# DEVELOPMENT OF AESTHETIC ART LEARNING INNOVATION FOR THE NAKHON NAYOK ELDERLY SCHOOL

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#### Abstract

This research aimed at designing ecological plans, developing learning innovation aesthetic art teaching for promoting the elderly health; and proposing and analyzing location assessment, learning management, ecological plan and sets of learning for promoting the elderly health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School. A mixed methodology has been employed. The quantitative research used questionnaire conducted with 77 respondents while the qualitative research used in-depth interview conducted with 30 purposive sampling interviewees and 10 non-participatory observant whereas the action research was to contribute knowledge to the elders about aesthetic knowledge integrating arts and religion, practical skills and experiences, which contributed 4 dimensions of health, self-management, elderly community management and organizing Aesthetic Art Workshop pertaining 7 creative activities organized with 15 elderly students. Results revealed:

1) The ecological plan should adopt the Thai architecture responsive to the central region, with mayongchit [sweet yellow Marian plum] as a provincial leading fruit symbol. The building required consciousness for the elders, the disables and the common people's uses, alleviating discrimination, respecting human and top self-reliance such as restrooms with bars and top security, proper lane for wheelchairs, emergent signal buttons, and lightning. Outside building had to be furnished with slope

for wheelchairs as in the Universal Design, carparks for elders, naturalized landscaping, shadiness, outdoor activities spaces for exercises and recreations with serenity and windiness.

2) Aesthetic Art Workshop included 7 activities to promote elders to understand arts to acquire happiness emerged from internal mind or called selfaestheticization. This led to *samãdhi*, lowering anxieties and stresses, understanding natures and acquiring 4 dimensions of health: body, mind, emotion and wisdom such as exercises of hand, arm and finger muscles. This was to increase capacity of physical strength, self-livelihood, living with dignity, self-valuing, and good relation with fellow humans, prompting to share life experiences on virtue inheritance to sibling and nephew generations amid social, political, economic, environmental and technological changes enabling to daily life practices.

3) Instructions in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School were differently organized by context and promptness by each school. Syllabuses specified each subject period, hourly activities or recreation activities to promote their health. Practical activities were organized to cultivate their skills and experiences for sideline careers to raise income. Contents were unlikely emphasized but activities, diverse theoretical and practical curriculums and activities responsive to their needs, their body and mind happiness till the end of their lives.

Keywords: Ecological plan, aesthetic art activities, elders' health

#### Introduction

Thai societies today, each year, skewed to increase elders. They should thus be caring and attending beginning from families who are closed, binding and intimate. Diverse activities should be organized and inclined to their participation or encouraging them to engage in various activities among their age-mates or different age-mates. This are for their good quality of physical and mental life. Engagement in art activities is an appropriate approach in organizing aesthetic art learning and as a learning vested with activities and instructions. They play the leading role in brainstorming innovation and operations with happiness which will lead to skills for life development and they can value their life and significance as the role models for the later generations.

Demographic structural changes entering the aging societies became the very interested issue at the national and the global levels because wide impacts existed at the macro levels, i.e. the GDP (gross domestic products), per capita, saving, investment, government fiscal budget, employment and labor productivity. On the other hand, in micro levels, they were market impacts, products and various services especially financing, health, and promptness to meet such changes. They were the critical immediacies needed systematic planning and pre-operations due to all various measures needed time to yield fruitful results (Chompoonuch Bhramabhakdi, 2013, p. A).

Thailand is significantly and rapidly stepping into the ageing society as for the past 50 years (1960-2010), the ageing population (exceeding 60 years old) increased from 5% to 13% (from 1.2 million to 8.4 million). Assuming that in the next 30 years (2040/2052), they will increase 31% (20.5 million). This reflected the rise of population at the age of relying on economy, social and health. As such, in ASEAN, there are only Thailand and Singapore accommodate the aging at the ration of 30%, in the next 30 years (Siriwan Aroonthipphaitoon, 2014: Abstract).

By such issue, the researcher was interested to develop learning innovation through ecological plan, the elderly schools, the assessment of the learning innovation aesthetic art teaching for promoting health for the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School vested with valuable activities, and benefits for the body and mind of the elders responsive to the philosophy-based objectives, the universal and the national policies, founded on units deserved for supports. This was to promote such instructional activities especially of the aesthetic arts diverse with theories and practices for the elders to meet happiness, enjoyment and enabled them to lead their valuable lives as the role models for the next generations.

