The Research of Constructing Generativity Model of Taiwan's Older Adults

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Abstract

This research was mainly based on the literature review and interview to depict the older adult's self-contribution is built-up by social participation, giving meanings to contribution services throughout the process, and to establish the localized generativity model. Generativity is defined as an inner desire of an individual to lend a hand or make contribution to the society. Older adults wished to keep nurturing, guiding and mentoring their offspring even in passing down their experiences and knowledges to the next generation during the progress of ageing. Thus, generativity is the key concept to a successful ageing and old ages. In a nutshell, generativity is an implicit ability, which is possessed by all, to help one's descendants and others, and create one's fulfilling life. The findings of this research found that the development process of older adults generativity model in Taiwan includes 8 features: motivation source, concern, belief, commitment, preparation, action, narration, and future. This result echoed to generativity model proposed by McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992). The participations make people have clearly understanding about the significance of construct the generativity and investigate the generativity model of Taiwan.

Keywords: Generativity, Older Adults, Model

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background and Purpose

In June 2021, Taiwan had achieved 3,861,467 people aged 65 and above, or 16.44% of the total population (Ministry of the Interior, 2021). For facing the problem of ageing population, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had revealed that the education for older adults plays a vital role. They emphasize that the issue of older adults should no longer be counted as a welfare service. Instead, they should realize that the lifelong learning is a part of old-aged life (Lamdin & Fugate, 1997). It is major topic of discussion for every country which have the problem of increasing ageing population to help the older adult to adapt the challenges of development tasks and get noticed by the significance and value of their old-aged life by enhancing the knowledge of older adult's education and related issues. As the population aged and the lifespan extended, generativity will play a pivotal role in the life of older adults (Ehlman & Ligon, 2012). Villar (2012) has addressed that the generativity is important to help older adults to regain their new roles through learning.

Erikson (1997) proposed theory of psychosocial development, which refers life as a continuous process of personality development and it was divided into eight stages. In that theory, one's development tasks in stage 7 are generativity vs. stagnation. Once an individual was lack of active participation from stage 7 to stage 8 of their psychosocial development, they will tend to be in despair and even become pessimistic. This is an obstacle for the individual to achieve their self-identity. Furthermore, Schoklitsch and Baumann (2011) addressed that the generativity is an indispensable factor to maintain psychological health in old

ages. This theory has been proved by Baltes and Baltes (1990) that they regarded generativity and wisdom as the best portrayal of the old age life. However, they stated that the generativity is the point of a successful ageing. Many researches pointed out that there is a positive correlation between generativity and the life satisfaction of older adult. (Ackerman, Zuroff & Moscowitz, 2000; Keyes & Ryff, 1998). In the domain of gerontology, generativity is an important topic undoubtedly. All the countries around the world are concentrating on how to provide older adults a better life rather than longer lifespan. Moreover, recently there are many researches have focused on active aging, successful aging, and productive aging in Taiwan, but less is known about the generativity.

Besides, based on McClusky's (1971) Margin Theory of Needs, older adults have contributive needs. They have the propensity to lend a hand to the society and get some appreciations and values from their contributions. The stereotype of older adults should be changed in the public. Specifically, the aim of this study is as follows:

(A) To define the features of generativity and its influences to old-aged life.

(B) To construct a generativity model for increasing the social participation of older adults.

(C) To investigate the development process of generativity.

1.2 A Theory of Generativity

In the relevant literatures, the biological reproduction, continuation of parent-child relationship, skill-transfer and the cultural transmission are introduced as four forms of generativity, and the importance of the generativity is emphasized by Kotre (1984) as well. Kotre exceedingly emphasized that skills inheritance is based on the transfer of skills from teacher to students. The meaning of the skill can be introduced and transferred to the society during the process of imparting skill, which is called the transmission of culture. The puppet show is the best example of the transmission of skill and culture. In addition, the importance of the generativity is not just in the development of middle age, but also plays a vital role in the integration of skill and culture transmission into a social heritage Kotre (1996). This social inheritance will be continued from middle age to old age (Urrutia, Cornachione, Moisset, Ferragut & Guzman, 2009). In fact, when one's development of task in middle-aged is completed, the further task of life will be mentoring the next generation which is seemed as a contribution to society. The value of the self-existence of an individual can be developed by these contributions.

