

The Development of Health Massage Establishments Participation Model under COVID-19 Situation in Phetchabun, Thailand

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Abstract

The purpose of research was to study participation towards Phetchabun health massage establishments under COVID-19 situation. Informal interview, in-depth interview, and participation observation were carried out respectively. Purposive sampling was used with 15 health consumer protection officers in charge; 11 district level, 2 provincial level, 2 regional level as well as each representative of 11 districts. Then group discussion was performed with each service provider representative of 3 zones, each resident representatives of 3 zones which were village health volunteers, and 4 officials in charge; 3 district level, 1 provincial level. After implemented, participation processes were classified into four phases. First of all, input were recent COVID-19 situation as well as involved regulations and laws. Secondly, participation steps were decision-making and planning, implementation, benefits, and evaluation. Thirdly, output were activities done as planned, the establishments standardized as prescribed, and cooperation network built. Lastly, outcomes were clients were assured of hygienic and safe service, circulating fund was increased in economic system, and tourist attractions were become. In summary, as the networks of health massage establishments were built, they served as significant channels to exchange experiences, to share knowledge, to send messages, and to encourage. Clients were provided standardizes services that they firmly believed safety and clean services. Government officers deeply understood the providers and the practitioners of authentic practices in communities while they achieved their performance objectives. Since the standardized services attracted more clients, their incomes were risen.

Keywords: Health Massage Establishments, Government Officers, Participation Model, COVID-19, Personal Health Practice

Introduction

Due to COVID-19 spread, health massage establishments were considered that a risk business for contracting; therefore, they were forced to shut down. Department of Health Service Support, was authorized to regulate health establishments, realized

impacts towards practitioners and service providers; as a results, "Preparation Guidelines for Health Spa, Health Massage, and Beauty Massage to Promote Health Tourism During COVID-19 Pandemic" was issued and granted which they were required to strictly accomplish before reopen business¹. They also adapted services following regulations and

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measures provided that became challenges for them. The Preparation Guidelines were implemented throughout the country that Phetchabun with 11 districts divided into three zones, was included.

Participation plays a vital role in people’s management of their own affairs². The participation is a systematic process involving a group of individuals in decision-making affecting their lives. It also includes implementing programs of participants, their benefits sharing, and their efforts to evaluate such projects³. Sherry Arnstein (1969) stated that participation can enhance local’s empowerment, can promote effectiveness of projects, and can foster development inwardly⁴. In addition, it can create ownership of development process and place rural people in position to identify, determine and control their priorities for actions⁵. Community participation is considered as a main point for good governance. The United Nation (2005) proposed that community participation is a means to enable society members actively participate in development processes, to influence it, and to live up to outcomes of development which can increase accountability and transparency⁶. Most important agencies believed that sustainable development cannot achieve goals without participation and involvement of community in particular programs⁷. Community development, as a method for purposive change, associated with people in community area to plan, to do things together, and to find suitable solutions to their problems for better living materially and socially. For achievable and long term development, it is essential to ensure the participation and active contribution of all members in society as a whole in design of the community development programs⁸.

However, researcher purposed to investigate the participation of Phetchabun health massage establishments under COVID-19 situation.

Methods

This research adopted informal interview, in-depth interview, and participant observation, respectively. Purposive sampling was used and data collection was carried out with 15 health consumer protection officers in charge; 11 district level, 2 provincial level, 2 regional level as well as each representative of 11 districts. After that, group discussion was managed with each service provider representative of 3 zones, each resident representatives of 3 zones which were village health volunteers, and 4 officials in charge; 3 district level, 1 provincial level. Validity and reliability of instruments were also assessed. Later, content analysis was conducted and triangulation method was used for data validation.

Results

After investigated, participation processes for the health massage establishment development in the study were divided into 4 phases. Firstly, input were recent COVID-19 situation as well as involved regulations and laws. Secondly, participation steps were decision making and planning, implementing, benefiting, and evaluating. Thirdly, output were activities done as planned, the establishments standardized as prescribed, and cooperation network built. Lastly, outcomes were clients were assured of hygienic and safe service, circulating fund was increased in economic system, and tourist attractions were become as shown in Figure 1.

