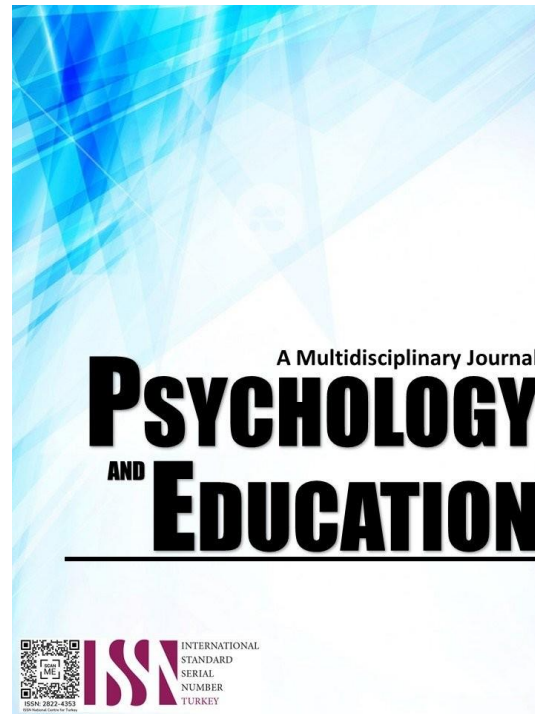


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Grow Old with You: Exploring the Love Language of Male Senior Citizen

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Abstract

Every individual has a distinct personality, and this uniqueness shapes how they express and interpret love. Understanding these differences, both within oneself and in significant relationships, one can recognize the root causes of conflicts, and foster deeper connections, and more profound relationships. Hence, this study aims to explore the love language of male senior citizens. Using a research design that utilizes interactive phenomenological analysis, the purpose of this study is to understand how senior citizens express and receive love through love languages. This study included fifteen male senior residents of Bulacan District IV (Obando, Marilao, and City of Meycauayan). The participants also accomplished a semi-structured interview guide that included the experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of male seniors. The study's findings revealed that male seniors experience difficulty expressing and receiving their love languages. The participants stated that they were frustrated, distressed, sad, and regretful because they were having difficulties in expressing and receiving their preferred love language from their partner. The difference in love language is one of the reasons why there is difficulty in expressing and accepting that preferred love language with their partner. Despite negative emotions, they show respect, handle disagreements with patience, and understand the importance of clear communication and conflict handling for successful relationships.

Keywords: *act of service, love language, physical touch, quality time, receiving gifts, words of affirmation*

Introduction

Every individual has a distinct personality, and this uniqueness shapes how they express and interpret love. Understanding these differences, both within oneself and in significant relationships, one can recognize the root causes of conflicts and foster deeper connections and more profound relationships (Mantova, 2023). However, understanding one's love language entails letting go of expectations and beliefs, as well as applying them to interpersonal relationships. The five ways to express affection are (1) Word of affirmation, (2) Quality Time, (3) Receiving Gifts, (4) Act of Service, and (5) Physical Touch. Every language has ways of behaving that an individual could look for from their spouse to feel loved (Adams, 2020). Knowing and using your partner's love language can make both of you feel more cherished and loved (Gordon, 2023).

According to research by Bland and McQueen (2018), relationships were better overall for couples with more of the same love languages. This might result from a shared understanding of how and why each spouse wants to be loved in a specific way by the other partner. One of the keys to communicating their desires to their spouse is to have an understanding of how their partner wants to be loved in particular ways. The major justification for speculating is that if a person's partner does not show them love in their preferred manner, they would be most often unsatisfied with the relationship they have.

However, Chapman (2015) stated that the main reason for relationship problems is that couples speak different languages of love. To be effective communicators, each partner has to understand the language of love his or her partner prefers. Men are attracted to women who speak their primary love language, and when two people share the same love language, they can express their affections openly and freely for all time. Ben-Ze'ev (2019) suggests that older individuals often experience higher levels of satisfaction and love connection than younger individuals. However, they may change their perspective, recognizing the importance of time and embracing a more peaceful approach to love. Consequently, older individuals may experience more profound love than younger ones.

Moreover, one another's preferences of love language is satisfied in their romantic relationships and sexual lives (Mostova, 2022). Furthermore, meeting one's partner's needs seems to have an equal or greater influence on a person's opinions of the quality of a relationship, as does getting desired forms of love expressed.

According to Adams (2020), discovering your love language can enhance relationships, bring people closer, and make love more thrilling. Time plays a crucial role in teaching a couple how to love each other, and understanding and communicating this language can lead to increased happiness. Both partners should try to understand and express their love language, as life and time offer opportunities to take actions that align with their goals and happiness.

Overall, exploring the love language of senior citizens is a valuable part of understanding how their relationship is affected by their respective love languages. This study will analyze the different ways in which senior citizens express and receive love through these love languages. It will also identify any challenges the couples may have in understanding and expressing love in their relationships. The result of this study seeks to impart knowledge about love language to individuals who are in a relationship or marriage, and for future researchers, it can be a useful reference.

Research Questions

This study explores the love language of male senior citizens. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions.

1. What are the experiences of male seniors in expressing their love language with their spouse?
2. What challenges do male seniors face in expressing their love language with their spouse?
3. What coping mechanism do male seniors use when facing challenges in expressing their love language with their spouse?

Literature Review

Male Senior Citizen Experiences in Projecting Love Language

Individuals who are more similar to each other's Love Language preferences are satisfied in their relationships and romantic lives and meeting one's partner's wants has at least as significant an influence on a person's perceptions of relationship quality as getting desired expressions of love. This study indicates scientific research on Chapman's basic assumption of Five Love Languages (Mostova, 2022).

Furthermore, Polk and Egbert (2013) studied the possibility that relationships would be more satisfying if couples used their significant other's primary love language while expressing their affection. Chapman (2015) suggested that receiving the preferred love language is more important for keeping the tank full than receiving a combination of all five love languages. He postulated that learning to express a partner's love language often requires effort and discipline, and when done intentionally, it is most likely to lead to feelings of love and greater relationship satisfaction. People may be more likely to use and value Love Languages (LLs) activities if they experience higher satisfaction in their present love relationships. (Mantova, 2022).

A study of Hughes and Camden (2020) indicated, that women who believed that their partners were effectively expressing their love to them through gifts, acts of service, or physical touch experienced stronger sensations of love. The authors took Chapman's theory to the test, finding that relationships are more fulfilling when partners use and receive each other's preferred love languages. It concluded that although men and women communicate love differently, they are equally likely to express affection. Moreover, Montova et al. (2022) stated that the most common ways that people show their partners they love them are through physical touch, exchanging gifts, encouraging words, spending time together, and doing acts of service.

