



Integrating Systemic Racism into a First Professional Year Course with a Student-Led Symposium Capstone

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KEY FINDINGS

- Integrating a student-led project based on systemic racism (SR) resulted in improvement in student understanding, perceptions, confidence, and opinions on the topic.
- Audience members found the symposium beneficial and felt it would change their professional services and communication skills.
- This student-led symposium offers a model to assess student outcomes in the context of team-based learning.
- This project explored integration of SR within the core curriculum, as well as a strategy to promote health equity and delivery of culturally competent care during the foundational first professional year (P1).

BACKGROUND

- SR is a public health emergency defined as the combination of laws, policies, and rules that are embedded within society and organizations that generate and reinforce inequities, disadvantaging groups of color.^{1,2}
- The historical and current impact of SR on health disparities is an essential public health topic for pharmacy students.
- Results from a national study show low priority, with limited focus to teach SR in pharmacy curriculum in the US.³
- With recent publications and organizations recognizing SR as a root cause of racial health inequities^{2,4}, colleges and schools of pharmacy should include SR in their curriculum.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine the impact of integrating a student-led symposium focusing on SR within a doctor of pharmacy course.
- To determine by survey, the impact of the symposium on the audience and students knowledge, perceptions, confidence, and opinions of SR.

METHODS

- P1 students completed a group project that describes the historical context and impact of SR on health outcomes.
- Each project included a written paper and presentation at a student-led symposium to faculty, staff, students, and community partners.
- Students were surveyed pre- and post-symposium to assess the impact of the project on their understanding, perceptions, confidence, opinions, and knowledge of SR.
- Non-P1 student audience members were also surveyed on their opinions of the symposium.
- Survey questions were asked on a Likert-type scale (1=Strongly disagree/Not at all confident, 5=Strongly agree/Extremely confident).
- Assessment of the knowledge-based question used a 5-point grading scale and given a rating of poor, average, or clear as a global assessment.
- Open-ended survey responses were analyzed with qualitative statistics; mean composite survey scores were calculated by category and compared with Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test.

RESULTS

Students

- 30/66 (45% response rate) of students participated.

Survey Item	Z	Significance (two-tailed)*
Understanding		
1	-4.210	0.000
2	-4.018	0.000
3	-3.515	0.000
4	-3.189	0.001
Perceptions		
5	-0.433	0.665
6	-0.503	0.615
7	-1.328	0.184
8	-3.216	0.001
9	-2.398	0.000
10	-2.400	0.016
11	-4.247	0.000
12	-3.579	0.000
13	-4.455	0.000
14	-4.595	0.000
15	-2.239	0.025
16	-3.089	0.002
17	-3.982	0.000
18	-1.713	0.087
Confidence		
19	-3.108	0.002
20	-2.798	0.005
Opinions		
21	-2.504	0.012

