

THESIS TITLE: SELF RELIANT OCCUPATION OF FARMERS

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ABSTRACT

This operations research has two specific objectives of which one is to investigate occupational problems and needs of the rural farmers, and the other is to search for some appropriate self-reliant occupations. The sample for this study consisted of 80 farmers from Ban Laow Yai community, Tombol Nakha, Munjakeeree District in Khonkaen Province. Quantitative data were collected from these farmers via questionnaire interviews at times before and after the programmed interventions. In addition, qualitative data were solicited from home visits, community assembly meetings, small group discussions, and participatory observations during the project implementation period. These data included information on the respondents' socio-economic status, the general community profile, as well as the problems and needs related to occupational practices.

The programmed interventions for this study included a set of training sessions, study tours to other communities, an establishment of occupation groups, practice of occupational related activities, marketing system development, providing supervision and monitoring. For the data analysis, this research project employed SPSS/PC to provide a combination of statistical values namely, percentage distributions, means, t-test, F-test and Chi-square.

The results of the study revealed that: 1) The Laow Yai community farmers had faced with a number of critical occupational problem, such as a lack of capitals and funds for investment, a lack of occupational group organization, a declining market price for produces, and inadequate technical support form both the government and private sectors. 2) These farmers wanted to earn their living from farming of pesticide-free vegetables, raising native chicken, weaving, and other agricultural produces. 3) As resulted from the interventions, these farmers had more knowledge and understanding of how to become more self-reliant in their own occupation. There was a clear trend of moving toward more self-reliant among these farmers. They organized among themselves an occupational group to assist each other on their family chores. They were able to produce enough foods for family consumption, and became thrifty. The occupation which showed the highest tendency to become most self-reliant was pesticide-free vegetable growing, and the least was fabric weaving. 4) The differences, in terms of income generation, expenditurse, working conditions, knowledge and skills for engaging in self-reliant occupations between pre and post interventions, were statistically significant at 0.05 level.