



CODEN [USA]: IAJPBB

ISSN: 2349-7750

**INDO AMERICAN JOURNAL OF  
PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**<http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3826578>Available online at: <http://www.iajps.com>**Research Article****STRESS AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS****Safa Munawar, Shafia Arshad, Hajra Khan**  
Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Teaching Hospital, Gujrat**Article Received:** March 2020**Accepted:** April 2020**Published:** May 2020**Abstract:**

*Stress is defined as the body's non-specific response to demands made upon it, or to disturbing events in the environment. It is not just a stimulus or a response but rather, it is a process by which we perceive and cope with environmental threats and challenges. A total of 90 students was included in the study. The mean age of the students was  $23.12 \pm 2.25$  years. There were 50 (56%) females and 40 (44%) males in the study. According to fifteen percent of the students, they do not take stress during their medical studies. Thirty percent of the students responded that, they only take stress during their final examination, that too for difficult subjects only. Fifty five percent of the students responded that they always remain in stress i.e. during routine tests, internal assessments as well as final examinations. A lot of medical students suffer from different levels of stress during their medical studies. The various reasons must be evaluated, and proper policy should be made to minimize this issue.*

**Keywords:** *Stress, Medical Students***Corresponding author:****Safa Munawar,**  
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Please cite this article in press Safa Munawar et al, *Stress Among Medical Students.*, Indo Am. J. P. Sci, 2020; 07(05).

**INTRODUCTION:**

Stress is defined as the body's non-specific response to demands made upon it, or to disturbing events in the environment. It is not just a stimulus or a response but rather, it is a process by which we perceive and cope with environmental threats and challenges. Personal and environmental events that because stress is referred to as stressors. In short, stress includes the emotional disturbances or changes caused by stressors. Linn & Zeppa have suggested that some stress in medical school training is needed for learning. Stress that facilitates learning is called 'favorable stress' and stress that suppresses learning is called 'unfavorable stress'. Depending upon their cultural backgrounds, personal traits, experience and coping skills, medical students may perceive the same stressors differently (1).

Medical school is recognized as a stressful environment that often exerts a negative effect on the academic performance, physical health and psychological wellbeing of the student. A study among undergraduate medical students in the United States of America found that 23% had clinical depression and 57% were under psychological stress. Stress is often reported in students studying for examinations. Medical students are expected to learn and master a huge amount of knowledge and skills. The personal and social sacrifice they have to make in order to maintain good academic results. in a highly competitive environment puts them under a lot of stress'. Undergraduate medical students have been the most distressed group of students compared to any other course undergraduates. This stress has serious consequences which may lead to the development of depression and anxiety'. In most medical schools, the environment itself is an all prevailing pressure providing an authoritarian and rigid system; one that encourages competition rather than cooperation between learners. Studies suggest that mental health worsens after student begins

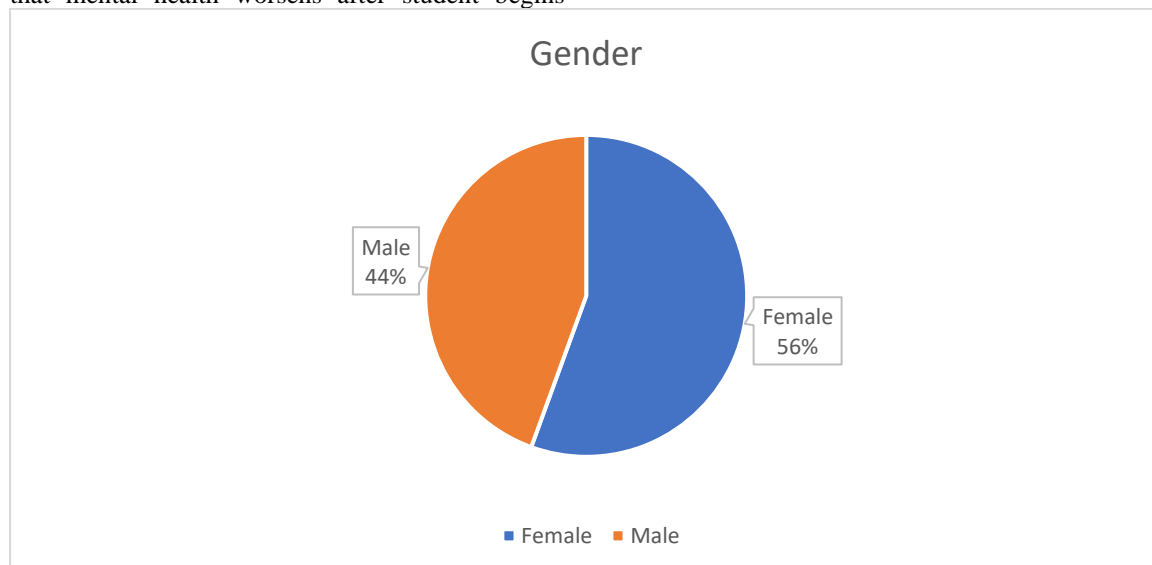
medical school and remains poor throughout training. The majority of the studies on stress in medical education focus on the documentation of stress and information on the correlation of stress. It is not just undergraduate study period which brings the stress but it may continue later in internship, postgraduate study period and later in physicians' practical life and it may reach burnout level (2,3).