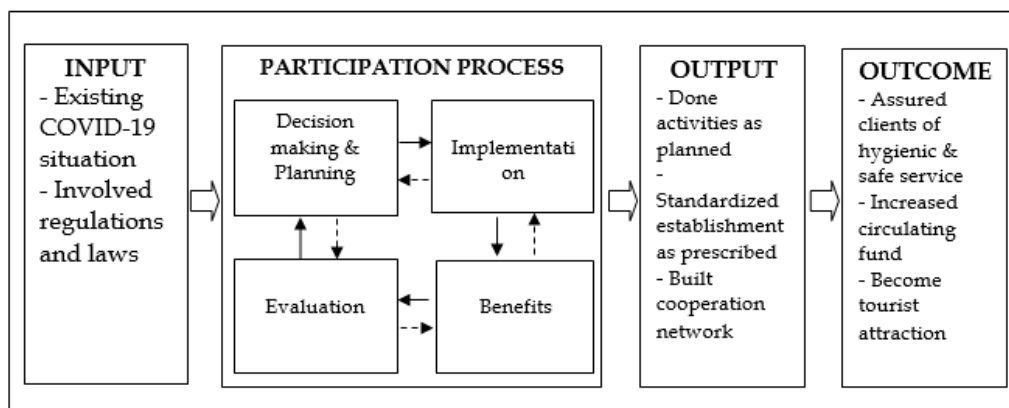


Figure 1: Participation processes towards health massage establishments

As displayed above, there were explanations of 4 participation steps.

1) Decision-making and planning: respondents had a meeting to collect data of existing COVID-19 situation, problems, and needs. Officers introduced involved regulations and laws and provided knowledge about participation. Their facility requirements were identified then mutual agreement was explored. Next, functions, activity schedule, and performance process were specified. While having discussion, officials introduced useful and practical participation activities to establishment providers (EPs). Later, they presented perceived information to other providers in communities and they were allowed to select an appropriate activity. After that, they were allowed to design their own development plan with academic framework for their context under regulations and laws. There were found that village community method was used in some rural areas while voting method via LINE Application was carried out in some urban areas. On the other hand, the provincial officials conducted using appreciative inquiry. Although there were different methods used, various "good models" were discovered.

2) Implementation: both the EPs and the officials were asked for collaboration with informal ways to perform activities as scheduled. While resources and facilities were supported, the officials provided useful suggestions as a member in the community as well. After the EPs performing, positive encouragements which were certifications and compliments were provided to whom achieved the Preparation Guidelines. After implementing, the EPs felt anxious about performances which were irregularly managed while any operations and activities were not recorded systematically. Hence, it was proposed that the officials should observe and take note while practicing so that the plan was progressed. They also asked for assistance of other organizations such as Department of Skill Development and institutes with certified health massage course to participate in community activities.

3) Benefits: after implementation their health massage establishments were standardized whereas practitioners and providers gained more knowledge and developed essential skills so that they safely serviced with self-confidence. They felt pride of

their profession then network of the establishments was created. Besides, the official performances were fulfilled as prescribed ministry indicators. It was expected that number of unstandardized establishments were decreased resulted in official inspections were reduced. They increasingly also understood various circumstance of the providers. While the network was built, channels to ask for collaboration were easier and more convenient. Moreover, they were found different examples for further developments. In addition, community network was risen that caused additional activities were arranged. People were advertised their improved standards, then number of clients was increased with their risen incomes. The establishments were also became tourist attractions with higher circulating funds in the community. In addition, they were not embarrassed to be open-minded and to express opinions to the officers. They had accessible ways to ask for assistance or cooperation and had confidence with upgraded service. However, these participants took part for lesson learned after performance (After Action Review).

4) Evaluation: the provincial officials mainly functioned to follow and inspect the performances while the representatives observed overall of the operations. The district officials were major examiners each district and the representatives monitored the performances. The evaluation was carried out every quarter and at the end of the fiscal year which it was divided into 2 parts. Firstly, activities and programs were examined they were whether accomplished as planned or not. Then, problems and barriers were explored as well as solutions. Secondly, their learning knowledge exchange was enhanced while feedbacks were provided. Empowerment visit with having compliments and encouragements was arranged which these were to collect data for further operations.

Discussion

Division of Consumer Protection and Pharmaceutical is a major agency to promote, enhance and regulate the health establishments in Phetchabun which authorized district and provincial officers to provide knowledge, to improve service provider potential, to develop connection and participation,

and to receive and deal with complaints. Along with the Preparation Guidelines, officials of the Division of Consumer Protection and Pharmaceutical performed based on Provincial Orders and Notifications of the Communicable Disease Committee so that it was suitable in their circumstances.

After the participation investigated, there were some discussions of the processes.

1) Decision making and planning: The participants both public and private sectors gathered to brainstorm with common goal of health massage establishment development. The officials certainly provided opportunities to heartily hear opinions' people because members in communities were crucial stakeholders⁹. Also, they actuated members to share and exchange knowledge about concept and importance of participation throughout the processes; as a result, people were not embarrassed to express their demands. After that, establishment providers and practitioners became independent to define their needs and problems in specific environment. While they were influenced to design and plan activities, district officials facilitated and consulted. Yuvadee Phongrod et al. (2021) stated that giving chances for members in villages and communities significantly plays a role¹⁰. They explicitly understood their strengths and weaknesses responding to local desires and changing circumstances which they directly involved ownership of the programs: they will be empowered and will manage over decision affecting on their lives⁷. Moreover, the development activities were under principles with assistance of district officials. While participation of communities produced various good practices for either their establishments or tourism features, provincial officials investigated the good practices using appreciative inquiry.

