act, B.E. 2546 Section 11 (4): The elderly are entitled to protection, promotion and support in self-development as well as participation in social activities.

In studying attributes of active ageing among elite Thai elderly such as health personnel found that one of the active aging among elite Thai elderly attributes is well-being (Parichat Yatniyom, 2004) which is same as the World Health Organization 's statement: purpose of the elderly worldwide is well-being (World Health Organization, 2002).

The review of the direction of development for well-being, including the importance of psychological dimension or the development of the inner human condition was associated with implementation and reflection in the management of social environment as well as physical development. The emphasis on the real human "happiness" began as a challenge in searching Thailand and worldwide (Wirat Kumsrichan and others, 2008). Waves of change in social, economic, political and cultural traditions affect life and existence of the elderly directly and indirectly.

The National Health Act B.E. 2550 provides that "health (well-being)" is a state of complete physical, mental, Spiritual and social well-being, which are holistic balance. It is the same as the World Health Organization states that "health (well-being)" is complete physical, mental and social well-being as well as living in society with happiness. This includes spiritual well-being, whose characteristic image is a holistic life. In consistent with the Buddhist holistic well-being, holistic relationship system of causes is a holism or composition which is related to each other as causes. It is composed of 1) Physical development;

2) Moral/ Social development; 3) Emotional development; and 4) Cognitive/Wisdom development (Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, 2006). The Buddhist holistic well-being is in line with the new paradigm that health (well-being) concept is holistic. It is the relationship of body and mind and association with various contexts of life and health learning.

The demonstrating state of well-being comes from understanding the world, understanding life, understanding your own body and your own mind, including the creation of an action plan to conduct causes contributing to such according to the goal of well-being of life. Each side must be linked and affected each other as the process of living systems (Wiratthep Pathumcharoenwattana, 2000). Therefore, researcher has brought holistic well-being concepts as mentioned in order to synthesize internal factors of each element of the well-being to be the target or results to be supported for the elderly good quality life. There are 4 elements of the well-being as follows; physical, mental, social and cognitive well-being.

Supporting the elderly to have good quality of life and appropriate implementation to Thai society is to enhance well-being life which is the mission of the Ministry of education to follow Elderly National Plan No. 2 (B.E. 2545-2564). There are measures to promote knowledge about health, protection and basic self-care which is consistent with Elderly Act, B.E. 2546 Section 11 (2) which states that the elderly are under the law entitled to protection, encourage and support to receive an education, religion and useful information to their lives. This implementation can be done to achieve the goals by promoting and supporting lifelong learning with non-formal education because non-formal education is flexible to set target, format, measurement and evaluation. Its content and curriculum must be appropriate for the problems and needs of individuals (Office of the Education Council, 2545).

Education and learning for the elderly today are not aimed for learning purpose or goal but they are viewed as a means that can bring the elderly to self-development, potential aging and quality social resources. However, current non-formal education for the elderly is not aimed for education purpose but for the elderly participation in society. Its goal is more on recreation than education (Penkhae Pachonpanchanuek, 2007). As a result, adoption of non-formal education that is developed based on andragogy defined as art and science of helping adult learn is integrated in order to be consistent with the contemplative education or the other names such as awakening, new consciousness and others (Prawase Wasi, 2007). It is appropriate to be defined as a reasonable education strategy for the elderly because contemplative education is the education that focuses

on mental and cognitive development to generate the awareness of the meaning of life, valuing without prejudice, loving and mercy as well as the perception of the relationship between the holistic body and mind.

Basic philosophy of the learning process of contemplative education is "confidence in being human" to access the goodness that exists in human and "holistic paradigm". Holistic paradigm is the holistic learning management for human development to balance both body and mind and thinking. It is the learning that is connecting to real life based on principles of culture, scientific process by integrative + transdisciplinary learning, experiential learning, practical learning and transformative learning in order to access to the principal facts, beauty and goodness (the proceedings of human resources development on higher education working group, 2550). In addition, it is accordance with the education principles of Buddhism that includes development of body, verbal, relationships with others and environment, training for quality mental development, mental competency, mental health along with training for cognition, world and life understanding as well as free mind (Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, 2006).

