

Methods:

The cross-sectional study was conducted during December of 2019 and included a total of 493 students at the five Universities in Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Nis, and Kosovska Mitrovica). The questionnaire used was developed based on the questionnaires from similar research and included the sections on social characteristics, lifestyle characteristics, study engagement, Beck depression inventory, Copenhagen burnout inventory, and Zung anxiety scale. Based on the score on Zung anxiety scale students were classified in two groups: with anxiety (scores ≥ 45) and without anxiety (scores 20-44).

Results:

The mean Zung anxiety scale score was 35.39 ± 8.31 (minimum=20, maximum=69). A total of 64/493 students (13%) was in the group with anxiety. The multivariate logistic regression analysis with the anxiety as an outcome variable showed that anxiety was associated with female sex (OR: 4.20, 95% CI: 1.41-12.50), higher scores on Beck depression inventory (OR: 1.18, 95% CI: 1.12-1.26), and total burnout (OR: 3.98, 95% CI: 1.66-9.54).

Conclusions:

This study shows that students with anxiety have a higher likelihood of higher scores on Beck depression inventory and a higher likelihood of having burnout syndrome. The clustering of mental health problems, along with the high prevalence of anxiety among medical students is alarming.

Key messages:

- One in eight medical students in Serbia has scores on Zung anxiety scale indicative of at least mild anxiety.
- The anxiety was associated with female gender, higher score on Beck depression inventory and total burnout.

Anxiety among the Medical students at five Universities in Serbia

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Background:

Medical education is both academically and emotionally demanding. The demands of medical school can influence the development of anxiety among medical students. The aim of this study was to assess the prevalence of anxiety and factors associated with it among the fifth year medical students at the five universities in Serbia.