

## Pharmacy Education & Pharmacy Practice (PE)

### PE-O-2 Factors associated with students deciding to study Pharmacy or Medicine at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Puthisastra, Cambodia

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#### INTRODUCTION

Most students, after being awarded with a high school diploma, have made a decision to study at health science academic institutions under various majors, particularly including Pharmacy and Medicine. However, the reasons behind this decision remain unclear.

#### OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to investigate the factors which make students decide to study Pharmacy (PM) or Medicine (MM) at Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), University of Puthisastra (UP).

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was performed via structured interviews of 138 high school graduates who submitted their application at Faculty of Health Sciences FHS, University of Puthisastra (UP). The data analysis was performed by IBM SPSS Statistics 22. The statistical technique used in the interpretation of the analysis included frequency count, arithmetic mean, median, percentage, cross tabulation, Pearson chi-square test and Independent samples t-test.

#### RESULTS

The findings indicated that the enrollment number of male students accounted for 30.4% (n=42, age in years: 19±1.65) and of female students accounted for 69.6% (n=96, age in years: 18±1.28), which was not significantly different in ages ( $P > 0.05$ ). The percentages of students who chose to study PM or MM were 78.3% (n=108) or 21.7% (n=30) respectively. Male and female students enrolling in PM constituted 18.5% (n=20) and 81.5% (n=88) respectively and in MM, 73.3% (n=22) and 26.7% (n=8), respectively. The students were aware of the UP through their relatives (Mean = 1.0, SD= 1.73). The students' relatives were past or present students at UP studying in the majors of Pharmacy (42.2%, n=19), Medicine (17.8%, n=8), Medical Laboratory Technology (13.3%, n=6), Nursing (11.1%, n=5), Midwifery (11.1%, n=5), Dentistry (2.2%, n=1) and Information Technology (2.2%, n=1). The students' awareness of UP were related with their relatives studying at UP in the majors of Pharmacy, Medicine, Medical Laboratory Technology, Nursing, Midwifery and Information Technology with percentages of 39.5% (n=15), 18.4% (n=7), 15.8% (n=6), 13.2% (n=5), 10.5% (n=4) and 2.6% (n=1) respectively ( $P < 0.05$ ). The students decided to study the majors of Pharmacy or Medicine at UP because of "Qualified Experimental Equipment for Practical Work" on an average of 2.3 (SD=0.96) or 2.1 (SD=1.07) respectively, finding no significant difference between majors ( $P > 0.05$ ).

#### CONCLUSION

Collectively, this research finds that the major factors encouraging students to study at FHS is "Qualified Experimental Equipment for Practical Work," and recommendation to enroll in FHS by their relatives studying in the majors of Pharmacy, Medicine, Medical Laboratory Technology, Nursing, Midwifery and Information Technology of FHS. This knowledge is of importance in formulating effective enrollment strategies in the development of Faculties of Health Sciences.

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