

The Effect of Gender on The Clinical Learning Experience in A Multicultural Setting. Students' Perceptions in UAE

Dr.Ghada Mohammed. NUIG



Background

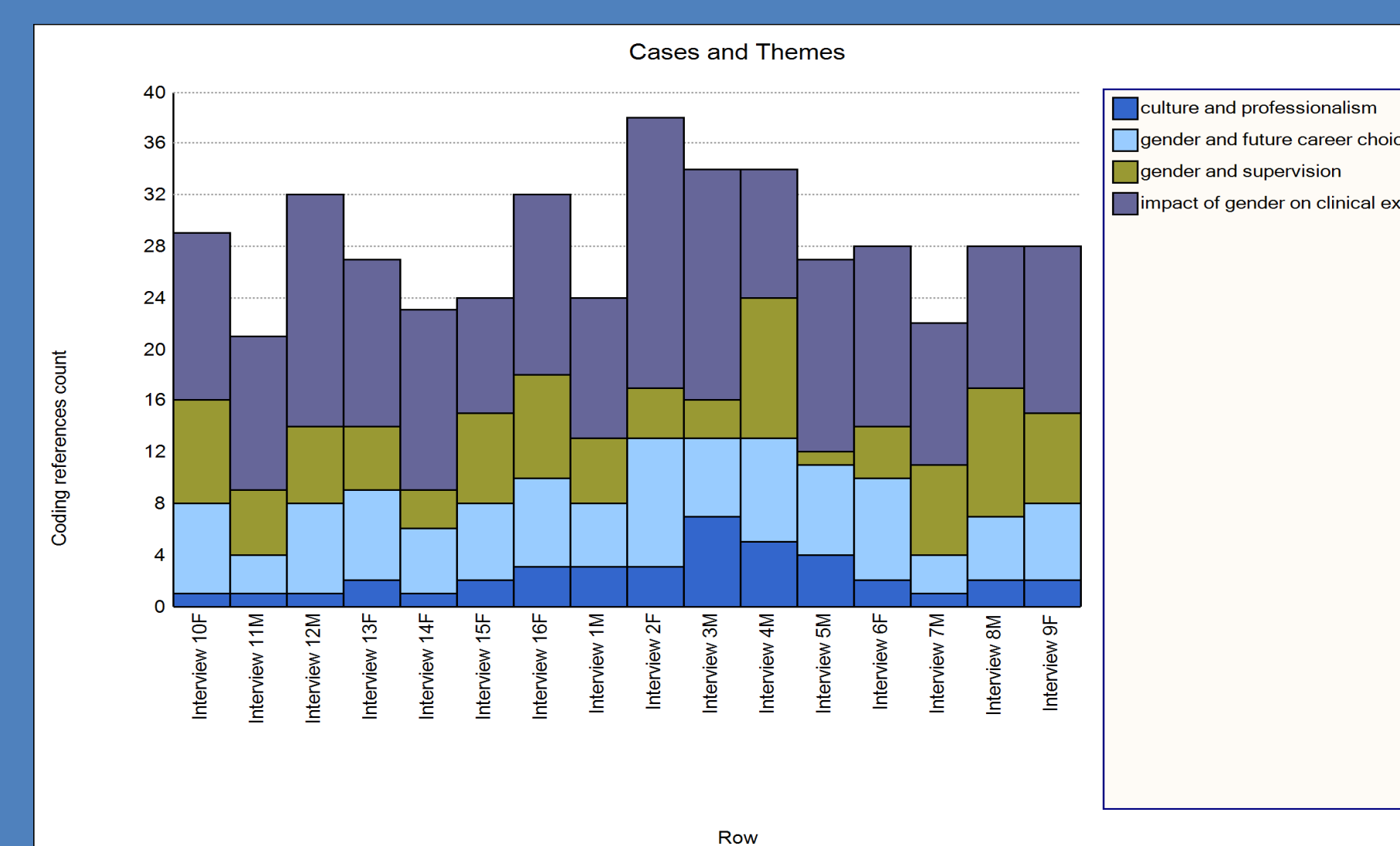
The medical students in the UAE medical colleges are from different nationalities and specialise in different fields. Due to multicultural environment of UAE, it is possible for the doctors to perform their responsibilities without gender barriers to some extent. Gender barrier is seen more when dealing with national patients particularly female patients towards male doctors. Many studies looked at the effect of gender on the learning experience, student's-patient relationship, student's supervision and future career choice .

Objectives

This is an exploratory qualitative study that is focused on the study of the perception of the students regarding effect of students' gender on the clinical clerkship learning experience in a multicultural setting.

Methodology

- Purposeful sampling (final year medical students who finished the clerckship rotations).
- Semi structured, face to face interviews, audio-taped.
- 16 participants (8 males and 8 females).
- Framework data analysis.
- Nvivo 11 used for Thematic analysis.



Results

- ❖ Male students perceived that they face more difficulties and rejection from female patients.
- ❖ Male students feel de-motivated in such cases and thus their participation in the clinical examination of female patients is negatively affected.
- ❖ Female students revealed a fact that their male colleagues had this set idea of not being allowed to examine female patients, so they didn't make an effort.
- ❖ Gender barrier with patients of opposite gender is related to multiple factors such as culture and religion.
- ❖ Mixed outcomes were obtained regarding the influence of gender on the clinical supervision.
- ❖ The students believed that their own culture, religion and personal beliefs had no influence on their relationship with patients .

Conclusion

The impact of gender of students on their learning experience during the clinical clerkship in UAE is clearly demonstrated in this study particularly the male students' difficulties accessing female patients . Efforts should be made to address this problem and acknowledge it's existence considering the cultural background of the local society. Solutions to overcome this problem should be thought to ensure adequate and healthy learning environment.

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