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## **A Learning Model Based on the Elderly Philosophy for a Happy Life in Thai Social Context**

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**Abstract.** The objectives of this research were divided into two phases: Phase 1: To synthesize and design learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context; the target group consisted of 8 key informants, 6 casual Informants, and 6 general informants; instruments used were an unstructured interview form, a non-participant observation form, and a diary form, data were analyzed by content analysis and thematically analysis. Phase 2: To study a learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context, key informants consisted of 9 experts selected by purposive sampling, instruments used were a draft model and an evaluation form, data were analyzed by mean and standard deviation. The research results were as follows: Phase 1: The synthesis and designed results consisted of 4 aspects, 4 relationships, 4 developing dimensions, 5 standards, and 6 indicators in learning activities based on the elderly philosophy. Phase 2: The learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context consisted of POCO&A+L(PAORS). The details were: a principle (P), an objective (O), conditions for achievement (C), operations and activities (O&A), and learning processes based on the elderly philosophy consisted of planning (P), action (A), organizing (O), reflection (R), and sustainability (S). The suitability and the possibility of the learning model were at the highest level (mean = 4.76 and 4.68) respectively.

**Keywords.** A Learning Model, Elderly Philosophy, Happy Life, Thai Social Context

## **Introduction**

According to the United Nations (2019), the world's population is aging, with people over 65 being the fastest-growing age group. By 2050, one in every six persons on the planet will be over the age of 65 (16%), up from one in every eleven in 2019. (9 percent). Northern Africa and Western Asia, Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean are among the regions where the proportion of people aged 65 and more is expected from 2019 and 2050 to treble. One in every four people in Europe and Northern America could be 65 or older by 2050. For the first time in history, children under the age of five were outnumbered by individuals aged 65 and over in 2018. Statista Research Department (2021) confirmed that Thailand's population over 65 accounted for 10.6% of the population in 2015. The percentage of the population over 65 was predicted to reach 35.1 percent in 2100, a modest decrease from the previous year's prediction.

Similar to the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Plan on The Elderly (2002-2021) 1<sup>st</sup> Revised of 2009 (The National Committee on the Elderly (The ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand, 2009, p. 2), it aimed to promote the elderly's well-being by allowing them to live with dignity, individual liberty, and autonomy as a contribution to society, and dependable safety, and to increase social awareness about the elderly's significant contribution to society, in which their valuable experience was preserved for as long as possible.

Additionally, Summary the Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017–2021) (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Office of the Prime Minister, Thailand, 2017, pp. 12-18) determined that an aging population would inevitably have an impact on the economy and how people live. It would create numerous opportunities, particularly among the elderly in industrialized countries, who would represent a significant consumer segment with the ability to boost some goods and services that are in a high demand. Improving the system of care for elderly persons and creating an environment that is suited for an aging society was one of the key development pathways of the strategy for developing and fulfilling the potential of human capital. Create laws that encourages the elderly to receive long-term care, for example.

The main concept of education management for the elderly was to meet the basic needs of the elderly. Providing education for the elderly was considered a lifelong education to develop the quality of their lives. It would be able to live in society happily and help the elderly adapt very well to the changing environment. (Office of the Education Council, 2019, p. 5)

Therefore, education management is linked to the importance of culture and society. It is both a personal and societal responsibility. The environment in which you live has an impact on your education. You should be cautious concerning the level of education that you can achieve. Understanding the goals, forms, techniques, and meaning of education is critical. Management of education for the elderly is depended on the elderly's requirements in terms of physical, psychological, social, and economic needs. This includes the preparation of the elderly when they grow older. There will be changes both physically and emotionally. Therefore, preparing for those who grow older and enhancing knowledge for the elderly, such as psychosocial rights to health, management, finance, and Dharma to create happiness and information entertainment, to train themselves to be able to adapt for changing, healthy aging also defines trying new things, being physically and socially active, and eating well, and being open-minded to accept new things and the changes that will take place in preparation to accept and adapt to the situation, society, and environment happily to a concept of “The elderly are valuable assets to society”. Moreover, the elderly is still part of the economic and social system, which is based on the dignity of freedom, pleasure, and stability, not different from other aged

populations. Another continuing issue is ageism, which inhibits older people's rights to self-determination, participation, education and training, health and social care, security, and decent work.