According to McAdams and St. Aubin (1992), the generativity was demonstrated as a concern of adults for the next generation and a desire to increase their happiness. This viewpoint was based on the proactive coping perspective. In the process of reaching old age, adults wished to have some contributions on the transmission of tradition to the next generation. Generativity entails a commitment of an individual to maintain and improve their social participation, in hope that they could live a life with dignity Villar and Celdran (2012). According to Erikson (1997), if ones unable to demonstrate their generativity in the middle age, they will lose their meaning of live and become stagnant gradually, which is a hindering factor to the development of their self-integration in the old age.

In 1950, the psychosocial development is first presented by Erikson, it was referred to the generativity with middle age. In addition, there are many evidences to support the importance of generativity to the life of older adults. One of the evidences is statistical analysis. Due to the pattern of delayed marriage and the difficulty of becoming financially independent, the time of children to stay at home is longer than past. Coupled with longer life span, there will be three to four generations sharing old age life with the older adults. Moreover, the change in demographic structure has also affected the personal conditions of older adults. For example, an individual possesses a better health, better education, more stable income and more leisure time in the previous stage of life. They are more likely to continue their middle-aged lifestyle

patterns to the old age, the generativity can be maintained by taking part in some activities. Therefore, Erikson has evolved the concept of grand-generativity in his last book. He has expanded the generativity to the wider community, society, and the environment. He emphasized that the social participation is essential for older adults, which fulfill the expectation about the intergenerational transmission of values to the future generation (Ranzijn, 2002).

After reviewed those relevant literatures, the relationship of the generativity and older adults were mostly discussed in terms of altruism, self-transcendence, and interpersonal respect. The relationship between the generativity and altruism was generally linked to voluntary services. The relevant research has pointed out that the older adults have the needs of reaching out to their community and the future generations for giving supports and helps (Theurer & Wister, 2010). Furthermore, engaging in volunteering brings positive influences on well-being or achieve active aging (Yuen, Huang, Bruik & Smith, 2008; Lin Li-hui, 2006; Chen Li-Kuang, 2011). Secondly, the discussion of the generativity and self-transcendence has showed the act of generativity can promote self-transcendence. The so-called self-transcendence can be referred to one expands their capabilities. On the other hand, according to Cheng's (2009) study, the more contributions of older adults be valued by others, the more confidences can be achieved on their behavior. Especially, when the older adults get respect from the offspring, it will help the older adults to show up their generativity and give them a sense of well-being.

In summary, this study addresses that the generativity is an inner desire for one to help others or to contribution to the society, this can be counted as the concern of older adults to the next generations. Generally, the older adults tend to arise the life satisfaction of their descendants with their effort. Older adults wished to keep nurturing, guiding and mentoring their offspring even in passing down their experiences and knowledges to the next generation during the progress of ageing. That is, to leave the eternal legacy to the posterity. Thus, generativity is the key concept to a successful ageing and old ages. In a nutshell, generativity is an implicit ability, which is possessed by all, to help one's descendants and others, and create one's fulfilling life.

