

Depression among medical interns

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Abstract

Introduction: The way the young professional students are looking at their own profession is changing from the time of their admission to the course and at the time of their internship. In the recent past, the instances of students undergoing mental trauma are often being published. And the same mental attitude will have some of its impact in their future professional life.

Materials and Methods: A questionnaire was prepared with preambles and the questions mentioned in Beck's Depression inventory. Medical college students who have passed their MBBS exam and doing their internship from different colleges were sent the questionnaire and 36 have responded completely. This was subjected to statistical analysis.

Results: The study sample has been categorized according to gender, schooling before joining the professional college, medium of study, parent's occupation, family history and habits of the individual. Among these, family history and habits were found to be significantly affecting the depression.

Conclusion: Students may be assessed and parents may be updated about their ward psychological condition in the initial days of professional course; so that any undue event may be prevented by appropriate measures.

Keywords: Professional, Psychiatric disorder, Students.

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Introduction

The way the young professional students are looking at their own profession is changing from the time of their admission to the course and at the time of their internship. In the recent past, the instances of students undergoing mental trauma are often being published.^{1,2} And the same mental attitude will have some of its impact in their future professional life.³

As there is still some stigma exists, the students either try the way out by themselves or by media like books, journals or internet. This act may lead to the budding professional to self-medicate.^{4,5} In particular with psychiatry related medicines; most of them will be of sedative in nature and may reduce the symptoms to some extent initially. This will make the prevalence of these distress symptoms in a more turbulent way. And in a study for assessing the depressive symptoms conducted in the UK has recorded 16%.⁶

Other studies conducted have reported depression ranging from 14-36%. One study has reported that the students studying in university had suffered from psychiatric disorder up to 19%.⁷ and the similar episodes have been reported up to 23% in the physician working in a hospital and general practitioner.⁸

Depression leading to suicidal act is also mentioned very high. And this was reported in many kinds of literature that; depression is one of the major causes for it. The quality and quantity of work will have a definite impact on this mental status. Somatic complaints were noticed as the individual will not be able to do his routine activity.

This is including their future professional competency for either studying for the post-graduation or for the professional practice. Both of these are competitive and challenging nowadays. Of course assault on Doctor's is also contributing to this apprehension in them. Keeping these things in mind, we thought to just assess the possible causes of affective disorder in medical interns.

Objective

To assess the mental status of the medical interns.

Materials and Methods

A questionnaire was prepared with preambles and the questions mentioned in Beck's Depression inventory. Medical college students who have passed their MBBS exam

and doing their internship from different colleges were sent the questionnaire and 36

have responded completely. This was subjected to statistical analysis.

Results

Table 1: Gender-wise classification of study Sample

			Depression Classification				Total	Chi-square (p-value)
			Mild	Moderate	Normal	Severe		
GENDER	Female	Count	3	0	14	0	17	.089
		%	60.0%	.0%	56.0%	.0%	47.2%	
	Male	Count	2	5	11	1	19	
		%	40.0%	100.0%	44.0%	100.0%	52.8%	
Total		Count	5	5	25	1	36	
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 2: Schooling: Primary education of the students

			Depression				Total	Chi-square (p-value)
			Mild	Moderate	Normal	Severe		
	Rural	Count	1	1	1	0	3	.258
		%	20.0%	20.0%	4.0%	.0%	8.3%	
	Urban	Count	4	4	24	1	33	
		%	80.0%	80.0%	96.0%	100.0%	91.7%	
Total		Count	5	5	25	1	36	
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 3: Medium studied during school

			Category				Total	Chi-square (p-value)
			Mild	Moderate	Normal	Severe		
MEDIUM	English	Count	5	4	23	0	32	.093
		%	100.0%	80.0%	92.0%	.0%	88.9%	
	Hindi	Count	0	1	0	1	2	
		%	.0%	20.0%	.0%	100.0%	5.6%	
	Kannada	Count	0	0	1	0	1	
		%	.0%	.0%	4.0%	.0%	2.8%	
	Others	Count	0	0	1	0	1	
		%	.0%	.0%	4.0%	.0%	2.8%	
Total		Count	5	5	25	1	36	
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 4: Religion- wise classification

