

## Abstract

The purposes of this thesis were: (1) to analyze the differences of some social indicators related to mental health of Taiwan (23 cities/counties) and Yunlin county (20 townships). (2) to understand the opinions of the key informants about community mental health problems. (3) to survey community residents of agricultural areas about the subjective perceptions of their mental health. (4) to set up a summative index of Taiwan Rural Mental Health indicators System.

This research used a multi-method strategy. Data collected in the spring of 2005 included 24 social indicators of 23 cities/counties in Taiwan, and 16 social indicators of 20 cities/township in Yunlin, and questionnaires of 99 key informants and 967 community members of Erh-lun and Shui-lin Township of Yunlin County.

Major findings of this study were as follows:

- (1) Significant differences were found in the social indicators about the numbers of older population, the lower educational status, the widowed, the foreign spouse, and the disabled, the accidental injury-related deaths in agricultural counties. In contrast, urbanized areas had higher rates of the divorced, all criminal case, larceny, robbery and forceful taking, violent crime, rape, and the average number of people serviced by per medical personnel .
- (2) The geographic analysis in terms of the mental health status and service needs of residents revealed no significant differences among 23 cities/counties, but significant differences among 20 cities/township (Yunlin County), Erh-lun and Mailiao had much more problems.
- (3) Yunlin County's key informants indicated that the areas of Kou-hu, Tai-si and Sih-hu have high needs for mental health services. Erh-lun's key informants indicated that 3 villages have high needs for mental health services. Shui-lin's key informants indicated that 3 villages have high needs for mental health services.
- (4) Most respondents of resident sample ranked the following mental health problems as serious: fraudulent telephone calls, out-migrant, farm crisis, being elderly, and family economic hardship.

(5) Most respondents of resident sample employed “chatting with others” as stress-relieving or coping method. Besides “family and friends”, only about 6.5% of respondents reported that they sought help from mental health professionals or specialists.

(6) To set up the initial rural mental health indicator systems of Taiwan: a summative index consists of 14 items and is divided into five dimensions

The recommendations for rural mental health policies, indicator systems, program strategies and rural mental health service delivery issues were also suggested.

**Keywords:** Community Mental Health Center, Social Indicators Analysis, Key Informants Approach, Community Residents Survey, Farm Crisis, Rural Mental Health Services, Mental Health indicators System