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The study of the participation of medical students of Chulalongkorn Unversity in extracurricular activities.

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This descriptive research aimed to study the participation of medical students of Chulalongkorn University in extracurricular activities, as well as related factors, in the 1993 academic year. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 644 medical students of the first to fifth-year classes while 535 students responded (83.1%). The participation varied among different activities. There were significant correlations between the participation in some activities and certain population characteristics, such as sex and class. Nevertheless, the study showed no difference between the participation of conventional students and of bypass students in extracurricular activities. In addition, the participation associated with most of the tested motivating factors, as well as some supportive factors particularly support from parents, and opportunities to work with friends. The participation of the students in all activities also significantly associated with their attitude.

Key word : *extracurricular activities, medical students, participation*

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จิรุตม์ ศรีรัตนบัลล์, กาญจน์สุดา ทองไทย, ธันยวีร์ ภูธนกิจ, อัญชลี คนตรง. การเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมนอกหลักสูตรของนิสิตแพทย์ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย. จุฬาลงกรณ์เวชสาร 2537 กรกฎาคม ; 38 (7) : 399-405

การศึกษาเชิงพรรณนานี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมนอกหลักสูตรของนิสิตแพทย์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัยในปีการศึกษา 2536 รวมทั้งปัจจัยอื่น ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้อง โดยใช้แบบสอบถามชนิดตอบด้วยตนเอง ทั้งนี้ในนิสิตแพทย์ชั้นปีที่ 1 ถึง 5 จำนวน 644 คน โดยมี 535 คน ตอบกลับมาคิดเป็นร้อยละ 83.1 พบว่าการเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมนอกหลักสูตรมีความแตกต่างกันไปตามประเภทของกิจกรรม การเข้าร่วมในกิจกรรมบางประเภทมีความสัมพันธ์อย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติกับลักษณะทางประชากร เช่น เพศและชั้นปี อย่างไรก็ตามไม่มีความแตกต่างของการเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมระหว่างนิสิตที่สอบเข้ามาจากชั้น ม.6 และนิสิตที่สอบเทียบเข้า นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่าการเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมมีความสัมพันธ์กับปัจจัยจูงใจที่ได้ทดสอบแล้วเกือบทุกปัจจัย รวมทั้งปัจจัยสนับสนุนบางปัจจัย เช่น การสนับสนุนจากบิดามารดา และโอกาสที่ได้ทำงานร่วมกันเพื่อน การเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมนอกหลักสูตรในทุกด้านยังมีความสัมพันธ์อย่างมีนัยสำคัญทัศนคติอีกด้วย

The medical service system in Thailand has been developing very rapidly since the past few years. However, there exists one administrative problem in the system that medical doctors seem to have problems working as a team with other health personnel.[1] This interpersonal skill has to be trained while studying. In general, curriculum in medical schools bring about competent physicians in treating patients, but there is no class on how to work well with others. Thus, extracurricular activities take the role in order to help medical students develop skills besides medicine.[2]

Nevertheless, there is a decline of interest of medical students in the activities. Moreover, the M.6 equivalent examination of the Ministry of Education provide opportunities for high school students to bypass their last year and enter directly into universities. These students have been said to be bookworms with little interest in extracurricular activities.

Consequently, this research aimed to study participation of medical students of Chulalongkorn University in extracurricular activities, as well as related factors including population characteristics, motivating factors, supportive factors, and attitude, and compare the participation of conventional students who entered universities from M.6 with "bypass" students who were from M.5 or M.4.

Materials and Methods

The study was cross-sectional descriptive, using self-administered questionnaires for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of five parts asking on personal information, motivating factors to participate in extracurricular activities, supportive factors for the participation,students' attiitude towards extracurricular activities, and their participation in the activities. It was tested for validity and reliability in 30 students and corrected for completeness before the study.

Between January 15 and March 11, 1994 , the questionnaires were distributed to all the first to fifth-year medical students of the 1993 academic year of the Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University without sampling, excluding the fourth and fifth-year students who studied outside Bangkok and all "new-tract" students who already had bachelor s degrees. The questionnaires were collected back on the same day.

