

PRIDE OR PREJUDICE? IN WHAT WAYS DOES THE ETHNICITY OF MEDICAL STUDENTS AND DOCTORS, ALONGSIDE THE PROCESS OF MEDICAL ACCULTURATION, IMPACT ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING AND PROFESSIONAL ATTAINMENT?

Diana Bass, Doctor of Clinical Practice
University of Exeter
Exeter, UK

Research by the UK General Medical Council (2017) found that differential attainment with regard to ethnicity exists in both postgraduate and undergraduate contexts, in recruitment, and across exam pass rates; this indicates that medical education and training may not be fair. The focus of this research project is to explore factors related to students' ethnicity and cultural environments, as well as the medical acculturation process that may make it more likely that some medical students will experience psychological and academic difficulties during their training.

A thematic analysis of the assessment sessions of 24 medical students from different ethnicities and family backgrounds highlights the ways in which students' lived experiences, both personal and in their medical training, affect their personal well-being and academic performance. The identified themes are explored using a sociological and psychoanalytic lens, as well as that of critical theory, as in combination these offer the wide perspective necessary to consider the sociocultural as well as the psychological aspects of this research enquiry.

This research also considers the narrative arc and socio-cultural context of the research literature in this area as a way of investigating patterns of thinking over time within Medicine and its social environment. The focus of this investigation is on the ways in which invisible, silent and unspoken currents within families, communities, institutions and wider society shape students' and doctor's relationships with themselves and others. This research considers the possible reasons for the systemic silencing of particular narratives, and how this can happen in subtle and complex ways, and dynamics of exclusion that can reinforce the effects of trauma, and show the ways that systemic discrimination and pathways of privilege operate. It explores factors within medical culture that create psychological pressure on all students and suggests actions that can promote change at all levels.

Full List of Authors
Dr Diana M Bass

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. To increase their understanding of the causes of the ongoing UK BAME Differential Attainment in medicine by considering a range of theoretical perspectives which shed light on the affects of discrimination on mental health and wellbeing.

2. To understand the importance of knowledge about the effects of inequality, discrimination, intergenerational trauma and internalised oppression in clinical interviews and therapeutic interventions.

References

BMJ. (2019). Racism in medicine. Retrieved from <https://www.bmj.com/racism-in-medicine>

General Medical Council. (2019). Fair to refer? Retrieved from https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/fair-to-refer-report_pdf-79011677.pdf

Layton, L. (2019). Transgenerational hauntings: Toward a social psychoanalysis and an ethic of Dis-illusionment. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 29(2), 105–121. doi: 10.1080/10481885.2019.1587992