

The Results of the Intergenerational Relationship Program and Creation of New Meaning in the Thai Community Context: A Case Study of Ban Na, Nakhon Nayok Province

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Abstract

The utilization of intergenerational relationship as the foundation for community development aligns with the expectations set forth by Thailand's national policies, particularly within the economic dimension. This research explores the outcomes of fostering intergenerational relationship and investigates the learning outcomes to create fresh significance in the collaborative occupational development of diverse age groups. It involves the experimental implementation of the Intergenerational Relationship Program aimed at redefining the meaning of community development in the Thai context, with a specific focus on youths and elderly demographics within Ban Na, Nakhon Nayok Province, involving a total of 60 participants. To assess the study's outcomes, different methods were employed, such as surveys and interviews, followed by data analysis to expound upon the observed results. The research findings indicate a positive trend in intergenerational relationship, with enhanced communication between youths and the elderly, increased communal engagement, improved mutual attitudes, and a greater display of friendliness towards one another. Regarding learning outcomes, it was found that the collaborative grouping of individuals from two different age brackets led to the development of community-generated products with inherent value. Additionally, the target groups stated that program participation had the potential to increase community livelihoods and income generation.

Keywords: intergenerational relationship, youths, the elderly, occupational development

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Research Problem

Thailand entered the realm of an aging society as of the year 2005 (B.E. 2548), a phenomenon paralleling the global demographic trend facing numerous countries today. This aging society is characterized not merely by an increase in the elderly population (Bongaarts, 2009; Raleigh, 2009; Teresa et al., 2019), but also by a simultaneous decline in the number of children. This demographic shift has had significant repercussions on contemporary Thai society. It has led to a diminishing labor force in both the agricultural and industrial sectors, with elderly individuals retiring from the workforce and possessing altered capabilities for their previous occupations. This is particularly salient in the case of agricultural activities, which constitute a primary livelihood for many Thais. Furthermore, the younger generation appears less inclined to continue traditional family and community occupations, instead gravitating toward online businesses or technology-related careers. This transformation in occupational preferences has yielded both successful and unsuccessful outcomes, as observed within the Thai societal context. Consequently, it underscores a shift in intergenerational cooperation at both the familial and community levels (Ueangchokchai, 2020). It is worth noting that this challenge is not unique to Thailand but rather a global issue, albeit manifesting differently in each region's specific context (Ng, 2014; Chetty, Friedman, Saez, Turner & Yugan, 2017).

The cohabitation of individuals from all generations within society constitutes a fundamental policy of Thailand, aimed at fostering harmonious relationships across urban and rural community contexts. This collaborative

endeavor is anticipated to manifest its success through tangible outcomes resulting from systematically planned collective activities, wherein the potential of individuals from all age groups plays a role commensurate with their capabilities. The mechanics facilitating this collaboration encompass: 1) creating an amicable atmosphere for collective activities, 2) fostering potent and valuable communication that emphasizes both listening and expressing opinions, 3) inclusive participation ensuring equality among all individuals in the group, irrespective of gender or age, 4) activities driven by necessity and capable of benefiting individuals across all age brackets, and 5) a reflective approach that elucidates the shared values emerging from collaborative efforts (Brown & Roodin, 2002; Grenčíková & Vojtovič, 2017; Hong, Hashim, 2018; Buchanan & Rotkirch, 2018). The impacts resulting from intergenerational relationship are expected to culminate in improved mutual relationships and the collective strengthening of communities, contributing to enhanced livelihoods and overall well-being, allowing families and communities to sustain themselves and find fulfillment in their way of life.

In the context of Thailand's past operational efforts, it is observed that the primary implementers of community-driven initiatives within local areas are local government organizations, which typically have the highest budgetary allocations and the closest proximity to the population. However, the resulting impacts have not consistently reflected a substantial level of success. Much of the work is carried out in the form of projects dependent on annual budgetary support, which often leads to a lack of continuity in the operations. Consequently, the local population tends to become disengaged as they perceive the activities as primarily participatory without a clear sense of involvement and with limited discernible benefits. This stems from the fact that the operational units lack a systematic and well-planned framework based on the academic concepts previously discussed. Therefore, there is a pressing need to develop a mechanism that genuinely involves individuals from all age groups in the community in the operational process, with the aim of establishing a model that can serve as an exemplar for other communities to appropriately adapt and implement.

This research attempts to investigate the aforementioned issues within the context of Ban Na sub-district, Ban Na district, Nakhon Nayok province, an eastern region of Thailand rich in natural resources such as rice, fruits, and fish. The area is currently grappling with an increasing elderly population, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has left a portion of the working-age population unemployed and residing within the community. Consequently, many individuals are facing income challenges, affecting both their self-sustenance and family support. Furthermore, this community comprises a group of tech-savvy youths, the new generation with significant potential. Therefore, there is considerable interest in implementing an Intergenerational Relationship Program, with the aim of exploring the resulting transformations. The findings from this study can serve as a model for intergenerational collaboration within the community to create livelihoods and income sources based on existing community resources. It is believed that such collaboration will contribute to the sustainability of community operations in the future.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

1. to investigate the developmental outcomes of intergenerational relationship between youths and the elderly within a community. This investigation will be conducted through the implementation of an Intergenerational Relationship Program, which aims to create new meanings within the community's workforce; and
2. to examine the learning outcomes associated with the collaborative development of livelihoods among individuals from different age groups. This examination will be facilitated by the utilization of the Intergenerational Relationship Program, which seeks to generate fresh significance within the community's occupational landscape.