Furthermore, all stakeholders in different conditions selected accessible and suitable operations for development projects. For example, participants in rural society employed village community to share visions and ideas how to plan, do, check, and act the activities (PDCA). Piyanush Ngernklay et al. (2020) proposed that community forum was arranged for development participation with exact issues and timing¹¹. Then, written and spoken notifications were done for locals. Usman Bappi et al. (2018) mentioned

that people generally were informed about community topic and were interested in resolving it, felt they can be more effective in working in groups⁸. They also managed their time to collect involved information for showing opinions. In the meantime, villagers in urban areas participated in by voting via LINE Application.

2) Implementation: the officials informed formally and informally concerned information to community members to encourage positive attitude towards activities. The participants willingly engaged in the planned activities in order to achieve. While implementing the district officials gave consults about academic approaches, regulations, laws and facilitated. On the other hand, the provincial officials played a major role to perform appreciative inquiry because informants had satisfied experiences to participate in the activities using AI in previous study of health massage establishments. So, they realized its benefits and presented to communities. However, the locals were provided chances to independently select appropriate methods enhancing their participation. Kitima Chumart and Kamolporn Kanlyanamitra (2017) proposed that publicity was a vital factor to promote collaboration both public and private sectors that people informed its advantages voluntarily participated in¹². Nevertheless, the sectors specified certain functions in the projects and were aware of their roles so that performances were managed successfully and effectively.

3) Benefits: the programs achieved its objectives then the participants recognized benefits of their involvement. Later, they received a share of project benefits. Siriluk Khumphiranont and Anchana NaRanong (2020) proposed that expectation of mutual benefit was the most influential factor contributed to successful collaboration among government, private sector and civil society¹³. Piyanush Ngernklay et al. (2020) stated that the government officers should be truly open-minded to friendly hear people's opinion, complaints, challenges, and limitations through accessible and different channels such as opinion boxes, hotlines, and websites¹¹. Besides, After Action Review: AAR was proposed to carry out to improve effective knowledge for further projects. Similarly, benefits of development promoted pride and self-reliance especially villagers in the community.

Nevertheless, providing opportunity to participate in other aspects significantly effected to receive mental and physical benefits such as valuable community pride and clean environment¹⁴.

4) Evaluation: the participants engaged in the appraisal of work done focused on program operations and how outcomes were achieved. After implementing they exchanged their experiences to discover advantages and disadvantages then they recognized improvements that can be made. Suraphop Nakonchom and Napatsawan Thanaphonganan (2022) mentioned that evaluation carried out before, during, post performances greatly enhanced participation of teachers and educational personnel so that they took part in sharing and exchanging to provide practical suggestions for development¹⁵. While district officials played a crucial role to control the operation, representatives of stakeholders engaged 3-month monitoring and at the end of the fiscal year. On the other hand, the provincial officials were leaders of evaluation whereas the representatives examined overall of the practices. Nongnuch Yaboonna et al. (2017) and Thitilina Chaipiarn (2015) also proposed that both villages and leaders should continually spread the news and their performances through various channels such as bulletin board, website, social media, and local radio that it can enhance community participation for further development^{16, 17}.

Recommendations

1. Policy recommendation: the health massage establishments were supported to strengthen networks for self-development and solve problems under participation.

2. Research recommendations: studies of factors towards participation to develop establishments were studied. Strategies development of health establishments were also investigated for authentic practices in context.

Conclusion

As the networks of health massage establishments were built, they served as significant channels to exchange experiences, to share knowledge, to send messages, and to encourage. Clients were provided standardizes services that they firmly believed safety

and clean services. Government officers deeply understood the providers and the practitioners of authentic practices in communities while they achieved their performance objectives. Since the standardized services attracted more clients, their incomes were risen. Moreover, all contributors with unities were assumed as a considerable part to reach mutual goals and benefits. Leaders of involved sectors also encouraged members to realize importance of participation. Clarified communication that could reach exact targets were a drive to strengthen participation; meanwhile, frequent activities were included. Public sectors were required to support useful academic source.

ETHIC

The study was approved by the Ethics Committee for Human Research, Phetchabun Provincial Public Health Office 2/2564 Project number: Sor Sor CHor.2/64-14-25/06/64. All participants provided written informed consent.

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Conflict of Interest: Nil

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