

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

From the result of the study, the average score is high in the extensive workload and disturbance of clinical practice; but it is low in facilities, peer competition, interpersonal relationships and student-instructor relationships. It indicates that extensive workload and disturbances of clinical practice are more potential causes of stress in dental students; while other factors are less potential.

For the whole student

From the results, the average score in every dimension except in facilities fall between 1 and 2. It show that all dimensions are possible factors to cause stress.

Extensive workload and the clinical environment, which average score of these dimension from the whole student is 1.79 and 1.67 respectively, are found to be most possible factors to cause stress. The extensive workload is defined to the excess of examination, work, quality requirement, skilled need and time limitation. The clinical environment means any factors or situations that could disturb clinical practice. The score result reveals that students

concern about factors that could affect on their grade and graduation, therefore, the factor that would have an effect on grading and graduating could cause stress.

Learning environment, which the average score of this dimension from the whole student is 1.398, shows potential to cause stress to dental students. Interpersonal relationships, student-instructor relationships, peer competition, and facilities, of which average score from the whole student are 1.37, 1.11, 0.99 and 1.05 respectively, show smaller effect to cause stress to the dental students. From these results reveal that any factors that would have an impact on their grading and graduating can cause stress to dental students while other factors that no impact on grading and graduating have less effect to them such as the facilities that shows lowest rank.

Recoding the data into 0 and 1 would indicate the perception of stress in each item. The top 5 result that have much impact on their grading and graduation is the extensive amount of work, the deadline of work, the frequency of examination, the obstacles in clinical practicing and the difficulty of work. In top 10 ranking, all items are issue about extensive workload and clinical practice. Item 11, which obtained 6th rank, is the issue about the compatibility with friend, shows that the dental students are concerned about the factors that effect on their graduation and also concern about relationship between friends.

Similar to Garbee's study(20), the report shows completing graduation requirements is the most concerned factor that could cause the stress.

Furthermore, the study in Chulalongkorn dental students in 1991(13), it says time factor in dental subjects, preparation and time schedules are also related to the stress. These indicate in the same way as this study.

From the comparison between American and South East Asean (Singapore) dental school, Singapore dental students show students are mostly stressful in completing graduation requirements, the amount of work and deadline of their works.

The above studies pointed towards the same direction that students are most concerned and anxious about the factors that directly relate to the completing graduation.

For the separate class year

The results obtained here revealed in the same way with the whole research population. The score of every dimension, which falls between 0.846 and 2, indicates that every dimension has potential to cause stress.

As for workload and the clinical environment, the average score of these dimensions for the separate class year is in between 1.69 and 1.89, showing that they are the most potential factors to cause stress. Workload obtained the most average score for every separate class year except for the 6th year. The most average score of the 6th year is the clinical environment, which is due to the dental subjects in the 6th year is mostly concentrated in clinical practice. The reason is because they are familiar with the amount of work and the difficulty of work also. They have been practicing for a period of

time so they have the skill in completing the requirement. Nevertheless, the factors that could effect to their work can cause the stress. In the 4th year dental students, the stress found in clinical environment is facing the new situation, whereas the stress from the clinical environment factor is lower in the 5th year students. This could perhaps result from adaptability. From the study, we can conclude that the students have great anxiety about their grading and graduation. Thus, anything that may affect their work and completing graduation has the potential to cause stress to the dental students. The factor that could cause the stress varies from year 1 to year 6.

Interpersonal relationships show the most effect on the 1st year dental students and show the least effect on the 6th year dental students. The reason for this could be the familiarity with friend or maturity. The 6th year students should have known and have been familiar with their friend more than the 1st year students did.

Peer pressure and competition shows the same effect in every class year. The average score of the 1st to the 6th year is 1.04, 0.94, 1, 0.98, 1.04 and 0.92 respectively. The result shows that friends have certain effect to all students in every class year.

Recoding the data into 0 and 1 explains whether the students perceive stress in each item or not. The result shows that the top 5 is extensive workload and clinical environment in every class year excepts in the 2nd year, which the learning environment is ranked in the top 5. In the 2nd year, dental classes are more condense on lecturing and laboratories so they have to attend lecture and laboratory classes more than any other class years, namely

everyday. So it's not surprising that the result comes out this way. The mainly factors that cause stress were ranked in top 10 are extensive workload, clinical environment and compatible with friends. This result is consistent with that of the whole research population. That is to say, factors that affect the students most are completing requirement and concerns about friends.

The result shows that stress will develop in the student if there are too much examination or the too extensive workload with time constraint. However, this study could not confirm the presence of such situations. Therefore, further studies are still required. If those situations occur, it would be the responsibility of the faculty administrator to evaluate that the frequency of the examination and the amount of work are corresponding to time limitation. However, we need some stress to push energy in ourselves.

Facilities and peer competition show little effect to these students, while compatibility with others show some effect.

Comparing the potential stressor of each class year

Although the potential factors that cause the stress in each class year is not the same, all items listed are factors concerning issues that could effect on their completing graduation and compatible with friend.

Limitation of the study

One of limitation of this study is the response rate is not high; although the researcher distributed the questionnaire and asked the student for enrolling this research by herself. Details of questionnaire-maker are anonymous so it is impossible to trace the unanswered questionnaires.

Furthermore, the students were invited during class time to complete the questionnaire. Therefore, some of them may not be in that class making it impossible to pursue further additional collection after that class.

Moreover, inappropriate time launching the questionnaire could effect on the result of the study. Although the researcher chooses to launch the questionnaire in neutral time, namely the period which students shouldn't have examination. Nevertheless, the 5th and 6th year students still have some tests.

The questionnaire in this study aim to find out whether the perceived stress in the situation whatever it was happened or not. The students who had faced the situations directly tend to score higher than the students who had not. Consequently, some bias could possibly occur.

As the questionnaire is newly developed for this study, the result might not be reading compatible with others. However, its overall result could be compared with other studies.

Comment on scale

The scale used in this study has been designed to cover all dimensions of potential stressors. The initial test of the questionnaire's reliability and validity reveals satisfactory result. Since the number of pretest sample was quite limited, the questionnaire was re-tested in the study population. The result in re-test reliability is similar to the original.

The result of factor analysis shows that some items may be grouped in many dimensions. Although seven factors were conducted at present, item1-2

and item10-11 should be in the same dimension of item 6-9, while Item28-29 should be in the same dimension of item 12-14. In the re-grouping of the items, the item1-2, item 6-9 and item 10-11 could be grouped into “interpersonal relationships”, and item 12-14 and 29 could be grouped into “Peer pressure and competition”. However, all items except item 29 (that should be grouped in “Peer pressure and competition”) could be grouped in the same dimension as pretest but not quite well.

Further study

To acquire more information on the stress-related factor in dental students, the further study should be done. Studying the same group of dental students over time or in the same class year in different group of dental students will tell us that the potential stressor in each class year is different.

The potential stressors from this study should be evident that was happened. If those situations happen and cause excessive stress, the administrator of the faculty should pay considerable attention and do something in relieving stress. For example, consulting team should be arranged for stressed students. The relative factors to those potential stressors should be found in further study. These relative factors can tell us that which student may prone to stress so the administrator can early detect the problems.