

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL WELL-
BEING OF FOUR ELDERLY THAI MUSLIM IN
BANGKOK: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL CASE STUDY

BY

SINNAN CHAROENSUK

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Master of Education

Kulliyyah of Education
International Islamic University Malaysia

JANUARY 2022

ABSTRACT

For the past several years, Thailand has faced a tremendous increasing amount of elderly, while the countermeasures and preparation for dealing with the elderly are still not doing well. Thus, this study happens to understand better the elderly, especially their psychological and spiritual well-being. It is because the outcome of many studies shows that both can affect the well-being of older people. This study aims to explore the elderly's experiences focusing on psychological and spiritual well-being. The core objective of the present study is to identify the viewpoint of the Muslim elderly in Bangkok in their life experience. It is specifically assigned based on the following; 1) To explore the psychological well-being condition of the Thai Muslim elderly. 2) To discover the spiritual experience of the Thai Muslim elderly. 3) To examine the Thai Muslim elderly perception of the connection of spiritual well-being and psychological well-being. 4) To discover how the Thai Muslim elderly enhances their well-being. This study is conducted qualitatively which is designed as a phenomenological case study. In this study, the participants were four older adults aged 65 and above, with four family members. Interviews are the way to access the information of this study. The data was gathered and analyzed into twelve themes to answer the research questions. The result of this study shows that the elderly experience spirituality and psychology and have a positive level of well-being. The result also shows the connection between spiritual and psychological well-being based on the data from the elderly. The study results can be used for further study in the future.

ملخص البحث

على مدى السنوات الماضية، واجهت تايلاند زيادة ملحوظة في أعداد كبار السن، في حين أن الإجراءات المناسبة والاستعداد للتعامل مع كبار السن ما زالت على غير ما يُرام. وبناءً على ذلك، أُجريت هذه الدراسة لمحاولة فهم كبار السن بشكل أفضل، وخاصة فيما يتعلق بسلامتهم النفسية والروحية، وخاصة أن نتائج العديد من الدراسات قد أظهرت أن السلامة النفسية والروحية يمكن أن تؤثر على رفاهية كبار السن. تحاول هذه الدراسة استكشاف تجارب كبار السن، مع التركيز على الرفاهية النفسية والروحية لديهم. وتهدف أساسًا إلى تحديد وجهة نظر المسنين المسلمين في بانكوك تجاه تجاربهم الحياتية، في نطاق أربعة محاور، هي: أولاً، استكشاف حالة الرفاه النفسي للمسنين المسلمين التايلانديين. ثانياً، اكتشاف التجربة الروحية لكبار السن من المسلمين التايلانديين. ثالثاً، فحص تصور المسلمين التايلانديين المسنين للعلاقة بين الرفاه الروحي والرفاه النفسي. رابعاً، اكتشاف كيف يعزز كبار السن من المسلمين التايلانديين رفاهيتهم. تتبنى هذه الدراسة أحد أنواع مناهج البحث النوعي، وهو منهج دراسة الحالة. بلغ عدد المشاركين في هذه الدراسة أربعة أشخاص مسنين، تبلغ أعمارهم (65) عامًا فما فوق، مع فرد واحد من الأسرة لكل منهم، ليصبح المجموع ثمانية. وقد اختارت الباحثة المقابلات أداةً لجمع البيانات. وقد انبثق عن عملية التحليل اثنا عشر موضوعًا، وظفتها الباحثة للإجابة على أسئلة البحث. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن كبار السن لديهم خبرة على الجانبين الروحي، والنفسي، ويتمتعون بمستوى إيجابي من الرفاهية، كما أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة بين الرفاهية الروحية والنفسية، وذلك بناءً على البيانات التي أدلى بها كبار السن. تأمل الباحثة أن تستفيد الدراسات المستقبلية من نتائج هذه الدراسة.

