

Quality of Life for the elderly and Government Assistance

Pongkon Akkharasaksiri, Piyanuch Tuncharoen

Doctor of Philosophy Program in Public and Private Management Innovation,
Graduate School, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University

Abstract: *Thailand’s demographic transition towards a fully aging society by 2035 presents significant challenges across economic, environmental, health, and social dimensions. The elderly face physical decline, mental health issues such as loneliness and reduced social engagement, and fluctuating income that impacts their quality of life negatively. Technological advancements offer opportunities to bridge generational gaps and support elderly independence, although some technologies require targeted education and adaptation. Government and private sectors play critical roles in addressing elderly care demands, emphasizing the need for integrated innovations tailored to different health and life stages of the elderly. These include medical and technological aids for healthy and chronically ill older adults, as well as social and community programs to foster participation and skill development. Collaboration among the government, private entities, civil society, and the active involvement of senior citizens is essential for developing effective innovations. This research synthesis aims to explore the factors affecting the quality of life of the elderly, relevant aging theories, and approaches to improvement, providing a foundation for proposing guidelines to enhance the well-being and independence of older adults in Thailand’s aging society.*

Keyword: Quality Government elderly assistance.

1. Introduction

Thai society has fully entered an aging society. (Supakul, & Toyoda, 2026) Rapid changes are evident in various aspects, such as income, housing, and health, due to population growth. (Kuzior, Et al 2022) This has led to increased demand for elderly care from both the government and private sectors, categorized into four dimensions: economic, environmental, health, and social. Problems faced by the elderly include physical decline with age, which negatively impacts mental health, leading to feelings of loneliness, discouragement, and reduced social involvement. (Remoundou, & Koundouri, 2009) While expenses may remain the same, fluctuating income significantly affects their quality of life. (Farquhar,1995) The elderly are increasingly likely to require self-care due to changing socio-economic conditions, evolving family relationships, and technological advancements. (van Vuuren,& Carter, 2014) However, while technology plays a significant role in societal changes, some programs are easy to learn and use, allowing for integration with younger generations. (Annandale, 2025) Conversely, some technologies are less efficient than others. Younger generations must dedicate their time to teaching the elderly how to use these tools independently, bridging the generational gap in communication. Further research is needed on the quality of life for the elderly, approaches to improving it, factors affecting it, indirect ways to promote it, and relevant concepts/theories related to the quality of life of the elderly, including theories/concepts on aging, quality of life components, and the quality of life for the elderly. Factors affecting the quality of life of the elderly, for example, are the result of collecting and processing research that impacts their quality of life. (Schaie,

& Willis, 2010) The findings of this study can be used to further develop and propose guidelines for improving the quality of life of older adults. This is the origin of this research synthesis study and the study of future prospects of the field. The demographic shift towards an aging society is a challenge faced by all countries worldwide. (Patrawiwat, Et al 2022) Thailand is no exception. According to data from the National Economic and Social Development Council, Thailand will enter a fully aging society in 2035, with more than 20% of the total population being older adults.

Therefore, improving the quality of life of the elderly is a crucial issue that requires urgent attention. Innovation is an important tool that can be used to improve the quality of life. Innovations for improving the quality of life of the elderly can be applied to address the different needs and problems of the elderly at different stages of life and health. (Walker, 2005) healthy elderly people can benefit from technological and medical innovations to enhance their daily lives, such as walking, vision, and hearing aids. (Gelijns,& Rosenberg,1994). Older adults with chronic health problems or disabilities can benefit from technological and medical innovations to improve their quality of life, such as electric beds, electric wheelchairs, and rehabilitation equipment. (Maresova, Et al 2019) Unemployed elderly people can also benefit from these innovations. (Noack, & Federwisch, 2020) Social and community innovations can be leveraged to foster social and community participation, such as senior citizen activities, skill and career development projects, and volunteer programs. Developing innovations to improve the quality of life of the elderly requires collaboration from all sectors: government, private, and civil society. (Sirianni, & Friedland 2001) The participation of senior citizens is crucial, as they can propose initiatives and contribute to the creation of innovations that meet their needs and interests. Innovations to improve the quality of life of the elderly are vital tools that can help them live independently and enjoy a better quality of life. Therefore, the government, private sector, and civil society should continuously prioritize the development of innovations to enhance the quality of life of the elderly.

