

## ข้อสะท้อนของนักศึกษาต่อการฝึกภาคสนามวิชาเวชศาสตร์ชุมชน: การศึกษาเบื้องต้น

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### Students' Reflection on Community Medicine Fieldwork: A Preliminary Study

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**หลักการและวัตถุประสงค์:** มหาวิทยาลัยขอนแก่นได้จัดให้มีการฝึกภาคสนามของวิชาเวชศาสตร์ชุมชนมากกว่า 30 ปีแล้ว การเรียนรู้โดยการฝึกภาคสนามเป็นการส่งเสริมนักศึกษาได้ลงมือปฏิบัติด้วยตัวเอง ให้ผู้เรียนกำหนดการเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเอง และมีความรอบรู้ถึงทรัพยากรในชุมชน การให้ผู้เรียนสะท้อนความคิดเห็นถึงสิ่งที่ได้เรียนรู้จากการฝึกภาคสนามจะทำให้ผู้สอนเข้าใจความนึกคิดของผู้เรียนได้ลึกซึ้งมากขึ้น การศึกษาครั้งนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาข้อสะท้อนของนักศึกษาต่อการฝึกภาคสนามวิชาเวชศาสตร์ชุมชน

**วิธีการศึกษา:** นักศึกษาจะผ่านกระบวนการเรียนรู้ของการฝึกภาคสนาม วิชาเวชศาสตร์ชุมชนที่กำหนดโดยภาควิชา หลังจากกระบวนการฝึกภาคสนามเสร็จสิ้นแล้ว นักศึกษาที่อยู่ในบ้านเดียวกันจำนวน 12 รายถูกสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกด้วยการใช้แบบสัมภาษณ์แบบมีโครงสร้าง ในประเด็น การสัมฤทธิ์ผลการเรียนรู้ตามสิ่งที่กำหนดไว้ สิ่งที่นักศึกษาได้เรียนรู้จากการฝึกภาคสนาม และ คุณค่าของสิ่งที่ได้เรียนรู้ ข้อมูลจากการสัมภาษณ์ถูกรวบรวมวิเคราะห์เป็นสาระสำคัญ แล้วแปลผลเป็นข้อสะท้อนจากการฝึกภาคสนาม

**ผลการศึกษา:** นักศึกษาได้เรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับวิถีชีวิตในชุมชนซึ่งช่วยให้เขาเข้าใจถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างชีวิตและการเจ็บป่วย นักศึกษาได้เรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมชุมชนซึ่งมีอิทธิพลต่อความเชื่อเรื่องสุขภาพ และทัศนคติต่อสุขภาพ นักศึกษาได้เรียนรู้และเข้าใจมากขึ้นว่าทำไมบางครั้งชาวบ้านเลือกการรักษาทางเลือกแทนการรักษาแผนปัจจุบัน การฝึกภาคสนามสอนให้เขาทำงานร่วมกันเป็นทีม ส่งเสริมให้เขาเรียนรู้ด้วยตนเองและกำหนดวิธีการเอง

**Background and Objectives:** Khon Kaen University, Thailand, has set up a fieldwork for community medicine for more than 3 decades. Fieldwork education could promote student-centered practice, self-directed learning, knowledgeable of community resources. Student's reflection to fieldwork would enable teachers to understand deeper what students learned. This study aim to determine students' reflection to the community medicine fieldwork.

**Methodology:** Students completed the process of fieldwork study set by community medicine department. After finishing the fieldwork, 12 students, staying in the same house, were in-depth interviewed using structured interview form. The interviews were about achievement of objectives of the fieldwork, what they learned and how it was valuable to them. Content analysis was performed and interpreted into learnt experiences.

**Results:** The students have learnt the villager's lifestyle which helped them to understand the connection between lifestyle and illness. They learned about villager's culture which influenced people's health belief and attitude to health. They have learnt and understood better that villagers, sometime, chose alternative treatment instead of modern treatment. Fieldwork taught them to work together as a team. Fieldwork supported the self-centered practice and self-directed learning.