Word of affirmation

One of the basic human necessities is the need to be appreciated (Palmer, 2018). Exploration of the significance of words of affirmation in relationships has introduced that respect and praise from significant mates can help to increase relationship satisfaction and frequent complaining in connections tends to dampen relationship satisfaction. The incapability to self-disclose among mates paves the way for an incapability to acclimatize, lack of tone-confidence, passions of inferiority, etc., which in turn can affect the internal health of the relationship mates (Matthew & Sasikala, 2022).

Furthermore, Hughes and Camden (2020) Chapman pointed out the importance of people wanting compliments in relationships. He emphasized the significance of voicing feelings of appreciation between partners. To affirm a spouse, Chapman recommended using a calm and pleasant tone, making humble requests, and complementing a partner in front of friends, family, or coworkers. He said praising a partner in front of others will make them feel loved because it shows admiration for others. Thus, several studies have consistently shown that individuals with higher levels of empathy excel at recognizing their partners' needs and providing valuable support and superior guidance. (Hodges, 2013; Devoldre, 2016)

Physical Touch

Romantic couples use touch to express intimacy, with stroking, holding, and kissing being universally used in love relationships. Touch is a stable element in human love relations, connected to reported love levels and relational wellness. Touch promotes love among partners, with partners and one's approach motives prioritizing touch. Couples report higher intimate touch compared to singles, and interpersonal touch helps endure adversity by promoting low-stress reactions (Sorokowska et al., 2023).

Additionally, in the study of Benzeev and Rao (2022), their findings show that older people do enjoy sexuality and retain their sexual desire and interest, even though the forms and intricacies of expression vary. Emotional closeness and companionship were the central core of intimacy, whereas there were several gender differences. For men, the ability to maintain an erection and the ability to ejaculate was a central point of concern.

However, a few also mentioned difficulties with sexual fantasies and arousal. It is an effective approach to convey affection (Chapman, 2015). Touching, hugs, holding hands, kissing, or sexual actions can all be described. It's important to understand the desired touch type. The married males expressed their love by initiating sex, engaging in outdoor pursuits, and helping out around the house. It's possible that the heterosexual women in our sample responded to the males initiating sex (physical touch) and helping out around the house (acts of service) by feeling more loved as a result (Hughes & Camden, 2020).

Act of service

When you give acts of service, you give up your time. Even though your partner may have a preference for a different love language, engaging in acts of service can prove to be advantageous for the overall health and well-being of any relationship (Sheppard 2022). According to the study conducted by Pew Research Center (2016), more than fifty percent of all married couples held the belief that

the act of sharing household chores and responsibilities carried significant weight and played a pivotal role in achieving a prosperous and harmonious marital union. Moreover, Geiger (2016) revealed that more than half of married couples considered the equitable distribution of household responsibilities to be essential for a fulfilling marriage. Ensuring both partners are content with their respective contributions to domestic tasks is vital, irrespective of whether it aligns with their expressions of affection.

Receiving gifts

Gift-giving decisions require individuals to consider the balance between desirability and feasibility. Desirability pertains to the inherent value and appeal of the gift, while feasibility concerns the practicality and ease of using or enjoying the gift. When individuals hold a destiny belief, they become more attuned to the effort and resources required to consume the gift, placing greater emphasis on feasibility considerations. Conversely, individuals with a growth belief prioritize the benefits and personal growth that can be derived from consuming the gift, placing greater emphasis on the central aspects and value of the gift itself (Baskin et al., 2014).

Additionally, if one's primary love language is gift-giving, it signifies that their love is demonstrated by bestowing presents upon others. These gifts serve as a conspicuous display of love and gratitude towards the recipient. The gifts are customarily adapted to the specific individual and are designed to evoke joy and contentment in the receiver (Miller, 2022). Moreover, according to the Community Love Language article (2021), the significance of a gift lies in the recipient's perception, not its cost or frequency. For some, the value of a gift is more than its monetary worth, as it represents affection and care. While it's not necessary to give expensive gifts regularly, the sentimental value of a gift is more important than its monetary worth, making it a symbol of love and care.

Quality Time

There are differences in the perception of time spent together among couples. These perceptual differences were established to be impacting relationship quality to a larger extent, suggesting that it isn't the expression of love language that matters, but the perception of the expressed love language by the receiver that aids in relationship satisfaction. It asserts that the extent to which participated conditioning is perceived appreciatively in a relationship is dependent on three factors including the type of exertion, the provocation behind bearing the exertion, and the mate's degree of commitment to the exertion (Stolarski et al., 2016).

Moreover, according to Tarkang et al. (2017), the happiness of a family is closely linked to the decisions made regarding leisure activities, including the significant component of annual vacations. Going on a holiday is often linked to various advantages, including recreation, relaxation, and strengthening the bond between couples (Mélou et al., 2022). Additionally, family vacations have been shown to enhance communication within couples (Durko & Petrick, 2016).

Male Senior Citizen's Challenges in Expressing Love Language

Low self-esteem and poor relationship satisfaction are common among those who do not show their spouses' admiration or refuse to receive it (Lambert & Fincham, 2022). Even though it can be challenging to remember to always be grateful to one's partner, developing the habit can help with issues like resolving conflicts and self-worth (Palmer, 2022). Furthermore, according to Stolarski et al. (2015), individual differences in how people spend their time together may affect the quality of their relationships.

Relationship partners can have disagreements about what makes quality time. One spouse may think they are spending quality time together, while the other may have an entirely different definition of quality time and think they aren't spending quality time together. Jourard (2022) stated that if a partner is too silent or doesn't discuss their opinions during a relationship, it suggests a lack of communication and leads to many arguments. However, according to Baumeister and Vohs (2022), self-disclosure is a crucial component of communication in relationships. The inability to self-disclose among partners leads to issues with adaptability, lack of confidence, inferiority complexes, all of which can have an impact on the mental health of the relationship partners (Johnson, 2022).

Additionally, according to Hughes and Camden (2022), couples encounter difficulties when they are unaware of or unable to use each other's love language. It may not be viewed as caring and may result in the partner using their preferred love language, which may lower their partner's emotions of love or relationship satisfaction. Mantova (2023) found the study that knowing a partner's preferred love language and being able to communicate well in it might lead to higher levels of relationship contentment. However, failing to recognize or speak following a partner's love language might result in dissatisfaction in the couple's relationship.

