

# Creative Ageing for Community Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Rural Thailand

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Khemmiga Teerapong<sup>1</sup>  and Boonanan Natakun<sup>2</sup> 

## Abstract

This article investigates an emerging creative practice led by elderly individuals and residents in Baan Thachang, a rural village in central Thailand. The focus is on *Chara Chatri*, an unconventional Thai performing arts troupe, as an example of creative ageing practices. The study examines how community resources, combined with the culturally innovative performances of *Chara Chatri* disseminated through online platforms, captivated audiences and generated income during the COVID-19 lockdowns from 2020 to 2021 and beyond. Employing observation and interview methods, this research seeks to understand the establishment and sustainability of this practice. The analysis indicates that this unique form of performing arts, integrated with local community resources, provided a creative solution to mitigate the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. Elderly performers, regarded as valuable human capital, alongside the local social, cultural and physical resources, significantly contributed to the community's resilience. The creative ageing practice within the Baan Thachang community, coupled with the collective efforts of its members, presents a model that could be adapted in other settings. This model illustrates how the synergy between the wisdom of elderly individuals and creative practices, supported by community resources, can foster resilience at both the individual and community levels.

## Keywords

Creative aging, community resilience, performing art, arts engagement, rural Thailand

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<sup>1</sup>School of Fine and Applied Arts, Bangkok University, Bangkok, Thailand

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

### Corresponding author:

Boonanan Natakun, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University, Pathum Thani 12121, Thailand.

E-mail: [boonanan@ap.tu.ac.th](mailto:boonanan@ap.tu.ac.th)