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Academic Stress among medical college students, Pakistan

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Abstract

Main objective of this research paper is to find out the determinants that cause stress in private medical students, in Lahore region Pakistan. According to Richard S.Lazarus “stress is such as a situation when an individual feels that demand has gone beyond the available resources it is state of stress (Richard. L 1999). Practically the academic stress is primarily concerned with two reasons; scarcity and desires, (Lovely Joseph 2018). Increasing ratio of committing suicide among younger people (Nabeeha 2018) has persuaded to conduct this type of study. Pursuing professional studies like medical, engineering, in higher education create stress level higher than other studies (Ashok, Karthik 2019). The scarcity limits medical student demands and the desire is that the loss of something which they expect. This study highlights focuses to know the factors of stress; a random sample of 110 students from the population of two districts in Lahore and Sheikhpura is selected. Primary data was collected through the questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was prepared after analyzing the various aspects of academic stress. It is significant that stress can cause both positive and negative influence on students. As per experts extreme stress situations can disturb human health but at the same time moderate stress is normal and mostly source to do well in life.

Keywords: Stress Management, Medical Career stress, Medical Colleges Pakistan. Medical student's problems

INTRODUCTION

Stress has become an integral part of student's academic life as various elements are there. Stress is not harmful, but it can seriously impact the people those who perceive it negative. Every person has different set of reactions to stress. Because of academic stress students usually get disappointed which generally result in depression, anxiety, sleeping disorder, memory loss, or other psychological disorder. Education plays pivotal role to enhance economic and social status. It is very important to create opportunities to convert human capabilities into employment in order to generate economic incentive both for individual and society. Thus it is of great significance for medical colleges to plan balanced and at par academic environment to control stress factor. Academic stressors in medical college are associated to study for mother university examinations, monthly test, term test, send ups, and seminars, parental pressure from families and most of all huge part of learning scripts to master the same in short time. An increasing trend of committing suicide among students gives an alarming sound as around 3000 students (Muneeba 2018), 73% male and 27% female committed suicide of their education pressure a survey from 2010-2017.

Most common reasons behind suicide were found to be failure in exams (23.6%), scolded by parents (11.8%) harsh attitude of teachers or administration (5.9%) and academic stress 2.9%. (Muneeba Shakil 2018). Moreover, among the deceased cases, most of the students were enrolled in MBBS, engineering and A- levels. Suicidal ideation among medical students was investigated in a private medical college of Karachi by Osama et al. in 2014. Findings suggested that 13.9% of all the students committed suicide planed for long, while 4.8% out of 331 students tried to commit suicide at some point of time in their life. Reasons were considered to be substance abuse followed by ignoring behavior of parents and chronicle behavior disorder.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To identify the causes and effect of stress in medical students
- To analyze the impact of stress on medical students
- To achieve possible remedies of the problem

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress is “a vibrant situation that person faces to perform under an opportunity, scarcity, desire and demand related to what one wishes for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important” (R.S Schuler) .Stress word has been retrieved from the physics that indicates the force consumed heavily based object and it associates to genuine case to find out how force can be applied on life of human being (Wheeler 2007, 2). Stress is “sudden reaction to internal and external norms of environment” that brings both bright and dark side of the pictures (Pargman 2006, 5)’Bernstein et.al. (2008) shares the core element of stress as every situation or event that tends to share threat to people who have affected their day to day matters and tried to settle down . Phinney and Haas (2003) emphasized on sources of stress categorically as a novel set of stress oriented situation for student such as financial constraints, duties and academic burdens.

Stress determinants

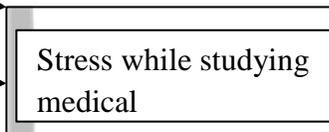
DV1



DV2



DV3



**Independent variable
(Research problem)**

Sources of Stress for Medical College Students

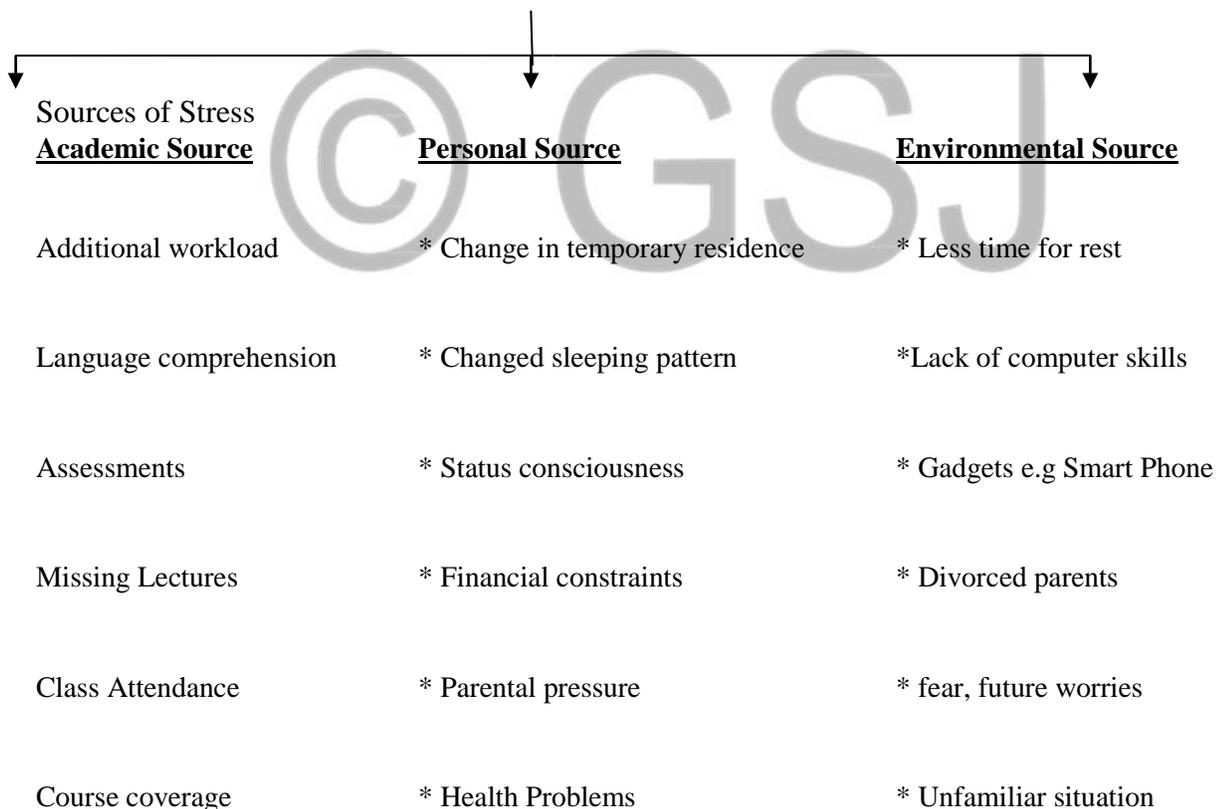
Medical College students are stressed due to various elements majorly includes academic factors, personal factors and environmental factors. Medical Students may get stressed by increasing hard work. Students usually take on many contents learning orally and by heart for in each professional year for at least five to six years. Some other type of stress may arise from the language comprehensions and missing lectures.

