

Developing the Health Self-Reliance Potential of Lao Women in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the level of health self-reliance among Lao women in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) and to enhance their potential for health self-reliance by means of research and development. A variety of qualitative techniques were employed, such as brainstorming, focus groups, in-depth interviews, and observation. The target groups include experts from the Ministry of Public Health, leaders of Lao women, representatives of Lao women in Vientiane Capital, academics with relevant experience in Lao Women's Federation agencies, and representatives of the agency in charge of the project on promoting Laos mothers. It was found that: 1) Lao women in the Lao PDR have normal health and self-reliance; they avoid smoking, eat fermented foods and seasonal fruits and vegetables, and occasionally engage in aerobic and running exercise. Regarding reliance on one's health in the event of illness, research is being done to better understand different ailments. 2) The outcomes of transforming health behaviors and planning seven activities to enhance the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in the Lao PDR.

Keywords: self-reliance potential, potential development, Lao women.

1. Introduction

The health self-reliance potential is the ability to help oneself take care of oneself in terms of own health in normal conditions and in sick situations. Have knowledge and understanding about health, disease prevention and coping with illness without the help of health personnel, including being able to live independently not a burden to others able to live a normal, happy life adapt to changing trends public health especially the adjustment of Lao women under the trend of sanitary changes in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR.).

Lao PDR. even though it is a socialist country that uses the principles of Marx-Lenin in the administration of the country, but the public health and medical care systems are different from

those in socialist countries, for example, Cuba provides free medical treatment especially after the economic reform “Reimagining” makes Lao public health expensive even though government hospitals do not charge for the services of doctors or nurse. But it still has medicine costs. Cost of medical equipment, surgery costs, and various overtime expenses involved in treatment including the lack of personnel and various equipment. This makes Lao public health and medicine in a dire state. Laotians who have enough money will cross over to receive treatment at hospitals on the Thai side. Both public hospitals and private hospitals. Because they believe in higher quality of treatment (Charoensuk , 2023). At present, Lao PDR. has implemented the 30,000 kip medical policy treats all diseases , which solves the basic public health problem of Laos. The government of the Lao PDR has guidelines for joint public health promotion work in 14 issues, the most important of which is capacity development and the capacity of public health personnel (Tangsriwong , 2024). However, at present, it is found that many hospitals, such as Khammouane District Hospital, are facing a crisis in providing convenience to the people. “During the crisis period, the district hospital lacks basic essential medicines to the point of having to have the therapist go and buy medicine himself at a pharmacy outside the hospital” by Dr. Kaewudom Lodthammawong, Director of Khammouane District Hospital announced in the book that “medicines with high prices must be paid for themselves outpatients must pay 100% of their own treatment costs and cancel outpatient contributions. (ASEAN News, 2016)

From such crises and problems taking care of oneself in terms of health self-reliance is something that people should do to be healthy and happy. Able to self-manage minor illnesses and manage, delay or prevent lifestyle diseases such as heart attack, stroke, diabetes or cancer. etc can be used to make individual health decisions and promote health literacy. It will result in people being able to find information about their own health. Makes it possible to understand the connection between the benefits of taking care of yourself, such as taking care of good oral hygiene. In addition to preventing gum disease. It also reduces the risk of heart disease or exercise besides making the body strong. It also reduces the risk of Alzheimer's. etc. In addition, health literacy also helps people to distinguish incorrect information. (Muang Thai Life Assurance, 2022)

Relying on the health of the Lao woman means that the Lao woman has the ability in taking care of oneself, can choose to consume quality food , daily life able to help oneself basics when sick take care of oneself in terms of own health, both in normal conditions and in sick situations. Having knowledge and understanding about health ,disease prevention, and being able to cope with illness , which is a potential that must be developed in every Lao woman in order to reduce the government's expenses on medical treatment when illness increases. From the conditions and problems mentioned above, it reflects the importance of developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women. Starting with creating health literacy awareness of one's own physical and mental health reducing various risks to health, taking care of one's own health reasonably and appropriately ,as necessary must cooperate with various organizations involved in developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in order to strengthen cooperation in developing the potential of Lao women. As a result of development, Lao women are able to be more self-reliant. It has

reduced the burden of government expenses. For the benefit of yourself and others who can rely on themselves.

Research objectives

1. To study the state of health self-reliance of Lao women in the Lao PDR
2. To develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in the Lao PDR .