## **Research Objectives**

1) Designing ecological plans about the aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School;

2) Developing learning innovation aesthetic art teaching for promoting the elderly health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School; and

3) Proposing and analyzing location assessment, learning management, ecological plan and sets of learning for promoting the elderly health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School.

### **Literature Review**

World Health Organization early defined health covering 3 important dimensions, i.e. body, mind, and social specifying the meaning in the Organizational Charter in the Remarks that health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of the disease and infirmity. Later, the 4<sup>th</sup> dimension has been attempted to add "spiritual wellbeing" in its definition. (Vichai Chokvivattana, 2010, p. 324).

Adapting technology and innovation to facilitate freedom in life spending of the elders and to create diverse caring with alleviating healthcare expenditures through adopting healthcare by distance system, using digital technology and embracing Information and Communication Technology to play these roles. This was under the budget supports from the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society. A new project of the Elders in Thailand 4.0 has been launched for learning and elder healthcare (Faculty of Associated Medical Sciences, Chiang Mai University, 2020: Online).

The explorations on Arts besides developing the philosophical aesthetics of imaginations, beauty, expressions, thoughts and the scientific aesthetic development had been the rationale, planning, and systematization to be the foundations or the drives of innovation. On the other hand, it was also imperative to develop the aesthetics of the learners. It was called the Aesthetic Education (Viroon Tangcharoen, 2003, pp.38-39).

#### **Research Methodology**

1) In the Quantitative Research, the researcher has first selected it for empirical analysis. Its data collection and statistical analysis were to recognize reasons co-related to with the qualitative data while closing its weakness through survey research and collecting data form respondents, data investigation, designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School with 7 basic principles based on the Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety with the following principles:

1.1) Designing tools/ questionnaire to survey opinions of participants in the 6 locations of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School;

1.2) The opinion survey was on designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School based on 7 basic principles

according to the Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety conducted with 77 purposive samples (persons involved with the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School).

1.3) Analyzing the data of opinion survey and ideas of practices about designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School based on 7 basic principles according to the Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety.

1.4) Organizing the quantitative data to comprehend opinions and practices on designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School based on 7 basic principles according to the Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety to be as data in designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School.

2) In the Qualitative Research, the researcher adopted data from in-depth interview to find problems or needs responsive to developing the design on the ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School. It was based on 7 basic principles according to the Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety to be as the data in designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School. The methodology was applying the focus group responsive to analyzing the development of the ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School. Its methodologies were as below:

2.1.) 30 interviewees participated in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School and 10 non-participants or totally 40 interviewees through purposive sampling with related to topics of expectation and recommendations in order to develop the approaches on 7 basic principles according to the Friendly Design/ Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety to be as data in designing ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School.

2.2) Processing data from interviews given by the qualitative key informants to be analyzed and synthesized for the purpose of the developmental process on designing on the ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Elderly School founded on 7 basic principles of the Friendly Design/ Universal Design.

2.3) Its Focus Group pertained 4 memebers from the teacher group and the scholar group engaging the elderly school activities to endorse the analysis in developing the design of ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School.

2.4) Processing data from the Focus Groups among the qualitative key informants to be analyzed and synthesized to see the investigative process and the experience learned on developing the design of ecological plan of aesthetic art of the Elderly School founded on 7 basic principles of the Friendly Design/Universal Design.

3) The Action Research was a process to develop learning activities on innovative aesthetic art to promote health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School with activities and Aesthetic Art Workshop training, based on 7 innovative activities and its process pertained:

3.1) The process of formulating 7 innovative Aesthetic Art Workshops.

3.2) Contributing knowledge and aesthetic art to the elders (Aesthetics Learning Elderly) through integrating arts/Buddhism to emerge practical skills, and experience worth 4 dimensions i.e. wellbeing, self-management and elderly community. This was by bringing waste materials to create arts from 15 elderly students of the Sub-district Elderly School. They were selected 1 in 6 from the Nakhon Nayok Elderly Schools for the purpose of Aesthetic Art Workshop based on the 7 innovative activities.

3.3) In the pretest and posttest before participating the aesthetic art activities to promote the elder health; it was for to respond the test about arts, and wellbeing of 4 dimensions, self-management and the elderly community.

3.4) Scaling the satisfactory levels of the Aesthetic Art Workshop participants founded on 7 activities.

3.5) Analyzing knowledge, experience learned and results of the Aesthetic Art Workshop founded on 7 activities.

