



# A COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH APPROACH TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFICIENCY AND READINESS OF PRODUCING NURSES FOR COMMUNITIES IN SUPHANBURI PROVINCE

Supaporn Voraroon<sup>\*</sup>, Laddawan Vaisurasingha, Umakorn Jaiyangyeun, Akom Phosuwan

Nursing Instructors at Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Suphanburi, Thailand

<sup>\*</sup>e-mail: supaporn\_wor@hotmail.com

---

## Abstract


The change of national policy of producing nurse was resulting in a shortage of registered nurses in Thailand. The government reduced the capacity of new nurses from 1999 onwards, affecting in a shortage of registered nurses in 2009 to 30,000 people (Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2009). Research need to be addressed how the local community can aid the production of nurses. This research aims to investigate the ability and readiness of local administrative organizations, the primary healthcare hospital and Boromarajonani college of nursing, Suphanburi in order to produce community nurses in Suphanburi province. A Participatory Action Research was used in this study. Data were collect from local administrative organizations, the primary health care hospital and education institute. The process in the implementation of participatory action research was included pre-research phase, research phase and monitoring and evaluation phase. The research results from in-depth interview from the thirteen local administrative organizations found that the two executive managers were already planned to support funding and hiring nurses. However, the rest of eleven organizations weren't planned because of the policies. 2) To success of this project, the local administrative organizations, the primary healthcare hospital and nursing institute should participate and exchange their knowledge on how to select students, the corporation in each institute, education plan, and competency of community nurses and the professional career of community nurses. There was only two organizations were eligible to support funding for students and to be ready for hiring graduated nurses. Many organizations need nurses to work in their community. However, the policies in each organization were not clear and it's limitation on the funding. The recommendations are both each organization should find the solution to support the production of community nurse and the executive manager of local organizations, the primary healthcare hospitals and education institute should discuss about the issues.

---

**Keywords:** Producing nurses for communities, Efficiency and readiness, Participatory action research.

## Introduction

Thailand has faced a shortage of registered nurses for the past decade, and as services expand in cities and rural areas, shortage of nurses is affecting health care quality. The government reduced the capacity of new nurses from 1999 onwards, resulting in a shortage of registered nurses in 2009 to 30,000 people. Research found that only 79.46 percent are working in the nursing services. Problems associated with the shortage of nurses in the country poses a serious amount of human resources and skills needed to meet the health demand of diverse



population in communities (Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2009). To fix the lack of nurses, it has to be a process that aids in the production of nurses in the community by community.

The process of producing nurses from community areas is an important concept which can be implemented to solve the problem of nursing shortages. Although the concepts and operations have been expanded more extensively, there remains a necessity to clarify. In this study need to be focus on the capacity and readiness of each local organization if they can be able to support and operate the project. Because of the differences in capacity, readiness, experience and operational guidelines of local administrative organizations in each area, studies on the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations are required.

Implementation of the participation process in this study is a method which allows participants to discuss, exchanges knowledge and experience, and present information to about the problems, needs, limitations, motivation, practical guidelines to produce community nurses and capabilities of each organization involved in the project.

The Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Suphanburi is a higher educational institute under the jurisdiction of the Praboromarajchanok Institute health workforce development and its main mission is to produce quality resisted nurses. Therefore, the concept of producing nurses from communities, by communities and for communities is an important concept because it can be response to demanding in public healthcare diversity of local health systems. Moreover, the province of Suphanburi realizes the importance of conducting the aforementioned studies on the topic of producing community nurses. Therefore, the study has been conducted by employing participatory processes on the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations in Suphanburi province. The ideas and opinions in this study could help participants make an agreement and guidelines how to implement the project for the communities.

### **Research Objectives**

- 1) To study the capacity and readiness of the local administrative organizations in Suphanburi province can support and participate in the project.
- 2) To analyze the possibility of local governments, Primary Health District hospital, and educational institutions in order to co-produced community nurses in Suphanburi.

### **Research Methodology**

A Participatory Action Research was used in this study. Data were collect from local administrative organizations, the primary health care hospital and education institute. The process in the implementation of participatory action research was included pre-research phase, research phase and monitoring and evaluation phase.