2. Literature review

Self-reliance concept

Sanyawiwat (2007) said that self-reliance was refers to the ability to exist independently, completely and securely. There are both individual levels and community level. The term self-reliant individual means that a person can live independently, such as being able to separate themselves and live away from their parents. Have stability in life and be able to support themselves. Able to make important decisions and can do themselves or can ask for advice from others to make their own decisions.

Khunyayak (2007) gave the meaning of self-reliance that means a person has shown an effort to help himself by using the knowledge and abilities that have to solve problems, solve obstacles, or take any action to be successful on your own with confidence.

Pansiri (2010) stated that self-reliance is a process of educating and developing a person's abilities by bringing out a person's potential, making them able to help themselves more. Reduce dependency on outsiders but still provide mutual assistance between people in a group or community.

In summary, self-reliance is a person's ability in self care be able to manage oneself, including trying to help oneself in using own knowledge and ability to solve problems and obstacles by reducing reliance on outsiders.

Self-reliance theory

Sanyawiwat (2007) mentioned the theory of self-reliance of rural communities that rural communities rely on self-reliance in 5 areas as follows.

1. Technological self -reliance (T) means having the quantity and quality of material technology and social technology. Knowing how to use it effectively and maintenance to maintain its condition at all times for the use of technology. This meaning includes both modern items and traditional local items called folk wisdom.
2. Economic self -reliance (E) means the ability to survive economically. Be in a way that can create a balance between needs and capabilities. Satisfying needs is an economic system that is continually evolving. Effective in competing with outsiders. Have the ability to save and invest and can be grouped together for production and marketing. There is also planning for the future.

3. Natural resources self-reliance (R) Natural resources refer to things that are in the community or can be obtained. Being self-sufficient in natural resources means having natural resources and having the ability to take advantage of those natural resources and the ability to preserve natural resources so that they do not deteriorate completely. It should be plentiful or can be used with ecological balance and in a state where it can be restored.

4. Mental self-reliance (M) refers to a state of mind that has the courage to fight against problems and obstacles in earning a living. Developing life to be more progressive in self-government in preventing defilements. People in the community should have a sense of self-reliance. Have a mind to learn be eager to develop, have knowledge and ability to apply, have quality, reduce vices and be diligent.

5. Social-cultural self-reliance (S) refers to a situation in which a group of people. There is a strong unity. There are effective leaders who can lead their groups to perform their duties and achieve their goals effectively or you may ask for cooperation from outside. The community has good leadership high participation. There is social solidarity. There is a strong social organization. including having knowledge and news that is up to date with the outside world

Relying on oneself is creating yourself with value and importance and will give you confidence in living life. Have confidence in work and are eager to do various tasks without having to wait to ask for help from anyone be yourself, don't try to imitate anyone. Until I want to become that person.

In this study use the self-reliance theory concept above as a basis for determining various activities. To be appropriate in line with the theory of self-reliance, which requires one to rely on oneself mentally. Able to make decisions about health care by oneself, able to rely on oneself on natural resources. By using herbs that are available in the local area to get the most benefit and the ability to heal available herbs to exist so as not to completely deteriorate by replanting

3. Methodology

This research is research and development (R&D) by combining qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, observation, and brainstorming meetings.

Target group consists of

1. The group for in-depth interviews to study the conditions of health self-reliance of Lao women in Lao PDR. consists of representatives of agencies responsible for promoting Lao women responsible for the project to develop the potential of Mae Ying Chao Mueang, leader of Mae Ying Lao Village Fund Member, members of Lao women living in the target village communities, 2 people per unit, totaling 17 people (Saaty, 1970). The qualifications are determined to be those who have experience and work in coordinating matters related to public health.

2. The group for focus group discussion to study the needs for developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women, consisting of representatives of Lao women in Vientiane was selected specific persons who are qualified to work as female leaders in the village head of the

village fund, head of the unit involved in the development of women, 10 people per group (Morgan, DL, 1998), 2 groups , totaling 20 people.

3. The group for brainstorming meeting to brainstorm ideas about developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women consisting of government officials, academics related to agencies of the Lao Women's Federation ,expert, Ministry of Public Health representative from the province total of 30 people (Orapin Sopchokchai , 2014).

