



Leicester-Gondar Link: Teaching Psychiatry to medical students in Gondar Ethiopia

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Introduction

Gondar is a city in Northern Ethiopia. Gondar Hospital serves a population of about four million people. There are no psychiatrists in Gondar. Outpatient psychiatry clinics are provided by two psychiatric nurses. Inpatient psychiatric facilities are available only in or around the capital city Addis Ababa.

The Leicester-Gondar Psychiatry link was established in 2008 to develop psychiatry training for nurses and medical students and develop community mental health services.

In February 2011 a 2 week psychiatry teaching course was provided for 101 final year medical students at Gondar Medical School.

Learning objectives

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- Assess patients with mental health problems
- Formulate differential diagnoses
- Formulate management plans
- develop helpful attitudes towards mental health

With a focus on commonly encountered mental disorders



Teaching methods

- Teaching was delivered in English and Amharic by three psychiatrists and one specialist nurse from Leicester and one Ethiopian psychiatrist.
- Teaching used large group lectures and interactive small group sessions with role play. A course workbook was provided.
- There was limited exposure to outpatient clinics.
- An MCQ examination was held at the end of the teaching programme.



Student evaluation of the teaching programme

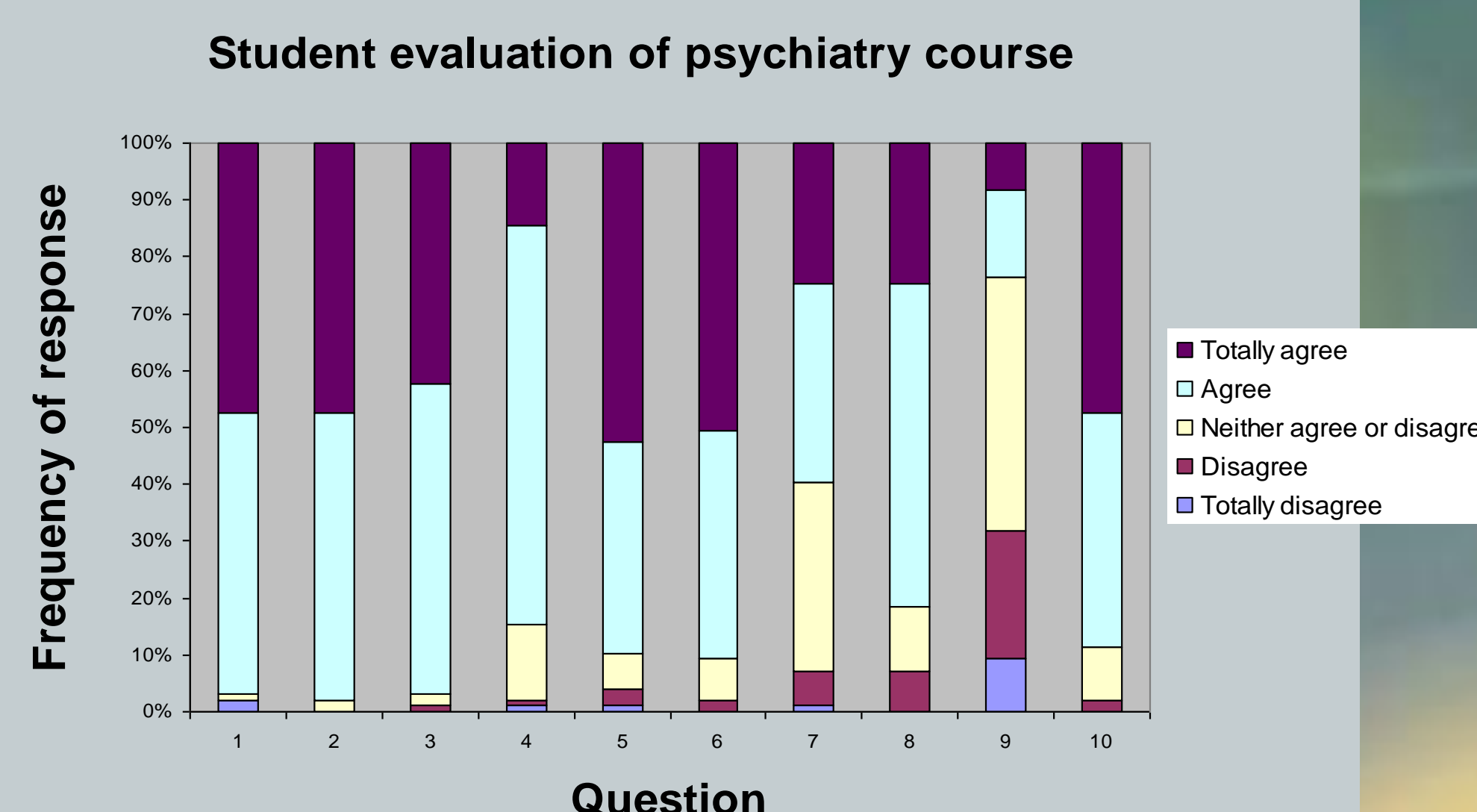
Aims of evaluation

To assess knowledge of psychiatry gained, attitudes to mental illness, view of teaching and view of a psychiatry career

Method

Students anonymously completed a course evaluation ten item questionnaire based on a 5 point Likert scale and open feedback questions

Questionnaire: 1 I know how common mental health problems present. 2 I know how to take a psychiatric history. 3 I know how to do a mental state examination. 4 I know how to treat patients with a psychiatric disorder. 5 I think psychiatric disorders are worthwhile treating. 6 I enjoyed the psychiatric course. 7 I think we should be taught by psychiatrists from Ethiopia. 8 Psychiatric teachers from the UK can teach students in Gondar effectively. 9 I would like to become a psychiatrist. 10 I enjoyed the course



Results

- 97(97%) evaluation forms were completed
- Responses are shown the graph

Perceived knowledge of psychiatry (Q1-4)

- 85-97% of students agreed that they had gained knowledge in the presentation, history taking, mental state examination and treatment of mental disorders (Presentation 97%, History taking 98%, Mental state examination 97%, Treatment 85%)

