

PERCEPTION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS TOWARDS MEDICO-LEGAL AUTOPSY**Amaley Krantikumar D¹, Jain Atul S²**¹Asst. Prof. & H.O.D. Agadanttra & Vyavahar Ayurved Dept.²Asst. Prof. & H.O.D. Sharir Rachana Dept. Vidarbha Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Amravati, Maharashtra, India**ABSTRACT**

This article explored the perceptions of ayurveda medical students towards medico legal autopsy. The 2nd year medical students have to interact with cadaver for medico legal autopsy. This article is a sharing of students experience after 1st exposure to autopsy in mortuary. The objective of this article is to compare General emotions, thoughts & reactions of 2nd year medical students on their exposure to the human autopsy & the perceived benefits of the autopsy experience towards their overall learning. Majority of the student found the autopsy experience tolerable while some students found it unpleasant & distasteful. Majority of the students felt that their experience was beneficial & they recommended autopsy viewing for all medical students is of its various beneficial roles. Our experience showed that students were aware of the potential benefits of autopsies. To improve the student's moral as well as attitude towards their studies, this conceptual study is carried out. Also teaching staff can make changes by this reorientation along with students.

Keywords: Medical students, Medico-legal autopsy, perception, Beneficial, Dizziness, Physical symptoms, Pre education session.

INTRODUCTION

Thanatology means science of Death. Mostly we all deal with living human beings & their

health problems. But what exactly happen after death,? how many & what type of changes occur in the body after death?, this is studied in science of death & really it is very interesting & vast science that everybody should know about. For that purpose, Post-mortem examination played a significant role in medical education. Modern computer-assisted teaching methods this has seen the decline of using autopsies as an educational tool. Still the benefits of attending an autopsy cannot be replaced by these new educational techniques.

Students attending autopsies can learn anatomy & pathology & therefore gain better understanding of clinico-pathological correlation. Through they have the opportunity to learn about the indication of medico legal autopsy & also discuss legal & ethical issues re-

lating to death. Including death certification, dead body challan, police Inquest etc.

Our medical faculty believed that medical graduates in virtual absence of an autopsy experience would have an incomplete medical education. Hence participation of students in viewing an autopsy session was incorporated into the medical curriculum. The perceptions to the

1st exposure to human medico-legal autopsy get varies person to person.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aim of this conceptual study was to explore the perceptions of Medical students undergoing the experience in the following areas.

- 1) To compare General emotions, thoughts & reactions of 2nd year ayurveda medical students on their exposure to the human autopsy
- 2) The perceived benefits of

the autopsy experience towards their overall learning.

3) To Emphasise the need for pre-education session prior exposure to autopsy.

MATERIAL & METHODS

In Amravati, Autopsies are conducted in the District Hospital Mortuary by the autopsy surgeon & These included medico legal cases & death resulting from different types of injuries sustained e.g. victims of motor vehicle accidents, injuries from fall from height, train accident, drowning, suicidal hanging, burning, electrocution, poisoning, snake bite, gas poisoning etc. Other autopsy cases include unexplained deaths among hospital in-patients from disease process. Some of these cases observed natural cases of deaths like coronary heart disease, haemorrhagic stroke, cardiomyopathy, tuberculosis, acute pulmonary oedema & pulmonary thromboembolism etc.

Forensic medicine & toxicology is taught to our ayurveda medical undergraduates in their second academic year. Each student must attend at least ten autopsy cases in their curriculum. In Amravati our undergraduate ayurveda medical students are allowed to observe autopsies conducted by autopsy surgeon in the mortuary in Irwin General Hospital, Amravati. Our second B.A.M.S. batch of 32 Students were permitted for one year to attend autopsies in small groups of up to five students & they were also required to obtain a clinical history of the case prior to the autopsy procedure.

They had to follow strict protocol according to hospital regulations, confidentiality about the case & autopsy report. Strictly instruction given that, we are here only to attend & observe autopsies not to disclose any confidential autopsy report outside.

