

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease".

-(WHO)

BACKGROUND

Depression, anxiety, and stress demonstrate the mental health of an individual. Previous studies have shown high rates of depression, anxiety, and stress amongst medical students throughout the world. It is well accepted that mental distress of medical students is mainly associated with increased academic burden. But it is largely unexplored that which curricular changes are essential to reduce academic burden and enhance the well-being of medical students.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study was to provide ideas to medical educators to create necessary changes in curriculum to improve the mental well-being of students.

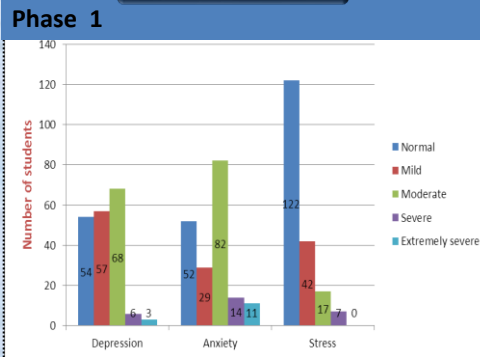


METHODOLOGY

This study was done in two phases and utilized a mixed methodology.

In Phase one the validated DASS-21 questionnaire was used. In Phase II, focus group was carried out to explore the possible reasons behind the mental distress among students.

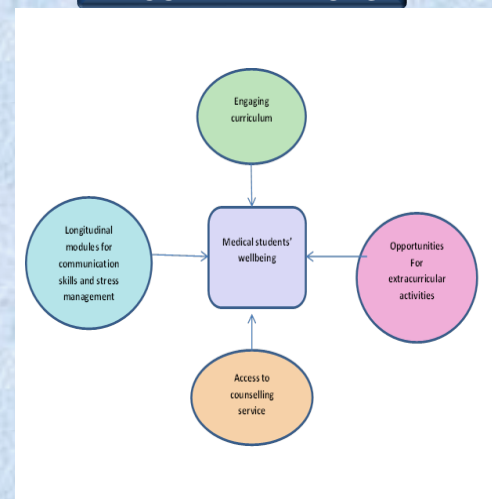
RESULTS



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study revealed that high rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among students is mainly academically related. Interventions targeting to reduce academic burden i.e. engaging curriculum, feedback and reflection, early introduction clinical subjects, opportunities for extracurricular activities and proper student support service should be initiated to improve the mental health of students.

RECOMMENDATIONS



REFERENCES

1. Dahlin, M., Joneborg, N., & Runeson, B. (2005). Stress and depression among medical students: A cross-sectional study. *Medical education*, 39 (6), 594-604.
2. Dyrbye, L. N., Thomas, M. R., & Shanafelt, T. D. (2005). Medical student distress: causes, consequences, and proposed solutions. In *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* (Vol. 80, No. 12, pp. 1613-1622). Elsevier.
3. Cohen, D., Winstanley, S., Palmer, P., Allen, J., Howells, S., Greene, G., & Rhydderch, M. (2013). Factors that impact on medical student wellbeing- Perspectives of risks Individual Support Programme School of Medicine Cardiff University.

Phase 2: Themes of focus group

Academic burden

Lots of exams
Lots of content to be learned
Too long lectures
Minimal students-teacher interaction
Unclear learning objectives
Lack of time to study

Transitions

Lack of communication skills
Lack of guidance
Minimal feedback and reflection

Poor life style

No time for extracurricular and leisure activities

Lack of support system

No place to discuss problems with confidence

Financial reasons

So many books to buy
High fees

Main reasons of mental distress as perceived by students in focus group