

A Development of Health Massage Establishments in Phetchabun Province Thailand using Appreciative Inquiry Application

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Abstract

Thai government sets a policy in order to develop Thailand as Global Medical Hub, so the Health Establishment Act BE 2559 was provided to regulate related business reaching the required standards. The researcher carried out this action study by applying appreciative inquiry to develop health massage establishments in Phetchabun Province, Thailand. The appreciative inquiry is a positive and collaborative approach to change all sizes of organizations that techniques employed by successful entrepreneurs were used to improve unachievable ones. 73 volunteer participants were included then a surveillance was conducted by finding out “superior models” which were passed all of three categories and each passed >60% as well as were passed all important drawbacks and not found any illegal performances. The five superior models employed good techniques with 8 lists: 6 lists in category 1 location and surroundings, 1 list in category 2 safety, and 1 list in category 3 service followed by assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment. The remaining 68 intervention cohorts implemented those techniques for 30 days. The results were passed 91.18% (62 of 68 sites) comparing to 69.12% (47 of 68 sites) before implementation. Classified by each category, it was increasingly passed all of three categories. Moreover, there are some fresh techniques were explored and used for improvement. It is assumed that the appreciative inquiry is based on their experiences, skills, and individual exploration of entrepreneurs and massagers to enhance their establishments reaching achievement.

Keywords: Appreciative inquiry; risk management; health massage establishments; health massage establishments; surveillance.

Introduction

According to health tourism potential in Thailand, the government sets a policy aiming to develop Thailand as Global Medical Hub in order to enhance service quality of establishments related to

medical and health.¹ Health service business becomes popular among Thais and foreigners. Market value expansion of health service business was continually expanded to 4.75 billion in 2012, comparing to 3.24 billion in 2011 which the growth rate was 15% per year. Health massage establishment is a kind of

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health service business that causes national income was highly increased.^{2,3} According to the apparent enlargement, the Health Establishment Act BE 2559 was provided to protect consumers for health service. The Act is to regulate three types of business refers to Section 3 including spa, health massage or beauty massage, and others identified in the ministerial regulations. Department of Health Service Support under Ministry of Public Health is a principal department driving the policy to be practical. A provincial and district sector were authorized to approve licenses and audit the establishments.⁴⁻⁶ A person who required to run a business was asked to submit an application attached identified documents. Then a surveillance was conducted followed by assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment including three categories: location and surroundings, safety, and service. The assessment form was designed by Health Establishment Division under Ministry of Public Health. Before a five-year license was approved and a receipt of business annual fee was issued, the establishment could be achieved the required criteria.⁵

Nowadays, there are 8,795 health massage establishments in Thailand certified by Ministry of Public Health.⁷ However, there are some obstacles for health establishments such as preparation, service providers, service quality, customer's safety, and hidden affairs that influence consumer protection about health service.^{8,9} Some health massage establishments performed some hidden illegal affairs such as prostitution that directly affected to reliability and image for Thais service users as well as foreigners towards health massage establishments.⁴ Furthermore, some are not standardized including place or surroundings, safety, and service^{4,10} that physical and mental effects were come out towards the users. Also, some entrepreneurs are inexperienced and have insufficient knowledge to handle the business followed by the required standards.¹¹ Some massagers are unskilled, not frequently trained and not improved themselves. According to the stated problems above, improvement studies of health massage establishments using collaborative approach were not found after reviewing literatures. Therefore, appreciative inquiry application was used in the action research in order to deal with the obstacles of health massage establishments that lead to meet the achievement.

Appreciative inquiry is an approach to organizational learning and organizational change and it has been globally used by public and private organizations. The approach emphasizes inquiry into strengths rather than focusing on fixing weaknesses. The people were asked positive affirmatives to explore on success and strengths that already exist then the answers can be used as a model to build future direction for improvement. The appreciative inquiry is comprised of four phrases: discovery, dream, design, and destiny. Discovery phrase: in order to explore good techniques, positive questions were asked to identify what successful techniques and strategies. Dream phase: in order to encourage and stimulate creating energy and motivation, achievable goals were set to apply those techniques and strategies. Design phrase: an activity plan was created to implement the techniques and strategies. Destiny phrase: in order to accomplish, the implementation was performed.

