

# Exploring Needs of Medical Students for Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities in A Public Sector Medical University

Muhammad Daood, Sumera Ehsan, Sehar Sajjad, Affifa Yaqoob, Humayun Suqrat Hasan Imam

## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study was designed to exploring needs of medical students for co-curricular and extracurricular activities in a public sector medical university. **Study Design:** Cross Sectional Study. **Settings:** Faisalabad Medical University, Faisalabad. **Duration:** 16 months from July 2017 to October 2018. **Methodology:** A properly designed and tested questionnaire was distributed among students of all years. Extracurricular activities were divided into five categories: Games, Clubs, Societies, Workshops and Language learning. Sample size was 269 out of which 56 students belonged to 1st year, 58 students were from 2nd year, 47 students classified among 3rd year, 42 students were from 4th year and 56 students belonged to final year. **Results:** It is found that Badminton is the highly rated sport, accounted for 57.2% followed by video games (53.15%) and cricket (54.62%). 183 (68.02%) are interested in First Aid Society, 120 (44.60%) prefer Media & Photography club, 119 (44.23%) want to be part of student council. Career counseling 175 (65.05%) and stress management 172(63.94%) workshops were highly demanded. As for languages majority students showed interest in learning English 186 (69.14%) and Arabic 169 (61.33%). **Conclusion:** It is concluded that majority of the students have shown a keen interest in various extracurricular and co-curricular activities. All medical colleges and universities are recommended to have proper physical education curriculum and medical education department which should offer standardized activities ranging from sports, languages, various societies and lastly workshops to address the needs of their students.

**Keywords:** Extracurricular activities, Exploring, Students.

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of co-curricular and extracurricular activities in a student's life is recognized by universities globally. These activities are found to be very important in developing a student's personality and even improving class room learning.<sup>1</sup> At different places it has different organization, sometimes teacher supervises and in other student-led activities are encouraged.<sup>2</sup>

Extracurricular activities like games, sports, music etc. are necessary to inculcate positive life style behavior among youth.<sup>3,4</sup> WHO recommends proper physical activity time during school and college life to ensure healthy living thus preventing chronic disease burden.<sup>5</sup> A study found that students who take part in extracurricular activities gain good GPA in studies.<sup>6</sup> In latest education system (IB education), music, games and learning a foreign language are now part of proper curriculum.<sup>7</sup> Higher education commission has a basic requirement for playground for approval of any university.<sup>8</sup>

A big proportion of preclinical students have been suffering from stress, burnout and emotional disorders<sup>9</sup> therefore promoting such activities and encouraging students to participate is the responsibility of any institution. All these activities promote team work and leadership skills among participants and keep them engaged in personality building exercises. Different universities

all over the world are providing facilities for the extracurricular activities for students along with different programs and courses which help their students in shaping their personality.<sup>10</sup> LUMS university, one of the leading universities in Pakistan, houses up to 28 different societies.<sup>11</sup> NUST university is among the top 500 universities of the world, it also provides over 28 societies for their students.<sup>12</sup> Our college has been upgraded to a medical university therefore it is a need of the hour to take different initiatives for providing such facilities and to encourage students to take part in different activities.

## METHODOLOGY

**Study Design:** A cross section study.

**Settings:** Faisalabad Medical University, Faisalabad-Pakistan.

**Duration:** 16 months from July 2017 to October 2018.

**Methods:** A pre-tested validated questionnaire was used to collect data. Four main areas (with 43 choices) of sports, societies/clubs, capacity building workshops and interest in learning different languages were asked in the questionnaire. After getting ethical permission from institutional ethical committee, survey forms were distributed among medical students and it were returned after completing the questionnaire. Total 300 forms were distributed and 269 completed forms were returned. A reasonable number of

volunteer participants from each class of MBBS were included in the study keeping in mind the male, female ratio of the medical students.

## RESULTS

1<sup>st</sup> year and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students showed more interest in learning cardiopulmonary resuscitation as compared to senior classes. Senior students have more interest in joining student's councils while junior students were interested in literary and debating

societies. First aid care society was the most highly (67.5%) rated.

64.48% students (Female (42.3%) have showed interest in attending stress management workshops and communication skill was the 2<sup>nd</sup> most needed (62.28%). There was a significant finding about gender and choice for the activities as boys rated more for video games and badminton while girl students were interested in badminton and cricket. No significant difference was found in any other category.