1.3 Generativity model and its features

Based on Erikson's (1997) theories, McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) evolved a generativity model to demonstrate the development of generativity since it is a theoretical basis of life-span and personal development. It suggests that the development society can be enhanced through the involvement of older adults in the generative activities. This model emphasizes the virtuous cycle of personal growth and social development. It attempts to explain the development of generativity by providing a multi-oriented social psychological concept framework. This model reveals the process of generative activities and its outcomes through the interpretation of individual-social two-way interactive process. The participation of older adults in the generative activities not just proactive with personal development but also benefit the society. Therefore, the social context should be involved in the discussion of old-aged life. According to the discussion, the generativity model contains seven social psychological features, which showed the adult's inner desire and the cultural needs of the society trigger the adults be concerned about the future generation. They realized that a caring society will make them to have a strong commitment to generativity, and it becomes an incentive to their actual actions (willing to practice in society), perhaps to provide a better social environment to the next generation. According to McAdams and de St. Aubin(1992), a full understanding of generativity in a given person's life, requires a full examination of all seven features, including culture demand, inner desire, belief, concern, commitment, action and narration.

2   METHODOLOGY

This study was mainly based on the literature review and interview to depict the older adult's self-contribution is built-up by social participation, giving meanings to contribution services throughout the process, and to establish the localized generativity model. The face-to-face communication is used as an interview method. The purpose is for the researcher to gather detailed information like other's thoughts or feelings. It generally focuses on a conversation with certain purpose and specific topic. Meanwhile, it also can be carried out with a non-verbal communication. Among the variety of non-quantitative research methods, the interview method is widely used, interview is normally seemed as a conversational event. This approach mainly expects the process of meaning construction between interviewer and interviewee, to construct a consensus by having some experiences or feelings between two parties at the same time. The following are the research tools, research objects, and data processing method.

2.1 Research Tool

In the past, the concepts of narrative and life story are crucial as a new scientific paradigm in the domain of social science study (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The narrative research can have more understanding and presenting through stories, therefore, the information was collected in a story manner, just like an interview for one's life story or a way of anthropologist for them to collect what they observed. Likewise, the course of one's life can be revealed through narrative research, which represents the form and content of the culture and society. A descriptive framework is more likely to analyze the development process of the generativity of older adults.

There are two forms of narrative research (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998), which are narrative constructive and narrative criticism. They focus on different aspects of a story. One is narrative constructive, focusing on well-developed, documentary stories. Researcher devoted on constructive and authentic narratives, in an open-ended form. Otherwise, the narrative criticism focuses on the meaning, plot or the connotation of the story, to be focused as a main issue. Researcher can apply different methods to do some analysis on one or several stories. The narrative criticism is used in this study. Through the interviews of 18 Volunteer Contribution Award winners, we can gain more understanding on the features of generativity. Based on this, the researcher adopted McAdam's (1985,1993) conceptual model history in research and use interview to get information from life story. In the concept of the generalization to specification, the outline of the interview is designed based on core value of the series of story. The outline of the interview was drafted after the pre-visit of 3 interviewees.

2.2 Research subjects

There are 19 winners of Volunteer Contribution Award of the Third Active Ageing Education Contribution Award interviewed, who were referred as the older adults with high generativity. The features of generativity were elucidated through the process of the interview. To reward and make tribute to older adults' services, Active Ageing Education Contribution Award has been held by Ministry of Education once every two years since 2012. The procedures of the recommendation and review are rigorous. Therefore, it is an appropriate way to achieve to those winners of the award for this study. One of the candidates was absent for the interview, thus, the actual interviewees were 18.

2.3 Data Processing

"Holistic-Content" analysis has been used for the analysis of interview data, which proposed by Lieblich, Mashiach, and Zilber (1998), as the analysis framework. The researcher improved the rigorousness by adopting the "Categorical-Content" analysis method and using triangulation. The content

of each topic will be extracted and categorized from the text after the category of the research topics has been clearly defined. This interview analysis sometimes present quantitative data, the concept is similar with the "content analysis method". The steps are as follows:

Step 1. Open coding: to develop core concepts

To develop the core concept, the researcher read the transcripts of the contents, then go through the analysis, examined, compare and conceptualized process sentence by sentence. Besides, the researcher classified the key sentences associated with the research questions or literatures and naming them as crucial units, then the core concepts' development can be carried out.

Step 2. Axial coding: to identify sub-themes

Based on the main connotation of the research, the researcher should find out the causality conditions, contexts, interaction strategies and processes. In addition, the categories or concepts that have features of clusters, and linked each category together to form sub-themes.

