

**PARTICIPATION OF VILLAGE HEALTH VOLUNTEERS IN  
NUTRITIONAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM,  
MUANG DISTRICT, SAKEO PROVINCE, THAILAND**

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**ABSTRACT**

This cross-sectional study was conducted on participation of village health volunteers in a nutritional activities program in Muang district, Sakeo province, Thailand. The aim was to assess their level of participation in the nutritional activities and determine the factors related to their participation. A total of 280 volunteers, randomly selected from four sub districts in Muang district, were interviewed by using structured questionnaire during January and February 2006. Results were presented in frequency and percentage, and Chi-square was applied to show the association between independent and dependent variables.

The results of the study revealed that the prevalence of good participation among the volunteers in nutritional activities was 19.64%. More than half (52.86%) and 27.50% of the volunteers had fair and poor participation, respectively. The majority of respondents (more than 50%) were involved actively in seven activities: weighing children under five years old, checking growth curve, informing and discussing with mothers about their children's nutrition status, providing health education about breast feeding, reporting on nutrition status in the village to the health center, discussing with health staff about nutrition problems and cooperating with village committees to solve the nutrition problems in their village. The finding showed that there was significant association between higher participation and socio-demographic and psychological characteristics of the volunteers such as older age, higher level of education, higher family income, and good attitude towards the nutritional activities ( $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ). There was also a significant association between participation and long duration of work, being recruited by selection by the villagers, training and number of training courses attended, having attended training courses recently, material support, support from local leaders, support from health staff, support from villagers and receiving a number of different incentives ( $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ).

This study indicated that type of volunteer recruitment, refresher training and motivational and material supports are essential for improving the participation of volunteers in nutritional activities.

**KEY WORDS : PARTICIPATION / NUTRITIONAL ACTIVITIES / VILLAGE HEALTH VOLUNTEERS / MUANG DISTRICT**

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