

Assessment of Inclusion and Diversity Topics in an Undergraduate Pharmacy Programme in Japan

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Abstract. Discriminatory attitudes and negative perceptions among healthcare providers can be detrimental to patients' health outcomes, especially patients in the minority, who require special needs and are marginalized. Despite Japan's perception as a homogeneous society, the presence of ethnic minorities, international residents, and varied social identities underscores the necessity for culturally competent healthcare professionals. However, the depth and consistency of inclusion and diversity (I&D) education in healthcare programs remain uneven. This cross-sectional study utilized an online questionnaire that was distributed via email to pharmacy students at Fukuoka University undergraduate pharmacy program. A total of 42 respondents from Fukuoka University were included in this study. Despite students perceiving low exposure to I&D components in their pharmacy curriculum, students expressed moderate satisfaction to the I&D components already present in their curriculum. Students ranked as I&D components involving race, age, and physical disabilities as priority needs. Students reported moderate confidence in counseling diverse patients, despite reporting insufficiency in the current I&D training. The study also identified a significant association between students' satisfaction level with I&D exposure and their gender, year of study, and involvement in extracurricular activities. The study reveals gaps in inclusion and diversity education within the pharmacy program at Fukuoka University, with students indicating a need for greater I&D curriculum integration. Enhancing I&D training could improve student preparedness for a multicultural professional environment.

Keywords: Diversity, Inclusion, Japanese pharmacy students, Pharmacy curriculum