

**SOCIAL CAPITAL AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
MORBIDITY IN KANCHANABURI, THAILAND**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(DEMOGRAPHY)
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2005**

**ISBN 974-04-5793-2
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**SOCIAL CAPITAL AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE MORBIDITY
IN KANCHANABURI, THAILAND****ZHANG, LIYING 4537398 PRDE/D****Ph.D. (DEMOGRAPHY)****THESIS ADVISORS: WASSANA IM-EM, Ph.D.,
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Many studies conducted in Western societies suggest that social capital has a negative relationship with health. People with higher social capital are more likely to be in good health than those with lower social capital. However, few studies have explored the link between social capital and health in Asia. The purpose of the present study is to explore the link between social capital and self-reported cardiovascular disease (CVD) and related risk factors by using data from a baseline census of 100 selected communities in Kanchanaburi province of Thailand. The data used in this study were collected in 2000 and included a total of 27,842 individuals aged 15 years and above. A social capital index was constructed based on 12 variables related to social support, media exposure, social networks and family ties. Multiple logistic regression and generalized linear model (GLM) statistical analysis were applied in this study. Bivariate results showed that social capital is negatively related to self-reported heart disease. After controlling for demographic factors, this negative relationship was not statistically significant. The relationship between social capital and risk factors of CVD, such as hypertension, smoking and alcohol consumption were also examined. There was a negative bivariate relationship between social capital and self-reported hypertension. This relationship became positive after controlling for other factors. Social capital is negatively related to smoking and liquor consumption, even after controlling for other factors. The results also showed that social capital was influenced by socioeconomic status and demographic factors. The findings of the study indicate that the effects of social capital on health are complex. This study provides clues for exploring the causal relationship in future research, perhaps by using longitudinal studies, expanding the information collected on social capital in order to better measure the concept, and also obtaining measures on other intervening variables. It is necessary to design family-based and community-based interventions for providing remedial activities in health promotion, rather than focusing on individual level interventions. This study also suggests that for social science studies related to health, biological factors should be combined with the social factors.

**KEY WORDS: SOCIAL CAPITAL/CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE/
MORBIDITY/THAILAND****181 pp. ISBN 974-04-5793-2**