2. The results of this study are as follows:

Rights and Welfare Benefits for Senior Citizens Over 60 Years: Government Assistance. Thai Nationals

1. Senior Citizen Allowance: Upon registration, senior citizens receive a monthly allowance on a tiered basis according to age. - Ages 60-69: 600 baht/month - Ages 70-79: 700 baht/month - Ages 80-89: 800 baht/month - Ages 90 and Above: 1,000 baht/month
2. Discounted Fares: By presenting their senior citizen ID card each time they use public transportation, they receive discounts as follows: - 50% discount on the normal fare for buses (BMTA), intercity buses (BKS), Category 2 and Category 3, and the MRT subway, as well as passenger boats on the Chao Phraya River, Khlong Saen Saep, and Khlong Phasi Charoen. - Chao Phraya River ferries in Bangkok and its surrounding areas. - BTS Skytrain: 50% discount on regular fares when purchasing a Senior Citizen Rabbit Card. - Airport Rail Link: 50% discount on regular fares when purchasing a Senior Citizen Smart Pass. - Trains: 50% discount on fares only between June 1st and September 30th of each year. Bangkok Airways: 10% discount on regular fares for all domestic and international flights.
3. Tax Deductions: Children caring for elderly parents are eligible for a tax deduction of 30,000 baht per person per year, subject to the conditions stipulated in the Revenue Code.
4. Housing Renovation for Impoverished Elderly People.
 1. Home improvement/repair services to ensure a suitable and safe living environment for the elderly, with a lump-sum payment of 22,500-40,000 baht. The Center for the Development of Social Welfare for the Elderly screens and implements projects.
 2. Interest-free loans for occupational purposes, with a limit of 30,000 baht per person or 100,000 baht per group of at least five people. A guarantor is required, with monthly repayments within three years. Applications are submitted to the Elderly Fund of the Department of Elderly Affairs.
 3. Occupational rights: Access to vocational training, job information services, and suitable job placement specifically for the elderly,

provided by the Employment Office, Ministry of Labour in every province. Safe and accessible facilities in public service areas, such as ramps, elevators, wheelchair services, parking, and senior-friendly restrooms. Educational rights: The elderly have the opportunity to pursue appropriate education through lifelong learning curricula developed by the Office of Non-Formal Education and Informal Education (ONFE), Ministry of Education, Thailand. Medical and public health rights: Convenient and efficient services for older adults, such as express lanes, wheelchair services, dedicated staff, and senior healthcare services. 10. Rehabilitation and long-term care for dependent individuals. Legal assistance is provided by the Department of Rights and Liberties Protection, Ministry of Justice, including legal counseling, advice, and support for cases involving the elderly, such as lawyer fees, court fees, and bail. Free entry to government facilities, such as national museums, national parks, botanical gardens, zoos, and royal projects. Participation in social activities for self-development within the community, such as senior citizen clubs, health parks, sports fields, and indoor sports centers, with a 50% discount on membership fees. Support is available through networks or communities, such as senior citizen clubs, the transmission of senior citizen wisdom, tourism, sports and recreational activities. Assistance for impoverished, distressed, and needy elderly individuals in various cases, including food and clothing assistance of 3,000 baht per person, up to three times per year. In cases of hardship and lack of caregivers, impoverished and needy elderly individuals can apply for services at the Elderly Social Welfare Development Center, which provides housing, food, and clothing. This also applies to deceased impoverished elderly individuals who hold state welfare cards. The funeral organizer can apply for a traditional funeral assistance payment of 3,000 baht per person at the district office, sub-district administrative organization office, or municipal office within six months from the date of the death certificate.