The collected data was, then, transformed into codes regarding a codebook and analyzed using SPSS/ PC+. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze qualitative data using percentage and ratios. Quantitative data was analyzed in term of means and standard deviation. Inferential statistics use Chi-square test to test associations of data.

The frequency or the number of participation, as well as a role of a student, were not considered in this study. One-time involvement in an activity was considered similar to being organizers of many activities.

Results

The study of attitude and participation of medical students of Chulalongkorn University in extracurricular activities in the 1993 academic year was performed in the total 644 medical students of the first to fifth-year classes. 535 students responded, equivalent to 83.1% The ratio of male to female studentswas about 1.2 to 1, and most respondents, 28.2%, were from the first year. The mean of cumulative grade point average (GPAX) of all respondents was 3.03, with a standard deviation of 0.46. More thana half of the respondents (53.9%) were bypass students. Only 30.1%of the respondents were conventional students.

Among the respondents, medical students participated academic activities the most (83.7%) whereas the next one was sports (70.3%). There was least participation in social development activities (15.5%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Participation of medical students in extracurricular activities (n=535).

Participation in activities	Respondent	
	No.	%
Academic	448	83.7
Sports	376	70.3
Social development	83	15.5
Art & Culture	184	34.4
Student relations	294	55.0

The factor most frequently found to motivate the medical students to participate in extracurricular activities was to have fun (79.3%). To utilize the free time productively was also the common motivating factor (74.0%). The respondents did not need to gain recognition by participating in the activities very much (Table 2).

Table 2. Motivating factors in participating in extracurricular activities (n=535).

Motivating factors	Respondent	
	No.	%
To improve personality	274	51.2
To gain knowledge	303	56.6
To utilize free time productively	396	74.0
To meet new friends	310	57.9
To have fun	424	79.3

Furthermore, the respondents considered opportunities to work together with friends as a supportive factor for participating extracurricular activities the most (86.5%). About a half thought that living in dormitories should support their level of participation. Only 12.9% of the respondents considered a personal car to be supportive (Table 3).

Table 3. Supportive factors in participating in extracurricular activities (n=535).

Supportive factors	Respondent	
	No.	%
Living in dormitories	265	49.5
Good academic performance	189	35.3
Support from parents	182	34.0
Support from lecturer	126	23.6
Working with friends	463	86.5
Having personal car	69	12.9

It was found that the mean scores of the attitude of the medical students towards the groups of extracurricular activities were between 3.50 and 3.85. The student relations activities had the highest mean score. Considering the mean score as a cutoff point between positive and negative attitude, more than half of the respondents had negative attitude towards every group of activities, especially in sports (70.3%) and student relations (72.9%) (Table 4.).

Table 4. Attitude of medical students towards extracurricula activities (Full Score = 5; n=535).

Attitude towards major groups of activities	Mean Score	% of respondents	
		Positive	Negative
Academic	3.60	42.1	57.9
Sports	3.80	29.7	70.3
Social Development	3.51	46.9	53.1
Art & Culture	3.52	45.8	54.2
Student Relations	3.85	27.1	72.9

Regarding the tests of associations between population characteristics and participation in extracurriculr activities of the medical students, the statistics showed significant associations between sex and social development activities, and between class and sports, as well as art & cultural, and student relations activities. Mode of admission and GPAX of the students had no significant association with the participation in any activities (Table 5).

Table 5. Associations between Population characteristics and Participation of the students in extracurricular activities (number in p-value from X^2 test).

Population characteristics	Participation in extracurricular activities				
	Academic	Sports	Social Development	Art & Culture	Student Relation
Sex	0.27	0.26	0.03*	0.61	0.29
Class	0.46	0.003*	0.17	0.04*	0.00008*
Mode of admission	0.43	0.42	0.56	0.41	0.74
GPAX	0.34	0.47	0.43	0.11	0.10

Note * statistically significant at = .05

There were also statistically significant associations between all the motivating factors and participation of the medical students in all the group of extracurricular activities, except between to gain knowledge and student relations, between to have fun and social development, and between to gain recognition and sports (Table 6).

