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## BACKGROUND

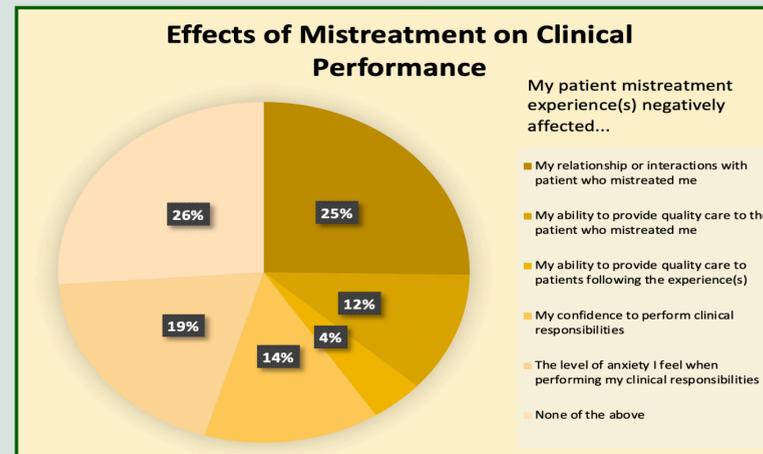
- Medical students have a multitude of opportunities to practice patient interactions in clinical settings.
- Clinical experiences play a vital role in applying skills learned in classes. Moreover, much of what students learn about medicine is based on what they glean from patient care.
- However, investigation into mistreatment by patients is limited. These incidents can result in adverse outcomes for student performance in academic and clinical environments<sup>1</sup>.
- Without a positive and safe learning environment, future physician-patient relationships can be strained<sup>2</sup>.
- Previous research reveals that student mistreatment impacts confidence to perform clinical duties, and, in turn, interferes with patient care dynamics<sup>2</sup>.
- We aim to assess how mistreatment affects patient relationships and student success in academic and clinical settings.

## METHODS

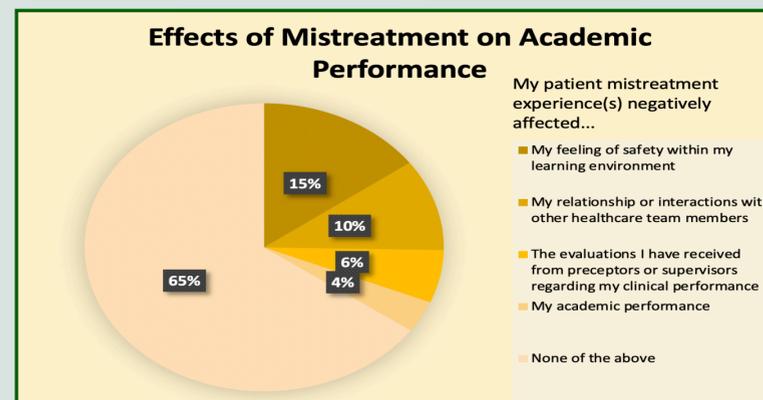
- As part of a 2020 study conducted at WSUSOM, a voluntary and anonymous survey was sent out to medical students.
- Inspired by the AAMC Graduation Questionnaire, the survey assessed the prevalence of mistreatment by patients toward medical students in various clinical settings.
- Components of the survey included types of mistreatment, reporting of these incidents, and impacts of these behaviors on student wellbeing and medical school performance.
- In total, 582 students (50.7%) completed the survey and results were based on their responses.

## RESULTS

*Mistreatment experiences negatively affected students' academic and clinical performance.*



**Figure 1.** Students reported that mistreatment experience(s) negatively affected their relationship or interactions with patients (25.23%) and their ability to provide quality care to the patients who mistreated them (11.41%). Of note, students reported that these incidents affected their ability to provide quality care to patients following the experience(s) (4.20%).



**Figure 2.** Students acknowledged that these experience(s) negatively affected their feelings of safety within the learning environment (15.02%) and academic performance (3.56%).

Subsequently, students reported that the experiences caused them to no longer consider a particularly specialty (8.03%) and caused them to change the patient population they envisioned themselves treating (13.25%).

## DISCUSSION

- This study indicates that mistreatment experiences adversely impact students' ability to thrive in academic and clinical contexts.
- Students expressed that the experiences affected their ability to provide care not only for the patient(s) that mistreated them, but also for subsequent patients, suggesting long-term effects of mistreatment.
- Mistreatment experiences also influenced students' future plans, steering them away from previously considered specialties and patient populations.
- If medical students do not feel comfortable in their learning environment, their capacity to provide comprehensive, patient-centered care is greatly affected.

## SIGNIFICANCE

- This study harbors important implications for fostering a welcoming clinical environment.
- With students entering clinical settings in earlier stages of medical school, it is essential to consider how these negative interactions can have deep-rooted consequences for future physicians and their ability to make the most out of their training.
- Future studies can investigate avenues through which schools can make changes at a curriculum level. By doing so, students and faculty can be equipped with tools for approaching and addressing these situations.

## References

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2. Mazer, L. M., Merrell, S. B., Hasty, B. N., Stave, C., & Lau, J. N. (2018). Assessment of Programs Aimed to Decrease or Prevent Mistreatment of Medical Trainees. *JAMA Network Open*, 1(3). doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.0870