			Depression				Total	Chi-square (p-value)
			Mild	Moderate	Normal	Severe		
RELIGION	Hindu	Count	5	4	19	1	29	.886
		%	100.0%	80.0%	76.0%	100.0%	80.6%	
	Jain	Count	0	0	1	0	1	
		%	.0%	.0%	4.0%	.0%	2.8%	
	Muslim	Count	0	1	5	0	6	
		%	.0%	20.0%	20.0%	.0%	16.7%	
Total		Count	5	5	25	1	36	
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 5: Family wise categorization

FAMILY			Depression				Total	Chi-square (p-value)
			Mild	Moderate	Normal	Severe		
Joint	Count		0	1	2	1	4	.123
		%	.0%	20.0%	8.0%	100.0%	11.1%	
	Nuclear	Count	5	4	23	0	32	
		%	100.0%	80.0%	92.0%	.0%	88.9%	
Total	Count	5	5	25	1	36		
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		

Discussion

Among 36 replies received completely from mail were subjected to statistical analysis and discussed. 19 males constituting 52.8% and 17 females of 47.2% were of the total study sample. In these total 19 males, 2 were having mild depression, 5 were having moderate and 1 was having severe depression whereas 11 were normal in the study sample. And in the female group 3 were having mild depression and 14 were in normal range over the tool used in this study.

In the study signs of depression were at 12% among the students and female students have sought the professional help more compared to males. A study done by Givens JL reports 24% of depression among medical students.⁹

Schooling in the study sample was; among rural group 3 were identified and 1 each in mild, moderate and normal scoring, where as in case of urban schooling 33 were qualified in this group among them 4 each were having mild and moderate depression, 1 was having severe depression and 24 were normal. In this study group 32 have studied in English medium; in them, 5 were having mild depression whereas 4 were having moderate depression and 23 were normal. And 2 students have studied in Hindi medium and 1 was having moderate depression and 1 was having severe depression. And 1 student each from regional languages and both were normal.

As per the religious categorization totally 29 are from Hindu and in this group 5 are having mild, 4 were having moderate and 1 is having severe and remaining 19 are in the normal score range in the scale used for this study. The study also had a type of family included a total of 4 are from the joint family in them 1 was having moderate and severe depression and remaining 2 were in the normal group.

Other 32 members were from the nuclear family in them 5 were having mild and 4 were having moderate depression and remaining 23 in the normal category. Family history also has been taken in detail to know if any impact of systemic

disease over depression; in the total of 36 members 5 were having a family history of Diabetes mellitus and 6 were having hypertension and in 4 members having both.

In the diabetes family history group 2 were having mild and 2 were having moderate and 1 was in normal range. And in the group of hypertension all 6 were having the normal range in the scale. And in both the history of Diabetes and hypertension 1 is having mild and 1 is having moderate and 2 were in the normal range over the scale used for this study. In one of the study the possible presence of depression is more in the students with the history of depression almost near to half.

An episode of depression prior to medical school was much more common among the depressed students as was a family history of treated depression.

In 36 members, 4 have mentioned the use of alcohol in them 1 was having mild and 1 was having moderate depression. 2 were in the normal range. And 1 has reported the use of smoking and gaming found to be in the group of normal. In one of the studies conducted by Firth-Cozens J¹⁰ showed that around 50% of the students who suffered from anger, tiredness, overwork were diagnosed to be either suffering from depression along with anxiety or both together.

Conclusion

Majority of the students who replied to the questionnaire are almost equal in number. Whereas one of the male student was suffering from severe depression did not seek any medical help. This could be a possibility that females approach the medical help sooner than the male counterpart as mentioned in the earlier literature. It has also been noted that one student who done his schooling in Hindi medium was suffering from severe depression. This can be attributed to the possible reason of adjusting to the English medium all of a sudden in the professional course. And the study sample was having a majority of Hindus, which is possible that the total population and number of students getting

admitted to the professional course is higher in this region.

The family history of the medical disorder has shown the direct impact in this study where parents suffering from the systemic disease are the usual victims of this disorder. And habits of the students also had a similar impact in diagnosing this condition.

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