2. Method

2.1 Area and Target Group under Study

The area under study includes Ban Na communities, ranging from village 1 to 11, located in Ban Na district, Nakhon Nayok province, in the eastern region of Thailand. In this region, there is a significant population of elderly individuals who are engaged in agriculture, accounting for more than 20% of the local population. Additionally, there is a substantial number of young people who have recently become unemployed, dropped out of the educational system, or left their previous occupations due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of them have returned to their hometowns to engage in agricultural activities.

The target groups for this study are divided into 2 groups. They are:

- 1) Youth group, aged between 15-25 years, totaling 60 people, who are willing to volunteer to participate in the program willingly. The qualifications of the youths participating in this program should be individuals who are unemployed, have a basic understanding of agriculture, are open to learning alongside people of different ages,

and are ready to participate in activities throughout the program; and

2) Elderly group, aged 60 years and above, totaling 60 people, who are willing to volunteer to participate in the program willingly. The qualifications of the elderly individuals participating in the program should be individuals who are capable of self-help in participating in activities, have a basic understanding of agriculture, are open to learning alongside people of different ages, and are ready to participate in activities throughout the program.

2.2 Program for Experiment

To investigate the hypotheses, the researcher focused on an intervention research project known as the "Building Intergenerational Relationship and Creation of New Meaning in Community Occupations" program. It is a form of learning promotion that utilizes principles of adult education management, emphasizing learning through hands-on experience, experiential learning, and mutual exchange of knowledge. This program has received cooperation from local government organizations, Baan Na Hospital, and elderly schools in Baan Na sub-district, Nakhon Nayok province, in providing learning facilities and support for various learning activities. The program is divided into two phases, which are as follows:

Phase 1: Building Interrelationship among Generations

This phase utilizes the concept of experiential learning as the main mechanism for organizing activities. It involves 7 practical training activities for youths and the elderly, totaling 70 hours of learning, and learning through group activities with community members, totaling 50 hours of learning.

Phase 2: Creating New Meaning in Community Occupations

This phase employs the concept of transformative learning as the main mechanism for organizing activities. It involves practical training activities for youths and the elderly, totaling 50 hours of learning, and learning through group activities with community members, totaling 100 hours of learning.

The program focuses on studying the outcomes experienced by the youths and elderly in the community, aiming to analyze what kind of mechanisms that contribute to the observed changes.

2.3 Tools for Program Outcome Measurement

In this study, data collection is divided into two phases:

Phase 1: Data collection involves conducting surveys with the target groups to investigate the outcomes of developing intergenerational relationship between youths and the elderly in the community. A random sample of 10 individuals from each target group (youths and the elderly) will be selected for data collection through interviews. The researcher will collect this data after the completion of the program's Phase 1, which has elapsed for a period of 2 weeks.

Phase 2: Data collection entails conducting surveys with the target groups to study the learning outcomes aimed at creating new meaning in the joint development of careers among individuals from different age groups. A random sample of 10 individuals from each target group (youths and the elderly) will be selected for data collection through interviews. The researcher will collect this data after the completion of the program's Phase 2, which has elapsed for a period of 1 month. This will allow for an examination of the post-program behavior trends and the sustainability of the learned behaviors.

2.4 Sample Size, Power, and Precision

In this study, the researcher has developed tools for data collection based on research work relevant to the program. These tools have undergone quality validation by five experts in the field of education and five experts in measurement and assessment. They confirmed that the research instruments are suitable for data collection. The tools used for measuring the program's outcomes consist of three instruments:

1. Questionnaire for Assessing the Development of Intergenerational Relationship between Youths and the Elderly in the Community: This questionnaire is divided into four sections, including:

- Section 1: Examining communication patterns, measured using a checklist format, focusing on communication frequency, communication styles, and emotional expression in communication with individuals from different age groups;
- Section 2: Studying joint activity participation, measured using a checklist format, focusing on the frequency of engaging in activities together, types of joint activities, and feelings associated with participating in activities together;

- Section 3: Investigating attitude towards different age groups, using an open-ended format that allows the target groups to provide responses reflecting their opinions; and
- Section 4: Assessing behavior towards individuals with different age groups, measured using a rating scale with three levels: high, moderate, and low.

These instruments are designed to comprehensively evaluate the outcomes of the program regarding intergenerational relationship and the creation of new meaning in community occupations among individuals of different age groups.