The ability of the partners to self-regulate their preferred means of expressing love by employing a more receptive approach would therefore seem to rest significantly on the couple's ability to be in a satisfying relationship despite not speaking the same love language. (Bunt & Hazelwood, 2017). Individuals aspire to attain relationship satisfaction by nurturing shared dedication, affection, investment, and effective communication within their partnerships. This pursuit is often driven by the desire to prevent unfavorable outcomes such as separations, unhappiness, and marital dissolution or divorce. (Keizer, 2014; Gerlach et al., 2018) Moreover, according to Montava (2023) several critical factors, including intimacy, passion, commitment, and social status, significantly impact one's overall relationship satisfaction.

In the early stages of a prospective relationship, individuals often evaluate each other's strengths and weaknesses to determine the potential for constructing a prosperous and satisfying partnership. Polk and Egbert (2013) studied the possibility that relationships would be more satisfying if couples used their significant other's primary love language while expressing their affection. Undoubtedly,

addressing a partner's needs can help lessen the negative consequences of a lack of complementarity. Even if one's sexual impulses don't align with them (Kogan et al., 2013). Individuals who have diabetes are more likely to experience sexual dysfunction. Sexual arousal, orgasm, and desire can be impacted by vascular and neural damage, prescription drugs, and inadequate glucose regulation.

Moreover, older men with type 2 diabetes have been associated with decreased sex drive, orgasmic dysfunction, and erectile dysfunction. The ability to achieve and sustain an erection may be adversely affected by various factors, including low testosterone levels, suboptimal glycemic control, the aging process, excess weight, compromised blood circulation, and nerve damage (Cervoni, 2022). Thus, De Jong and Reis (2014) found that distinct sexual preferences predict greater sexual satisfaction as compared to similar ones. Adhering to a partner's preferences enhances overall sexual satisfaction in a relationship.

Coping Mechanism of Male Senior Citizen's Love Language in Relationship Challenges

Montava (2023) stated that Chapman's concept of emotional love tanks suggests that when these tanks are running on empty, it can result in conflicts, emotional withdrawal, feelings of isolation, and difficulties in managing relationship issues. On the flip side, couples who are strongly committed to each other have the essential resources to confront challenges and effectively resolve conflicts. According to Mostova (2022), women might expect greater visible expressions of affection from their partners. In contrast, males may prefer living up to the social norm of being in a committed relationship over particular loving behaviors.

Contrarily, a pleasant relationship has been correlated to an improved quality of life, better well-being for both partners and the capacity to deal with stressful situations. For long-term happiness and general life contentment, it is therefore crucial to emphasize and cultivate an intimate relationship (Montava, 2023).

Furthermore, allocating dedicated time to resolve conflicts allows both individuals in a relationship to take a step back and gather their thoughts, as elucidated by Grody. This allows them to contemplate the most effective approach to express their emotions in a composed and logical manner, thereby preventing the inclination to become defensive or accusatory. In the majority of instances, hurtful words are uttered impulsively during moments of anger, yet their impact lingers long after the heat of the moment has subsided (Grody, 2018).

The key to a successful relationship is active listening without any interruptions. However, this can prove to be a difficult task. In case your partner expresses feeling unheard, it is important to patiently listen to them until they have finished speaking. Afterward, seek clarification if there is any confusion (Grody, 2018).

Synthesis of Related Literature and Studies

Love language serves as a means of expression and communication through which a person expresses and receives love, recognizing their distinctive approaches and preferences in demonstrating and acknowledging affection. Some people express love through various love languages and possess their own individual preferences or interpretations when expressing love or affection towards others; some individuals may seek affirmation through words and quality time, while others may value acts of service, receiving gifts, or physical intimacy.

It may vary for every other couple depending on their needs and preferred love to give and receive. Differences in what each partner wants to contribute and receive in a relationship are inevitable. While love is a crucial component, achieving enduring and long-lasting relationships requires more than mere affection. Dedication, commitment, emotional intelligence, and effective communication are equally essential for understanding and knowing each other better (Keizer, 2014; Gerlach et al., 2018; Hodges, 2013 and Devoldre, 2016). A partner values shared activities in a relationship depends on three things: the type of effort, the reason behind making that effort, and how committed the partner is to putting in that effort (Stolarski et al., 2016).

On the other hand, male seniors who are unable to give their partner's preferred love language often leave them feeling regretful and worthless. Due to several factors and limitations such as health problems, lack of quality time and giving monetary goods or gifts. For other couples, their experiences may influence how they prioritize expressing love. Some individuals might not prioritize giving gifts due to differing perspectives. Instead, they find alternative ways, such as expressing love through words—complimenting and showing appreciation to their partners in their own unique ways. Depending on what other couples were going through, it could be different for them (Hughes & Camden, 2022).

In addition to this, men who experienced tension between their partners often adopt a coping mechanism to diffuse tension in conflicts and disagreements. Instead of engaging in and adding up the situation, they disengage and avoid further confrontation. This is their way of expressing frustration with their partner's anger, and they prefer to wait until both parties have had time to cool down before resuming communication.

Setting aside time specifically to resolve disagreements gives both partners an opportunity to take a step back and gather their thoughts. Acknowledging the partner's feelings and actively listening to their concerns as showing empathy is crucial for both individuals in the relationship (Grody, 2018). Understanding and recognizing each other's needs, preferably in love language, is the key to a long-lasting relationship.

In conclusion, love languages represent personal preferences for both giving and receiving affection, making them a distinctive mode of communication in romantic relationships. While love is important, long-term relationships also involve emotional intelligence, good

communication, passion, and commitment. Building long-lasting relationships requires both parties to be aware of and sensitive to one another's needs, particularly when it comes to love languages.

Methodology

Research Design

As the present study adopts a qualitative approach, the research design employed in this study utilized Martin Heidegger's phenomenology, known as Hermeneutic Phenomenology. This has been extensively employed by researchers to gain insight into individuals' lived experiences. This research methodology posits that each individual is as distinct as their narrative.

Moreover, this phenomenological approach was consequently crucial in emphasizing the primary role played by human experience; it concentrates on the current condition of human experience in the context of the living world. The focus lies in revealing minor details and seemingly unimportant aspects of events that we frequently ignore in everyday situations to extract significance and get a deeper comprehension. It goes beyond linguistic analysis to include the broader cultural and historical context in interpretation that involves a rigorous analysis of consciousness and its intentional objects (Suddick et al., 2020).

Participants

The selected 15 participants met the formulated criteria for filtering and identifying participants— which include: (1) Male Senior Citizen; (2) Residing in District IV of Bulacan; (3) With 3-5 children; (4) Married; and (5) Must live separately from their children.

The participants of this study were 15 male senior citizens who live in District 4 of Bulacan. As shown in Table 1, the age of the participants ranges from 60 to 75. Furthermore, all of them are married and have 3-5 children.

