



Proposed policy for developing social innovations to create value for the aging

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Abstract

This paper has its objectives: (1) to study the aging wisdom in terms of arts and crafts, arts of agricultural culture, and education; and (2) to create policy proposals for developing social innovations to create value for the aging. Snowball sampling was used to recruit the target group consisting of 6 senior citizens from Pathum Thani province, together with 10 experts in the development and transmission of aging-related wisdom. The research tools used were unstructured in-depth interviews and a group discussion. The IOC consensus values were from 0.6–1.0. The data analysis applied content analysis. The results showed that: (1) In the field of arts and crafts, there is embroidering Sabai Mon and Mon cloth. Similarly, in the sphere of arts and culture, there are a hundred monks, Lam Pa Khao San, and Loi Krathong festivals. Additionally, in the study of agriculture, there is farming combined with fish farming, and for the education segment, there is educating the children, the youth, and the people. The policy proposal for social innovation development was to create values for the aging consisting of 3 issues: (1) Organizing systems and mechanisms for agencies are roles in strengthening the aging in self-development and ready to transfer wisdom with eight measures; (2) Promoting and developing the potential of people of all ages to be competent by using learning resources and wisdom of the aging with six measures; and (3) Promoting family and community networking for working together for the wisdom for youths with six measures.

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Introduction

The situation of aging in Thailand as of March 6, 2022 found that there is an aging population of 12,116,199 people, representing 18.3 percent of the total population of Thailand. The majority of older people –56.5 percent of all those who are aging—fall into the 60–69 age group. They are followed by those in the 70–79 and 80-plus age groups, respectively (Department of Older Persons, 2022). In this sense, Thailand is focusing priority on an aging society since “aging people” are those who readily lack self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as those who have a variety of medical problems both internally and outwardly brought on by various health issues. In the real world, “aging” is valuable because it means that a person has gained a wealth of knowledge and understanding from their experiences and various environments. As a result, they have developed into a treasure trove of priceless wisdom and can be regarded as honorable people.

The increasing number of aging people is in line with one of the strategies in the National Economic and Social Development Plan, which is the National Aging Plan. In the current Second Agenda (2002–2021), 5 strategies serve as the fundamental planning concepts. These strategies are; (1) preparing the population for quality aging; (2) promoting aging; (3) social protection system for the aging; (4) managing the national aging work development and personnel development; and (5) processing and developing aging knowledge and evaluating the implementation of the strategy (Department of Older Persons Committees, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2010). The development of society requires new concepts, methods and processes to drive and solve problems in society especially the gap between childhood and the elderly to keep them close and create co-creation between them in order to live together happily. The potential of aging can be driven socially innovative projects, participate and make use of social innovations for social community (Noack & Federwisch, 2020). In addition, Wongthongdee et al. (2016) studied the strategies for bringing the values of the aging to society in a creative way on the basis of ensuring good quality of life for people of all ages. The results of the study have formulated 5 levels of strategies for bringing the values of the aging to society in a creative way, namely; Strategy 1, at national level, “Promoting the bringing of values and experiences of the aging to society in a creative way for people of all ages”, Strategy 2, at regional level, “Integrating cooperation in the affairs of the aging between relevant agencies at the provincial and district level, including local administrative

organizations at the provincial level.”, Strategy 3, at local level, “Promoting wisdom activities and strengthening in bringing the potential and values of the aging at local level.”, Strategy 4, at community level, “Promoting leadership roles and institutions in the community to push for good attitudes and realize the value of the aging people.”, and Strategy 5 at family level, “Enhancing understanding and warmth in the family for the aging to maintain the connection of the head of the family”. The measures of each strategy should be implemented and coordinated in a holistic manner to create a better quality of life for people of all ages.

