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SEASONAL EMOTIONAL VARIATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WINTER AND SUMMER MOOD PATTERNS AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

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Relevance. The investigation into seasonal emotional patterns among medical students carries significant importance for multiple interconnected reasons. Medical students experience high stress, making them vulnerable to seasonal mood shifts that affect academic performance and mental health. Studying winter-summer emotional patterns helps to improve early detection of seasonal depression. Furthermore, the study opens new avenues for research, potentially expanding to examine how different demographic groups experience seasonal mood fluctuations.

Aim: to examine seasonal variations in emotional states, identify high-risk periods for stress-related disorders, and assess the impact of these fluctuations on psychological well-being and academic performance among medical students of the Republic of Belarus.

Materials and methods. A survey of different groups of medical students was carried out, which included personal assessments regarding seasonal variation in emotional states. Participants numbered 75 persons, of which 18.7% (14) were male medical students and 81.3% (61) were female medical students.

Results and their discussion. The evaluation of the survey shows that there is a seasonal variation in emotional states among the different groups of medical students. There are several key seasonal differences to be stated. In majority, the academic performance is significantly higher during the summer period. The participants report substantially enhanced motivation levels in summer 82.67% (62), accompanied by significantly lower stress experiences 77.33% (58). Furthermore, there are noticeable cognitive improvements, including better memory function 80% (60) and faster and easier information processing 74.67% (56). Besides, it can be determined that there is a brighter emotional state during the summer time, marked by increased social activity 89.33% (67) and more quality time spent with family and friends 81.33% (61). In addition the participants stated that the summer season is filled with a sense of lightness and joy 85.33 % (64), marked by heightened energy and deeper appreciation for life 92% (69). Many reported a natural uplift in mood, leaving them feeling refreshed and more active 86.67% (65). Notably, a significant part of the participants observed a reduced need for sleep 56.67% (41). On the other hand, during the winter period the greater part of participants reported difficulty concentrating on their studies 60% (45) and described experiencing slower cognitive processing during this period 57.33% (43). This mental fatigue was frequently accompanied by an increased need for sleep. Participants noted requiring longer nighttime rest periods 77.33% (58). In addition, they also stated that there is a feeling of exhaustion in comparison to the summer period 65.33% (49). Furthermore, there are more frequent frustration episodes during the winter period 46.67% (35). Equally noteworthy is the observed social behavioral modifications. There is a substantial decline in the motivation for social interactions 46.67% (35). Besides the significant differences in emotional state and physical well-being between summer and winter periods, there is no effect on rational thinking, problem solving and reality-based judgment.

Conclusion. The survey findings demonstrate significant seasonal variations in emotional states between winter and summer periods. In winter, there is an increased irritability, emotional exhaustion and social withdrawal noticed. In contrast, in the summer period we observe an improved mood, higher motivation and greater social engagement among medical students.