In the findings of Manasatchakun, Rupavijetra (2020, p. 18), as part of the effort to improve their quality of life, a school for older people was explored. Through lifelong education principles, this school for elderly intended to promote good health and encourage older people in maintaining their roles in society. With the help of the community and local organizations, this school created an instructional management system that was run by a group of senior leaders and learning networks, and promoted the health and full potential of older people. Furthermore, this school for the elderly developed local wisdom, happiness, self-esteem, and the quality of life of elderly.

The philosophy of learning management for the aged can be considered a lifelong continuing education to increase the elderly's quality of life who live happily in Thai society, able to adjust to the environmental changing from the past to the future. The use of learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context was rooted in an elderly philosophy and religion in Hinduism, which addresses the attitudes of daily life and conduct of Hindus as manifested for older people. Health was connected in all dimensions without separation, having a relationship and depending on each other, whether it be physical, verbal, or mental, was a well-balanced state of holistic life.

The concept of an aging population can be defined as a population with a longer life expectancy that requires ongoing for health, sharing, and security chances. Furthermore, active ageing applies to both personnel and population groups, allowing people to develop their physical, social, and mental potential throughout their life, and to engage in society in accordance with their needs, desires, and capacities, while also ensuring proper safety and security, and care when they require it. It has resulted in the concept of a school for the elderly in Thai society to promote lifelong learning for learning management to improve the quality-of-life skills and activities that are beneficial to the elderly to apply in daily life and live a meaningful life according to the concept of the aging population.

In Buddha, the word *sukha* referred to multiple types of happiness since proper words in the language of the time were unavailable to explain the various types of happiness. He qualified his use of the phrase on occasion; for example, four different sorts of worldly happiness were listed for regular people: 1) *Ananya sukha*: Being debt-free brings happiness; 2) *Atthi sukha*: Possessing wealth and property brings happiness, even if one does not appreciate or use it. This *sukha* is the pleasure of possession; 3) *Bhoga sukha*: One benefits from different conveniences as a result of one's wealth: one sees beautiful sights; one hears melodic music; one smells beautiful aroma; one eats tasty nutrition; and one pleasures physical touching; and 4) *Anavajja sukha*: To refrain from actions that are contrary to the Truth. (Phra Prom Khunaporn (P.A. Payutto), 1997, p. 40) and Goenka (2006, p. 1)

In terms of Valenzuela, Batac, Joseph (2020, p. 146), it was found that everyone was searching for ways to be happy. Happiness was the greater desire of all elderly and senior citizens. The purpose of the study was to measure the happiness of senior citizens using a self-developed questionnaire to assess the 7F factors of happiness of senior citizens namely: food, fitness, feelings, family, faculty, friend, and faith. The study also highlights the fact that the highest contributing factor to happiness among senior citizens was friendship, followed by faculty, while the least contributing factor in happiness among senior citizens was the family factor.

It was also the finding of Wongboonsin, Aunguroch, Hatsukano (2020, p. 104), Thailand had reached the ageing society level. By 2025 and 2040, Thailand is expected to become an aging and super-aged society, respectively. Family members were the primary source of assistance for elderly people's everyday tasks, according to statistics. Communities were also expected to play a larger part in the care of older persons as a result of government policy.

It can be concluded that the ability to age well and lead a happy life in the context of Thai society is derived from many factors, including household income, health status, and satisfaction with the government's long-term care policy without living alone. The elderly has a tendency to believe that happiness is a rare commodity and will go to any length to find it. Some have been successful, but some have failed because they are rare commodities and will go to any length to find happiness. They look for happiness from outside of themselves without considering that happiness is within themselves, ignoring the fact that pleasure may be found within and around them. It's difficult to justify the importance of elderly philosophy. A learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context can be implied that if happiness is a primary aim, driving the quality of care seems to be more important in terms of the happiness of the elderly.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To synthesize and design learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context.
2. To study a learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context.

### **Research methods**

The researcher divided into two phases as follows:

**Phase 1:** To synthesize and design learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context.

The target group as participants was divided into 3 group as follows:

Group 1: Key Informants consisted of a community leader, a community philosopher, community health center staff, a village health volunteer, a voluntary caregiver for the elderly at home, a community developer, and a director of Non-Formal and Informal Education (NFE) in the area, for a total of 8 informants.

Group 2: Casual Informants consisted of 6 elderly people selected by purposive sampling, living in Suthep Sub-District Municipality, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province, and Choeng Doi Sub-District Municipality, Doi Saket District, Chiang Mai Province. They were accepted by community's members as happy people, as assessed by one's general perspective on life, who are happy with their lives as determined by the snowball sampling technique.

