

THESIS TITLE : PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL STIGMA AND SELECTED FACTORS
INFLUENCING ON LONELINESS OF HIV INFECTED PERSONS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this descriptive research was to study the perception of social stigma and selected factors influencing on the loneliness of HIV infected persons. The sample consisted of 112 HIV infected persons who were treated at the Out Patient Department of the Northeastern Communicable Diseases Hospital. Instruments used in the study were composed of Three parts: demographic data, perceived of social stigma scale and the loneliness scales. Content validity was verified by Seven experts. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to test reliability of perceived social stigma and the loneliness scales which showed the reliability value of 0.87 and 0.78 respectively. Data were analyzed in terms of frequency, percentage and standard error of mean. Coefficient of variation, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient method and multiple linear regression were also used for further sophisticate data analysis.

Results of this study were concluded as followed:

1. There was statistically significant positive correlations between perceived social stigma, average monthly-family income, and loneliness of HIV infected persons at the level of 0.001 ($r=0.398$) and 0.05 ($r= 0.163$), respectively.
2. There was no statistically significant correlation between age, sex, marital status, educational level, disease stages, and loneliness of HIV infected persons.
3. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis yielded that perceived social stigma and average monthly-family income were significant predictors of the loneliness of HIV infected persons. The variance accounted for the loneliness was 21.5 per cent at 0.05 level of significance.

Results of this study showed that there are still social stigma attached to HIV infected persons in Thai Society. This has led such group to decreasing social relationship with others and feeling as having no one to care for, which in turn, causes loneliness. Nurses should take part in caring and helping these patients by providing information and counselling and AIDS related practices to the persons families and their communities in order to promote positive attitude toward HIV infected persons. These approaches will help to reduce factors influenizing loneliness and to promote HIV infected persons' capability to live happily in the community regardless of their HIV status.