Prevalence of depression and anxiety among Serbian medical students

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Introduction

Medical exposed to multiple factors during their academic and clinical study which can lead to symptoms of depression and anxiety during their studies. Problems can also occur later during their career which can affect their ability to provide medical care.

Aim

The aim of this study was to determine the frequency of depression and anxiety symptoms among medical students, and to study relationship of these symptoms with socio-demographic factors.

Method

This cross-sectional study enrolled 378 sixth year students at the Faculty of Medicine University of Belgrade in October 2018. Data from students were collected by using anonymous questionnaire. The symptoms of depression and anxiety were determined using Beck depression and Beck anxiety inventory. In statistical analysis descriptive statistics and univariate regression analysis were used.

Results

Table 1: Prevalence of depression and anxiety among medical students according to Beck depression and Beck anxiety inventory

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Depression		
Without depression (0-9)	335	88.6
Mild depression (10-19)	32	8.5
Moderate depression (20-29)	10	2.6
Severe depression (≥ 30)	1	0.3
Anxiety		
Without anxiety	265	70.1
Mild anxiety	73	19.3
Moderate anxiety	30	7.9
Severe anxiety	10	2.6

Table 2: Association of depressive symptoms with socio-demographic factors

Factors	Depression +	Depression -	p value
Gender (women)	29 (67.4)	222 (66.3)	0.878
Age (years)	24.21 ± 0.83	24.28 ± 1.15	0,669
Father‘s educational level primary school secondary school university	 1 (2.3) 16 (37.2) 26 (60.5)	 3 (0.9) 133 (39.7) 199 (59.4)	0.965
Mother‘ s educational level primary school secondary school university	 1 (2.3) 19 (44.2) 23 (53.5)	 6 (1.8) 125 (37.3) 204 (60.9)	0.644
Living with family members	27 (62.8)	173 (51.6)	0.480
Socio-economic status Good Moderate Poor	 23 (53.4) 18 (41.9) 2 (4.7)	 245 (73.1) 88 (26.3) 2 (0.6)	0.003

Table 3: Association of anxiety symptoms with socio-demographic factors

Factors	Anxiety +	Anxiety -	p value
Gender (women)	90 (79.6)	161 (60.8)	<0.001
Age (years)	24.35 ± 0.97	24.24 ± 1.17	0.390
Father‘s educational level primary school secondary school university	 2 (1.8) 48 (42.5) 63 (55.7)	 2 (0.8) 101 (38.1) 162 (61.1)	0.269
Mother‘ s educational level primary school secondary school university	 4 (3.5) 42 (37.2) 67 (59.3)	 3 (1.1) 102 (38.5) 160 (60.4)	0.557
Living with family members	66 (58.4)	134 (50.6)	0.232
Socio-economic status Good Moderate Poor	 75 (66.4) 36 (31.9) 2 (1.7)	 193 (72.8) 70 (26.4) 2 (0.8)	0.168

Conclusions

Prevalence of depression and anxiety among medical students in our study is lower in comparison with prevalence observed in other studies, but it should not be disregarded. Medical universities should not only recognize these symptoms occurring in students, but should also identify and manage risk factors in order to prevent their negative influence on personality function.

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