Key characteristics affecting the quality of life of the elderly

General Characteristic s Perceived economic status Hobby or leisure	Monthly Income perceived economic status	Perceived economic status self-efficacy Interpersonal relationship
--	--	--

Source (Kim, & Oh, 2024)

Table. 1

General Characteristics Perceived economic status Hobby or leisure activity

General characteristics of physical changes include deterioration of organ function, loss of muscle mass, decreased balance, and the possibility of underlying or chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Mental changes: Often emotionally sensitive, feeling lonely, or losing self-worth if not working or isolated from society. Social roles: Primary work roles decrease or end (retirement), but roles shift to mentorship, serving as a family emotional center, and passing on experiences to younger generations. 2. Perceived economic status: Primarily dependent on other income sources: Most elderly people do not have regular employment. Their main income sources are usually savings, care from children and grandchildren, and pensions. Feelings of financial insecurity: Many older adults perceive their economic status as unstable or have insufficient income, especially those below the poverty line. Economic adaptation: Older adults become more cautious in spending, reduce investment risks, and focus on purchasing goods and services that prioritize value and quality of life. 3. Hobbies or leisure activities:

Religious and social activities: Visiting temples, listening to sermons, practicing meditation, and participating in community activities or senior citizen clubs. Recreational activities for health: Walking, Tai Chi, yoga, or light exercise. To maintain physical health, keep home-based hobbies such as gardening, planting trees, raising animals, reading books, watching television, or listening to music. Spending time caring for family: helping with childcare, doing light housework, and preparing meals. Supplemental income or activities: crafts such as sewing and embroidery, cooking, art, or home-based farming to avoid boredom and earn extra income.

3. Monthly Income perceived economic status

The monthly income and perceived economic status of the elderly reflect their vulnerability. Thai elderly people rely on three main sources of income: income from work, the elderly allowance, and reliance on children and grandchildren. Most have insufficient income to make a living and perceive themselves as being poor. Information on the current income and economic situation of the elderly can be summarized as follows: 1. Main income and average monthly income of working elderly: Even after retirement, many Thai elderly still have to work to earn income, with an average income of approximately (11,877 - 13,339) baht per month. Unworking elderly: The main income comes from the elderly allowance, which is paid in tiers as follows: Age 60–69 years: (600) baht/month; Age 70–79 years: (700) baht/month; Age 80–89 years: (800) baht/month; Age 90 years and above: (1,000) baht/month. 2. Perceived economic status below the poverty line: Income does not correspond to the cost of living. More than (30) to (40) percent of older adults have incomes below the poverty line. Dependence: Another main source of income is reliance on financial support from children and grandchildren. In the current economic climate, children and grandchildren face financial problems, causing the elderly to feel insecure. Debt: Many elderly people still have debts, either from borrowing for business investment, household expenses, or medical treatment. 3. Welfare and assistance from the government. In addition to the monthly allowance, eligible elderly people also receive other assistance, such as disability allowance (for elderly people who are disabled), a project to improve the environment and repair the homes of the elderly (budget support according to criteria not exceeding (40,000) baht per house), access to the Gold Card, and free medical treatment.

4. Perceived economic status self-efficacy Interpersonal relationship

Perceived QoL and self-management abilities in older adults are interconnected components. Assessment is typically measured across four areas: physical, mental, social, and environmental health. Older adults who can manage their daily routines and care for their health tend to have significantly higher self-esteem and a better quality of life. Promoting quality of life and self-management abilities can be achieved through key support mechanisms, including self-assessment and management of health, encouraging older adults to learn how to manage daily routines and screen for early health issues such as depression or mobility. Further guidelines can be found in the Department of Health's Elderly Care Manual. Promoting health literacy: Personalized knowledge helps older adults understand and manage health issues appropriately in their context. Social and mental empowerment: Receiving social support and participating in community activities can reduce depression levels. If you are studying or caring for older adults, please tell us more: Do older adults have any underlying medical conditions or mobility limitations? What activities do they engage in daily? We can then recommend a 9-area health assessment or a health promotion program tailored to your context.

5. The results and knowledge gained are discussed

Types of Innovation for Improving the Quality of Life of the Elderly: Innovation for improving the quality of life of the elderly refers to the application of creativity and new technologies to solve the different problems and needs of the elderly at different stages of life and health levels so that the elderly can live independently and have a better quality of life. Examples of innovations for improving the quality of life of the elderly include assistive devices for the disabled, such as canes, wheelchairs, hearing aids, and visual aids; rehabilitation technologies, such as muscle stimulators and physical therapy equipment; remote healthcare technologies, such as wearable health monitors and online healthcare platforms; social activities, such as senior citizen clubs, recreational activities, and volunteer activities; and skills and career development projects, such as vocational skills training and digital skills development. Innovations for improving the quality of life of the elderly can help fulfill their needs and solve various problems, such as improving mobility, enhancing rehabilitation, improving access to healthcare services, increasing social and community participation, and helping the elderly develop skills and careers. Innovations for improving the quality of life of the elderly can be divided into two main types: innovations in technology and medicine and the application of new technologies. These innovations are applied to address the diverse needs and problems of elderly people of different ages and health levels, enabling them to live independently and enjoy a good quality of life. Technological and medical innovations can be categorized as follows:

Assistive devices for the disabled, such as canes, wheelchairs, hearing aids, and visual aids, improve mobility and reduce accidents and risks. Rehabilitation technology, such as muscle stimulators and physical therapy equipment, enhances rehabilitation and helps elderly people return to normal life. Remote healthcare technology, such as wearable health monitors and online healthcare platforms, improves access to healthcare services and reduces the burden of care for families and society. Examples of technological and medical innovations to improve the quality of life of the elderly include smart canes that detect abnormalities in gait and alert caregivers, smart glasses that improve vision without contact lenses, smart wheelchairs that adjust seating positions to suit the physical condition of the elderly, smart muscle stimulators that help rehabilitate weakened muscles, and wearable health monitors that measure various bodily functions such as heart rate, blood pressure, and blood sugar levels. Social and community innovations involve applying creative ideas and new technologies to promote the constructive participation of the elderly in society and the community. To enable senior citizens to live independently and enjoy a better quality of life, social and community innovations can be categorized as follows: Social activities such as senior citizen clubs, recreational activities, and volunteer activities help senior citizens socialize with others and engage in activities that promote their physical and mental health. Skills and career development projects, such as vocational skills training and digital skills development, help senior citizens acquire skills and careers that can generate income and improve their financial security.

Examples of social and community innovations to improve the quality of life for senior citizens include online senior citizen clubs, which allow senior citizens to socialize with others even from afar; recreational activities for senior citizens, such as yoga and dance, which promote health and quality of life; volunteer projects for senior citizens, such as volunteering to care for patients and volunteering to teach, which add value to their lives; and skills and career development projects for senior citizens, such as vocational training in carpentry and automotive mechanics, which promote employment for senior citizens.

Social and community innovations can help fulfill the needs and solve various problems of senior citizens, such as enabling them to socialize with others, providing them with activities that promote physical and mental health, and equipping them with skills and careers that generate income. Developing social and community innovations to improve the quality of life of older adults requires collaboration among all sectors, including the government, private sector, and civil society. The participation of the elderly is

crucial, as they can propose initiatives and contribute to the creation of innovations that meet their needs and interests.

Guidelines for Developing Innovations to Improve the Quality of Life for the Elderly: Innovation development is essential due to the changing demographic structure of an aging society, resulting in longer life expectancy and increased demands for healthcare and elderly care. Innovation can help fulfill these needs and solve various problems faced by the elderly, promoting their independence and improving their quality of life. This includes Physical Health (e.g., assistive devices, rehabilitation technology, remote healthcare), Mental Health (e.g., social activities, skills development, and vocational training), Social Participation (e.g., social activities, skills development, and vocational training), and economics (e.g., skills development and vocational training). Furthermore, it fosters understanding and equal acceptance of older adults in Thai society. Therefore, developing innovations to improve the quality of life of the elderly is a crucial approach to enabling them to live independently and enjoy a better quality of life. Innovations for improving the quality of life of the elderly can be divided into two main categories (Chatsiri Wipawin and Nantiya Rueankongngan, 2022): 1. Technological and medical innovations. Innovations can help older adults live independently and improve their quality of life. Examples include assistive devices for disabled individuals, rehabilitation technology, and telehealth technology. Furthermore, social and community innovations promote constructive participation of senior citizens in society and the community, such as social activities, skills and career development programs, and volunteer programs. Innovations for improving the quality of life of senior citizens can be applied to address the diverse needs and challenges of senior citizens at different stages of life and health levels. For example, healthy senior citizens can benefit from technological and medical innovations that enhance their daily lives, such as walking, vision, and hearing aids. Senior citizens with chronic health problems or disabilities can benefit from technological and medical innovations to improve their quality of life, such as electric beds, wheelchairs, and rehabilitation equipment. Senior citizens who are unemployed can benefit from social and community innovations to participate in society and the community, such as senior citizen activities, skills and career development programs and volunteer programs. Developing innovations to improve the quality of life for senior citizens requires collaboration among all sectors: government, private sector, and civil society. The participation of senior citizens themselves is crucial, as they can propose initiatives and contribute to the creation of innovations that meet their needs and interests. Innovations for improving the quality of life of senior citizens are vital tools that help them live independently and enjoy a better quality of life. Therefore, the government, private sector, and civil society should continuously prioritize the development of innovations to enhance the quality of life of senior citizens.