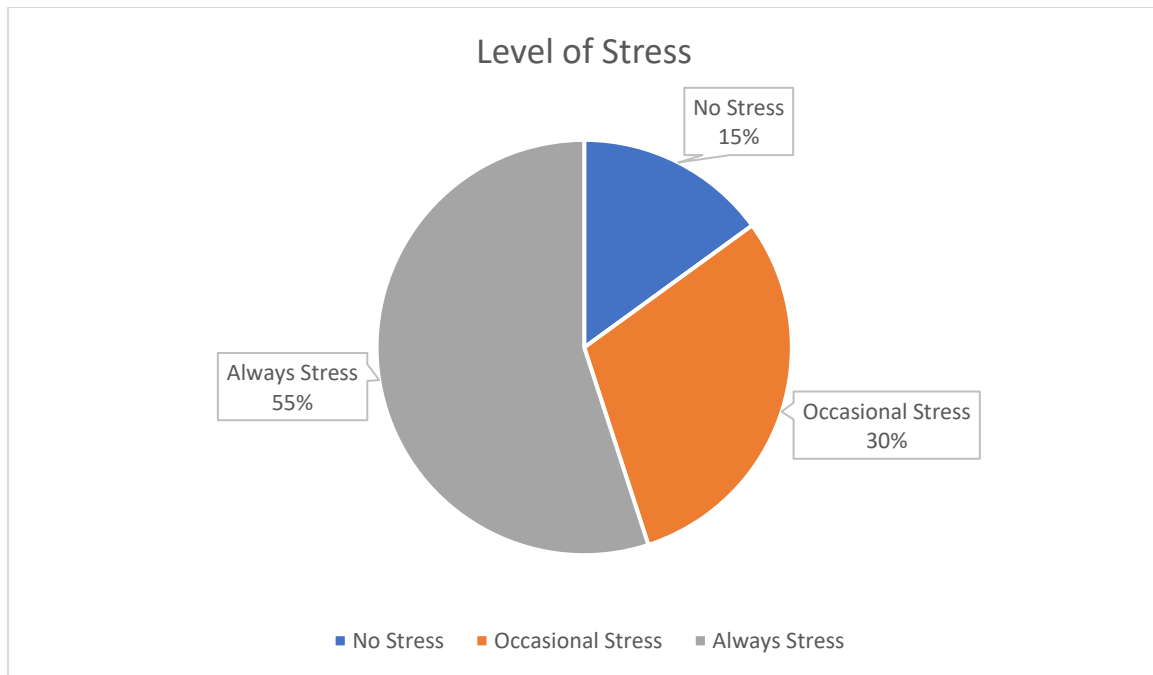
**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

This study was conducted in different medical colleges of Pakistan. The data was collected from students of different classes on a predefined proforma. Different Likert type questions were asked. All the responses were collected and analyzed in SPSS Ver. 25.0. The qualitative variables were presented as frequency and percentages. The quantitative variables were presented as mean and standard deviation. Relevant statistical analysis was performed.

**RESULTS:**

A total of 90 students was included in the study. The mean age of the students was  $23.12 \pm 2.25$  years, mean age of the females was  $21.89 \pm 1.54$  years and mean age of males was  $23.12 \pm 2.01$  years. There were 50 (56%) females and 40 (44%) males in the study. According to fifteen percent of the students, they do not take stress during their medical studies. Most of these students were day scholars. Thirty percent of the students responded that, they only take stress during their final examination, that too for difficult subjects only. These students were regular among their classes and complete their internal assessments regularly. Fifty five percent of the students responded that they always remain in stress i.e. during routine tests, internal assessments as well as final examinations. Most of these students were living in the hostels away from their home.





### DISCUSSION:

The negative effects of long and tiring medical education on the psychological status of students have been shown in several studies. A study from UK showed that one third of psychiatrically ill students did not graduate from the college. The changes appear to be significant during the first year. Therefore, with early identification and with effective psychological services, possible future illness may be prevented. Besides educational demands, social and friendship-related factors are reasons for psychological disturbance in our students. The data suggests that first- and second-year students who have the higher level of stress should be supported well by student support system as they may be able to cope up with the stress properly in later years and at higher level of education. It is also important to target prevention strategies at the students who have mild or moderate level of psychological stress in order to prevent the development of more serious conditions. Wellness and mental health programmes are needed to help students to make smooth transitions between different learning environments with changing learning demands and a growing burden. Medical schools in the United States and Canada have initiated health promotion programmes and have reported positive results in reducing the negative effects of stress upon medical students' health and academic performance (4,5).

Student distress may influence professional development and adversely impact academic performance contributing to academic dishonesty and substance abuse and may play a role in attrition from medical school. Other studies on medical school graduates also suggest that distress may

negatively affect quality of patient care, patient safety, and professionalism.

### CONCLUSION:

A lot of medical students suffer from different levels of stress during their medical studies. The various reasons must be evaluated, and proper policy should be made to minimize this issue.

### Conflict of interest:

There was not conflict of interest.

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