## Results

1). The First Objective: designing ecological plans about the aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School disclosed that analyzing its data with 7 foundations of the Friendly Design/ Universal Design, setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety and found that the Friendly Design/ Universal Design earned the highest level at 4.52 and the top level was 66.9% whereas the lowest level was 1.3%. In setting up the environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety of the Elderly School (internal landscapes and its buildings) were highest at 4.60. Considering opinion, the highest level was at 71.5% but the least level was at 0.8%. From interviews, they were found that the building features should be the applied

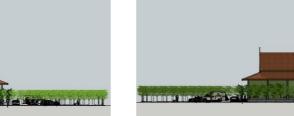
building with its gables (of the central region). The building accommodated airy and spacious space designed with the Friendly Design/ Universal Design. Its landscape within the building, and walkways had to realized safety of the elders,/slope lane for wheelchairs/installing speakers for all to hear with monitor screens, sound systems, modern electronic media in classrooms- activity rooms/ adjustable facilities or mobiled for the elders who were left-handed or righthanded, simple classrooms with less complexity in language and buttons to ease the elders understanding, posting signs (alphabet symbols), and apparent such as toilet signs, accidents warning signs such as slipperiness or stumbling, and fire exit signs to ease understanding, danger signs, slippery wet surface such as toilet floor, different level floor/ prompt safety tools such as bars, automatic doors, or finger scan for simple uses, urgent instruments, rings for urgency and rescue, spare toilets with bars for facility and safety for elders and the disable (wheelchairers). On the contrary, the outdoor landscapes accommodated natural environments (trees, baileys/small parks, cascades) should be exquisite, and serene. Installing the position of speakers should be clear to whole area. The building and compound should be convenient and safe. The forefront had to be install with the sign of the Elderly School and the Nakhon Nayok symbol with sculptures of mayongchit [sweet yellow Marian plum/ fruit of Nakon Nayok], special carpark for the elders and the disables as the ecological plan of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School below:



ด้านหน้า/front



ด้านหลัง/ back



ด้านข้าง/side

The ecological plan of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School in 3D based on the Universal Design.

2. The Second Objective: Developing learning innovation aesthetic art teaching for promoting the elders' health in the Nakhon Nayok by Elderly School – the researcher found that 15 participants of pre-testers and post-testers by paired t-test through testing knowledge of engaging aesthetic art activities to promote the elderly health, the results revealed that before joining activities, the results were at high level with the average of 3.74, SD = 0.80. It indicated that key informants before engaging the activities owned high level of knowledge but in post-test after engaging activities owned 4.60 by average and SD = 0.68. It revealed that by pre-post engagement, and by analysis on the test forms to value knowledge and aesthetic art activity engagement to promote the elder health; the informants well cooperated and earned higher knowledge of aesthetic art. With their satisfactory scaling on participating the Aesthetic Art Workshops applying 7 innovative activities; they were respectively surveyed opinions on context or environmental state, inputs, process, and outputs were at the highest level of 4.72. Considering by levels of opinions, respondents earned highest level at 4.72 and followed by the level of 79.3 and the least was 0.3 level. It indicated that activities were smoothly run and the elders acquired relaxed emotion allowing them happy with the activities.

3. The Third Objective: Proposing and analyzing location assessment, learning management, ecological plan and sets of learning for promoting the elderly health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School; the researcher found that 1). The background of the Nakhon Nayok by Elderly School came from the gathering of individuals in a community (state retirees) beginning from the elder club associated with the local units, state, educational institutions, and religions integrated with many units of the central and local sectors to find budget, support and activity organizers to sustain and to drive the elderly schools. 2) Organizing the syllabus activities was diverse and by context with promptness of each school. Period has been specified for learning each subject, clear activity by period and ended with certificate conferred. Activities were emphasized on recreations sometimes to promote the elder health and practical activities. This was to practice skills, and experiences for sideline career in raising earning according to their promptness and their interestedness. The drive of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School relied on roles and supports of units/institutions. Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) supported budgets for organizing projects and activities

though to its Provincial Office, its District Office/ the quality of life and the livelihood of the elders. Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) supported budgets for projects and activities through Srinakharinwirot University, Rajbhat Suan Dusit University, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi/ quality of life, health and career promotion of the elders. Ministry of Education (MOE) supported budgets for projects and activities through Provincial Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education: PNFE and District Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education: DNFE/career and sideline income promotion. Ministry of Public Health (MPH) supported budgets for projects and activities through Provincial and district Office of Public Health and National Health Security Office (NHSO), Thai Health Office, and Tambon Health Promoting Hospital/ provision of health knowledge, a health promotion for the elders. Tambon Administration Organizations, and Tambon Municipalities supported budgets for projects, activities, compounds used for locating the elderly schools, and temples (wats) to locate the elderly clubs and organizing projects, activities. The mosques were used to organize projects, activities, families and quality of life for the elders. The educational units were mentors, consultants to design syllabuses, and activities responsive to the needs of the elders for their physical happiness till the end of their lives.