6. Conclusion

Considering the concept of creative public sector management in conjunction with the gerontological model for social security, local governance, and the public sector management concept for elderly welfare in Thailand, it is evident that as all countries, including Thailand, are entering an aging society, the government must prepare and implement various measures to address this situation. Emphasis should be placed on creating well-being, social equality, and reducing inequality in all fields. This can be achieved by promoting a gerontological model, in the sense of an elderly person caring for themselves (geronto society), focusing on the role of civil society organizations, establishing self-care groups categorized by age, and providing state welfare for all elderly individuals, from retirement to old age. This includes health security through the development of information systems, promotion of preventive care, and ensuring equitable distribution of public health services. The participation of the elderly in creating welfare programs for the elderly demonstrates the importance of integrating and supporting the involvement of civil society

organizations for the elderly. Furthermore, the capacity of social security welfare provision should be enhanced by strengthening income security for relief and promoting community-based self-reliant welfare programs. To improve household liquidity, a framework for managing the welfare of the Thai elderly through gerontology is being developed. This aims to enhance management efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Therefore, good governance and well-being must encompass the well-being of older people of all ages, not only at the national level but also at the local level.

7. References

- [1] Annandale, E. (2025). *The sociology of health and medicine: a critical introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [2] Farquhar, M. (1995). Elderly people's definitions of quality of life. *Social science & medicine*, 41(10), 1439-1446.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536\(95\)00117-P](https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536(95)00117-P)
- [3] Gelijns, A., & Rosenberg, N. (1994). The dynamics of technological change in medicine. *Health affairs*, 13(3), 28-46.
<https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.13.3.28>
- [4] Kuzior, A., Zhuchenko, S., Samoilikova, A., Vasylieva, T., & Brožek, P. (2022). Changes in the system of country's population health care depending on the level of providing affordable housing. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 20(3), 215-232.
[https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.20\(3\).2022.18](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.20(3).2022.18)
- [5] Kim, H. K., & Oh, H. S. (2024). Determinants of quality of life (QoL) in female caregivers in elderly care facilities in Korea. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(1) 1-16
- [6] Maresova, P., Javanmardi, E., Barakovic, S., Barakovic Husic, J., Tomsone, S., Krejcar, O., & Kuca, K. (2019). Consequences of chronic diseases and other limitations associated with old age—a scoping review. *BMC public health*, 19(1), 1431.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7762-5>
- [7] Noack, A., & Federwisch, T. (2020). Social innovation in rural regions: Older adults and creative community development. *Rural Sociology*, 85(4), 1021-1044.
- [8] Pattawiwat, K., Charuchinda, A., Numkanisorn, P., Suvarnasara, C., & Peltzer, K. (2022). Guidelines for developing quality of life for the elderly: A community-based approach. *Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Studies*, 336-347. 1
- [9] Remoundou, K., & Koundouri, P. (2009). Environmental effects on public health: An economic perspective. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 6(8), 2160-2178.
- [10] Schaie, K. W., & Willis, S. L. (Eds.). (2010). *Handbook of the psychology of aging*. Academic Press.
- [11] Sirianni, C., & Friedland, L. (2001). *Civic innovation in America: Community empowerment, public policy, and the movement for civic renewal*. Univ of California Press.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph6082160>
- [12] Supakul, S., & Toyoda, P. (2026). Thailand's Aging Society: Reconsidering Policy and Innovation Readiness for Elderly Care. *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, provision, and Financing*, 63, 00469580261427095.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00469580261427095>
- [13] van Vuuren, D. P., & Carter, T. R. (2014). Climate and socio-economic scenarios for climate change research and assessment: reconciling the new with the old. *Climatic change*, 122(3), 415-429.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-013-0974-2>
- [14] Walker, A. (2005). *Understanding quality of life in old age*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).