Important factor of learning process of contemplative education is having direct experience that leads to changes, independence, happiness and a holistic paradigm or viewing world in relationship aspect. The basic organizing of contemplative education management is composed of the following 7th C principle: 1) contemplation, 2) compassion, 3) connection, 4) confronting, 5) continuity, 6) commitment, and 7) community. (Thana Ninchaikowit et al., 2007)

Goal of the learning process of contemplative education is targeted to be important methods and tools for inner human development in actual implementation and practice. It is the foundation of spirit and a new holistic paradigm. This change will lead to a state of happiness.

The integration of contemplative education into non-formal education that focuses on to teaching people to think, make decision and adapt it in daily life (Archanya Ratana-Ubol, 2007). It is needed to develop systematically in order that various activities can develop the elderly to change in knowledge, skill and attitude, and achieved as set. Therefore, researcher adopts the concept of Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) to use in development of a model for the elderly activities because there is a development plan for learning systematically. The development process includes the following 5 steps: 1) assessing needs and problems; 2) establishing objectives of behavior; 3) designing activities to promote change or learning; 4) implementing designed activities; and 5) assessing programs or outcomes.

Therefore, researcher is interested in developing non-formal educational activities based on contemplative education to enhance the elderly well-being. This research will target at the elderly people in Bangkok because Bangkok is the society that has different economic pattern from other rural society of the country. It can be said that the majority occupation in Bangkok must end when the age is at 60. That would mean that the Bangkok elderly people whose role will be reduced faster than the rural elderly population. In addition, the Bangkok elderly people are the group that population growth is increasing continually and quickly now the number of elderly over 60 is at 657,342 peoples. The Bangkok elderly people tend to be dependence on others and there for the chances of acquiring the disability is higher than other provinces, this disability includes anxiety, stress, depression and insomnia. It is essential to organize activities to enhance well-being to this group of the elderly population. In addition, the elderly are interested in participating in the activities and wanting to meet needs of developing holistic well-being. (Department of Mental Health, 1999; Jirapa Srikam, 2002; Chulalux Sonchaiya, 2003; Taweesak Sawangmek, 2005) is in line with Elderly National Plan No. 2 which states that the elderly has value and should be supported to learn to enhance their potentials. In order to achieve such potentials, the development of learning activities is to focus on changing concepts, beliefs, knowledge, values, attitudes, conscious as well as awareness of personal feelings that affect the behavior.

Research Objectives

1. To develop a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education approach to enhance the well-being of elderly
2. To study the results of using the developed model of non-formal education activities to enhance the well-being of elderly
3. To study the factors and conditions, which are, involved in implementation of the developed a model of non-formal education activities to enhance the well-being of elderly

Research Hypothesis

1. The elderly who joined non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being will have knowledge, skills and attitudes for physical, mental, social, and cognitive well-being according to the difference of test scores before and after activities.
2. The elderly in the experimental group that joined non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being will have knowledge, skills and attitudes for physical,

mental, social and cognitive well-being according to the difference of test scores between this group and control group.

Research Scopes

The scopes of this research are to cover in 2 parts which are population and variables of the study, the details are below:

1. Scope of population

Population of the study is the elderly people who live in Bangkok. The sample group was 42 elderly from the area of Bon Gai as the case study.

2. Scope of variables of the study

Variables of the study are:

2.1 Independent variable is non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly.

2.2 Dependent variable is physical, mental, social and cognitive well-being of the elderly.

Research Definitions

The development of non-formal education activities: There is a development plan for learning systematically based on the concept of Brundage and MacKeracher (1980). The development process includes the following 5 steps: 1) assessing needs and problems of the elderly; 2) establishing objectives of behavior to enhance the well-being; 3) designing activities to promote change or learning based on contemplative education approach which consists of a) contemplation b) compassion c) connection d) confronting e) continuity f) commitment and g) community; 4) implementing designed activities; and 5) assessing programs or outcomes.

