

# Sustainable Development of the Life Quality for the Elderly by Applying Sufficiency Economy-Based Schooling

Suttipong Boonphadung and Pintipa Seubsang

Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

**Abstract.** This research aims to investigate life quality of the elderly by applying Sufficiency Economy Based Schooling. The purposes of this research are to (1) study the level of life quality of the elderly and (2) set up guidelines to enhance life quality of the elderly. The samples in the study were 83 elderly living in Suraolunkaeg community. A questionnaire was employed as a research tool to collect data. The questionnaire content consisted of 6 different areas including of positive emotional condition, personal interaction, well-being, positive health condition, engaging social community and self-determination. Then the data were analyzed by using the following statistics: mean ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (S.D.) and coefficient of variation (C.V.). The result of this research revealed that the personal interaction is in the first rank, followed by engagement in social community, positive emotional condition, and positive health condition. While self-determination, and well-being are in the average level. They are unable to express opinions and share ideas with their own family member, relatives, and close friends. The research found that the guideline to enhance life quality of the elderly by applying Sufficiency Economy based schooling has been agreed by other scholars.

**Keywords:** Sustainable development, Life quality, School based, Sufficiency economics, Elderly

## 1. Introduction

The number of the elderly has been increasing since the system of the Public Health has been developed. In 2010, the number of 60 years of age reached 7,639,000 or about 11.36 percent of overall population. The number of elderly in Bangkok has increased from 721,000 in 2005 to 906,000 in 2010 [1]. The Nong Chok district is considered as the biggest area in Bangkok with high level on elderly population - 11,793 [2]. Accordingly, it tends to bring about problems relating to quality of life for the elderly which affects the government and the related organization's performance in terms of dealing with health problems, cost of living, and the unbalance between the working age and the elderly [3, 4], and being abandoned and mentally hurt with unrespectable words by family members [5]. Such notions have an important implication for the government to establish and prepare for improving the quality of life for the elderly. According to applying the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy, of His Majesty The King of Thailand in developing life quality guidelines for the elderly, the government economically invests the plan for improving the quality of life for the elderly.

Numerous studies relating to life quality of the elderly pay attention on risk factors effecting life quality development of the elderly. However, the study on developing life quality by using elderly based communities needed to be explored [6]. Educational institutes are located in the local communities as well as educational institutions and are therefore a rich source of information and technology. Hence, using school based in studying on developing quality life of elderly possibly leads to a clear understanding in factors effecting life quality of the elderly in order to reduce problem of quality of life of the elderly in the next 5-10 years. With regard to the above matter, the researcher is thus interested in setting up life quality development guidelines for the elderly in the Non Chok district, Bangkok by applying Sufficiency Economy-based schooling. The research objectives are to (1) study the level of elderly life quality in Nong Chok district, Bangkok and (2) set up the guidelines to enhance life quality of the elderly in Nong Chok district, Bangkok by applying Sufficiency Economy based schooling

## 2. Participant and Method of Analysis

The researcher has studied academic journals relating to the elderly and found the theories such as biologic theories, psychology and social. There are 3 kinds of change in the elder life: (1) physical, (2) mental and (3) social change [7]. The elderly physical, mental, economic, social, and family care. Other

factors effecting life quality of the elderly include a feeling of well-being, positive health condition, engagement with the community, personal interaction, positive emotional condition, self-determination, self-development and freedom [8, 9, 10, 11]. There are two different kinds of interview forms used in measuring life quality. The first form consists of level 2 and 4. The 2 levels of measurement consists of yes/no questions. The 4 levels of interview measurement will ask elderly to answer yes or no about the satisfaction in their life quality. For the 4 levels of measurement interview form will ask the elderly to answer 1: Poor, 2: Fair, 3: Good, or 4: Excellent about the satisfaction in their life quality [12]. The second kind of interview is the 5 and the 6 levels of measurement interview form. The 5 levels of measurement interview form will ask the elderly to choose the answer from Very Satisfied to Unsatisfied by making the answers into small icons based on feeling rather than language use. The 6 levels of measurement interview form will ask the elderly to choose the answer from less important to most important by using Likert's concept. [13, 14, 15, 16]. Based on the above life quality measurement, the researcher, then, created the 3 levels of measurement interview form. The interview form had been adjusted according to the Likert Type Question. The interview questions relate to 6 life quality issues and are divided into 83 actors. Those are 1) positive emotional condition (12 questions), 2) personal interaction (18 questions), 3) engaging social community (10 questions), 4) well-being (18 questions), 5) positive health condition (15 questions), and 6) self-determination (10 questions). The research tool was approved as content validity (IOC of each item ranged from 0.80 -1.00) The research tool has been tested on 100 elderly who is not the target participant of the study in order to define the Alpha Coefficient . The Alpha Coefficient of Cronbach of each item and issue ranged from 0.944 0.892, 0.914, 0.942, 0.923, 0.906, and 0.959 in order. The director and teachers of Suraolumkaeg School took part in collecting data from the group of elderly who live near the Suraolumkaeg School in Nong Chok district, Bangkok. The researcher then analyzed the data concerning life quality of the elderly by using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and standard deviation (S.D.), then compare to the level of life quality by using coefficient of variation (C.V.). Next, the researcher concluded the factors to set up the guidelines to enhance life quality of the elderly in Nong Chok district, Bangkok by applying Sufficiency Economy based schooling.