ABSTRACT IN BAHASA MALAYSIA

Sejak beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini, Thailand menghadapi peningkatan jumlah penuaan sementara langkah-langkah dan persiapan untuk menangani orang tua masih belum berjalan dengan baik. Oleh itu, kajian ini dilakukan untuk lebih memahami warga tua terutama kesejahteraan psikologi dan rohani mereka. Ini kerana hasil dari banyak kajian yang menunjukkan bahawa kedua-duanya dapat mempengaruhi kesejahteraan orang tua. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk meneroka pengalaman para penatua dengan fokus pada kesejahteraan psikologi dan rohani. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti pandangan orang tua Muslim di Bangkok dalam pengalaman hidup mereka. Ia ditugaskan secara khusus berdasarkan perkara berikut: 1) Untuk mengetahui keadaan kesejahteraan psikologi warga tua Muslim Thailand. 2) Untuk mengetahui pengalaman kerohanian orang tua Muslim Thailand. 3) Untuk mengkaji persepsi warga tua Muslim Thailand mengenai hubungan kesejahteraan rohani dan kesejahteraan psikologi. 4) Untuk mengetahui bagaimana penatua Muslim Thailand, tingkatkan kesejahteraan mereka. Kajian ini dilakukan secara kualitatif yang merancang sebagai kajian kes fenomenologi. Dalam kajian ini, para peserta adalah empat orang tua yang berumur 65 tahun ke atas bersama empat ahli keluarga masing-masing, dengan jumlah keseluruhan lapan orang. Temu ramah adalah cara untuk mengakses maklumat kajian ini. Data dikumpulkan dan dianalisis menjadi dua belas tema untuk menjawab persoalan kajian. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa orang tua mempunyai pengalaman kerohanian dan psikologi dan mempunyai tahap kesejahteraan yang positif. Hasilnya juga menunjukkan hubungan antara kesejahteraan rohani dan psikologi berdasarkan data dari para penatua dan hasil kajian dapat digunakan untuk kajian lebih lanjut di masa depan juga.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Education.

.....
Mastura Badzis
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Education.

.....
Aishah Hanim Abd Karim
Examiner

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Education.

.....
Norwati Mansor
Head, Department of Educational
Psychology and Counseling

This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyah of Education and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Education.

.....
Noor Lide Abu Kassim
Dean, Kulliyah of Education

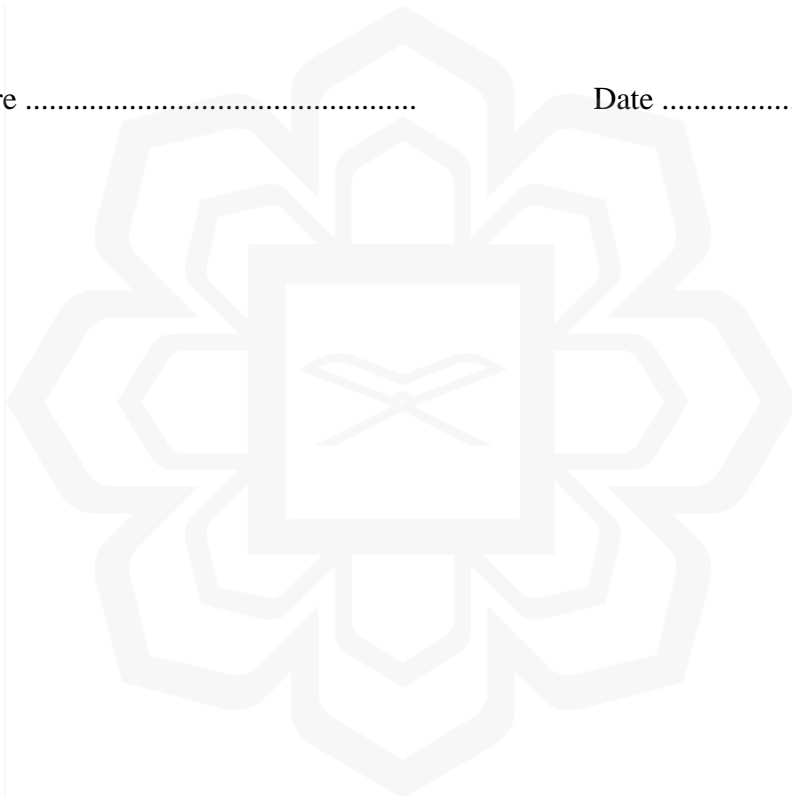
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Sinnan Charoensuk

Signature

Date



INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF
FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH**

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING OF
FOUR ELDERLY THAI MUSLIM IN BANGKOK: A
PHENOMENOLOGICAL CASE STUDY**

I declare that the copyright holders of this dissertation are jointly owned by the student and IIUM.

