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## **The influences of extra-curricular activities on the development of competence among undergraduate nursing students in Hong Kong**

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A comprehensive nursing education nurtures competent nurses. Apart from designed nursing curriculum, extra-curricular activities (ECAs), which are believed to enhance perceived social support, are appraised for a comprehensive development of University students. None of previous studies, however, investigated the influences of ECAs among undergraduate nursing students. This study aimed to examine the influences of ECAs on perceived social support of undergraduate nursing students in Hong Kong. Ethical approval was gained from the research University. A cross-sectional survey was employed. Convenience samples of all full-time, Bachelor of nursing students in a local University were recruited. A self-administrative questionnaire was used to collect the hours involved in ECAs and assess perceived social support of subjects. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the perceived social support scores between subjects spending different hours on ECAs per week. There was a significant difference in perceived social support scores for spending less than 5 hours per week ( $M=48.4$ ,  $SD=6.07$ ) and spending more than 5 hours on ECAs per week ( $M=50.13$ ,  $SD=4.76$ ;  $t(15)=-1.98$ ,  $p=0.05$ , two-tailed) among female students. For the male students, no significant difference was manifested. Female students mostly take part in the ECAs that involve others, such as social club. Female students experienced and perceived more support in the interactive human relationship in ECAs. Hence, female students, who spent more time on ECAs, had perceived better social support than those spent less time on them. ECA exerts positive influence on perceived social support among female undergraduate nursing students. Better perceived social support enhances the development of competent nurse. It is suggested that ECAs, exclusively those involve others should be promoted in nursing education.

### **Biography**

W C Wong is the Lecturer (Division of Nursing and Health Studies) of The Open University of Hong Kong. She is a Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse. She had worked in many different clinical areas, including acute care unit and psychiatric unit before joining the university. Her research interests include mental health nursing and nursing education.

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