



De La Salle University-Dasmariñas

The Psychosocial Experiences of Integrity vs. Despair Among Senior Religious Lay Women

A Research Proposal

Presented to the Faculty of the Behavioral Sciences Department

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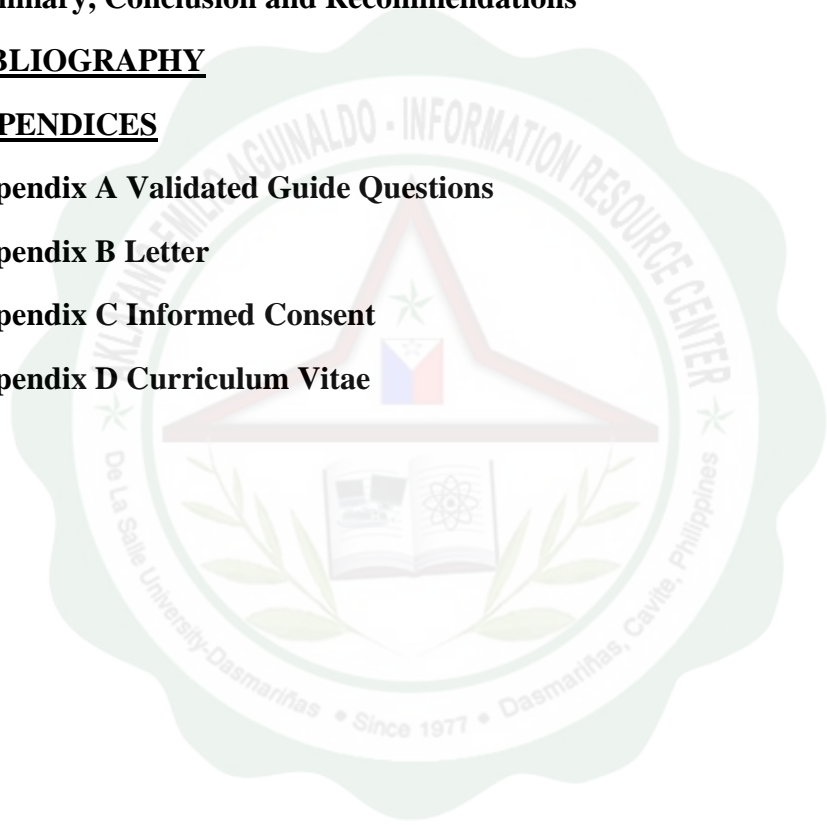


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Chapter V

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

What is the demographic data of the respondents?

The respondents were ten senior religious laity women within the municipality of Bacoor, Cavite. One is aged seventy-four with a previous work as a personal secretary for thirty years. A seventy-one year old respondent had a previous work as a seamstress for more than 2 years. One of the respondents is sixty-nine years old with a previous work as an executive secretary at a manufacturing firm for fifteen years. Two of the respondents are sixty-eight years old with a previous work as teacher for fifteen years and logistics manager for twenty-three years, respectively. One respondent is sixty-six years old and worked as an employee at Lydia's Tatoy's Foundation. Three of the respondents are aged of sixty-five, the youngest among all of the respondents with a previous work as lingerie production worker/canteen helper for six years, a crew manager for nineteen years and a cashier at a department store for sixteen years.

Out of the ten senior religious laity women, nine are married and only one is widowed. All the respondents are living with their families.



What are the psychological experiences of integrity of the senior religious lay women on their psychological, biological and social dimensions?

