

Evaluation of Burnout among Professional Students: An Institutional Analysis

Ruchika Khanna¹, Parvathi Devi M², Ravindra S V², Kuber Tyagi², Dharmveer Singh², Anand Kumar³

¹Department of Oral Medicine and Radiology, Sri Sukhmani Dental College and Hospital, Dera Bassi, Punjab, India, ²Department of Oral Medicine and Radiology, Teethanker Mahaveer Dental College and Research Centre, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, India, ³Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Carrer Post-graduate Institute of Dental Sciences, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Background: The pursuit of professional education demands a lot of hard work and efficiency in order to excel and emerge out as thorough professionals, which in itself becomes very stressful at times. Through this study, we have tried to evaluate the level of stress among professional students of three main streams, i.e., Medical, Dental and Management at a University in Uttar Pradesh. **Aim:** The aim of this study is to compare and identify the levels of stress among students of three main streams at a University in Uttar Pradesh. **Study Design:** This study was conducted at a University in Uttar Pradesh to evaluate the stress level among Medical, Dental, and Management students. The study subjects comprised of total 300 volunteers, which consisted of 100 subjects of each stream. A questionnaire was administered to Dental students, Medical students and Management students to assess stress levels among them and compare the results. **Results:** The results of this study showed that the Medical and Dental students exhibited higher levels of stress as compared to Management students probably due to academic performance, patient and clinical responsibilities. **Conclusion:** Stress in professional colleges is a global issue. It remains to be evaluated that whether it's more in case of Medical students when compared to students pursuing other professional courses. Hence, it would be useful for the students if the professional institutes carry out screening and management programs as part of their curriculum. As this research was limited to one campus only, it is not known whether the results reflect the widespread attitudes of students. Hence, more studies should be done to justify the results obtained.


Key words: Burnout, questionnaire, stress

INTRODUCTION

The world that we live in can expose us to various pressures in life which causes stress and if left uncured can lead to depression.^[1] “Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, reduced personal

accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity.”^[2] Continuous stress in our working environment acts as a risk factor for developing burnout syndrome.^[3] It's a physical response one experiences because of the inability to manage it effectively.^[4] Stress has been described as an external demand that an individual endures, affecting his personal and psychological well-being. Stress can lead to various symptoms such as depression, anxiety, irritability, clammy hands, headaches, muscle spasm, heart palpitation, anger, etc. We may not reveal or display any signs to the world outside, but it is appropriate to identify the condition before it intensifies. It can be intellectually debilitating and can

Access this article online

Publisher	
	Website: www.renupublishers.com
	DOI: 10.5958/2394-4196.2015.00011.4

Address for Correspondence:

Dr. Ruchika Khanna, Department of Oral Medicine and Radiology, Sri Sukhmani Dental College and Hospital, Dera Bassi, Punjab, India. Phone: +91-9051925794. E-mail: mini.coolsml@gmail.com

Submission: 22 Feb 2015; **Revision:** 22 Mar 2015; **Acceptance:** 07 May 2015

have detrimental effects on an individual's academic performance. Contemporary curricula require professional students to attain manifold proficiencies, including the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, clinical efficiency, and interpersonal skills.^[5] Arduous academic pressure, limited social and personal time can append to the normal stress of life and thus can lead to a negative impact. Professional education, especially medicine, dentistry and management is held with very high esteem in a country like India. Parents who fail to fulfil their dream of professional education fulfil it through their children. Many times children are forced by their parents to join the professional course that they do not wish to join. It has been reported that the medicine and dental students experience a lot of stress as compared to the general public showing increased levels of depression and anxiety. Hence, burnout has been recognised by both the researchers and the practitioners as a social problem requiring immediate attention. The aim of this study is to compare and identify the levels of stress among students of three main streams at a University in Uttar Pradesh.