Copyright © 2022 Sinnan Charoensuk and International Islamic University Malaysia. All rights reserved.

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder except as provided below

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may only be used by others in their writing with due acknowledgement.
2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make and transmit copies (print or electronic) for institutional and academic purposes.
3. The IIUM library will have the right to make, store in a retrieved system and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other universities and research libraries.

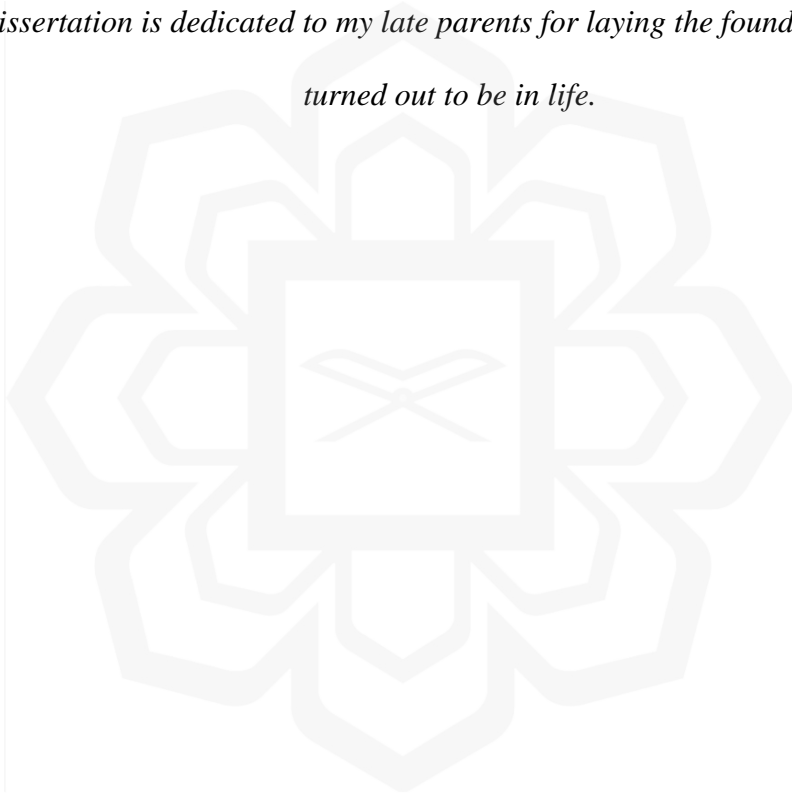
By signing this form, I acknowledged that I have read and understand the IIUM Intellectual Property Right and Commercialization policy.

Affirmed by Sinnan Charoensuk

.....
Signature

.....
Date

*This dissertation is dedicated to my late parents for laying the foundation of what I
turned out to be in life.*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All glory is due to Allah, the Almighty, whose Grace and Mercies have been with me throughout my program. Although it has been tasking, His Mercies and Blessings ease the arduous task of completing this dissertation. I want to thank God for granting me the opportunity to partake in the exciting and challenging world of higher education. I hope to be able to apply the knowledge I have gained beneficially.

My gratitude goes to my beloved parents. It is impossible to have completed this seemingly endless endeavor without your unlimited support. Thank you for your love, support for every moment of frustration, and for reminding me that hardship could be overcome with hard work and prayer. May God always bless you with good health and brighten my life forever with your company.