Literature Review

The establishment of training courses in indigenous vegetable production bases for pesticide-free vegetable production systems and local knowledge in agriculture for the elderly is one example of the study being done currently on the development of aging. It was found that knowledge should be shared based on the rules, regulations, and concepts of indigenous agricultural wisdom in order to augment knowledge. The training program's effectiveness was 80 percent greater than the threshold for information acquired during training (E1) and knowledge acquired after engaging in training activities (E2). Moreover, additionally, it was recommended that agricultural learning materials be developed in the region to improve the age-appropriate occupation (Kaewkaeng, 2016). This included knowledge management, i.e., the knowledge management system of weaving from aging wisdom in the upper southern region, consisting of 2 parts; Part 1, the user: user, informant, administrator, Part 2 consisting of five modules: user information, weaving community, weaving wisdom, weaving process, and satisfaction assessment. The experimental results were the most appropriate and have been accepted by users at a high level as well (Sooknit & Sakda, 2020). In addition, the results of the non-formal education management using indigenous wisdom based on the relationship between the aging and the youth found that: (1) for activities of folk wisdom, Mudmee silk made communally assisted in creating an atmosphere and organizing the physical environment in learning, planning, designing, implementing activities and assessing activities between the aging and the youth; (2) for the activities of folk wisdom, Mudmee silk making created a relationship between the aging and the youth, including communication, sharing opinions, helping others, giving job opportunities, showing sincerity and appreciation, and accepting individual characteristics (Jitwilai & Ratana-Ubol, 2019).

In the province of Pathum Thani, the arts and crafts, the arts and culture, agriculture, and education were four excellent examples of wisdom of the ages. In order to build social innovations to generate values for the aging and pass knowledge and wisdom from the aging to the youth, the Department of Older Persons (DOP) gathered individual wisdom.

The objectives of this research were: (1) to study the aging wisdom in terms of arts and crafts, arts of agricultural culture, and education; and (2) to create policy proposals for developing social innovations to create value for the aging.

Methodology

The methods used were qualitative research with Ethnography.

Phase 1: Studying the wisdom of the aging in arts and crafts, arts and culture, agriculture, and education; by interviewing the aging people who are knowledgeable and skilled in each area and achieving all four groups and summarizing the lesson learned for publication.

Phase 2: Developing policy proposals for social innovation development from creating values for the aging according to their potential by using focus group discussion.

Participants

Participants 1: Target group

The target group consisted of six senior citizens in the province of Pathum Thani who are knowledgeable in many sectors, including arts and crafts, arts and culture, agriculture, and education. An in-depth, unstructured interview was employed as the research tool to examine the lessons learnt as people age.

Participants 2: Expert group

10 highly qualified policy proposal agents with expertise and experience from both public and commercial sectors participated in the development and transmission of aging-related wisdom. Focus group discussions were conducted using a research instrument, and the IOC were from 0.6–1.0 from 5 experts.

Data Collection

1. Searching for the aging according to four pearls of wisdom: arts and crafts, arts and culture, agriculture, and education.

2. Contacting for an interview with the aging according to wisdom to gather information, ideas, experiences, and works of the aging.

3. Noting lesson learned from each of the issues from the interviews and compiling the articles for dissemination through a blog.

4. Appointing qualified persons from relevant agencies, including: (1) Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education, Pathum Thani; (2) Pathum Thani Provincial Agriculture and Cooperatives Office; (3) Pathum Thani Cultural Office; (4) Pathum Thani Provincial Office of Buddhism; (5) Pathum Thani Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office; (6) President of the Association of the Council of Elders of Thailand, Pathum Thani; (7) Industrial Technician Vocational Standards Consultant; (8) Khlong Phra Udom Elderly Club; (9) a Buddhist company promoting Buddhism business; and (10) Bang Prok Subdistrict Culture, for them to attend the Focus Group Discussion.

5. Organizing a panel discussion on proposed proposals for social innovation development in creating values for the aging on related issues, namely, the role in strengthening the aging, developing activities, or learning resources for the youth and the connection of working together, developing knowledge from aging people to pass on to all ages continuously and sustainably.

6. Transcribing the conversation and summarizing the results of the group discussion according to the specified issues and then drafting policy proposals for developing social innovations to create values for the aging.

7. Presenting the proposed policy draft to experts, considering suggestions for improvement in accordance with the context and working with relevant agencies.

Data Analysis

This research applied the content analysis to lessons learned from the interview data and the information from group discussions.

Results

The research findings are presented in two parts; part 1 summarizes the lessons learned from the aging wisdom in four aspects: arts and crafts, arts and culture, agriculture, and education, and part 2 proposes policies for social innovation development in creating values for the aging.

