

Outcome Assessment of Health-Related Activities in Indigenous Cultural Community in Pangasinan

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INTRODUCTION

Good health is central to handling stress and living a longer, more resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. It is a resource to support an individual's function in wider capacities. It is a resource to support an individual's function in wider active life. In 1986, the World Health Organization defines health as a society, rather than an end in itself. A healthful lifestyle provides to lead a full life with meaning and purpose (Sampson, 2023).

The determinants of health are biology and genetic endowment, culture, education, employment and working conditions, gender, health services, income and social status, personal health practices, physical environment, and social environment and support. One of the fundamental determinants of health is the organic makeup of the human body. Meaning, the susceptibility of an individual to diseases is based on his or her biological form, which is inherited or passed on to the next generation. This is in line with the humanistic theory that holds that organisms die but the genes live on and pass onto generations (Genibalzo, 2020).

Having a job is good for health than having no job (Geniblazo, 2010). Health equity is dependent on one's control over his or her work. If an individual has better employment, he or she has financial security, personal development, social relations, social status, self-esteem and health protection. However, workers are also troubled with stress. Syed (2020) found out that employment and working conditions contribute to health problems such as cardiovascular disease, obesity, metabolic syndrome, depression, and sleep disorders. Also, there are reports about call center agents who are experiencing psychosocial stress due to high workload, job insecurity, excessive supervision and monitoring, and unpredictable work schedules (Lozano-Kuhne, et al, 2012). For women working in selected semiconductor companies, the most reports from this group of workers who are exposed to organic solvents are narcotic effects, irritation of respiratory tract and the skin, and Steven Johnson syndrome (OSHC, 2006). It is advisable that workers, especially those who belong to lowest income groups, should take care of their health to effectively perform their tasks. Research shows that income earners coming from the lowest income groups are most likely to experience the highest level of psychological distress (APA, 2010). On the other hand, unemployment is associated with poorer health. Meaning, it is better to have a job than without a job. Unemployed individuals have a greater degree of psychological distress, health problems, major activity limitation, hospitalization and health services utilization than employed persons.

In the study of Wilkinson and Marmot (2003), they found out that poor people have more illnesses and shorter life expectancies than the rich. Poor is defined as individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority and/or cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life (RA 8425). Because of poverty, some Filipinos' health is compromised indirectly by living in communities blighted by concentration of deprivation, low educational attainment, high unemployment, poor quality housing, limited access to services and a poor quality environment. When it comes to income expenditure, high income group spends high on education while lower income group on personal care (Geniblazo, 2010). Mapa (2019) reported that the poverty incidence among population of the Philippines in 2018 is 16.6 percent or 17.6 million Filipinos.

This is the number of Filipinos who lived below the poverty threshold to meet the basic food and non-food needs at Php 10,727 for a family of five per month. Another, the subsistence incidence in 2018 was registered at 5.2 percent. Filipino families consisting of five members should at least earn a combined monthly income of Php 7,528 in order to meet their basic food needs. Among families, the proportion of poor families in 2018 was estimated at 12.1 percent or equivalent to three million families, while the subsistence incidence among families in 2018 was recorded at 3.4 percent or 800 thousand families.

Another determinant of health is education. Education is any formal or informal act or experience that has formative impact on the ability of an individual. According to Zarcadoolas, Pleasant and Greer (2006 as cited by Geniblazo, 2010), health status increases as level education increases. It is expected that as individual attain higher level of education or literacy, his or her ability to understand and use health care information is instrumental to reduction of health risk, improvement of health status and improvement in quality of life. Also, education help people to solve problems, secure job, and attain income satisfaction.