I am most indebted to my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mastura Badzis, whose enduring disposition, kindness, promptitude, thoroughness, and friendship have facilitated the successful completion of my work. I put on record and appreciate her detailed comments, valuable suggestions, and inspiring queries, which have considerably improved this dissertation. Her brilliant grasp of the aim and content of this work led to her insightful comments, suggestions, and questions, which helped me a great deal. Despite her commitments, she took time to teach and attend to me with her heart. The moral support she extended to me is undoubtedly a boost that helped in building and writing the draft of this research work. Lastly, my sincere thanks to anyone who has become a part of my dissertation. Including friends, officers, and other lecturers who give suggestions and enlighten me through this thesis. May God bless you all and accept all of your prayers.

Once again, we glorify Allah for His endless mercy on us, one of which is enabling us to round off the efforts of writing this thesis successfully. Alhamdulillah.

“Glory is to you(God). We have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-knower, The All-wise.”

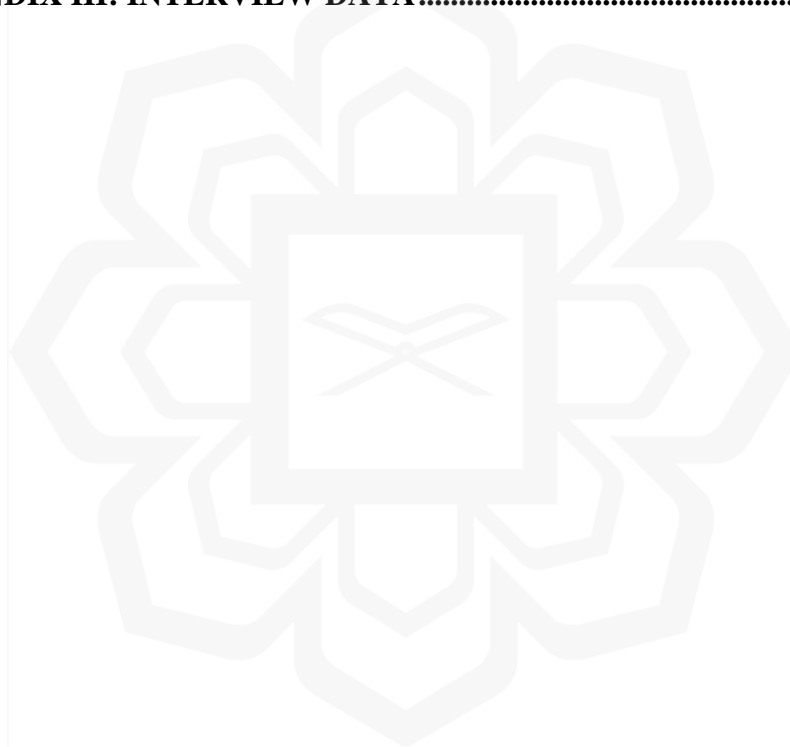
Qur'an 2:32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic	iii
Abstract in Bahasa Malaysia.....	iv
Approval Page.....	v
Declaration	vi
Copyright	vii
Dedication	viii
Acknowledgements.....	ix
List of Tables	xiii
List of Figures	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	7
1.3 Purpose of the Study	12
1.4 Research Objectives.....	13
1.5 Research Questions.....	14
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	14
1.7 Delimitations of the Study	15
1.8 Definitions of Terms.....	16
1.8.1 Elderly	16
1.8.2 Spirituality.....	17
1.8.3 Spiritual development	17
1.8.4 Well-being.....	18
1.8.5 Spiritual well-being.....	19
1.8.6 Psychological well-being	19
1.9 Chapter Summary	20
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2.1 Introduction.....	21
2.2 Definition of the Elderly	21
2.3 The Theories of Aging.....	23
2.4 Psychology and Psychological Well-Being.....	31
2.5 Spirituality and Spiritual Well-Being	37
2.6 Relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Psychological Well-Being	42
2.7 Spirituality and Spiritual Well-Being in Islam	46
2.8 Previous Research Related to the Study	50
2.9 Chapter Summary	59
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	60
3.1 Introduction.....	60
3.2 Research Design	60
3.3 Sample and Sampling	62
3.4 Data Collection Procedures	63