The researcher concluded the development of learning innovation aesthetic art teaching for the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School was a mixed research between, quantitative research, qualitative research and focus group allowed to emerge knowledge on the model of ecological plan of aesthetic art, aesthetic art learning management, and health promotion of the Nakhon Nayok elderly schools. It emerged the SOMPOTH MODEL represented with 7 English alphabet, i.e. S = SENIORITY, O = OPPORTUNITY, M = MORALITY, P = PEACEFULLY (peacefulness), O = OPTIMISTICALLY (optimism), T = TRUTHFULLY (truthfulness), and H = HEALTHY (healthiness). The researcher constructed and presented the guidelines of the process on the aesthetic art activities for promoting the elderly health which engulfed 6 factors abbreviated with "SOMPOTH".





Appropriateness and responsiveness to the elderly livelihood.

Opportunities given to the elders by appropriate time to innovation

The elderly valuation with virtues till the end of their lives

The elders learn about life serenity and peacefulness.

The elders view what pass by with delight and optimism.

Understanding the truth that is the truth of life among the ageing

Promoting the elders to acquire perfect health physically, mentally, and socially.

## Discussion

In the research on "the Development of Learning Innovation Aesthetic Art Teaching for the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School", the researcher discussed by the important findings as below:

1) The analyses on designing ecological plans about the aesthetic art of the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School disclosed that analyzing its data with 7 foundations of the Friendly Design/ Universal Design, setting up the

environment and landscape, appropriate facilities and safety and found that the Friendly Design/ Universal Design earned the highest level at 4.52 and the top level was 66.9% whereas the lowest level was 1.3%. The results were corresponded with the works of Menna Allah SALAH Refai Mahmoud, Esam Aldin Mohamed Ali, and Lobna Mahmoud Moubarak (2022: 95) studying Assessment of Urban Spaces from the Perspective of Universal Urban Design (Universal Urban Design from Theory to Practice)". They found that the principle of the Universal Design began with the equality of different ages and capacity, flexibility, personal convenient uses, understandable interpretation, endurance to fallacy, light weight, size and area for reaches and uses, manuals to read, improvement of facilities for public building development adherent to the universal design policy. With the past critical and background of this problem, it deserved to be investigated the theoretical concept to develop a model for improve the environments and facilities in the former public buildings to enhance equality and convenience. It was assumed that the improvement model should respond to uses for all ages who needed their services. This was to be as guides to establish the standards of the building prototype for all ages who were interested or for units which would apply for the building uses.

2) The analyses of developing learning innovation aesthetic art teaching for promoting the elderly health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School – the researcher found that the pre-testers and post-testers by paired t-test earned high level with the average of 3.74, SD = 0.80. It indicated that informants before engaging the activities owned high level of knowledge but in post-test after engaging activities owned 4.60 by average and SD = 0.68. It revealed that by pre-post engagement, and by analytical results participants well cooperated, well improved and earned higher knowledge in each aspect (aesthetic art, 4 dimension of health state, self-management, and elderly communities). They were corresponded with the works of Taksina Phphitkul (2016 p.18) investigating "Aesthetics and Arts: from representing images to relational aesthetics." She found that the relationship between arts and external world was direct. Later when perceptions to access truth, they demonstrated scientific knowledge. The aesthetic art access became seeking for truth through revealing the internal core of everything which was true transcended beyond seeing the world with bare eyes to the sought of real truth which was universal by aesthetic model. The current formalism is diverse and fruitful by information media which allowed humans to raise questions and challenged things manifested. Humans did not believe in perfect truth but all things were construct. The

concept of accessing truth through representation was again challenged by pushing arts into the real experience and besides the importance of arts. As it was found in the works of Salmi Razali (2021, p. 34) Assoc. Prof. Dr. in Psychiatry, investigating "Art Therapy for People with Mental Illness: Overview of the Evidence from Empirical Research on the Effectiveness of the Treatment". She found that therapeutic arts might be useful as a tool to release moods or negative trauma, communicative improvement, enhancing human relation, relationship and increase of supporting system. Most experts of mental health advised patients with symptoms of mental sickness to be treated with tested mental therapy (for minor and moderate symptoms) and added with pharmaceutical therapy (for moderate and critical symptoms). The art therapy played duties to support all these traditional treatments. Art therapies might be useful as additional treatment for mental sickness and it was indispensable to have additional evidences to reveal the art therapeutic effectiveness.

