FACTORS AFFECTING NON-EXERCISE OF THE ELDERLY: A STUDY AT ONE PROVINCE IN THE WESTERN OF THAILAND

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Introduction

• Physical exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, who lead an active life are less likely to get ill and more likely to live longer.

• Exercise not only makes physically fitter, it also improves mental health and general sense of well being.
Introduction

- The results from previous studies in Thailand indicated that most of the Thai elderly do not exercise.

- The data from the National Statistical Office in Thailand in 2008 showed that only 28 percent of the Thai elderly have done exercise regularly.
Introduction

• The above circumstances show that although exercising is a useful behavior for the elderly, many older persons do not take exercises.

• Therefore, the elderly should be encouraged to take exercises efficiently.

• It is so essential to study the causes/determinants of non-exercising of the elderly to get the information for planning in promoting exercising in the elderly, and for tackling obstacles appropriately.

• By these reasons, the researcher is interested in studying the factors affecting non-exercising of the elderly
Objectives of this study

- There are two main objectives of this study
  - 1) to investigate health behavior of the Thai elderly on doing and not doing exercises.
  - 2) to study factors affecting on the elderly who do not exercise.
Methodology

• This study was the quantitative research

• The data from the Kanchanaburi Demographic Surveillance System (KDSS), done by the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University in 2004, covered 4,277 samples of the elderly aged 60 years and over were used.

• The data was analyzed by Chi-square and binary logistic regression analysis.
Results

- The results showed that about 96.5% of targeted populations had non-exercise behaviors. Most of them were...
  - Female
  - in middle old age and late old age
  - were uneducated
  - worked in the agricultural sector
  - had below-standard Body Mass Index
  - had family debt
  - lived with more than three family members
  - lived in rural areas
  - and lived in villages where 80% of village members or more did not exercise.
Results

- From the binary logistic regression analysis, the factors affecting non-exercising of the elderly at the statistically significant level.

- **Personal factors**, which involved gender, age, level of education, occupation, and consumption of fruit and vegetable.

- **Social and environmental factors**, which involved the number of family members, residence, and percentage of non-exercising village inhabitants.

- All these variables could mutually predict the fluctuation of non-exercise behavior in the elderly at 21.04% (Pseudo R-square = 0.2104).
Results

• From the Stepwise Binary Logistic Regression Analysis was used to find out which independent variables could best explain the variation of dependent variables.

• It was found that the variable on the percentage of non-exercising among village inhabitants was the variable to best explain the variation of non-exercise behavior in the elderly or at 11.2%.
Policy-based Suggestions

• The result showed that the elderly working in the agricultural sector had more non-exercise behavior than those working outside the agricultural sector. The reason may be that the tasks in the agricultural sector needed a lot of energy so the elderly thought that it was the exercise for health, and did not take any exercises.

• This is the same explanation to the female elderly who had more non-exercise behavior than the male elderly. Female elderly may probably think that the housework was a kind of exercise.

• Therefore, the local administrative organizations and Tambon health promotion hospitals should launch the programs to educate and publicize the exercise among the elderly in every community so that they have knowledge and correct understanding about the exercise and turn to take exercises seriously.
Policy-based Suggestions

• The result showed that the elderly had more non-exercise behavior when they got older. That is because when an individual gets older, the efficiency of body functioning was decreasing; so the capabilities in doing any activities, including exercises or so decreased.

• Therefore, some local agencies should allocate the budget to assign some officials to be directly in charge of promoting the exercise of community members, to give advice/consults on exercises suitable for each individual’s physical body.
Thank you for your attention.