Part 1 Summary of the Lessons Learned from the Aging Wisdom

Arts and crafts

The Mon culture has presently been inherited by a

contractor of crafting expertise (Embroidered the Mon cloth) in the province of Pathum Thani. *“She is the inheritor of the wisdom of making Sabai Mon that continues to conserve and carry on the beauty of the Sabai Mon, which has a distinctive identity and indicates the roots of the Mon people. The beauty culture of the Mon people will remain with Thai people for a long time. Sabai is commonly used in various rituals and traditions and often used to express common identities among the Mon people. Mon people instantly recognize them while wearing Sabai in various ways. Mon ladies can never leave the house without a Sabai. There is an ancient prophecy “Maeng Jane” that mentions one of the 10 reasons for the collapse of the Mon nation, that is, “Mon women will abandon the Sabai”. It reflects the importance of Sabai to the existence of the Mon nation from ancient times to the present. If anyone goes to the temple and does not bring the Sabai with them, they will feel ashamed. It reflects the importance of Sabai to the existence of the Mon nation from ancient times to the present. If anyone goes to the temple and does not bring the Sabai with them, they will feel ashamed. The Sabai Mon’s needlework serves as a means for the Mon people to promote their arts and cultural goods. The ancient pattern, eggplant flower pattern, and matat flower pattern are the three designs that make up the Sabai Mon traditional pattern. The Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education in Mueang Pathum Thani District, Sam Khok District, and Lat Lum Kao District worked together to promote weaving careers. Later, the product model was developed to meet the trend by adding more patterns, namely lotus patterns to show the identity of Pathum Thani Province.”* shown that see Figure 1



Figure 1 Embroidered Sabai Mon

Arts and culture, and traditions

Offering alms to a hundred monks is another custom carried down from the Mon people in the region of Pathum Thani. It is a long-standing custom that enables young people to get together prior to the eighth night of Buddhist Lent and stay together until the end of Buddhist Lent by floating aboard a Ban Muang boat called Mon Krang. This festival provides opportunities for Mon people to

socialize. On the ships, things are traded. Popcorn, pickled guava, deep-fried unripe banana grains, cooked bananas in syrup, sweet banana crisp, boiling water chestnuts, sugar cane that has been peeled and diced, and boiled pigeon peas are just a few examples of the various dishes available. Mon people will perform ghost dramas. There is a ritual of bathing and cleaning the Buddha statue with scented water in the Songkran festival and playing the “hiding a cloth behind one’s back” and “monkeys scrambling for posts” games. The popular traditional Pathum Thani people’s food is “Khao Chae Raman”, a unique dish of Mon people which indicates their belief, wisdom and culture, and family. In addition, since King Rama 3’s reign, the residents of the province of Pathum Thani have observed the “Ram Pha Khao San” custom (Phrabat Somdet Phra Paramathiworaset Maha Jessadabodindra Phra Nangklaor Chao Yu Hua, Rattanakosin). The song used is Chao Khao Lala Lok, which is the name of Her Royal Highness Princess Watchariwong, and later there is the Mon Doo Dao song used in boat parades.” as shown in Figure 2



Figure 2 Culture and Traditions at Wat Hong Pathummawat

Agriculture

The agricultural wisdom came from farming and raising catfish and gourami at Ban Khlong Kwai, Sam Khok District, Pathum Thani Province. Uncle Khao’s primary line of work is farming. He has farms from his father’s and mother’s generations and grows vegetables for his household. *“Since the parents’ and ancestors’ generations have farmed twice a year, the original technique has been a field where rice is transplanted as seed, but today’s farming is done in paddy fields with the use of agricultural tools. In addition to farming, Uncle Khao raises hybrid catfish, which provides money for the family because he can combine catfish farming with rice cultivation. One of the reasons is an abundance of water. When fresh fields are planted, water is released. Fertilizer is not needed when farming with water from catfish ponds since the rice plants are well-fertilized by fish waste and feed in the green water from the catfish pond. Fresh meat, such as crushed chicken ribs, is used to feed the hybrid catfish; however, doing so will make the water deteriorate quickly.”*