Step 3. Selective coding: to classify and generalize

After forming the sub-themes, the other topics were further systematically linked with these sub-themes and the relationship between them were assessed. By analyzing and comparing the information from the interview content, the correlation between them were considered, to organize and generalize those units with similar or relevant meaning.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Features of generativity

Based on the analysis of the interview data, eight features are found in the generativity of older adults by the researcher, which are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, concern, belief, commitment, preparation, action, narration and future.

3.1.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is the first feature, they represent the intention of the interviewees to participate in the service. Intention is a driving factor for the development of the generativity model. This motivation can trigger the generativity model to develop in the interviewees. Intrinsic motivation refers to people's spontaneous tendencies. For example, the drive of personality traits and the consciousness guide. Extrinsic motivation arises from extrinsic factors, such as getting referral and inspiration from others.

3.1.2 Concern

Concern is the second feature of generativity. Interviewees are likely to focus on the specific things or people before the further thinking recognized. In the level of concern, the interviewees not just pay attention on the mental state and its development of theirs and the other older adults, but also might show concern to the relevant issues of certain population in a community.

3.1.3 Belief

Belief is the third feature, which referred to the ideological awareness of interviewees toward service. It will trigger the development or reinforcement of the beliefs before take them into actions or plans. The interviewees may have the beliefs in the recognition of self-identity and the affirmation of service value. Once they recognize their self-identity, they may realize that they can solve the problems and fulfill their responsibilities. In the level of service value recognition, they may believe that the positive value might be generated through the service which can provide help to other or even enhance the growth of their state of mind and capability.

3.1.4 Commitment

Commitment is the fourth feature, which referred to the commitment made by interviewees to the service. Before taking an action, the commitment is essential as a guidance to them. Its existence is formed in the mind. In the level of commitment, interviewees may make variety of commitment towards the attitude of service and the service's content. Refer to the attitude towards the service, they will treat their service with a higher demands and expectations on their attitude, and they may make specific setting for the specific service content and or targets.

3.1.5 Preparation

Preparation is the fifth feature, which represented the preparation for the interviewees to be prepared for their involvement into the service, including learning, mental adjustment and improving their skills. For example, the interviewees can learn knowledge and learn the way of using them in their service task. Besides, through mental adjustment, the interviewees realized that the service task can be more efficient once their mentality are adjusted. Therefore, they thought they will take the action and be prepared before the start of the service tasks. Nevertheless, the skills improvement can make them more competent in the service work by enhancing their certain service skills.

3.1.6 Action

Action is the sixth feature, which refers to the interviewee's specific action in service task, which indicates take action in actual service, enhancing service modes and promoting social development. The actual service can be represented with the practical services, which are taken by interviewees to the service target. For example, visiting the solitary older adults, serving as a volunteer teacher, performing for the charity sales and the list goes on. The improvement of the service is addressed to the service mode will be optimized and the interviewees will put their efforts to the service to make it sustainable. Promoting social development is referred to the guidance will be given by the interviewees to the recipients for helping them in the involvement of the social participation, leading to the positive development of the society and transmit the idea of service.

3.1.7 Narration

After performing the service, the interviewees can perceive their own feelings and more understanding on their behavior. This indicates the seventh feature, narration, which including self-identity, service value, self-integrity and contribute to the society. The notion of self-identity implied the interviewees' narration of themselves and the recognition of their identity. In short, they get the way of how to recognize their own identity. Service value referred to their narration towards service and their recognition to service. Self-integrity indicated to their life retrospection and the integration of their life experiences. Besides, the contribution to the society is seemed as a narration of the effort that they have paid off to the society.

3.1.8 Future

Future is the eighth feature, which is the future prospect of the interviewees after the service. This new expectation is formed after the interviewees devoted into the generativity model. It included self-fulfilling, paying contribution to the family and society. In terms of self-fulfilling, the interviewees expected to live in an enriched life. For them, paying contribution to the family is to expect their family can live a full life. In addition, paying contribution to the society is referred to make the society a better place by performing voluntary services.