Contemplative education: The education that focuses on mental and cognitive development to generate the awareness of the meaning of life, valuing without prejudice, loving and mercy as well as the perception of the relationship between the holistic body and mind. It is the experiential learning, practical learning and transformative learning in order to access to the principal facts, beauty and goodness. The learning process of contemplative education is having direct experience that follows 7^c principle:

1) Contemplation is the state of mind that is suitable for learning and can be used at work. Contemplation includes systems thinking or critical thinking, linking thought to cognitive, interpersonal (empathy) and intrapersonal (self-reflection).

2) Compassion is to send out power of companionship to take care of facilitator group, process management of environment and supportive context of learning.

3) Connection is to help participants or learners in connecting experiences during the learning process to life. It can lead to learning process of

internalization to be integrated into living and help connecting experiences among learners, community and society as well as learning of what learners have and are (being) that affect yourself, others, community and society.

4) Confronting is to organize challenging activities opening to participants to leave their own comfort zone to face risk zone that will be new learning areas and understanding of limitations and potentials of themselves to learn and develop.

5) Continuity is to create an energetic flow of process, which allows dynamic learning to facilitate learning potentials of participants or learners to release, learn ourselves and see ourselves (self-image) as well as work for further development.

6) Commitment is to facilitate the participants or learners to bring the learning process to their daily life after training in order to lead to learning for sustainable and continue changes.

7) Community is a sense of learning community or community of practice among the participants and facilitators who support learning and the inner change of each person including building relationship network, learning exchange in the group, learning together, sharing experiences, which are, continue learning and connecting to life.

Well-being: This research has brought holistic well-being concepts to synthesize internal factors of each element to be the goal to enhance the well-being of elderly. There are 4 elements of well-being as follows:

1) Physical well-being is an appropriate health care behavior, including body strength and enough sleep.

2) Mental well-being is delighted mind, including mercy, self-esteem and life satisfaction as well as the loss and death acceptance as the nature of life.

3) Social well-being is living together with a good family relationship, supporting each other to promote social peace and adapting to the changing role of various age appropriately.

4) Cognitive well-being is ability to critical thinking and solves the problem according to cases, practicing mindfulness and having clear comprehension of the body, feeling, and mind, and letting go from the self.

Expected Benefits

1. To obtain a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education that can be implemented to enhance physical, mental, social and cognitive well-being of elderly.

2. To apply a model of education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being from this research to the education target

group both formal and non-formal education. Hence, it is useful for youth and the human resource development as well as various public and private sector organizations.

3. To implement the developed model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being, which is one factor to promote and support individuals to have quality of life. In addition, it helps to create guidelines for enhancing the well-being for oneself continuously.

Relevant Literature and Researches

Part 1: Non-formal education principles and non-formal education activities processes

Part 2: Contemplative education concepts, principles and processes

Part 3: Concepts of the elderly

Part 4: Concepts of the well-being

Part 5: Relevant researches

The Conceptual Framework

1. Input: Studying the collected data, relevant concepts, related theories from documents and research in order to define a conceptual framework for research and development of non-formal education activities that are: 1) principles of non-formal education activities 2) contemplative education 3) concepts of the well-being and 4) concepts of the elderly.

2. Process: The step that use to process all input and define non-formal education activities and education contents as follows:

2.1 Setting a model of education activities, including objectives, materials, participants, facilitators, necessary equipments, places, time, activities process and evaluation.

2.2 Content learning is a way of life maintenance for the well-being person such as naturally good physical health, good mental health as well as good relationship with family, community and social. In addition, critical thinking is used to consider the reality of the natural environment through education activities and a variety of techniques.

2.3 Evaluation before and after the experiment for both control group and experimental group. The evaluation is done by using questionnaires for the well-being and in-depth interview the experimental group about knowledge, attitudes and skills after experiment.

3. Output: a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance well-being of the elderly. The characteristics of these elderly are physical, mental, social and cognitive well-being. Furthermore, knowing promoting factors and problems in arranging developed non-formal education activities based on

contemplative education to enhance the well-being of the elderly can be implemented.

