

Hospital Social Marketing and Agenda Setting Research on Elderly Subjectivity

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The Asian Conference on Aging & Gerontology 2024
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

In response to the aging population in Taiwan, this study conducted a case study on a long-term care institution, specifically a nursing home. Utilizing the dynamics of interactive groups based on symbiosis and collaborative learning at the operational level of subjectivity, the research employed agenda-setting theory in activity design. A total of twelve residents and 20 nursing home staff and workers, including nurses, volunteers, interns, and caregivers, participated in this research activity, engaging in discussions on elderly-centered agenda setting and observing social marketing activities. After conducting case analysis, interviews, and social-marketing activities, emotional cues and levels of interaction were identified as persuasive means. Subsequently, a promotional video was created, emphasizing the nursing home's unique strategy in promoting subjectivity. This advertisement addressing shared feelings and emotions related to the aging population was part of a social marketing initiative, targeting both the nursing home administration and residents. The research findings indicated that staff involved with this project believed that increasing transparency, support, and a sense of trust were positively correlated with enhancing participants' subjectivity. Residents in this nursing home showed a positive correlation between know-how, motivation, and the importance of subjective issues, facilitating opportunities for successful aging. Over 60% of residents and over 70% of staff believed that these activities contributed to the hospital's positive social image.

Keywords: Hospital Social Marketing, Agenda Setting, Elderly Subjectivity, Elderly Care Environment, Long-Term Care Exploration

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Introduction

Taiwan's National Development Council predicts that Taiwan will enter a super-aged society by 2025, with individuals aged 65 and above comprising 20% of the total population. Moreover, more experts suggest that there should be a strengthened focus on elderly-centric research in the future to assist seniors in proactively facing challenges and overcoming potential pitfalls of aging and disability. In Taiwan, long-term care policy has been developing to a 10-year long-term care plan 2.0 in 2016, compared with the three-year plan for long-term care in 1998 for the elderly. In Taiwan, the Ministry of Health and Welfare identifies missions and goals of LTC 2.0 to set up missions as person-centered, community based, and continuum of care. One of its goals is to use upstream prevention to delay disability. The policy has been creating a network to link institutes, locals, governmental branches to establish a safe and welfare system.

More experts develop new ideas to bring social interaction with the elderly. For example, bringing the elderly to play roles as convenience stores' clerks or waiters of a restaurant to help their experience of social interaction. The purpose of similar activities is to increase the ideas of successful aging even though the aging seniors are losing their capability gradually. These ideas emphasize the importance of seniors' participation or interaction for social connection to bring back their experience of rational expectations. Thereby, searching for ways to avoid them to become people who accept only arrangement by others and refuse to make any decision for themselves. The elements of successful aging are lower risks of diseases and disability, high physical and mental function, and engagement with life (Rowe & Kahn, 1997). Hospitals, as key players in Taiwan's response to societal aging, may employ agenda-setting theory to promote the elderly's subjectivity, the goal of which is to strengthen the elderly's motivation of being themselves to the last minute till they totally lose it.

When designing research about helping aging seniors, it is important to use elderly-centric research to uncover insights through individual case analyses. With this knowledge and information about the elderly, hospital promotional content can develop to achieve public health goals of social marketing communication. The purpose of this project is to plan successful aging social marketing content, through the production of subjectivity-based advertising videos, exploring the theme of seniors living gracefully and the successful aging movement. It employs agenda-setting theory to test the significance of reinforcing self-awareness of successful aging and extending healthy lifespans. This includes exploring variables such as needs of orientation for issue salience, taking action to learn, motivation, and practice of ideas. The goal is to aid in the design of content for successful aging-related social marketing and enhance the hospital's social responsibility image.

Literature Review

Taiwan's government proposed the Long-Term Care 2.0 plan in 2016. The emphasis has been on constructing a user-centered long-term care system, starting from the Long-Term Care 1.0 plan in 2007 and continuing to develop the long-term care network from 2013 to 2016 (See Figure 1). It brings new ideas to handle the elders' long-term care when we explore the relationship between elderly subjectivity and social issues. Theories of active aging, healthy aging, successful aging and elderly retreat are used to explain different phases of aging, and agenda-setting theory can highlight the relationship between elderly subjectivity and social issues.