2. Interview Questionnaire for Exploring Perceptions regarding the Intergenerational Relationship between Youths and the Elderly after Program Participation. This questionnaire aims to gather in-depth data on the outcomes related to communication and participation in activities with individuals from different age groups.

3. Questionnaire for Studying Learning Outcomes Aimed to Create New Meaning in Joint Career Development among Different Age Groups. This questionnaire is divided into two parts:

- Part 1: Assessing the changes in perspectives on joint career development among youths and the elderly, measured using a checklist format with response options: Agree, Uncertain, and Disagree; and
- Part 2: Evaluating the perceived post-program success, using a checklist format with response options: Agree, Uncertain, and Disagree.

These instruments are designed to comprehensively assess the post-program effects on intergenerational relationships and the development of a shared understanding of career opportunities among individuals of various age groups.

2.5 Data Analysis

The analysis is divided into two parts based on the objectives:

Part 1: The outcomes of developing the intergenerational relationship between youths and the elderly in the community will be analyzed quantitatively through descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentages. Qualitative data analysis involves constructing conclusions based on evidence derived from interviews with the target groups. The key analysis points will encompass topics such as communication, joint activity participation, differing perspectives, and expressions towards individuals of different age groups.

Part 2: The outcomes of learning aimed at creating new meaning in joint career development among individuals of different age groups were analyzed. Quantitative data analysis will be conducted using descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentages. Qualitative data analysis will involve narrative descriptions of the success observed as a result of program participation. Key analysis points will include the changes in perspectives on joint career development among youths and the elderly, the outcomes arising from the collaboration between youths and the elderly, and the post-program perception of success.

3. Results

3.1 The Result of Developing Intergenerational Relationship between Youths and the Elderly in the Community

Provide dates defining the periods of recruitment and follow-up and the primary sources of the potential subjects, where appropriate. If these dates differ by group, provide the values for each group.

3.1.1 Communication

Table 1. Data on the communication behaviors between youths and the elderly

ITEM	Youths (N = 30)				The elderly (N = 30)			
	Before		After		Before		After	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Communication frequency/week								
1-2 times	19	63.33	3	10.00	8	26.67	5	16.67
3-4 times	7	23.33	13	43.33	12	40.00	9	30.00
> 5 times	4	13.34	14	46.67	10	33.33	16	53.33
Communication types								
Face to Face	5	16.67	20	66.67	11	36.67	21	70.00
Social Media	25	83.33	10	33.33	19	63.33	9	30.00
Use of emotions in communication								
Positive	5	16.66	18	60.00	10	33.33	20	66.67
Moderate	11	36.67	8	26.67	9	30.00	7	23.33
Negative	14	46.67	4	13.33	11	36.67	3	10.00

After participating in the program's experimental phase, communication between youths and the elderly exhibited positive trends across all dimensions. Within the youth group, the frequency of communication with the elderly, which was previously at 1-2 times per week before joining the program ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$), significantly increased. Following program participation, communication frequency mostly exceeded 5 times per week ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$). Communication patterns shifted from predominantly using social media channels before joining the program ($P = 83.33 / N = 25$) to face-to-face interactions afterward ($P = 66.67 / N = 20$) among youths. Regarding the use of emotions in communication with the elderly, before program participation, youths often employed negative emotions ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$). However, following program participation, there was a noticeable shift towards using positive emotions in communication ($P = 60.00 / N = 18$).

In the analysis of data within the elderly group, the frequency of communication among the elderly and youths, prior to program participation, was at 3-4 times per week ($P = 40.00 / N = 12$). However, following program participation, the frequency of communication among the elderly themselves increased, with a majority engaging in communication exceeding 5 times per week ($P = 53.33 / N = 16$). In terms of communication patterns, before program participation, the elderly and youths predominantly used social media channels for communication ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$). Nevertheless, after program participation, the elderly shifted towards face-to-face communication ($P = 70.00 / N = 21$). Regarding the use of emotions in communication with youths, it was observed that before program participation, the elderly often employed negative emotions ($P = 36.67 / N = 11$). However, post-program participation, there was a noticeable shift towards using positive emotions in communication ($P = 66.67 / N = 20$).

From interviews with representatives of the youths and elderly groups, several factors from the program were identified as contributing to enhanced communication between them. These findings can be summarized as follows:

1. The program activities encouraged learning the role of being a listener, a skill that both the elderly and youths often resist in real life, as reflected in interviewee statements. Youths mentioned that the elderly tend to prioritize their own thoughts and shut out younger perspectives, but this program provided an avenue for the elderly to listen more to the viewpoints of the younger generation. Simultaneously, it allowed them to understand the benign intentions of younger individuals. Similarly, elderly participants shared that they had previously believed that younger generations often held their own opinions and were resistant to advice or warnings, but through increased listening opportunities, they realized that young people were not as stubborn as many adults had assumed.