Group 3: General informants consisted of caregivers of the elderly and neighbors living in the same community who are not relatives of the elderly, for a total of 8 informants.

The instruments used were an unstructured interview form, a non-participant observation form, and a diary form.

The data were analyzed by content analysis and thematically analysis.

**Phase 2:** To study a learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context.

Key informants were 9 experts attending in the workshop to evaluate the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context.

The instruments used were a draft model and an evaluation form of suitability and possibility.

The data were analyzed by mean and standard deviation.

### **Research results and discussion**

The research results were as follows:

1. Results of synthesis and designed learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context, the researcher investigated problems and needs of the elderly in the target area, especially on basic health and welfare for the elderly to be analyzed to the principles of educational management activities for elderly. The educational management activities were designed to focus on child-centered, living a happy, and meaningful life in order to create motivation towards effective and efficient teaching and learning, exchange knowledge among resource persons, friends, and elderly leading to learning and self-development and integrating teaching and learning according to the context of their own area. It is necessary to rely on the elderly philosophy for the preparation of the teaching curriculum. The elderly curriculum serves as a guideline for learning management activities aimed at helping the elderly recognize the value and dignity of human beings and preparing them to enter old age with dignity, understanding life, promoting health prevention, and taking care of themselves in order to keep up with world changes and adapt happily in Thai society, and covers four areas: 1. IT (Information technology) courses; 2. Employment and social welfare; 3. Wisdom culture; and 4. Health promotion among the elderly target population. However, the instructors must understand the nature of the elderly in accordance with Somdet Phra Buddhaghasocariya (P A. Payutto) (1997, 22/79/121) in cultivation; training; development 4 aspects, 4 relationships, 4 developing dimensions, and 5 standards, 6 indicators in learning activities of the Office of the Education Council (2019, p. 7-9) as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Results of synthesizing and designing learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context.

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Developing dimensions</b>	<b>Standards and indicators in learning activities based on the elderly philosophy</b>
1. Physical development (Bhāvitakāyo)	Object Environment	Physical Development: Develop five organ-object relationships: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body in order to take care of your physical health for the well-being of nature.	Standard 1.1 Health of the elderly Indicator 1.1.1
2. Moral development (Bhāvitasīlo)	Social	Moral Development: Develop a supportive relationship with the social environment by engaging in positive physical and verbal interactions with humans, including careers.	Standard 1.3 Social skill. Indicator 1.3.1, 1.3.2

Aspect	Relationship	Developing dimensions	Standards and indicators in learning activities based on the elderly philosophy
3. Emotional development (Bhāvitacitto)	Cultivation of the heart	Emotional Development: Improve mental performance, and health by developing mental quality.	Standard 1.4 Voluntary mind Indicator 1.4.1
4. Intellectual development (Bhāvitapañño)	Cultivation of wisdom	Intellectual development: Develop thinking, considering, diagnosing, reflecting, solving problems, acting with intelligence, seeing things as they really are, without bias, having the wisdom to keep up with the world and life according to its conditions.	Standard 2.1 A curriculum that encourages the elderly to develop themselves continuously throughout their lives. Indicator 2.1.1, 2.1.2 Standard 2.3 Innovation in learning management, learning media, and providing all kinds of information services that are conducive to self-learning and participatory learning are developed.

It was consistent with Phra Prom Khunaporn (P.A. Payutto) (1997, p. 40) and Goenka (2006, p. 1), because there were no adequate words in the language of those days to express the various kinds of happiness, the Buddha used the word ‘happiness’ to refer for ordinary people: The delight of being debt-free; the happiness of having riches and property, even if one does not appreciate or use it; the delight of possession; one enjoys numerous comforts as a result of one's wealth: one sees attractive views; hears harmonious music; smells sweet perfumes; tastes delectable foods; and enjoys pleasant physical touch; and to abstain from activities that were contrary to the Truth.

Additionally, Tavachalee, Kapko, and Pulanram (2018, p. 191) who studied the model of learning promotion for the elderly person after retirement be alive as happiness according to Buddhist way in Muang district, KhonKean province, it was found that the happy living according to the Buddhist principle was found that: the 4 Bhāvanā can be applied to the development of life to thrive by 4 principles: 1. Kāya-bhāvanā: physical development, 2. Sīla-bhāvanā: moral development, 3. Citta-bhāvanā: emotional development and 4. Paññā-bhāvanā: wisdom development.