Personal factors generally influence the student academic output and cause to add stress. Staying in hostels and changing living scenario, sleeping habits have to be changed due to additional

academic workload, carrying out jobs while studying, also financial constraints cause a student push under stress and depressed. Unbalance diet and Poor nutrition add on the students stress level. Students start feeling uneasy when enters in a new environment which can badly affect their studies. A rest is required to human body in different timings. Lack of skills in computer application to make assignments etc can cause to generate stress. On the contrary poor living conditions, fear of future , separated or divorced parents and non-availability ideal scenario can add up to stress.

Stress though may be useful to do well on testing times. If stress becomes unmanageable then stress can create frustrations, desperations, depression, and many other psychological and physical issues. Stress can damage student’s ability to perform well. Stress also causes confusion, tense and other suffering of memory loss etc for students.

Stress factor in medical, engineering, and higher education is comparatively more amongst younger people (Karthik, Ashok 2019). Stress factors have been used by (lovely Joseph 018) to study the stress level among students in India. Determinants of Stress



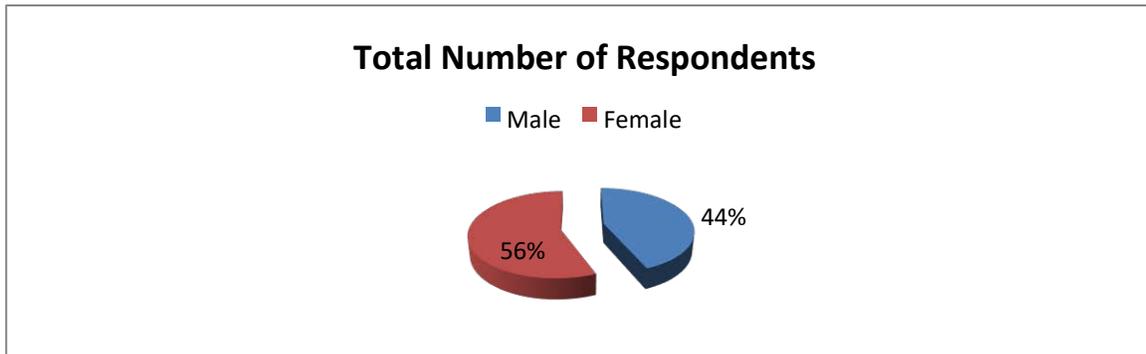
Research methodology

Data was collected with combination of interview ad questionnaire method from the respondents.

Sample design: random sampling was used to collect data from the respondents. **Sample size:**

110 respondents were interviewed through questionnaire.

Statistical tool: percentage method was used to analyze the data.



Data Analysis

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male students	48	43.63
Female students	62	56.37
Total	110	100

Interpretation: The table shows that out of 110 respondents, 48 were male and 62 were female students.

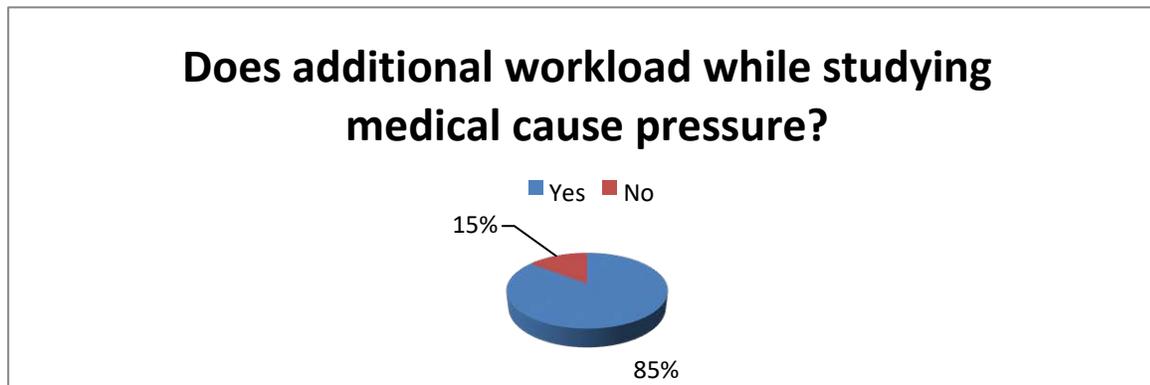
SECTION A (ACADEMIC FACTORS)

Q.1 Do you feel studying medical have additional workload comparing previous education?

Table 2

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	93	84.5
No	17	15.5
Total	110	100

Chart 2



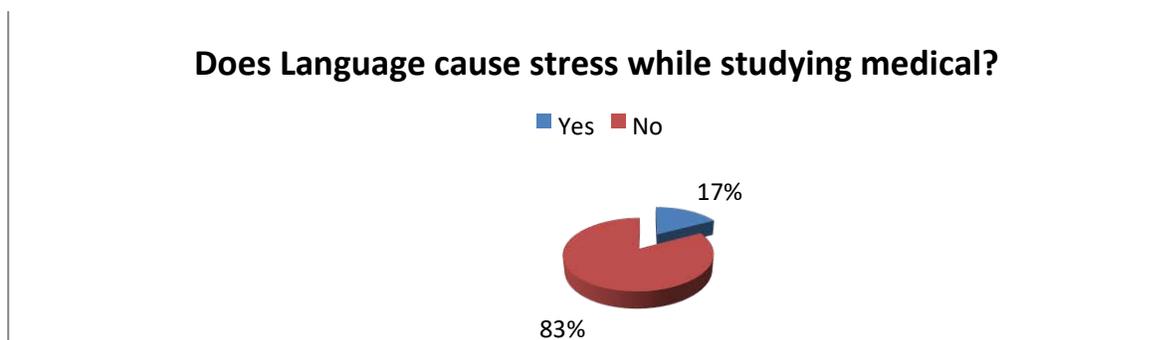
Interpretation: The graphical representation of the table no. 1 shows that 84.5 percent of respondents agree with the additional workload comparatively their previous studies workload of intermediate level while 14.5 percent students feel the workload was as good in previous class as now in medical studies.