### 3. Findings

The finding of the study on life quality of elderly in Nong Chok district by applying Sufficiency Economy-based schooling are as follows: The samples in the study were 83 elderly living in Suraolumkaeg community including of 44 males and 39 females with the ages rating from 60 to 80 years old. Sixty-one participants were in age between 60-63 years old, 9 participants were in the age between 64-67 years, 4 participants were in the age between 68-71 years old, 6 participants are in age between 72-75 years old, 2 participants were in the age between 76-79 years olds, and 1 participant was in the age over than 80 years. The average educational background of the participant was elementary educational level.

Table 1: Overall finding of life quality of the elderly in Nong Chok district, Bangkok

Life Quality	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	C.V.	Rank	Quality of Life Results
Personal Interaction	2.59	.59	.23	1	High
Engaging Social Community	2.44	.68	.28	2	High
Positive Emotional Condition	2.33	.68	.29	3	High
Positive Health Condition	2.32	.70	.30	4	High
Self-determination	2.17	.71	.33	5	Average
Well-being	2.11	.69	.33	5	Average
Overall	2.33	.68	.29	-	High

The overall level of life quality of the elderly in the Nong Chok district appears to be high. As can be seen in Table 1, the personal interaction is in the first rank, followed by engagement in social community, positive emotional condition, and positive health condition. While self-determination, and well-being are in the average level.

According to Table 1, well-being is the lowest issue for life quality of the elderly. The issue of well-being relates to the need of earning an income and being independent from financial support of the family (cost of living, donation, debt and medical expense etc.) In the same way, the self-determination is also at a low level. The low level of self-determination means that the elderly lack freedom in choosing and doing activity. They are unable to express opinions and share ideas with their own family member, relatives, and close friends.

Table 2: The guidelines to enhance life quality

Life Quality	Related Factor	The guideline to enhance life quality of the elderly by applying Sufficiency Economy based schooling	Expect Outcomes
Well-being	1. Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting the elderly to be able to rely on themselves by establishing occupational group for the elderly including both full-time and part-time jobs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The elderly are able to be independent from financial support from their family members.</li> <li>Elderly live in a safe and appropriate environment.</li> <li>Elderly have better well-being with sufficiency economy</li> </ul>
	2. Income and expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Searching for investment or economic support to enhance the 4 essential life factors of the elderly</li> <li>Making a campaign on improving safety of the environment</li> </ul>	
Self-determination	1. Freedom of thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicizing and giving information about sufficiency economy for the realization of being reasonable, and sufficient.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elderly feel free to express their opinions and are able to recognize advantages and disadvantages as a result of particular activity</li> <li>The new generation gain valuable advice and life experiences.</li> <li>The local community has more unity</li> </ul>
	2. Freedom in choosing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowing the elderly to participate in expressing opinions and ideas, as well as, encouraging them to take part in the development of the community</li> <li>Establishing activities for developing positive relationships between the elderly and youth, for example, encouraging the elderly to participate in teaching, educating, and giving advices to the new generation.</li> </ul>	
Positive Health Condition	1. Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arranging exercise activities such as walking and jogging</li> <li>Setting school as the place for exercise and center for sport</li> <li>Publicizing information about healthcare such as harmful effect of smoking and drinking alcohol</li> <li>Organizing training to educate the elderly about a healthy diet and nutrition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The elderly realize the importance of healthcare.</li> <li>The government should spend less expense on medical treatment</li> <li>The school is a model of developing life quality for the elderly</li> </ul>
	2. Healthy diet		
Positive emotional condition	1. Loneliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizing a kindness campaign</li> <li>Organize travel activities</li> <li>Encouraging the elderly to participate in religious and traditional activities in the local community and local school</li> <li>Organizing the activities for the elderly to show their talents or abilities such as dancing, singing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elderly realize their own value and obtain self-esteem</li> </ul>
	2. well-being		
Engaging social community	1. Social volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting the community to establish specific activities for the elderly</li> <li>Encouraging the elderly to participate in activities of the local community through better communicative leader or local school in order to create relationship between the local organizations</li> <li>Encouraging the local school to search for educated and experienced elderly to engage with local school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The elderly have their own community for sharing ideas and problems</li> <li>The elderly gain social acceptance and are able to create positive relationships within their community</li> </ul>
	2. Gaining social acceptance		
Personal interaction	1. Family relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasizing the appropriate way to treat the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The elderly feel happy and are satisfied with their surroundings.</li> <li>The elderly and family members understand one another.</li> </ul>
	2. Relations with Friends and neighbors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging the elderly to participate in family activities, meeting party or traveling activity with friends</li> </ul>	