There are eight features in the generativity as mentioned above. The result of this research responded

to McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992). The identical features included motivation source, concern, belief, commitment, action and narration. These are involved in the process of transforming their thoughts into actions. Moreover, this generativity model differs from McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992), this model added two more features, which are "Preparation" and "Future". People with high generativity has been found out that they are more emphasizing "Preparation". They realized the preparation is the key element for guiding them to commence their services and to be competent for service. Thus, "Preparation" is included into the features of the generativity model by the researcher. Besides, Future is the new expectation after Narration. They will possess the further expectations for the future and even get into the next generative process.

3.2 Generativity Model

Based on the comprehensive overview of 18 interviewees life stories, the generativity is shown in the figure 1.
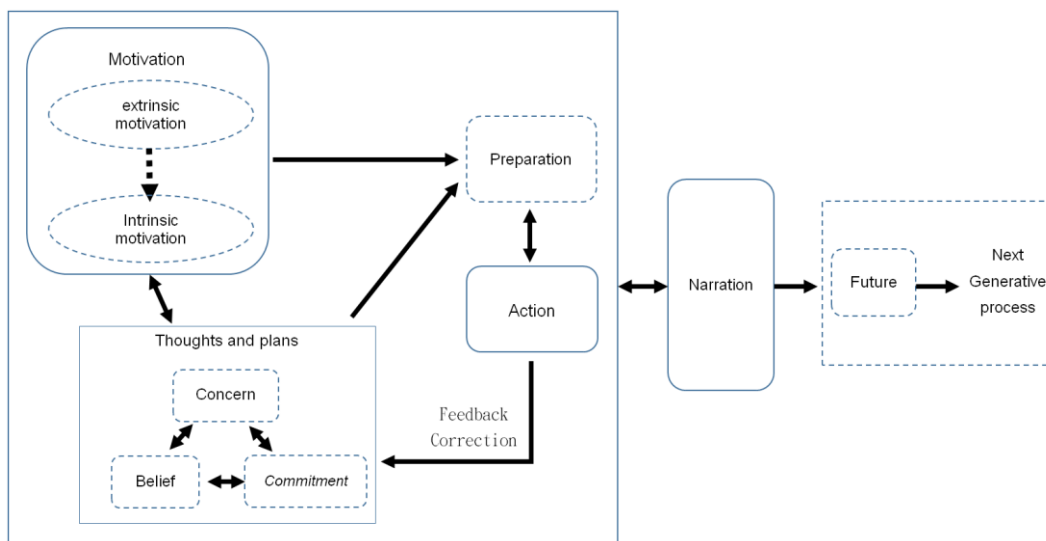

Figure 1 Generativity Model

McAdams and de St. Aubin's (1992) model presented that motivation have both inner desire and cultural demands. They are derived from intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In this study, the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are diverse, they could not be limited to inner desire and cultural demands. Thus, they are categorized as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Some interviewees were intrinsically motivated whereas others were extrinsically motivated. The extrinsic motivation of some interviewees may be implicitly transformed into intrinsic motivation. So, it is presented in the model with dashed line.

After Motivation, the interviewees might move on to thoughts and plans, or they might directly develop to behaviors. Thoughts and plans are composed by three features, which are Concern, Belief and Commitment. Thoughts and plans might have mutually influence with motivation. Concern, Belief and Commitment are regarded as the foundation of the generativity, this finding echoed with McAdams and de St. Aubin's (1992) model. They are a three-in-one concept and are interrelated to each other. The examples are as follows:

A. In terms of Concern:

Once an individual focused on the underprivileged groups in society, a certain belief will be developed, such as "I believe that the quality of life of underprivileged groups will be improved with my efforts". It is possible for them to make a direct commitment. For example, "I would like to help the underprivileged groups with the rest of my life."