The social environment as determinant of health has something to do with social relationships and support from families, friends and communities. Study shows that married people live longer than unmarried people. Also, widowhood is associated with illness and death. For adults and persons with disability who live alone, their social network is limited causing problems in the event that they need support. Among those who are 75 years old and above who live alone, a substantial proportion have either only one or no family members to whom they feel close (Geniblazo, 2010). In Sitio Mapita, there are 17 mentally challenged and 17 persons with disability (PWD) or physically challenged persons. PWD are those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society in equal basis with others (RA 10524). On the other hand, mental health condition refers to a neurologic or psychiatric condition characterized by the existence of a recognizable, clinically-significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional regulation, or behavioral that reflects a genetic or acquired dysfunction in the neurological, psychosocial, or developmental process underlying mental functioning. Psychosocial problems refers to a condition that indicates the existence of dysfunctions in a person's behavior, thoughts and feelings brought about by sudden extreme, prolonged or cumulative stressors in the physical or social environment (RA 11036). From Republic Act 8425, the basic sectors or disadvantaged groups are poor, farmers, indigenous peoples, persons with disability, and others. The foregoing served as basis for the proponents to study the health status of special populations of Sitio Mapita like mentally challenged and persons with disability.

Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive research design. The objective of this study is to describe the profile of the subjects and their health status. This study does not include the knowledge and skills of the subjects and its utilization as stated in the proposal since the seminar was not conducted.

This study covers 16 PWDs and 17 mentally challenged individuals in Sitio Mapita. Sitio Mapita is home of indigenous peoples particularly Kankananey and Ibaloi. Data are sourced out from documents of Barangay Health Worker and 2023 extension terminal report Adopt-a-Sitio Program. The health assessment was conducted by the health personnel of PSULC and faculty members of Social Work department, Health and Nutrition department, and Physical Education department in December 7, 2023. Data are presented in narrative form.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the subjects. There are 5 female and 12 male PWDs. The subjects are either physically disable or have impairment of the eye or ear. For the mentally challenged, 7 are female and 10 are male. The World Health Organization (2023) estimated 1.3 billion people experience significant disability. This is equivalent to 16 percent of world's population, with 80 percent living in the Global South. From the report of Ines (2023) that is based on the Philippine Statistics Authority's Labor Force Survey, there were almost 76 million working-age Filipinos in 2022 and out of this number, 1.9 million are PWDs. Also, The Philippines indicates a low labor force participation rate among PWDs. Out of the 1.9 million working-age Filipinos with disability, only 353,000 or less than one in five were part of the workforce in January 2022.

The prevalence of disability tends to be higher within indigenous peoples worldwide than amongst non-indigenous groups (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The high prevalence of

disability amongst indigenous peoples is viewed as both cause and consequence of severe poverty, violence and unsafe living conditions, including exposure to environmental degradation, toxic waste and the adverse impacts of development projects (Carson, et al 2007). The lack of access to employment, training and disability-specific support has created poverty traps for indigenous persons with disabilities.

Health Status. For the PWDs, two of them needs eye glasses, three PWDs are requesting for hearing aid, and another three for cane. This suggests that the impairments of the subjects are physical, vision, and hearing. Among the mentally challenged, one has diabetes and heartburn, and one with epilepsy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There are indigenous people with disability and mental disorder in Sitio Mapita. On disability, the indigenous peoples covered in this study have hearing and physical disability and more male have disability and mental disorder than female. Very few indigenous people with mental disorder have serious medical condition. It is recommended to conduct health seminar as well as the dissemination of information to the PWDs and mentally challenged in the community to determine the outcome the adopt-a-sitio project. The health offices of LGU Aguilar and Laoag should have regular assessment or monitoring of the health status of the indigenous peoples with disability and mental disorder. Immediate referral or connection with related government agencies, non-government organizations, and private companies or individuals should be initiated by the health offices of LGU Aguilar and Laoag, and Pangasinan State University (PSU) to assist in the medical needs and treatment and livelihood of the indigenous peoples with disability and mental disorder. The health offices of LGU Aguilar and Laoag, and PSU should also communicate with different government agencies, NGOs and/or private companies and individuals for the livelihood of the family members of the IPs with disability and mental disorder.

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