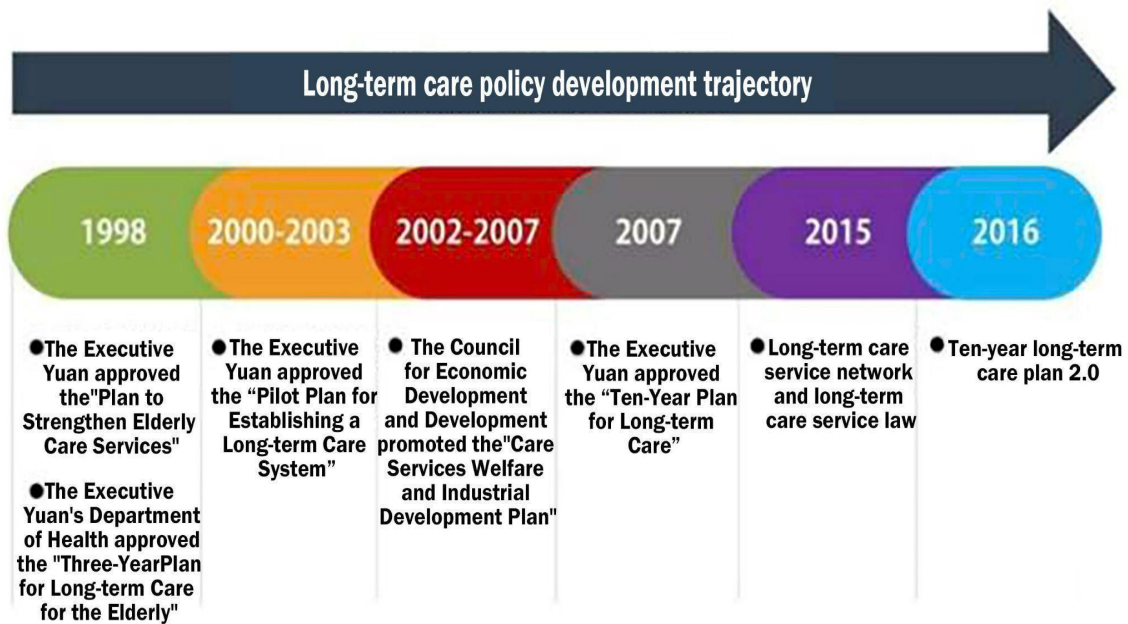


Figure 1: Overall long-term care policy blueprint Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare

As long-term care planning gradually matures, long-term care policies are taking a more optimistic direction. For instance, the aging population is sparking a wave of autonomy (Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2019). Many experts suggest that future long-term care efforts should emphasize letting the "subjectivity of the elderly" be reexamined (Huang Chaoqing, 2018). Some propose affirming aging, emphasizing comfort in old age, rather than avoiding the difficulties and challenges that come with aging (Chiu Tianzhu, 2017). As a septuagenarian expert in Taiwanese gerontology, Chiu Tianzhu has drawn on 20 years of post-retirement experience and sociological observation to explore how to confront issues in old age. Some embarrassing topics that elderly individuals may not want to confront are gradually being brought to light, such as the fear of being alive for too long leading to vulnerability, or the notion that older people are more susceptible to deception. As Figure 2 shows, for the people at the age of 85 and over, close to 49 percent of them are disabled. With continuous reports, Taiwan is on the brink of entering a super-aged society, facing the likelihood of a significant increase in long-term care demand. Ultimately, facing fears when left alone. In response to the impending long-term care needs of Taiwan's super-aged society, concerns arise regarding the possibility of disabilities and cognitive decline exceeding healthy life expectancy. This underscores the importance of successful aging, positive aging, healthy aging, and active aging. While aging has various definitions and definitions may vary

over time, from a life course perspective, individuals may inevitably withdraw from society (Rowe & Kahn, 1997; Crowthe, 2002; Chen Li-guang, et al., 2011).

