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FREQUENCY OF DEPRESSION AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS OF QUAID-E-AZAM MEDICAL COLLEGE, BAHAWALPUR

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Abstract:
Our objective of study was to assess the frequency of depression among medical students of QAMC, Bahawalpur. The data was collected by a pretested questionnaire. The first part of questionnaire was composed of demographic variables the second part of questionnaire was a depression screening scale-BDI-II, which consists of 21 questions. Chi square test was used as test of significance because the study variables were qualitative in nature. The study showed that male students had high proportion of depression than female students. Depression was found more in 24-26 years of age while students of 3rd year class were more depressed. Any other class.Our findings suggest that health authorities, medical universities and colleges should offer early detection programmes. In this way students at risk must be identified and councelled properly and also be treated if considered necessarily before starting the busy, hectic and ever demanding carrier of medical profession to reduce incidence of depression among medical students so that they can cope with stress of their profession.

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INTRODUCTION:

Mental health is regarded as an essential component of health by world health organization. A person could be termed depressed if he/she shows variable combination of low mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feeling of guilt, ruined self- esteem, disturbed appetite, disturbed sleep or disturbed concentration.[1] A high frequency of depression among medical students is an important issue in both eastern and western countries. The study was done to see the frequency of depression among medical students of Quaid-e-Azam Medical College, Bahawalpur and to create awareness among students and authorities about magnitude of depression among students, So that preventive measures could be taken by the higher authorities which may be in the form of Psychotherapy or other kind of help.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY:

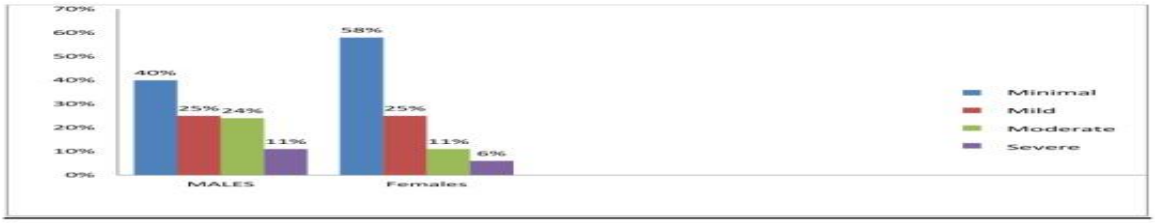
Study was conducted among medical students studying in Quaid-e-Azam Medical College Bahawalpur. The duration of study was 4 months from 10th April 2018 To 10thAugust 2018. Total medical students residing in QAMC hostels were about to be 1500. Keeping in view the prevalence of depression, it was decided to take a sample size of 300 students on proportion basis. 40 females and 20 male students were taken according to their proportion in each class. Non–Probability Convenient Sampling Technique was used. All medical students of all classes and age groups living in hostels of QAMC Bahawalpur were included.Students who were not willing to be subject of study. And the students who were diagnosed case of psychiatric problems and taking treatment were excluded.

The study design was cross sectional descriptive design. The data was collected by a pre-tested questionnaire (Annexure). The first part of the questionnaire was composed of demographic variables. The second part of the questionnaire was a depression screening scale BDI-II, which consists of 21 questions. Data was analyzed manually. Percentages and frequency of depression was calculated. Data was represented in the form of tables and figures. Any difference noted was subjected to statistical analysis. Chi-square test was used as test of significance as the study. Variables were qualitative in nature Level of significance used was 0.05%.

RESULTS:

