



The University
of Birmingham

The Preparation of Healthcare Undergraduates in Managing Diversity

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Steps in Evidence-based Practice

- Define the question arising
- Find the evidence
- Critically appraise the evidence
- Implement relevant findings into practice
- Evaluate impact of change

(Bury and Mead 1999)

Define the Question Arising

How effective is the preparation of undergraduate healthcare students in managing diversity in clinical placements?

Find the Evidence -Background

Questions surround the cultural competence of healthcare undergraduates i.e. their ability to manage diversity (Stewart 2002, Cheung et al 2002).

Critically Appraising the Evidence

- There is a dearth of evidence
- Diversity raises other questions in defining minority groups, culture and ethnicity

Critical Appraisal (ctd)

- a) **Measuring the effectiveness** of the preparation students
- b) **Seeking evidence** to support teaching and learning,
- c) **Increasing understanding** of the complexity of interactions between students and clients.

The Study

Method

Students were introduced to the concepts of:

- cultural competence,
- race,
- racism,
- ethnicity,
- identity,
- discrimination

and

- inequalities in health

Data Gathering

Feedback on the usefulness of the preparation they had received for managing diversity was requested via a questionnaire following their first clinical placement.

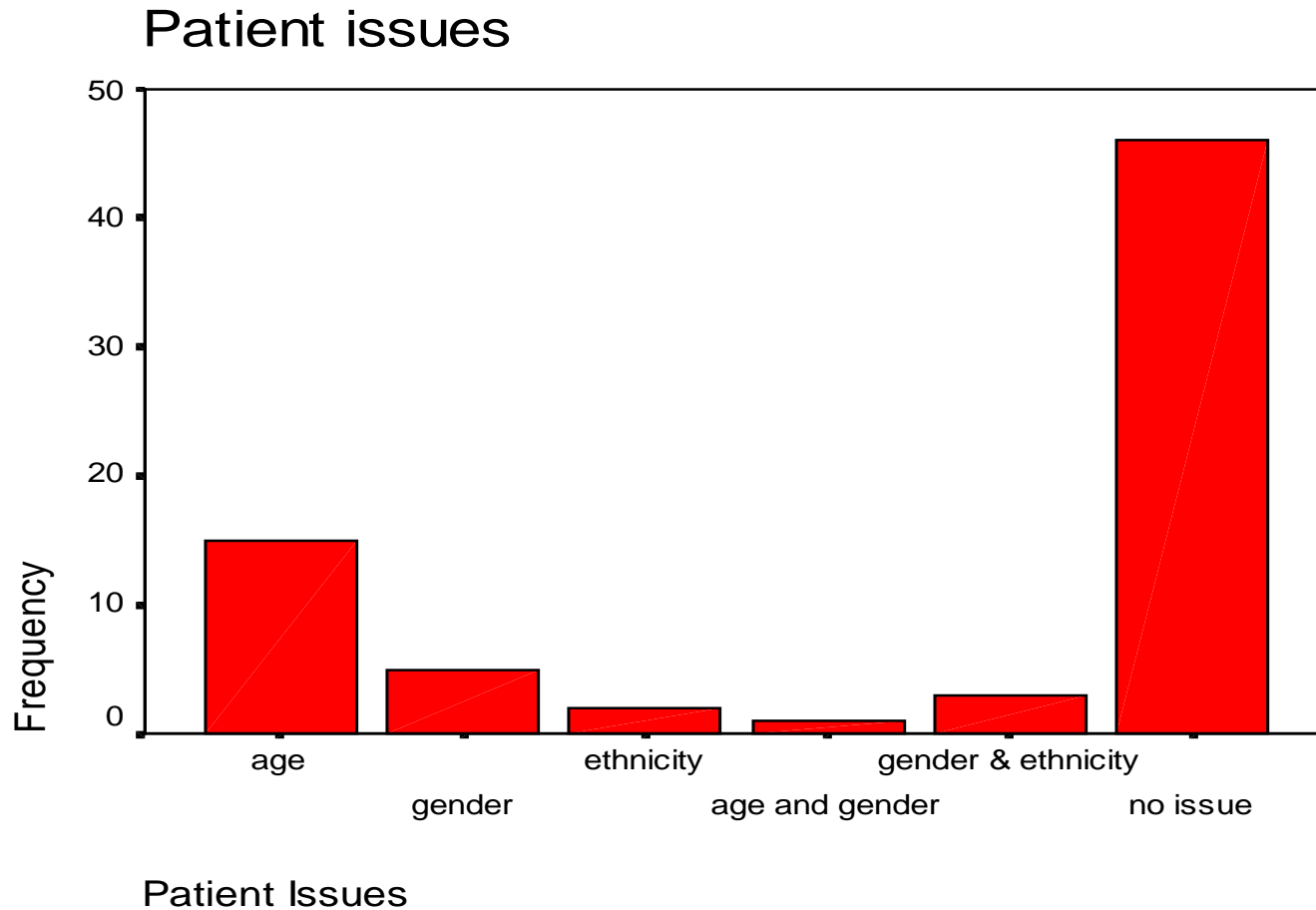
Results

- Ninety-two questionnaires were distributed and an 88% response was obtained. (n=72)
- Descriptive, content and statistical analysis was carried out with the help of SPSS

Age Distribution of Undergraduates

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-25	62	86.1
Over 25	10	13.9
Total	72	100

Issues arising on Placement



Comments on the Module

Positive Comments (n=26)

- 'Professional communication skills that were taught - essential. Reflective practice and teaching was essential.'
- ' PD1 started me thinking about huge variety of patients I would face in a clinical setting which prepared me for when I faced a patient who may be slightly more difficult.'

Comments on the Module

Negative Comments (n=4)

- Felt it was my own nature and social skills that enabled me to manage the situation not my theoretical understanding of maturation, cultural diversity etc.'
- 'I feel most of what was covered in above were issues I was already aware of due to life experience. Theory is very different from real life - spontaneous situations.'

Comments on the Module

General Comments (n=10)

- 'Looked more at ethnicity and gender and older patient not at our age being a problem'.
- 'No real discussion of issues relating to age'.

Comments concerning patients

- Age (23 responses)
- Gender (7 responses)

Summary

- In general students found the preparation offered by the module useful, but reverse age discrimination and gender issues assumed a greater importance than was identified within their preparation for clinical work.
- The perspective students take to a placement and the context in which they work bring about a complex set of interactions.
- It is important to explore these interactions in order that important aspects of curriculum development and delivery are not omitted, and to contribute to the evidence in the teaching and learning of managing diversity.

References

Bury T J and Mead J M (1999) Evidence-based Healthcare: A Practical Guide for Therapists. Butterworth Heinemann.

Cheung Y, Shah S, Muncer S (2002) The British Journal of Occupational Therapy. Vol. 65 No.12 pp 543 –5.

Stewart M (2002) Developing Cultural Competence in Health Care Students. Physiotherapy, Vol. 88, No. 10 pp 620-629.