The definition of health should be considered from a broader perspective, no longer solely based on the presence of disease but also encompassing concepts such as holistic health (physical, psychological, spiritual, emotional, social adaptation, and moral character) and environmental well-being (Liu Lifan, 2010). However, whether it's active aging, healthy aging, or successful aging, they all highlight social issues related to the elderly. It's crucial not to view long-term care problems solely as issues arising from aging and disabilities, but also to consider psychological acceptance of the aging process (Huang Fangyi, 2015).

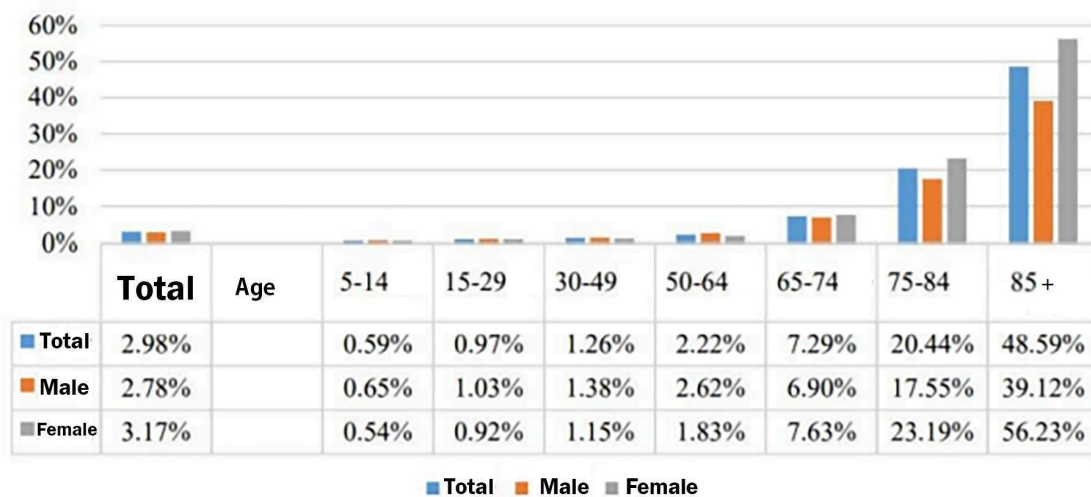


Figure 2: National disability rates Source: Department of Health, Executive Yuan

Long-Term Care 2.0 in Taiwan assists individuals in self-reliance and many sectors of it advocate for emphasizing prevention and care at all levels which learns from Nordic approaches to aging issues. The aim is to minimize dependence on caregiving services even in the face of long-term care needs. This concept of extending healthy life through healthy aging, coupled with notions of self-help and autonomy, along with the psychological and spiritual dimensions may imply good strategy to help the elderly's subjectivity when the concept of social marketing is added. Social marketing strategies apply new 4ps as publics, partnership, policy and purse strings to replace traditional 4ps as product, price, place, promotion for social change (Weinreich, 1999). Generally speaking, the elderly do not want to live in nursing homes unless it is not avoidable. However, the image of nursing homes can be changed as a trustworthy institution and an ideal place to design action research if group dynamics can relate to communication effects linked with psychological attributes. Both residents and staff of nursing homes are partners with the help of the policy and the public's attention of an aging society. Each nursing home may have a different background, therefore, individual case analyses and experiences as residents in a nursing home could be integrated into elderly-centric advertising content designed for successful aging through symbiosis and co-learning. This approach allows persuasive messaging to be more readily accepted by the elderly with the help of trustful institutional workers. Fostering a sense of coexistence and shared learning to explore the possibilities of subjectivity in aging may help increase the salience of the issue of subjectivity. Successful aging can be explained as minimizing risk and disability, maximizing physical and mental abilities, maximizing positive spirituality, and engaging in active life (Crowther, et al. 2002). Crowther explains that adding the missing

factor, maximizing positive spirituality, symbolizes the potential of community partnerships in addressing institutional forms of diversity that limit outreach with disadvantaged groups.