### **Participants**

Quantitative data were collected from 126 local administrative organizations in Suphanburi province to identify the effectiveness and capacity to join the project.

Qualitative data were collected form thirteen voluntary local administrative organizations, thirteen the representative of the primary healthcare hospital and one academic institution.



## Methodology

**Research Instrumentation** comprised the following two parts:

- 1) The survey form on the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations for participating in the production of community nurses developed by the work committee for the plan to produce community nurses by communities and for communities.
- 2) The participatory action meeting was used to analyze the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations if they were eligible to join the production of community nurses project.

## Procedure

- 1) Explore the potential and capacity of local governments to participate in the production of the community nurses by asking surveys questions from local administrative organization executives
- 2) The eligible local administrative organizations join a participatory workshop to discuss and analyze the feasibility of supporting and participating to produce community nurses. Focus group and in-depth interview were used to identify the guideline and planning of this project.

**The research process** consisted of the following two steps:

### 1) Preparation

- 1.1) The research committee reviewed and modified the form for surveying the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations for supporting and participating in the production of community nurses in the areas of 126 local administrative organizations of Suphanburi.
- 1.2) The research committee held a meeting for all teachers in nursing educational institutes to make preparations, build understanding about the research guidelines and the use of survey forms with operational plans for conducting the surveys.

### 2) Operation

- 2.1) Survey of data on the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations in Suphanburi.
- 2.2) Meetings to analyze feasibility, build understanding and draft cooperation agreements for supporting and participating in the production of community nurses by using participatory action research together with summarizing data in the form of capability maps of three-tier coordination organizations.
- 2.3) Summary of the survey findings on data regarding the capacity and readiness to support and participate in the production of community nurses of three-tier coordination organizations nationwide and the names of students educated during the 2009 educational year.

## Data Analysis

- 1) The data from the survey of the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations was analyzed by:

- 1.1) Frequency and percentage distribution of the data on the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations (demographic data regarding local administrative organizations,

number of healthcare employees, healthcare experience, experiences in cooperation with hospitals, educational institutions, desire and readiness to participate in the production of community nurses);

1.2) Content analysis of issues related to healthcare work experience, capacity and readiness in terms of policy, infrastructure, workforce, materials, support equipment and instruments and budgets for participation in the process of producing community nurses and 1.3) Data from the results of the analysis on the feasibility of supporting and participating in the production of community nurses by summarizing the performance and studies on the capacity and readiness of three-tier coordination organizations.

## Results

This study was summarized in two sections. Section one was the descriptive data that identify the capacity and readiness of local administrative organizations from 126 institutes. Only 42.68 percent of questionnaires were returned and the results showed that 24 local administrative organizations were ready and they could support funding to produce nursing in their community. Only eleven local administrative organizations were able to hire graduated nurses and thirteen organizations were willing to join the producing community nurses project.

**Table 1** The demand of local government at Suphanburi province. (N=54)

The capacity of Local Administrative Organizations in Suphanburi	Number
1. Support funding to produce nursing in their community	
No	30
Yes	24
2. The availability of employment.	
No	43
Yes	11

In section two was analyzed the feasibility of producing community nurses from the joint organizations. Thirteen local administrative organizations were joint the project. Only the Srisumran and Songpinong administrative organization were ready to support funding and hiring nurses for their community. In contrast, the rest of eleven administrative organizations were have problems with their policies. Research finding indicated that there are four issues regarding on how this project to be success. 1) How to select students in the community area should be clear and all organizations should plan together. 2) The local administrative organizations could support funding only 30,000 Bath per student. 3) Graduated nurses need to be work with their local community. 4) There should be cooperated between nursing college and the local administrative organizations in order to plan the project every year.



## Discussion

### 1) Capacity and Readiness of Local Administrative Organizations to Support and Participate in the Production of Community Nurses

The research results from in-depth interview from the thirteen local administrative organizations found that the two executive manager were already planned to support funding and hiring nurses. However, the rest of eleven organizations weren't planned because of the policies. Kanitta Nantaboot and colleagues (2009) suggest that the local administrative organizations should find they way that associated with the policies. This would help the local organizations to be ready to producing community nurses.