**Table 1: Q#1 Participation in extracurricular activities**

		YES	NO
Male	Frequency (Percentage)	84 (81.55 %)	19 (18.44%)
Female	Frequency (Percentage)	99 (59.63%)	67 (40.36%)

**Table 2: Q#2 Sports**

	Surely Frequency (Percentage)		Not Interested Frequency (Percentage)		May be Frequency (Percentage)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Badminton	63 (61.16%)	92 (55.42%)	16 (15.53%)	29 (17.47%)	24 (23.30%)	45 (27.11%)
Basketball	28 (27.18%)	35 (21.08%)	48 (46.06%)	94 (56.62%)	27 (26.21%)	37 (22.38%)
Volleyball	19 (18.44%)	13 (7.43%)	53 (51.45%)	118 (71.08%)	31 (30.09%)	35 (21.08%)
Football	57 (55.33%)	60 (36.14%)	23 (22.33%)	72 (43.37%)	23 (22.33%)	34 (20.48%)
Cricket	62 (60.19%)	84 (50.56%)	21 (20.38%)	52 (31.33%)	20 (19.41%)	30 (18.07%)
Hockey	31 (30.09%)	24 (14.48%)	45 (43.68%)	117 (70.48%)	26 (25.24%)	25 (15.06%)
Bowling	29 (28.15%)	38 (22.89%)	54 (52.42%)	89 (53.61%)	20 (19.41%)	39 (23.49%)
Gymnastics	32 (31.06%)	45 (27.11%)	39 (37.86%)	97 (58.43%)	32 (31.06%)	24 (14.46%)
Netball	18 (17.47%)	32 (19.28%)	57 (55.33%)	109 (65.66%)	28 (27.18%)	25 (15.06%)
Handball	30 (29.12%)	37 (22.29%)	56 (54.36%)	93 (56.02%)	17 (16.50%)	36 (21.69%)
Squash	22 (21.35%)	34 (20.48%)	53 (51.45%)	108 (65.06%)	28 (27.18%)	24 (14.46%)
Swimming	46 (44.66%)	67 (40.36%)	23 (22.33%)	60 (36.14%)	34 (33.00%)	39 (23.49%)
Table Tennis	35 (33.98%)	53 (31.93%)	36 (34.95%)	73 (43.96%)	32 (31.06%)	40 (24.10%)
Tennis	44 (42.71%)	52 (31.32%)	37 (35.92%)	84 (50.60%)	22 (21.35%)	30 (18.07%)
Video Games	66 (64.70%)	77 (46.38%)	25 (24.27%)	51 (30.72%)	12 (11.65%)	38 (22.89%)

**Table 3: Q#3 Societies/Clubs**

	Surely Frequency (Percentage)		Not Interested Frequency (Percentage)		May be Frequency (Percentage)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Literary & Debating Society	50 (48.54%)	58 (34.94%)	25 (24.27%)	73 (43.96%)	28 (27.18%)	35 (21.08%)
Environment Protection Society	47 (45.63%)	57 (34.34%)	34 (33.01%)	51 (30.72%)	22 (21.36%)	58 (34.94%)
First Aid Society	68 (66.02%)	115 (69.28%)	26 (25.24%)	22 (13.25%)	9 (08.73%)	29 (17.47%)
Horticulture Society	39 (37.86%)	43 (25.90%)	42 (40.78%)	62 (37.35%)	22 (21.36%)	61 (36.75%)
Media & Photography club	56 (54.37%)	64 (38.55%)	37 (35.92%)	63 (37.95%)	10 (09.71%)	39 (23.49%)
Student Council	54 (42.43%)	65 (39.16%)	28 (27.18%)	65 (39.16%)	21 (20.34%)	36 (21.69%)
Dramatic Club	47 (45.63%)	55 (33.13%)	44 (42.72%)	90 (54.22%)	12 (11.65%)	21 (12.65%)
Music Club	44 (42.72%)	52 (31.33%)	43 (41.75%)	93 (56.02%)	16 (15.53%)	21 (12.65%)
Guitar Playing	35 (33.98%)	50 (30.12%)	50 (48.54%)	82 (49.40%)	18 (17.48%)	34 (20.48%)
Piano Playing	23 (22.33%)	38 (22.89%)	58 (56.31%)	100 (60.24%)	22 (21.36%)	28 (16.87%)

**Table 4: Q#4 Workshops**

	Surely Frequency (Percentage)		Not Interested Frequency (Percentage)		May be Frequency (Percentage)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Humanism	61 (59.22%)	76 (45.78%)	25 (24.27%)	55 (33.13%)	17 (16.50%)	35 (21.08%)
Research Social Science	41 (39.81%)	62 (37.35%)	36 (34.95%)	73 (43.98%)	26 (25.24%)	31 (18.67%)
Personal Development Planning	58 (56.31%)	91 (54.82%)	23 (22.33%)	43 (25.90%)	22 (21.36%)	32 (19.28%)
Career Counselling	73 (70.87%)	102 (61.45%)	17 (16.50%)	36 (21.69%)	13 (12.62%)	28 (16.87%)
Interpersonal Skills	57 (55.34%)	94 (56.63%)	27 (26.21%)	49 (29.52%)	19 (18.44%)	23 (13.86%)
Communication Skills	65 (63.11%)	102 (61.45%)	21 (20.39%)	39 (23.49%)	17 (16.50%)	25 (15.06%)
Training of House Officers	44 (63.11%)	95 (61.45%)	36 (20.39%)	49 (23.49%)	23 (16.50%)	22 (15.06%)
Writing Skills	58 (56.31%)	90 (54.22%)	26 (25.24%)	53 (31.93%)	19 (18.45%)	23 (13.86%)
Stress Management	62 (60.19%)	114 (68.67%)	20 (19.42%)	28 (16.87%)	21 (20.38%)	24 (14.46%)
CPR Workshop	57 (55.34%)	98 (59.04%)	30 (29.13%)	53 (31.93%)	16 (15.53%)	15 (09.04%)
Self-Directed Learner	50 (48.54%)	100 (60.24%)	32 (31.07%)	37 (22.29%)	21 (20.39%)	29 (17.47%)
Basic Surgical Skills	42 (40.78%)	74 (44.58%)	47 (45.63%)	89 (53.61%)	14 (13.59%)	3 (01.81%)