Table 1. *Participants' Profile*

<i>Participant Code</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Number of Children</i>	<i>Religion</i>
Participant #1	65	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #2	68	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #3	60	Married	3	INC
Participant #4	60	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #5	66	Married	4	Catholic
Participant #6	75	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #7	60	Married	4	Catholic
Participant #8	67	Married	5	INC
Participant #9	61	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #10	72	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #11	61	Married	5	Catholic
Participant #12	61	Married	5	Catholic
Participant #13	65	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #14	60	Married	3	Catholic
Participant #15	71	Married	4	Catholic

The participants were interviewed in face-to-face settings by the researchers, who also recorded their responses on smartphones. The interview was conducted with the participant's consent, and the researchers further discussed the interview's purpose and process.

Instrument

The study conducted interviews with the selected participants. The researcher generates a semi-structured interview guide within the study. A data collection method of a qualitative nature in which the researcher formulates and utilizes an interview guide composed of open-ended questions and subjects that necessitate discussion during the interview, typically in a predetermined sequence (Burgess, 2018).

Before carrying out participants, the validation of the semi-structured interview guide instrument is conducted by a group of licensed professional teachers, a registered guidance counselor, and a licensed psychometrician. The interview will explore three key aspects of their experiences, involving experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms. Based on the following codes: (1) experiences regarding projecting love language in the spouses of male senior citizens; (2) challenges in the love language of male senior citizens; and (3) coping mechanisms of male senior citizens.

Procedure

To achieve rich and precise findings, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Male Senior Citizen Adults. The participants were asked a series of open-ended questions, allowing them to share and openly express their personal experiences and opinions. Specifically, the selected participants were asked about their experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms related to the concept of love languages in their romantic relationships.

The study employed a semi-structured interview with male senior citizens. The step-by-step process of collecting data is described below:

1. The researchers selected qualified participants in the area after evaluating the study's instrument and participants.
2. After evaluating the selected participants in a research locale, experiences were collected through one-on-one interviews.
3. To ensure legal compliance and participant consent, a consent form was provided before the data collection began.
4. A consent form was provided to participants, granting permission for transcription and individual conversations to ensure legal compliance, privacy, and confidentiality during data collection.
5. At the end of the interview, the participants were explicitly informed that all the information shared during these discussions would be kept confidential.

Data Analysis Procedure

The study utilized Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as the inquiry strategy. IPA researchers center their attention on the experiences that individuals have in their lives and how they interpret and understand these experiences about their personal and social environments. A specific emphasis is placed on personal interpretation and understanding, also known as sense-making. This means, that IPA researchers aim to communicate personal aspects of individuals' experiences while also recognizing that their own experiences and predispositions might influence their analyses (Smith & Nizza, 2021).

Furthermore, this research will employ the method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This method of data analysis seeks to understand the subjective perspectives of participants, and how they make sense of their everyday lives about the research question. IPA has been used in numerous studies to explore the lived experiences of a range of topics (Smith, 2013). This study used the IPA analytical process, an iterative and inductive cycle.

The study followed eight strategies: reading and re-reading, initial noting, member checking, developing emergent themes, searching for connections, moving to the next case, looking for patterns, and writing up. The researcher transcribed the interviews, read and reread the transcripts, and engaged in organizing and categorizing the data (Smith et., 2013).1. The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) serves as a significant resource for both research and practical applications. It empowers researchers to explore fresh viewpoints and gain insights into the real-life experiences of individuals.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical standards are strictly observed to secure permission before the survey is conducted and to select research participants. Written informed consent was given during the data collection process in conformity with ethical guidelines. The aims of the research were explained clearly to participants based on their voluntary participation, and they were given the assurance that they could withdraw from the interview process at any time.

Furthermore, confidentiality is guaranteed by the Data Privacy Act, officially known as Republic Act No. 10173, which provides that all private, sensitive, and personal information must be protected. Both natural and legal people who are involved in the processing of personal information are intended to be included. The respondents were assured that all information gathered throughout the research would be used only for educational and research purposes and that their identities would be secured by the use of an identification code. The participants' accessibility in the execution of this study will be considered.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *The Analysis*

<i>Superordinate Themes</i>	<i>Sub Themes</i>
Expression of Love (Emotional Expression)	More Than Words Can Say (Affirmation)
	A gift, Just for You (Reciprocation)
	Act of Touch (Physically affectionate)
	Spend Time Together (Fulfillment)
Hardships in Love (Discomfort)	I misunderstand (Frustration)
	Turning Off the Heat (Sexual Dysfunction)
	Giftless

	(Remorse)
	Keep in Silence
	(Emotional Withdrawal)
	Love Grows Stronger
	(Resilience)
A Way to Deal Hardships	Cool Off Zone
	(Self-regulation)

Expression of Love

Love is a powerful experience shared between senior citizen couples, especially those who have spent years together. Despite the years, they find ways to express their love and appreciation, including simple gestures like holding hands, giving hugs, and exchanging small gifts. These ways are meaningful and special. However, in the study of Gareis and Wilkins (2010), they revealed that the perceptions of love frequently mirror a society's convictions regarding their culture's beliefs—as they change through the ages—about humanity in different historical periods. Hence, if the person fostered through communication, it will impact what expression of love he would prefer. In responses provided by the participants to this theme, four aspects are highly significant and deserve attention. These aspects pertain to how they express their affection towards their partners.

More Than Words Can Say

This is where the participant answered the question about how they express their love through words and how they spend their time showing their affection to their wife. According to Díaz (2022), seniors who yearn for expressions of love will not perceive such sentiments solely through material presents, physical affection, or quality time. Instead, they require actual auditory reception of compassionate and uplifting words. Verbal indications carry significant importance, and as such, it is imperative to avoid the use of unfavorable language, critical remarks, or an acrimonious tone as they can cause profound emotional distress.

Participant 3 added to what he said that he reminisced on how he loved his wife and how he expressed it by saying uplifting words

“Sa tagal na din ng pagsasama namin parang... ang bonding namin parang mag kapatid na lang so ang joke na lang naming dalawa pagka sinasabihan ko siya ng “Huy ang ganda mo ngayon ah” parang gusto kong maging binata ulit. Yung mga ganoon lang.” Parang binabalik ko lang... parang pinapasaya ko siya nung dati na kung kailan ko siya inumpisahang niligawan tapos parang pagka alam kong lalo na’t pagka alam kong pagod siya binibigyan ko siya ng parang.. Anong tawag don motivation ba tawag don? Para maging... yung ganda ng awra at mood niya hindi ma alis”.

