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Health behaviours of undergraduate students in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is study of relationship between a varieties of health behaviours of undergraduate students in the College of Allied Health Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand. The students of Health Science Program, Aesthetic Health Science Program, Public Health Program and Thai Traditional Medicine Program were represented the sample group in this research. Undergraduate students (N=562) enrolled in second semester, 2014. Male students and female students were 87.5 % and 12.5 %, respectively. The research tool for data collection was the checklist with 0.807 reliability index. The interpreting of results was calculated by statistical analysis. The results found that the most average of healthy behaviours in students was brushing teeth after wake up and before sleep 85.6%. Moreover, less healthy behaviours was exercise regularly at 3.6%. As a result of most health risk behaviours, 36.0% of students in aesthetic health science program eating spicy food, 20.9% was constipation regularly and 19.4% of students in Thai traditional medicine program was stress and insomnia. The students was self-care with well-being in mental health of 62.8 %. Moreover, 8.4 % was general medical examination in every year. As a Results, good health and life satisfaction are related to a variety of health behaviours in undergraduate students of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

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Keywords: Health behaviors; undergraduate students; University

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1. Introduction

The 11th National Economic and Development plan of 2012-2016 stated the purpose of decreasing volume of health risk factors among Thai people as a whole by creating physical and emotional happiness (Ministry of Public Health of Thailand). University is a critical time of transition when students develop and integrate health-related behaviors into their lives. Study life can be demanding and stressful for a new student. Many researcher reported 60% of undergraduate students rated stress levels as high or very high. University is also a time that requires more independence, initiative, and self-regulation of behaviors. The undergraduate student not only faces academic challenges, but also challenges to maintaining healthy behaviors in this new environment. Although a number of authors have examined the challenges a new student faces when beginning college life such as alcohol use, sleeping time, weight gain, stress. There is limited research on the relationship between health behaviors such as physical activity, diet, stress, sleep, alcohol use, and ratings of life satisfaction in this population. Health risk factors can be created by developing knowledge of health and skills to look after one's self, family, community and the nation. It also focuses on decreasing all risk factors from workplaces and household, developing the system of health awareness and capturing the hidden risks in development process. More importantly, the public health care support is very essential and should not be missed. This statement is coherent with the national health development plan which specifies the proactive strategy of health support, disease prevention and control for the reduction of risk factors in health. Citizens should have physical and mental well-being. Moreover, people should also possess knowledge and skills in health care at the individual, family and community levels. They should participate in formulating public policies regarding health care. Public health services should be improved through better quality and coverage, and promote the use of alternative medicines. The supply of health personnel should be redistributed more equitably and a national health database should be created. Monetary and fiscal measures for health care should be managed in an efficient and sustainable manner. It's also essential to have strategy in children development in physical, emotional and intelligent terms. Drugs awareness should also be part of the plan, as well as the measure of controlling the risk factors among people in the society. More importantly, exercising should be promoted as a way to be healthy (Thongmuang, 2013; National Statistic Office).

National statistical office also runs the same survey in 2011. Populations were 57.7 million people in this survey. The survey research found out that only 26.1% of people exercised in the previous month. Men also performed exercise more than women 27.4% and 25.0% respectively. Comparing to the last survey, the volume of national exercise percentage has dropped down for 3%. When looking at 17.1 million patients admitted in hospitals last month, 73.1% of the patients didn't do any exercise for at least a month. Also, 76% of 3.1 million of patients admitted within last year didn't do much exercise either (Maneesawang, et. al. 2007).

2. Method

In this research, the undergraduate students as Participants were 562 of the College of Allied Health Science students. The data was collected in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Staff handed out the questionnaires method to students. The questionnaires were took 20 minutes. Staff collected the questionnaires and checked the data at the end of the day.

3. Results and Discussion

The undergraduate students were completed the questionnaires all of sample group. The percentage of male students and female students were 87.5 % and 12.5 %, respectively. The average of the students' body mass index, blood pressure, and heart rate was 20.37, 109/67, and 83, respectively. The result of health behaviors, brushing teeth after wake up and before sleep was 85.6 %, eating cooked and clean foods was 48.4 %, self-care with well-being in mental health was 42.7%, defecating in everyday was 41.1%, having some activities to reducing stress was 37.5%, washing hands before eating was 28.5 %, drinking water of 6-8 glasses per day was 27.2%, vegetable and fruits consumption for laxative was 24.6%, sleeping time for 6-8 hours per night was 19.9% and exercise regularly was 3.6%, respectively as shown in table I.

Table 1. Practice percentage of health behaviors

Health behaviors	Practice percentage				
	everyday	often	sometimes	rarely	never
1. Brushing teeth after wake up and before sleep.	85.6	12.3	2.0	0.2	0.0
2. Washing hands before eating.	28.5	44.5	25.3	1.6	0.2
3. Eating cooked and clean foods.	48.4	45.0	6.0	0.5	0.0
4. Exercise regularly.	3.6	18.9	50.2	25.8	1.6
5. Self-care with well-being in mental health.	42.7	47.5	9.6	0.2	0.0
6. Drinking water 6-8 glasses per day.	27.2	38.3	29.4	4.8	0.4
7. Fruit and vegetable consumption for laxative.	24.6	75.4	27.8	3.2	0.2
8. Defecating in every day	41.1	38.8	16.7	3.4	0.0
9. Having some activities to reducing stress	37.5	47.7	13.9	0.5	0.4
10. Sleeping time for 6-8 hours per night	19.9	39.9	32.9	6.8	0.5