Q.2 Do you think language is a barrier as medium of Instruction in English?

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	19	17.2
No	91	82.8
Total	110	100

Table 3

Chart 3



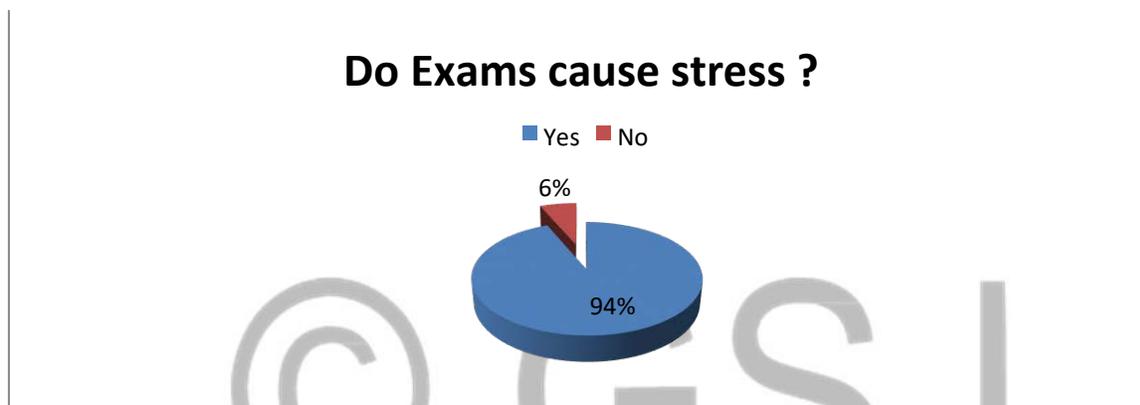
Interpretation: graphical representation of table 3 shows that only 17.2 percent medical students find it difficult to study in English language for comprehension while 82.8 percent students believe they are comfortable studying in English language.

Q.3 Do internal and external (Final Exams) cause stress?

Table 4

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	103	93.6
No	7	6.4
Total	110	100

Chart 4



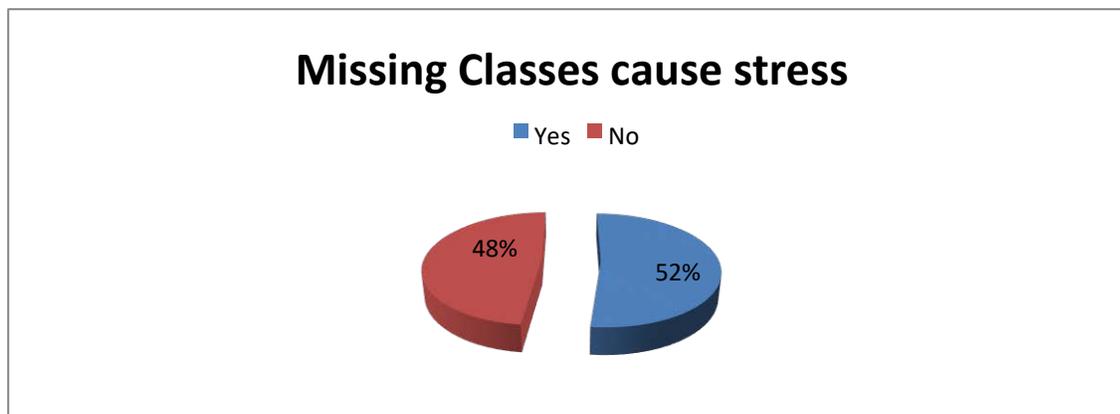
Interpretation: graphical representation of table 4 refer towards the exams stress as almost 94 percent students are under stress during exams days while only 6 percent students are able to control their stress level.

Q.4 Do missing lectures during classes create problems?

Table 5

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	57	51.8
No	53	48.2
Total	110	100

Chart 5



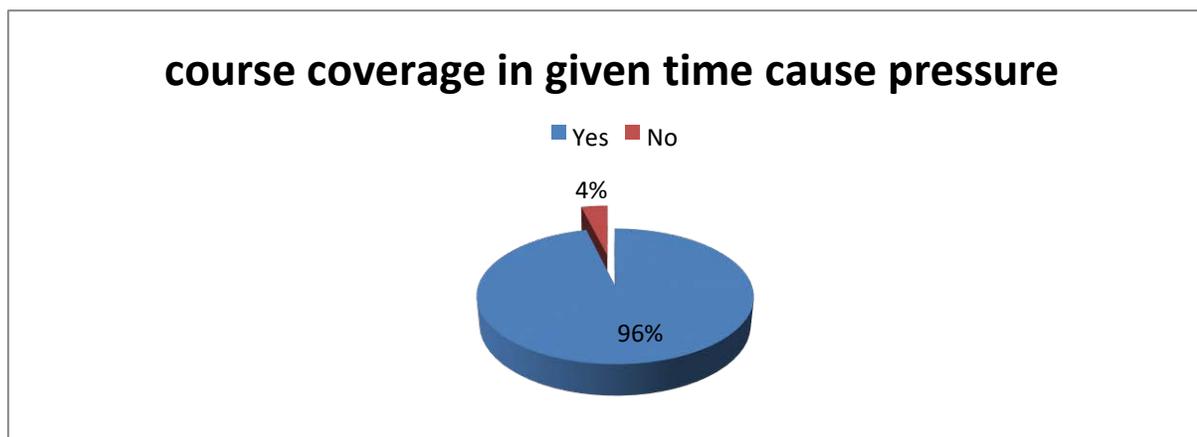
Interpretation: table 5 graphical expression refer that the 51.8 percent students who miss their lectures during class days find it hard to manage later on but 48.2 percent students are able to make up their missing lectures before they appear in final exams.

Q.5 Course coverage in given time is a big pressure while taking classes?

