

Problems Faced by Female Doctors Regarding Career Development

MUHAMMAD ATHIF AKRAM¹, FAKEHA REHMAN², MARIA RUBAB³, HINA AFTAB⁴, MUHAMMAD ZEESHAN SARWAR⁵, YAHYA SAEED⁶, SYED ASGHAR NAQI⁷

ABSTRACT

Aim: to determine the issues faced by female doctors regarding career development in Pakistan.

Methods: A Cross sectional Survey was conducted in Mayo hospital, Lahore. In it 60 Female House officers, enrolled with Mayo Hospital, Lahore, aged between 20-30 years were asked to fill the questionnaire.

Results; 41(68.3%) of respondents faced problems and 19(31.7%) did not. Issues related sexual harassment was reported by 8(13.4%). 39(65.3%) faced Gender-based cultural constraints and 23(38.3%) reported gender based issues.

Conclusion: The frequency of problems faced by Female doctors is very high most common issue faced by doctors was gender based cultural constrain and gender based issues.

Keywords: Female doctors, Difficulties, Career, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

Islam preaches about the gender equity and emphasis on the education of the women, because, women have their own role and contribution in the development of a nation. But when we talk about the Asian Socio-cultural norms the scenario is bit different. Majority of females in our society facing the social problem as according to survey conducted in Faisalabad, (75.8%) of families faced problems and issues like problems in looking after their children at home.(Bano, 2005) Similar issues are found in the doctors a survey conducted to determine why female doctors not pursue surgery as their carrier. It was revealed that the doctors decline this career because they want to have family. Secondly they do not have female role model in this field (Sanfey et al., 2006) Other than these barriers there are certain more aspects that contributes in stopping the female doctors career development that are sexual harassment at workplace, disrespect from male colleagues, lack of sensitivity to women's gender-based cultural constraints, conflict between domestic and work responsibilities and poor infrastructural support.(Mumtaz et al., 2003)

Thus the current study has been conducted to determine the issues faced by female doctors regarding career development in Pakistan. To the best of my knowledge no such study has been conducted so far and this study will contribute as a base line study in the policy making and for further researches.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

It was cross sectional survey in it 60 female house officers at Mayo hospital were approached through non-probability, convenient sampling. They were surveyed using pre-tested questionnaire, with the help of surveyor to explain unclear questions. They were taken into confidence that all the information provided through the questionnaire were protected. Questionnaire was based on different questions related to different issues faced by female doctors and health workers. They were given opportunity to express their experience openly and rate the problems faced at their workplace.

RESULTS

In this study the data was collected from 60 female doctors using a well designed none structured questionnaire. The response was not normally distributed there for the median was used to describe the frequent response.

In response to "Have you ever faced any problem or issue in your work place?" 41(68.3%) responded in yes and 19(31.7%) replied no. In response to "which environment would you feel more secure?" 31(51.7%) replied anywhere whereas

¹Assistant Professor Anesthesia, Sharif Medical and Dental College / Sharif Medical City Hospital, Lahore.

²Assistant Professor Pathology,

³Student, Bsc OT Technology, KEMU/ Mayo Hospital, Lahore.

⁴Assistant Professor Anesthesia, PGMI/Ameer ud Din Medical College, Lahore.

⁵Assistant Professor Surgery, KEMU/ Mayo Hospital, Lahore.

⁶Professor of Anesthesia, Sharif Medical and Dental College / Sharif Medical City Hospital, Lahore.

⁷Professor of Surgery, KEMU/ Mayo Hospital, Lahore.

Correspondence to Dr. Muhammad Athif Akram,
Email: athifakram@gmail.com Cell: 03028459435,

13(21.7%) replied female dominating and same were in favor of male dominating setup. when an in depth question was asked “Did you ever influence by male domination of profession?” 23(38.3%) replied never, 17(28.3%) replied once or twice and same replied many time and only 3(5%) replied every time. When asked “Have you ever been physically or non-physically sexually harassed by other persons at your work place?” 52(86.7%) were simply negate the question whereas 7(11.7%) respond in affirmation where as 1(1.7%) says she always face the situation. When asked in depth “What should be the ratings of the severity of the problem presented by sexual

harassment at your workplace?” 30(50%) replied no problem and 5(8.3%) replied severe problem whereas 17(28.4%) rate it between 2 to 4 and 8(13.3%) did not reply. when further asked Have you ever face Gender-based cultural constraints at your workplace? 21(35%) replied Never, 32(53.3%) replied sometimes, 6(10%) replied usually and 1(1.7%) replied Always and when asked in detailed “Did you ever face disrespect from your male colleague?” 37(61.7%) replied never, 21(35%) replied sometimes and 2(3.3%) replied usually.