The study which was used application of appreciative inquiry was to develop health massage establishments followed by assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment. Firstly, it is to explore new and useful techniques and strategies of accomplished establishments. Then implement these techniques and strategies to improve unachieved establishments.

Materials and Methods

Participants

In the 2020 fiscal year, there were 81 health massage establishments in Phetchabun Province, Thailand. Seventy-three of these are volunteers participated in the study. Firstly, results of a surveillance were sorted out. Next, the five establishments with the highest scores >60% were "superior model" which passed all important drawbacks and not found any illegal performances. The remaining 68 establishments were classified into the "intervention cohort" which implemented the identified techniques and strategies.

Study design

In the discovery phrase, firstly the five entrepreneurs of the superior models were interviewed by the researcher aiming to find out what made them success through positive affirmatives. The three questions were "What are your good stories and good practices in your site?" "What are

your inspirations or what stimulates you to carry out these good things?" and "What made you achieve the inspection?" Later, interviewee answers were considered along with audit results referring to assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment. The good practices were identified in order to further implement.

In the dream phrase, 6 representative of the entrepreneurs which were specifically selected from three zones of Phetchabun Province, 2 for each zone, 6 district public health officers and 2 from the provincial level, and 73 volunteer entrepreneurs had a meeting purposing to set goals and to plan involved processes and performances. The questions asked were "How do you want to improve your business?" "What push you to achieve?" and "Who involves the establishment improvement?"

In the design phrase, the 14 engaged participants from the dream phrase had a discussion about how best to apply the identified techniques in the discovery phrase to meet the goals set in the dream phrase. They developed a plan about how to introduce the successful methods to the intervention cohort. The plan were specified subjects, objectives, advantages, performance timing, monitoring, and outcome reports.

In the destiny phrase, those public health officers visited all 68 establishments in the intervention cohort and explained about the activity plan and how to implement. Each establishment was given 30 days to perform. The researcher continuously followed and monitored during the implementation aiming to identify obstacles through interview with the question "How do you deal with any problems?" To verify effectiveness of the intervention, the officers returned to the establishments for examination after 30-day implementation.

Results

Followed by assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment

including three categories, the five superior models of health massage entrepreneurs employed good techniques and strategies with 8 lists: list no. 1-6 of category 1 location and surroundings, list no. 7 of category 2 safety, and list no 8 of service.

Category 1: location and surroundings

1. Establishment name board which was made from available hardwood was beautifully handwritten and it was obviously displayed in front area.
2. Interior divisions were affordable cabinets, interweaved bamboo, and sewn rag or unused cloth which were used as partitions to divide service unit.
3. Lockable doorknobs were removed and rag or unused cloth was replaced in order to protect inner locking. (In cases of rented house, the owners did not allow to remove any doors or doorknobs).
4. Trash lid was made from available materials such as cardboards or scraps of wood.
5. Washbasin was made from holed plastic basin and waste pipe was inleted.
6. Changing unit was designed by cornered cabinet with curtain, bended sticks attached with sewn cloth as curtain, two modified hula hoops on the top and at the bottom attached cloth in the middle looking like a cylinder, and interweaved bamboo making like a threshing basket with cloth covered.

Category 2: safety

7. An assistant equipment of service user was a squeezing toy.

Category 3: service

8. Service lists and service charge board were made from wood board or cardboard with beautiful handwriting and clearly shown.