**Table 5: Q#5 Languages**

	Surely “Frequency (Percentage)”		Not Interested “Frequency (Percentage)”		May be “Frequency (Percentage)”	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
English	80 (77.67%)	106 (63.86%)	14 (13.59%)	31 (18.67%)	9 (08.74%)	29 (17.47%)
Arabic	66 (64.08%)	99 (59.64%)	19 (18.45%)	35 (21.08%)	18 (17.48%)	32 (19.28%)
Spanish	28 (27.18%)	51 (30.72%)	59 (57.28%)	82 (49.39%)	16 (15.53%)	33 (19.88%)
French	27 (26.21%)	64 (38.55%)	64 (62.14%)	67 (40.36%)	12 (11.65%)	35 (21.08%)
Persian	28 (27.18%)	46 (27.71%)	54 (52.43%)	77 (46.39%)	21 (20.39%)	43 (25.90%)
Chinese	24 (23.30%)	54 (32.53%)	60 (58.25%)	64 (38.55%)	19 (18.45%)	48 (28.92%)

**DISCUSSION**

In our study, the percentage of participation in extracurricular activities (70.59%) is reassuring and was slightly higher than a study reported by Mazen Almasry et al (60.3%).<sup>13</sup> Under-representation of female students in extracurricular activities can be explained firstly by their inclination towards studies and academic activities as compared to extracurricular activities which is reflected in their academic performance<sup>14</sup> secondly because of country specific and cultural reasons. Also, it can be seen globally that men are more actively participating in games than females. Male students show higher preference for video games and this is in accordance to a study conducted by Frederick W Kron et al.<sup>15</sup> In our study female students like to play badminton and cricket while survey in England shows interest of woman in netball and hockey<sup>16</sup> this could be due to cultural difference and availability of resources for the sports activity. Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (Basic Life Support) is one of the lifesaving procedures which every medical student must know how to perform. Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest have a very high mortality and thus public must be given education regarding BLS and medical student should learn as soon as he enters the medical college. Complete knowledge about BLS among medical students in Pakistan is significantly low<sup>17</sup> therefore our junior classes showed higher preferences as compared to senior classes for CPR workshops so it will help them tackling life threatening situations. The reason why senior classes showed less preference is that it is mandatory for them in final year.

Stress is very common among undergraduate medical students<sup>18</sup> and it continues during post graduate training and even in doctor’s personal life. Doctors have the most suicide rate as compared to any other profession.<sup>19</sup> Majority of students want to learn how to cope with this dreadful situation and thus showing a large interest in stress management workshop and this should be held regularly not only for medical students but for doctors also.

Communication skills training has been found to improve doctor-patient communication<sup>20</sup> communication is an integral part of a doctors training. Many serious issues can be dealt properly with good communication skills. Interestingly students are well aware of this fact and they rated this skill very high. Whereas students showed interest in learning different languages. This is not planned at institutional level. Medicine is a 5-year graduation program and there must be opportunities for students to learn different languages as is being offered in other universities All the people who are responsible for designing the curricula of medical students must emphasize on ECAs and they must include research-based and non-research-based ECAs in curricula. Some can be made elective, selective and mandatory. Most importantly, the integration of ECA should be properly planned and guided so that students can get the maximum out of ECAs for their personal development and stress management<sup>9</sup> without affecting academic performance. This potential effect on academic performance can be prevented by strict faculty supervision, evaluation programmes and career counselling.

As our college is upgraded to university therefore the administration must make arrangements to meet the needs of the students.

## CONCLUSION

All medical colleges and universities are recommended to have proper physical education curriculum and medical education department which should offer standardized activities ranging from sports, languages, various societies and lastly workshops to address the needs of their students.

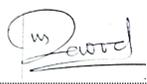
## LIMITATIONS

This study was conducted in Medical college. Dental and nursing college students are not included in this study. It can be conducted on big scale by getting participants from all colleges.

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