The results of psychosocial experiences of integrity in terms of different human dimensions:

PSYCHOLOGICAL

The respondents identified what they like most about themselves in terms of stating their personal positive attitudes such as being generous, motherly, friendly or approachable, compassionate and understanding. They are also open to reveal their negative traits which illustrates that elderly accept negative traits without the feeling the danger in it also has ego integrity. Their accomplishments in life and the things they have achieved personally like the education for their children, attaining their religious life, having a good relationship with their family, the blessings being received everyday as well as having a successful married life also contributed to their integrity. The respondents mostly were looking forward to their personal life from day to day basis as well as looking forward to things they still want do are by remaining active for the church community and family, helping other people as well as to commit in activities like travelling in which considered that older adults who engage in creative activities are strengthening a sense of self that is competent, efficacious and capable. A study done by Aitken and Rudolph (2010) says that positive attitude even after retirement shows having integrity in life similar to the



the study done by Prior (2005) which says that feeling of disgust and displeasure of individual to himself result to despair of the individual. The respondents were still valuing their lives and still depict a sense of well-being through social support.

BIOLOGICAL

It is believed that retirement is a time marked by changes in the aspects of elderly affecting health (Alvarenga, 2009). Only respondent A does not encounter any health problems. Most of the respondents encounter health problems like hypertension, diabetes, lower back pain, headache and nervous breakdown but avoiding diseases and maintaining physical functioning are implied to contribute to a successful aging. The common answers in terms of their reactions toward the respondents regarding their health problems are: spiritual healing in terms of praying, taking medications and self-discipline by being self-cautious in foods and having proper exercise and diet. More so, the respondents through experiencing physical changes like wrinkles and sagging of skin, they have positive reactions with these physical changes like acceptance, praying, maintaining a happy lifestyle and taking their accomplishments in life as an advantage of their aging. Healthy old age is aimed as a time of integrity and still, the respondents though aged, expressed positivity through social support and having a religious life. It is identified that the relationship of biological and social factors is linked to psychological well-being and contentment in the sense of identity of older adults as stated by Kroger (2007).



SOCIAL

The integrity of the respondents in their social aspect are were seen through their religious participation as a means of engaging their selves in creative activity like traveling, engaging in volunteering work, and joining church seminars towards build a strong sense of self that appeared to have positive effects on the respondents in terms of their ability, health and life satisfaction. For the respondents, family is a means of social support and is considered significant for the well-being. Joining activities like serving the church is a means of keeping in touch with the community. This for them makes life more meaningful. Further, satisfaction in the work experiences of the respondents served as an accomplishment in life and a factor to contribute to their integrity. Respondents showed satisfaction in the length of years they served with their previous work. As member of religious organization, having something worthwhile to do gives them a sense of satisfaction. For James (2010), socio-economic status of the respondents played a factor for their successful aging in terms of the person's attitude towards their previous work as well as the present work or with their organization. More so, having contentment with the performance and the totality of the work experiences prior to the respondents' retirement as well as with the present work or organization contribute to their sense of belongingness and coping to life stresses are factors that lead to their integrity of the respondents.



SPIRITUAL

The respondents showed well-being of personal growth and over-all satisfaction with their religious involvement like having feelings of contentment, peace, and joy in praying that serves as a contributing factor of integrity in the lives of the older adults. Faith is considered as part of healthy living and wellness of the respondents that is associated on being involved in the religious laity. More so, the feelings of the respondents whenever they pray are engaged to the spirituality they have with God. Feelings contentment, peace, love and acceptance are positive feelings that contributed to the integrity of the respondents.

What are the psychological experiences of despair of the senior religious lay women on their psychological, biological and social dimensions?

The results of psychosocial experiences of despair in terms of different human dimensions:

PERSONAL

The experiences of despair among the respondent in their personal dimension is seen through their negative traits. Among them are being impatient, moody, short-tempered, and stubborn. Some of the respondents also showed regrets like early marriage, and wasting time during younger which are a contributing factors in their despair. In addition, worrying of some respondents especially with their



children, family, and changes that are happening to them also could be contributing factors of despair.