Health behaviors practice of the sample group 562 students in different majors as shown in table II. Aesthetic Health Science students were 89.2% of brushing teeth after wake up and before sleep, 32.5% of Public Health students were washing hands before eating, 54.2% of Public Health students were eating cooked and clean foods, 46.9% of Health Science students had self-care with well-being in mental health, 42.0% of Health Science students drinking water 6-8 glasses per day, 28.4% of Thai Traditional Medicine students Fruit and vegetable consumption for laxative, 50.6% of Health Science students had defecating in everyday, 38.7% of Thai Traditional Medicine students had some activities to reducing stress and 23.0% of Aesthetic Health Science students Sleep for 6-8 hours per night. Only 4.9% of Health Science students were exercise regularly.

Defecating in everyday students in the College of Allied Health Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University is difference health behaviors of students in Chandrakasem Rajabhat University (Chantharapanya, 2008) Defecating in everyday mean of score of students in the College of Allied Health Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University was 3.18 .It is less than mean of score on Chandrakasem Rajabhat University students (3.41).

The results of daily practice health behaviors for exercise regularly in students , sometimes exercise regularly of Thai Traditional Medicine students was 50.2%), rarely exercise regularly (25.8%), often exercise regularly (18.9%) ,exercise regularly in everyday (13.6%) and never an exercise (1.6%) ,respectively. The health behavior of defecating in everyday among the sample group shown that most Health Science students had defecating in everyday (50.6%) ,Thai Traditional Medicine students (44.6%), Public Health students (39.2%) and Aesthetic Health Science students (31.7%) ,respectively.

Table 2. Practice percentage of daily practice health behaviors in different major students

Daily practice health behaviors	Practice percentage			
	Health Science	Aesthetic Health Science	Public Health	Thai Traditional Medicine
1. Brushing teeth after wake up and before sleep.	87.7	89.2	81.7	84.7
2. Washing hands before eating.	29.6	19.4	32.5	31.5
3. Eating cooked and clean foods.	40.7	41.7	54.2	52.3
4. Exercise regularly.	4.9	4.3	2.5	3.2
5. Self-care with well-being in mental health.	46.9	42.4	46.7	39.2
6. Drinking water 6-8 glasses per day.	42.0	38.8	39.2	36.0
7. Fruit and vegetable consumption for laxative.	23.5	18.7	25.0	28.4
8. Defecating in every day.	50.6	31.7	39.2	44.6
9. Have some activities to reducing stress.	33.3	37.4	38.3	38.7
10. Sleep for 6-8 hours per night.	14.8	23.0	16.7	21.6

From the results of health risk behaviors as shown in table III, Health risk behaviors of stress and insomnia of Thai Traditional Medicine students were found stress and insomnia condition (19.4%) , Health Science students (12.3%), Aesthetic Health Science students (10.1%) and Public Health students (9.2%) ,respectively.

Moreover, health risk behaviors of having buffet, Aesthetic Health Science students were found often buffet (10.1%) , Thai Traditional Medicine students (7.2%), Public Health students (6.7%) and Health Science students (3.7%) respectively.

As a results, healthcare behaviors students in the College of Allied Health Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University was difference healthcare behaviors with students in Chandrakasem Rajabhat University. Ranking number 1 of healthcare behaviors students in the College of Allied Health Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University was eating spicy food .On the other hand, ranking number 1 of healthcare behaviors students of Chandrakasem Rajabhat University students was sleeping time for 6-8 hours per night (Maneesawang, et. al. 2007).

Table 3. Practice percentage of health risk behaviors in different major students

Health risk behaviors	Practice percentage			
	Health Science	Aesthetic Health Science	Public Health	Thai Traditional Medicine
1. Alcohol beverage drinking	1.2	2.2	0.8	1.8
2. Smoking	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0
3. Eating spicy food	30.9	36.0	26.7	30.2
4. Stress and insomnia	12.3	10.1	9.2	19.4
5. Often eat buffet	3.7	10.1	6.7	7.2
6. Constipation regularly	16.0	20.9	10.0	15.8
7. None of the above behaviors	35.8	20.1	46.7	25.7

Aesthetic Health Science students were constipation regularly (20.9%) ,Health Science students (16.1%), Thai Traditional Medicine students (15.8%) and Public Health students (10.0%) respectively. Finally, Public Health students were none of the above behaviors practice (46.7%), Health Science students (35.8%), Thai Traditional Medicine students (25.7%) and Aesthetic Health Science students (20.1%), respectively.

4. Conclusion

The results of this study show that most students in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University enjoy exercising and realize how important exercise is to their health. However, only a few numbers of students do not like to exercise. As a result, university should provide some support and encouragement by providing equipment and space to exercise as well as running various activities to serve different interests. Because exercising activities not only help our students stay fit and healthy, they also can create fun, enjoyment, happiness and bond among students, university staff and teachers. However, this research should not be done only in university level. It should be introduced to secondary schools, demonstration schools and other offices under Suan Sunandha. The future research should include the factors that affect exercise behavior, such as personal issue, family support, etc. Lastly, the extended research about students who don't like to exercise should be initiated in order to get more ideas of limitation to exercise. University should provide some support and encouragement by general medical examination in every year to students and got them known their health condition.

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