2. The program activities facilitated behavioral changes in communication patterns between both groups, increasing the frequency of dialogue and fostering a newfound comfort in engaging in direct and courageous conversations. As one youth expressed, "I used to feel somewhat hesitant when talking to the elderly, whether at home or elsewhere, but this program has helped me become more at ease in conversing with them. I've adjusted my approach when talking to my grandmother at home and feel more confident in engaging with elderly community members." Conversely, elderly participants acknowledged that the program had provided them with insights into subjects that were suitable for conversing with the younger generation, leading to more

comprehensible discussions. One elderly participant reflected, "This program not only made me more confident in talking to my grandchildren but also taught me what topics are suitable for engaging with younger individuals. Sometimes, they want to hear something new according to their age and the society they live in, rather than older stories."

3. Activities within the program have facilitated both age groups in acquiring the skill of employing positive and appreciative language when communicating with one another, including the use of words such as "thank you," "excellent," "the best," "no problem," and "I'm sorry." These simple yet impactful words create a positive atmosphere and convey mutual acceptance, a desire shared by both the elderly and youths. As expressed by one youth during an interview, "I really appreciate the program teaching us to use positive language with people close to us. In our everyday lives, we sometimes use words that are impolite, and we bring them home as well. Speaking negatively can make others feel bad, but if we use kind words with others, it can uplift their spirits." Similarly, an elderly participant commented, "Sometimes, adults tend to use impolite language with their grandchildren, thinking it's something small that can be said. However, participating in this program has made me think that, in reality, we should choose to use good words with those around us because, at times, it makes people feel that they are accepted and trusted."

3.1.2 Joint Activities

Table 2. Data on the Joint Activities of Youths and the Elderly.

ITEM	Youths (N = 30)				The elderly (N = 30)			
	Before		After		Before		After	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Joint activity participation frequency/week								
1-2 times	17	56.67	5	16.67	12	40.00	2	6.67
3-4 times	8	26.66	12	40.00	14	46.67	13	43.00
> 5 times	5	16.67	13	43.33	4	13.33	15	50.00
Types of joint-activities								
Community care volunteer	9	30.00	19	63.33	18	60.00	23	76.67
Making merits and traditional events	10	33.33	18	60.00	23	76.67	26	86.67
Education	11	36.67	17	56.67	16	53.33	19	63.33
Local intellectual learning	8	26.67	21	70.00	15	50.00	20	66.67
Community environment	13	43.33	19	63.33	8	26.67	14	46.67
Feelings for activity participation								
Happiness	4	13.33	19	63.33	10	33.33	22	73.33
Indifference	18	60.00	10	33.33	15	50.00	8	26.67
Unhappiness	8	26.67	1	3.34	5	16.67	0	0.00

The study of intergenerational joint activities' behavior patterns revealed post-participation changes within the youth group. Prior to the participation, the youths displayed an average activity frequency of approximately 1-2 times per week when engaging in activities with the elderly ($P = 56.67 / N = 17$). However, following program participation, the frequency of joint activities with the elderly increased significantly, with most occurrences exceeding 5 times per week ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$). The types of activities that youths commonly engaged in with the elderly before joining the program included community environment activities ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$), education ($P = 36.67 / N = 11$), making merits and traditional events ($P = 33.33 / N = 10$), community care volunteer ($P = 30.00 / N = 9$), and local intellectual learning ($P = 26.67 / N = 8$). However, after participating in the program, there was a notable increase in participation levels across all activity categories, with local intellectual learning being the most frequent activity ($P = 70.00 / N = 21$), followed by community environment activities ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$), community care volunteer ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$), making merits and traditional events ($P = 60.00 / N = 18$), and education ($P = 56.67 / N = 17$). In terms of emotional engagement in these activities, prior to program participation, most youths reported feeling somewhat indifferent when participating in joint activities with the elderly ($P = 60.00 / N = 18$). However, after program participation, youths expressed a higher level of happiness when engaging in activities with the elderly ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$).

Regarding the analysis of data within the elderly group, it was found that prior to program participation, there was an average activity frequency of approximately 3-4 times per week when engaging in joint activities with youths ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$). However, after participating in the program, the frequency of joint activities with youths increased, with most occurrences exceeding 5 times per week ($P = 50.00 / N = 15$). The types of activities

that the elderly commonly engaged in with youths before joining the program included making merits and traditional events ($P = 7.67 / N = 26$), community care volunteer ($P = 60.00 / N = 18$), education ($P = 53.33 / N = 16$), local intellectual learning ($P = 50.00 / N = 15$), and community environment activities ($P = 26.67 / N = 8$). However, after participating in the program, there was a significant increase in participation levels across all activity categories, with making merits and traditional events ($P = 60.00 / N = 18$) remaining the most frequent activity ($P = 86.67 / N = 26$), followed by community care volunteer ($P = 76.67 / N = 23$), local intellectual learning ($P = 66.67 / N = 20$), education ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$), and community environment activities ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$). In terms of emotional engagement in these activities, prior to program participation, most elderly participants reported feeling somewhat indifferent when engaging in joint activities with youths ($P = 50.00 / N = 15$). However, after program participation, the elderly expressed a higher level of happiness when engaging in activities with youths ($P = 73.33 / N = 22$).