Figure 3: Rowe and Kahn's Model of Successful Aging Revisited. Retrieved from Crowther, Parker, et al, *The Gerontologist* Vol. 42, No. 5, 613–620, 2002. Retrieved from <https://academic.oup.com/gerontologist/article/42/5/613/653590>

For the World Health Organization's indicators for healthy aging, the definition of successful aging, prevention of disease and disabilities, the stage of seeking self-care awareness and acceptance of the psychological adjustment process in aging are discussed. However, how should the content of subjectivity-based advertising videos be designed? Coupled with the potential long-term care needs, this may be a taboo topic even among healthy elderly individuals. Design for the elderly's activities and social marketing should be processed very carefully and researchers can be regarded as partners when working with nurses, caretakers, and hospital managers.

Elderly Issues and Agenda Setting

Generally, agenda-setting emphasizes that the salience of issues in the public's mind is influenced by the salience presented by the media. The effects of agenda-setting range from midterm to short-term outcomes. The effects are believed to manifest as midterm effects over time (McCombs & Reynolds, 2014), but short-term effects can also occur (Perse, 2002). The idea of agenda-setting conveys the importance of successful aging attributes to target audiences. Agenda-setting theory is often used to explain how citizens perceive the significance of issues. It emphasizes that public issues have different agendas among policymakers, media, and the public, and these agendas differ from real-world indicators. After being tested by scholars worldwide, agenda-setting effects are widely supported that the media can significantly influence the public's perception of issue salience (Dearing & Rogers, 1996; McCombs, 2014; McCombs & Reynolds, 2014). When analyzing individual issues, researchers use the concept of need for orientation to help explain factors at the individual psychological level. Need for Orientation is operated by the public's perceived relevance and uncertainty about the issue, which has also been supported by empirical evidence (McCombs & Reynolds, 2014; Ghanem, 2009).

This study employs group dynamics and action research to guide the design process. The main aim of this research is to support and assist the participants in maintaining group dynamics. The purpose of this design is to adapt new ways of helping residents of a nursing

home to manage their learning or behavioral issues for subjectivity to interact with people, as a mode of "technical" action research (Dharma Raja, B.W. & V. Sasikala, 2020, p.92). Scholars combined action research with group dynamics to gather people's power and track down to a main goal together through problem solving and interaction (Tang, 2010). Researcher designed group activities to explore how residents' physical, mental responses and perceived social benefits could be improved by measuring physiological, psychological benefits such as an increase in attention, confidence, positive emotions; or social benefits as an improvement in communication skills, an increase in opportunities to share common interests, and enhancement of interpersonal relationships (Lo, 2011).

Initially, participants are engaged in focus groups and workshops, incorporating awareness of successful aging and holistic health attributes. Aging issues involve individual perceptions and uncertainty to varying degrees, thus, before incorporating social marketing content into subjective advertising videos, this study first invites participants to focus groups and workshops, utilizing the framework and attributes of agenda-setting to select several cases. Through interactive processes of case analysis and issue-setting operations, more readily accepted content for subjective advertising videos is produced.

The dissemination of messages is carried out through social marketing emphasizing the 4Ps (Publics, Partnership, Policy, Purse strings) approach (Weinreich, 2011) to persuade the target audience. Interactive designs can be utilized to analyze psychological factors through group dynamics. Hence, this study introduces subjective advertising videos into social marketing, rather than using traditional news media. Vorderer (2008) suggests that interactive designs should consider providing users with options, experiences, and feedback. Studies produced subjective advertising videos advocating for public health campaigns to promote healthy behaviors or disseminate knowledge, which has been widely discussed among scholars (Atkin, 2002). In recent years, the popularity of subjective advertising videos, combined with public service announcements, has made the government one of the main supporters of producing such videos in Taiwan. The design, trends, and classification of subjective advertising videos have become another option for media professionals, with dedicated magazines focusing on subjective advertising videos available domestically (Micro Movie Taiwan, 2012).

This project was divided into two parts. Firstly, scholars and participants developed case analyses with promotional characteristics to explore their needs for orientation, motivation as self-awareness related to the issue of subjectivity. The progress was aligned with the hospital's expertise to develop promotional themes. Subsequently, public health messages were conveyed through advertising to explore participants' reaction. Content of social marketing was designed based on the interactive factors related to the issue of subjectivity by residents.

