

## Strengthening the Self-care of Local Fabric Weaving Women in Thailand

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### ABSTRACT

Many studies in Thailand have revealed that local fabric weaving women are faced many health problems related to work because of caring for themselves improperly. They did not have access to information about work and safety and how to care for themselves properly to prevent health problems during working. This action research was implemented to strengthen self-care among fabric weaving women.

Purposive sampling was used to recruit 107 fabric-weaving women and 15 stakeholders from six rural villages in Northeast Thailand. The study was divided into four phases: preliminary data collection and analysis, plan for actions, implementation of the action plans, and evaluation through formative and summative evaluation. To collect data, fifteen focus groups were conducted to identify women's self-care, problems of self-care and need for help. Twelve meetings were conducted to create action plans and for formative evaluation after the implement of the action plans. After implementation of the action plans nine focus group were conducted for summative evaluation, for example to evaluate women' awareness, their self-care behaviors and their ability to address their difficulties. Each focus group discussion took 90 minutes. Additionally, informal interviews, participant observation, and field notes were employed throughout the study. Content analysis was applied to analyze data

The results of the study showed that through the process of action research, it allowed weaving women to participate in identifying their situations of self-care, planning to address the problems that emerged from weaving, and implement an action plan and evaluation. The implementation was education, training, developing media for the women, and developing systems and instruments to protect from the hazards of chemical dyes including building a well to treat chemical dye water. As a result, the weaving women were empowered and care for themselves properly, such as using a mask to protect themselves from work hazards and wearing groves when using chemical dyes. They also worked with good posture during weaving the fabric. They practiced exercise to strengthen their muscle at least four days a week. They treated chemical dyes before pouring them on the ground. Healthcare personnel who cared for weaving women can use the results of the study to enhance self-care of fabric weaving people.

**Keywords :** self-care, local fabric weaving women, action research