B. In terms of Belief:

Once an individual has firm mind to believe in something, they might pay their attention to it or make some commitments to it. For example, if an individual believed that "I am able to assist others", they might commence to concern about "people who need help" and might also make the commitment directly, such as "I would like to devote myself to the volunteer service".

C. In terms of Commitment:

An individual might develop a more unshakeable belief or to intense their concern. For example, an individual will develop the belief of "I believe I can do better", after making the commitment such as, "I would like to be more dedicated in the organization". Otherwise, they will be more focused on the needs of underprivileged groups after they realized that the underprivileged groups are the recipients of the service in the organization.

In the "behavior", Preparation and Action are included. This concept is mainly the specific extrinsic performance of the interviewees in the generativity model. "Preparation" is the new discovery in this study. To enhance the service quality and improve their generativity, most of the interviewees will work hard in the variety of preparation activities. For example, for continuing improving themselves, the interviewees will take part in the volunteer training, ask for advice from others and self-directed learning. There are three ways of getting into the state of Preparation. First, getting into preparation from motivation. Second, preparation is started from having thoughts and plans first. Third, oneself makes self-improvement in action. Moreover, not every interviewee is in the Preparation. Some interviewees are not specifically have to be prepared for the participation of service. Hence, preparation is indicated by dashed line.

Action is the feature represents as the practice of the generativity. Interviewees start to take various of actions, includes starting from motivation, starting from thoughts and plans, starting from preparations, or starting from narration. Practical actions will affect other features, including:

A.   Strengthening preparation:

An individual puts action into practice may intensify their preparation after discovering their self-incompatibility. According to McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992), the preparation is not in the discussion. Preparation is the new feature discovered in this study.

B.   Influencing on thoughts and plans:

The thoughts and plans of one may be reflected and correction may be made. For example, new concerns, beliefs, and the long-term commitments of an individual will be formed in the service experiences.

C.   Creating narration:

After action is taken, narration will be formed towards one's actions and even new meaning will be created in all dimensions.

Narration is not just giving meaning to the action, but also the overall or partial narration of the features as mentioned will be made by the interviewees, which echoed with the model of McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992). In general, an individual's self-identity and value will be established by producing the new narration and integrating the generativity into their own life after their action. It is more likely for them to find the meaning of service from narration and enhance their action further. Nevertheless, narration may also affect the previous features such as motivation and thoughts and plans. They may have new concerns, beliefs and commitments due to their narrations. In fact, narration may also guide an individual to form new expectations for the future. Thus, the new motivations, new thoughts, and new actions are carried out whereas another generativity process will be developed. However, not every interviewee has the expectation for the future. Some of them are relatively weak in this concept, so it is presented by dashed lines.

3.3 The development process of generativity

The developmental process of the generativity in the 18 interviewees can be summarized into three types, include step-by-step, learning by doing, and philosophical thinking. The developmental process of the generativity in the 18 interviewees can be summarized into three types, include step-by-step, learning by doing, and philosophical thinking.