This data supports the study of Park et al. (2022), that the result of their findings highlighted the significant role of saying motivational words and expressing gratitude can have greater satisfaction and commitment, the study presented empirical support for the lasting advantages of perceiving elevated levels of gratitude expressions from a partner that leads to enhance the commitment and feelings of being cared for by their partner one year later. Additionally, participant 2 described what kind of behavior he desires to stand out. He said, *“Eh, ako demonstrative ako eh. Unang-una, tawag ko sa kanya, sweetheart. Di doon pa lang, alam mo na”.*

Moreover, participant 3 described how bringing back the old passion of love and being consistent are the key to maintaining long-term and a strong relationship with the spouse.

“Parang binabalik ko lang... parang pinapasaya ko siya nung dati na kung kailan ko siya inumpisahang niligawan tapos parang lalo na’t pagka alam kong pagod siya binibigyan ko siya ng parang.. Anong tawag don motivation ba tawag don? Para maging... yung awra niya hindi ma alis”

To support the statement above, Gupta (2022) discovers that the mere expression of "I love you" aids in affirming and reassuring individuals, fostering a sense of closeness between couples. Consequently, the uncomplicated yet genuine expression of love assumes a significant role in safeguarding one's happiness and overall state of being. Moreover, the study by Grossman (2020), revealed that senior citizens have had a greater duration of time compared to the majority of individuals to exchange their affection towards one another, hence, expressing love and offering words of support possess a deep understanding of their love. Such encouragement must be not only received but also reiterated, as repetition plays a pivotal role in this process.

A gift, just for you

Gift-giving is a customary practice observed within the context of romantic partnerships. A notable aspect of romantic presents that has been extensively researched pertains to their role in conveying an individual's dedication to the relationship in the course of a courtship phase. Gift-giving, like exchanging small favors and effort, is noteworthy to continue the relationship of a married couple (Komiya et al., 2019). The study conducted by Gupta (2022), uncovered that elderly couples have a tendency to value small gestures as tokens of affection, asserting that it is truly the sentiment behind the gift that holds significance, rather than its monetary value.

Participant 3 also shared his way of expressing love and affection through consistently surprising his wife to demonstrate that he cares more about her. He said,

*“Ah.. sa regalo naman, basta’t sinusurprise ko siya kasi, hindi mo naman kasi pu-pwedeng regaluhan... magbigay ka ng gift na tatanungin mo siya. Mas impressive kasi yung o kaya yung may touch yung dating pagka sinurprise mo yung isang bagay na magre-regalo lalo na sa minamahal or sa nililigawan mo. *Tumawa saglit* Yung kasi yung nagpapahanga at saka nagpapabilib din bilang nagagawa mo ba yung dapat na dapat mo gawin sa pagbibigay ng regalo.”*

This statement shows that maintaining practical implications in romantic relationships may seem effective to long ensuring the commitment and understanding of each partner. According to Peske (2023), surprises revolve around the act of demonstrating affection to one's partner in an unprecedented and unforeseen manner. Regardless of their magnitude, surprises consistently foster a heightened feeling of closeness between two individuals and have the potential to propel any relationship toward a more profound form of love.

Participant 12 described his act of gift-giving in a simple form and practical way to sustain the needs of his wife.

“Ay, sa regalo. Kahit nung dati pa palagay ko hindi ko siya naregaluhan. Pero sa pera. Lahat ng pera kong kinikita ay sakanya napupunta. Basta lahat ng pera kong nakukuha, nahuhulog sa kaniya”.

This evidence shows that giving your spouse an allowance is an expression of love that supports the established framework of a marriage. It supports the study of Komiya et al. (2021), who found that traditional romantic presents, such as bouquets and scented candles, are not as effective in improving a woman's chances of survival compared to the negative impact they have on a man's financial resources. In addition, According to the blog entitled Traditional Catholic Femininity (2023), research conducted by scientists and psychologists has demonstrated that within the context of matrimony, it is more advantageous for the male spouse to assume the role of primary provider or to be a main breadwinner, as this fosters the longevity of the marriage and the long-term happiness of the couple.

According to participant 12, he once gave a gift to his wife, he humorously said, *“Ay, hindi ako nagbibigay ng regalo. Kahit noong kami ay nagsama, noong first time pa lang nag ano ako, kahit nanliligaw ako sa asawa ko. Hindi ako marunong magbigay ng regalo, siya lang, dahil mahal niya ko. Pinipikot niya ako *tumawa* Nagbigay ako isang beses na regalo sa kanya. Noong time noon, Pasko yun. First time ko nagbigay sa kanya. Alam mo, ang binigay ko nung naisip ko, bumili ako ng bulaklak na plastic. Pasko yun, okay na yun, naappreciate na niya.”*

However, this data supports the study of Gupta (2022), he reveals that little things often matter the most, and it considered as a basis for making your partner happy, and secure, and small things that don't take a lot of money, but go a long way toward showing your partner how much you care about them.

Act of Touch

Performing grand romantic gestures to your partner like holding their hand often, giving them hugs and kisses for no reason, and touching them frequently, whether it's a squeeze of the shoulder or a hand on their back are some ways to show your partner affection physically. It's important to remember that every day is an opportunity to show your partner how much you love them (Gupta, 2022). According to Wagner et al. (2020), they revealed that touch is particularly important to establishing and preserving romantic relationships.

According to Participant 1, he continuously has an intimate interaction with his wife. He proudly said, *“Continue pa rin, nagyayakapan pa rin kami.”*

He also added that helping each other and doing thoughtful tasks for his wife, such as completing a chore or errand on his behalf without being asked, demonstrates these as making them feel special and loved while being responsive to their needs. He stated, *“Eh yung ganda niya, tapos kilos kilos sa bahay, sa lahat. Tulong-tulong kami sa lahat.”*

Moreover, Participant 8 described how affectionate he is, by helping a wife do some chores and considering the feelings of a wife. It is an expression of love that shows genuine care for a spouse and is fair to them. He said, *“Lalo na halimbawa, magluluto ka na. Mag hahain na'ko ng hapunan, maglilinis ng bahay. Ika nga, para mapahinga ang mga nanay. Dahil usually kasi, sa trabaho ng bahay, mas pagod ang mga nanay.”*

This statement shows that expressing love through hugs, kisses, sex or touch, and holding hands are not only considered acts of touch but also supporting your partners and giving a fair few serving acts can also be a way of expressing affection to your partner. Henry (2023) found that adults who are involved in romantic relationships may experience a greater sense of security when they observe their partner demonstrating their affection through concrete actions rather than solely relying on verbal expressions.

However, Wagner (2020) revealed that husbands and wives demonstrated minimal disparity in their average ratings across most variables, except for touch satisfaction and engagement in physical affection. In comparison to their male counterparts, wives were more satisfied with touch.