3.5 Pilot Study	65
3.6 Methods of Data Collection.....	66
3.7 Credibility of Data	68
3.8 Ethical Considerations	69
3.8.1 Confidentiality	70
3.9 Role of the Researcher.....	70
3.10 Data Analysis.....	70
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULT AND FINDINGS	73
4.1 Introduction.....	73
4.2 Participants Profiles	74
4.3 Detailed Finding of the Study.....	78
4.3.1 The Elderlies' Relationship.....	78
4.3.1.1 Relationship with the family.....	78
4.3.1.2 The relationship with others	81
4.3.1.3 The elderly feeling over the relationship	81
4.3.2 Religious Practice of the Elderlies	84
4.3.2.1 The importance of religious practice	84
4.3.2.2 Religious practice is a part of life routine.....	87
4.3.3 Perception of a God.....	88
4.3.3.1 The existence of God	88
4.3.3.2 Allah is the God of the Islamic religion.....	89
4.3.4 Personal Growth.....	90
4.3.4.1 Mental ability and changes	90
4.3.4.2 Physical ability and changes	92
4.3.4.3 Perception on aging	94
4.3.5 Source of Hope and Driving Force	95
4.3.5.1 The intangible source.....	95
4.3.5.2 The tangible source.....	97
4.3.6 Well-Being's Key	99
4.3.6.1 Family background	99
4.3.6.2 A positive relationship with family	99
4.3.6.3 A positive relationship with others	100
4.3.6.4 Personalities	101
4.3.6.5 Religion.....	102
4.3.6.6 Self-care	103
4.3.6.7 Be economical.....	103
4.3.7 Resolution Ability	104
4.3.8 Peacefulness	108
4.3.8.1 The religion happiness	108
4.3.8.2 Happiness family	110
4.3.8.3 Animal therapy	112
4.3.9 Perception on Health and Death.....	112
4.3.10 Life Satisfaction	116
4.3.11 Life Goal	118
4.3.11.1 The goal for this world.....	118
4.3.11.2 The goal for the next world.....	120
4.3.12 Autonomy.....	121

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY AND CONCLUSION	125
5.1 Discussion.....	125
5.1.1 The Psychological Conditions of the Thai Muslim Elderlies	125
5.1.2 The Thai Muslim Elderlies Spirituality.....	130
5.1.3 The Connection of Spiritual and Psychological Well-Being of the Thai Muslim Elderlies	135
5.2 Limitation of the Study	141
5.3 Future Research	141
5.4 Conclusion	142
REFERENCES.....	144
APPENDIX I: INFORM CONSENT FORM.....	155
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	171
APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW DATA.....	174



LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
1.1	Number of Spiritual Study Shows in Digital Research Information Center	10
1.2	The review of spiritual study in Thailand	11
2.1	Psychosocial Theories of Aging	26
2.2	Psychological Theories of Aging	28
2.3	Biological Theories of Aging	30
2.4	Definitions of Theory-guided Dimensions of Well-being	34
4.1	Demographic Data of the participants	75
4.2	Summarization of themes and subthemes	124

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
3.1	The Process of Organizing and Analyzing the Data	72
4.1	Data Frequency Analyzed by Atlassian Software	74
5.1	A Summary of Elderlies' Suggestion on the Way to Enhance Wellness	140



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The United Nations have predicted that 2001-2100 would mean a century for the elderly population, at its highest level in human history. In ASEAN, there are ten countries with a total population of 633 million people, and 9% out of the whole population are the elderly. In 2016, 3 countries became known as the 'Aging Society': Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, while Malaysia and Myanmar followed suit. For Thailand, the senior population is in 2nd place in the ASEAN and ranked 4th place in the Asian region.

According to K. Larpsombatsiri (2019), there are 66 million Thais in Thailand which 19.1 million are older adults in the age bracket of 60 years and above or counted as 28.9% in percentage. There is a possibility that the number will increase because the life expectancy is longer than before, and the female gender is expected to live longer than the male gender.

