



The Education and Training for Capacity Building on Happiness of Older Persons (HOPE)

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Abstract— Demographic data indicates that the Philippines is aging accompanied by the increasing lifespan of the older population. This study aims to educate and train older people to change their ways of eating, moving, and thinking about life during aging. The education and training were implemented in the twelve towns and cities with 1069 participants in food intake, fitness, faculty, and faith—an open forum and action planning on sharing knowledge with family, friends, and social networks. A mixed method design was used in the study and a monitoring form was provided to measure the changes in knowledge and actions of older persons. The study's results revealed that the level of happiness and health of senior citizens varied depending on their food intake, fitness, mental stimulation, and faith. Mayors could share their insights on the happiness of older persons by providing an avenue and space to transform them into less stress, and more happiness, from lonely and sound healthy individuals with strong faith. The impact of the training was identified as Education and training empower older persons about their health, food intake, lifestyle, and finances, change their mindset on everyday activities with self-efficacy; increase awareness of good governance and policies of Senior Citizens; keep the senior citizens' minds active, which is associated with a lower risk of cognitive decline in older age; inspired by Project HOPE to become healthy, physically fit, and have a healthy diet with morning sunshine (Vitamin D) every day that can lead to lower mortality rates and reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes and; strengthen their relationship with God and take care of their faith/spiritual health by detaching from the worries of their daily life. This study concluded that education and training on the happiness of older persons could change the knowledge, lifestyles, and mindset of the senior citizens. The overwhelming majority of a warm welcome indicated that this kind of first set of interactions was a breath of fresh air, a pioneering venture to support older persons. Therefore, it is recommended that the education and training of the senior citizens be conducted not only for the officers of the senior citizens' organizations but also in each barangay (village) to implement the happiness of older persons. There may be a segment in the program that may highlight the significant takeaways and lessons given the build-up of immersion in the different local governments.

Keywords: *Happiness of Older Persons, fitness, food, governance, faculty, and faith*

I. INTRODUCTION

Demographic data indicates that Bulacan province is ageing as the fertility rate is falling accompanied by the increasing lifespan of the older population. In less than three (3) decades, there will be an increasing number of older persons, Senior Citizens (SC), and those 15 years old and below who remain a minority in the years to come. This trend requires changes in the resources and capacity of the local government to deliver services to SC in municipalities and cities of the province. For one, the older adult population is rapidly expanding, creating a demand for education and training programs that cater to their unique needs and abilities. The education and training of older persons are critical to promoting their well-being and ensuring they can actively participate in society. The current public health care service that is focused on acute care is considered by the World Health Organization, WHO, as both obsolete and ineffective as most SC are suffering from lifestyle-based chronic conditions and the eventual lack of necessary long-term care as the same chronic conditions deteriorate until at the end of their life. For healthy aging, studies and researchers have shown that social factors, among others, contribute to better outcomes than genetics alone.

Cognizant of the change in the demographic profile and given the prevailing ageist policies, the provincial government is aware that the current business-as-usual modality of service delivery, including the current policies and programs therein, at the level of municipalities and cities will need to be reviewed so that change will take place. Moreover, the requisite skills and competencies of the personnel in the municipal and city social welfare and development Office of Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA) need to be revisited to better align with a new paradigm directed at well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness in old age.

As an alternative to the current business-as-usual model of service delivery in the OSCA, last December 2019, the Bulacan province, with the lead taken by the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office, PSWDO, launched an SC program that considers ten (10) factors of aging. This is The Happiness Village. The following is the program framework

of 10F: Food, Fitness, Faculty, Feeling, Friends, Family, Faith, Fear, Financial, and Future. The pandemic suspended the program in 2020 given the higher case fatality rate of older persons. This year 2021, the Bulacan province saw the need to review The Happiness Village. One aspect of the review will be on the policies and programs at the municipal and city level, specifically on the service delivery of the OSCA and the policies of the SWDO, the social welfare and development office in the municipality and city.

Earlier results within the research area by applicants; related works already in progress: Comprehensive research on aging was undertaken from 2019 to 2020. Last September 2020, the research was peer-reviewed and was published online on this web link:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344437683_SEVEN_FACTORS_OF_HAPPINESS_AND_HOLISTIC_APPROACH_TO_HAPPINESS_AMONG_SENIOR_CITIZENS_IN_BULACAN_PROVINCE_PHILIPPINES

After the publication, the paper was shared with the Provincial Governor, the PSWDO, and the Bulacan Provincial Administrator. The intention was to ensure that the Happiness Village becomes institutionalized in the provincial government with the corresponding allocation of fiscal resources that are predictable on an annual basis. For this fiscal resource to be optimized, there is a need that there is support for the sub-provincial level which can only take place when there is a formal plan document so that optimal use of scarce fiscal resources, especially given the expansion of fiscal deficit that was brought by the expenditures related to cash and commodities transfer during the one year of the pandemic.

