

OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID:
EDU-2025-14019406

Volume: 14

Issue: 1

Month: December

Year: 2025

P-ISSN: 2320-2653

E-ISSN: 2582-1334

Received: 15.08.2025

Accepted: 12.10.2025

Published Online: 01.12.2025

Citation:

Bhuranahirunn, S. (2025). Flexible Occupational Skills Development for the Elderly through Empowerment to Enhance Quality of Life and Strengthen the Grassroots Economy. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 14(1), 68–79.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v14i1.9406>




This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Flexible Occupational Skills Development for the Elderly through Empowerment to Enhance Quality of Life and Strengthen the Grassroots Economy

Siribhorn Bhuranahirunn

Nakhon Sawan Rajabhat University, Thailand

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9221-5970>

Abstract

This research aimed to 1) study the potential, knowledge, and wisdom of the elderly in the area; 2) develop a flexible occupational skills learning module for the elderly; 3) experiment with a flexible occupational skills learning module for the elderly; and 4) study the quality of life and income from flexible occupational skills for the elderly. The research was conducted according to the research and development process using a mixed methodology, social phenomenological study, inductive data analysis, and local or community-based research. The target group comprised 50 elderly people from the Thanam Oi Subdistrict, Phayuha Khiri District, Nakhon Sawan Province, Thailand. The research period was 21 months, from 1 October 2023 to 30 June 2025. The researchers conducted the research in four steps as follows: Step 1: Analysis of the potential, knowledge, and wisdom of the elderly. The researchers visited the area to study the potential, knowledge, and wisdom of the elderly and their needs regarding career development. This research involved a document study, participatory observation, interviews, and focus group discussions. and brainstorming. Step 2: Development of a flexible occupational skills learning module for older adults. The researcher used the data from Step 1 to create a flexible occupational skills learning module for older adults. Step 3: Experimentation with the flexible occupational skills learning module for the elderly. This is an action research study that experiments with a learning module and conducts occupational skills training for the elderly. Data were collected both during and after the activity. The results were summarised and evaluated, and the information was returned to the communities. Finally, Step 4: Study of the quality of life and income from flexible occupational skills for the elderly. This is a career creation from occupational skills to income generation for the elderly, increasing their quality of life, self-esteem, and income from occupations.

Research Findings Revealed

1) The potential of the elderly: The Khao Mai Den Elderly Group, initiated in April 2023, consists of 50 members, including senior citizens and those aged 55–59 years from five villages. They meet monthly to participate in healthcare activities supported by public health officials. The elderly possess diverse potentials and wisdom. Most have experience in traditional handicrafts such as bamboo weaving, mats, rice baskets, and embroidery, providing a strong foundation in handicraft skills, pattern design, meticulousness, and perseverance. While bamboo and rattan are becoming increasingly rare, the elderly are considering the use of modern materials such as plastic threads instead of bamboo or rattan. They state that plastic threads are durable, come in various colours, are affordable, and can create patterns similar to traditional wisdom.

2) Development of flexible occupational skills learning modules for the elderly: The researchers created five learning modules: Understanding Materials and Equipment, Basics of Plastic Thread Weaving, Designing and Preparing for Basket Weaving, Weaving Simple Baskets, and Understanding Colours and Patterns. The quality was assessed by seven experts, and the learning modules were found to be of the highest quality.

3) The trial of the Flexible Occupational Skills Learning Module for the Elderly, which was held in a workshop for the elderly, found that participants participated in the workshop. Overall, basket-weaving skills were at the highest level.

4) Creating a career from flexible career skills for the elderly is an expansion of occupational skills training for a good quality of life and income generation for the elderly. The Elderly Club received a budget from the Elderly Fund Administration Division, Department of Elderly Affairs, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. It was used as a cost for purchasing materials for