

Facilitators and Barriers of Extra-curriculum Research among Medical Students in Thailand: The Student Perspective

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Background:

Research training is essential in a modern undergraduate medical curriculum. Undergraduate research in medicine is important to expose and encourage the students towards the newer advances and research practices.

Objective:

The present study aim to assess the perception of medical students towards doing extra-curriculum research, and identifying the facilitators and barriers faced by them.

Methods:

This cross-sectional study was conducted among 1st -6th years medical students at Phramongkutklao College of Medicine in January 2020. An anonymous online survey was designed to assess demographic data, perceptions, facilitators and barriers towards extra-curriculum research activity. Data were analyzed using STATA version 14.

Results:

606

- Total of students

80%

- Responded survey

11%

- Had done extra-curriculum researches

58%

- Expressed their interest in participating in research during study

Barriers

- Curriculum overload (51%)
- Time constrain (47%)
- Inadequate training/opportunities in research (46%)
- Lack of interest in research experience (40%)
- Lack of mentor guidance and cooperation (29%)
- Lack of motivation (27%)

Facilitators

- Focus on pursuing higher degrees (53%)
- Improving their potential in research skill (28%)
- Having mentor guidance/role model (27%)

Discussion and conclusion:

- Thai medical students showed a significant interest in research, with
- A majority of the students planning to participate in extracurricular research activities during studying in the medical school, and
- Having enthusiasm to be involved in research throughout their medical careers.
- Important issues have addressed by students i.e.
 - decreasing the curriculum overload
 - more training workshops on research methodology
 - integration of research methodology into undergraduate curriculum
 - more research mentors and cooperation

Take-home Message: Medical education policies should aim to counteract the facilitators and barriers identified in this study to develop medical curriculum which is able to encourage medical students to put more enthusiastic about getting involved in research. Given the right support, medical students' interest in research can be successfully nurtured.

Keywords: Extra-curriculum research, Facilitators, Barriers, Medical students

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