



Migraine Prevalence and Impact Among Medical Students of The University of Calabar, Southern Nigeria

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BACKGROUND

- Migraine among medical students further compounds the demanding nature of medical training.
- The global campaign against headache burden seeks to determine the nature, scope and magnitude of the burden of headache worldwide.

OBJECTIVES

- This study aimed to determine migraine prevalence, associated absenteeism and headache-related health-seeking roles among undergraduate medical students of the University of Calabar, Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Cross-sectional descriptive study recruiting medical students in the Clinical level classes during the 2018/19 academic session.
- Those who were absent from the hospital at the times of data collection, those that did not fully complete the study questionnaire and those who did not give informed written consent, were excluded from the study.
- Two hundred and twenty participants, comprising 62.3% males and 37.7% females, completed the study.
- We used a structured questionnaire incorporating the International Headache Society criteria for migraine to identify migraine among the aforementioned students, besides obtaining baseline demographic data and data on headache-related absenteeism and health-seeking behavior.

RESULTS

- Overall, 5.9% of them had migraine headaches, with gender-specific prevalence values of 4.4% and 8.4% for males and females, respectively.
- 53.8% of the affected persons had migraine with aura.
- The age at migraine onset ranged from 11 to 16 years, with a mean (standard deviation) and median ages of 13.6 (1.92) years and 13.5 years, respectively.
- All the students diagnosed with migraine reported being absent from scheduled activity because of headaches.
- More than half of those with migraine relied on self-medication; whereas, only a quarter had consulted a physician for their migraine attacks.

Table 1: Population of Participant Who Missed Scheduled Activities Because of Headache

Type of activity missed	Identified Migraineurs (n = 13)	Non-migraineurs (n = 204)	p-value
Class lecture	65.5%	20.3%	0.001
Examination	15.4%	2.4%	0.010
Scheduled activity with friends	92.3%	32.9%	<0.001
Any occasion or schedule	100%	36.7%	<0.001

Table 2: Headache-Related Health-Seeking Behavior among the Affected Students

Activity	Percentage
Medical consultation	53.8%
Health worker consulted	
Physician	23.1%
Pharmacist	15.4%
Nurse	7.7%
Others	7.7%
Use of medication for headaches	100%
Who mainly prescribes medication?	
Self-medication	53.8%
Healthcare professionals	38.5%
Friends and relatives	7.7%

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CONCLUSION

- Migraine was common among this set of medical students, with frequent headache-induced absenteeism.
- There was poor utilization of available healthcare resources, for migraine treatment, even among the medical students with access to tertiary health care.

REFERENCES

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