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Reflections on the Inner Transformation of Physical Education Students through Service-Learning in Intergenerational Health Promotion Activities: A Case Study of the Elderly School in Chae Son Subdistrict, Mueang Pan District, Lampang Province, Thailand

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Introduction

Thailand is rapidly transitioning into a super-aged society, creating new challenges for teacher education in preparing future educators with not only professional knowledge and pedagogical competence but also empathy, civic responsibility, and the ability to collaborate across generations. Service-Learning integrated with intergenerational health promotion activities provides an experiential learning approach that simultaneously enhances student learning and contributes to community well-being. While previous studies have highlighted the educational benefits of Service-Learning, limited research has explored the process of inner transformation experienced by pre-service physical education teachers through sustained engagement with older adults. This study therefore investigates the reflective experiences of physical education students participating in an intergenerational Service-Learning program and proposes a conceptual pathway explaining their transformative learning process.

Research Objectives

1. To explore the inner transformation experienced by physical education students after participating in Service-Learning through intergenerational health promotion activities at the Elderly School in Chae Son Subdistrict, Lampang Province.
2. To synthesize the major themes of students' inner transformation using Thematic Analysis.

Methodology

Research Design Qualitative Research

Participants

Twenty-two undergraduate Physical Education students who participated in the intergenerational Service-Learning program.

Research Setting

The Elderly School, Chae Son Subdistrict, Mueang Pan District, Lampang Province, Thailand.

Data Collection

Reflective Journals, Field Notes Photographic, Documentation

Trustworthiness

Data Triangulation Investigator Triangulation

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis following Braun and Clarke (2022).

Findings

Five interconnected themes emerged, illustrating the students' pathway of inner transformation.

Theme 1: Breaking Stereotypes

Theme 2: Bridging the Generational Gap through Communication

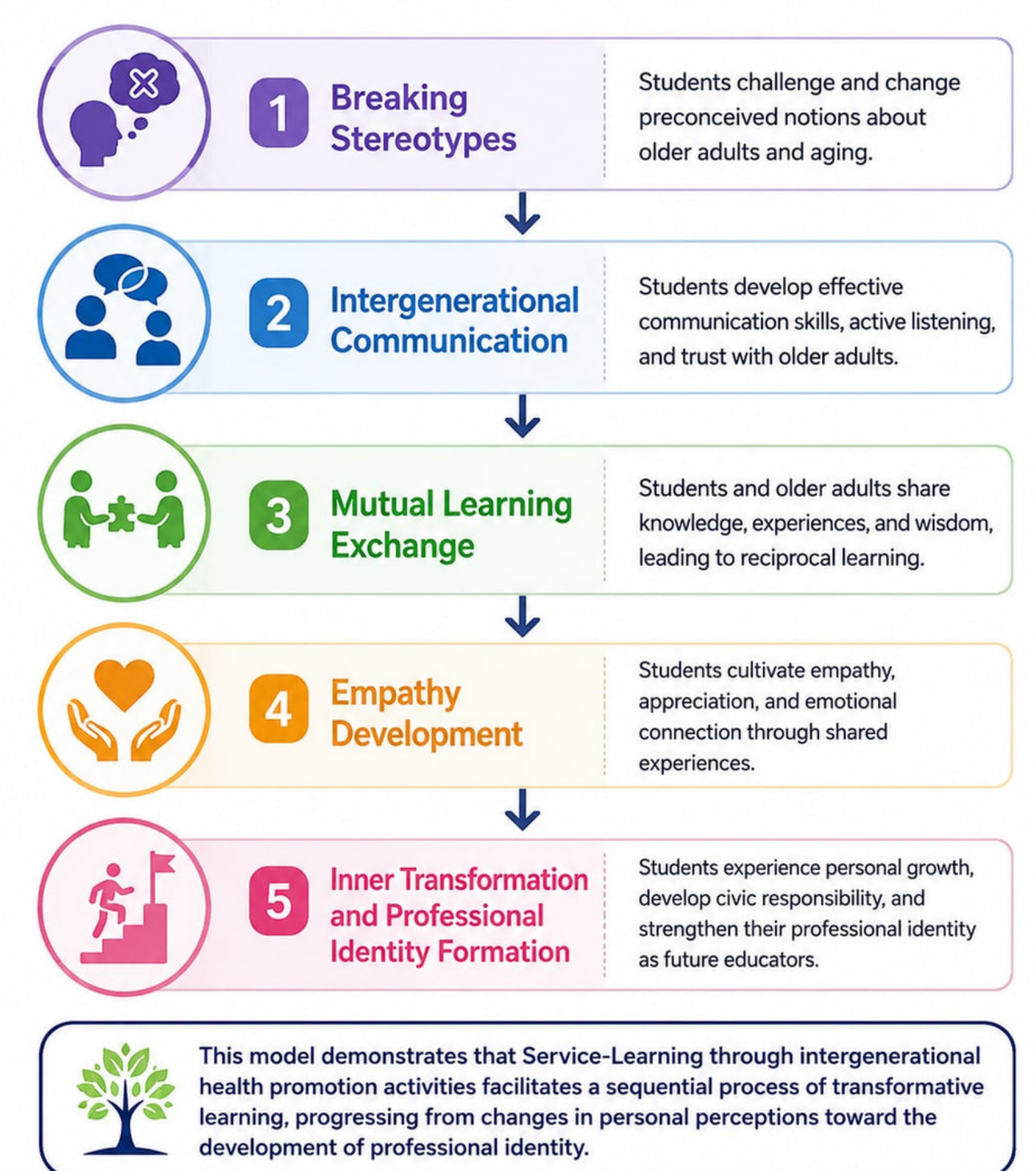
Theme 3: Mutual Learning Exchange

Theme 4: Emotional Connection and Empathy

Theme 5: Inner Transformation and Professional Identity Formation

Inner Transformation Pathway Model

Service-Learning through Intergenerational Health Promotion Activities



Discussion

The findings indicate that Service-Learning in intergenerational health promotion fosters students' inner transformation through authentic community engagement. Students reconstructed their perceptions of older adults, strengthened communication skills, developed empathy, and enhanced their professional identity. These findings align with the principles of Transformative Learning, Service-Learning, and Intergenerational Learning, which emphasize experiential learning, critical reflection, and meaning-making through authentic social interaction.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Service-Learning through intergenerational health promotion fostered students' empathy, reflective learning, civic responsibility, and professional identity through authentic community engagement. Teacher education programs should integrate Service-Learning and strengthen university-community partnerships. Future research should examine its long-term transformative impact across diverse disciplines and community contexts.

References

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