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DUANGTA GRAIPASPONG: MENTAL HEALTH STATUS AND ITS CORRELATES
AMONG THAI WORKERS ATTENDING PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AT SIRIRAJ HOSPITAL
PRIOR TO WORKING ABROAD. THESIS ADVISORS: PANTYP RAMASOOTA Dr.P.H.,
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This cross-sectional descriptive study is aimed to identify the prevalence of psychological distress among Thai workers prior to working abroad, and to describe their mental health status by sociodemographic characteristics, problem-focused coping and social support. The study was conducted at the Physical Examination Unit, Department of Preventive Medicine, Siriraj Hospital during 19 March to 9 April, 1999. The 259 respondents were interviewed. The structured questionnaires covering 4 areas: sociodemographic characteristics, the Thai version of the General Health Questionnaire-28 (GHQ-28) for measuring mental health status, 15-items problem-focused coping of the Jalowiec Coping Scale and the Social Support Questionnaire were applied for data collection.

The results revealed that the prevalence of psychological distress among Thai workers prior to working abroad was low (5%). The majority of subjects were male, 22-35 years old, low educated, northeastern origin, unemployed, having debt and having dependents. The ratio of married to single was 5 to 4. The prevalence of psychological distress was significantly higher among the group with educational level above grade 6 and having regular debt. Most of the subjects used active problem-focused coping approach when they faced stressors or problems. Father and mother were the best social support for the subjects, while the support role of brother/sister and children was rather low, as was support from outside the family. However, most subjects were satisfied with their supports. The group with normal mental health was more satisfied with their social support than the group with psychological distress.