



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures

Recent Trends in the Reporting of Medical Student Mistreatment

Additional Supporting Information 1*

Analysis in Brief, July 2006

Volume 6, Number 4

Non-comparability of 2000-2004 and pre-2000 medical student mistreatment data on the Graduation Questionnaire (GQ)

In the 2000 GQ survey, the AAMC introduced a general mistreatment question, “Have you personally been mistreated during medical school?” as the leading mistreatment question. The web-based survey uses skip logic, so if respondents answer “No” to this general mistreatment questions, they automatically pass over any subsequent detailed mistreatment questions.

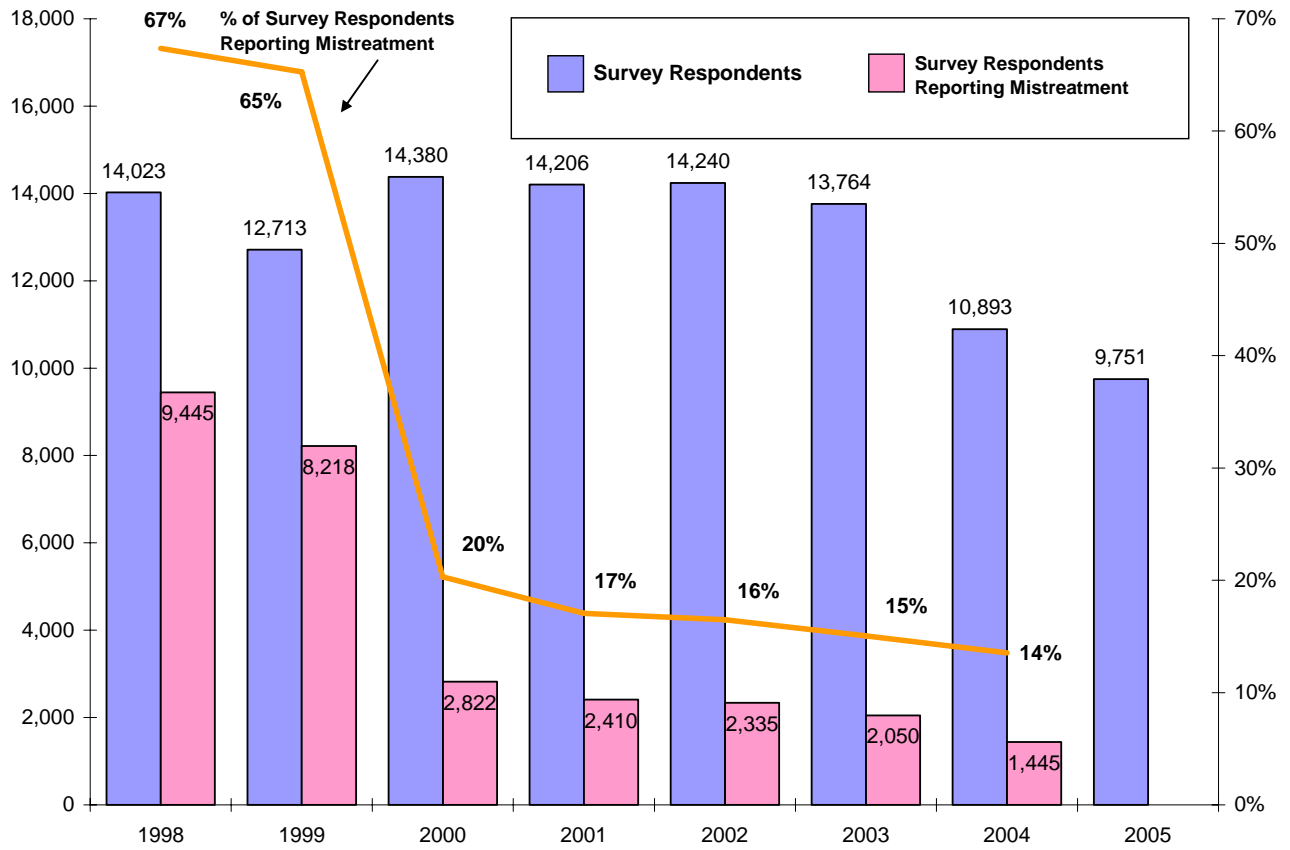
Figure S-1 presents the number of GQ participants, the number of respondents who indicated that they had personally experienced mistreatment (both shown in the bar graph), and the percentage of respondents with mistreatment experiences (shown in the line graph) from 1998-2005. The number of individuals reporting mistreatment drops suddenly and considerably between the 1999 and 2000 surveys, a decline from 65 percent or higher in 1998 and 1999 to 20 percent in 2000.

We suspect that the substantial decline in the number and percentage of graduating medical students reporting experiences of mistreatment was due largely to the changes made to the mistreatment-related questions described above. Thus, the introduction of a general mistreatment question altered students’ survey response behavior, demonstrating that how these questions are asked is not inconsequential. This also suggests a discrepancy between the students’ definition of mistreatment and their mistreatment experiences.

Recent Decline in the Survey Participation

In 2005, the AAMC made substantial changes in the format and administration of the GQ. In its present version, the GQ consists of two components: (1) a program evaluation survey and (2) a supplemental survey on financial aid, career intentions, and diversity. The program evaluation survey, which is completed anonymously, includes questions related to the student’s medical school experiences, student support programs, and potential problems, including mistreatment. The supplemental survey collects personally identifiable information, and therefore students have the option to consent to release their identifiable information back to the medical schools. These changes appear to have resulted in a lower overall participation rate. As shown in Figure S-1, the number of GQ respondents declined by more than 20% from 13,764 in 2003 to 10,893 in 2004 and 9,751 in 2005.

Figure S-1. The Number of Medical School Graduates who Participated in GQ and the Number and Percentage of Graduates Reporting Personal Mistreatment, 1998-2004.



Note: Detailed survey results were not available for the 2005 GQ at the time of this writing.

* This supporting information accompanies "Recent Trends in the Reporting of Medical Student Mistreatment," *Analysis in Brief*, vol. 6, no. 4. Washington DC: AAMC; 2006. Available at www.aamc.org/data/aib