4. The group that took action to develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in the community was selected 30 people voluntarily to participate in the activity (Burn&Grove,2005)

5. The group for evaluation the development of the health self-reliance potential of Lao women consisting of Lao women participating in activities and group of administrators involved in developing the potential of Lao women numbering 15 people (Delbecq , et al., 1975)

Research instrument

1. The topic of the in-depth interview was a question about the current state of health self-reliance of Lao women .

2. Focus group discussion questions was a question about the need to develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women. Group discussion participants included representatives of the Lao Women's Mother Development Group, representative from the Department of Planning, representatives from relevant agencies, representative from the Secretariat of the Lao , representative from National Committee for the Promotion of the Advancement of Mothers, Women and Children ,representative from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, representative from the Department of Women's Development, representatives of the agency responsible for inspecting those involved in developing the potential of Lao women , 2 groups totally 20 people

3. The topic for brainstorming about methods for developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in Vientiane.

Data collection

This research collected 4 steps as follows.

Step 1 : Study the current conditions health self-reliance of Lao women by using interviews and focus groups discussion as follows:

1. In-depth interview with executives involved in developing the potential of women regarding the current state of health self-reliance of Lao women.

2. Focus group discussion about the need for developing the health self-reliance potential of 2 groups of Lao women .

Group 1: Female leaders living in the village,Village Fund Head, Unit Head

Group 2 is a group of representatives of female executives who acts as a potential developer of Lao women

Data from in-depth interviews and focus groups were synthesized into needs for developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women to presented to meeting participants for further brainstorming.

Step 2: Developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women.

1. Organize a brainstorming meeting for participation in developing health self-reliance potential of Lao women in Vientiane Office of the Lao Women's Federation Organization with a total of 30 representatives
2. Jointly determine activities to develop the health self-reliance potential by organizing academic seminars to determine activities to develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women, with experts office academic on potential development of Lao women ,academic experts in health development, director general of the Lao Women's Development Department ,Lao Lady Training Center and all relevant parties involved in developing the health self -reliance potential of Lao women.

Step 3 Take action to develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women.

In this step it is take action to develop the health self-reliance potential by carrying out various activities as obtained from academic seminar. In this step, it is the actual practice using action learning with the following process.

1. Working group meeting consisting of involved representatives, executives from the Lao Women's Federation
2. Select activities to be carried out before and after as appropriate and consistent with developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women collaborate with related organizations
3. Take action with a clear division of roles and responsibilities according to the specified framework for a period of 1 quarter

Step 4: Evaluate the development of the health self-reliance potential

This step is a summary of the results of joint operations between researchers and practitioners, including those involved in carrying out activities to develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women to be financially self-reliant. The health care program for Lao women in Vientiane is beneficial and suitable for use in developing the health self-reliance potential of Loa women in Lao PDR. collects data with relevant parties, organizations supporting Lao women and organizations responsible for developing the potential of women by evaluating outputs and outcomes with the following activities.

1. Evaluation of the use of activities to promote the development of the potential of Lao women by interviewing relevant people, including representatives of the Lao Women's Development Group, pepresentative from the Planning Department ,representative from Mae Ying Lao Vocational Training Center , representatives from relevant agencies, representative from the Ministry of Planning, representative from the Ministry of Commerce ,representative from the Ministry of Finance,representative from the Secretariat of the Lao National Committee for the promotion of the Advancement of Mothers, Women and Children representative from the

Ministry of Internal Affairs, representatives from the Department of Women's Development and representatives of agencies responsible for inspection

2. Evaluate the satisfaction of all involved parties regarding the implementation of activities that develop the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in the health self-development of Lao women.

Data verification

Checking data to answer the research objectives and obtain complete and complete information and is reliable using the inquiry method observations and interviews with people who provided information .The examination of data in the research was done at the same time as the data collection. This is an immediate check and check during the periodic data analysis until entering the process of summarizing the results of the analysis. Therefore, it was checked once more to get answers that were completely correct and able to answer the research objectives.

Data verification method used data verification using triangulation technique. This is the verification of information by considering the time, place, and person. If there have been changes to the location and person of the person providing the information, will the information be the same or not. We will ask 3 or more people to confirm the information. But if the information obtained is very different. It is necessary to repeat the same interview again. It may be the same group of people or a new one. Then check the general information of every group again. If the information matches, it is considered correct. Then take the data for further analysis.

4. Results

The results of a study of the health self-reliance status of Lao women in Lao PDR.