Table 6. Associations between Motivating factors and Participation of the students in the activities (number in p-value from X2 test).

Motivating factors	Participation in extracurricular activities				
	Academic	Sports	Social Develop.	Art & Culture	Student Relation
Improve personality	0.00027*	0.00187*	0.00008*	0.00122*	0.00136*
Gain knowledge	0.00031*	0.021 *	0.003 *	0.0066 *	0.18899
Utilize free time	0.00012*	0.00032*	0.019 *	0.01428*	0.00057*
Meet new friend	0.00063*	0.00011*	0.008 *	0.00135*	0.00103*
Have fun	0.00000*	0.00000*	0.34	0.00002*	0.00000*
Recognition	0.00100*	0.06	0.00069*	0.00003*	0.00417*

Note * statistically significant at = .05

Furthermore, it was found that support from parents and working with friends associated with participation of the medical students in most groups of the activities. Living in dormitories associated only with sports activities. However, there was no significant supportive factor for social development activities. (Table 7).

Table 7. Associations between Supportive factors and Participation of medical students in the activities (number in p-value from X^2 test).

Supportive factors	Participation in extracurricular activities				
	Academic	Sports	Social Development	Art & Culture	Student Relation
Living in dormitories	0.46	0.03 *	0.35	0.48	0.67
Good academic performance	0.057	0.22	0.67	0.08	0.45
Support from parents	0.03	0.008 *	0.09	0.00019*	0.14
Support from lecturers	0.13	0.096	0.68	0.31	0.87
Working with friends	0.0004*	0.00000*	0.52	0.004 *	0.007*
Having a personal car	0.26	0.67	0.54	0.37	0.28

Note * statistically significant at = .05

In addition, there were strong associations between attitude and participation of the medical students in all the groups of extracurricular activities (Table 8).

Table 8 Associations between Attitiude and Participation of medical students in extracurricular activities (number in p-value from X^2 test).

Participation in activities	Academic	Sports	Social Development	Art & Culture	Student Relation
Attitude towards activities	0.03*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*

Note * statistically significant at = .05

Discussion

Regarding the study, it was found that the attitude and participation of the medical students in social development activities were in the lowest rank relative to other activities. This result might reflect a small concern and interest of the students on community and social problems, as well as their responsibilities for them. It might also explain the finding of medical students having poor attitude towards working in rural areas after graduation.(3)

Moreover, the association between sex, as well as class, with the participation of the students in some activities,such as sports, might originate form the nature of the activities and the course workload of the students. However, mode of admission was not a significant factor which meaned that the bypass students participated in the activities no less than the conventional ones in all the groups of activities.

The associations between the motivating factors and the participation of the students in the activities, seemed logical. For example, students who participated in social development activities should want to help others, not to have fun. Besides, most medical students expressed their concerns about interpersonal ability or communicating skills and might expect that the activities could improve it.

Suggestion

1. To motivate medical students for more participation in extracurricular activities, the faculties should make their students realize that their needs could be satisfied by the participation.

2. The students, as well as their parents, should be provided with adequate informationabout extracurricular activities to develop good attitude which would ultimately lead to more participation and supports.

3. Further studies were recommended concerning the following topics:

- Factors affecting participation of medical

students in social development activities

- The utilization of free time of medical students
- The skills of leadership and human relations of medical graduates with different background of participation in extracurricular activities

Conclusion

This descriptive research aimed to study the participation of medical students of Chulalongkorn University in extracurricular activities in the 1993 academic year, and the related factors. The participation of the medical students varied among the five groups of activities. There were significant associations between the participation in certain activities and particular population characteristics, such as sex and class. However, there showed no difference in the participation level between conventional students and bypass students in terms of extracurricular activities. In addition, the participation associated with most of the tested motivating factors, as well as some supportive elements particularly support from parents, and opportunities to work with friends. According to statistical significance, the students overall attitude towards all activities also affect their level of participation.

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