



Mistreatment of Students During Their Pre-professional Programs



PA Student Experiences:
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Introduction

- Nearly 80% of PA students experience mistreatment in some form¹
- Rate of reporting mistreatment is less than 30%¹
- Prior research among medical students has documented demographic differences in experiencing daily incidents of identity-based microaggressions in the clinical setting²
- These experiences are especially challenging for students of minoritized backgrounds, who are more likely to report identity-based mistreatment and discrimination³

Purpose

To better understand demographic differences in students' experiences of mistreatment during PA school, this exploratory study seeks to understand the differences across demographic groups experiencing mistreatment from various sources, and their reasons for failing to report having been mistreated.

Analytical Plan

- Reports of experiencing each type of mistreatment among the seven performers were used to create discrete variables for having experienced mistreatment from each source
- Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (SPSS Versions 29.0.1.0)

References

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Hudak, N, Blazar M, Knudsen N. Physician Assistant Program Policies to Assess and Address Student Reports of Mistreatment During Clinical Training. *J Physician Assist Educ.* 2002;33(3):185-191.

Leitman IM, Muller D, Miller S, et al. Implementation of an online reporting system to identify unprofessional behaviors and mistreatment directed at trainees at an Academic Medical Center. *JAMA Network Open.* 2022;5(12).

PAEA would like to thank the PA students who participated in these surveys and the PA programs that facilitated data collection.

Methods

Participants

- 2,165 graduating students from 146 PA programs
 - Female = 77.8%
 - URM = 21.4%
- In 2021, students completed an online survey upon graduating from their programs
- Key demographics
 - Gender
 - Race, ethnicity --> Underrepresented minority (URM) status
 - URMs: Hispanic and non-single-race White students
 - Non-URMs: Single-race, non-Hispanic White students

Measures

- Mistreatment performers
 - Among students who experienced specific mistreatment behaviors

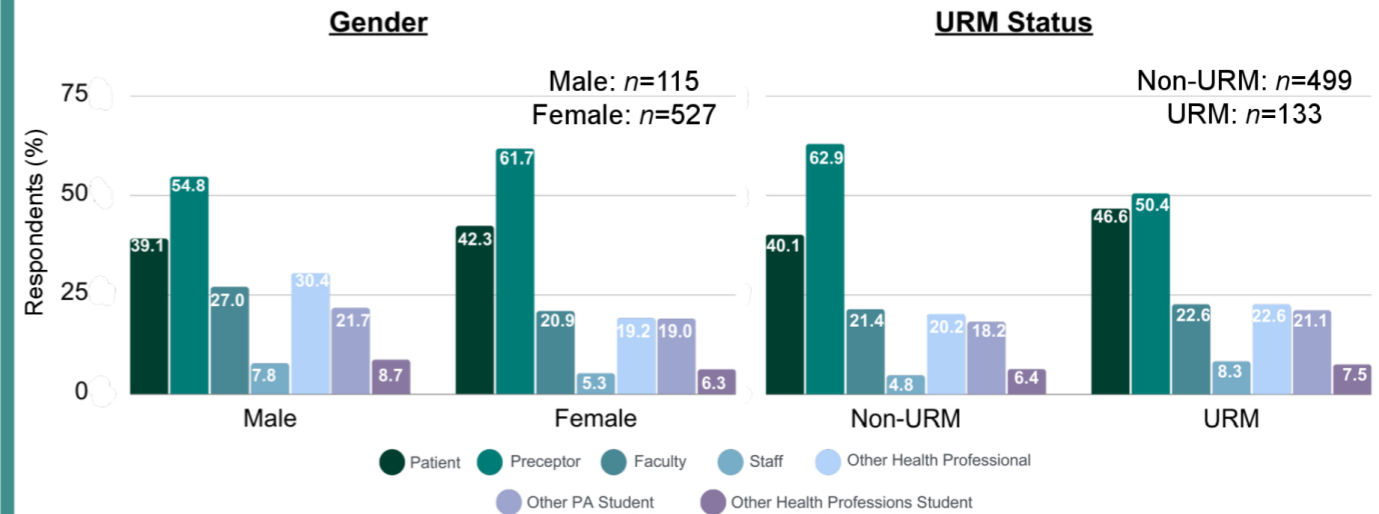
Patient	Preceptor	Faculty	Staff	Other health professional	Other PA student	Other health professions student
Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated	Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated	Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated	Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated	Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated	Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated	Been publicly embarrassed or humiliated
Experienced or been threatened with physical harm	Experienced or been threatened with physical harm	Experienced or been threatened with physical harm	Experienced or been threatened with physical harm	Experienced or been threatened with physical harm	Experienced or been threatened with physical harm	Experienced or been threatened with physical harm
Been required to perform personal services	Been required to perform personal services	Been required to perform personal services	Been required to perform personal services	Been required to perform personal services	Been required to perform personal services	Been required to perform personal services
Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances	Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances	Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances	Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances	Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances	Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances	Been subjected to unwanted sexual advances
Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___	Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___	Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___	Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___	Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___	Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___	Been denied opportunities for training or rewards based on my ___
Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___	Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___	Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___	Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___	Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___	Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___	Been subjected to offensive remarks/names regarding my ___
Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___	Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___	Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___	Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___	Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___	Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___	Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of my ___