It was found that health self-reliance is normal. Lao women , eating 3 complete meals (breakfast-lunch-dinner), but some people eat 2 meals (lunch-dinner). Some people eat raw rice which will give additional value.The body, whether it receives complete nutrition or not, some people do not know. But some people receive all 5 groups ,eat seasonal fruits and vegetables,drink 6-8 glasses of clean water per day and sweetened beverages, tea, coffee and soft drinks ,eat fermented food, don't smoke, sleep normally, have naps during the day. In addition, there is some physical activity for good health where physical activity. It is any movement of the body, such as doing housework, traveling, various leisure activities. It is a normal movement of the body every day. As for exercise, there are some such as running and aerobics, but not regularly.Health self-reliance during sickness. There is education to gain knowledge about various diseases such as COVID know how to protect oneself. There is some use of herbal medicine . Having sick, will buy medicine to take yourself. When the symptoms don't improve, will go to see a doctor at a clinic or hospital depending on each person's economic status.In terms of herbs for health care popular garden plants are grown in the backyard gardens of some families. Those found in every family include galangal , lemongrass , basil, chilli, eggplant, gourd, galangal, tomatoes, acacia, rosella, bitter gourd, betel nut, winged bean, mustard greens, coriander, mustard greens, soybeans, onions, fern, garlic, lime, kaffir lime, cucumber, papaya, sweetcorn, fang , pumpkin,

acacia, neem, cassia, khayang, ma-uk, ma-vaeng , lotus, sweet leaf, Bai-ya-nang , bamboo shoots , pineapple, star fruit, gooseberry , jackfruit , tamarind, mango , coconut , olives

The results of developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in Lao PDR.

By changing behavior as follows.

1. Must not eat polished rice, eat local vegetables and beans, eat small fish, eat extra fruit
2. Refrain from eating large animals, poultry, food mixed with chemicals, fermented food, monosodium glutamate, white sugar, soft drinks, beer, liquor, cigarettes, energy drinks. All types of canned food
3. Must eat food that is in season and eat according to the elements of each person
4. Must drink water in the morning immediately after waking up until feel full and exercise to make oneself sweat.
5. Enhance knowledge and understanding of abnormalities that happened to oneself and related to other parts of body, which will lead to more severe abnormalities.
6. Promote nutritional status for good health and happiness.

The result of activities to develop the health self-reliance potential . Has carried out the following activities:

1. Training on taking care of oneself and own family's health.
2. Promote safe food gardening and growing medicinal plants.
3. Training on healthy kitchen gardening.
4. Study visiting of preparing healthy food recipes for the family.
5. Growing more organic plants in public areas of the community.
6. Promote the cultivation of herbs for making medicine and disease-preventing food in every household .
7. Stop using chemicals , fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides. Change to using biological substances.

The activity was shown in fig 1- 5.



Fig 1: Food-safe gardening and growing medicinal plants.



Fig 2: Study visits to prepare healthy food recipes for families.



Fig 3: Training to take care of oneself and ownfamily's health.



Fig 4: Training on healthy kitchen gardening



Fig 5: Training on the use of biological agents

The results of the evaluation of the development of the health self-reliance potential

Evaluation of the development of the health self-reliance potential of Lao women .

It was found that everyone benefited from participating in the activities, both themselves and their families was gotten knowledge, understanding of health care in both normal and sick conditions. There has been a change in general health behavior in terms of eating family cooking

.As for the evaluation of the satisfaction of those involved, namely the executive group involved in developing the potential of Lao women, it was found that the administrators were satisfied that the Lao women have the ability to rely on themselves in health and illness. That requires fewer doctor visits including promoting the cultivation of herbs for making medicine and disease-preventing food in every household.

5. Conclusion and discussion

Conclusion

The research results found that 1) condition of health self-reliance of Lao women in Lao PDR. has normal health self-reliance, which is eaten seasonal vegetables and fruits and fermented

foods, do not smoke, do exercise such as running and aerobics, but not regularly . As for self-reliance in health in the event of illness, there is a study to gain knowledge about various diseases.

2) results of developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in Lao PDR. by means of changing health behaviors and organizing activities to develop the health self-reliance potential , totaling 7 activities as follow : 1) training on taking care of ownself and ownfamily's health. 2) promote safe food gardening and growing medicinal plants. 3)training in healthy kitchen gardening. 4) study visiting of preparing healthy food recipes for the family. 5) growing more organic plants in public areas of the community. 6) promote the cultivation of herbs for making medicine and disease-preventing food in every household; and 7) stop using chemicals, fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides and switch to using biological substances.