3) The analyses of the location assessment, learning management, ecological plan and sets of learning for promoting the elderly health in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly Schools; the researcher found that their most locations were within the Office of the Tambon Administration Organization to provide learning activities. Most schools owned their evident syllabuses on specifying subjects, dates and time throughout their curriculums. Some schools provided timely activities on the occasions of the elderly students needed to learn together. And the art activities should be organized as part of the syllabus or activities in the elderly schools, for example, the 7 activities in the innovative aesthetic art workshops. They were corresponded with the works of Chairat Wongkitroongruang (2017: executive summary) who investigated "Quality of Life of the Elder in Rural Societies: a case of the elders in Ratchaburi Province" He found that the key internal issues affecting the elderly quality of life were their physical health, followed by economy, family and their ability to adapt themselves to health, body, mind, social and culture to enable them to appropriately lead their lives in the changing societies. On the other hand, the key external issues affecting the elderly quality of life were social and cultural changes affecting their sensation which adhered to their cultural customs.

## Conclusion

This study found the innovative learning of aesthetic art for the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School pertaining (1) contributing knowledge based on 7

foundations according to Friendly Design/Universal Design in designing the aesthetic art plan of the Nakhon Nayok elderly schools pursuing the universal principle taken by the civilized nations which being conscious of safety and facilitation to lead self-reliance living while paying importance to the rights of equality, alleviating discrimination, enabling the elders to access social opportunities while the disables were enabled to lead their lives with dignity in common societies with happiness. (2) In AESTHETICS LEARNING ELDERLY, it should be integrated art knowledge/religion to emerge practical skills, experiences supporting 4 dimensions of wellbeing, self-management and elderly communities through using waste materials to create artworks. With such process, the elders understood the aesthetic art associated with ability to leading their lives with physical and mental happiness. (3) The public sector should have the host unit to be responsible for driving the establishment of the elderly schools by each Tambon (sub-district) associated with the public health units to healthcare. The local educational units provided knowledge, and learning activities responsive to the needs of the elders, provided sustainability and continuity to support policy, budgets, and human resources including continuously being the supportive mentors. (4) The elderly schools should integrate with units of Tambon Administration Organizations, religious sites, temples (wats), mosques in the location for the purpose of policymaking on learning, instructing, budgeting and using the schools for public sector participation where transparency and auditability were imperative. (5). Bringing the draft of 2 dimensions and the ecological aesthetic art plan of the Nakhon Nayok elderly schools, and the 3 dimensions founded on 7 factors according to the Friendly Design/Universal Design to proposed to the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School as guides for further exploring the design of ecological plans. (6). Presenting set of practices on innovative aesthetic art with 7 activities to be the activities for promoting physical, mental, emotional, social and intellectual health for the elders in other Elderly Schools in Nakhon Nayok province.

The building required consciousness for the elders, the disables and the common people's uses, alleviating discrimination, respecting human and top self-reliance such as restrooms with bars and top security, proper lane for wheelchairs, emergent signal buttons, and lightning. Aesthetic Art Workshop included 7 activities to promote elders to understand arts to acquire happiness emerged from internal mind or called self-aestheticization. This led to *samãdhi*, lowering anxieties and stresses, understanding natures and acquiring 4

dimensions of health: body, mind, emotion and wisdom such as exercises of hand, arm and finger muscles. Instructions in the Nakhon Nayok Elderly School were differently organized by context and promptness by each school. Syllabuses specified each subject period, hourly activities or recreation activities to promote their health. Practical activities were organized to cultivate their skills and experiences for sideline careers to raise income. Contents were unlikely emphasized but activities, diverse theoretical.

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Menna Allah SALAH Refai Mahmoud, Esam Aldin Mohamed Ali, Lobna Mah Moud

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