This research work therefore aimed to undertake education and training for older persons to change their ways of eating, moving, and thinking about life during the aging years with the participation of the local government Office of Senior Citizens (OSCA), the Social Welfare and Development Office (SWDO) and the Health Office (HO). Specifically, it sought answers to the following research questions: 1) Assess the older person's capacity to build happiness based on the contexts of the training in terms of food intake, fitness, faculty, and faith; 2) Measure the changes in actions of older persons through self-assessment to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for older persons (SDG3); and 3) Determine the impact of the change in the lifestyles and mindset of the senior citizens in the context of food intake, fitness, faculty, and faith.

II. METHODOLOGY

The education and training were implemented in each of the twelve (12) towns/cities in Bulacan Province. It also enabled the transfer of knowledge that resource speakers imparted to all the participants. Interviews with some older persons were utilized about their food intake, fitness, faculty or mental stimulation, governance for Senior Citizens, and faith. It facilitated the setup of the community-based organization, around clusters of older persons as part of the learners-centered learning of the education and training sessions. A pathway on the number of reaches of the knowledge and skills dissemination as well as the quantity of action on the changes given the new information that is shared. The flow of the activity was the opening formalities including a

presentation of the purpose and the outputs expected of the session. A lecture on food intake, fitness, faculty, good governance for older persons, and faith was delivered by resource speakers from the College of Social Science and Philosophy, Department of Psychology, Philosophy, Social Sciences, and Public Administration and Governance. An open forum for the sharing of knowledge with the participants was done and by employing an evaluation questionnaire this study attempted to measure the changes in knowledge and actions of older persons. The data collected consisted of 1069 senior citizens who were analyzed and interpreted using SPSS to determine frequency count, percentage, mean, and weighted mean. The study employed thematic analysis to determine the impact of the change in the lifestyles and mindset of senior citizens using NVivo Version 14. Jackson and Bazeley (2019) emphasized that NVivo is a popular qualitative data analysis software that provides a user-friendly platform to perform complex and sophisticated tasks such as data management, idea management, data querying, analyses visualization, and reporting.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the descriptive results of the profile variables, we found that the majority of the participants were in their 60s to 70s (1035). There were thirty-three (33) participants in their 80s and one (1) in their 90s. There are more female participants than male participants.

A. Components of the Training Package

There were five components of the training package namely: 1) Food, Faculty, Fitness, and Faith; 2) Senior Citizens' Psychological well-being; 3) Governance of the Elders; 4) Well-being and Welfare of the Older Persons and; 5) Spiritual Well-being of the Elders.

During the education and training, the resource speakers emphasized to the senior citizens what to eat especially fruits, vegetables, and kinds of seafood. The characteristics of the Okinawa Diet were identified as the importance of low-calorie intake, high consumption of green-yellow vegetables, high consumption of legumes and fiber intake, moderate consumption of fish products, low consumption of meat and dairy products, low fat intake, and moderate alcohol consumption. It was viewed that good fats like avocado, omega-3 fish oil from fish caught in the mid-sea, and egg yolk were essential to older persons. If possible, one meal a day (OMAD) and ensure the quantity and quality of food is correct with at least 8 hours of sleep. It was found that faculty or emotional cognition is problematic given the mini-mental status test where there was no more response for 100 minus 7 minus 7. Diabetes is reported as the main response to seniors' health problems. This is indicative of the sedentary lifestyle combined with the issues of food intake and the lack of physical movement. Sleep patterns are predominantly fragmented, indicating a lot of disparity in the psychological and emotional health of the participants. In terms of eating patterns, rice and bread remain the main source of food with most eating three meals a day.

Their motto is “Less Stress, More Happiness” regarding the psychological well-being of senior citizens. They learned the following activities: play mind games, get physical, stay connected, pick a hobby, volunteer or be a part of an organization, care for a pet or somebody, and connect with God. For the welfare and well-being of older persons, they have learned about the continued learning on Technology and Internet Training to make them stay connected and in case of emergency, in times of crisis and disruption, they can easily find ways for help. Skill enhancement through workshops, social engagement through community service and volunteering; educational and cultural activities; recreational and social events; celebrations, and festivities. Support and counseling services, field trips, and tours as part of older persons’ health and wellness.

B. Evaluation Used After the Training

Table I shows the evaluation used after the training in terms of changes in knowledge and actions of older persons. As indicated in the table the education and training conducted were useful, timely, and relevant to older persons with verbal interpretation of excellent.

TABLE I. EVALUATION

No.	Item	Mean	Interpretation
1	Natugunan ng edukasyon at pagsasanay na isinagawa ang aking mga inaasahan. <i>(The education and training conducted met my expectations.)</i>	4.28	Excellent
2	Naging kapaki-pakinabang sa akin ang isinagawang edukasyon at pagsasanay. <i>(The education and training rendered was useful to me.)</i>	4.39	Excellent
3	Ang layunin ng edukasyon at pagsasanay ay natugunan at nasunod. <i>(The purpose of the education and training was met and complied.)</i>	4.19	Very Satisfactory
4	Ang daloy ng edukasyon at pagsasanay ay maayos at organisado. <i>(The education and training flow is smooth and organized.)</i>	4.33	Excellent
5	Ang mga impormasyon na ipinamahagi ay kapaki-pakinabang at may kinalaman sa edukasyon at pagsasanay na isinagawa. <i>(The information distributed is useful and related to the education and training executed.)</i>	4.52	
6	Ang edukasyon at pagsasanay na isinagawa ay napapanahon at may kaugnayan sa kasalukuyang pangangailangan. <i>(The education and training provided is timely and relevant to current needs.)</i>	4.39	Excellent
7	Sapat at husto ang kaalaman ng mga tagapagsalita na	4.43	Excellent