Currently, Thailand is already turning to be an aging society. It is possible to have more elderly due to the decline of birth and death rates and the increase of the average life expectancy, according to the study done by Mahidol University in 2019. The Thailand Information of the Office of the Economic Development Board and the National Society found that Thailand has entered the aging society since the number of the elderly population has exceeded by 10 percent since 2005 and showed a gradual increase to 10.4, 10.5, and 10.7 in 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively. The ratio of the elderly will then further increase to 10.7 million people or 15.28 percent by 2020 and

more in the next 20 years. 2030 B.E. will see a substantial increase of more than double to 25 percent, which is the super-aged society.

According to the statistical evidence provided by the result, Bangkok is the province with the highest rate of the elderly, with a percentage of 16.47% out of the whole elderly population. The percentage of the elderly is increasing from 6.7% in 1990 to 15.2% in 2019, and 13% of them are in the age bracket of 80 years and above. Also, based on the statistical evidence, the Department of Development and others had predicted that in 2020, Thailand would have an elderly population with a number of 12.6 million out of 66.0 million, which can be calculated as 19.1% of the overall Thai population. Moreover, Thailand is also predicted to be the Aged Society in 2021. The study expected the situation to be of more serious concern as, within ten years, the number of the elderly is predicted to be much higher than other age groups. Eventually, this group of elderlies will become a Super-Aged society in 2031 (Pramoth Prasartkul. 2017).

According to the National and Ministry of Public Health, the policy for the elderly is derived from four sources which are the 20 years' National Strategy (2018-2037), the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2036), the National Health Development Plan (2017-2036), and the 2nd National Plan on the Elderly (2002-2021 revised from 2009). The main focus of these policies and strategies is to fully equip the elderly with the tools to achieve their well-being, employing them to lead a valuable life with dignity, autonomy, and security according to the Objectives and Goals of the 2nd National plan for Older persons. Jitapunkul and Wivatvanit (2009) stated nine goals and objectives; thus, the goals and objectives are not only for the elderly but for all people to be aware and prepare for their successful aging. The goals and objectives are to create awareness in members of the society that

older individuals are a valuable group and intend to make all people realize the significance of preparation for aging and thus prepare themselves for quality aging. Additionally, to encourage people, families, communities, and public and private entities to participate in activities concerning the elderly. It includes establishing practical criteria and guidelines for all social sectors and the involvement of public, community, and government entities. At the same time, to adequately prepare the population for their quality aging by promoting positive behavior toward the elderly, managing the development of national work on the elderly, and specifying the personnel involved. Lastly, to develop further insight into the elderly through monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons.

There are 12 critical domains of the 2nd National plan for older persons (2001-2021), which are the Act on Older Persons 2003 that has been enforced since 2004: Old age protection and security, the alleviation of poverty in old age, the treatment of older persons and emergencies, the cultivation of having a positive attitude toward the aging and older persons, provision of employment of older persons, the advancing health and well-being into old age, the provision of quality health and long-term care, to continue to ensure the enabling of a supportive environment, housing and conducive environment, the correct care and support for caregivers, and the protection of the rights of older persons.

Although Thailand has plans for the elderly, in reality, the result is still not satisfactory. The impact of the increase of the elderly has caused a higher rate of sickness and patients in medical services due to the nature of the elders. During this period, the particular things that every older person has to face are external and internal transformations. They will have to face the change of their environment, an unfamiliar society, the loss of familiar people, and physical problems, and mental

instability. The internal struggle mostly happens from loss, especially when one loses their abilities, a loved one, and social interaction with others. Once, they used to being self-reliant, mingling in an active society, and being loved by family members; conversely, later, they then had to give up their job and become unable to depend on themselves besides having to let go of family members, as such these can be difficult and cause grief for them. For the past few years, according to the Department of Mental Health of Thailand, the statistic in 2019 shows that for the rate of suicide in Thailand, the elderly population is committing suicide places second after the working-age group. The reasons for suicide are mostly problems in their relationship with close ones, chronic diseases, and depression. This is when they need to adapt their life to reality, and there are several ways to help them cope with such changes. The suicide rate reflects the competency of the Thailand government in dealing with the population's quality of life.