The issue with catfish is that they will develop red fin sickness if it rains. This shows how acidic the water is. If there is an issue with acidic water, salt mineral must be added to the water, and fish must be given medication to treat red clematis. If there are not many fish grown, they can be sold in 4–5 months, as shown in Figure 3



Figure 3 The combination of raising catfish and growing rice

Education

Grandma Rewadee Jangprai is a wise speaker whose profession provides the family with revenue by producing bakery treats, sweets, breads, cakes, and Thai delicacies. Additionally, she gave talks at this time about how to make different sweets to adults, kids, and institutions in Bueng Yitho sub district, Thanyaburi District, Pathum Thani Province. *“Grandma Rewadee’s previous job involved selling curries and rice and preparing meals on demand. Following the footsteps of her grandmother’s wisdom, she opened their home in Fa Rangsit Village as a learning center naming it “Bung Yitho Vocational Training Center” in order to share her expertise and teach interested volunteers about Thai delicacies and banana cakes. She also volunteered as a speaker for the Elderly Empowerment Program at Thammasat University’s lecturer training for workers from various organizations. She started from visiting the area of Wat Moon Jindaram School to teach baking and making baskets made of paper. Later, she became acquainted with workers in Pathum Thani, therefore, she went to teach those people as well and has performed in various places, including Chaeng Watthana Government Center, Nonthaburi Province and various OTOP trade shows”. In addition, she participated in vocational training in 2012 for disaster victims after the great flood to further their career, as seen in Figure 4*



Figure 4 Bung Yitho Vocational Training Center

The wisdom lessons and experiences of the elderly in each aspect above transmitted to children and youth were important to help strengthen society and community and extend careers for youth, and create stability in life. This led to policy proposals for social innovation development to add value to the elderly in the next stage.

Part 2 Policy Proposals for Developing Social Innovations to Create Value for the Aging Consisting of 3 Issues, 20 Measures

Issue 1 Organizing systems and mechanisms for agencies as role in strengthening the aging in self-development and ready to transfer wisdom

1.1 Keep a database on the valuable wisdom of the aging in various forms by using technology to enable efficient access to the information with Social Development Agency and Local Culture together with the Elderly Council.

1.2 Provide appropriate elderly care courses by the public health sector with educational institutions to increase personnel to be ready to deal with an aging society.

1.3 Organize to develop the aging courses, both Hard Skill and Soft Skill, and how to manage learning on an individual or whole family, focus on a cross-generational family with educational institutions.

1.4 Provide a role of aging as a leader in the wisdom that promotes physical, mental, social, emotional, and intellectual aspects with various related organizations.

1.5 In collaboration with the office of Non-Formal and Informal Education and all levels of educational institutions, provide lifelong education on technical skills, social and emotional development, and physical and mental health care for the elderly and all ages.

1.6 Allocate funds from all organizations to the project's planning and activities that will foster relationships between generations from early infancy until the elderly can coexist peacefully.

1.7 Provide elderly access to projects or activities that will improve their professions, such as career training, handicrafts, innovations, food, agricultural goods, etc., to grow community businesses with the help of the local administrative organization and community development agency.

1.8 Arrange the dissemination of the knowledge of the elderly to the public through a range of social networks so that children, youth, and adults of all ages may learn from the Social Development and Human Security office as well as affiliated organizations.

Issue 2 Promoting and developing the potential of people of all ages to be competent by using learning resources and wisdom of the aging

2.1 Managed to bring out the potential of the aging in

driving the development of the new generation through learning resources including; Young Smart Farmer, Role Model, and Wisdom of the Elders Club, Cultural Heritage in the contemporary art, etc. with the related agencies.

2.2 Provide identity from the wisdom of the aging in each area to create pride and be learning resources for people in the local communities.

2.3 Applied technology to convey cultural knowledge, wisdom, and customs from the elderly to younger generations—including blended families, young smart farmers, etc.—and the relevant organizations.

2.4 Prepare creative media and material leveraging the experience of the elderly for new generation learning in collaboration with community development organizations and educational institutions.

2.5 Organize projects or activities to drive the foundational economy according to the principle of sufficiency economy for *strengthening families* and communities with the related agencies.