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**สรุป:** นักศึกษาสะท้อนถึงข้อดีจากการฝึกภาคสนามวิชาเวชศาสตร์ชุมชน และสะท้อนถึงคุณค่าที่ได้มีโอกาสเรียนรู้และมีประสบการณ์จริงในชุมชน

**คำสำคัญ:** การฝึกภาคสนาม เวชศาสตร์ชุมชน การสะท้อนข้อคิดเห็นของนักศึกษา

**Conclusion:** Students have reflected positive image of community medicine fieldwork that it offered a way of learning and gaining experiences about community.

**Key word:** Fieldwork education, Community medicine, Students' reflection

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## Introduction

Fieldwork education is one kind of active learning. Fieldwork education helps students to perceive values of learning in groups and gain experiences from being with the actual lively situations<sup>1,2</sup>. Fieldwork education could promote student-centered practice, self-directed learning, knowledgeable of community resources. The Faculty of Medicine in conjunction with the faculties of health alliances in Khon Kaen University has set up a community medicine fieldwork for students since 1983. This fieldwork has been designed for the students from various faculties of health sciences to go out together and stay with villagers in rural area of Thailand for 10 days. Several activities are set up for the students during the fieldwork<sup>3</sup>. This fieldwork intends to

- (1) encourage students to work together as a health care team,
- (2) enable students to understand rural people's life style and
- (3) support students to have positive attitude towards the community

Evaluations of the course and fieldwork have been quantitatively performed regularly by the Department of Community Medicine<sup>4</sup>. Every year, the faculty of medicine and faculties of health alliances invest both budget and people workforce to run the fieldwork study and expects that students would learn, gain experiences and have positive attitude. Students' attitude as well as teachers' attitude regarding community medicine fieldwork has been previously quantitative studied<sup>5,6</sup>. However, qualitative study about students' feeling to the fieldwork has never been published. Student's reflection to fieldwork

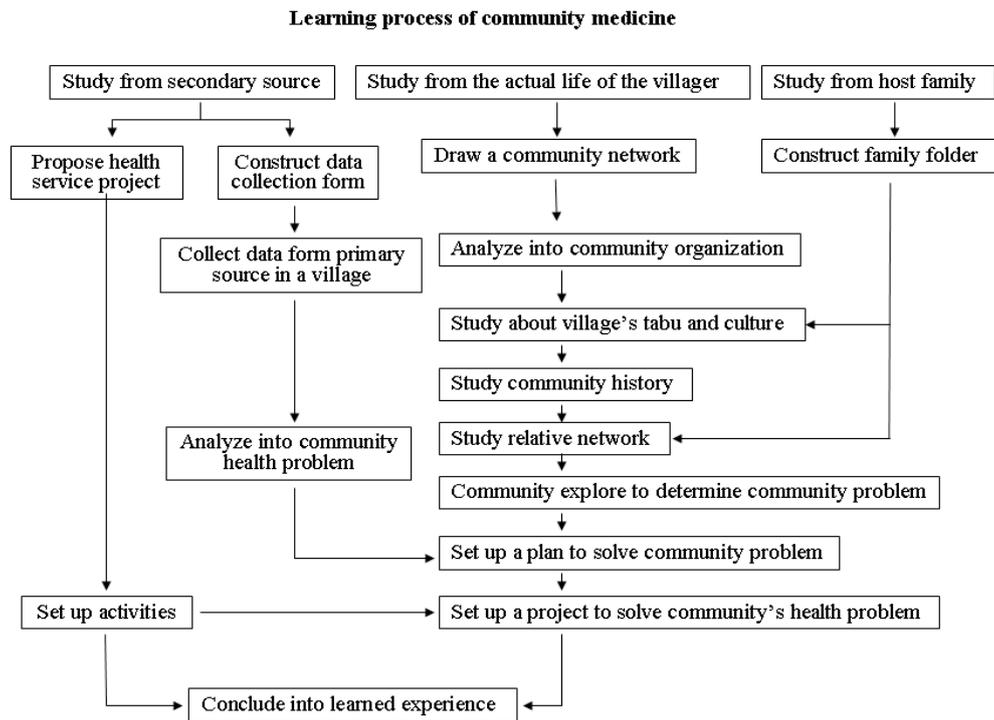
would enable teachers to understand better what and how students learned from the fieldwork. This work was, therefore, conducted to determine students' reflection regarding the achievement of objectives and the experiences they earned from the fieldwork.

