



## ***SJSM Science***

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### **Correlation of personality traits with the ability to cope with stress, anxiety, and depression of medical students at Saint James School of Medicine**

What can a “True color test” reveal? According to the scientists - sort out the rainbow and your personality style, work style, learning style, your preferences, the way you solve the problems, the way you meet the challenges - and much much more will be discovered. Can it reveal the ability to cope with stress, anxiety, and depression? Can it discover the chosen specialty? Those were the questions SJSM students tried to answer.

Hmm... what about people that have color blindness? Let's see will it be the next research project in Anguilla!

Gerlach R, Konkankit V, Reusser G, Rochman M.

# Correlation of personality traits with the ability to cope with stress, anxiety, and depression of medical students at Saint James School of Medicine

Gerlach R, Konkankit V, Reusser G, Rochman M

## Background

- Medical students have high level of stress in general
- Recent studies done in Canada and the United States, less studied in the Caribbean
- Increasing popularity of Caribbean medical schools

## Main sources of stress in SJSM students

- Moving to a foreign country
- Accelerated program

## Hypothesis

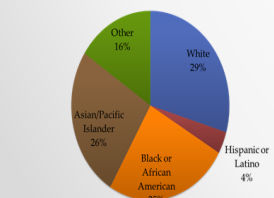
We hypothesize that there is a strong correlation between personality traits and the ability to handle anxiety, stress, and depression at a foreign medical school. This relationship will in turn serve as an indicator of student 's success rates and completion of medical school.

## Material and methods

158 participants, 18--40 y/o, 42% Males, 58% females, 82.91% single, 22% married or in a domestic relationship, 3.17% either divorced or separated.

- True Colors Personality Test
- Slightly modified Depression Anxiety and Stress scale (DASS)

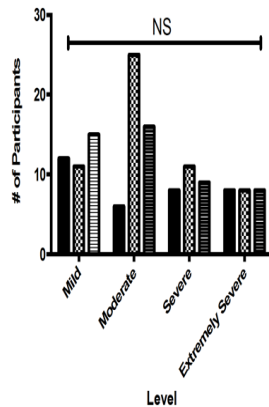
Ethnicity



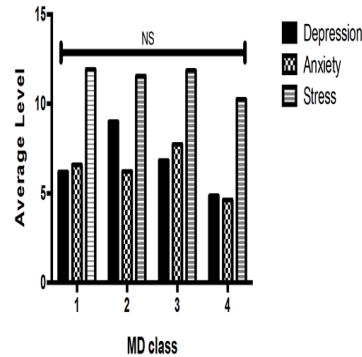
Mentor: Eugene AR, MD  
December 4, 2013

Poster by: B. Filipovic

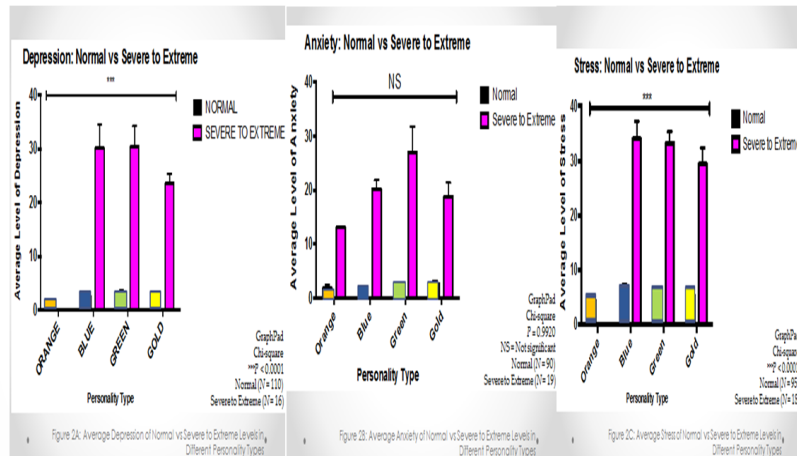
## Prevalence of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels



## Differences between average level of DAS in MD classes



## Results



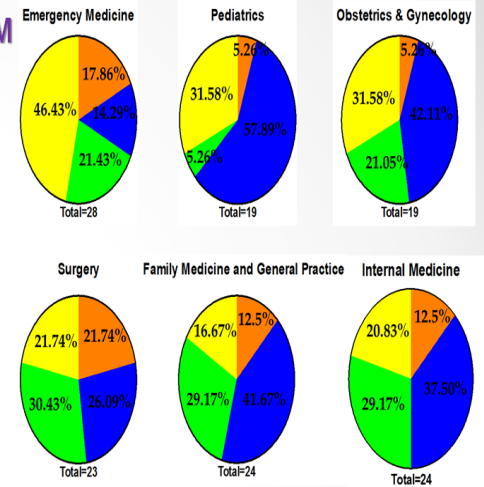
## Discussion

Gold personalities: stability, strength, responsibility, dependability, authority, structure, efficiency and thoroughness. The majority of those who chose emergency medicine were gold personalities.

Blue personalities: emotional intensity, sensitivity, need to helper and nurture: SJSM "blue" students were drawn distinctively to pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, family medicine or general practice.

Orange personalities: action, motivation, excitement, movement, variety, impulsive risk-taking. "Orange" students showed the least interest in abovementioned specialties.

Green: logic, use mind over emotion to solve the mysteries of life, push themselves to improve, perfectionists, independent thinkers, more detached than the others. "Green" students are drawn to more "technical specialties" like internal medicine and surgery. Increased risk of depression, anxiety, and stress.



## Conclusion and recommendations

Research studies on depression, anxiety, and stress in medical students of other foreign countries when compared to ours had nearly the same prevalence.

The higher prevalence of depression in foreign medical students may be due to the nature of the study and its affects on mental health due to frequent examinations, in addition to a purely competitive environment in the medical schools as seen in U.S. and Canadian schools. Medical students with "orange" personalities (risk-takers, drawn to action-filled jobs, a need for variety) have the lowest levels of stress and depression. Recent studies have shown them to have a higher drop out rates, but our study shows they are more adaptive to the Caribbean medical school experience.

Overall, a medical school environment may have negative effects on one's mental health and lead to repercussions later in their lives.

It is important to discuss depression, anxiety, and stress levels among students to find an effective solution.

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