Based on interview data with youth representatives and the elderly participating in the program, there are noteworthy perspectives emerging regarding collaborative activities resulting from program participation. These perspectives can be summarized as follows:

1. The reasons behind the increased interest of youths in engaging in intellectual learning activities with the elderly are multifaceted. It is evident that youths have come to recognize the value of wisdom, perceiving it as a resource that can be leveraged to enhance career prospects and increase income. This sentiment is encapsulated in the statements of one youth interviewee who remarked, "I've become more interested in learning local wisdom because I used to think it was not suitable for modern youths. But through these activities, I've realized that we've been misunderstanding its potential to generate income." Another youth participant expressed a particular fondness for culinary activities rooted in local wisdom, stating, "I enjoy all the activities I do with the elderly, but I especially like learning culinary skills tied to local wisdom because it has the potential to benefit me greatly."
2. The reasons behind the increased interest of the elderly in participating in environmental care activities with youths can be elucidated as follows, as articulated by the elderly themselves: the elderly perceive these activities as opportunities to engage with the younger generation within their communities. They find these activities to be accessible and conducive to collaboration with their grandchildren. Moreover, the elderly possess a proclivity for enhancing the aesthetic appeal of their local environments. They view such endeavors as occasions to impart knowledge about the various plant species found in their communities to the younger generation. One the elderly participant, when discussing her motivation for participation, conveyed, "Normally, I enjoy gardening because it aligns with our agrarian way of life. Planting trees may seem like a small task, but I relish the opportunity to engage in this activity with the youths. At times, it allows me to teach them about the various plant species in our community. The abundance of greenery also makes our community look fresh and beautiful."
3. The outcomes of engaging in collaborative activities have led both youths and the elderly to perceive an enhanced potential within themselves and each other. Previously, they relied on their own judgments when assessing others, but engaging in joint activities has enabled them to use real-life experiences to recognize the increased value they bring to one another, as illustrated in the following direct quotations from youths and the elderly participants: "Participating in activities together feels like an opportunity to get to know each other better. Our closeness has grown," one youth mentioned. Another stated, "Engaging in activities has shown us that our grandparents still possess the ability to contribute to the community." One participant further expressed, "Initially, agreeing to participate in activities with the elderly seemed quite challenging, but once we actually did it, it turned out to be different from what I had thought. I realized that in the past, I used my own judgment to assess people all the time."
4. The increased happiness in their perspectives stems from cooperation that lacks negative communication or conflict, resulting in a sense of comfort during their collaborative activities. This sentiment is echoed in the direct quotations from both youths and the elderly: "The happiness that arises comes from the comfort of not having anyone criticize or constantly judge whether what we are doing is good or bad," one youth explained. Another participant stated, "Engaging in activities with people of different ages and feeling happy might be due to the assistance and increased understanding. We avoid using positive words or trying to avoid emotional aspects when engaging in activities together."

3.1.3 Different Viewpoints

From the analysis of data collected through questionnaires assessing the opinions of both youths and elderly participants in the program, it is possible to summarize the differing perspectives as follows:

The viewpoints of youths towards the elderly encompass several key points as follows:

1. The elderly are individuals with extensive life experiences (N = 8) who can offer valuable advice and insights for navigating life (N = 6).
2. The elderly possess valuable knowledge within themselves (N = 7), and this knowledge can be genuinely harnessed or passed on to address various issues (N = 4) among the younger generations.
3. The true identity of the elderly is characterized by kindness (N = 9), empathy (N = 9), and receptivity to feedback (N = 4). However, there may be occasional expressions to the contrary because they seek acknowledgment and respect from the younger generation (N = 2).
4. The elderly are a group of individuals open to learning new things when given the opportunity and appropriate means (N = 4). They are individuals ready for self-development and lifelong learning (N = 2).
5. The elderly are individuals willing to act for the benefit of others (N = 3) or contribute to society according to their potential (N = 1).

The viewpoints of the elderly

1. Youths are the new generation ready to learn new things (N = 3), they can learn quickly (N = 6), and they possess a strong desire for learning (N = 2).
2. Youths are a group of individuals with self-confidence (N = 3) and represent the hope of the community and society in bringing about positive change (N = 7).
3. Youths are a group of individuals who will pass on various aspects of goodness within the community, including culture, wisdom, and more, for the broader society to acknowledge (N = 6).
4. Youths are individuals who will utilize technology to develop their own hometowns (N = 2).
5. Youths are individuals who are willing to care for the elderly in their families to ensure their happiness (N = 3).

