

THESIS TITLE : SELF-CARE PRACTICE OF THE ELDERLY AT RATCHABURI
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to study self-care practice of the elderly and to investigate the differences in self-care practice according to the following basic conditioning factors : sex, age, educational level, marital status, income and living condition.

A multistage sample of 352 elderly was selected from those of male and female elderly who were healthy without chronic disease or physical and psychological disabilities at Ratchaburi Municipal area, Ratchaburi Province. The data was collected by interviewing with the questionnaire which was constructed by the researcher from a pilot case study. The content validity of the testing was done by 7 experts in 3 fields : nursing gerontology, nursing psychology and nursing theory. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested with Cronbach's alpha coefficient with results showing accuracy of 0.96

Statistical methods used to analyze the data were percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, analysis of variance and multiple comparison

Findings and conclusions :

The level of self-care practice among the elderly was high. Universal self-care requisite scores were high in the areas of maintenance of sufficient intake of air, water and food, the provision of care associated with eliminative process and excrements, the prevention of hazards to human life, human functioning and human well-being and the promotion of normalcy. The score were moderate in the maintenance of a balance between activity and rest and maintenance of a balance between solitude and social interaction.

Developmental self-care requisite scores were somewhat high in self awareness, self esteem and body image, but self consistency had moderate scores.

The differences in scores according to basic conditioning factors were the following : sex, age, educational level, marital status, income and living condition all showed statistically significant differences in self-care practice at a level of 0.05.

Males had better mean scores in self-care practice than females. The 60-64 age group had better mean scores in self-care practice than the other age groups, the Matayomsuksa level had better mean scores in self-care practice than the other educational groups, the married status group had better mean scores than the single and widowed groups, the high income group had better mean scores than the low and moderate income groups and the elderly who stayed with a spouse and child had better mean scores than the elderly who stayed alone or with their cousin.

It is recommended that there should be the same investigations in rural areas and in other regions.