

Ways Of Healthy Aging: A Case Study Of Elderly People In A Northern Thai Village

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Response Paper

The article is ethnographic research that was done to find out ways of healthy aging and also the impact of culture on the behaviors that are related to health. This study focused on the older adults of the rural community in Northern Thailand. The data was collected through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, field notes, and participant observations. These methods were then used to examine and comprehend the lives of seven healthy Thai adults who were 75 or more than 75 years of age. The specific period for which the data was gathered was from March 2007 until February 2008. Analysis of the data was done by identifying patterns, coding, making reflective notes, and generalizing them to elucidate cultural or social patterns of behaviors. At the end of all the data analysis, it was found that cultural factors impact the health of aging persons and their families.

The article first provided statistics on the increase in life expectancy of the people in Thailand, making its way to the main topic of the article, which is the health of older adults with aging. It has been made clear that more and better policies must be introduced since life expectancy is increasing, and older adults' healthy aging must be an important concern. The literature review consists of different studies that have come up with different aspects that impact healthy aging, which include cognitive, environmental, and physiological factors. All the cultural aspects, such as shared values, beliefs, and ways of living, are also observed to influence healthy aging. After discussing all the impacts and influences, the author of the article advises the professionals to understand and comprehend all these problems and concerns.

The interviews were taken and responded to in the native language of Thailand. The interesting thing was that the researcher first learned the dialect of the participants three months before the data collection so that she could communicate well with them. The community under consideration was chosen by the researcher as it was known for the longevity of its people. However, since the author believed ways of healthy aging and the relationship between aging and culture weren't much studied and researched, she aimed to examine them. Not only did the author learn the dialect of the Thai people, but she also lived in that particular community to gain the trust of the people and deeply observe the ways of living of those people, such as their source of income or what they do for a living, their religious beliefs and different rituals in which they strongly believe in, etc. This strategy was helpful in establishing good research. The participants consisted of four females and three males who were 78 to 85 years old. The article provides the readers with a little background on all the seven participants. They all experienced physical deterioration because of the aging effect, but they were

healthy enough to perform their activities by themselves. The researchers also examined each person's social life, including how one person interacts with other people, family members, and friends. This was done through the additional interviews taken with the neighbors and family members of the participants.

Confidentiality was observed throughout the research. To make the research more authentic and helpful, meetings with the committee members were also held during the study period in order to have discussions regarding the interview transcriptions, interpretation of findings, and data analysis. These members had expertise in gerontology, public health nursing, community health education, and behavioral science. The article also gave its ethical considerations, which are an important part of any research being conducted. Two main groups were identified after the analysis of the data: one group preferred family practices, and the other was interdependent.

The connection between these groups was found to be significant in healthy aging as they unified spiritual, physical, and social health. All these family practices, such as exercising, eating right, healing practices, making merit, ancestor and spirit worship, and being interdependent, were explained in detail in relation to the data analyzed. It was found out that these people emphasized healthy eating and worked in the rice fields but performed less demanding exercises, making them feel healthy and strong. Being Buddhists, all believed in the law of Karma, and the religion helped them feel spiritually strong. Smoking and drinking weren't found to be done by the participants.

All these techniques and methods used enhanced the authentication and reliability of the source. Primary and secondary interviews and the researcher's observations increased the credibility of the study. The findings corresponded to the previous studies, which also discovered that cultural factors make an impact on healthy aging. The research is helpful for healthcare professionals in comprehending the mindset of older adults, what aspects and factors have an impact on them, and how to take better care so that they undergo healthy aging effects. Though the study was focused on just a small group of a village in Thailand, and results cannot be generalized, the findings are helpful enough to give the other researchers a direction as to how the research must be conducted for the particular topic and how the discoveries must be implemented. The article made use of all the studies and research that were done before so that a coherent relationship could be established between the ideas and concepts.

Works Cited

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