2.6 Provide learning resources from the collection of local wisdom to transfer youth in all areas with local agencies.

Issue 3 Promoting family and community networking for working together to the wisdom to youths

3.1 Setting goals for the development of aging “The elderly are a rich part of society.” strengthening the foundation by involving families, communities, and other pertinent authorities.

3.2 Provide integration and collaboration between agencies by bringing out the potential of expertise’s aging and transferring to the public.

3.3 Open spaces to show valuable wisdom of aging based on the *traditional cultural inheritance* with local authorities and relevant agencies.

3.4 Organize activities for co-creation within the family, and cohabitation increased across generations by relevant agencies.

3.5 Organize relationship-building activities with the organizations or regional agencies to promote collaboration, care, and assistance for elderly families and people of all ages.

3.6 Building a network of collaboration across organizations to connect all levels—family, local, district, and provincial—to create an aging society that is sustainable and to set up a center for coordination.

Discussion

This session is divided into two parts: a summary of the lessons learned from the elderly, and policy

recommendations for developing social innovations to benefit the elderly, as presented below;

Part 1 Summary of the lesson learned from the wisdom of the aging in 4 aspects; arts and crafts, arts and culture, traditions, agriculture, and education.

Arts and crafts from outstanding seniors are the handicraft (Embroidered Sabai Mon, Mon Sarong). The wisdom of making Sabai Mon continues to conserve and carry on the beauty of the weaving, which has distinctive identity and indicates the roots of the Mon people as well.

In terms of arts and culture, traditions that have been passed down among the Mon Pathum Thani people include offering alms to a hundred monks. There is a bathing of the buddha statue in Songkran festival and playing “hiding a cloth behind one’s back”, and “monkeys scrambling for posts” games. Khao Chae Raman, a traditional dish of the Pathum people, is a favourite, while “Ram Pha Khao San” is a boat procession. Chao Khao Lala Lok and afterwards Mon Doo Dao song are the songs played during the procession.

The majority of farmers in agriculture rely on producing rice and rearing fish to make a living. A field that was formerly utilized for transplanting rice seeds twice a year was converted to a paddy-sown field. Due to its compatibility with rice growing, uncle Khao also bred hybrid catfish. The reason was that farming using water from catfish ponds does not require fertilizer because the water from the catfish pond, the green water from the fish droppings and the food used for feeding, are good fertilizer for the rice plants.

In education, a wisdom teacher from Bueng Yitho who provided knowledge and techniques for making various desserts for teenagers and people. A speaker for various organizations or schools to teach baking and making paper baskets to laborers in Pathum Thani Province, opening her own home in Fa Rangsit Village to serve as a learning center named "Bung Yitho Vocational Training Center" to impart knowledge of Thai desserts and banana cakes to interested people as volunteers.

The research results are consistent with the research of Khammungkun et al. (2019). The needs and guidelines for the development of the elderly’s role in social development in Ban Thung Yai Community, Phu Kradueng, Phu Kradueng, and Loei found that the aging have basic needs in terms of self, family, and community. Self, consisting of body and mind, includes food, rest, exercise, income, and participation in family and community activities. As for guidelines for the development of the role of the aging people in the community and social development, Tooltham et al. (2020) conducted research on the Development of guidelines for the participation of the aging in tracing local wisdom, and they found that local wisdom in Ban Nun is divided into 6 areas, namely, recreations, forest

conservation, Lanna language, ritual traditions, herb making, and handicrafts. The obstacles to reviving and continuation of wisdom are the influence of modernity, consumerism, and materialism, the gap between the aging and the youth, and the value of investing in wisdom. For inheriting wisdom guidelines there is the establishment of local museums, groups, clubs, and networks and providing continuous activities, and the application of the community-based activities to develop a sub-district into an eco-cultural tourism site and the emphasis on integrating local wisdom as part of the school curriculum, which can be considered to extend the local wisdom for sustainability.