Table 6

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	88	80
No	22	20
Total	110	100

Chart 6



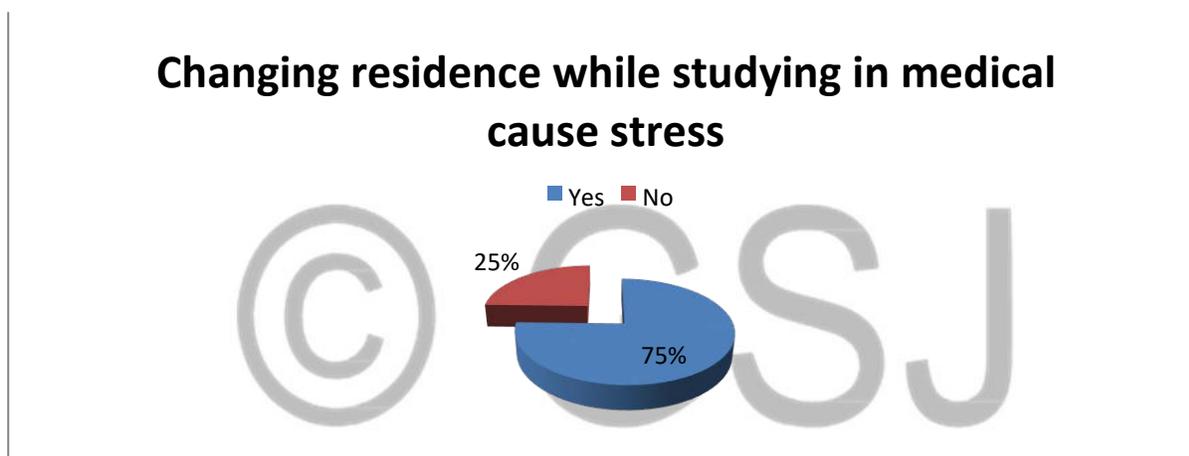
Interpretation: as per graphical chart no 6 show 80 percent students are under stress while 20 percent students deny the fact that course coverage in given time creates stress.

SECTION B (PERSONAL FACTORS)

Q.7 Changing residence while studying medical cause trouble and create stress? Table 7

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	83	75.4
No	27	24.6
Total	110	100

Chart 7

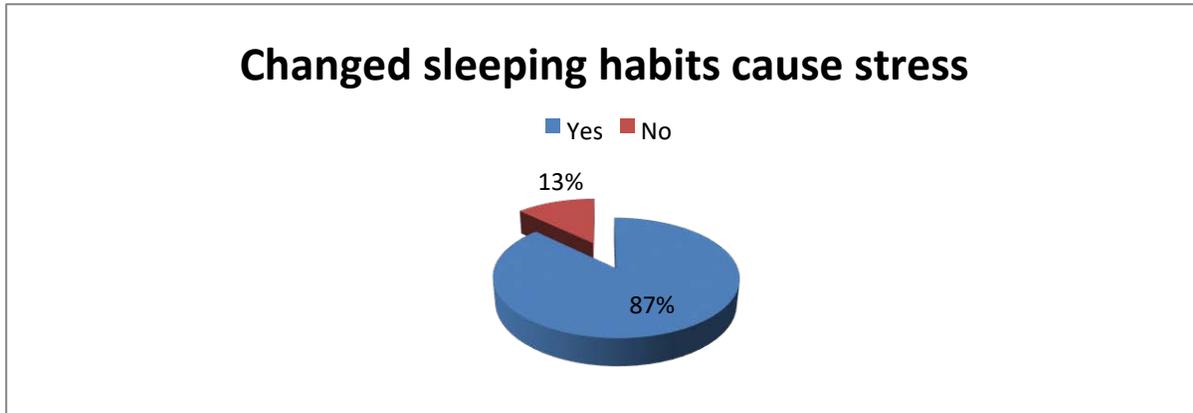


Interpretation: graphical representation of table 7 depicts that 75.4 percent students feel it stressful changing residence while studying medical while 24.6 percent students don't feel stress for changing residence during medical studies.

Q.8 Sleeping habits have to be changed since entering in medical college? Table 8

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	96	87.2
No	14	12.8
Total	110	100

Chart 8



Interpretation: graphical representation of table 8 refer that changed sleeping habits create stress for 87.2 percent students while 12.8 percent students are able to balance their sleep while studying medical.

Q.9 Does Maintaining status in joint family system after / before completion of MBBS cause stress?

Table 9

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	79	71.8
No	31	28.2
Total	110	100