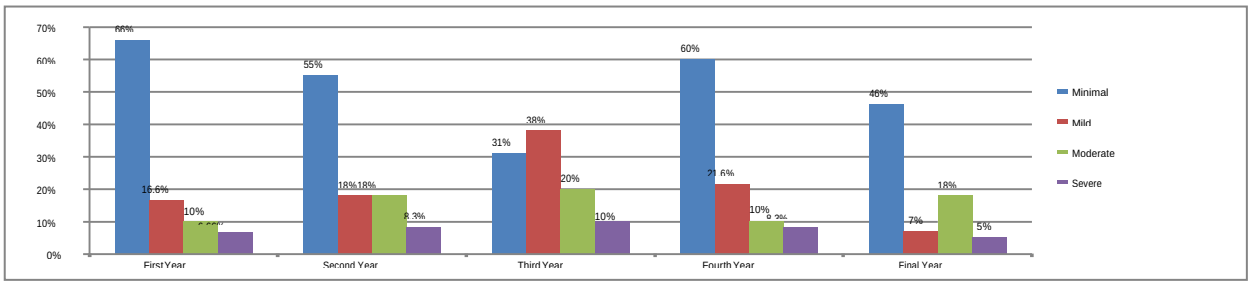
Regarding the severity of depression among 300 medical students of QAMC, 52% had minimal depression, 25% had mild depression, 15.33% had moderate depression and 7.66% had severe depression.(Table-01). With respect to Gender distribution, the study showed that among 100 male respondents 40% were in minimal depression, 25% in mild depression, 24% in moderate depression and 11% were in severe depression. While among 200 female respondents, 58% were minimally, 25% mildly, 11% moderately and 11% were severely depressed. The result was statistically significant (Figure-01)

Fig-01 Severity of depression in relation to gender distribution.



With reference to depression among 60 students of each class, the results are shown below.

Fig-02. Severity of depression in relation to class distribution



While calculating relationship of gender with depression, it was found that male students had more moderate (24%) and severe (11%) depression, while female students had less moderate and severe depression, 11% and 6% respectively. The result was found significant (p= 0.003).

While finding the frequency of depression in relation to class distribution 3rd year students had more moderate and severe depression with a frequency of 20% and 10% respectively. The result was found significant. (p=0.04).
According to depression in relation with age, The results are shown in table 5.

Table-5: Relation of depression with Age

X^2 = 15.312 df = 6 p = 0.017

Age in Years	18-20	21-23	24-26	Total
Minimal	72	70	14	156
Mild	18	45	12	75
Moderate	11	27	08	46
Severe	08	12	03	23
Total	109	154	37	300

DISCUSSION:

In this study it had been revealed that (52%) had minimal, (25%) had mild,, (15.33%) had moderate depression and (7.66%) respondents were suffering from severe depression. In our study (23%) students were moderately to severely depressed. But study conducted in Pakistan showed the (60%) prevalence. In our study the frequency of severe depression was (7.66%) which is higher than Chinese medical students having (2%) severe depression. This is because of better environment of study and clinical site over there.1,2. In this study, a significantly higher proportion of male respondents(100) had moderate to severe depression as compared to female(200) respondents. Our study was different from the study conducted among all 5 years medical students of Dhaka medical college that showed there was greater prevalence of moderate to severe psychological stress in male(73%) than does female respondents(56%)(1). Similar results were found in studies in Bangladesh. The reason might be that the males were less expressive and more concerned about their future and responsibilities. Results are in contrast to other studies conducted in Allama Iqbal Medical College Lahore.3,4,5.

The frequency of severe depression was more in 3rd year students than any other class that was significant (p=0.04) . Clinical study is the causing factor of this depression. Our study is opposite to that of Allama Iqbal medical college Lahore where the rate of depression was higher in 4th and final year students than 1st to 3rd year students. This suggested that prevalence of depression increases as the students advance in their medial years. Separation from class mates and friends during clinical rotation and demands of training can contribute to a sense of isolation and lead to stress. Similar findings were observed in students of Thailand and India. The reason might be that third year students were first time encountered clinical science along with basic subjects.6,7. In relationship with age significant findings showed that age group 24-26 years had more depression. Similar results were found in other studies. The reason might be that the elder students were mature and more concerned.8,9.This is because with the advancing age, the course of study becomes lengthy and causes depression among medical students and some students were those who have lost their time in improving the marks to get admission in medical college.10,11 We were not able to conduct study of associated factor of depression because of shortage of time and limited resources. Depression may be a significant hidden problem in medical students. Mechanism to identify and help students with mental health programme should be seriously considered. Therefore, an effective system for the prediction of development of depression in medical students should be developed and interventions aimed at reducing the incidence of depression needs further research.

CONCLUSION:

Our study revealed a clear picture of the frequency of depression in medical students, which was more in the 3rd year students and marginally more in male students. Age group of 24-26 years was found to be more depressed. Further research and intervention

studies are required to identify the preventive measures in this regard.

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