

THESIS TITLE : HOPE OF THE ELDERLY

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive research aimed to study the hope of the elderly. Miller's model of hope used as the conceptual framework.

The sample of the study consisted of 28 elderly people who lived in the home for the aged, 83 Elderly Association members, and 105 elderly people who were not the members of the Elderly Association, at khoabookaew, Phayuhakeerec Distric, Nakhon Sawan province. Data were collected between May and July, 1998.

Instruments used in study were composed of 2 part ; demographic data and Miller's Hope Scale which consisted of 3 factors ; 1) Satisfaction with self, others and life, 2) Avoidance of hope threats and 3) Anticipation of a future. Miller's Hope Scale was translated from English into Thai by a linguistist. The internal reliability was examined by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient with the value of 0.82. The data were analysed using SPSS/PC⁺ program to find the frequencies, percentage, range, means and standard deviation.

The result of the study can be concluded as follows :

The mean hope score of the elderly was at a moderate level($\bar{X} = 134.49$, $SD = 16.06$). With respect to hope structure, it was found that a mean score of factor concerning satisfaction with self, others and life was in a high moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.41$). The majority of the elderly were satisfied with their lives, had good relationship with others and helped each others. As they became older, their beliefs and faith in themselves increased and they relied more on religion as psychological support. This made the elderly feel more valuable, meaningful and being needed by others, thus, promoted hope in their lives.

For the factor concerning the avoidance of hope threats, the result showed a moderate mean score ($\bar{X} = 2.80$, $SD = 0.61$). Most of the elderly accepted their physical and psychological changes. For example, they felt that their life time left was short, they did not concern how life would be and they did not have interested in the past. The elderly, therefore, were not aware of these feelings which in turn deteriorating their psychological well-being and consequently resulting in the avoidance of such feeling and loss of hope in the life.

Regarding the factor concerning anticipation of the future, it was found that the mean score of this factor was in a moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.41$, $SD = 0.61$). Since most of the elderly accepted that their life time left become shorter, their physical health was deteriorating and their role was changing to be out of work and have not family responsibility, they did not plan for the long future. Their hope was only in feasible things and could be met in short time. From this, the mean hope score of this factor was in a moderate level.

The result of the study suggests that nurses should find nursing strategies to encourage the elderly to be aware of and to avoid hope threats. Nurses should also promote hope in the elderly in order to maintain the hope of the elderly and to enhance their quality of life.