BIOLOGICAL

Health problems that are encountered by some of the respondents are migraine, having cyst, lower back pain, high blood, diabetes, nervous breakdown, and Myoma are the factors that contributed to their despair that leads to affect their living conditions. Study of Eckstein and Mullener (2010), healthy old age should be aimed as a time of integrity and not a time of despair. Their health problems were affecting their motor abilities as well as their emotional wellness. The feelings of insecurity and resentment also serve as contributing factors to their despair. In addition, disadvantages of aging their internal and external characteristic in terms of body weakening and having insecurity due to their physical features like having wrinkles and sagging of skin are parts of having resentment because of body changes as they grow older. In aging, there is a feeling of uselessness and displeasure among respondents. One of the respondents stated that if she had sickness, she felt that she is left alone and being useless.

SOCIAL

The relationships of the respondents with their family and friends can also contribute despair with their lives. Family and friends are considered as social support with the respondents. However, there are maladjustments that were experienced by the respondents that served as factors that lead to despair. Having



problem in the household in terms of the finances, having arguments with a family member, having negative feelings towards a person and feeling of bad mood and irritation which could not be totally eradicated. Respondents' relationship with their friends that show that most of them did not maintain close relationship since they are living in far places and some are already gone. This shows that respondents are lacking the chance to maintain old friendship. However, they are able to gain new friends and maintain relationship through the religious group they have joined. Moreover, The satisfaction with the performances on the work prior to the retirement of the respondents as well as to present work or organization can also lead to despair. The discontentment of the respondents on their previous job are not being able to balance their work from their relationships with their co-workers and also incongruent relationships with them. Factors such as incongruent relationship with co-workers in the workplace were contributing to the discontentment of the respondents on their careers. In addition, lack of something to do at work and the need to be useful or worthwhile are factors to have displeasure on life. It is indicated that the late stage of psychosocial development is to either find meaningful experiences or disappointments in life and with the work aspect of some of the respondents, there were unrealized goals which influences despair in life.



Conclusions

The study showed that ten respondents manifest integrity in life based on their experiences. Most of them find family support and are involved in spiritual life that gives them joy and contentment. Engaging in religious organization allows the respondents to have a positive outlook. As they age, they are encountering problems in their different human dimensions such as the personal, biological, social and work aspects. They experience insecurity and resentment through the physical changes happening to them but they find acceptance since they have spirituality in life. More so, the respondents were able to maintain their physical functioning by having self-discipline like taking medications, regular check-ups and proper diet and exercise. Social support is also a contributing factor for the integrity of the respondents. Their family and fellow religious laity women are groups of people whom they find sense of belongingness and a mean to cope with life stresses like finances, as their most common problem. In addition, life for the respondents is peaceful since they have a deeper relationship with their faith. Being in the religious organization also makes their life exciting since involving with church-related activities provides a creative and a sense of self-strengthening for them in spite their aging. Some of the respondents have still worryies about the past and regrets during their younger years but still, they look forward to their personal life from day to day basis. Similarly, as a religious laity woman, they tend to cope with these difficulties because spirituality helps them to cope with these difficulties because spirituality helps them to. As older adults,



they are able to reflect and find fulfilment in achieving goals and accomplishments. Most of the things they achieved personally are having a successful married life, education for their children and the everyday blessings from God. The church community assists the respondents to live life with joy and satisfaction. Learning how to be thankful, forgiving and accepting are the personal positive attitudes that influences them to have integrity in life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations formulated based on the research accomplished:

As younger generations, the study would be helpful if , encouraged to be read and do further studies among the aged population since, it would make the young Filipinos aware of the importance of providing better means of living conditions among the older people.

Guidance counsellors and psychology majors should give focus to the increasing population of elderly people since researches on older adults are not given much attention in the empirical field.

Senior citizens regardless of their profession and status should be given programs that would enable them to understand their life stage and enable them to still live productive and useful lives of purpose by doing something about their despair stage in life.



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It is suggested that male respondents be interviewed as well regarding their life experiences. It would be interesting to find out if there is a difference between male and the female respondents.

This study will make Filipinos aware of the importance of psychosocial development of Erik Erikson towards the aging years. Thus, enabling many to focus on achieving a life of ego integrity than that of despair.

