

PERSPECTIVE



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This study found that medical students who are URIM report higher levels of exhaustion-related burnout but lower levels of disengagement burnout. In addition, regardless of URIM status, those who were in the bottom quartile of learning environment scores had the highest levels of burnout in medical school as were those who experienced at least one episode of discrimination. That latter finding confirms the work of Dyrbye LN, et al, which was reported in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* (now *JAMA Internal Medicine*) in 2007. Of note, Dyrbye had reported a lower level of burnout among URIM students, whereas Jamieson's study is showing lower level of disengagement burnout but a higher rate of exhaustion-related burnout. The differences between the two may be due to the use of different burnout assessment scales.

The most significant finding of this study is the correlation between discrimination and burnout, regardless of medical students' race, and is an important addition to the medical literature. This provides support for medical schools' increased focus on the learning environment. The fact is that learners are adversely affected by racism, microaggressions, feelings of isolation and untoward cultural experiences, and consistent with the racial reckoning that began during the summer protests of 2020, we should redouble our efforts to protect the learning environment from such adverse experiences.

While it is true that our study as well as others have demonstrated a lower level of burnout among URIM physicians, both Jamieson and Dyrbye have shown that medical students may be more vulnerable than attendings, and that if they experience discrimination, it does result in more burnout.

Reference:

[Dyrbye LN, et al. *Arch Intern Med*. 2007;doi:10.1001/archinte.167.19.2103.](https://doi.org/10.1001/archinte.167.19.2103)

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