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PIMPA KACHONDHAM: DISABILITIES AND ACTIVE LIFE
EXPECTANCY IN THE THAI ELDERLY POPULATION. THESIS ADVISOR :
VARACHAI THONGTHAI, Ph.D., PRAMOTE PRASARTKUL, Ph.D., SUMALEE
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The purposes of this study are: 1) to estimate the prevalence rates of disabilities by age and sex in the elderly population 2) to examine the factors affecting the prevalence of disabilities, and 3) to examine the quality of life in term of active life expectancy. The data source is the cross-sectional survey from the 1995 Health Interview Survey of the Population Aged 50 and Over in Thailand, conducted by the Ministry of Public Health, the Institute of Population Research, Chulalongkorn University, the Thailand Health Research Institute, the National Health Foundation, and the Health System Research Institute. Only the persons aged 60 and over are used and the sample size is 4,483 cases.

The Nagi's concept, the disablement process proposed by Verbrugge and Jette, and the disability transition propositions proposed by Myers and Lamb are adopted as the framework. The disability status is categorized as no disability, disability in instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs disability), and disability in activities of daily living (ADLs disability). The hypotheses are 1) elderly men are healthier than elderly women, and 2) educational attainment has the inverse relationship with the prevalence of disabilities.

The result revealed that the majority of the elderly had no ADLs disability, only 7 percent of the elderly had difficulty in walking around inside the house but almost one-third reported having IADLs disability. Prevalence of disabilities was higher in elderly women. Traveling alone by car or boat was found to be the toughest task especially for female elderly. Both IADLs and ADLs disabilities increased with age. The multivariate analysis using Ordered Logit Regression demonstrated that functional limitations were found to be strongly related to both IADLs and ADLs disabilities. Gender and educational attainment were found to significantly influence both types of disabilities even after controlling other variables ($p < .001$). However, it was not certain whether the higher prevalence of disabilities in women reflected the real phenomenon or it was mainly due to a higher self-concern in women.

The 1995-1996 abridged life table for population in Thailand produced by the National Statistical Office is the basis of life expectancy and the Sullivan method is employed to estimate the proportion of active life expectancy at age 60 and over. The analysis revealed that the life expectancy at age 60 and over was longer in women than in men. However, the proportion of active life (free of disabilities) in women was shorter than that in men in every age. The analysis also confirmed the hypothesis that elderly men were healthier than elderly women.