



ASSESSMENT OF SUBSTANCE USE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTERNSHIP AMONG INTERN DOCTORS IN MAHARASHTRA

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Financial Support: None declared
Conflict of interest: None declared
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How to cite this article:

Todkar SS, Nandimath VA, Haralkar S, Mulaje SM, Mangulikar SK, Bennishirur WA. Assessment of Substance Use and Attitude Towards Internship among Intern Doctors in Maharashtra. Ntl J Community Med 2016; 7(2):88-91.

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Date of Submission: 06-11-15

Date of Acceptance: 26-02-16

Date of Publication: 29-02-16

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Substance use (SU) among medical students is well-known phenomenon. It may affect learning capabilities in medical students and the quality of health care offered to the patients may be hampered. This study was conducted in order to assess the SU among medical students and to study their attitude towards internship.

Methods:- Descriptive Study was conducted at Dr. V M Govt. Medical College, Solapur Maharashtra, India. A pretested, anonymous semi open-ended questionnaire was administered to intern doctors. For this study we included all passed out final year MBBS students from a single class. Response rate was 88%. So the final sample was come out to 76 intern doctors. Appropriate statistical tests were applied.

Results: the most frequently used substance among intern doctors was alcohol consumption (18.42%), followed by cigarette smoking (10.53%) and tobacco chewing (5.27%). The attitude of most of the intern doctors (90.79%) was towards preparation of postgraduate medical entrance examination. also their choice of post graduation course was clinical branch (96.05%).

Conclusion: - The most commonly used substance among medical students was alcohol & cigarette smoking. The attitude of the intern doctors was towards preparation of postgraduate medical entrance examination.

Key words: Substance Use, Assessment, Attitude, Intern Doctors, medical students

INTRODUCTION

Substance use among medical students is a well-known phenomenon. In spite of this there have been few attempts to estimate the problem of substance use.¹ Data on prevalence of SU among medical students is almost unavailable in India. Substance Use (alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, tobacco chewing, here after mentioned as SU) among medical students could impact on the conduct, safety and efficiency of future doctors. It can hamper the quality of medical health care offered to patient.² Despite

of serious medico legal, ethical and political ramifications, there are very few studies on topic like substance use by intern doctors.³ Substance use is one of the most important causes of preventable morbidity, disability and premature mortality.⁴ There is a lack of enough and reliable data on substance use among medical students. This study was conducted to the assesses use of substance that is alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, tobacco chewing, and identify reasons associated with substance use

among intern doctors at Dr. Vaishampayan Memorial Government Medical College, Solapur Maharashtra, India.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were to assess the attitude of intern doctors towards internship. And also to assess the of Substance use i.e. alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, tobacco use and factors associated with substance use, and to study the premarital sexual intercourse among intern doctors.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Socio-demographic data and individual risk behaviour of intern doctors was collected by an anonymous self-administered, Semi open-ended questionnaire after informed oral consent and the participants were free to join or leave the study. The prior approval from the ethical committee of college was taken to precede the study. Questionnaire was administered to medical students who had just passed out final MBBS examination. For this study we had included all passed out medical students. Sample size -Universal sample, in a batch of 100 students 86 were cleared in first attempt. Response rate was 88%. So the final sample was come out to 76 students. Study Design: Descriptive Study was conducted at Dr. Vaishampayan Memorial Government Medical College, Solapur Maharashtra, India. Statistical Tests: Percentage, Standard deviation, Chi-square test and Z test whenever necessary.

RESULTS

Results of the study are shown in table 1 & 2. The study variables like whether doing daily physical exercise or yoga/Pranayam etc. and their corresponding positive and negative responses are shown in table. Out of 76 total intern doctors (n=76), 48.68% were males (37) & 52.34% were females (39). Mean age was 22.7 ± 0.8 years with standard deviation of 0.8 and median age of 23 years, After enquiring about reasons for choosing MBBS course, it was observed that maximum number (82.90%) of interns said that Doctor is 'Noble Profession' and that's why we choose MBBS course, 2.62% interns replied my parent were doctor and want to continue their practice! 2.62% replied I want to earn money. And none of intern doctors said I want to do private practice!

Table: 1 Health awareness and substance use among Intern Doctors (n=76)

Study Variables	Positive Re-sponses	Negatives Re-sponses
Doing Physical Exercise	51 (67.10)	25 (32.90)
Doing Yoga/ Pranayam	37 (48.68)	39 (51.32)
Chewed Tobacco	04 (5.27)	72 (94.73)
Consumed Alcohol	14 (18.42)	62 (81.58)
Smoked Cigarette	08 (10.53)	68 (89.47)
Had Sexual Intercourse at least once!	10 (13.15)	66 (86.85)

Table: 2 Attitude of intern doctors towards internship

Character	N=76 (%)	Test Statistic	P value
During internship priority--			
Will do internship sincerely?	07 (9.21)	Z = 7.11	P < 0.01
Will prepare for PG entrance?	69 (90.79)		
After completion of internship			
Will do private practice?	01 (1.31)	$\chi^2 = 78.65$	P < 0.01
Will work as Medical Officer?	14 (18.42)	d.f. 2	
Will do Post graduation?	61 (80.26)		
Choice of PG			
Clinical branch	73 (96.05)	Z = 8.02	P < 0.01
Para clinical branch	03 (3.94)		
Where will practice in future after PG?			
Urban area	52 (68.42)	$\chi^2 = 44.94$	P < 0.01
Rural Area	18 (23.68)	d.f. 2	
Tribal area	06 (7.89)		