Aim and Objective

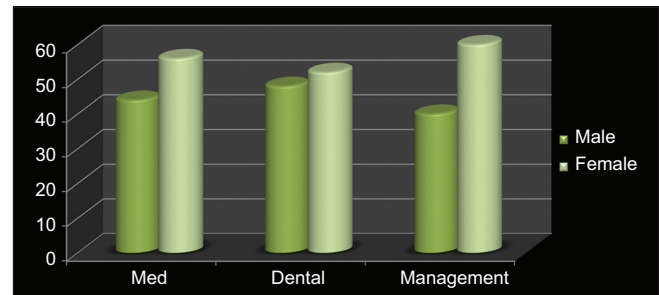
The aim of this study is to compare and identify the levels of stress among students of three main streams at a University in Uttar Pradesh.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted at a University in Uttar Pradesh to evaluate the stress level amongst Medical, Dental, and Management students. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants. The study subjects comprised of total 300 volunteers, which consisted of 100 subjects of each stream. Students above 18 years of age were considered for the study. The volunteers were informed about the study purpose. A questionnaire given by Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions Stress Questionnaire for Students was administered to students to assess stress levels among them and compare the results. The participants were given the questionnaire during their free time. The items and domains were considered to be perceived as stressful and the students were classified as slightly stressful, moderately stressful and severely stressful.

RESULTS

A total of 300 volunteers participated in the study out of which 100 comprised of the medical students group consisting of 44 (44%) males and 56 (56%) females with a mean age of 21.66 ± 1.62 years, 100 dental students group consisting of 48 (48%) males and 52 (52%) females with a mean age of 23.18 ± 2.72 years, 100 management students with 40 (40%) males and 60 (60%) females with a mean age of 21.11 ± 1.76 years [Table 1 and Bar diagram 1]. The distribution of scores of the subjects showed that maximum value of mean score was recorded in case of medical students with a mean score value of 35.14 ± 12.46 followed by dental students having a mean score value of 28.87 ± 9.90 which was further followed by management students with a mean score range of 26.35 ± 9.97 . The $P < 0.05$ suggesting it to be highly significant [Table 2].



Bar diagram 1: Distribution of gender

Table 1: Distribution by age groups

Age groups	Med. (%)	Dental (%)	Management (%)
18-21 years	49 (49)	35 (35)	65 (65)
22-25 years	50 (50)	44 (44)	35 (35)
26-29 years	1 (1)	21 (0)	0 (0)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
Mean age	21.66	23.18	21.11
SD age	1.62	2.72	1.76

SD: Standard deviation

Table 2: Distribution by scores

Scores	Med. (%)	Dental (%)	Management (%)
0-10	1 (1)	6 (6)	4 (4)
11-20	9 (9)	14 (14)	21 (21)
21-30	28 (28)	34 (34)	36 (36)
31-40	32 (32)	34 (34)	32 (32)
41-50	20 (20)	10 (10)	7 (7)
51-60	8 (8)	2 (2)	0 (0)
61-70	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
71-80	2 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
Mean age	35.14	28.87	26.35
SD age	12.46	9.90	9.97

SD: Standard deviation

DISCUSSION

Professional colleges are known to be highly demanding and stressful learning environments for the students pursuing the professional course. They involve an acquisition of academic and interpersonal skills during the course of learning. Student's progress may be affected if they are unable to cope with their academic stress or manage the emotions evoked by their stressful experiences. The present study was conducted to compare and identify the levels of stress among students of three main streams, i.e., Medical, Dental and Management at a University in Uttar Pradesh.