Research Procedures

In order to develop a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly, researcher designs and develops the study into 3 phases as follows:

Phase 1: Development of a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly. The first phase is to analyze and synthesize concepts of non-formal education theory, concepts of contemplative education, concepts of enhancing the well-being and concepts of the elderly by collecting data to develop a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly. Steps are as follows:

Step 1: The study and data collection will be done through documents, books, internet, articles, related researches, attended workshops, seminars and practices. These are obtained to determine the process to develop a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly.

Step 2: Development of a model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly according to process of development of a model of non-formal education activities by Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) in stage 1 -2 as follows:

- 1) Stage 1: Evaluation for needs and problems of the well-being of elderly uses scale to measure the well-being of elderly. The well-being test is developed by researcher and inspected quality by experts.
- 2) Stage 2: Setting educational objectives includes behavioral characteristics, which are shown to be physical, mental, social and cognitive well-being.

Step 3: Organizing of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly according to the fundamental of development of a model of non-formal education activities by Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) in stage 3.

- 3) Stage 3: Organizing activities to support learning and be consistent with objectives is as follows:

- 3.1 Determining content and learning experiences in accordance with objectives as well as variety of activities uses principles of non-formal education activities and principles of learning process of contemplative education which consists of a)

contemplation b) compassion c) connection d) confronting e) continuity f) commitment and g) community

- 3.2 Preparation of research tools, including the development of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly is to be organized by arranging a model of non-formal education training activities workshop in the form of 3 days 2 nights camping for 2 times. Plan of training activities includes names of activities, objectives, group size, time, devices, activities process, evaluation, summary, facilitator's skill and remark. The activities are consistent with the behavioral characteristics of the well-being people. Self-study is arranged by following the handbook for non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being for 21 days. Total duration of the training and self-study is 27 days. The research tools are developed by researcher and inspected quality by experts.

- 3.3 The measurement tools in this research are developed to obtain results for the objectives. This research is to study effect of implementation of the developed model of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly, as well as study related factors and conditions. There are 6 research tools as follows: 1) Questionnaire form of well-being as measuring tools for sample group; 2) Interview form about learning, attitudes and skills to enhance the well-being of elderly; 3) Assessment form of the development activities, 4) Interview form for promoting factors and obstacles of implementation of activities; 5) Self-assessment form which comes with operation manual for experimental group; and 6) Interview form that comes with handbook. The quality of all tools is tested by experts.

Phase 2: The experiment and the study of results of implementation of the developed non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly are processed according to the fundamental of development of a model of non-formal education activities by Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) in stage 4-5 which are:

- 4) Stage 4: Operation follows the plan of non-formal education activities based on

contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly.

- 5) Stage 5: Evaluation of project and results of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education according to objectives of learning to enhance the well-being of elderly as required.

Phase 3: The study of factors and conditions that are involved in implementation of developed non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly. Researcher collects data from evaluation form of activities after the experiment. The analysis of evaluation form is done in the part that is related to the opinions of elderly who join the activities by in-depth interview. Information that is obtained from this phase will be used to revise and develop non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of elderly to be more efficient and effective.

Conclusion

The major findings were as follows the model development of non-formal education activities based on contemplative education to enhance the well-being of the elderly consists of:

1. The essential of activity model contained four components that were: 1) the principles of activity model 2) the objectives of activity model 3) the processes of activity model and 4) the results of activity model. The learning processes of activity model included: a) contemplation b) compassion c) connection d) confronting e) continuity f) commitment g) community. From the studies, the researcher has found a new principle, which was h) cheerfulness, or delightful relaxation of confederate in the learning processes of activity.

2. The activity model which was implemented to be able to enhance the well-being of the elderly in the experimental group that had their well-being higher after attended the activity model with the statistical significant at .05 level.

3. The implementation of activity model resulted in the supporting factors, which were the deep-listening, opened mind and experienced facilitator of contemplation, the participation of learners, and substance of the holistic well-being of learning factors. The conditions of the success reliant on the physical health of learners, the understanding of assessment form, and natural environment of training place.

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