

4138161 ADPM/M: MAJOR: PRIMARY HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT;
M.P.H.M.(PRIMARY HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT)

KEY WORDS : ELDERLY/THAILAND

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ELDERLY PEOPLE IN SALAYA, THAILAND. THESIS ADVISORS:
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Now, the population of Thailand is aging, as is that of many other countries. However, low awareness of elderly issues among communities is sometimes pointed out. In order to reveal the state of quality of life and life satisfaction of elderly people, a cross sectional descriptive study was conducted. Ninety-eight elderly people aged 60 years and older from four villages in Salaya sanitation district, Nakhonpathom province, Thailand were purposively selected and interviewed by using structured questionnaire during February, 1999. The questionnaire of a previous survey (the Survey of the Welfare of the Elderly in Thailand) was partially referred to.

The results were as follow. With regard to the elderly's main source of income, 76.5% of respondents relied on their children. Many of the respondents (72.5%) were living with their extended family and 85.3% were living with at least one of their children. About preferred place to live during old age, 96.9% of respondents answered "with family". Only 13.4% of respondents prepared money for their old age and 62.3% expected their main source of financial support to be from children. In response to short open-ended questions about source of pleasure and anxiety, 63.2% of respondents said that family related events and issues were sources of pleasure. Considering those results, elderly people in Salaya sanitation district were considered to be dependent on their families. Regarding ability to read and educational level, 34.7% of respondents were illiterate and 37.8% had never attended any school. Only 13.4% were working now and 70.4% had no income. The percentage of respondents who had saving accounts was 16.3%. The percentage of respondents who received monthly pension was 3.1%. It showed that the social and economic status of elderly people in this research was low. Concerning self-assessed overall health status, 67.4% answered "moderate" or above and 60.2% thought that their health was the "same" as others'. However, for questions about actual activities, many elderly people found difficulties in walking 1 km (78.6%), walking 2-3 steps (62.2%) and travelling (66.3%). Generally, results of this research show that those subjects were similar to the "rural" subgroup of the previous survey rather than the "provincial urban" subgroup. Elderly people in Salaya sub-district preferred to participate in community activities, especially religious-related activity.