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Factors Associated with Depression among Medical Students in a Private Tertiary Care Hospital in South India

M. Gautham Raj, Jay Jaiswal, Mahesh Anirudh, M.Logaraj

Affiliation Department of Community Medicine, SRM Medical College Hospital & Research Centre, Kattankulathur, Tamilnadu.

***Author for correspondence:** Dr.Jay Jaiswal, Department of Community medicine , SRM Medical College Hospital & Research Centre, Kattankulathur, Tamilnadu.Pin: 603203. Email: jay.jaiswal430@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Background: Undergraduate medical training is perceived more stressful compared to another undergraduate program. Medical students to undergo strenuous curriculum and evaluation added to that other factors like homesickness, heavy workload, sleep deprivation, financial concern, environment not ideally suited for learning, information over load and career planning make them more susceptible to depression compared of students of other profession. **Objectives:** to estimate the prevalence of depression and assess the factors associated with depression among medical students. **Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among medical undergraduate students of a tertiary care hospital in Tamilnadu situated in the suburban area of Chennai. A total of 232 students was studied to estimate the prevalence of depression using Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI) questionnaire was used. **Results:** A total of 232 medical students were included in the study based on the inclusion criteria, of which 49.5% (115/232) were males while 50.5% (117/232) were females. Prevalence of severe depression was 12.5% and very severe depression was 3.4%. Higher number of students in the age group 17 -19 years were with severe and very severe depression compared to 20-22 years of age group and it was found statistically significant(p=0.001). Compared to males' higher number of females were having severe and very severe depression and it was found statistically significant (p=0.04) severe and very severe depression was higher in first year students compare to final year students and it was found statistically significant (p=0.000). Significance association was found between higher BMI, consuming alcohol, previous exam failure and do not do regular exercise with depression. **Conclusion:** The burden of depression among medical Students found to be common that do more in the first year of college life compared to final years an effective counseling of the students at the time of induction will reduce the burden of depression in medical colleges.

Key word: prevalence, depression, medical students, Beck's Depression Inventory questionnaire