

Editor's Comment:

Here are my comments with reference to the manuscript entitled ASSOCIATION OF DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND STRESS IN MEDICAL STUDENTS STUDYING IN MODULAR, SEMESTER AND ANNUAL EXAMINATION SYSTEM. Please read the attached Editors comments. The methodology is questionable and not well explained and the socio demographic data is crucial to the paper. Basically the paper just compared depression, anxiety and stress among students in the different system of assessment not weighing in on the confounding factors of gender, cultural background, parental guidance, peer influence and other related factors. However, since the reviewers have given scores of 8 for this manuscript, maybe the article can be renamed as "A PILOT STUDY OF ASSOCIATION OF DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND STRESS IN MEDICAL STUDENTS STUDYING IN MODULAR, SEMESTER AND ANNUAL EXAMINATION SYSTEM IN A DISTRICT IN PAKISTAN"

I feel that the methodology needs to be corrected in order to maintain the good name of your journal. I would like to suggest you get another editor's comments (preferably a statistician) on this matter.

Only one reviewer gave a rating of 8 for this document (Chi)
The other reviewer asked for minor changes so it is assumed rating is the same, 8 Vi)

Written in the methodology section that " Participants were recruited using multi stage sampling technique. My main concern is sampling technique because it was mentioned as **multistage** yet it was not explained.

Random selection of students was performed, 50% population of each class were randomly selected on the basis of their willingness to become the participant of study. Taking samples of students who agree to answer the questionnaire is purposive sampling not random sampling. Could the authors please elaborate the sampling technique. Is it like this:

Level 1: Medical schools in Sindh Pakistan divided into modular, semester and annual examination system (total how many medical schools in each category and how were these sampled? Systematic or Random)

Level 2: After sampling one school for each type of examination system you pick those in year 1,2 and 3. You randomly pick 50% of the class...how is this done, using random numbers or you put the names in a box and pick up 50%.

Level 3: Only those who agree to the study answer the questionnaire. What about consent? Was it taken. Did this questionnaire pass the research ethics board of the university?

Multistage is a type of sampling which involves dividing the population into groups (or clusters). Then, one or more clusters are chosen at random and everyone within the chosen cluster is sampled. Constructing the clusters is the first stage. Deciding what elements within the cluster to use is the second stage. The technique is used frequently when a complete list of all members of the population does not exist and is inappropriate.

With reference to demographic characteristics were not included in the study as there were many things do discuss on as answered by the author A summary of the sociodemographic data can easily be tabled as shown in the example below:

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Description		Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Year of MD program	Year 3	24	27.0%
	Year 4	37	41.6%
	Year 5	28	31.5%
Gender	Male	49	55.1%
	Female	40	44.9%
Race	Malay	46	51.7%
	Chinese	15	16.9%
	Indian	26	29.2%
	Other	2	2.2%
Number of siblings	No Siblings	3	3.4%
	1-2 Siblings	15	16.9%
	3-4 Siblings	44	49.4%
	5 And More Siblings	27	30.3%
Siblings of adolescent age	No	22	34.4%
	Yes	42	65.6%
Marital status of parents	Married	78	87.6%
	Divorced	5	5.6%
	Widowed	5	5.6%
	No Parents	1	1.1%

A summary like the above would describe to the readers about the students that answered the questions. This is because gender, number of siblings, type of dwelling, whether parents are divorced/separated have an influence on depression, anxiety and stress.

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