Countries for psychiatrists who will ultimately work in developing countries. There may be some disparities between training needs and the training obtained, but this is only to be expected, given the nature and extent of the differences in psychiatric practice. But cross-cultural training exchange helps develop the insight into both worlds that is required to be able, one hopes, to make some contribution towards changing psychiatric practice in the developing world.

Conversely, Britain is a multicultural society with many ethnic groups, some members of which formerly lived in the developing world, which in turn might influence their current customs and practices. It might be a good idea for British psychiatric trainees (and indeed trainees from other developed countries) to obtain some training in the developing world. This would give greater insight into the cultural variations in psychiatry. I am sure many would find this an exciting and rewarding prospect. After all, one of the best ways of learning about other cultures is to be among them and to partake of the local customs and traditions.


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Cross-cultural training in psychiatry

Farooq (2001) has highlighted some inadequacies in the psychiatric training imparted in developing countries. He has suggested the need for a total paradigm shift in training to address these problems. As a psychiatric trainee having initially trained in a developing country and now undergoing training in the UK, I cannot agree more with this suggestion. However, I wish to make some further points.

Some doubts are expressed about the suitability of training in developed countries for psychiatrists who will ultimately work in developing countries. There may be some disparities between training needs and the training obtained, but this is only to be expected, given the nature and extent of the differences in psychiatric practice. But cross-cultural training exchange helps develop the insight into both worlds that is required to be able, one hopes, to make some contribution towards changing psychiatric practice in the developing world.

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