3.1.4 Expressing Oneself towards Individuals with Age Differences

Table 3. Data on attitudes towards expressing oneself towards individuals with age differences

ITEM	Youths (N = 30)				The elderly (N = 30)			
	Before		After		Before		After	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Giving compliments on various occasions								
High	6	20.00	21	70.00	12	40.00	24	80.00
Medium	13	43.33	7	23.33	15	50.00	6	20.00
Low	11	36.67	2	6.67	3	10.00	0	0.00
Greetings at different places								
High	10	33.33	23	76.67	19	63.33	27	90.00
Medium	14	46.67	7	23.33	7	23.33	3	10.00
Low	6	20.00	0	0.00	4	13.34	0	0.00
Thanking and encouragement								
High	9	30.00	23	76.67	11	36.67	23	76.67
Medium	13	43.33	6	20.00	13	43.33	7	23.33
Low	8	26.67	1	3.33	6	20.00	0	0.00
Giving help on different occasions								
High	10	33.34	22	73.33	14	46.67	23	76.67
Medium	13	43.33	8	26.67	9	30.00	5	16.67
Low	7	23.33	0	0.00	7	23.33	2	6.66

Based on the self-assessment results of youths and the elderly regarding their attitudes towards expressing themselves towards individuals with age differences, it was found that, within the youth group, prior to participating in the program, giving compliments on various occasions towards the elderly in various circumstances were at a moderate level ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$). Greetings with the elderly when encountered in different locations were also at a moderate level ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$). Expressions of thanking and encouragement to the elderly were likewise at a moderate level ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$), as well as giving help to the elderly in various situations ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$). However, following program participation, it was observed that there were changes in expressions, namely, compliments on various occasions towards the elderly were at a high

level ($P = 70.00 / N = 21$). Greetings with the elderly when encountered in different locations were also at a high level ($P = 76.67 / N = 23$). Expressions of thanking and encouragement to the elderly were also at a high level ($P = 76.67 / N = 23$), and giving help to the elderly in various situations was at a high level ($P = 73.33 / N = 22$).

Regarding the data analysis for the elderly group, before participating in the program, giving compliments towards youths in various circumstances was at a moderate level ($P = 50.00 / N = 15$). Greetings with youths when encountered in different locations were at a high level ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$). Expressions of thanking and encouragement to youths was at a moderate level ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$), and giving help to youths in various situations was at a high level ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$). However, after participating in the program, it was observed that there were changes in expressions, namely, giving compliments towards youths in various circumstances were at a high level ($P = 80.00 / N = 24$). Greetings with youths when encountered in different locations were also at a high level ($P = 90.00 / N = 27$). Expressions of thanking and encouragement to youths were also at a high level ($P = 76.67 / N = 23$), and giving help to youths in various situations remained at a high level ($P = 76.67 / N = 23$).

3.2 The Outcomes of Learning to Create New Meaning in Collaborative Career Development among Individuals of Different Age Groups.

3.2.1 The Results of Changing the Perspective on Collaborative Career Development among Youths and the Elderly

Table 4. Perspectives on collaborative career development of youths and the elderly

ITEM	Youths (N = 30)				The elderly (N = 30)			
	Before		After		Before		After	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Community funds used to increase income								
Agree	12	40.00	25	83.33	14	46.67	27	90.00
Not sure	16	53.33	5	16.67	13	43.33	3	10.00
Disagree	2	6.67	0	0.00	3	10.00	0	0.00
Traditional occupations can be extended or developed to increase their value								
Agree	7	23.34	27	90.00	7	23.34	28	93.33
Not sure	19	63.33	3	10.00	13	43.33	2	6.67
Disagree	4	13.33	0	0.00	10	33.33	0	0.00
The potential of individuals of different ages can elevate careers within the community								
Agree	16	53.33	26	86.67	18	60.00	28	93.33
Not sure	11	36.67	4	13.33	10	33.33	2	6.67
Disagree	3	10.00	0	0.00	2	6.67	0	0.00
The collaboration of people of all generations in the community is the mechanism that leads to successful career development								
Agree	19	63.33	30	100.00	20	66.67	30	100.00
Not sure	8	26.67	0	0.00	10	33.33	0	0.00
Disagree	3	10.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

The results of the analysis of the change in perspectives on collaborative career development among youths and the elderly reveal that, within the youth group, prior to program participation, there was uncertainty in two aspects. First, youths had an uncertain belief that community funds could be used to generate increased income ($P = 53.33 / N = 16$). Second, there was uncertainty regarding the belief that traditional occupations could be extended or developed to increase their value ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$). Additionally, they agreed on two points: the belief that the potential of individuals of different ages can be leveraged to elevate careers within the community ($P = 53.33 / N = 26$) and the belief that the collaboration of people of all generations in the community is the mechanism that leads to successful career development ($P = 63.33 / N = 19$). However, after program participation, it was observed that youths were in agreement with all these points. Specifically, they strongly believed that community funds could be used to generate increased income ($P = 83.33 / N = 25$), that traditional occupations could be extended or developed to increase their value ($P = 90.00 / N = 27$), that the potential of individuals of different ages can be leveraged to elevate careers within the community ($P = 86.67 / N = 26$), and that the collaboration of people of all generations in the community is the mechanism that leads to successful career development ($P = 100.00 / N = 30$).

