

Thesis Title The Effects of Empowerment Education on
 Smoking Prevention Program for the
 Secondary School Students,
 Suphanburi Province

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ABSTRACT

Cigarette smoking has been recognized as the leading cause of diseases and deaths. The most effective way to attack the smoking problem is a prevention on smoking onset among youths, especially, the secondary school students who are the significant group of the smoking initiation. Evidences showed that smoking among youth associated with personal and social factors. Peer influence is the most important social factor that affects adolescence smoking. Therefore, it is necessary to empower youth to be able to resist smoking persuasion. The study of the effects of the empowerment education-smoking prevention program for the secondary school students aimed at evaluating the effects of the program on the changing of self-esteem, self-efficacy, smoking attitude, participation in nonsmoking activities and smoking behavior of the students, as well as determining the influencing factors of the students' smoking behavior.

Non-randomized control group pretest-posttest design was used for this study. The study samples were 962 students in grade 7 to grade 9 of the schools in Suphanburi province which were selected to be the experimental group and the control group. Forty-eight student leaders were recruited from 12 classes of the experimental group, according to the set criteria, to receive the 5-day-empowerment education training course. The student leaders were facilitated to develop necessary skills, such as communication, problem solving and group working skills, included smoking refusal skill; and to be able to set a plan and conduct peer education and nonsmoking activities for their friends and in the school after the training. Periodical meeting among the student leaders, investigator and health teacher were set along the study for experiences sharing and solving the problem. Data were collected at pretest, 4-month posttest and 8-month follow up by using a bogus pipeline technique that collected saliva sample then followed by self-report questionnaire; smoking behavior checklist,

observation and interviewing were also used. The Chi-square, t-test, Z-test, Discriminant Analysis and other descriptive statistics were used in data analysis.

The summary findings were the empowerment education for smoking prevention program effected significant improvement of self-esteem, smoking attitude and participation in nonsmoking activities, as well as prevented smoking behavior among the student leaders. For the target students, there were significantly positive change in self-esteem, self-efficacy and regular smoking behavior in the experimental group than in the control group at the posttest. But at the follow up, smoking attitude of the experimental group was significantly less improved than the control group, while regular smoking behavior of the experimental group was significantly more positive changed than the control group. The ranking of seven significant influencing factors on smoking behavior of the students from great to small relatively important were smoking of close friends, smoking attitude, sex, self-efficacy, school achievement, grade level and daily expense.

This study revealed that the empowerment education can be implemented in a school-based smoking prevention program. The training of student leaders to be change agents and to be proactive in nonsmoking activities is an important strategy in smoking prevention that can create the critical mass for nonsmoking value among the student themselves. But the program which focus on empowering students needs a real and continuous support from school administrative, teachers and policy. Moreover, this kind of program should be done in a long-term and the qualitative approach should be also used in evaluating the effects of the program. The study of empowerment strategy for school health promotion should be more concerned and studied in the future.