Table 1: Pre- and Post- Survey Item Results

* p-value <0.05 represents a significant value

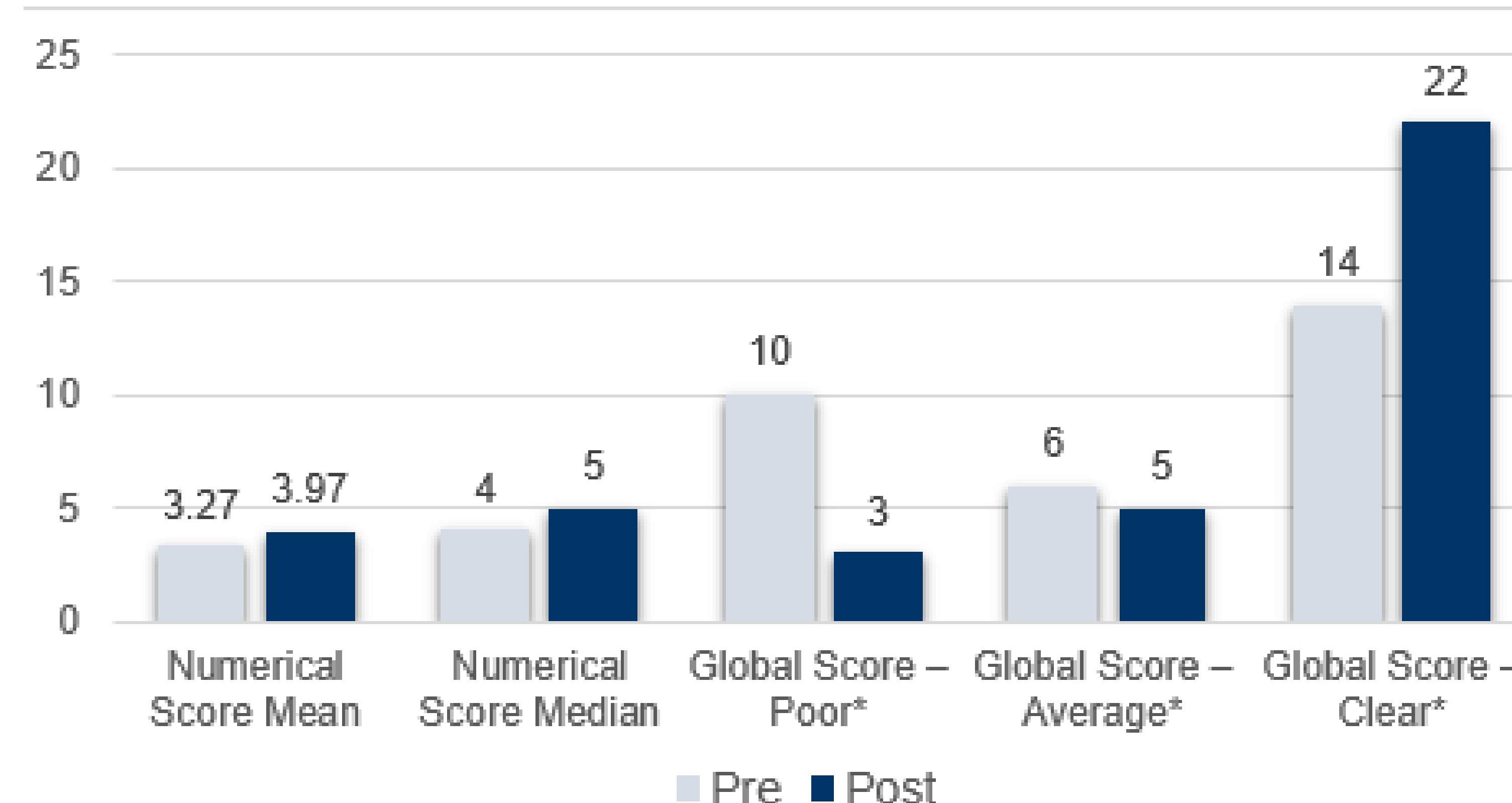


Figure 1: Pre- and Post- Knowledge-Based Assessment Results

*Number of responses meeting category

- There was no statistical difference in numerical or global scores for pre- and post-surveys in the knowledge-based assessment.
- Students showed improvement in all pre-global scores: average increased to clear (6/6=100%) and most pre-global poor scores saw improvement to average or clear (9/10=90%).

RESULTS (CONTINUED)

Audience

- 10 non-P1 student audience members assessed the symposium.
- Audience members agreed that the presentations at the symposium:
 - Will be used to make change in the services I provide in my professional career path (mode=5, IQR=3-5)
 - Will help me improve my written and/or verbal communication skills when discussing systemic racism (mode=5, IQR=3-5)
 - Were helpful (mode=5, IQR=4-5)
- Three main themes emerged from written responses:

Theme	Representative Quotes
Professionalism	"I was impressed by the level of knowledge and professionalism."
Information Presented	"I thought the combination of student and professional presentations was excellent." "The students shared some impressive data and advocacy strategies." "Student presentations outstanding! Amazing! Excellent opportunity for students to learn about this topic and build skills."
Accessing Materials	"It would be great to have handouts or synopses - there was a lot of excellent information."

DISCUSSION

- Majority of survey items on the student survey significantly increased from pre- to post-survey (except for survey items #5-7 and 18, as means were high for pre-survey items).
- Two survey items (#16 and 17) significantly saw a decrease in perception from pre- to post- survey.
 - Likely due to an inverse relationship between initial perception and overconfidence that diminished as understanding on such topics grew.
- Limitations include: survey fatigue; post survey was completed 3 months post-symposium (recall bias); single institution implementation; small sample size.
- Future research: other quantitative assessments such as patient simulations to assess students' skills; longitudinal impact of integrating SR content throughout the professional pharmacy curriculum.

REFERENCES

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