As the interviewer inquired about the participants' availability for engaging in acts of physical intimacy and love-making, the majority of the individuals asserted that they refrain from undertaking such activities. To support this statement, the study of Saber & Rauer (2017) showed that older couples are influenced by situational factors, such as their specific needs and physical health problems, thereby they agree to desist from physical intimacy.

Spend Time Together

According to Hamermesh (as cited in his book titled "Spending Time: The Most Valuable Resource, 2019), it is asserted that individuals with higher incomes and a slightly increased amount of time at their disposal can partake in a greater variety of activities within each hour compared to previous generations. Even if we spend no money, the cost of time itself is higher for us than it is for older people. The study by Hudson et al. (2019), found that being in an intimate relationship and spending exceptional time with partners are revealed as a reason for successful commitment.

Participant 1 described the meaningful bonding with his wife, creating their traditions and spending time every day with just the two of them, without phones or devices, just enjoying each others' company.

"Marami na yung napuntahan namin. Sa Tagaytay tapos sa Boracay mga ganon ba, masaya kami kapag nakakagala at nakakapagsama ng ganoon. Ano lang, masyal masyal lang kami, para makapag relax kaming dalawa".

In addition, participant 3 shared the same answer that the way of spending time with his partner was also going to their favorite place or sentimental place for them. He said, *"Ah... Meron, like isang halimbawa, sa mga pasyalan or yung kayong dalawa lang, katulad ng doon kayo sa.. Kayo lang dalawa yung mapupunong lugar, yan kasi yung mga favorite kong puntahan na halos kayo lang dalawa yung nagbibigayan ng kuan ninyo. Nagpapalitan ng kuro-kuro, pala-palagay, para malalaman niyo kung ano yung dapat na kailangan niyo".*

To support the statements above, the study of Luscher et al. (2022), revealed that for older couples, their experience of less negative affect and greater positive affection was more than high, as was their reported closeness. The instances of temporary intimacy saw more precision as partners felt positive and negated negativeness along with a sense of togetherness.

Nevertheless, the feelings of unity, security, and togetherness replace loneliness and isolation when people are connected. Such an act of love can shake up the whole world being so deep when two people decide to share. Seniors can also join new models of partnerships/cohabitation where they should choose freely, love, and communicate with each other (Gareis & Wilkins, 2010). Participant 7 answered that they still spend more time together despite of his illness, he said that, *"Pag may time kami, pupunta kami sa out of, sa Tagaytay, yan ganiyan. Yung dati namin ginagawa na dinadala ko sila dun. At least ngayon, nagagawa ko kahit na ganito ko na stroke, nagagawa ko sa kanila. Pag araw na linggo, yan, simba kami, simba kami ganyan. Importante sa amin yan kasi diyan ko sila minulat na every Sunday, basta may time, may pagkakataon simba tayo. Tapos after ng simba, dadaan sa mami niya. And then, pasyal-pasyal, pupunta sa SM Marilao, tapos kakain mga gano'n lang, mga normal lang."*

This statement proves that no matter what the situation is, if you have faith to stand or face all the circumstances, you can explore new ways of being intimate with each other. Both participants 7 and 12 involve their faith regarding their religion. Participant 12 said, *"Pag medyo maganda ang panahon ko, pag lalabas ko punta lang sa simbahan. Hindi ako pumupunta lang pasyal-pasyalan."*

The above-mentioned statements support the study conducted by Braithwaite (2013); his research showed that Christians are more passionate but less committed compared to people who have no religious beliefs. Moreover, there were found to be individuals, among the Christians having a high level of religiosity, who were strongly committed to their respective romantic relationships.

Hardships of Love

Love, which is typically romanticized for its beauty, comes with its own set of challenges. Vulnerability, a necessary element, exposes individualities to the threat of rejection and emotional pain. Overcoming barriers to communication and conquering jealousy demand adaptability, pointing out that the route of love isn't always simplicity itself, but it leads to profound connection and growth when conquered together. This theme explores the challenges that male seniors experience in showing their expression of love for their partner.

I Misunderstood

Misunderstandings can be a common occurrence in relationships, as individuals naturally have different opinions, beliefs, and values. Couples who experienced a misunderstanding were more likely to experience difficulty in their relationship.

According to the article of Marriage 2023, it takes love, compassion, and patience to navigate a relationship. Misunderstandings, which frequently stem from presumptions without convincing proof, can lead to conflict and maintain an unhealthy relationship.

Most of the participants have a misunderstanding in their relationship. Similar to Participant 2, when there's a fight between him and his wife, he curses but he doesn't direct it to his wife but to something else.

"Nagmumura pero hindi ko siya tinutukoy. Nagmumura ako ng "putang ina". Nagmumura lang ako pero hindi para sa kanya."

He added that they only have conflict because sometimes they don't think alike but eventually they fix it.

"Alam mo yung away na ano lang, yung bang... Siyempre, magkaiba kayo ng isip. Parang minsan nagkakaroon ng tampuhan pero at the end of the day, magkayakap kami."

Furthermore, for Participant 6, when they have a misunderstanding, they yell at each other because they are annoyed by other things that for them are pointless sources of fighting.

“Gaya po sabi ko kanina, pamisan-pamisan, nakakabulyawan kayo.”

“Kasi dati, palagay ko, parang magandang talaga ang naging samahan namin. Pero oo sa tingin ko, gaya nagka-inisan kami ng walang kabagay-bagay.”

Additionally, participant 12's statement is that in married life there may be things that cause misunderstanding such as jealousy or misunderstanding because the decision made by each other's mind is different.

This implies that there are lots of reasons why misunderstandings in a relationship may end up in arguments that can affect the expression of love for one another. According to the article Joyful Couple 2022, miscommunications in relationships can happen much too often. It may cause conflicts and arguments that are avoidable. Couples often find themselves at odds during tough conversations, whether it's due to unclear communication or opposing opinions.

Turning Off the Heat

Intimacy is one way that a couple shows their love for one another. This is one of the love languages that can be employed in a relationship. Nonetheless, certain conditions, such as a person's age and health, make this activity difficult. According to Pelusio (2023), sexual activity in senior citizens is influenced by various factors, with healthy, positive individuals more open to exploring new ways to arouse each other, while those with loneliness, illness, or unhappiness may struggle with intimacy.

Participant 1 and his wife are no longer active in sexual intimacy because of their old age, this was the participant's statement when asked if he and his wife were still sexually active.