## Method and Procedure

Figure 1 shows the process of fieldwork study. The exact objective of each activity was clarified to the students prior to the fieldwork. This preliminary study of students' reflection was conducted in targeted subjects. Twelve students staying in the same house with teacher supervisor were subjects of the study. They were from all faculties of health sciences. The study was conducted about one month after the 2012 joint fieldwork ended. Students were in depth interviewed using structured interview form. The interviewer was the teacher supervisor who was also participated in the fieldwork. The main components of interviews were about the achievement to objectives of the fieldwork, what they learned from being in the field and how those experiences were valuable to them. Content analysis was performed in the analysis. Information from the interviews was verified with what students presented in the field (data triangulation)<sup>7</sup>.

## Results

Table 1 shows the general background of the interviewee. The interview revealed that students understood the objectives of the fieldwork because



**Figure 1** Learning processes of the community medicine fieldwork, Khon Kaen University<sup>8</sup>.

**Table 1** Demographic data of students who gave in dept interviews

No.	Affiliated Faculty	Year status	Gender
1	Nursing	2	Female
2	Medicine	3	Female
3	Medicine	3	Female
4	Medicine	3	Female
5	Medicine	3	Male
6	Medicine	3	Male
7	Dentistry	4	Male
8	Dentistry	4	Male
9	Veterinary Medicine	4	Female
10	Veterinary Medicine	4	Male
11	Associated Medical Science	4	Female
12	Associated Medical Science	4	Male

they could point out the purposes of each assigned activity. They were, more or less, self-centered practice, self-directed learning and understood more about community resources. Students also had positive attitude about team work. For instant they said...

*"...I learn that people in the village have their own culture and taboo which decent from the ancestor"*

*"...I understand better why the villagers, sometime, prefer alternative treatment, but not the modern medicine, to treat their illnesses"*

*"...There are, still, people believe that their illnesses cause by ghost and devil, and that why they believe that supernatural spirit could heal their illnesses"*

### Discussion

Fieldwork and qualitative approach concerned primarily with how people see and understand their social worlds which is necessary for health science students to be more realistic when they graduate and go to work<sup>9</sup>. Fieldwork and qualitative approach may provide insights into the reasons why interventions succeed or fail<sup>10</sup>. This preliminary study used qualitative method to study and it showed that students, somewhat, had experienced student-centered practice, self-directed learning and knowledgeable of community resources.

Now a day, there is a growing interest in the application of ethnographic medicine in medical education. They have, also, a qualitative approach of social aspect for medical students. This approach offered other ways of knowledge, skill and attitude that had significant impact on medical education<sup>11</sup>. Ethnography is the study of social interactions, peoples' behavior, and perceptions occur within groups, teams, organizations, and communities. The targeted aim of ethnography is to provide rich, holistic insights into peoples' views and actions, as well as the nature of the location they inhabit, through the collection of detailed observations and interviews<sup>12-15</sup>. The community medicine fieldwork set up by Khon Kaen University, somehow, complies with the concept of

ethnographic medicine. This fieldwork enabled the students to experience participation observation, interview and discussion to probe the emerging issues and ask questions regarding life and health. Fieldwork enabled the students to immerse themselves in a setting, thereby generating a rich understanding of people's attitude and allowed the students to see insight villager's behavior which normally hidden from the public gaze. Fieldwork allowed the students to practice on documentary data such as port folio, diary and minutes of meeting. The core value of community medicine fieldwork was building up students' attitude to people and community which should impact them to be good practitioners when they graduate.

Reflection data in this study came from students' interview given to teacher supervisor who was a researcher of the study. Therefore, it might be a question whether students might tend to reflect only positive attitude. This suspect was unlikely because the teacher supervisor's observation in the field and the data students presented in the field were in accordance with students' interviews. In addition, the interviews were performed after the evaluation grades were announced. Therefore, we believed that students reflected their genial attitude. The explanation why students' reflection was mostly positive was because the interview questions asked them about achievement of objectives of the fieldwork, what they learned and how it was valuable to them. However, this study had limitation on the number of study sample as we interviewed only 12 students. Further study should be conducted with more number and interview questions should include some negative attitude in fieldwork study. Follow up study to see whether the students' positive attitude would last until they go to work is also an interesting question to study.

### Conclusion

Students have reflected that community medicine fieldwork offered them a chance to learn and gain experiences about community which increased their understanding about people and community.

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