Research Questions:

- RQ 1: How to design focus groups, events, and produce content of social marketing with the expertise of the nursing homes to explore cases of elderly residents?
- RQ 2: For residents participating in the study, does their know-how, motivation and issue importance increase successfully before and after participation?
- RQ 3: What concepts are associated with the importance of this issue of subjectivity for residents?
- RQ 4: What concepts are associated with staff's observation for residents' issue of subjectivity?

RQ 5: Do participants, as residents and staff of the nursing home, feel a positive impression for the hospital's image of social responsibility after participating in this project?

Research Design

Through group dynamics interaction, emphasizing symbiosis and co-learning, the goal is to offer future advertisements featuring elderly subjectivity. The design process is as follows: focus group, individual discussions and case sharing, event filming and analysis of social marketing results.

First, focus group discussions were conducted called *Our Small Project*. In it, researchers introduced the concept of elderly subjectivity and guided participants to provide examples of independent and autonomous actions. Members were invited to participate in lectures based on the issues they raise during discussions. Through interaction, challenges appear due to residents' health and psychological conditions; the researcher needed to adjust the design of focus groups and promotion events to promote pragmatic spirit of subjectivity in social marketing to overcome subjective barriers. Several invitation-based discussions were organized to generate progress and follow-up. Case interaction sharing and a Christmas event was conducted, followed by event filming. The film was later shown to residents of nursing homes aiming to encourage elderly individuals to empower themselves to interact with members, staff, and volunteers of nursing homes as a dynamic group. Residents participating in this activity were classified into three categories based on their physical conditions:

1. Able to walk to the activity area independently.
2. Able to push a wheelchair or use assistive devices (such as walkers) to reach the activity area independently.
3. Wheelchair-bound, requiring assistance from others to move and unable to use assistive devices or push a wheelchair independently to reach the activity area.

Among the 12 residents from the nursing center participating in the activity, there are three individuals in category 1, two in category 2, and seven in category 3. Therefore, there are five residents who can participate independently and seven who cannot.

Findings

1. Case Interaction Analysis: Understanding the Participants and Identifying Suitable Social Marketing Designs for the Study.

RQ1. Results:

The nursing home, participating in this project, is a winner of the Golden Torch Award and is a branch of a general hospital. Since it is in a hospital, this nursing home serves residents with professional nursing services. Through focus groups and workshops, residents able to interact with social marketing content were identified, and case analysis was conducted through interactive symbiosis and co-learning group dynamics. After interactions with the residents, it was found that their physical conditions varied significantly. Since the activities were mainly designed for the collective, a Christmas-themed warm and safe sharing event was designed by several stimuli for residents' interactions. Four ways are offered for residents to choose as interactive designs for them to participate: residents as audiences of a live music performance, residents as participants in a magician's show, residents as a singer of a live music performance, and residents as a model for portrait painting by a cartoonist.

Residents' interaction: Residents' participation was high in joyful activities such as attending as audiences of a live saxophone performance or a magic show; in contrast, participation was low as activities arranged as an individual singing performance and as a model for on-site portrait painting by a cartoon artist. As these two latter options offered stronger individual choices in public which might bring pressure to residents.

Filming of Advertisements as Social Marketing: "Memories may fade, but love remains."

During this phase, the shooting of advertisements focusing on subjective imagery, incorporating the concept of symbiosis with varying levels of physical health. The promotional audio-visual content depicts these residents of this nursing house spending a warm and safe Christmas together, conveying emotions through warm and personalized music rhythms. The title of the promotional material is *"Where the Heart Is, Where the Home Is,"* with headlines like *"Listen and accompany, happiness in slow aging," "Thank you for your gentle guardianship," "Exchanging opinions through eye contact,"* and *"Memories may fade, but love remains."* The film links explain grandparents' words, *"I'm happy today, even though I may not remember."* *"They are still happy. Please understand them and accompany them."*

II. Data Analysis

Based on the concept of the need for orientation, two questions are used to test the concept of need and uncertainty: "Do you hope to have some time and energy to plan activities that can increase physical, mental, and social well-being?" "Do you know how to do it?" Another variable is added as an empowerment index measured by two questions as "Do you know how to do it?" "Do you want to address issues and achieve goals?"