“Eh, ano na eh. Siyempre, may edad na eh. Parang nawala... Eh, yung libido nandun pero yung kakayahan mo wala na. Gustuhin mo man pero wala kang magawa”

Additionally, participant 1 further elaborated on his response concerning the aspect of diminished ability despite the persistence of libido. He indicated, *“Sa ngayon kasi, lalong-lalo na nagkaka-edad na ako, isa pa may physical ako na nararamdaman. ‘Yung dati noon na it's 30, it's 40, kumbaga, meron pa kayong.. Tawag dito... yung dating physical na aggressive physical, parang nawawala na pag tumungtong ka na ng 50. Kasi nga, nando-doon sa tinatawag nila na ang mindset mo kasi, nakafocus ko na lang sa trabaho pa rin. Pero minsan naman, dumarating yun na gusto mo, minsan naman, wala siya sa timing. So, yung nangyayari talaga, sleep is sleep.”*

In addition to giving off the daily routines of partners, the conflicting work schedules and the exhaustion that comes with heavy workloads greatly impede sexual intimacy. This misalignment and exhaustion together may make it difficult to meet needs for intimacy, fulfill sexual impulses, and partake in partnered sexual activities. This emphasizes the need for a more complex understanding of the complex effects of nonsynchronous work schedules on intimate aspects of relationships.

Participants said that their spouses' rejection of them is one of the reasons they are rarely sexually active. They said that this rejection causes them to experience negative emotions, which they sometimes choose to ignore.

As per Participant 4 response, he stated his feelings towards sexual intercourse rejection by his wives. He said,

“Oo, syempre. Nangyayari talaga yung ganon. Syempre pag walang gana yung babae, tatanggihan ka talaga.”

“Minsan idadaan mo nalang sa biro, sige bahala ka dyan”

“Syempre malungkot Hindi ka masaya syempre”

“Tatahimik nalang. Osige kung ayaw tas syempre ako tulog nalang. Ano gagawin natin?”

Participant 12 also stated with a feeling of frustration his difficulties with the rejection of sexual intercourse. He stated,

“Bahala ko sa buhay ko na. Kung ayaw mo sa akin, di ba tutulugan kita. Pero noong kabataan ko pa, kapag tumatanggi sa akin, parang pumasok sa isipan ko na bakit ayaw mo sa akin? Parang selos ganon.”

Refusal of sexual intercourse can significantly impact a relationship, leading to feelings of unattractiveness, bitterness, anger, resentment, insecurity, rejection, and lowered self-esteem. This refusal can also result in a breakdown of communication and trust, causing a sense of failure and inadequacy, as per a 2016 study published in the journal 'Sexuality & Culture'.

Moreover, sex can be challenging in a relationship when one partner is ill due to physical, emotional, and side effects, as well as the potential interference with sexual desire and performance.

According to Participant 12, he has stopped having sex because of his sickness.

“Wala na, hindi na namin ginagawa yon lalo na’t may sakit na ako. Sinabihan nadin ako ng doctor na nawawala na daw yong hilig sa ganon pagmay diabetic ka. Tsaka sa gantong edad hindi na importante yon.”

This data indicated that individuals who have diabetes are more likely to experience sexual dysfunction. Sexual arousal, orgasm, and desire can be impacted by vascular and neural damage, prescription drugs, and inadequate glucose regulation. Moreover, older men with type 2 diabetes have been associated with decreased sex drive, orgasmic dysfunction, and erectile dysfunction. The ability to achieve and sustain an erection may be adversely affected by various factors including low testosterone levels, suboptimal glycemic control, the aging process, excess weight, compromised blood circulation, and nerve damage (Cervoni, 2022).

Giftless

Gift-giving in relationships is a way to express love, appreciation, and care for the recipient's interests. It's not superficial or materialistic, and those who view gifts as the primary means of expressing affection may be more sentimental and nostalgic. A happy relationship relies on generosity, showing care and consideration for the recipient's interests (Gonsalves, 2021).

On the other hand, not everyone can give gifts. Just like participants 5, 6, and 11, they are both unable to give gifts to their wives.

“Dadating sa buhay ng tao na walang wala ka talaga. Gusto mo man magregalo, wala ka naman kakayahan”

“Unawain? Ay hindi pero sa pera ganon mga kailangan, minsan mahirap ibigay kasi hindi naman lagi may kakayanan”

“Hindi na kami nagbibigayan, minsan syempre kapos na sa pera. Mga anak ko na lang madalas nagbibigay samin ng ganon”

Hence, participant 12 often felt self-blame because he felt that he could not provide for his wife's needs, at least in terms of gifts.

“Kung sa akin kasi, kapag kung ako siguro mag-balance, kung mayroong bagay na hindi ko maibigay si kanya o ako man ang ano, parang nasa isip ko, sasarilihin ko na lang din. Parang, wala na lang. Parang sinisisi ko ang sarili ko.”

This data implies that a lack of giving your partner's needs such as giving gifts becomes a struggle in expressing love. Often the reason for this is a lack of financial status and other circumstances in life.

Keep In Silence

In A. Weiss's 2021 book, "Hidden in Plain Sight: How Men's Fears of Women Shape Their Intimate Relationships," he delves into how societal conditioning hinders men from expressing needs, instilling fear of conflict and abandonment. This fear is evident in their constant monitoring of partners' emotions, leading to avoidance of conflict, prioritizing partner appeasement, and reluctance to discuss issues, perpetuating a cycle of dissatisfaction. The popular mantra "Happy wife, happy life" reflects the profound anxiety men feel about their partner's disapproval, often causing them to disengage from addressing relationship issues.

“Minsan dumarating dun sa punto nga na kapag ka ang isa mainit at sinabayan mo, mas lalong nagliliyab. So, minsan, pagkasabi nga nila, ang langgam pag nakanti mo, mangangagat. Ngayon, nandodoon ka sa punto na nakagat ka, hindi mo rin maiwasan minsan na magalit o uminit dahil siyempre masakit yun. Kaya minsan, dumarating yung mga punto na may mga lumalabas na bagay na.. hindi mabuti. Pero yun naman, eh... binabawi rin naman pagkatapos.”

Participant 3 discusses experiencing anger occasionally, particularly when it becomes challenging to control. According to Psychologist Dana Jack, men also struggle not to silence themselves in intimate relationships.

“Hindi na lang ako kumikibo, hinahayaan ko na lang saka maguusap ganon naman palagi dapat hindi sinasabayan sama ng loob ng isat isa hindi ba?”

“Siguro, wala siya saakin, kasi kapag medyo may guni-guni kasi sa isipan ko, hindi ko na, hindi ko na iniintindi yun. Hindi ko na kakausapin, basta bahala ka dyan, ako ay matutulog o kakain lang ako. Pero, basta sa akin lang, medyo kung magandang panahon, sasabihin ko sa kanya na...huwag mong ulitin yung gano'n. Huwag mong ulitin yung ginagawa.”

