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Shifting Paradigms: Assessing Gambian Medical Students' Perceptions of Dermatology and Dermatologists

Changement de Paradigmes : Évaluation des Perceptions des Étudiants en Médecine Gambiens en Dermatologie et en Dermatologues

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Perceptions of dermatology and dermatologists by medical students can vary widely depending on their personal experiences, exposure to the specialty, and their cultural and societal beliefs. The lack of emphasis on dermatology in the medical curriculum can lead to misconceptions in the field. Therefore, it is important for medical students to have a well-rounded understanding of dermatology and the role of dermatologists in the healthcare system.

AIM: The aim of our study was to assess the medical students' perceptions of dermatology and dermatologists.

METHODS: The study design was cross-sectional and was conducted in the School of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences, University of the Gambia, Banjul, Gambia. Participants were 700-level medical students undergoing their dermatology training. An online questionnaire was created which they filled out on both the first and last day of their dermatology training.

RESULTS: A total of 72 responses were received. The mean age of respondents was 25.69 years. Concerning their perceptions of dermatology, there was a statistically significant improvement in the etiology and treatment modalities of skin diseases at the end of their training. Additionally, a statistically significant increase was observed in the beliefs that dermatologists had high status, a high degree of responsibility and free time for their patients after dermatology training.

CONCLUSION: Overall, there was a paradigm shift in the perceptions of medical students toward dermatology and dermatologists. However, there is room for improvement in terms of reviewing the dermatology curricula, changing the pattern of training and the employment of information technology. **WAJM 2024; 41 (10): 993-999**

KEYWORDS: Dermatology education, Medical education, Medical students, Dermatology, Dermatologists

RÉSUMÉ

CONTEXTE: Les perceptions de la dermatologie et des dermatologues par les étudiants en médecine peuvent varier considérablement en fonction de leurs expériences personnelles, de leur exposition à la spécialité et de leurs croyances culturelles et sociétales. Le manque d'accent sur la dermatologie dans le cursus médical peut conduire à des idées fausses dans le domaine. Il est donc important que les étudiants en médecine aient une compréhension équilibrée de la dermatologie et du rôle des dermatologues dans le système de santé.

OBJECTIF: L'objectif de notre étude était d'évaluer les perceptions des étudiants en médecine en dermatologie et en dermatologues.

MÉTHODES: La conception de l'étude était transversale et a été menée à l'École de Médecine et des Sciences de la Santé Alliées, Université de la Gambie, Banjul, Gambie. Les participants étaient des étudiants en médecine de niveau 700 en cours de formation en dermatologie. Un questionnaire en ligne a été créé qu'ils ont rempli le premier et le dernier jour de leur formation en dermatologie.

RÉSULTATS: Un total de 72 réponses a été reçu. L'âge moyen des répondants était de 25,69 ans. En ce qui concerne leurs perceptions de la dermatologie, il y a eu une amélioration statistiquement significative de l'étiologie et des modalités de traitement des maladies de la peau à la fin de leur formation. De plus, une augmentation statistiquement significative a été observée dans les croyances selon lesquelles les dermatologues avaient un statut élevé, un degré élevé de responsabilité et du temps libre pour leurs patients après la formation en dermatologie.

CONCLUSION: Dans l'ensemble, il y a eu un changement de paradigme dans les perceptions des étudiants en médecine envers la dermatologie et les dermatologues. Cependant, il reste de la place pour l'amélioration en termes de révision des programmes de dermatologie, de changement du modèle de formation et de l'utilisation de la technologie de l'information.

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MOTS-CLÉS: Éducation en dermatologie, Éducation médicale, Étudiants en médecine, Dermatologie, Dermatologues

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