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Research Article

### PREVALENCE OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

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<b>Abstract:</b>		
<p><i><b>Objective:</b> To determine the prevalence of emotional distress in medical students of different medical institutes. <b>Material and Methods:</b> A total of 103 medical students were included in this study. A predefined questionnaire was served. The data collected was entered and analyzed using SPSS Ver. 22.0. <b>Results:</b> The mean age of the students was 25.23±1.02 years. There were 65 female students (67.01%) and 32 male students (32.98%). Emotional distress was found in 52.77% of the students including 36 (37.11%) female and 15 (15.46%) male students. <b>Conclusion:</b> Medical students suffer from emotional distress throughout their academic career and ward rotations and girls are more prone to this emotional distress.</i></p>		
<p><i><b>Keywords:</b> Emotional distress, medical education, Health Professionals</i></p>		

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Medical education is one of the most stressful careers throughout the globe. It demands special attention of the students as well as the professionals. In order to perform well in the field of medical education, one must be able to cope with the pressures during his or her academics and ward routines. It can be observed that the internal environment of medical institutes is usually stressful and is usually associated with anxiety and other psychological impact<sup>1-3</sup>.

According to a study in Singapore, it was reported that fifty-seven percent of the medical students were suffering from different kinds of emotional disorders. They reported this study based on the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) and compared to the law students. In law students, only 47.3% of the students were having emotional disorders. In a study at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in the USA, it was reported that 57% had a high level of emotional distress and 23% of students had certain levels of depression<sup>4</sup>.

In order to become a better health professional and enable the medical students to cope the stressful environment during their ward rotations, hospitals, and emergencies, they must be educated in a way that they don't feel stress, emotional distress and any kind of depression<sup>5,6</sup>. The purpose of this study is to determine the prevalence of emotional disorders among medical students in different medical institutes. This study will help us in enabling medical students to empower their emotional agonies and become better health professional.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

A total of 103 medical students were included in this study including male and female students. The students from 4<sup>th</sup> year and final years were selected for this study. The purpose of this study was explained to them and consent was taken. Confidentiality of each student was ensured. A predefined questionnaire was served. The data collected was entered and analyzed in SPSS Ver. 22.0. The categorical variables were expressed as numbers and percentages and the quantitative variables were expressed as mean and standard deviations.

**RESULTS:**

Out of one hundred and three medical students, 97 students returned the proforma. Response rate noticed was 94.17%. The mean age of the students was 25.23±1.02 years, minimum age noticed was 23 years and maximum age noticed was 27 years. There were

65 female students (67.01%) and 32 male students (32.98%) in this study.

According to the questionnaire, emotional distress was found in 52.77% of the students including 36 (37.11%) female and 15 (15.46%) male students. There were certain reason of this emotional distress i.e. routine assignments (3%), fear of failure of examinations (66%), poor teaching methodology (9%), living away from the home (12%), bad relationship with opposite gender student (1%) and ward-routines (9%).

Twenty-three percent of the students responded that they suffer from this once or twice in a month or two months and 9% of these students told that it does not affect their daily routine. However, seventy-seven percent of the students told that it happens quite often and 52% of the students responded that it badly affects their studies and daily routines.

**DISCUSSION:**

According to our study, fifty-one students (52.77%) of the students were suffering from emotional distress and most of them were females. Most of the students suffer from these multiple numbers of times and they reported that this emotional distress affects their daily routines and studies. Ko et al reported that 57% of the medical students in Singapore suffer from this distress<sup>4</sup>.

Many studies reported that the environment of medical institutes is usually stressful and students have to suffer from different kind of challenges i.e. assignments, examinations and ward, clinical rotations. Most of the students in our study suffer from this distress during their examinations. Examination system in medical universities are always tough and it requires rigorous testing so many students are unable to cope with this.

In our study, many students reported that they are living away from home and it impacts their studies and emotional temperament. Mostly girls suffer from this kind of emotional distress. Other reasons are poor teaching methodology and bad relationship with the opposite gender. These reasons should be crucially addressed and solutions to these issues must be probed<sup>7,8</sup>.

There are certain limitations to our study i.e. we included a smaller number of students and the students from fourth and final years only. A study including a larger number of students and including all the classes

should be conducted for a better analysis of the students.

#### CONCLUSION:

Medical students suffer from emotional distress throughout their academic career and ward rotations and girls are more prone to this emotional distress.

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