

The purpose of this study is to investigate the health condition of the elderly in Thailand in relation to demographic, socio-economic, and cultural factors, health behavior and accessibility of health services. The data source of this study was "The Survey of Socio-Economic Consequences of the Ageing of the Population in Thailand" which was carried out by the Institute of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University during March to May, 1986. The total sample of this study is 3,252 elderly aged 60 years old and over. Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) was used for the analysis.

Results of this study indicated that age, sex, socio-economic status, (as measured by income sufficiency, current economic position compared to when self was aged 40-50 years old, and education) and residence are statistically related (in the expected direction) to the health condition of the Thai elderly. Elderly in younger age groups are in better health than those in older age groups. Older men are generally healthier than older women. The rural aged are less healthier than their urban counterparts. Similary elderly in higher soico-economic group are in better health condition than those in lower socio-economic group .

The positive association between smoking and drinking habits and health status among the elderly found in this study could be partly explained by a self selection effect. Further investigation of this issue is needed before any conclusion could be made.

Marital status, number of children ever born, house ownership and occupation before the age of 60 were found not to be statistically related to health condition of the elderly.

Of the three variables indicating accessibility of health services, only the number of years ago the nearest health station was established showed a significant impact on health condition of the rural elderly. Elderly who lived in the village where the nearest health station had been established earlier were likely to have better health than the elderly who lived in the village where the nearest health station had been established recently. The type of the nearest health station and distance from village to the nearest health station were not significantly correlated with the health condition.