

## Review Form 1.7

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|--------------------------|---|
| Journal Name:            | <b>International Neuropsychiatric Disease Journal</b>   |
| Manuscript Number:       | <b>Ms_INDJ_97706</b>  |
| Title of the Manuscript: | <b>Assessment of Depression, Anxiety &amp; Stress and their correlation with sociodemographic factors amongst recently enrolled medical and paramedical students.</b> |
| Type of the Article      | <b>Original Research Paper</b>  |

### **General guideline for Peer Review process:**

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<https://www.journalindj.com/index.php/INDJ/editorial-policy> )

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**PART 1: Review Comments**

|   | <b>Reviewer's comment</b>   | <b>Author's comment</b> (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here) |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Compulsory</b> REVISION comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Is the manuscript important for scientific community?</b><br/>(Please write few sentences on this manuscript)</li> <li>2. <b>Is the title of the article suitable?</b><br/>(If not please suggest an alternative title)</li> <li>3. <b>Is the abstract of the article comprehensive?</b></li> <li>4. <b>Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?</b></li> <li>5. <b>Do you think the manuscript is scientifically correct?</b></li> <li>6. <b>Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestion of additional references, please mention in the review form.</b></li> </ol> <p><u>(Apart from above mentioned 6 points, reviewers are free to provide additional suggestions/comments)</u></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One major issue is regarding the nature of the psychological variables explored (stress, depression, anxiety). There is a huge difference between claiming people have depression as a disorder, and saying that they have depressive symptoms. First one is clinical in nature, requiring psychiatric/psychological intervention. The second one is more normative in nature and refers to various depressive, anxiety or stress symptoms and tendencies that most people are prone to at various periods in their lives. The study is clearly exploring the second one; thus it is crucial that when something like '23% of students had depression' is stated, it has to be clarified that those students reported depressive symptoms, and they were not diagnosed with a depressive disorder. The lack of distinction between the two types is a fundamental issue in the manuscript that has to be corrected right from the title of the paper and throughout all the subsequent sections.</li> <li>• The use of DASS-21 has been found to be problematic at times as it overestimates the rate of various psychological symptoms. This has been pointed out by other studies as well, it is important to clearly state the time frame of the symptoms being reported, or only consider the severe-profound categories as 'problematic'. Most estimates from DASS are overly inflated owing to methodological issues and over simplistic interpretation. It is at best a screening of emotional disturbances and works best when used alongside proper diagnostic instruments.</li> <li>• The study Methodology does not provide the full details. Information regarding key socio demographic variables has not been provided. Full details of the only standardized scale used (DASS-21) have also not been given. There are also missing details and errors in details about sampling. Key citations are also missing.</li> <li>• The data analysis is very rudimentary in nature. There is huge scope in examining the range of sociodemographic variables and their influence on DAS symptoms (through regression models perhaps); however, all variables have been treated separately with no association between them. There was no attempt to even explore the relationship between the depression, anxiety and stress symptoms to see if they are related.</li> <li>• <b>Comments related to the numbered points on the left</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The manuscript is important for the scientific community. The medical field (both students and professionals) have been found to be very vulnerable to psychological issues, mental health disorders, suicide, etc. and more efforts are needed in helping this group. The manuscript is definitely an attempt at that.</li> <li>2. The title is mostly suitable as it captures the main variables and the sampling group. It would be better to clarify that the symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress have been explored, and not the mental disorders.</li> <li>3. The abstract is adequate but with a number of redundant details; it is not very necessary to report the significance values in detail and is enough to only report the main findings.</li> <li>4. The subsections and headings of the manuscript are mostly correct. It would be better to have separate headings for Sampling, Measures, Data analysis, Procedure, etc. in the Methods.</li> <li>5. The manuscript is scientifically correct; however, its procedures have been poorly defined, and the data analysis methods severely limit its scope and applicability.</li> <li>6. The references have a number of errors, and few issues in numbering could render the whole list unusable. Some entries do not match the required formatting style and none of the entries have DOIs/URLs.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |  |
| <p><b>Minor</b> REVISION comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Is language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</b></li> </ol>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manuscript requires a full proofreading and editing by an English language expert to fix the typos, errors throughout. Most errors are to do with missing terms, singular/plural errors, tense errors, spelling mistakes, incomplete sentences, nested sentences, etc.</li> <li>• The single figure given is completely unnecessary and unrepresentative of the data. The table formatting also needs to be reworked to fix the size of rows/columns to make the content more compact and reduce blank spaces.</li> <li>• Only two (or three) decimal places for numbers are sufficient. All statistics/ numbers given need to be checked again for accuracy. The sample size number is inconsistent in two places.</li> <li>• Introduction needs more information as justification for studying these variables among medical students. There is a ton of literature on how this is a vulnerable group and at risk for negative outcomes. However, the same has been represented poorly. A lot of things stated are true for other students also and not only for medical students. This is reflected in the basic nature of Discussion chapter too where the same results are restated and no other issues/insights are discussed.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <p><b>Optional/General</b> comments</p>   |   |  |

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**PART 2:**

|   | <b>Reviewer's comment</b>  | <b>Author's comment</b> <i>(if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i> |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</b> | <i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i> |   |

**Reviewer Details:**

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|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Name:                            | <b>Prakat Karki</b>             |
| Department, University & Country | <b>CHRIST University, India</b> |