3.3.1 Step-by-step

Step-by-step is a linear development in the developmental process of the generativity. The generativity of the interviewees is developed from motivation. As shown in Figure 2, those interviewees in this type mainly proceed their generativity from motivation. Next, they experienced thoughts and plans, preparation, and action. Lastly, they formed their own narration based on their achievements, then future is generated. The interviewees develop their generativity in the conventional way, the process is carried out step by step.
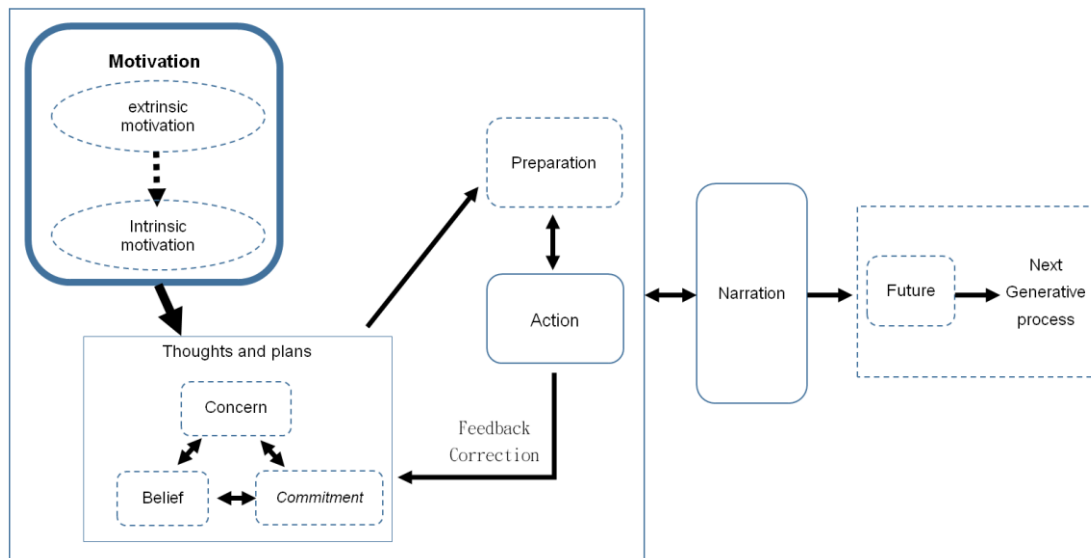

Figure 2   Step-by-step

3.3.2 Philosophical thinking

The interviewees in this type normally have strong thoughts and plans. They have a strong attention and belief to certain thing and they also make a commitment to it, which led to motivation and action, as shown in Figure 3. Since the interviewees in this type usually have clear headed thinking about the future and they are more aware of what they would like to do in the future, compared to others. Besides, they have a wide vision and comprehensive thinking to guide them in the developmental process of generativity.
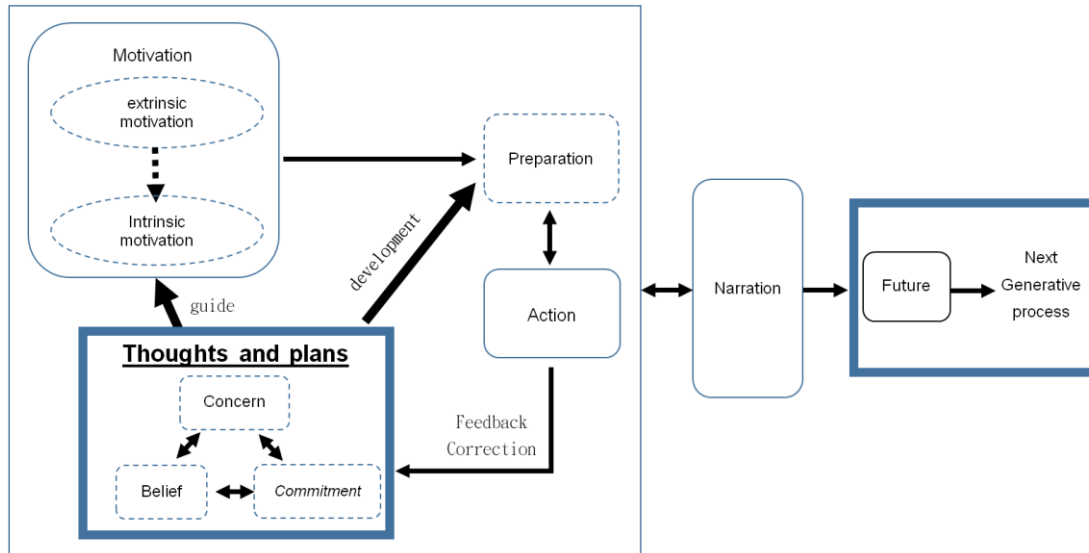
Figure 3 Philosophical thinking