Discussion

From the results of the study of the health self-reliance condition of Lao women in Lao PDR found that health self-reliance in normal Lao women eat 3 complete meals, but some people eat 2 meals. Eat seasonal fruits and vegetables, eat fermented food, don't smoke, sleep normally, and have some physical activity for good health. It is a normal physical movement every day. As for exercise, there are some such as running and aerobics, but not regularly. As for self-reliance in health during illness, there is education to gain knowledge about various diseases such as COVID and to know how to protect ownself. Some herbal medicines are used. When have sick, will buy medicine to take car of ownself. When the symptoms don't improve, will go to see a doctor at a clinic or hospital depending on each person's economic status . This is because the target group of Lao women mostly having some education, have enough knowledge to take care of ownself properly. This is consistent with the research findings of Nakphue and Sonthirat (2018) have researched self-reliance health empowerment health knowledge and happiness of the elderly in Thap Yai Chiang Subdistrict ,Phrom Phiram District, Phitsanulok Province. The results of the research found that 1) The elderly have a high level of overall self-reliance while strengthening health literacy and overall happiness was at a moderate level. 2) elderly people with age, marital status occupation, monthly income and different types of family structures. There is a statistical significant difference in happiness at the .05 level. 3) self-reliance health empowerment and health knowledge. There is a positive relationship with the happiness of the elderly at a statistical significance of .001.

Results of developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women in Lao PDR. By means of adjustment change health behaviors , including not eating refined rice, eat local vegetables and beans, eat small fish, eat extra fruit .Refrain from eating food mixed with chemicals, fermented food, monosodium glutamate, white sugar, soft drinks, beer, liquor, cigarettes, energy drinks. All types of canned food. This is because changing these behaviors will make healthy and safe from various diseases. Promote health to enable self-reliance in health and carry out activities to develop the health self-reliance potential .Has carried out the following activities: 1) training on taking care of ownself and ownfamily's health. 2) promote safe food gardening and growing medicinal plants. 3)training in healthy kitchen gardening. 4) study visiting of preparing healthy food recipes for the family. 5) organize a Tu Day event Home family creates bonds 6) growing more organic plants in public areas of the community. 7) promote the cultivation of herbs for making medicine and disease-preventing food in every household; and 8) stop using chemicals,

fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides and switch to using biological substances. This is because all of these activities come from the brainstorming of opinions of those involved in the development of Lao women and are activities that can be carried out appropriately for the target group, the same as research results of Phongphit (2019) was found that community health self-reliance have activities to promote health at each location. Communities have different interests, such as food organization, Thai massage training, using herbs to take care of own health. Take care of family and community establishment of a community health fund to promote careers that are conducive to good health.

As for the results of the assessment of the development of the health self-reliance potential of Lao women. It was found that the participants and those involved were satisfied with the results. Lao women have the ability to be self-reliant in their health, resulting in fewer illnesses requiring medical attention. This is because all activities include health care knowledge training. All study tours encourage Lao women to gain knowledge and understanding in taking care of their health and change their health behaviors, which causes good physical health. When having a minor illness, have the potential to take care of oneself without having to rely on the hospital. The results of this research are different from Dola et al. (2019) who evaluated the results of self-reliance activities for the elderly in terms of health. It was found that, overall, the self-reliance of the elderly in terms of physical, mental, and social health was at a moderate level. with an average (with an average ($\bar{X} = 3.40$))

6. Suggestions

Policy recommendations

1. Results of research on developing the health self-reliance potential of Lao women. It was found that there were a variety of activities. It is therefore necessary to promote policies for agencies involved in the development of Lao women to set policies for Lao women development.

2. The research results found that promoting the cultivation of herbs to make medicine and food for disease prevention. It is necessary and very important to the development of the health self-reliance potential. Therefore, it is deemed appropriate that relevant agencies should establish policies to promote it. Growing herbs to make medicine and food for disease prevention in every household

Suggestions for putting research results into practice

The research results found that Training to take care of your own and your family's health It gives Lao women the potential to be self-reliant in their health, so this should lead to practice in other areas.

Suggestions for next research

1. Study of the model for developing the potential of women in Lao PDR to cover all areas.

2. There should be innovation to develop the potential for self-reliance in the health of women.

Discovered knowledge

1. Self-reliance in health, especially when sick, should use herbal medicine to reduce the cost of expensive Western medicine due to purchasing from abroad.
2. Family thinking should be based on the principles of living and making a living. That is, “grow everything that you eat and eat everything that is grown”. Fill your stomach before there is anything left to distribute, exchange, process, and sell together.

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