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NATTHACHA CHAROONSAK: PROMOTING BREASTFEEDING THROUGH PARTICIPATORY LEARNING : CASE STUDY AT NAYONG DISTRICT, TRANG PROVINCE. THESIS ADVISOR: ASSISTANT PROFESSOR NUNTAVARN VICHIT-VADAKAN, M.S., M.P.H., Dr.P.H., 121 pp. ISBN 974-9599-77-2

This study aimed to examine the effect of training program that employed the methods of participatory learning and home visit. The study was conducted at Nayong district, Trang Province where the study group of 60 mothers and 60 supporters received participatory learning program, as well as, health advice and support from the team researcher during 5 home visits. The control group consisted of 60 mothers, who received routine health education at Wongvisat District, Trang Province and they had similar characteristics as the study group.

The study used questionnaires in collecting quantitative data of breastfeeding knowledge and supporting effort in encouraging mothers to breastfeed. The quantitative data was collected after the participatory training program and at each home visit during the study period. For qualitative data, the study employed in-depth interview and observation in collecting the data during the training program and home visits. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression were used in analysis of quantitative data while analysis of qualitative data was done by descriptive and content analysis.

The results showed that 38 out of 60 subjects (63.3 per cent) in the study group nursed their infants by exclusive breastfeeding up to 4 months, whereas, there were only 5 people (8.3 per cent) in control group. In addition, after the training program scores of breastfeeding knowledge in the study group were significantly higher than before training ( $p$ -value  $< 0.001$ ). The mean scores of breastfeeding knowledge in the study group were also significantly higher than those in the control group at after training ( $p$ -value  $< 0.001$ ).

In analyzing the different factors that may contribute to breastfeeding, the results showed that those who receiving participatory training program were 12 times more likely to exclusively breastfeed for at least one month than those who received routine health education program. More importantly, those who receiving participatory training program were 11 times more likely to exclusively breastfeed for four months than those who received routine education program. Others factors such as age, education, and income of mothers did not statistically contributed to exclusive breastfeeding.

It could be concluded from this study that participatory learning program and home visits helped mothers and supporters to improve their knowledge about breastfeeding and correct breastfed and supporting breastfeeding at greater extent than the mothers who received the routine health education program. Finally, it is recommended that participatory learning and home visit be adopted and integrated into maternal and child education, in order, to effectively improve the health status mothers and children.

Field of study Health Systems Development

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