

Health Literacy Intervention on Health Behavior among Thai Adults

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to assess the effects of a Health Literacy (HL) intervention on Health Behavior (HB) to mitigate the risk of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). The NCD mortality rate in Thai adults was projected to rise from 71% in 2013 to 75% in 2023.

Methods: A quasi-experimental design was used, selecting 1,000 Thai adults aged 20–65 with NCD risks via stratified random sampling. The sample included working adults from universities (556) and those living in rural communities (444). The intervention was developed based on Sørensen's HL concept and Bandura's learning and behavior modification concepts, using mixed media such as animation, infographics, and e-books. Data were collected via a 58-item, 5-point scale questionnaire, and analysed using ANCOVA.

Results: 1) Most participants exhibited NCD risk factors, such as lack of regular exercise (46.4%) and consumption of sweet/fatty/salty foods (42.5%). 2) Post-intervention, participants showed significantly higher mean scores for 4 compounds of HL: accessing, understanding, appraising, and applying health information and using health services. ($t=12.39, 10.03, 9.79, \text{ and } 11.64$, respectively; $p<.01$) than before the intervention, 3) HB mean scores for sufficient living, self-care, and safety behaviors were also significantly higher, and 4) The university group scored significantly higher on HL subscales, while the community group scored significantly higher on sufficient living behaviors.

Conclusion: The HL intervention is an effective measure for Thai adults at risk of NCDs and can be successfully conducted in both university and community settings.

Keywords

Health literacy, health behavior, health, intervention, NCDs.