First we collectively observed the

reactions of the students like fear factor and their attitude towards the sight, smell and touch. Student wise personal experience is also noted with the help of following-

- I) Their personal reflection of the autopsy. (physical, emotional aspects)
- II) Educational benefits of autopsy (cognitive aspects).
- III) Role of autopsy in the practice of medicine.
- IV) Personal opinions about the autopsy experience.

OBSERVATIONS & RESULTS

All students experience average level of stress before & during 1st visit to mortuary. Though most of the students stated that they understood the indication of the Post-mortem they observed. Nearly half of the students found the autopsy experience Tolerable & not unpleasant. While a smaller proportion found the experience unpleasant, distasteful & felt the procedure was disrespectful to the death & Very few students showed physical symptoms like fainting, dizziness, vomiting, loss of appetite & insomnia. Dizziness is the most common symptom observed followed by fainting.

Some students suggested discussing autopsy finding with the autopsy surgeon would help in their clinical practice. The majority of the students viewed the autopsy experience as useful & beneficial. They believed it improved their general medical knowledge & understanding of Anatomy, pathology & clinico-pathological correlation & they agreed that all medical students should experience at least one autopsy in their medical education.

Some students felt there was good explanation & teaching during the autopsy by autopsy surgeon. They noted that verbal communication between themselves & the doctors performing the procedure, conferring more benefit & raise interest in the subject.

DISCUSSION

Thanatology is a science of death. Autopsy is one main vehicle to know this science.

Autopsies not only help to determine the cause of death but also allow a better understanding of anatomy, pathology & clinico-pathological correlation. It plays a vital role to confirm, clarify & dispute ante mortem diagnoses.

In our university, Agadtantra-Vyvhar Ayurveda curriculum included mandatory attendance of ten autopsy sessions for second year ayurveda medical students. It was felt that, there were many benefits from viewing an autopsy for medical students. The responses from the students showed that, the students were aware of the importance of autopsy practices. The majority of the students indicated that an autopsy experience should be mandatory in their medical education. Many students knew the indication for autopsy & were aware of the procedure of procuring permission for the autopsy for medico-legal cases requiring police Inquest, dead body challan etc.

The reactions from the students showed that although the students regarded the experience as useful in their medical education, they were also aware of its limitations. It cannot be denied that a single autopsy experience with less than ideal explanations may not be entirely beneficial. The students experience & learning was influenced by the doctor's communication, skill & professionalism. Majority of the students were interested to come back for more interactive autopsy. Although the majority of the students were appreciative of the educative value of autopsy & tolerable to the experience. But some students felt distressed & were uncomfortable; they described it as distasteful, nauseating & non-tolerable. The students should have been prepared psychologically before viewing autopsies to avoid unpleasant reactions in

order to take the benefit of the autopsy. It has been observed that reaction of female students were more unpleasant than male students.

Pre education session for students before viewing autopsy will help to overcome this type of stress. In lectures complete autopsy procedure should be taught by using small group discussion, audio-visual aids, it will make more interesting for students. Anatomy, Pathology, Death these topics should be completely taught & discussed. It will make students confident & mentally strong. By such pre education session & seminars students can get more advantage of practical autopsy.

CONCLUSION

The viewing of an autopsy could be positive experience where students could learn many aspects of medicine in addition to the legal & ethical issues related to death. The teaching autopsy if properly executed & utilized could bring t a multitude of benefits as an educational tool. There were a variety of emotions displayed by students towards experience but the majority was acceptable to the procedure. Students perceived autopsy viewing is as beneficial. Students genuinely & commonly experienced average level of stress, fear & physical symptom

like Dizziness during first visit to mortuary. It is essential to determine new strategies to reduce stress in mortuary. Pre education session for students before viewing autopsy will help a lot to overcome stress & to increase interest about autopsy procedure & to better understand actual practical medico legal autopsy.

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