The present study was conducted with a total of 300 volunteers comprising of 100 medical students consisting of 44 males and 56 females, 100 dental students consisting of 48 males and 52 females and 100 management students consisting of 40 males and 60 females with a mean age of 22 years, 23 years and 21 years respectively. Similar studies were conducted by Harikiran *et al.* with a sample size of 44 undergraduate students and a mean age of 21 years, Vanessa Muirhead and David Locker with a sample size of 171 dental under-graduate students and a mean age of 24 years and Sherina *et al.* with a sample size of 391 medical students and mean age of 22 years. In the present study, number of females outnumbered males in all the three groups i.e., Medical, Dental, and Management, which was similar to the studies conducted by Mas Suryalis Ahmad, Dr. Shashidhar Acharya, Harikiran *et al.*, Vanessa Muirhead and David Locker. The response rate in the present was recorded to be 100% that was similar to the response rate obtained by Mas Suryalis Ahmad whereas Muirhead and Locker recorded it to be 62%, Barikani recorded it to be 77.7%, Dr. Shashidhar Acharya recorded it to be 88.2% and Harikiran *et al.* recorded it to be 86%. The present study exhibited a medium level of stress more in case of medical students, followed by dental and management students falling in the score range of 41-60 and high levels of stress exclusively exhibited by medical students falling in the score range of 61-68. Similar results were obtained by Siddibhavi, who in his study compared stress level between medical and dental students, whereas Robert J Murphy *et al.* recorded as dental students having more level of stress compared to medical students.

The collective evidence of separate studies and on reviewing the literature of medical and dental students over the past three decades strongly denotes that these students are under a high level of stress during their

professional course.^[6] Examinations, competition for grades, amount of work, fear of being unable to catch up, an uncertainty regarding future employment were considered to be potential stressors.^[7] Professional students appear to face challenges during their professional training these challenges can only be overcome by changes in the curriculum and method of training. A study conducted by Muirhead and Locker (2007) concluded that students receiving more social support experienced less level of stress and such social support should come from teachers, parents or other students.^[8] Praying or performing some spiritual exercise can help in reducing stress as the individuals become more calm and composed.

Professional students should collaborate with educational experts in developing a curriculum that is more student-orientated, which would enhance the psychological well-being of students and thereby improve their academic, as well as clinical performance.

CONCLUSION

This study was done to assess the perceived stress among professional students and Medical and Dental students were found to have higher level of stress as compared to management probably due to academic performance, patient and clinical responsibilities. Therefore, a congenial environment needs to be created in the institution so that students can pursue their studies with less anxiety or fear. This can be done by conducting workshops involving parents and teachers and students on a regular basis. Although the stressful events cannot be eliminated, appropriate measures may be undertaken to alter the student's maladaptive perceptions and reactions to those events.

REFERENCES

1. Reddy VD, Naveenm N, Prabu, Manipal S, Preethi A, Ahmed A. The evaluation of perceived stress and depression in dental undergraduates. *Int Dent J Stud Res* 2013;1:36-41.
2. Maslach C, Jackson SE, Leiter MP. MBI: The Maslach Burnout Inventory: Manual. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press; 1996.
3. Maslach C, Schaufeli WB, Leiter MP. Job burnout. *Annu Rev Psychol* 2001;52:397-422.
4. Gil-Monte PR. The burnout syndrome. A work illness in the well-being society. Madrid: Pirámide Psicología; 2005.
5. Kumar S, Dagli RJ, Mathur A, Jain M, Prabu D, Kulkarni S. Perceived sources of stress amongst Indian dental students. *Eur J Dent Educ* 2009;13:39-45.
6. Siddibhavi MB. Professional student environmental stress. A questionnaire study. *World J Sci Technol* 2011;1:39-42.
7. Harikiran AG, Srinagesh J, Nagesh KS, Sajudeen N. Perceived

sources of stress amongst final year dental undergraduate students in a dental teaching institution at Bangalore, India: A cross sectional study. *Indian J Dent Res* 2012;23:331-6.

8. Muirhead V, Locker D. Canadian dental students' perceptions of stress. *J Can Dent Assoc* 2007;73:323.

How to cite this article: Khanna R, Devi MP, Ravindra SV, Tyagi K, Singh D, Kumar A. Evaluation of Burnout among Professional Students: An Institutional Analysis. *Int J Dent Med Spec* 2015;2(2):15-18.

Source of Support: Nil; **Conflict of Interest:** None