No.	Item	Mean	Interpretation
	nagbigay ng edukasyon at pagsasanay. <i>(The education and training resource speakers have enough and good knowledge.)</i>		
8	Ang kalidad ng edukasyon at pagsasanay ay mahusay. <i>(The quality of education and training is excellent.)</i>	4.39	Excellent
9	Naisakatuparan ng Kolehiyo na nagbigay ng edukasyon at pagsasanay ang layunin. <i>(The education and training provided by the college accomplished the goal.)</i>	4.39	Excellent
10	Ang partisipasyon, kooperasyon at interaksyon sa mga seniors ay malayang naipatupad. <i>(Participation, cooperation and interaction among senior citizens are freely implemented.)</i>	4.29	Excellent
11	Sapat ang oras na inilaan para sa edukasyon at pagsasanay na isinagawa. <i>(The time allotted for the education and training implemented is sufficient.)</i>	4.35	Excellent
	Grand Mean	4.36	Excellent

The education and training resource speakers have excellent knowledge provided by the college to accomplish the goal. Participation, cooperation, and interaction among senior citizens are freely implemented.

C. Impact of Education and Training on the Happiness of Older Persons

Education and training on the Happiness of Older Persons have many positive impacts on the lives of senior citizens as perceived by the participants: Happiness of older persons provides an alternative pathway to aging to one that is happy and healthy and applies 10F (Fitness, Food intake, Faculty (Mental stimulation), Family, Friends, Feelings, Faith, Fear, Financial, and Future).

Mental Stimulation

Education and training improved the older persons' mental stimulation through frequent “MARITES” or being talkative; Education and training on the Happiness of older persons gave them opportunities to hear their sentiments, opinions, problems, and challenges they faced. Increase the social connections that can allow them to interact and form new relationships/friendships which is important for mental health and well-being. Enhance quality of life through “Less Stress, More Happiness” and giving more attention to their physical, financial, and emotional well-being. Sleep patterns are predominantly fragmented, indicating a lot of disparity in the psychological and emotional health of the participants.

Empower Older Persons

Education and training empower older persons about their health, food intake, lifestyle, and finances, and change their mindset on everyday activities with self-efficacy. Inspired by

Project HOPE to become healthy, physically fit, and have a healthy diet with morning sunshine (Vitamin D) every day that can lead to lower mortality rates and reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes. The politics that influence the local government in the barangay, the municipality/city, and the province are all hands-on deck given the fiscal resource implication, moving away from the donation (ayuda) culture to that of empowering the older persons to address intergenerational harmony – a sociological theme. Happy people tend to live longer according to Amen (2022) and have a better relationship because happiness is considered contagious in as much as happier people tend to make others happier. This means that the sociology in the community will change as the older persons become the main force to bring together different generations thereby harnessing their wisdom, accumulated crystallized intelligence, and stock knowledge.

Increased Awareness of Good Governance

Increased awareness of good governance and policies of Senior Citizens; Education and training help keep the senior citizens' minds active, which is associated with a lower risk of cognitive decline in older age. The demand side of aging is now being stimulated and there is a need to manage the demand side. In the management thereof, the following impacted the provincial level to respond and disseminate the proposed ordinance on the need for comprehensive health care for older persons. For the province to undertake a series of education and training on primary health care service delivery for older persons. The focus is based on the guidelines of the WHO.

Strengthen their relationship with God

Taking care of their faith/spiritual health by detaching from the worries of their daily life. Observing and exercising religious and spiritual beliefs instill a feeling of faith and gratefulness (Koffman et al., 2013; Chang et al., 2018; Abdel-Khalek and Singh, 2019; Robina-Ramírez et al., 2021). This further gives our participants to make peace with the past, admit current life situations achieve and learn the true meaning of life, and be hopeful for the future (Rizvi and Hossain, 2017).

IV. CONCLUSION

The education and training of older persons were good learning strategies and practices for senior citizens on their social interaction, intellectual stimulation, and physical movement that was undertaken before, during, and even after the event. A series of more education and training especially at the barangay level at least once a month should be done by

older persons. A big change in the mindset and knowledge through the education and training conducted was useful, timely, and relevant to older persons. The impact on the learners empowers them to be more active with their physical health, food intake, lifestyle, and faith.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The education and training of the senior citizens be conducted not only for the officers of the senior citizens' organizations but also in each barangay (village) to implement the happiness of older persons. There should be a segment in the program that may highlight the significant takeaways and lessons given the build-up of immersion in the different local governments as part of their learning support and community engagement where the older persons are the center of implementation. For future programs, the level of happiness of senior citizens and health in every village may be designed to enhance their digital competencies in times of crisis, disaster, and disruption.

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