RQ2. Comparison of Residents' Pre- and Post-participation in Promotional Activities:

There were no pre/post statistically significant differences in small plan wishes (motivation), importance, knowledge about what to do, taking actions to achieve the goal, and the empowerment index. Among the 12 participants, 5 showed an increase in importance, 4 showed a decrease, and 3 remained the same (See Table 1).

Table 1 Comparison of residents' pre- and post-participation in promotional activities for paired t-tests

	Paired difference					T	df	Significance (two-tailed)
	Average	Standard deviation value	Standard error of mean	95% confidence interval for difference values				
				lower limit	upper limit			
Pre/post Subplan Intention	-.417	1.165	.336	-1.157	.323	-1.239	11	.241
Pre/post Importance	-.333	1.670	.482	-1.394	.728	-.692	11	.504
Pre/post How to do	.250	.622	.179	-.145	.645	1.393	11	.191
Pre/post Want to deal with problems to achieve goals	.167	.835	.241	-.364	.697	.692	11	.504
Pre/post empowerment index	.41667	1.37895	.39807	-.45948	1.29281	1.047	11	.318

RQ3. Correlation Analysis of Residents' Subjectivity:

The post-test data reveal a strong correlation between the importance of subjectivity and intention to participate in sub-projects, knowledge, actions, and motivation to achieve goals. Correlations are statistically significant, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Analysis of Resident Subjectivity and Correlation

Correlation Coefficient/ Significance (two tailed**)/N		Post-small plan wishes	Post-importance	What to do next	Finally want to solve the problem and achieve the goal	Improve the hospital's social image	Physical condition classification
Spearman rho	Post-small plan wishes	1.000 .002 12	.806** .002 12	-.837** .001 12	-.625* .030 12	-.625* .030 12	.087 .789 12
	Post-importance	.806** .002 12	1.000 .002 12	-.693* .012 12	-.591* .043 12	-.591* .043 12	-.050 .878 12
	What to do next	-.837** .001 12	-.693* .012 12	1.000 .001 12	.837** .001 12	.837** .001 12	.055 .865 12
	Finally want to solve the problem and achieve the goal	-.625* .030 12	-.591* .043 12	.837** .001 12	1.000 .001 12	1.000** .001 12	-.087 .789 12
	Improve the hospital's social image	-.625* .030 12	-.591* .043 12	.837** .001 12	1.000** .001 12	1.000 .001 12	-.087 .789 12
	Physical condition classification	.087 .789 12	-.050 .878 12	.055 .865 12	-.087 .789 12	-.087 .789 12	1.000 .001 12

**p < .001, *p < .005.

Note: correlation results are all positive. Negative values appear due to deliberately alternating the attribute values from negative to positive and from positive to negative when describing the variable attributes, to avoid bias in structured data collection.

RQ4. Analysis of Staff's Observation for Residents' Subjectivity:

Staff's perception of the importance of residents' subjectivity and the development of residents' subjectivity in small projects are strongly correlated with government decisions, transparency of care center, external environment, transparency of nursing home, residents' trust in nursing homes, residents' family members, residents' psychological status, residents' communication and interaction, residents' self-learning, etc. All these correlations are statistically significant, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Analysis of Staff Subjectivity and Relevance

