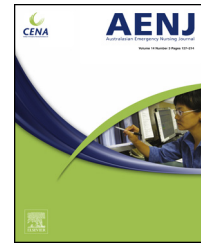




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RESEARCH PAPER

The quality of life of flood survivors in Thailand, Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University

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KEYWORDS

Quality of life;
Flood survivors;
Shelter for flood
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Summary

Background: The flood crisis of 2011 was a disaster of the highest order in Thailand and Nakhon Pathom Province was among those hit. The purpose of this research was to explore quality of life of flood survivors in Thailand living in a flood shelter established by Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University.

Methods: This study was a descriptive research. The research instrument was WHO quality of life-brief Thai questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF-THAI). The data were collected by self administered questionnaires, or read to the subjects who cannot read, then evaluated the answers by themselves on November, 2011. Descriptive statistics, independent-sample *t*-test and one-way ANOVA were used in the data analysis.

Results: The study found that: (1) The quality of life score was found to be at a moderate level of 65.9% and a high of 34.1%. The social relationships domain of quality of life was at the highest level (47.6%). The poorest quality of life score was from the environmental domain (24.9%); (2) There was no significant difference between gender ($t = 0.004$, p -value = 0.997) or age ($F = 1.356$, p -value = 0.260), with quality of life.

Conclusion: The quality of life evaluation of flood survivors should be further monitored after the recovery and a intervention programme should address their respective needs and covers all aged and genders.

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What is known

- The quality of life of the flood survivors was not good enough especially environmental domain.
- Knowing about factor related to quality of life lead to successful management of Flood Victims at the Shelter.

What this paper adds?

- Quality of life level should be further monitored after returning to normal life.
- Relationships with other people, and perceived their provided assistance from other people improve quality of life.
- Management of environment in flood victims at the shelter more likely to improve quality of life.

Introduction

Thailand was faced with severe flood during the 2011. The crisis situation began in the end of July, flood soon spread through the Northern, the Western and the Central of Thailand, a large number of people in several provinces got into difficulties. Nakhon Pathom Province is located in the Western region, the flooding situation in the province occurred when roads, residential and commercial properties had been damaged by overflow from Taweewattana canal, Mahasawat canal, and Yong canal since 2nd September 2011 totally flooding 7 districts, 99 sub-districts, 854 villages, 164,396 people, 45,651 households, and 6 deaths.¹ The flood survivors needed to evacuate their home and took refuge in several shelters. Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University realised such difficulties, so the university established the shelter for flood survivors with collaborating with the provincial public health office and the local government since October until 7th November, 2011.²

The Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University shelter, provided an area in the hall of the Student Affairs building, serving 645 people, provided accommodations, food, clothing, medicine, health services centre, and health consultation, as well as generous services by nursing instructors and students. The University allowed the flood survivors to participate in taking care of members in each zone as a village that consisting of 4–5 families, assigned team members to work shifts for taking charge in cooking, cleaning residential areas and toilets, security, and coordinating with the University officers and outsiders. During the flooding crisis, Thai people showed their hospitality in terms of donation of money, and necessities for daily supplies.

The survivors living together in the shelter among a variety of people with different families and backgrounds would affect their overall quality of life. There is no research about quality of life of flood survivors in Thailand. Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying the quality of life among flood survivors that would be beneficial for efficient shelter management. The findings of the study would be helpful for instructors, faculties, universities, and related agencies for the purpose of improving or monitoring flood

survivors' health and quality of life after returning to normal life. This would fulfil the mission of the University that regarding the community development and empowerment.

Aims of the study

The aim of this research was to explore quality of life of flood survivors in Thailand living in a flood shelter established by Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University.

Materials and methods

Study design

A descriptive exploratory method was used to conduct the study.

Regarding the research subject advocacy, the researcher explained and gave information about the to all randomly selected subjects before collecting the study data, and allowed the subjects to ask for information in detail. The individual confidential data were presented in the overview without mentioning name of the informants so as not to cause damage. The subjects had the right to deny answering questions at any time without giving reasons that would not affect their welfare.

Population

The population was 341 flood survivors who aged over 18 years at the Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University shelter from October to November 2011² chosen by a simple random sampling method. The subjects were assigned individual identification and selected each one number at a time until the researcher got 200 subjects. The sample size was calculated by the calculating method of Taro Yamane.³

Instrument

The research instrument was the questionnaire on demographic data including gender and age, and the WHO quality of life-brief Thai questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF-THAI). The questionnaire was modified by Mahatnirunkul and another in 1997 in the Thai context. The questionnaire has reviewed and revised for the English language in the WHOQOL-BREF by experts in English and Thai language and to test their understanding with a fundamental difference of Thai people to adjust the item that had a problem and retest for the third round. The reliability of the instrument with the reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.841, and content validity score of 0.652.⁴

The quality of life questionnaire contained 26 items for measuring both perceived objective and self-report subjective with 5-level rating scale, comprising 23 positive items and 3 negative items for measuring 4 domains of quality of life including physical domain, psychological domain, social relationships domain, and environmental domain. Score of quality of life ranged from 26 to 130 points. After calculating score of all items, the researcher compared the scores with the standard criteria as follows: 26–60 points indicated poor

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