According to Jitramontree and Thayansin (2013), the social welfare policy for the elderly is successful, but there are certain complications and barriers to overcome. According to them, the social activities provided made the older people joyful, which is in congruence with the activities in the theory of aging. The other factors contributing to the success of social welfare for older persons in Thailand are self-reliance, community participation, and updated data. However, the barriers that cause an unsuccessful policy are the implementation of vague policies, lack of integration in practices, accessibility to health services, and the administration of the community-saving fund.

There are several ways to promote positive elderly psychological development, health care, and spiritual dimension, and those are for the well-being of the elderly. Wellness is generally used to mean a healthy balance of mind, body, and spirit, and it

results in an overall feeling of well-being (Dhara and Jogsan, 2013). Based on the guideline for the elderly's happiness and well-being provided by Thailand's Department of Health, five dimensions promote happiness for the elderly: healthy (daily routine), then recreation (exercise and activities). Next, integrity (self-worth, positive thinking, and good relationships with others), cognition (memory practice, reason, and perception), and serenity (knowing and managing one's emotion).

In Thailand, there is one college for the elderly, where those aged 55 years old and above can participate in this study unit, which encourages them to learn and share their experiences. The college's name is Taina-Pasaeng College for the Elderly, which the Thai Health Promotion Foundation supports. They use five dimensions of happiness as the base of their operations and activities. The five dimensions they use are emotional stability, intellectual challenge, spiritual belief, physical fitness, and relational positivity. The outcome of this service shows that the love, unity, care, and encouragement of people benefit the elders and their family members (Sopontammarak, 2018). Besides this college, free educational services are provided under social support for the elderly around Thailand. Most of them are religious classes held in the Temple for Buddhists, the Mosque for Muslims, and the Church for Christians. Religious classes are one of the minor activities for the elderly that can help improve wellness. This support is one of the activities provided to help an elderly's life development.

Spirituality is perceived as involving an individual's transcendent relationship with a Supreme being or with the Universe and has been positively connected to hope, coping, and religiosity (O'Neill and Kenny, 1998, cited in P. Udhayakumar and P. Ilango, 2012). Spirituality has been found to be significant among older adults and linked positively to one's self-appraisal and good health among elders (Daaleman and

Frey, 2004 cited in P. Udhayakumar and P. Ilango, 2012). The spiritual aspect is one of the elderly's fundamental development and way to measure their spirituality. The term 'Spirituality' is appointed as Spiritual well-being. It always relates to the quality of life of a person, whereby the person is experiencing healthy spiritual growth in tandem with their purpose of life. It is evidence of the individual quality of life in the spiritual dimension or simply indicating their spiritual health (Fehring, Miller and Shaw 1997, and Fisher 1998, cited in N. Mansor and N.S. Khalid, 2012). Spiritual well-being has two aspects; the first is the Vertical aspect. It has to do with the relationship to the supernatural world and the Horizontal aspect; it has to do with the connection to the environment and others. Based on Paloutzian and Ellison's spiritual well-being scale, the higher the two aspects, the higher their spiritual well-being (Seraji, Shojaezade, and Rakhshani, 2016).

Besides spiritual well-being, psychological well-being is also one of the most important constructs for the elderly. Psychological well-being can be plainly understood as the mental condition of people. According to Maher, Kielb, Lover, Conneller, Rademaker, Masulam, and Rogalski (2017), psychological well-being is a positive psychological construct related to the views of one's self and life in a subjective way. The higher level of psychological well-being has positively cooperated with cognition performance in older adults. Cahioni, L. Delfino, S. Yassuda, S.T, Batistoni, C. De Melo, and A.R. da Costa Domingues (2017) stated that several associated concepts are related to psychological well-being: positive mental health, which includes self-acceptance, mastery over one's environment, positive relationships with others, purpose, personal growth, and autonomy. In addition, Mishra, Pendey, Z. Khan, P.A., and Jha (2014) stated in their work that social support is the essential factor in increasing psychological well-being in the elderly. Social

support and social network also create a significant effect on the health and mood of the elderly.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The changes in the physical form, such as sickness, the decline and deterioration of the body system, and the changes of society after retirement, have a marked effect on the psychology and mental health of the elderly. Based on the statistic done by the Thailand Department of Mental Health (2018), 21% of the elderly analyses themselves as having lower mental health compared to the general Thai population, especially for women (one out of four having lower mental health than the general population).