3.3.3 Learning By Doing

This type of developmental process referred to the interviewees' generativities are developed from action, as shown in Figure 4. Some interviewees are less adept at thinking and they are more easier to be affected by extrinsic motivation to develop generativity. To develop thoughts and plans, they learn by taking action and guided by practical actions. Then, a cycle of learning by doing is created. They are the people who make quiet commitment. Once they receive demand from an organization, they will take part in the service dedicatedly. On the other hand, the mode of "forming thoughts from actions" will be formed after action. This study assumed that this type is cultivated with the influence of Eastern culture. Older adults who live in the rural areas are educated to be simple and straightforward. Due to their introverted character, they usually developed their generativity in a gradual process. Self-development occurs and they formed new thoughts by taking actions.
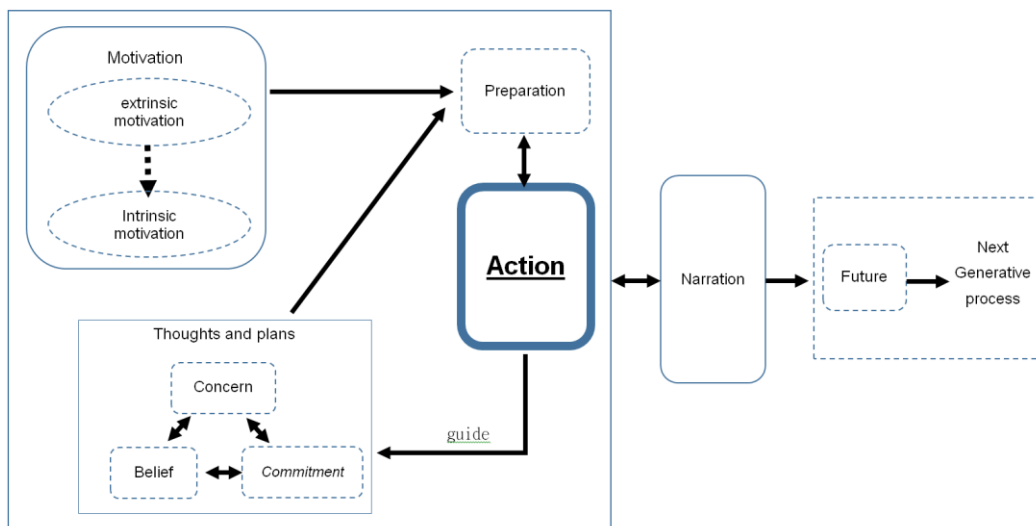

Figure 4 Learning By Doing

4. Conclusion

According to this research result, it has drawn three following conclusions:

4.1 Generativity has eight features

The generativity model consists eight features, which are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, concern, belief, commitment, preparation, action, narration, and future. The "source of motivation" includes both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Concern, belief and commitment are included in the "thoughts and plans". "Behavior" implies both preparation and action. "Meaning" implies narration and the "expectations" implies future.

4.2 Generativity model considers both universality and specificity

In the generativity model, the eight features are interactively influenced each other and form a complex interaction model. In general, the model shows a linear development. An individual will produce a narration for their generativity after experiencing motivation, thoughts, plans, preparations and actions. Furthermore, they will have new expectations for the future. This is the universality of generativity. Nevertheless, every individual will not experience the development process in the same way, so this model can also highlight the individuality, and it is applicable for describing the dynamic development process with high heterogeneity of the elderly.

4.3 The development of generativity can be divided into three types: step-by-step, philosophical thinking, and learning by doing

The step-by-step is a traditional way which is derived by motivation. Its characteristic is to develop one's generativity with linear development process. The philosophical thinking type is developed with thoughts and plans. An individual with this developmental process is has deeper thinking model and a wide vision. They are usually the core manpower of an organization. A quiet doer, who is in the type of learning by doing, they construct their generativity from actions. The development of its generativity model usually starts from action to generate ideas. It is a common type in Taiwan under the influence of Eastern culture.

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