

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter consists of two parts; the first part is the research conclusion and the second part are recommendations including policy planning, nursing practices, nursing education, and future research titles

6.1 Research Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to develop an instrument to assess the mental health for Thai older adults [MHAT-T]. This study was divided into three phases: 1) identifying domains of mental health for Thai older adults, 2) developing an instrument, and 3) the psychometric properties. The conclusion was presented in this phase as follow:

In the first phase, identifying domains of mental health for Thai older adults, methodologies comprised literature review, focus group discussions and indepth interviews.

The data were synthesized from existing phenomena. Four themes emerged, i.e., 1) mental status, 2) mental capacity, 3) mental quality, and 4) social well-being.

The second phase, developing an instrument was composed of three steps. First, the investigator generated items and determined the response format. Next, content and face validity of the instrument was checked. Finally, pretesting of survey administration was conducted. The result revealed that the first draft of the MHAT-T consisted of 100 items, with a Likert scale with 1 to 4 responses. The initial draft instrument was judged by a panel of experts who were specialists in the field. All experts judged that these items to be valid and reliable representation of the phenomena; however, this version was considered too long. As a result, this version

needed to be modified. The second draft of the MHAT-T consisted of 46 items and was commented on by a panel of older adults. Four items were dropped because their semantic meaning. For the third draft of the MHAT-T, 32 items were calculated by CVI. The CVI was 0.99; proving that it showed relevance and clarity. In addition, the third draft of 32 items was pretested with 40 older adults to assess psychometric properties. Using the criteria (> 0.30) in item total correlation, ten items were deleted. After deleting the items, Cronbach's alpha reliability in four themes exhibited good reliability ranging from 0.771 to 0.859 before survey administration.

In the third phase, the psychometric properties of the MHAT-T were tested with 1,266 older adults in three religions: Buddhism, Islam and Catholicism in the northern, northeastern, central, and southern regions, and the Bangkok Metropolitan Area in Thailand. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires. The final draft of the MHAT-T contained 32 items.

The characteristics of participants were various. Before conducting factor analysis, the assumptions were tested such as normal distribution and internal consistency. The principle component factor analysis with promax was used in the current study, five factors, 32 items and explained 55.8% of the total variance. Using factor analysis, four themes in four phases transferred to five themes or factors. These five factors consisted of 1) family attachments, 2) mental quality, 3) social well-being, 4) mental status and 5) mental capacity.

The reliability of the MHAT-T was examined by internal consistency. As a result, a total score of 0.91 showed high reliability, and internal consistency reliability ranged from 0.388 to 0.662. Test-retest was examined two weeks later with data from 40 older adults of the MHAT-T which showed a strong value (1.00), except for mental status and social well-being. In addition, the construct evidence of validity by contrast group approach found that most mental health scores were significant different between older adults in community and older adults who were diagnosed for mental health by a doctor, except for mental quality.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 Policy Planning

1. This study findings regarding the domains of mental health, i.e. mental quality, mental status, and mental capacity, confirm the valid use of such domains in assessing the mental health of Thai elderly by the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health. In addition to that, result of this study also recommends the future use of family attachment and social well-being domains to complement those domains mentioned above. By doing so, the future instrument should augment the more comprehensive assessment instruments in an integrated framework of mental health program of the Thai adult people.

2. As the dynamic change of Thai society requires a shifting from traditional views of negative mental health to a newly paradigm of positive mental health, the future implementation of the MHAT-T as suggested should also be followed by the mindset shifting of health care providers at any levels. The role of the Department of Mental Health, the Ministry of Public Health is further warranted and critical.

6.2.2. Nursing practices

1. Public health nurses and other health personal should employ to assess older mental health both community and hospital setting.

2. Public health nurses, other health personal, health volunteer and older adults can easily use the MHAT-T and don't need training. However, public health nurses and other health personal should understand more each domain of mental health, especially public health nurse should be emphasize " This study focuses on one month of feelings, perceptions and behaviors" as the objective is to clarify older adults' opinions.

6.2.3. Future research

1. This research used EFA start, so the next research use should be done using Confirmatory factor analysis, concurrent validity, sensitivity, and specificity should be confirmed.

2. The further research should increase the number of women and depressed clients to cover Thai older adults.