For the group of the elderly, prior to program participation, they had uncertainty in only one aspect. They were

uncertain about the belief that traditional occupations could be extended or developed to increase their value ($P = 43.33 / N = 13$). They were in agreement with the remaining issues, including the belief that community funds could be used to generate increased income ($P = 46.67 / N = 14$), the belief that the potential of individuals of different ages can be leveraged to elevate careers within the community ($P = 60.00 / N = 18$), and the belief that the collaboration of people of all generations in the community is the mechanism that leads to successful career development ($P = 66.67 / N = 20$). However, after program participation, it was observed that the elderly were in agreement with all these points. Specifically, they strongly believed that community funds could be used to generate increased income ($P = 90.00 / N = 27$), that traditional occupations could be extended or developed to increase their value ($P = 93.33 / N = 28$), that the potential of individuals of different ages can be leveraged to elevate careers within the community ($P = 93.33 / N = 28$), and that the collaboration of people of all generations in the community is the mechanism that leads to successful career development ($P = 100.00 / N = 30$).

Analysis of data and the reporting of the results of those analyses are fundamental aspects of the conduct of research. Accurate, unbiased, complete, and insightful reporting of the analytic treatment of data (be it quantitative or qualitative) must be a component of all research reports. Researchers in the field of psychology use numerous approaches to the analysis of data, and no one approach is uniformly preferred as long as the method is appropriate to the research questions being asked and the nature of the data collected. The methods used must support their analytic burdens, including robustness to violations of the assumptions that underlie them, and they must provide clear, unequivocal insights into the data.

3.2.2 The Results from the Collaboration between Youths and the Elderly in Creating New Meaning in Community Occupations

From the results of developing the intergenerational relationships between youths and the elderly, and collaborative learning to change the perspective on community career development of youths and the elderly in Ban Na Sub-district, Ban Na District, Nakhon Nayok Province, it has led to cooperation in utilizing community-available raw materials, including rice, fish, and fruits, to transform them into higher-value products. These products include:

1. Products Derived from Rice Processing: Dried crispy rice noodles / Instant noodle powder / Semi-finished congee powder / Semi-finished rice porridge powder / Tamarind juice
2. Products Derived from Fish Processing: Sun-dried snakehead fish / Dried fish sauce / Sun-dried tilapia fish fillets / Sun-dried fish chili paste / Tilapia fish seasoning powder
3. Products Derived from Vegetable and Fruit Processing: Preserved mangoes / Chicken dipping sauce / Mango sauce / Banana mixed with legume sauce / Dried mushrooms

3.2.3 Perceiving Success after Program Participation

From the results of the study on the perception of success after program participation among the youths and the elderly, it was found that both the youths and the elderly had similar perceptions across all study aspects. The details are as follows:

1. The aspect of "Increased mutual respect within the community after participating in the program": youths: agree 86.67% ($N = 26$), not sure 13.33% ($N = 4$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$), and the elderly: agree 96.67% ($N = 29$), not sure 3.33% ($N = 1$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$).
2. The aspect of "Increased mutual acceptance within the community after participating in the program": youths: agree 83.33% ($N = 25$), not sure 16.67% ($N = 5$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$), the elderly: agree 93.33% ($N = 28$), not sure 6.67% ($N = 2$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$).
3. The aspect of "Increased mutual assistance within the community after participating in the program": youths: agree 86.67% ($N = 26$), not sure 13.33% ($N = 4$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$), the elderly: agree 93.33% ($N = 28$), not sure 6.67% ($N = 2$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$).
4. The aspect of "Having a better perspective on careers after participating in the program": youths: agree 83.33% ($N = 25$), not sure 16.67% ($N = 5$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$), the elderly: agree 90.00% ($N = 27$), not sure 10.00% ($N = 3$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$).
5. The aspect of "Being able to advance career development after participating in the program": youths: agree 83.33% ($N = 25$), not sure 33.33% ($N = 10$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$), the elderly: agree 93.33% ($N = 28$), not sure 6.67% ($N = 2$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$).
6. The aspect of "Being able to increase income through group participation after participating in the program": youths: agree 66.67% ($N = 20$), not sure 16.67% ($N = 5$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$), the elderly: agree 80.00% ($N = 24$), not sure 20.00% ($N = 5$), disagree 0.00% ($N = 0$).

= 24), not sure 20.00% (N = 6), disagree 0.00% (N = 0).

4. Discussion

From the experimental application of the program aimed at establishing intergenerational relationships and fostering new meanings in community professions in Ban Na sub-district, Ban Na district, Nakhon Nayok province, which divided the operation into two phases: the phase of establishing relationships among generations and the phase of creating new meanings in collaborative career development, the research results indicate a significant transformation. Initially, youths and the elderly in the area had very limited interaction and shared little concern for each other's lives, essentially leading separate lifestyles. However, after the completion of the program in phase one, the research findings revealed positive changes in various dimensions. This is evident from the comparative scores before and after program participation, showing a trend towards improvement. These improvements encompassed enhanced communication, increased engagement in joint activities, improved attitudes towards one another, and behaviors reflecting a more accepting and collaborative relationship. The results of these experiments illustrate that modifying behaviors between youths and the elderly necessitates support mechanisms to familiarize both groups with the benefits of establishing positive relationships. Activities that encourage regular communication between the two generations emerge as a crucial key to bridging the generation gap most effectively (Jarrott, 2011).