Moreover, California State University, Stanislaus (2020) stated the philosophy with seven dimensions of building positive self-esteem, increase self-care, and boost personal empowerment and well-being, the teaching-learning philosophy was to give interactive education and methodologies that reflected the contemporary holistic/integrative paradigm of wellness. Seven dimensions of wellness and self-care were introduced at the basics as follows: Physical, social, environmental, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional factors all played a role in occupational wellness.

2. Results of drafting a learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context consisted of POCO&A+L(PAORS). The researcher used the results of synthesizing and designing learning activities based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context to drafted the model consisting of:

2.1 A principle (P) was to develop the elderly's potential to live a happy life of all ages in the Thai social context based on equality.

2.2 An objective (O) was to study the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context emphasizing on 3 learning activities: 1) health learning activities, 2) social and economic learning activities, and 3) mental learning activities.

2.3 Conditions for achievement (C) in implementing the model in the management of learning according to the elderly philosophy consisted of

2.3.1 The assistance of network partners from all sectors, as well as local citizen cooperation;

2.3.2 The interesting activities that are consistent with community-based aging; and

2.3.3 There are a continuous monitoring and an evaluation system.

2.4 Operations and activities (O&A) consisted of

2.4.1 Collaborate with community leaders and representatives from all relevant sectors to develop a vision, mission, objective, project, and plan.

2.4.2 Plan the work-integration at the level of network partners.

2.4.3 Encourage participation in learning management at all stages.

2.4.4 Diversified learning management in accordance with the community's way of life, which includes good customs, traditions, and cultures.

2.4.5 All procedures are supervised, monitored, and followed up on.

2.4.6 Evaluation by focusing on the formation of a professional learning community (PLC) and the reflection of after-action reviews (AAR).

2.5 Learning processes (L) based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context consisted of

2.5.1 Planning (P) was a process of consulting, sharing ideas, working together and co-developing in designing learning activities with an emphasis on participation in setting objectives and expected learning outcomes in learning activities and evaluation in accordance with the local and social context.

2.5.2 Action (A) was a process of making an understanding with the community by proposing projects or activities to the community and all relevant sectors to participate equally according to the appropriate roles and potential of each different sector within the determined time in order for that activity to achieve its goals.

2.5.3 Organizing (O) was a process of collecting information systematically by using a non-participant observation form covering in the following areas: 1) the process while doing activities, 2) the outcomes of activities, 3) context and the relevant environment, and 4) the limitation of doing activities.

2.5.4 Reflection (R) and area changing creation was a process that required all relevant sectors to participate in the analysis, discussion and evaluation of the implementation of the activities by reflecting among the participants and all stakeholders with creativity covering 1) atmosphere, conditions, findings, 2) assessment features by critiquing the finding activities, 3) provide a description of the findings, and 4) search for proposals to further improve the course of action by applying the findings, etc., in order to summarize the results of the activities.

2.5.5 Sustainability (S) was an action based on activities that were beneficial to the target group or the general public without creating problems and having an impact on future

generations over space and time. It could lead to success, understanding, worthiness, sharing responsibility, trust each other with faith, satisfaction of all relevant sectors until the image of happiness of the people in the community emerges. This will lead to self-reliance and community survival, love and pride in their own communities, such as having good or excellence practices, field trips, and innovation awards in the community, etc.,

After drafting the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context, the researcher organized a workshop of 9 experts to verify and evaluate the model, the details were as shown in Table 2.