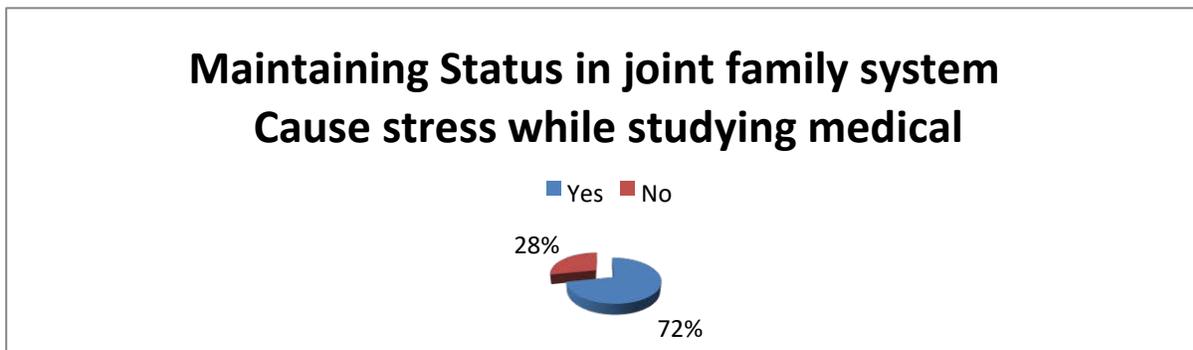


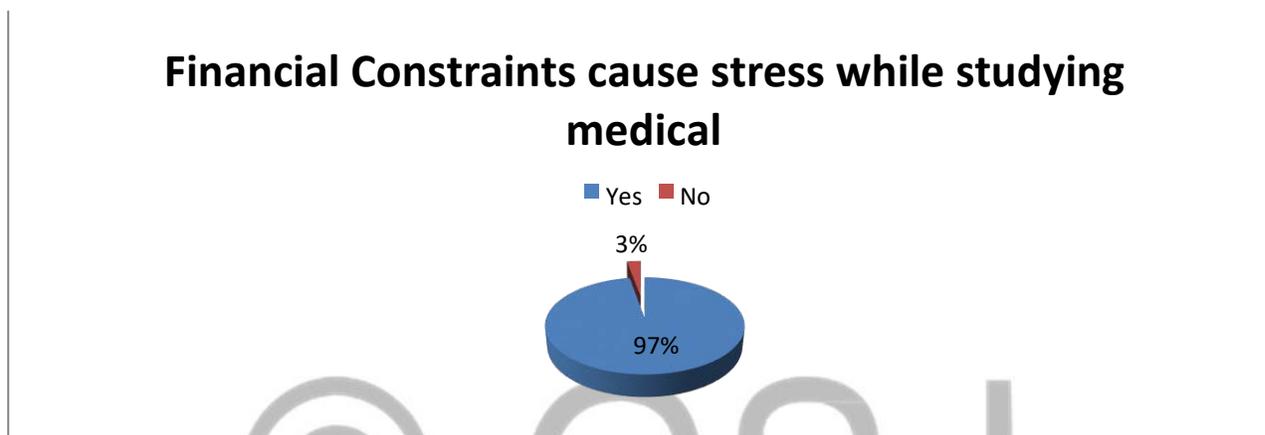
Chart 9

Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 9 show that 71.8 percent students feel stress of family / joint family after / before completion of MBBS whereas 28.2 percent students don't feel stress in this situation.

Q.10 Financial constraints are great barriers to live with while studying medical and cause stress? Table 10

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	107	97.2
No	3	2.8
Total	110	100

Chart 10

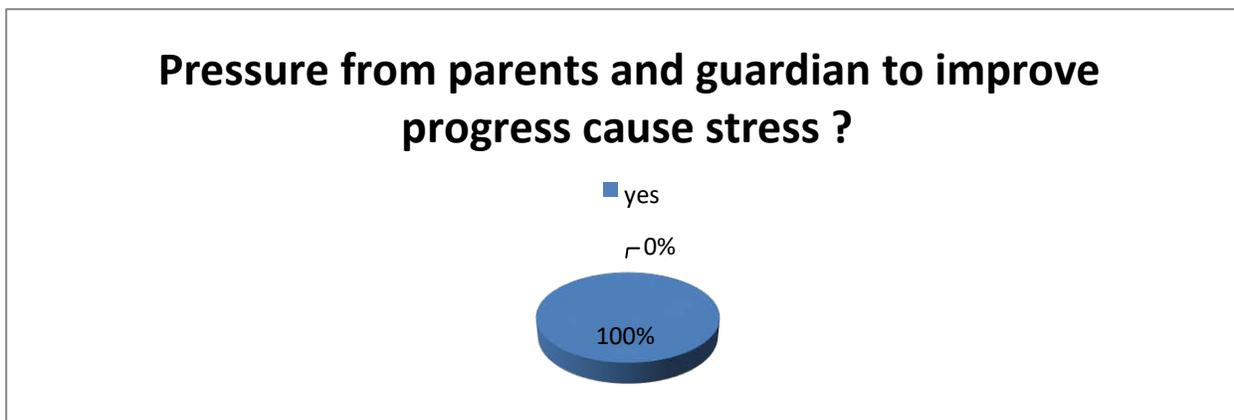


Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 10 clearly show the 97.2 students feel stress of financial constraints while studying Medical and only 2.8 percent students deny the fact of being under stress in financial scarcity.

Q.11 Does Pressure rise from parents and guardian to improve progress, cause stress? Table 11

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	110	100
No	0	0
Total	110	100

Chart 11



Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 11 show absolute reason to cause stress for 100 percent students that parents and guardian pressure to improve the progress create stress.

Q.12 Does it cause stress to be healthy and fit during medical studies? Table 12

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	96	87.2
No	14	12.8
Total	110	100

Chart 12



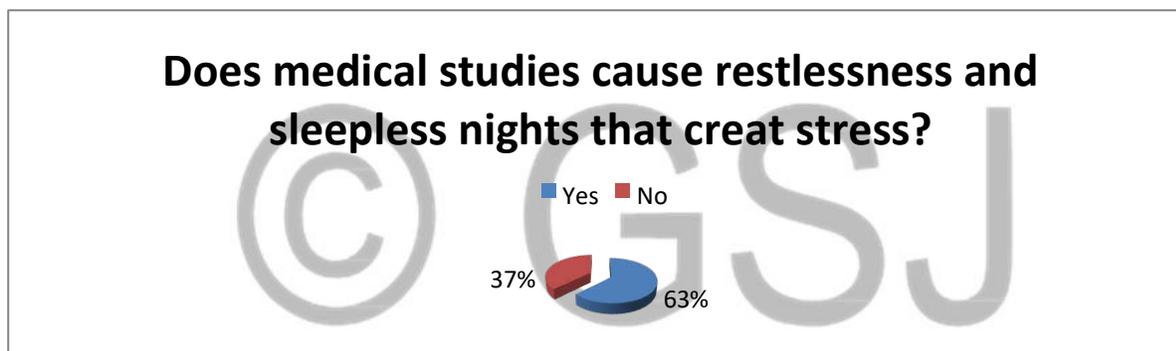
Interpretation: graphical representation of table 12 show that 87.2 percent students feel stress of remaining fit and healthy to perform well whereas 12.8 percent students deny the fact that it causes pressure.

SECTION C (ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS)

Q.13 Do medical studies cause restless and sleepless nights that cause stress? Table 13

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	69	62.7
No	41	37.3
Total	110	100

Chart 13



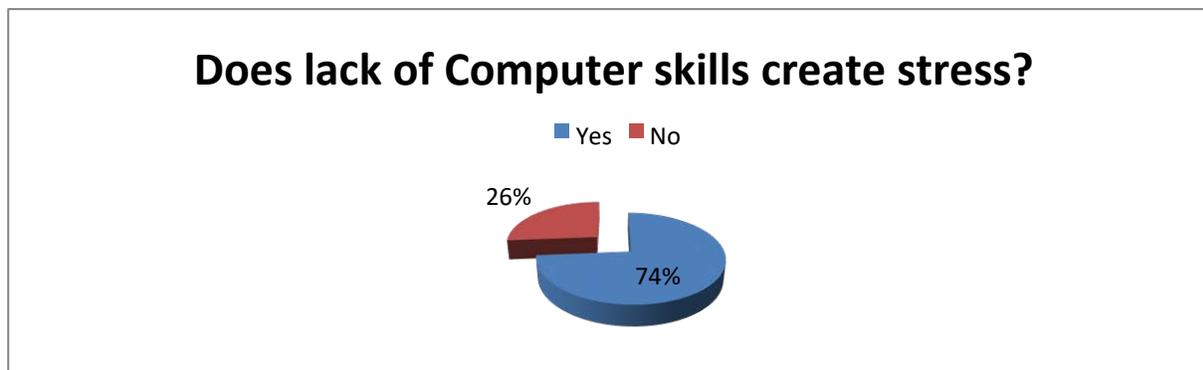
Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 13 show that 62.7 percent students feel stress to have restlessness and sleepless nights while studying medical whereas 37.3 percent students don't consider this for reason of stress.