Table 1: Identified good techniques for development of health massage establishments

| Techniques | Parlor 1 | Parlor 2 | Parlor 3 | Parlor 4 | Parlor 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Establishment name on board with handwriting | √ | √ | × | × | × |
| 2. Interior partition - affordable Cabinet | × | √ | × | × | × |
| - interweaved bamboo | √ | × | × | √ | × |

Contd... Table 1: Identified good techniques for development of health massage establishments

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| - sewn rag as a curtain | × | × | √ | × | √ |
| 3. rag or unused cloth instead of removed doorknob | × | √ | √ | × | × |
| 4. Trash bin | | | | | |
| - cardboards or scraps of wood as trash lid | × | √ | × | × | √ |
| - lid of plastic bin | √ | × | × | √ | × |
| 5. Washbasin: holed plastic basin with inleted waste pipe | × | × | √ | × | √ |
| 6. Changing unit | | | | | |
| - cornered cabinet with curtain | × | × | √ | × | × |
| - sticks attached with sewn cloth as curtain | √ | × | × | × | × |
| - two hula hoops with cloth covered | × | √ | × | × | × |
| - interweaved bamboo like a threshing basket with cloth covered | × | × | × | √ | √ |
| 7. A squeezing toy as assistant equipment | × | √ | √ | √ | × |
| 8. service list and charge on board with hand-writting | √ | × | √ | √ | × |

Remarks: √ employed the techniques, × not employed the techniques

Before the 68 entrepreneurs classified as "intervention cohort" employed the good techniques, their establishment surveillance was passed 69.12% (47 of 68 sites). In the other hands, their inspection after implementation was passed 91.18% (62 of 68

sites). Prior to the intervention, classified by each category: it was 76.47% in location and surroundings, 72.06% in safety, and 75.00% in service. After the implementation, it was obviously increased to 95.59%, 91.18%, 94.12% respectively.

Table 2: Surveillance results of health massage establishment of the intervention cohort

| Inspection | Before | | After | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| | Passed | Failed | Passed | Failed |
| Passed parlors all categories | 47(69.12%) | 21(30.88%) | 62(91.18%) | 6(8.82%) |
| Passed parlors classified by each category | | | | |
| Category 1 location & surroundings | 52(76.47%) | 16(23.53%) | 65(95.59%) | 3(4.41%) |
| Category 2 Safety | 49(72.06%) | 19(27.94%) | 62(91.18%) | 6 (8.82%) |
| Category 3 Service | 51(75.00%) | 17(25.00%) | 64(94.12%) | 4(5.88%) |

Remarks: Passed parlors mean they were passed all of three categories and each passed >60% with passed all important drawbacks and not found any illegal performances

Discussion

In this study the researcher applied the appreciative inquiry to improve health massage establishment in Phetchabun Province, Thailand followed by assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment, and it became successful. After implementing good

techniques identified by the five superior models, inspection results were obviously increased, so it was assumed that the strategies were practical and productive. The appreciative inquiry approach required collaboration of all participants including entrepreneurs, masseurs, government officials as well working together in order to reach the standards which was consistent with Barrett's study¹² that

organizations engaging in appreciative inquiry were reported to have increased system-wide collaborative competence. Besides, some fresh techniques and strategies used by successful entrepreneurs were found such as service user report which were unexplored potential and a key component of AI. Also, the participants engaged in a meaningful process that acknowledge their experiences, skill and enthusiasm. They have great enthusiasm to provide positive ways shifting form problems to solutions offering a new practice to improve themselves and to promote the establishment reaching achievement.^{13,14,15} For example, entrepreneurs and masseurs were dressed with unique uniform attached with individual name tags. While further studies are needed to explore appreciative inquiry process in various healthcare contexts that consistent with¹⁶ appreciative inquiry is recommended for sustainable development through exploration, preparation, and intervention, there was an observation about the assessment form of the health service standard for health massage establishment. It was divided into three categories including location and surroundings, safety with many related lists, and service with an involved list. The assessment form seems to focus on physical features, but it was not covered service quality features consistent with Kruthakul 2012 mentioned the service is a vital component creating customers' impression, reliability as well as good image.¹⁰

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Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This current study was approved by Ethical Review Committee for Human Research, Phetchabun Provincial Public Health Office. (reference no.1/20 - 06 -24/02/20)

Human and Animal Rights: Not applicable

Consent For Publication: All the participants were given an information letter explaining the purpose and the nature of the study, confidentiality, voluntary participation at any time with no consequences.

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