

Abstract

This study was about “power and potency of aging women in their living” and its objective was to ascertain pressure which they received and determine strategies to build living power for aging women among gender pressure and aging pressure which they faced. The author analyzed the data through Patriarchy, and empowerment concepts, various discourses which were built to explain aging women, gender, pressure or other conditions with qualitative methodology. In addition, the author collected data by in-depth interview and oral history with 4 aging women.

From the study, it was found that aging women had to encounter gender pressure which was from social structure in which men were superior, making “women inferior to men”. This value was infiltrated to all angles of cultural structure, politics, and economics by being taught through socialization and the areas which spread this discourse from families which began feminine and masculine difference. When teenage approached, femininity was more expected than masculinity and illusion (gender bias) was built to frame women with virginity which was the value to female life; such increased pressure as well. Moreover, the pressure was higher when women were in family age or marital life which framed wife and mother roles. This fetter made women accepted the life as the discourse “wife and child are the properties of a husband” and it was so difficult to be released from such pressure that it affected the living of those 4 aging women. Ultimately, gender pressure caused resistance within the aging women who needed to release themselves from the fetter; as such it led to empowerment.

Age pressure of the aging women took place for 2 levels i.e. 1) family level, the pressure was that their offspring’s perspective of “aging” as weak, they needed to rest. The offspring did not want them to do anything, they wanted the aging women to quit working and did not let any chances for them to think and select what they wanted to do, 2) social level, this was about adding the status of burden and dependent person to aging women (including aging men) through government policy such as pension fund for the elderly. Even though many aging women saw it was good with the aid from the

government, some aging women presented different point of view as it was unnecessary for them.

Aging women had procedure and strategies to empower among gender and age pressures by positive thinking, giving self-value, empowering and finding channels or paths to release themselves and going out to public in order to step across the pressures. Publicizing or working for community were important changes to push aging women go over the pressures of both feminine and aging matters.

In term of policy recommendation from this study, the government should adjust perspective or thinking method to aging women and men to realize the different of people as the current perspective makes the government incapable to see the diversity of aging people which is the main base leading to social allowance for the elderly and being consistent to the need of the elderly as well as to the sustainable support of the elderly to live with value and dignity. Also, there should support the “preparation to be aging which emphasized living power” to aging people. Before, people grow old, readiness preparation should be held for aging people and communities in order to create areas or activities supporting the gathering of aging people.

Furthermore, there should be social welfare to help aging women to live happily by emphasizing holistic services to such aging women which will support their potency to live happily and gain living power to do good for themselves, family and society.