Q.14 Does lack of computer skills cause stress in medical studies?

Table 14

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	81	73.7
No	29	26.3
Total	110	100

Chart 14



Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 14 show that 73.7 percent students feel stress when computer skills are not learnt while 26.3 percent students consider it not a cause of stress.

Q.15 Do Non availability of internet and latest gauges such as Smart phones and laptops cause stress? Table 15

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	110	100
No	0	0
Total	110	100

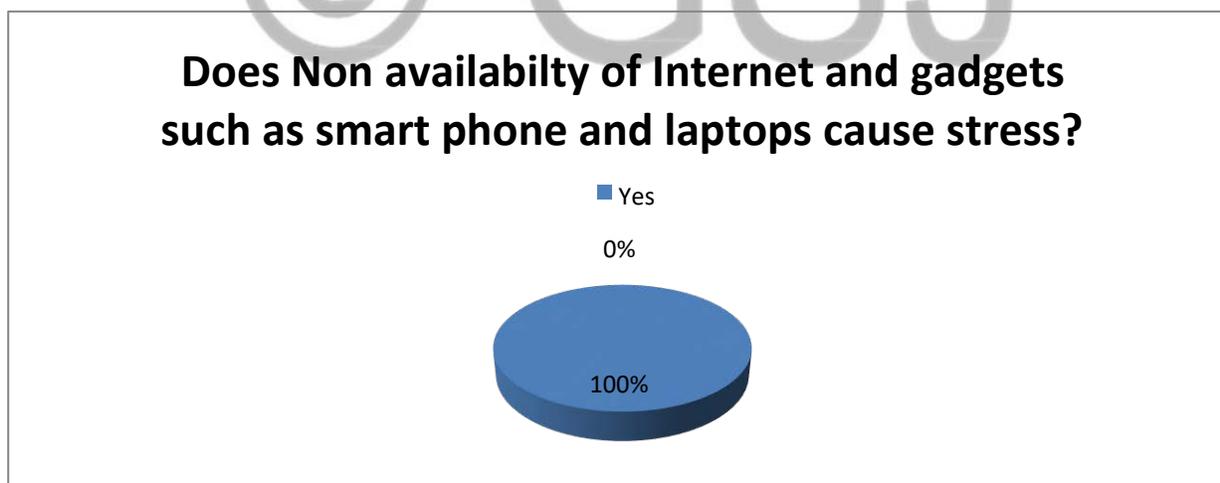


Chart 15

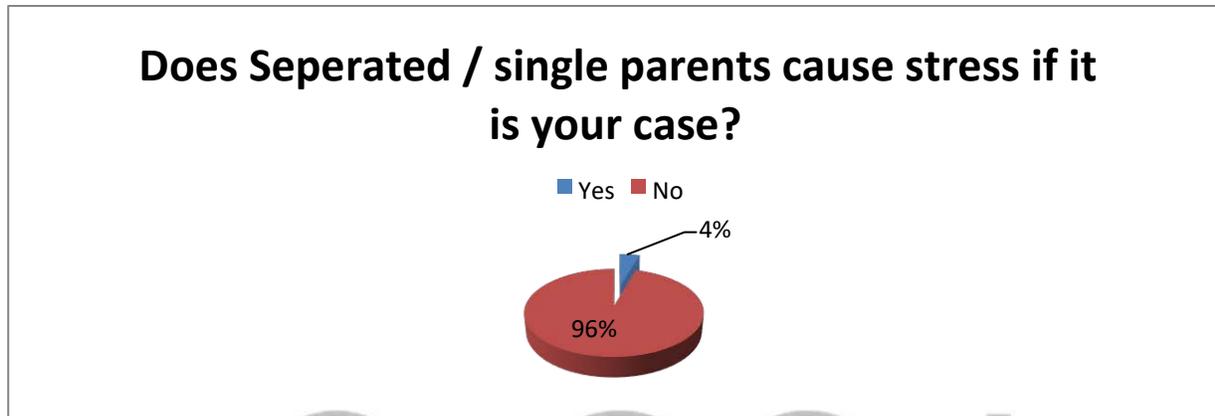
Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 15 shows that 100 percent students feel stress when Non-availability of internet and latest gadgets such as smart phones and laptops are not available while studying medical.

Q.16 Do separated or divorced / single parents cause stress while studying medical; If it is?

Table 16

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	5	4.5
No	105	95.5
Total	110	100

Chart 16



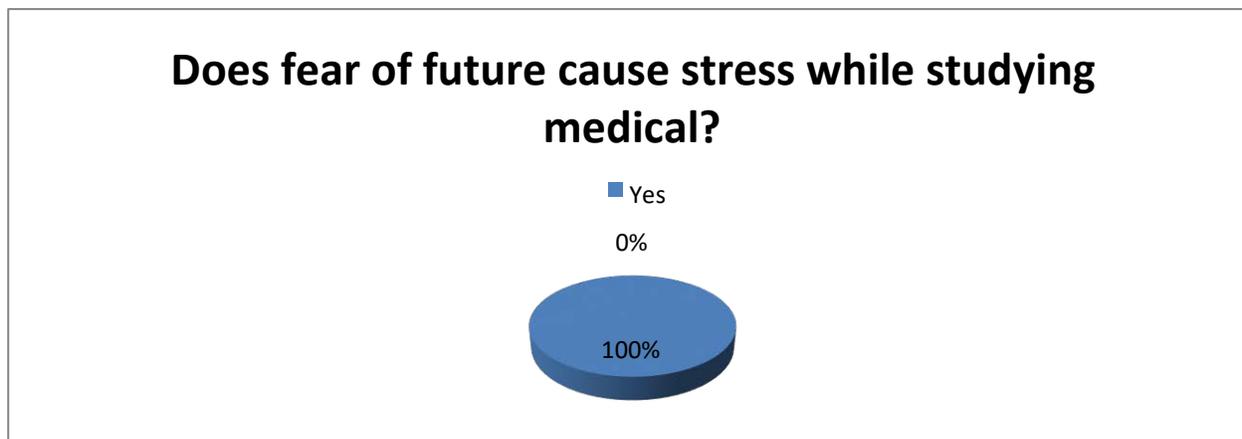
Interpretation: graphical representation of table 16 shows that only 4.5 percent students felt stress because of their separated / single parents' case whereas rest 95.5 percent students didn't have this kind of stress.

