

論文の内容の要旨

論文題目 Project ENGAGE: An action research towards improving the psychological well-being of community-dwelling senior citizens in the Philippines

(プロジェクト ENGAGE: フィリピンにおける高齢者の心理的幸福度を向上させるためのアクションリサーチ)

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Background

In response to the increasing needs and concerns of Filipino senior citizens, the research project ENGAGE was conceptualized which stands for **E**mbracing and **N**urturing **G**lobal **A**GEing. The goal of the research project was to improve the psychological well-being of community-dwelling senior citizens.

The research project ENGAGE is community-based action research conducted in the City of Muntinlupa from 2017 to 2018. The research project had three phases (see Fig. 1). Phase 1 measured the depressive symptoms of community-dwelling senior citizens and examined the factors associated with it. Phase 2 trained senior volunteers for leadership and peer counseling. Phase 3 conducted community-based interventions to improve the depressive symptoms of senior citizens.

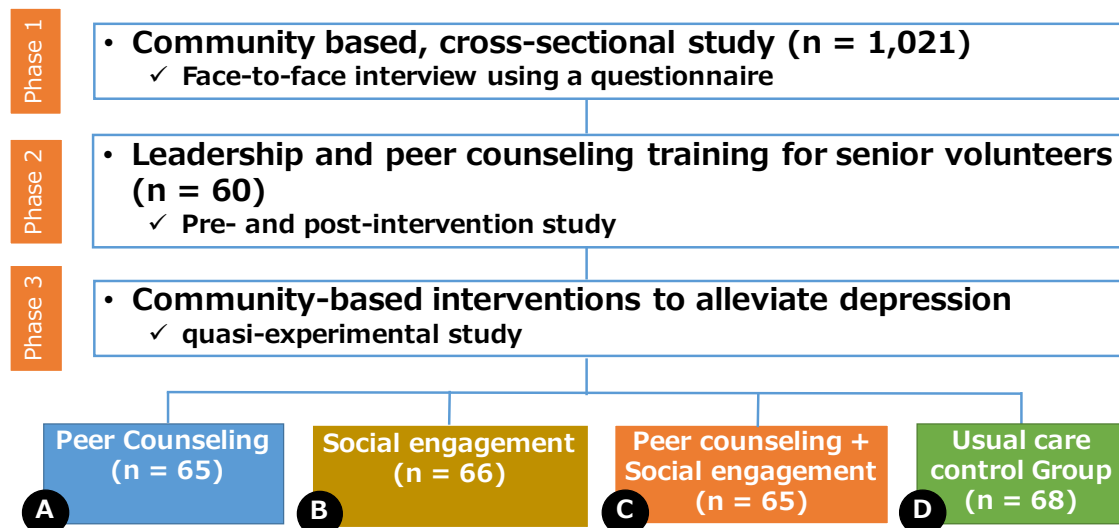


Fig.1 Research flow of research project ENGAGE

Table 1 Thesis at a glance – core contents

| Study 1 | Cross-sectional study |
|----------------|--|
| Aim | This study investigated the factors associated with depressive symptoms among community-dwelling Filipino senior citizens. |
| Methods | I conducted a cross-sectional study among 1,021 Filipino senior citizens aged 60-91 years. I used multiple linear regression analysis to identify the factors independently associated with levels of depressive symptoms. I predicted the model using hierarchical regression analysis. |
| Results | Loneliness and chronic diseases were the major risk factors for depressive symptoms while a higher level of psychological resilience was the primary protective factor against it among Filipino senior citizens. |
| Conclusion | To alleviate depressive symptoms, senior citizens' psychological resilience should be strengthened. It is also imperative to fight against loneliness and improve the healthcare services for senior citizens. |
| Study 2 | Intervention study |
| Aim | This study aimed to evaluate the efficacy of the training program on improving senior volunteers' competency towards peer counseling and explore its impact on their well-being. |
| Methods | I conducted a pre- and post-intervention analysis among 60 senior volunteers aged 60-82 years. They participated in 40 hours of training and performed weekly peer counseling home visits for three months. I evaluated the program using survey questionnaires, trainer observation and debriefing, and focus group discussions (FGDs). |
| Results | Peer counselors exhibited a significant improvement in their competency scores after the training. They also presented improvement in their well-being after three months. Both survey ratings and FGDs indicated that the training met their expectation and was successful in empowering them to assume their role as peer counselors. |
| Conclusion | Filipino senior volunteers could be trained to serve as peer counselors in their communities. I equipped them with the proper knowledge, skills, and attitude. Our program improved their competency and well-being. Peer counselors benefited from the program concerning personal growth and opportunities gained from experience. Future research is warranted to determine whether the provision of counseling by them will affect the health outcomes of the target population. |
| Study 3 | Intervention study |
| Aim | This study aimed to assess the efficacy of 3-month-duration interventions with peer counseling, social engagement, and combined intervention vs. control in improving depressive symptoms of Filipino senior citizens living in the community. |
| Methods | I conducted an open (non-blinded), non-randomized trial of senior citizens at risk for depression. Three different 3-month interventions included peer counseling (n=65), social |

engagement (n=66), and combination (n=65) were compared with the control group (n=68). I assessed geriatric depression, psychological resilience, perceived social support, loneliness, and working alliance scores at 0 months and 3 months.

Results In this study, geriatric depression score over three months significantly improved in all intervention groups (control as reference). Significant improvements were also seen in psychological resilience and social support. Not all interventions, however, significantly improved the loneliness score. On the other hand, the combination intervention group showed the largest effect of improving depressive symptoms ($d = -1.33$) whereas the social engagement group showed the largest effect of improving psychological resilience ($d = 1.40$), perceived social support ($d = 1.07$), and loneliness ($d = -0.36$) among community-dwelling Filipino senior citizens.

Conclusion Peer counseling, social engagement, and combination interventions were effective in improving depressive symptoms, psychological resilience, and social support among Filipino senior citizens at risk for depression. This study shows that it is feasible to identify senior citizens at risk for depression in the community and intervene effectively to improve their mental health. Further studies are required to target loneliness and investigate the long-term benefits of the interventions.

Study implications and recommendations

Findings from this study carry significant implications for the government, health sectors, and the senior citizens themselves. First, the local government units and OSCA must integrate community-based mental health programs into their yearly plans for helping those who are suffering from depression. The interventions in this study were effective in alleviating depressive symptoms. Adopting the model of depression care delivery used in this study is a feasible way to intervene effectively to improve the mental health of Filipino senior citizens. To ensure sustainability, it is crucial to gain legislative support for the adoption of research project ENGAGE in the city. The project will hopefully be integrated in city ordinances. The draft ordinances are expected to be appraised and be approved by the City Council. The development of these policies will be coordinated with the Local Health Board in partnership with the Office of Senior Citizen Affairs, City Health Office and Barangay officials. Concerning the acceptability of research project ENGAGE among the senior citizens, the satisfaction survey results and their personal narratives indicated that the activities were well-accepted by them. Second, the health sectors must provide a more comprehensive and age-friendly health care services that are made easily accessible for senior citizens. This way, Filipino senior citizens can live both physically and mentally healthier as they age. Finally, senior citizens themselves should remain physically active and socially engaged in their community throughout their lives. Active aging has multiple benefits for their overall quality of life.