

Thesis Title Factors Related to Employment Status of Elderly
 in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study of 'Factors related to employment status of elderly in Thailand' is to study the co-relation between the demographic, household and geographic factors that have an influence on the employment status, occupation, working hours of the elderly, and the reasons for their not being ready to work. The target group of this study is those over 60 years of age, divided into 2 groups, the ones who work and those who do not work.

The study utilizes information from 'Thailand's Employment Status Survey Project (Labour Force Survey)' carried out in 1989, Round 3, and selects only the information from all those over 60 years of age nationwide (8,196 in total). And in compiling, all information received is weighted and results after calculation show that the number of the elderly in Thailand in 1989 was approximatery 3.3 million.

Analysis of the data show that 38 percent of the elderly are still economically active, most of them are male. Occupation of most of the elderly is in the agricultural sector. Considering the difference between the working group and those who do not, it was found that most of the working elderly group are male, married, graduated from primary school and live in nuclear families. But most

of those who do not work are female, widowed, divorced or separated, illiterate and live in extended families. Both groups have something identical, i.e. most hold prominent role and are well-respected as head of the household.

From analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) in order to analyse the minor co-relation among dependent factors that have results on independent variables, it is found that demographic, household and geographic factors have a significant co-relation with employment status of the elderly. Region is the most important variance, less important ones are household structure and education. These variances can explain the variable employment status of the elderly, 25 percent in the male and 18 percent in the female group. Considering the occupation it is found that demographic and geographic factors have a significant co-relation to the occupation of the elderly, local area has the most co-relation, the second important is region. These important factors can explain the variance in occupation of male elderly up to 31 percent and 29 percent in the female elderly group. Considering factors that have co-relation with working hours/week of the elderly, it is found out that there are no factors that have a significant co-relation to working hours/week of the elderly outside the agricultural sector. Demographic and geographic factors, however, have significant co-relation and can explain the variance in working hours/week in the agricultural sector up to 11 percent, with most co-relation in the region factor. The factors that are second important are sex and marital status. Moreover, from the analysis of co-relation of variance factors with the reasons why the elderly are not ready to work (only the age group 60-69 considered), it is found that education is the factor that has co-relation to the reasons for not being ready to work and can explain very little about the variance (4 percent).

In conclusion of the study of 3 factors that have co-relation to employment status, occupation, and working hours/week, region is the most important factor as the differences can be seen clearly from each region, i.e. economical status by considering average income of household, Bangkok has the highest average income per household, but the North East has the lowest. Moreover, it is the difference in land holding for agriculture in each region, for instance, Bangkok has the least agricultural land. All these are the reasons why region has the most co-relation. From the study of the reasons for not ready to work, it is found that education has the most co-relation to the reason for not being ready to work because of old age.

From this study there are some interesting points to consider. Characteristics of household structure in which the elderly live has changed from the past. The number of elderly living in extended and nuclear families are reduced but the number of those living alone are increasing from 8 percent in 1989 to 11 percent. This fact shows that the support from the society to the elderly are getting less and less. This may be the result of economic constraints which allows their children less time to take care of them. Moreover, it is found that most of the elderly who do not work live in extended families with people of difference generations living together. This will help the elderly to live warmly and happily in their advanced age, and have somebody to take care of them when they cannot help themselves. Therefore the government should have the policy to support Thai families to maintain extended family characteristic, and should assist the critical group of those who do not work and live alone, to let them live happily in old age.