Q.17 Does fear of future cause stress while studying medical? Table

17

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	110	100
No	0	0
Total	110	100

Chart 17

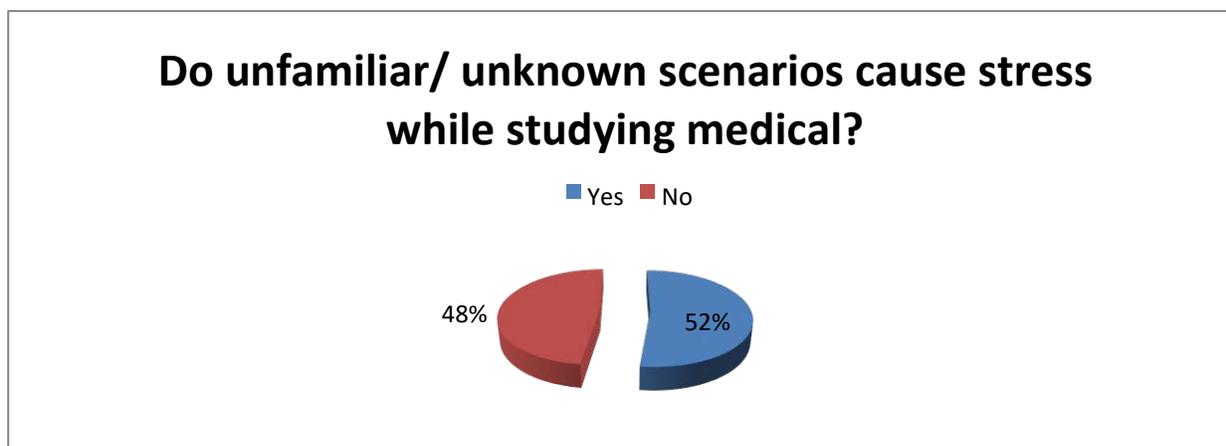


Interpretation: As per graphical representation of table 17 100% students are under stress about their future.

Q.18 Do unfamiliar / unknown scenarios cause stress while studying medical? Table 18

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	57	51.8
No	53	48.2
Total	110	100

Chart 18

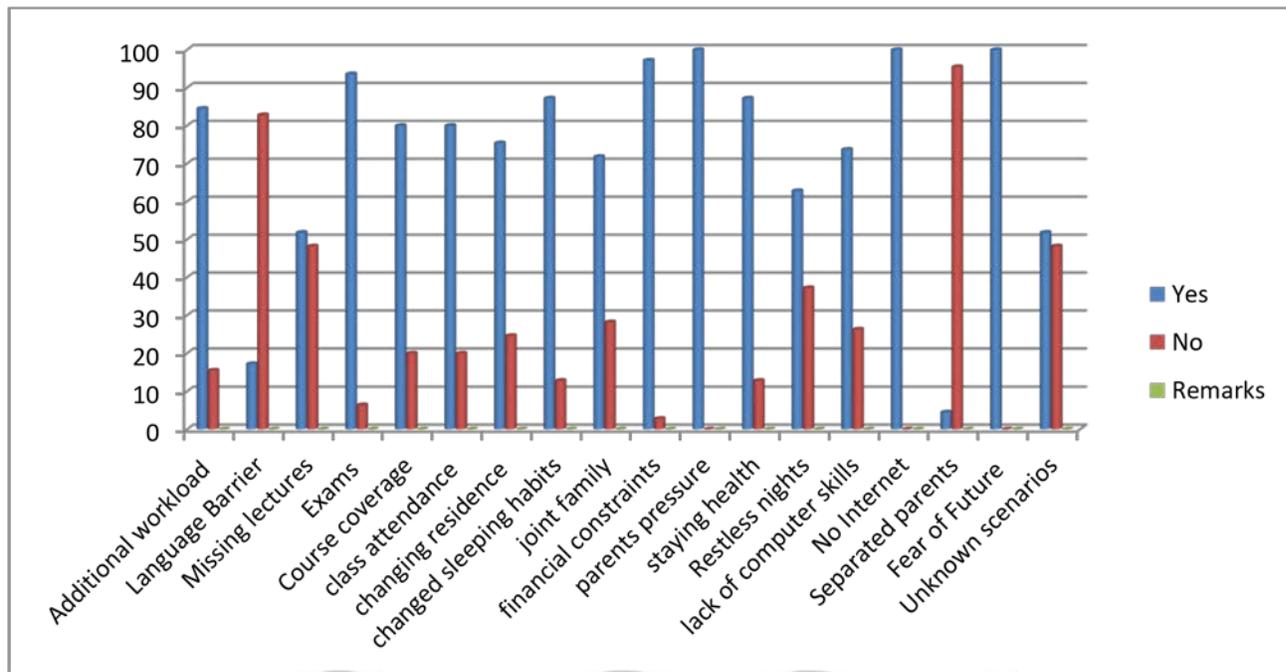


Interpretation: Graphical representation of table 18 shows that 48.2 percent students feel stress under unfamiliar / unknown situations whereas 51.8 percent students feel they are able to handle any situation while studying medical.

