An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Development Processes of Retired Professionals in Lifelong Learning

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An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Development Processes of Retired Professionals in Lifelong Learning

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dedicated
to
all senior people
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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the development and adaptation processes of Sarawakian retired professional in life-long learning using interpretative phenomenological analysis. This investigation detects evidence in its data that the possibility of human development conforms to the Wilber’s Four Quadrants (2000) which grow ever-larger concentric circles as the individual changes and develops progressively, embracing a wider circle of unity with fellow humans, nature and spirit. Wilber’s Four Quadrant Structure (Wilber, 2000) was used as it covers a wide range of developmental hypotheses and is ideal to guide, illuminate and legitimise the data of this research as he has incorporated all the major theories of human development in his hypothesis. He has incorporated cultural studies, anthropology, systems theory, developmental psychology, biology, and spirituality to come out with this integrated theory. This research’s objective is to translate Wilber’s hypothesis into the local, practical and applied terms via the data of the five retired and senior Sarawakian professionals. A wide range of past literature gave this research clues as to what to ask the participants in the research questions. The data obtained were analysed via the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis methodology. The research findings indicated that the senior participants were actively and freely engaged in life’s development processes in their senior years. The awareness of the development of senior has vast implications. There is so much to do in terms of support for them from policies makers, NGO’s, care-givers and the general community at large to help our deserving senior population in their twilight years to adapt and develop with respect and dignity in the face of the challenges of the 21st century.

Keywords: development, adaptation, life-long learning, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, wider circle of unity.
**ABSTRAK**

tahun senja mereka untuk menyesuaikan diri dan berkembang dengan penuh hormat dan maruah dalam menghadapi cabaran abad ke-21.

**Kata kunci:** perkembangan, adaptasi, pembelajaran sepanjang hayat, Interpretasi Analisis Fenomenologi.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This research investigates the development and adaptation processes of Sarawak retired professionals in lifelong learning. It belongs to the school of thought that holds the conviction that the development and cognitive processes are a lifelong undertaking. Theoretically when faced a new life issue, a senior needs to adapt to the new situation. This development and adaptation which involves complex cognitive processes are on-going processes, right throughout life. Life adaptations fall into two broad but distinct categories – a physical adaptation or/and a transformational one. In retirement, for example, the senior ends a role as a bread winner and contributor which has been a big part of his/her identity. The effects of this on people vary but adaptation is nevertheless necessary. An example of physical adaptation may take a form of ‘going to work’ in the park. Every morning he dresses up for ‘work’ as he has always done. He stays in the park the whole day until it is time to come home from ‘work’. The other form of adaptation is transformational. This requires the senior to undergo an attitude change in which he is comfortable with his retired status. Both adaptive and transformational adaptations are cognitive processes of ageing seniors. In facing the challenges of ageing in the 21st century, not only the seniors but the care-providers, government and non-government organizations face a very challenging time. An awareness of the development processes of seniors is essential in addressing the many issues that senior people face so that the right kind of services and resources can be channelled to where they are most needed and beneficially utilized.
In the 1970’s it was already perceptible that the populations of the developed countries were ageing. In 1982 the United Nations felt the need to address the world’s ageing population. The Vienna International Plan of Action was called to draft the first plan of action on ageing.

In 1991, the General Assembly of the Vienna International Plan of Action took up the United Nations Principles for Older Persons calling for their incorporation into national development programmes. The principle issues of the seniors were grouped under five quality-of-life characteristics: independence; participation in society; care facilities available to them; their opportunity for self-fulfilment and the protection of their dignity.

Regarding the integration of seniors into society, the General Assembly emphasised four interrelated dimensions: the situation of older persons lifelong individual development multigenerational relationships and the relationship between the ageing of population and development.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2002 was the second internationally agreed programme to offer recommendations and guidance. It reflected the growing significant impact of the elderly on society. One of the main aims of the Madrid International Plan for Action on Aging (2002) is to pressure legislatures, governments and academia, non-government organizations and aid agencies to adequately deal with the ageing population in their respective countries. Representatives of 159 countries gathered to share ideas and design policy solutions for the world’s ageing population. With a collective force it