Correlation Coefficient/ Significance (two tailed**)/N	Residents	Government decisions	Care center	External environment	Care Home Transparency	Residents' trust in nursing homes	Resident family member	Psychological status of resident families	Resident family communication	Resident self-study
Residents	1.000 .000 20	.874** .000 20	.781** .000 20	.873** .000 20	.791** .000 20	.764** .000 20	.889** .000 20	.771** .000 20	.824** .000 20	.645** .002 20
Government decisions	.874** .001 20	1.000 - 20	.833** .000 20	.833** .000 20	.715** .000 20	.656** .000 20	.788** .000 20	.641** .002 20	.669** .001 20	.464** .039 20
Care center	.781** .000 20	.833** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.906** .000 20	.810** .000 20	.711** .000 20	.728** .000 20	.663** .001 20	.661** .002 20	.611** .004 20
External environment	.873** .000 20	.833** .000 20	.906** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.834** .000 20	.751** .000 20	.765** .000 20	.732** .000 20	.788** .000 20	.608** .004 20
Care Home Transparency	.791** .000 20	.715** .000 20	.810** .000 20	.834** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.886** .000 20	.804** .000 20	.857** .000 20	.777** .000 20	.775** .000 20
Residents' trust in nursing homes	.764** .000 20	.656** .002 20	.711** .000 20	.751** .000 20	.886** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.846** .000 20	.930** .000 20	.867** .000 20	.753** .000 20
Resident family members	.889** .000 20	.788** .000 20	.728** .000 20	.765** .000 20	.804** .000 20	.846** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.892** .000 20	.834** .000 20	.600** .005 20
Psychological status of residents' families	.771** .000 20	.641** .002 20	.663** .001 20	.732** .000 20	.857** .000 20	.930** .000 20	.892** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.941** .000 20	.742** .000 20
Resident family communication	.824** .000 20	.669** .001 20	.661** .002 20	.788** .000 20	.777** .000 20	.867** .000 20	.834** .000 20	.941** .000 20	1.000 - 20	.745** .000 20
Residents self-study	.645** .002 20	.464** .039 20	.611** .004 20	.608** .004 20	.775** .000 20	.753** .000 20	.600** .005 20	.742** .000 20	.745** .000 20	1.000 - 20

**p < .001 , *p < .005

Note: correlation results are all positive. Negative values appear due to deliberately alternating the attribute values from negative to positive and from positive to negative when describing the variable attributes, to avoid bias in structured data collection

RQ5.1. Staff's Evaluation of Promotion of Hospital Social Image Through Promotional Materials and Related Activities:

Three-quarters of the staff members believe that the promotional activities designed for this subjectivity study have enhanced the hospital's social image (see Table 4 below).

Table 4. Staff Evaluation of Promotion of Hospital Social Image

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Efficiency	Improve the hospital's social image	15	75.0	75.0	75.0
	Didn't improve the hospital's social image	5	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

RQ5.2. Residents' Evaluation of Promotion of Hospital Social Image Through Promotional Materials and Related Activities:

Two-thirds of the residents believe that the promotional activities designed for this subjectivity study have enhanced the hospital's social image (see Table 5 below).

Table 5. Residents' Evaluation of Promotion of Hospital Social Image

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Efficiency	Improve the hospital's social image	8	66.7	66.7	66.7
	Didn't improve the hospital's social image	4	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Conclusions

The purpose of this project is to plan successful aging social marketing content through the production of subjective advertising videos by the group dynamic event, meetings to enhance the hospital's social responsibility image.

Using agenda-setting theory, the project explored the ideas of self-small-planning, need for orientation, motivation and an empowerment index and staff's perception of the importance of residents' potential for subjectivity.

Residents' pre- and post-participation data in the promotional activities did not show statistically significant changes. This could be attributed to individual factors as disabled physical conditions. However, it is evident that the importance of subjectivity is significantly correlated with willingness to participate in small projects, knowledge, motivation to achieve goals, and the promotion of the hospital's social image through promotional materials.

Staff analysis includes correlation analysis of staff's perceptions of the importance of maintaining subjectivity attributes in aging for residents. Additionally, there is an analysis of whether staff and residents assess whether the promotional materials and related activities have enhanced the hospital's social image.

Long-term care facilities have often been criticized for their lack of consideration for the elderly. However, this nursing home, a recipient of the Gold Award for Long-term Care Excellence, provides an environment conducive to the well-being of residents, including those who are physically and mentally capable of participating in activities. The quality of transparency and trust fosters a harmonious relationship between residents and staff, which is not easy to achieve. For the future, it is recommended to conduct more qualitative research, analyzing experiences and drawing insights to minimize past deficiencies in long-term care facilities.

In accordance with the national long-term care policy and development vision and to meet the challenges of Taiwan's rapidly aging society, this study aims to assist in the development of the distinctive characteristics and vision of nursing homes in the future. The outcomes of this research, focusing on enhancement of residents' subjectivity, possibly helps long-term care-related services to improve its quality of operation and efficiency.

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