FINAL STATISTICS

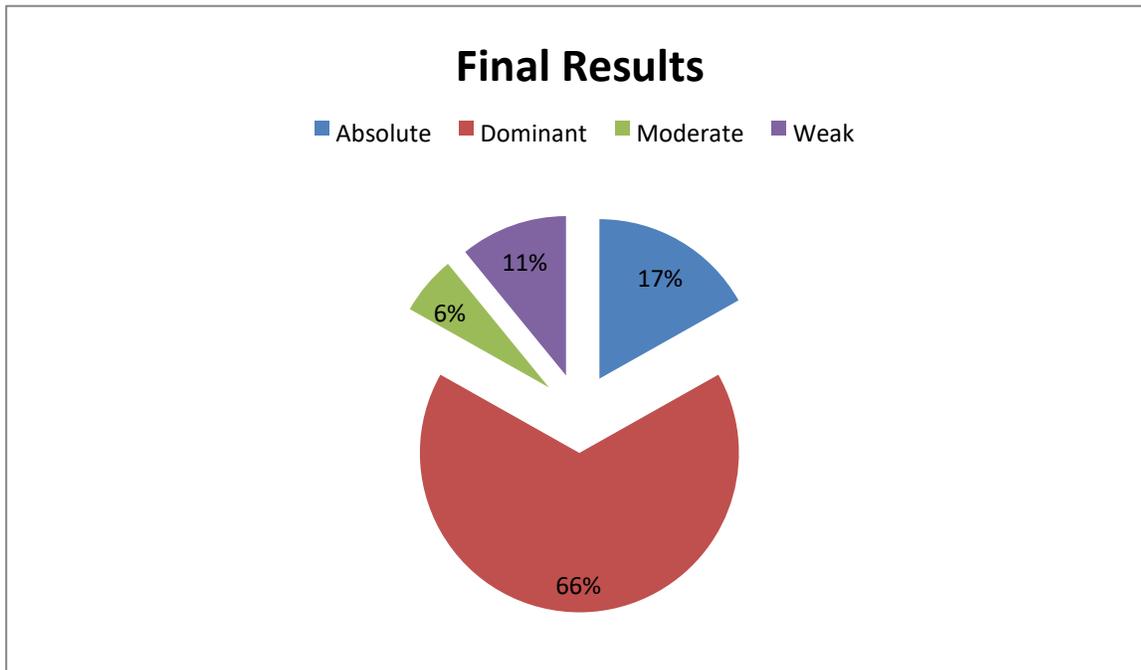
Sr.	Hypothesis	Yes %	No %	Remarks
ACADEMIC FACTORS				
1	Additional Workload of studies	84.5	15.5	Dominant
2	English Medium as Language Barrier	17.2	82.8	Weak
3	Exams cause stress	93.6	6.4	Dominant
4	Missing Lectures cause stress	51.8	48.2	Moderate
5	Course coverage in given time	80	20	Dominant
6	Class attendance	80	20	Dominant
PERSONAL FACTORS				
7	Changing Residence	75.4	24.6	Dominant
8	Changed sleeping habits	87.2	12.8	Dominant
9	Joint family / family system	71.8	28.2	Dominant
10	Financial constraints	97.2	2.8	Dominant
11	Parents / guardian pressure	100	Nil	Absolute
12	Staying healthy & fit	87.2	12.8	Dominant
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS				
1	Restless / sleepless nights	62.8	37.2	Dominant
2	Lack of computers skills	73.7	26.3	Dominant
3	Non availability of internet	100	Nil	Absolute
4	Divorced / separated parents	4.5	95.5	Weak
5	Fear of future	100	Nil	Absolute
6	Unfamiliar / unknown scenarios	51.8	48.2	Moderate

Final Statistics of Academic stress amongst medical students in Pakistan



Final statistics

Sr	Results	Count	Percentage %
1	Absolute	3	17
2	Dominant	12	67
3	Moderate	1	6
4	Weak	2	11



Research Finding

Medical College students are stressed the most by financial constraints, fear of future about their career, and non-availability of internet along with latest gadgets such as smart phones; laptops etc. as survey suggested that almost all students agreed in the study that these three factors cause absolute stress.

Similarly some other factors pressure of family / joint family, pressure from parents / guardians change in residence and sleepless nights, pressure of exams, missing lectures and language barriers also cause stress amongst medical students. Lack of computer skills also cause stress amongst the medical students. Remaining healthy and fit is has also been found a reason of stress.

Some of the students also feel stress by additional workload of medical studies. Unknown / unfamiliar scenarios also cause Stress. Similarly there are few others problems like psychological issues such as lonely feelings, desperate and being depressed. Stress can be reason to cause stress if sleeping pattern changes, unstable blood pressure, gaining or losing weight etc. Students found undress if they have not been using social media.

Conclusion

Academic stress can seriously damage the performance of the students and health also so it is of great significance to work out some techniques to help them removing their stress such as workshop at the start of each academic year. In this way the students might be in a position to

combat their stress issues during studies. Medical colleges must arrange stress awareness classes, physical and recreational activities on regular basis during academic session. However career counseling and motivational lectures can also help students to come out of stress and perform well academically.

Limitation

This study has only dealt with three factors cause stress among medical college; however social factors and political unrest along with security concern can also be taken on board for future research. This research is limited in nature as only two multiples have been used of agreed or disagreed due to lack of time and sources.

Future Research

However more multiples can be used as assessment to get precise results. This study is only been aimed to analyze private medical colleges as expenditures are as good as 10 times more of public medical colleges. Some other stress factors in public medical college can be taken as stress factor such competition on limited seats, health issues, and quota system etc. admission in other cities, provinces can be challenge.

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QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDY STRESS LEVEL IN MEDICAL STUDENTS

Considering you are medical student and have very precious time to fill this questionnaire, but your few minutes may help the cause to complete the study of managing stress among medical students.

Age ----- Gender----- professional year----- Medical College-----

SECTION A (ACADEMIC FACTORS)

1. Do you feel studying medical have additional workload comparing your previous education? YES/ NO
2. Do you think language is a barrier as medium of instruction in English? YES/ NO
3. Do internal and external assessment (Final Exams) cause stress? YES/NO
4. Do missing lectures create problems? YES/ NO
5. Do you think class attendance is important in setting up final result? YES/ NO
6. Course coverage in given time is a big pressure while taking classes? YES/ NO

SECTION B (PERSONAL FACTORS)

1. Changing residence while studying in medical studies cause huge problem? YES/ NO

2. Sleeping habits have to be changed since entering in medical college? YES/ NO
3. Maintaining status in joint family system after / before completion of MBBS doctor is big pressure? YES/ NO
4. Financial constraints are great barriers to live with while studying medical? YES/ NO
5. Pressure from parents cause great stress in medical studies? YES/ NO
6. Remaining healthy and fit is a big challenge in medical studies? YES/ NO

SECTION C (ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS)

1. Medical studies often cause restless and sleepless nights? YES/ NO
2. Computer skills help to stay satisfied to generate notes and handouts? YES/ NO
3. Non Availability of Smart phones and laptops along with wifi create stress? YES/ NO
4. Separated or divorced / single parents have caused great stress? YES/NO
5. Fear of future is always top of the mind to create stress? YES/NO
6. Unfamiliar situation hurt to a great deal in medical studies? YES/NO