As Weiss said, men are often willing to control themselves to almost any extent to avoid women being angry with them. It is not uncommon for men to become so conflict-avoidant in their intimate relationships that they placate their partners. However, he emphasized that after the emotions cool down, constructive discussions become feasible, underscoring the importance of addressing issues through communication.

Participants 10 & 12 recommend selecting words thoughtfully, demonstrating affection through kindness, and waiting for emotions to subside before entering into more productive discussions. According to "Hidden in Plain Sight: How Men's Fears of Women Shape Their Intimate Relationships," men consistently monitor their partners' emotions, interpreting any sign of unhappiness as a personal failure and fearing they're "in the doghouse." Reassurance from their wives often doesn't alleviate this concern. Furthermore, men's tendency to choose silence during disagreements may arise from a desire to prevent conflict, emphasizing the importance of recognizing diverse communication styles for healthier relationships.

Coping Mechanisms of Male Senior Citizens towards Expressing Their Love Language

Love the struggles

Senior couples, like any other married pairs, encounter diverse challenges in relationships that impede the strengthening of their bond. Bouncing back from tough times and dealing with life's challenges positively and flexibly are signs of resilience (Cénat et al., 2020; Glass et al., 2020). Despite facing difficulties, participants demonstrated their resilience in coping with these experiences. This theme explores the coping mechanisms male seniors employ to handle the difficulties and challenges encountered in their relationships.

Cool-off zone

The majority of participants discussed comparable coping mechanisms for de-stressing and handling tension. When the interviewee asked the participants how they cope with situations where tension arises, particularly during arguments and disagreements with their partners. Participant 3 stated,

“Minsan, pagka nagkakatatampuhan kami na kailangan maglayo muna kami para hindi humaba yung usapan. Ako yung nagkukusang nagwi-withdraw, umaalis ako.”

Participant 3 indicated that he prefers to avoid confrontation and keep quiet to handle such tension and stressful situations when having arguments or disagreements. Furthermore, in keeping with the same idea, Participant 11 also added,

“Hindi dapat sabayan ng galit, pag galit siya pag may problema alis lang muna ako para palamig lang tapos kinabukasan na ayusin. Mahirap kase na magsabay ang galit niyo sa isat isa.”

The statement of Participant 11 suggests that anger should not be present when tensions rise between them. Instead, they tend to wait for the situation to cool down, preventing it from escalating further. Concerning this, Participant 4 also said that after both sides have had some time to calm down. He stated,

“Oo naman, hindi naman mawala yon. Hindi naman umaabot ng matagal bago kami magkasundo kahit na mamayang gabi mag usap na eh. Eh sa gabi kapag natulog, pag nagtampuhan mag usap na. Pag sa umaga o almusal naman, mag-usap na din.”

Similar thoughts were expressed by Participant 5, who elaborated on the thought that they address issues after allowing emotions to cool down and reaching a stage where both are no longer angry. He said,

“Hindi lang magkikibuan pero kapag parehas na malamig na ang ulo tsaka pag-uusapan ang problem. Hindi pwedeng hindi kasi pag-uusapan ang problema.”

The responses of the participants make it clear that they discuss problems after allowing some time for emotions to cool down and tension to subside between them and their partner. Tromeu (2023), stated that a partner tends to take some time apart and employ a coping mechanism called "cooling off" to give themselves some space and allow them to self-regulate and process the content of the arguments. Furthermore, the American Psychological Association (2022), pointed out that anger, as an emotional response, could not help resolve disagreements and concerns. The idea is that anger controls are essential to keep it from negatively impacting the resolution process.

Love grows stronger

When the interviewee asked the participants how they handle difficulties with their partners, Participant 7 highlighted the significance of communication and understanding each other when dealing with shared problems. He said,

“Yun nga. Sabi ko kanina, tahimik lang ako pag hindi ako na-appreciate. In this way, may mga bagay kaming pinag-uusapan, andyan siya. Nag-uusap kami kung ano dapat pag usapan o anong dapat mangyari, nag-oopen kami sa isa’t isa. Basta sa ganun mga pagkakataon, we’re open.”

Participant 7 mentioned that they usually keep things to themselves but they make a point to openly discuss matters when necessary. According to Bradbury and Bodenmann (2020), talking to a partner can help both couples find answers to problems in their relationship by allowing them to express their worries, serving as an effective means of addressing and resolving issues.

Moreover, Participant 3 elaborated on how he handled and coped with the difficulties he experienced with his partner. He said,

“Ang lagi kong sinasabi sa kanya, yung tiwala mo, ibigay mo ng buo para hindi ka nag-aalinlangan sa akin dahil ako naman ganon din naman ako sa iyo. ‘Yon yung lagi kong sinasabing pananaw sa aming mag asawa. Communication, pinag uusapan namin kasi kung hindi mo binabanggit yung mga ganon, malamang na hindi kayo nagkakaintindihan pagka konting nagkaroon lang kayo ng konting pagtatalo-talo, ma-uungkat at saka mas mabilis yung kuan yung pag-iinit ng ulo.”

Epstein (2023) defined communication as a potent tool for fortifying a relationship, helping partners address shared challenges, and embracing a positive perspective. Through effective communication, partners can confront issues and obstacles in their relationship, nurturing an optimistic outlook for overcoming them together.

Conclusion

Male senior citizens often express affection through encouragement and quality time, highlighting the importance of communication and emotional connection. These actions reflect the complexities of love and intimacy in later life, fostering security and fulfillment in relationships. However, challenges such as emotional struggles, gift-giving issues, and age-related limitations may hinder their ability to give and receive love, leading to frustration and regret. Erikson's theory of intimacy vs. solitude underscores these difficulties, often rooted in unresolved psychological concerns during this stage of life.

Male seniors' approaches to resolving conflicts, marked by patience, self-control, and compassion, demonstrate their deep regard for their spouses and align with interpersonal development theories that emphasize coping strategies and habits to maintain meaningful relationships.

The study recommends small daily gestures of affection, such as positive words, hugs, or holding hands, to strengthen emotional bonds and create lasting routines of love. Open communication during challenging times and celebrating milestones with special gestures can further enhance connection. Senior couples are encouraged to adapt activities to their relationship's needs, fostering emotional support and mutual understanding.

Community initiatives, including workshops on love languages, "Love Language Days," and mentoring programs, are proposed to educate and inspire seniors to deepen their connections. These efforts aim to create a supportive environment where love is celebrated and shared across diverse expressions.

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