Have you ever faced any problem or issue in your work place?	Yes	No		
In which environment would you feel more secure?	Male dominating	Female dominating	Anywhere	No where
At which time you did your career planning?	During student years	While doing house job	Followed a senior role model	No planning
Did you ever influence by male domination of profession?	Once or twice	Many times	Every time	Never
Have you ever lost your temper when things go out of control?	Get risk	loose temper	Get confused & feel powerless	Become more anxious & prone to mistake
Which type of success brings more satisfaction in your life?	Personal and professional success	Marital success	Material success	Selfless service of people
Which way of expressing dissatisfaction you prefer?	Say what have to say	Leave the organization	Wait for the right time	Do not care for others
Are your personal feelings and emotions a major block in your way of success?	Too much ups and downs in emotional life	Emotions and profession are two different things	Hard to cope with success than failure	Emotions are big hurdle
With which relationship you feel more satisfy with?	Personal relations with family	Professional relation with colleagues	Both	None
Do you think that your job creates a problem in looking after your children?	Yes	No	Usually	Mostly
Is your job facilitating you regarding salary?	Yes	No	Often	Not satisfied salary
Have you ever been physically or non-physically sexually harassed by other persons at your work place?	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
What should be the ratings of the severity of the problem presented by sexual harassment at your workplace?	(Not a problem) 1	2	3	4
Have you ever face Gender-based cultural constraints at your workplace?	Never	sometimes	Usually	Always
Did you ever face disrespect from your male colleague?	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Which work domain is best suited for female doctors?	Academician	Personal business	House wife	Manager to lead organization
What should be the reasons behind failure to pursue career?	Easily give way to men	Exploited for soft values	Lag behind in knowledge and wisdom	Lack hard core skills men have
What are the skills needed to pursue career successfully?	Work hard & stood for success like men	Make strong relationships at workplace	Be more professional	Be more political
What are the most vital things for career development you think that are missing in female doctors?	Communication skills	leadership skills	Spirituality	micro political skills
Which type of influence would you like to use to achieve career success?	Referent power	Charismatic power	Expert power	Coercive power

Problems Faced by Female Doctors Regarding Career Development

	Response*	Minimum	Maximum
Have you ever faced any problem or issue at workplace?	Yes	No	Yes
In which environment would you feel more secure?	Anywhere	1	4
At which time you did your career planning?	While doing house job	1	4
Did you ever influence by male domination of profession?	Many times	1	4
Have you ever lost your temper when things go out of control?	Loose temper	1	4
Which type of success brings more satisfaction in your life?	Personal and professional success	1	4
Which way of expressing dissatisfaction you prefer?	Wait for the right time	1	4
Are your personal feelings and emotions a major block in your way of success?	Emotions and profession are two different things	1	4
With which relationship you feel more satisfy with?	Personal relations with family	1	3
Do you think that your job creates a problem in looking after your children?	No	1	4
Is your job facilitating you regarding salary?	No	1	4
Have you ever been physically or non-physically sexually harassed by other persons at your work place?	Never	1	4
What should be the ratings of the severity of the problem presented by sexual harassment at your workplace?	Not a problem	1	5
Have you ever face Gender-based cultural constraints at workplace?	Sometimes	1	4
Did you ever face disrespect from male colleague?	Never	1	3
Which work domain is best suited for female doctors?	Academician	1	4
What should be the reasons behind failure to peruse career?	Lag behind in knowledge and wisdom	1	4
What are the skills needed to peruse career successfully?	Work hard & stood for success like men	1	4
What are the most vital things for career development you think that are missing in female doctors?	Leadership skills	1	4
Which type of influence would you like to use to achieve career success?	Expert power	1	4

*Response is given on the basis of median score

DISCUSSION

Career has been introduced as “advancement, creating positive references towards career aspirations, promotion and development”. Career development provides an opportunity for self-actualization.(Arif, 2011). The study was conducted to determine the issues faced by female doctors. In Pakistan a professional woman has to face the pressure as well as stress of choosing between the relationship of wife or the career and similarly she has to cope with the conflicts and stress of a full time mother along with her job.(Robinson, 2003) thus these psychological burdens lead to poor performance.

In the current study it was found that there was high frequency that was facing different problems. Burnout, satisfaction, and other professional challenges for physicians vary by career stage. Middle career appears to be a particularly challenging time for physicians. Efforts to promote career satisfaction, reduce burnout, and facilitate retention need to be expanded beyond early career

interventions and may need to be tailored by career stage.(Dyrbye et al., 2013) similar results were found in the study where female physicians found themselves dominated by the males.

It was further found from the study that the in Pakistan the female mentors are less in a consequence the female are lacking in leading skills and they have to struggle more as well as they need more practical and managerial knowledge in pursuing their carrier. It is also suggested by most of physicians that academic jobs are more suitable for female physicians.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Overall reliability of the questionnaire was very low Chronbach’s alpha 0.073.The KMO and Bartlett’s test showed that the Sphericity/ sampling adequacy was 0.491 that is lower than the 0.6 but the variability was not statistically significant p-value 0.041.This KMO and Bartlett’s value was computed after excluding the questions “Did you ever influence by male domination of profession?”, “What should be the ratings of the

severity of the problem presented by sexual harassment at your workplace?”, “Which work domain is best suited for female doctors?” and “What should be the reasons behind failure to pursue career?”

CONCLUSIONS

In Pakistan, working environment is suitable for female physicians. The working female physicians have to face the problems related to family and administrative constrains. It is suggested that the female physicians should be taught managerial skills.

REFERENCES

1. ARIF, S. 2011. Broken wings: issues faced by female doctors in Pakistan regarding career development. *International journal of Academic research in business 7. and social sciences*, 1, 69-91.
2. BANO, S. 2005. Problems of female doctors working in hospitals. *Journal of Agriculture and Social Sciences (Pakistan)*.
3. Dyrbye, I. N., Varkey, P., Boone, S. L., Satele, D. V., Sloan, J. A. & Shanafelt, T. D. Physician satisfaction and burnout at different career stages. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 2013. Elsevier, 1358-1367.
4. Mumtaz, Z., Salway, S., Waseem, M. & Umer, N. 2003. Gender-based barriers to primary health care provision in Pakistan: the experience of female providers. *Health policy and planning*, 18, 261-269.
5. Robinson, G. E. 2003. Stresses on women physicians: Consequences and coping techniques. *Depression and Anxiety*, 17, 180-189.
6. Sanfey, H. A., Saalwachter-Schulman, A. R., nyhof-young, J. M., Eidelson, B. & Mann, B. D. 2006. Influences on medical student career choice: Gender or generation? *Archives of Surgery*, 141, 1086-1094