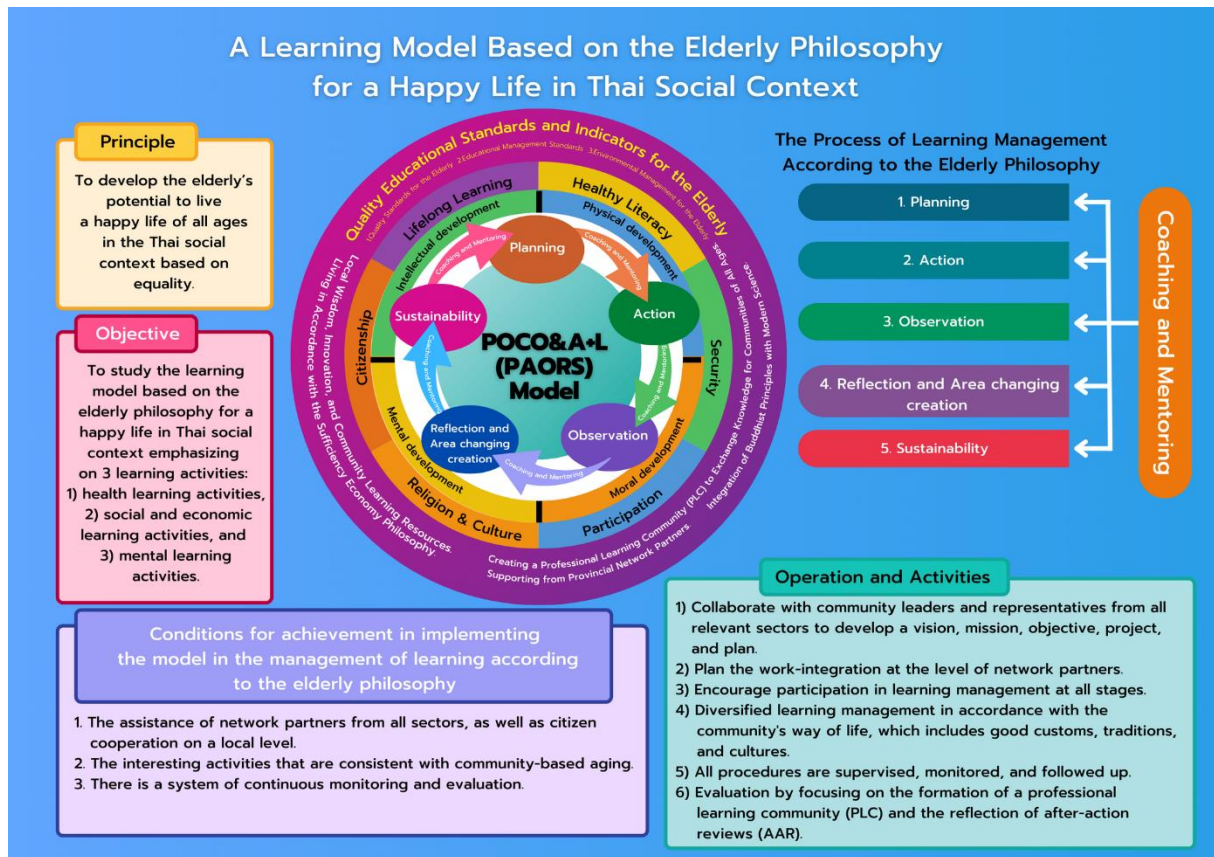
**Table 2:** The suitability and possibility the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context

Item	Model component	Suitability			Possibility		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpret	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpret
1	A principle (P)	4.40	0.55	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
2	An objective (O)	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.60	0.89	Highest
3	Conditions for achievement (C) in implementing the model	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
4	Operations and activities (O&A)	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
5	Learning processes (L) based on the elderly philosophy	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
<b>Total average</b>		<b>4.76</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>Highest</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>Highest</b>

From table 1, the suitability of the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context was overall at the highest level (Mean = 4.76, S.D. = 0.38). When considering by each aspect sorting from the highest to the lowest, it was found that operations and activities (O&A) was at the highest (Mean = 5.00, S.D. = 0.00), followed by an objective (O), conditions for achievement (C), and learning processes (L) were equal at the highest level (Mean = 4.80, S.D. = 0.45), and a principle (P) was at the highest level (Mean = 4.40, S.D. = 0.55).

The possibility of the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context was at the highest level (Mean = 4.68, S.D. = 0.58). When considering by each aspect sorting from the highest to the lowest, it was found that conditions for achievement (C), and operations and activities (O&A) were equal at the highest (Mean = 4.80, S.D. = 0.45), followed by a principle (P), an objective (O), and learning processes (L) were equal at the highest level (Mean = 4.60, S.D. = 0.55).

The overall draft model was usable and the experts summarized of the complete learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context was shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** The complete learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context

The finding was similar to that of World Health Organization: WHO (2002, pp. 12-13), which defined the step of improving possibilities for health, participation, and security in order to develop one's quality of life as individuals aged, as 'active ageing'. In the late 1990s, the World Health Organization coined the phrase 'active ageing.' It was intended to provide a broader message than 'healthy aging,' acknowledging elements other than health care that influence how people and elderly population age. Furthermore, Individuals, families, and nations are all affected by a range of forces or 'determinants' as they age.