### 2) Analysis of the Feasibility of Supporting and Participating in the Production of Community Nurses

To success of this project, the local administrative organizations, the primary healthcare hospital and nursing institute should participate and exchange their knowledge on how to select students, the corporation in each institute, education plan, competency of community nurses and the professional career of community nurses.

Wirasak Kruatep (2006) studied the capacity of local administrative organizations the result were associated with this study. Research indicated that the understanding of problems, the cooperation of organizations and the appropriate operation were the most importance to the success project.

### Recommendations for Producing Community Nurses by Communities for Communities

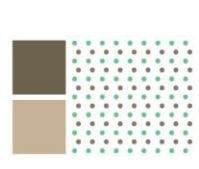
Research found that only two organizations were eligible to support funding for students and to be ready for hiring graduated nurses. Many organizations were need nurses to work in their community. However, the policies in each organization were not clear and it's limitation on the funding. Recommendations of this research are both each organization should find the solution to support the production of community nurse and the executive manager of local organizations, the primary healthcare hospitals and education institute should discuss about the issues.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank to my team this research. My former colleagues from the Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Suphanburi supported me in my research work. I want to thank them for all their help, support, interest and valuable hints.

## References

1. Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council. Nurses decreased significantly over the next 15 years. Thai Health Promotion Foundation; 2009.
2. Kanitta Nantaboot and colleagues. Capacity and Readiness of Local Administrative Organizations in Producing Community Nurses. Nursing Council Journal, 24<sup>th</sup> Year, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of April-June; 2009.
3. Kanitta Nantaboot. Six main systems for the production of community nurses. Institute for Research and Development of Nursing Systems, Nursing Council; 2007.

- 
4. Kanitta Nantaboot. Three-Tier Coordination Organizations – Local administrative organizations-hospitals-educational institutes for the development of community healthcare systems. Institute for Research and Development of Nursing Systems, Nursing Council; 2007.
  5. Kanitta Nantaboot. Nurses of the community, by the community, and for the Community in Thailand, *Regional Health Forum*, 2006; 10: 11-28.
  6. Prawet Wasi. TAO Strategies – The turning point for Thailand. Institute for Research Development of Nursing Systems, Nursing Council; 2008.
  7. Somchai Ruchupan, Pairoj Sujinda, Banton Ondam, Somporn Sangsuwan, Det Pungkacha, Chonlatan Wisarutawong and colleagues. Project to research and develop increased management capacity for local administrative organizations. 2004. Available from: URL: [http://elibray.trf.or.th/project\\_content.asp?PJID=RDG4740006](http://elibray.trf.or.th/project_content.asp?PJID=RDG4740006).
  8. Wirasak Kruatep. Capacity of local administrative organizations in managing external impacts as learned from the real experiences of tambon administrative organizations. 2006. Available from: URL: [www.polsci.chula.ac.th/initiatives/publications.htm](http://www.polsci.chula.ac.th/initiatives/publications.htm).
  9. Wirasak Kruatep. Modern state sector management: evidence-based proof of the capacity of local administrative organizations. 2006. Available from: URL: [www.polsci.chula.ac.th/initiatives/publications.htm](http://www.polsci.chula.ac.th/initiatives/publications.htm).
  10. Wirasak Kruatep. Modern state sector management: evidence-based proof of the capacity of local administrative organizations. 2006. Available from: URL: [www.polsci.chula.ac.th/initiatives/publications.htm](http://www.polsci.chula.ac.th/initiatives/publications.htm).
  11. Direk Pattamasiriwat and colleagues. Project to support good governance and public participation at TAOs: learning with localities, Phase 2; 2005. Available from: URL: <http://library.hsri.or.th/abs/res/hs1232t.doc>.
  12. Kowit Puang-ngam and colleagues. A study of TAO objectives and the strength of hearing public opinion in managing tambon-level community health issues. 2001. Available from: URL: <http://library.hsri.or.th/researchliknk121>.