Part 2, Policy proposals for developing social innovations to create value for the aging, consisting of 3 issues; (1) Organizing systems and mechanisms for agencies are role in strengthening the aging in self-development and ready to transfer wisdom with eight measures., (2) Promoting and developing the potential of people of all ages to be competent by using learning resources and wisdom of the aging with six measures., and (3) Promoting family and community networking for working together for the wisdom for youths with six measures using the principle of social network arising from the cooperation of individuals, groups and networks from all parties, including, all ages will learn through social networks as a resource linking knowledge transfer. This is in line with research on the creation of a model of wisdom knowledge management for the elderly with a supportive model, the development of a local wisdom knowledge management model for senior schools in Phetchabun, and the development of a knowledge management system for weaving wisdom of the elderly in the upper southern region. This research evaluated knowledge in terms of how it is produced, retained, disseminated, and used to preserve and transmit knowledge to future generations. The knowledge management system consists of 2 parts; the first part was the user part. The user enters the administrator's information. The modules, which comprised five modules total—users' information, content, wisdom, procedure, and assessment—made up the second part (Ruengpon, 2021; Sooknit & Sakda, 2020; Zangphukieo, 2020). Additionally, the development of aging's potential in fundamental abilities like critical thinking, comprehending and solving problems, health care, technologies, participation and coexistence in society, and so forth. This has guidelines for creating a database of local wisdom, establishing a knowledge transfer center for local wisdom, creating activities to strengthen local wisdom, and support for the inclusion of curricula on local wisdom in the national education system (Pinphila, 2020). Moreover, the effect of

organizing the non-formal education process based on indigenous wisdom on the relationship between the aging and the youth found that attending local wisdom activities to make Mudmee silk has created a positive atmosphere. Organizing the physical environment in learning, planning and designing on implementation and assessment between the aging and the youth, the Mudmee silk activity creates a relationship between the aging and the youth, namely: communicating, sharing opinions, helping, providing job opportunities, showing sincerity and appreciation, and acceptance of individual characteristics between them (Jitwilai & Ratana-Ubol, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

The lesson learned from the wisdom of the aging has 4 aspects, arts and crafts, arts and culture, agriculture, and education.

(1) Arts and crafts; The wisdom of Embroidered Sabai Mon continues to conserve and carry on the beauty of the weaving, which has a distinctive identity and indicates the roots of the Mon people; (2) Arts and culture; tradition of offering alms to hundred monks. There is a bathing of the buddha statue in Songkran festival and playing “hiding a cloth behind one's back”, and “monkeys scrambling for posts” games. The song “Chao Khao Lala Lok and later Mon Doo Dao song” are used during the festival; (3) Agriculture; where most farmers make a living by rice farming. They also raised hybrid catfish because it can be combined with rice farming; and (4) The education, the wisdom aging built learning center named “Bung Yitho Vocational Training Center” which provides knowledge and techniques for making various careers.

The policy proposals for developing social innovations to create value for the aging, consisting of 3 issues: (1) Promoting and developing the potential of people of all ages to be competent by using learning resources and the wisdom of the aging; (2) Promoting family and community networking for working together to pass wisdom to youths; and (3) Promoting family and community networking for strengthening the aging in self-development and ready to transfer wisdom.

Recommendation

1. To help students learn more about local development and to inspire innovation, educational institutions should use the knowledge of elderly or local wise men and women.

2. The provincial culture office and local culture office should cooperate with the local government in gathering wisdom from the aging by systematically managing knowledge leading to the creation of community identity to strengthen and create pride in the community by letting children and youth participate in the drive towards sustainability.

3. Local government should create learning resources from the aging wisdom in the community, starting from the concepts and actions of people of all generations, participating in development, care, and responsibility, and including the use of learning resources that create value for everyone in the community.

4. Government and private organizations with ties to the community should set aside funds and plan events to honor local seniors and promote their wisdom while also strengthening bonds and family ties, the community, and society as a whole so that everyone can coexist in harmony and with generosity.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. The management of lifelong learning for the elderly and all generations should be the subject of an extensive research study. collaborating with educational institutions to promote one's social and emotional, intellectual, and physical health.

2. Additional studies should be conducted to determine the best ways to promote the foundation economy in accordance with the sufficiency economy principles at all levels, including those of the family, community, and society, with a focus on the involvement of all pertinent departments.

3. The concept of community involvement should be studied from the ground up, along with the history of culture, traditions, values, and lifestyle from the leadership of the aging in conjunction with other generations.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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