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Hypochondriasis among medical and dental students: a cross-sectional study

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Statement of the Problem: Anxiety and depression are considered as an important mental health indicators in the community. Being a student of the most stressful and a challenging degree program. Medical undergraduates face several emotional, mental and physical stresses during the academic years. Researches indicate that medical students experience a large amount of psychological pressure due to work required in a competitive environment, extreme working hours, examination stress, large amount of information to seek, lack of social life, responsibility of human welfare and services and anxiety. Anxiety and depression ranks fourth as the leading cause of disability globally. Several studies suggest high prevalence depression and anxiety among medical students with distress levels consistently higher than in general population and age-matched peers. The rationale of the study was to pertain the risk of developing health related anxiety and depression among the medical and dental students throughout their study course. Examining existing individual health and morbidity among them, keeping various factors in consideration like year of study, age and gender.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: A cross sectional survey was conducted amongst the students of medical and dental college at Ziauddin University. The study included total 404 students from both disciplines, a pre-structured questionnaire "The Illness Attitude Scale- IAS" was given to the students. SPSS version 17 was used for data analysis & P value >0.05 was considered significant.

Findings: Of the total (n=450) 404 students completed the questionnaire. The average mean age was 22.05 ± 2.6 . Of the total (n=164) dental students, 10 students had mild, 83 moderate and 71 had severe hypochondriasis. Among (n=240) medical students, 13 had mild, 153 moderate and 74 had severe hypochondriasis. A significant difference was noted amongst the medical & dental students.

Conclusion: These findings support the, seek medical advice for hypochondriacal health concerns.

Biography

Mahnoor Moiz Khan has done her Bachelor of Dental Surgery from College of Dentistry-Ziauddin University, Karachi. She is currently enrolled in a Master's program in Science of Dental Materials. Currently working as a General Dentist at Mera Dentist- North Carolina Dental Practice. She is an ambassador for the Pakistan Dental Community and a registered member of the Pakistan Dental Association.

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