

SESSION IV:

**PARALLEL STUDY GROUPS FOR FREE PRESENTATIONS
AND AMEE STANDING GROUPS**

1. RESEARCH IN MEDICAL EDUCATION (free topics) I

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Evaluation of the Reasons for Sick Leave Given to Students at Çukurova University

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The medical problems of the university students in Turkey are handled at the medico-social centers of each university. The administrative committee of the faculties evaluate the seriousness of students' health problems according to the sick leave given by the university hospitals and the authorized commissions.

In this study, the sick leave given to the students of the three faculties of the Çukurova University (namely the faculties of medicine, agriculture and administrative sciences) have been analysed. The purpose here was to evaluate the main health problems with respect to faculties which the students attend. Comparisons between faculties have been made especially with reference to the students of the faculty of medicine. The main parameters taken into consideration were the rate of health disorders per faculty, the diagnosis and the duration of the sick leave.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is a retrospective one made utilizing the sick leaves taken by the students of three faculties of the Çukurova University between the academic years of 1985 and 1989. The faculties are those of medicine (first four years), agriculture and administrative sciences. The sick leaves were analysed with respect to faculties, sex and class of students and the departments the sick leave is taken from.

The ratio of students of the Faculty of Agriculture who take sick leaves is significantly higher than those of the other two faculties ($p < 0.01$)

RESULTS

Table 1. Number of Sick Leaves between 1985 and 1989

	No. of Sick leaves	%	Total No. Students
Medicine	43	14	6601
Agriculture	243	76	7660
Administrative Sciences	31	10	6050
Total	317	100	20311

Table 2. Total and Average Number of Days of Sick Leave with Respect to Faculties

	No. of Sick leaves	Total no. of days	Average no. of days per sick leave	Mode
Medicine	43	551	12.8	7 days
Agriculture	243	7953	32.7	15 days
Administrative Sciences	31	556	17.9	15 days
Total	317	9060	28.6	15 days

The students of the Faculty of Agriculture appear to take longer sick leaves than those of the other two faculties.

Table 3. Sex Distribution of the Students With Respect to Faculties Attended

	Male		Female		Total
	n	%	n	%	
Medicine	33	77	10	23	43
Agriculture	172	71	71	29	243
Administrative Sciences	20	65	11	35	31
Total	225	71	92	29	317

$\chi^2 = 1.15, p > 0.05$

No significant difference in sex ratios within faculties ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4. Treatment type With Respect to Faculties

	Hospitalized		Out Patient		Total
	n	%	n	%	
Medicine	13	30	30	70	43
Agriculture	59	24	184	76	243
Administrative Sciences	9	29	22	71	31
Total	81	26	236	74	317

$\chi^2 = 0.85, p > 0.05$

No significant difference within faculties in treatment types leading to sick leaves ($p > 0.05$).

Table 5. Distribution With Respect to Department Leading to Sick Leaves

	Surgical depts.		Non-Surgical depts.		Emergency depts.		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Medicine	10	23	32	75	1	2	43
Agriculture	126	41	100	52	17	7	243
Administrative Sciences	18	39	12	58	1	3	31
Total	154	49	144	45	19	6	317

$\chi^2 = 18.31, p < 0.01$

Medical students resort to sick leave from non-surgical departments more frequently than from others ($p < 0.01$).

Table 6. Sick Leaves from the Psychiatry Department With Respect to Faculties.

	Psychiatry		Others		Total
	n	%	n	%	
Medicine	20	47	23	53	43
Agriculture	37	15	206	85	243
Administrative Sciences	7	23	24	77	31
Total	64	20	253	80	317

$\chi^2 = 22.72, p < 0.001$

Number of sick leaves from the psychiatry department are significantly higher for medical students ($P < 0.001$).

Table 7. Distribution of Sick Leaves from the Psychiatry Department with Respect to Year of Education.

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	Total
	Medicine	1	12	6	
Agriculture	7	13	10	7	37
Administrative Sciences	-	2	2	3	7
Total	8	27	18	11	64

$\chi^2 = 3.27, p > 0.05$

The distribution of sick leaves from the psychiatry department does not show any significant features with respect to the year of education. However, when a comparison was made within the faculties, students of 2nd and 3rd year medicine take more sick leaves from the psychiatry department compared with the other classes of this faculty ($\chi^2 = 16.4, p < 0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS

1. Medical students resort to sick leave from non-surgical departments more frequently than from others.
2. The number of sick leaves from the psychiatry department is significantly higher for medical students.
3. The ratio of students who take sick leave per faculty is the highest for the faculty of agriculture.

4. The students of the faculty of agriculture take longer sick leaves.
5. Sex distribution and treatment type do not differ with respect to faculties attended.
6. When the analysis of the distribution of sick leaves from the psychiatry department is made within the classes of the faculty of medicine, it can be seen that the 2nd and 3rd year students are subject to sick leave of this type more frequently than 1st and 4th year students. This finding may be due to the intensive educational program in the premedical period and/or to the overloaded theoretical curriculum in the 2nd and 3rd years of the faculty of medicine. This, we believe, emphasizes the importance of the psychiatric test for the students selection and psychiatric counselling in medical schools.

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