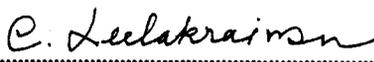THESIS TITLE : A STUDY OF LONELINESS AMONG THE ELDERLY IN SLUM
AREAS ; SURIN MUNICIPALITY, CHANGWAT SURIN

AUTHOR : MISS THIDA MEESIRI
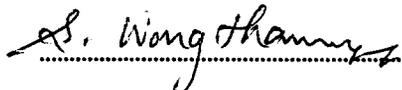
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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this descriptive research were to study the degree of loneliness of
the elderly who reside in the slums of Surin Muicipality , Changwat Surin and to study the
relationships between individual characteristics, the health conditions, family and
community relationship, losses and loneliness of elderly persons. This research interviewed
109 elderly people in the slums of Surin Municipality during 1-30 September, 1997. The
data were collected and classified to 2 types : the observation form and questionnaires,
which were used to collect general information : health conditions , family and community
relationship, losses and feeling of loneliness. The research instruments were approved by
the experts. Data were analyzed by Percentage, Multiple Classification Analysis and
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis.

The results of the research are as follows:

1. The majority the elderly people in the slums (45 %) had a moderate level of loneliness.

2. There were differences in degree of loneliness by sex. In general, females had higher average score of loneliness than males.

3. There were differences in degree of loneliness by marital status. The elderly who were single, widowed, and divorced had higher average score of loneliness than those who were married.

4. The elderly persons who lived alone had a higher average score of loneliness than those who lived with their own family member.

5. The aged who had received income from their offsprings had higher average score of loneliness than those who had to earn their own living.

6. Income was negatively correlated with degree of loneliness . (B=-.16)

7. The health condition was negatively correlated with degree of loneliness . (B=-.54)

8. The family and community relationship were negatively correlated with degree of loneliness. (B=-.03)

9. The loss was positively correlated with degree of loneliness.(B= .05)

Based on the results of this study it is recommended that the government and health care organization take action in protection of mental health for elderly persons. There should be a variety of activities to promote the warmth and cordial relationship in family and community, for example supportive group, family counseling, home visit etc. There should be some measures to screen for the elderly persons who are at risk of mental problems by gender, marital status, source of income, amount of income support from offsprings, and health conditions.