Back in 2011, the information from the Department of Mental Health and Ministry of Public Health (Nitayaporn, Bungon, Thongpet, Kanchana, 2019) shows the number of suicide cases escalating, the highest rate of the elderlies' population suicide is among those who are between 60-69 years old, the lower rate is those between ages 70-79, and the lowest are those who are aged 80 and above. The reason as given by those who had attempted suicide show that the decision made was due to the feeling of not having a purpose of living, having no relatives visit them, no family support, sickness, a life fraught with suffering, the cost of hospitalization and medical care and the loss of a spouse or friends bring about the sad and lonely feeling. In addition, economic difficulties are also why the elderly are attempting suicide, because of the effect of living expenses as their income decreases or there is none. Hence, leaving the elderly to live alone might instigate their psychological and mental health, which can manifest as loneliness, hopelessness, unhappiness, anxiety over sickness and expenses, stress, depression, and bad temper. There is numerous research

on the psychological well-being and spiritual well-being of the elderly, but few studies are conducted on the Muslim elderly. Thus, this study will find insights among the elderly Muslims on how similar or different it is to the information published by the Department of Mental Health, Thailand. Are those factors among the factors that affect the life of the elderly? This study will clarify the statement provided by the Department of Mental Health.

One of the policies provided in Thailand is the involvement of temples to encourage wholesomeness. There are five conditions stated by the Department of Mental Health and Ministry of Public Health that temples must follow: cleanliness, peacefulness, well-being, spirituality, and as a united society. A sizeable financial budget was passed to the temple, and all the while, the Muslim community still must depend on the public's donation for a budget. Due to this, the participants in most of the studies are Buddhist; therefore, it is skeptical that those studies can be applied to the Muslim elderly. Leppert (2009) studied the spirituality and psychological well-being among the oldest older adult. She suggested that future research be conducted to assess the relationship between psychological and spiritual well-being across ethnicities because their culture can influence well-being and value set. In addition, Aly (2010) also, in her further research, suggested that the study should be conducted on a specific group of Muslim people because of the uniqueness of the characteristics and needs. Ahmaed and Reddy (2000), cited in Aly (2010), identified three groups of Muslims: indigenous, refugee, and immigrant, who have unique circumstances. The suggestion is consistent with the context of Muslims in Thailand, including indigenous, immigrant, and refugee groups.

Another reason this study is conducted on the elderly is that there are fewer studies on elderly development in the educational background compared to the study on children and adolescents. This is confirmed by searching the keywords: Adolescent and Education, Children and Education, and Elderly and Education in IJUM Databases which include Open Dissertations, Arab World Research Source, Ebook Collections, Education Research Complete, Environment Complete, Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts, and Academic Research Complete. The results show that Adolescents and Education have the highest rate in the entire study with the number of 895265, while the numbers of Children and Education and Elderly and Education are 686789 and 32669, respectively. In addition, the journals and theses provided in the Thailand website, Digital Research Information Center, show that in Thailand, the topic of spiritual studies is not much researched, especially spirituality in the field of Psychology. The results are in the following table.

Table 1.1 Number of Spiritual Study Shows in Digital Research Information Center

Year	Spiritual in Medical study	Spiritual in Religion study	Spiritual in Business	Spiritual in Education	Spiritual in Psychology	Others
2020	-	-	-	-	-	-
2019	-	-	-	-	-	-
2018	-	-	1	-	-	-
2017	-	-	-	1	-	-
2016	-	1	-	-	-	-
2015	-	-	-	-	-	1
2014	-	-	2	1	1	1
2013	-	-	-	-	-	-
2012	1	-	-	-	-	-
2011	2	-	1	-	-	-
2010	3	-	1	1	-	1

*note: the number of research shown is based on the keyword ‘Spiritual’ only.

The following table is the summarization of the studies conducted on Thai Elderlies. The name of the authors, years of study, the field of the study, objective or purpose, sample, and the method are stated in the table.