The guideline to enhance life quality by applying Sufficiency Economy Based schooling consists of 6 different issues. Each issue contain its own related factors, which are in the average to low level from the

questionnaire result, All of the issues used for setting up the guidelines for developing life quality by using a partnership between school administrator and teachers in order to move to the second phase as presented in Table 2.

The guideline to enhance life quality by applying Sufficiency Economy Based schooling is the result of brainstorming and analyzing data between the school administrator, teachers, and the researcher. Additionally, the use of data source - journals and related studies are taken in to account.

#### **4. Conclusions and Discussions**

Personal Interaction appears to be the highest issue in life quality of the elderly. It means that the elderly in Nong Chok district construct good relationships with their family members, relatives and friends. This notion reflects that the elderly in the Nong Chok district have an adequate and appropriate treatment from family members and that often participate in their own social meetings. According to Thamsiri (2006), the elderly still require mental and social need. In other words, they still need love and care from their family which is one of the basic processes of life quality [9]. Jantriwong (2008) additionally supported that in order to develop life quality of the elderly, it is important to focus on family as the center of development [17]. Furthermore, encouraging the elderly to participate in family activities, social meeting activities, traveling activities and the activities of the local community tend to enhance personal interaction.

Engaging social community of the elderly appears in the high level. According to the findings of current study, most of the participants gain acceptance and respect from people in their society. Kuhar (2009) and Thamsiri (2006) asserted that it is important to strengthen the issue of social relation of the elderly in order to fulfill the need of the elderly [9, 18]. Sricharoen (2001) asserted that inviting the elderly to be the community's speaker in a community brings about acceptance from people within their own social community [21]. Positive emotional condition appears to be at a high level. Based on the findings, the elderly express positive feelings toward their surroundings, are able to control their feelings and emotions, and are satisfied in their living status. The study of Kuha (2009) found that the guideline for enhancing the issue of positive emotional condition of the elderly should emphasize on enhancing mental stability of the elderly, such as, organizing social, traditional and religious activities, creating a kindness campaign for the elderly, and activities allowing the elderly to show their talent [18].

Positive health condition to a high level. According to the findings of the study, the participants are interested in healthcare. Kuha (2009) recommended that the guideline for enhancing positive health condition of the elderly needs to focus health improvement [18]. While Nanthasupphawatna and the team (2005) additionally suggested that the guideline for enhancing positive health condition of the elderly should focus on organizing exercise group activity such as walking or jogging in order to develop positive health condition [19]. Moreover, setting the local educational institutes, as the center of exercise activity and publicizing information about healthcare and the harmfulness of smoking and drinking alcohol are another one way to effectively increase life quality. Furthermore, it is necessary to emphasize on wise consumption as well as providing the Mobile Medical Service or the Public Health Service to support health condition and prevent illness.

Self-determination appears to be an issue in the average level. According to the findings of the study, the elderly hesitate to express their opinion and ideas to their family and friends. It means that encouraging the elderly to express themselves freely, plan the activity for family or have a meeting with the relatives and friends are the way to encourage the elderly to feel that they are worth living in the family and society. However, it is also necessary to educate the family members about the negative effects of neglect and the importance for their healthcare. The family members are then able to transfer the information to the elderly.

The life quality of the elderly in relation to well-being is in the average level. The study found that the elderly still need to work in order to earn their own income. They want to be independent from their family. Chen and the team found that the financial condition is a factor effecting well-being of the elderly [20]. Furthermore, it is found that the elderly expressed worry about accidents within their house and resident area. Thus, the guideline developing life quality of the elderly in terms of well-being should place importance on supporting appropriate career for the elderly to enhance 4 essential life factors of the low income elderly, organizing the training on healthy diet and nutrition, publicizing and offering information about sufficiency economy for the realization of being reasonable, and sufficiency and offering advice and necessary information to the elderly.

In considering to enhancing life quality, collecting data from interviewing the elderly and discussing family members appears to be another effective way to establish guidelines. Moreover, the association of local community, such as school and community leaders or representatives, play as a vital role in analyzing data in order to establish effective guidelines for developing life quality of the elderly.

## 5. Acknowledgements

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## 6. References

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