Moreover, in accordance with four of eight articles in the Declaration of the Thai elderly B.E. 2542 (A.D. 2003) (Department of Public Welfare, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2003, pp. 1-3) were therefore an obligation to provide the elderly with a good quality of life, be protected which had been stipulated concerning values that must be cultivated to enhance the well-being of the elderly included the elderly must receive the basic necessities for living with worth and dignity; they should be with their families and be respected, loved, understood, supported, cared for, and accepted of each other's roles among family members to create a good relationship and live happily together; they were a source of local wisdom for future generations; and State, through the participation of private organizations, people, and social institutions, must campaign to cultivate social values to realize the elderly's respect according to Thai culture, which emphasizes gratitude and kindness to one another.

Additionally, Ratana-Ubol, Charungkattikul, & Sajjasophon (2015, p. 88) studied the University of the Third Age to provide learning activities for enhancing senior citizens in different lives' dimensions. In terms of university short course programs, senior schools, informal learning, and visual classrooms or online-learning programs, there were four implementation options to encourage lifelong learning activities for senior adults.

Furthermore, the conceptual design of education, according to the National Scheme of Education B.E. 2560-2579 (2017-2036), the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were considered to be external forces and include changes in the global economy and society caused by factors such as the needs of the workforce for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, the middle-income gap, the projected increase of the population of elderly, unsustainable economic growth that causes rapid deterioration of natural resources, problems with the educational system including the health of the population and the quality and management of education at all levels. (Office of the Education Council, Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 17)

Besides, Sombutboon, Prakas, Eiu-Seeyok (2019, p. 220) studied 'Happiness of Thai Elderly in Thailand 4.0' found that it was critical for those approaching retirement to be happy. Because they must deal with various changes in life, including physical, psychological, and spiritual changes, the elderly often lacked contentment or experience reduced happiness more easily than other ages. They also had more constraints on living than people in past eras, especially as Thailand 4.0 evolved with the incorporation of technology, creativity, innovation, science, and research into everyday life. As a result, organizing health promotion activities for the elderly that included physical, psychosocial, and spiritual components while incorporating the five dimensions of happiness (health, recreation, integrity, cognition, and tranquility) can help to promote positive feelings.

Similarly, Wudhiwanich, Puthaprasert, Yaboonthong, & Thong-ngok (2020, p. 33) Development of management model for senior citizens school under Chiang Mai City municipality towards Thailand 4.0, found that concerning the guidelines in terms of policy implementation, there should be the participation of all ages and all religions, and the children's behaviors should be promoted according to Thais' values such as gratitude to benefactors, being obedient and respectful to senior citizens while they were passing on the local knowledge, wisdom, and cultural heritage.

On the other hand, the study of Percic (2020, p. 101) who studied the social welfare in terms of a synthetic analysis from the perspective of the main schools of economic thought, the research revealed that happiness was one of the representatives of the largest schools of economic thought had not overlooked terms the same as prosperity, satisfaction, usefulness, wealth, building a trustworthy foundation to what we now call social welfare.

According to Lodo (2021, p. 606), who summarized that every human being strives to achieved happiness. Only by doing nice and noble activities could one get happiness. Each person's decision and intentions determine whether or not they desired to work on and obtain happiness. Difficult conditions, such as this epidemic, were a method for every human being to purify himself and obtained happiness in his life.

It is concluded that in many national settings, population ageing had prompted worries about countries' ability to offer enough social security for elderly people, particularly in those where the number of elderly people was rapidly increasing. The increased incidence and prevalence of noncommunicable illnesses can be attributed to a number of causes, including population aging, epidemiological shifts, and related lifestyle changes. This puts more pressure on public health systems to adapt to meet the rising demand for age-appropriate care, such as long-term care, as well as services and technologies for illness prevention, detection, and

treatment. The philosophy of educational management for the elderly was a branch of philosophy that addresses philosophical questions concerning the elderly nature, aims, and problems of education, acquiring knowledge and skills to lead a quality life. The opportunity for self-development as a branch of practical philosophy, its practitioners look to educational practice, as well as to developmental psychology, cognitive science more generally, sociology, and other relevant disciplines. The researcher expects that the learning model based on the elderly philosophy for a happy life in Thai social context can be applied for the elderly school all over Thailand.

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