

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL
STRESS AND SELECTED HEALTH RISK
BEHAVIORS (ALCOHOL DRINKING, SMOKING,
DRUG ABUSE) AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS IN
UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE, MANDALAY**

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ABSTRACT

Medical students have to catch up with their studies and it is suggested that their daily life is affected by the academic pressure. A cross-sectional study was carried out among 340 medical students in University of Medicine, Mandalay during September to December 2017 to determine the relationship between psychological stress and selective health risk behaviors(alcohol drinking, smoking and drug abuse behavior). This study determined the proportion of medical students who need stress management and had a opportunity to assess the stressors among medical students. Data was collected through convenient sample with self administered questionnaire. Data entry and analysis was done by using SPSS version 23 software. In this study, the prevalence of current drinkers was 23.2%. Nine percent of medical students were current smokers and only three medical students (0.9%) abused drug. Medical students >20 year had 4.2 times the risk of drinking alcohol than age group between 17 – 20 age group. Students who had father drinking alcohol had three times the risk of drinking alcohol than those whose fathers did not drink. Moreover, students who had friends drinking alcohol had six times the risk of drinking alcohol than those whose friends did not drink. Regarding smoking, elder students smoked cigarettes more than younger ones. The proportion of students with friend's smoking behavior smoked more than those whose friends did not smoke. Regarding psychological stress, it was found that 75.6% of the students had very high and danger level of psychological stress. Among the stressors, academic stressor affected the highest proportion of medical students in Mandalay. In this study, psychological stress was statistically significant with alcohol drinking behavior among medical students. Even the association was found between psychological stress and alcohol drinking by multivariate logistic regression with adjusted confounders. Medical students who needed stress management had three times the risk of drinking alcohol than those who did not need stress management. As a conclusion, the proportion of medical students who needed stress management was higher than other local and international studies. Academic stressors affected the highest proportion of medical students in Mandalay. If psychological stress level among medical students can be reduced, the proportion of medical students with alcohol drinking behavior will decline.