Seven sources of mistreatment:

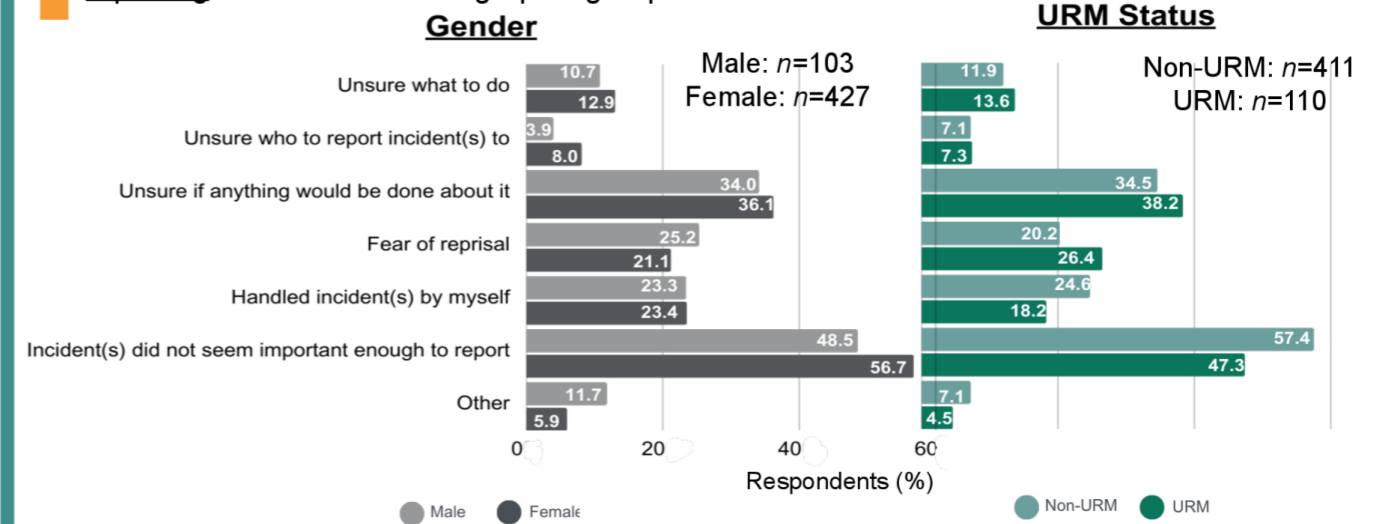
- Patent
 - Preceptor
 - Faculty
 - Staff
 - Other health professional
 - Other PA student
 - Other health professions student
- Reasons for not reporting

Results

Question 1: Do the sources of student mistreatment during PA school differ based on student demographic characteristics?



Question 2: Among students that have experienced mistreatment, do the reasons for not reporting differ across demographic groups?



Summary

- Mistreatment from preceptors is prevalently experienced by PA students, across gender and URM status
- Nearly half of the responding students across all demographic groups failed to report being mistreated because they felt it was not important
- Additional research examining the likelihood of being mistreated by specific performers across demographic groups is recommended

Conclusion

Educators should continue to call attention to the mistreatment of students in all learning environments by cultivating supportive learning environments where students feel safe to report these incidents, and that their experiences are valid and taken seriously.³⁻⁵ If mistreated during PA school, students can carry the negative experience into clinical practice, which can cause distress and even impact patient care.²