Communication serves as both a tool for establishing relationships and a potential means of disrupting them. Optimal communication is characterized by face-to-face interaction (Gamliel & Gabay, 2014). In the program activities, efforts were made to encourage youths and the elderly to engage in such communication. Key conditions for participating in dialogue were established: 1) While speaking, participants must use positive language, avoiding criticism or reference to age differences. 2) As listeners, individuals should reduce internal bias, open their hearts to receive information from the other party, and refrain from arguing while the other is speaking. 3) Questions or reflections could only be posed when it was the time for expressing opinions. These guidelines are based on the principles of Dialogue applied in the context of Contemplative Learning, which promotes behavioral changes in communication. It shifts the focus from wanting to be the speaker to becoming a better listener. This shift encourages understanding of the causes and effects of the other party's perspective, reducing judgment based solely on personal thoughts or beliefs (Dhiman, 2016).

The increasing engagement of youths and the elderly in joint activities is a result of the learning activities in the program that aim to encourage individuals of both age groups to engage in diverse collaborative activities. Examples include volunteer activities that pair participants to care for each other in the community, group initiatives aimed at jointly enhancing the community environment, learning activities related to health dimensions, technology for the elderly in schools, and knowledge transfer of culinary wisdom from the older generation to the younger one. These activities serve the purpose of pushing individuals from both age groups to learn how to assist one another during activities. Some activities require the skills of the elderly, others the skills of the youths, and some necessitate a combined effort of both age groups. The outcomes of cooperation in these joint activities enable the elderly and youths to learn the value of mutual appreciation and foster increased acceptance between them (Kuehne & Kaplan, 2001; Vandervan, 2011).

Following their participation in the initial program, it becomes evident that the elderly and the youths have developed improved perspectives and a more positive manner of interaction with each other. This transformation is attributed to a pre-program research phase which identified critical factors affecting their relationships, primarily rooted in limited communication levels that had been characterized by non-confrontational communication methods, resulting in reduced interactions. Therefore, in the program development, researchers placed particular emphasis on addressing these identified factors, adhering to a fundamental principle of promoting participation in evaluating various activities. These activities were designed to undergo comprehensive approval and scrutiny from relevant stakeholders, ensuring robust collaboration from both the elderly and youth participants. Compliance with program rules, conditions, and engagement in various activities is another crucial factor contributing to the expected program outcomes.

The success of the activities in phase 1, which saw improved relationships between the youths and the elderly, paved the way for a strong collaboration that led to successful outcomes in phase 2. Phase 2 aimed to empower both age groups to enhance their traditional agricultural livelihoods within the community, predominantly as subsistence farmers accustomed to selling their produce to middlemen without considering value addition or income generation. In this phase, transformative learning concepts were applied to stimulate joint reflection and direct discourse among the youths and the elderly, drawing from their personal experiences as farmers, which often included mistakes, exploitation, and deception by middlemen. These experiences left many farmers

disadvantaged, particularly in terms of family income, contributing to stress and negative behaviors within the family. The program's results ultimately fostered improved relationships between the two age groups.

Activities in phase two emphasized equal participation and collaborative learning in planning and implementing initiatives. The research found that the elderly and youths could effectively cooperate to develop existing community resources, such as rice, fish, and vegetables, by adding value to these products. This success resulted from the integration of knowledge and skills from both generations. The younger generation contributed contemporary knowledge and innovations to enhance agricultural practices, while the elderly brought their expertise in raw materials and provided valuable guidance. The strong relationship between the two age groups was a crucial factor that enabled the collaborative learning mechanism for career development to flourish, as there was a continuous exchange of ideas and active listening throughout the activity period.

5. Conclusion

The significant consideration in fostering intergenerational relationship between youths and the elderly in the community is the establishment of effective communication. Effective communication is the starting point for building positive interactions between the two age groups. Consistently organizing community activities serves as a valuable option for creating spaces where the elderly and youths can come together in communal settings, thus enhancing communication. These community activities should be diverse, including volunteer activities and community development projects, as they stimulate empathy and understanding between youths and the elderly. One limitation, nonetheless, is that the success in career development depends on the foundational knowledge and creative thinking skills of the youths, which enable them to contribute effectively to various community projects. As this research primarily focuses on studying the outcomes of the program's experimentation, further studies should delve deeper into the factors influencing the changes. Therefore, future research endeavors should utilize the results of this study to develop and refine models for fostering intergenerational relationships and creating new meaning in careers, benefiting other communities as well.

Disclosure statement

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Competing interests

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No additional data are available.

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