Attitudes to mental disorder and psychiatry

- 91% agreed that psychiatric disorders are worthwhile treating (Q5)
- 23% expressed an interest in a psychiatry career (Q9)

View of teaching course

- 80% agreed that UK Psychiatric teachers can effectively teach students in Gondar (Q8)
- 60% agreed they should be taught by Psychiatrists from Ethiopia (Q7)
- 88% enjoyed the course (Q6 / 10)

Free text feedback was very positive and covered the following themes:

- 1. Gaining mental health skills for general medical work** 'Learning that we can help patients without being psychiatrists'
- 2. The value of psychiatry in society** 'helped my understanding of the meaning of mental health and common problems in society',
- 3. Clinical experience and practical sessions**
- 4. Course Teaching methods and staff:** students found unfamiliar teaching methods challenging but valued interactive teaching with role play and clinical scenarios.
- 5. Cultural references and relevance to Ethiopia.** Comments referred to gaining insight into illness which may otherwise be attributed to evil spirits or the curse of God

Feedback demonstrated a positive change in attitude: 'the subject matter is all about ourselves'; 'it helped me to see the whole body and mind of human beings'

Feedback captured the capacity for teaching to inspire an interest in psychiatry: 'I have a vision to be a psychiatrist to serve the great problem of our country'; and 'Psychiatry is not only a science but also an entertaining art'.

Conclusion

- Overall teaching was viewed as enjoyable and valuable and increased knowledge and skills in psychiatry
- Teaching methods were valued although unfamiliar
- Expanding teaching and clinical experience is important
- Joint working with Ethiopian Psychiatrists is important to increase the relevance of psychiatry teaching to Ethiopia
- Introducing new perspectives can improve the understanding and impact of mental health problems and challenge stigma to promote a more positive attitude towards mental health

This evaluation demonstrates that despite limitations in local clinical services, important learning objectives in psychiatry can be met by a short teaching course delivered by joint working through international links

To overcome the low coverage of mental healthcare it is vital to develop local training programmes and raise awareness about the importance, both culturally and politically, of developing better mental healthcare for the people of Ethiopia.