(P value < 0.01 significant)

DISCUSSION

The health awareness, their attitude and substance use mainly alcohol, tobacco use, and cigarette smoking are showed in table 1. Off 76 intern doctors,

67.10% (51) replied 'yes' for physical exercise (was defined as physical activities at least five times in a week for 30 min like walking/jogging/running) while 32.90% (25) said they were not doing any physical exercise. In other similar studies done by Tetsuo Tamaki et al⁵ observed that 13.6% of medical students were doing physical exercise in Japan. However the findings are not comparable. The large difference in findings could be due to regional geographic variation. Also we did not find Indian studies supporting prevalence physical exercise among intern doctors / medical students which reveals that there is further need for in depth studies. For Yoga or Pranayam, 48.68% (37) respondents replied yes and remaining 51.32% (39) replied No. further 5.27% (04) intern doctors replied that they had ever chewed tobacco in life! In similar studies done by Nidhi Goel, Vivek Khandelwal, Kapil Pandya et al.¹ reported that the 8% [CI 6.4, 9.6], medical students had ever chewed tobacco and 16.6% [CI 14.5, 18.9] prevalence of alcohol consumption in Armed Forces medical College at Pune. The difference in percentage of tobacco chewing and alcohol consumption could be because of regional cultural variation (i.e. Pune is a Metro city while Solapur a developing city). 18.42% (14) intern doctors replied that they have ever consumed alcohol in life! In other similar studies from Brazil authors Oliveira LG¹, Barroso LP, Wagner GA et al.⁶ observed very high prevalence of alcohol consumptions and cigarette smoking i.e. 75.7% and 15.2% respectively. Also Croen LG, Woesner M, Herman M et al.⁷ observed 96.9% response rate for alcohol consumption in longitudinal study. Mancevska S, Bozinovska L, Tecce J et al.⁸ observed 25% prevalence of smoking second most frequent substance use. In our study 10.53% (08) intern doctors replied that they have ever smoked cigarette in life! In other similar studies like by Shishir Kumar et al⁹ in their study of Assessment of Dietary Habits and Lifestyle of the Medical Students of, Government Medical College Agartala, Asam, India found that 6.5% Medical students had ever consumed alcohol. 13.4% had ever smoked cigarette. Also Tetsuo Tamaki et al.⁵ observed that 24.8% of Medical students in Japan had consumed alcohol, while Jagnay V K et al.¹⁰ observed that 28.6% of alcohol, 40.85% smoking, and 18.2% of tobacco use among medical students at Sion medical college, Mumbai, India. The percentage of SU in above studies was higher than our study. It may be because of regional variation or may be due to person to person variation!

The main factors affecting for alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking and tobacco use among interns doctors which influenced them to indulge into such practices, were found that majority of interns doctors replied that they learned this SU from their seniors and friends and also because of peer pressure.

In Similar study done by Jagnay VK et al (6) observed that peer pressure was one the important factor for substance use among medical students, at Sion Medical college, Mumbai, India.

We enquired about the premarital sexual intercourse, "Have you ever had a sexual intercourse in life?" Then 13.15% (10) replied 'Yes!' Remaining 86.85% said 'No'. Further we asked the intern doctors to grade 'teaching of MBBS course' that they were received throughout the MBBS course! Majority of intern doctors 35.52% (27) replied that it was good! figure 3. We also tried to evaluate the attitude of interns towards internship, Table 2; so asked what will be your priority during internship. Only 9.21% (07) of intern doctors replied that they will do internship sincerely and remaining 90.79% (69) interns replied that they will prepare for the postgraduate medical entrance examination simultaneously during internship! (Z value = 7.11, P value < 0.01. difference was found statistically significant). Then we asked about after completion of internship what they will do? 80.26% intern doctors replied that they will do post graduation and remaining 18.42% replied that they will work as medical officer. And just 01% said will do private practice! (χ^2 value = 78.65, d.f. = 2, P value < 0.01. proportion was found statistically highly significant).

Further we asked about the individual choice of post-graduation, whether clinical or para-clinical? Majority of intern doctors 96.05% (73) replied that they will do postgraduation in any clinical subject and remaining 3.84% said for para-clinical subject. (Z value = 8.02, P < 0.01 difference was found statistically significant). Finally we asked about what will be the place for practice / service? Then 68.42% intern doctors replied that they will practice in urban area, 23.68% said rural and 7.89% tribal! (χ^2 value = 44.94, d.f. = 2, P < 0.01 proportion was found statistically highly significant)

CONCLUSION

From the present study we conclude that the most frequently used substance among intern doctors was alcohol consumption (18.42%), followed by cigarette smoking (10.53%) and tobacco chewing (5.27%). Overall percentage of premarital sexual intercourse among intern doctors was 13.15%. The attitude of most of the intern doctors was towards preparation of postgraduate medical entrance examination, also their choice of post graduation was to the clinical subjects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Intern doctors and health care professionals should be supported in their position as role models for

healthy lifestyle. Intensified health education and healthy lifestyle during medical education can help to improve these habits in intern doctors and health care professionals. But still further studies are needed to explore about substance use among health care professionals.

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