

Addressing the Undermining of Female Healthcare Professionals' Leadership Qualities by Human Resource Policies

¹Sadia Yaseen, ²Ayesha Ayub and ³Mamoona Shabbir

¹MedicalEducation.ORG; ²Incharge, Health Professions Education and Research Department, Faisalabad Medical University, Faisalabad; ³Senior Demonstrator, University of Health Sciences, Lahore

Correspondence: sadiayaseendme@gmail.com

Despite its growth and progression, the health sector is experiencing a critical and integral issue that topples its foundation especially regarding gender equality – the servitude of female healthcare workers/ professionals' leadership capability through established human resource (HR) policies. The human resource policies are often rigid enough to neglect the particular challenges faced by women in health care profession. These challenges may encompass their juggling role in work and family obligations and often lead to negotiating career routes besieged with discrimination.¹ Eventually, the natural leadership qualities of female health care professionals are undermined and their career pathway is restricted by the oppressive environment.

This issue not only influences an individual's competence to pursue her current responsibility but also it will impede her role in policymaking and larger level of healthcare delivery. Multifaceted leadership in health care institutes and hospital settings is mandatory to foster creative thinking, understanding the patient's requirement and developing a healthcare system inclusive of all requirements. However, as female health care professionals are not being provided the support and flexibility required to think as free mind utilizing their potential to fullest. Unintentionally, human resource policies impede this diversity of achievement especially in leadership and executive positions.²

Few initiatives can subside this grave issue. The inaugural measure could be the implementation of flexible hours at the workplace. This will certainly help them get out of a chaotic decision to choose between personal and professional lives. Another solution could be provision of remote and hybrid job offerings especially for the females working in basic medical sciences and administrative side. Furthermore, a gender inclusive focused policies regarding leadership will surely help foster leadership qualities of female healthcare professionals as a mean to prepare women for leadership roles and think tank positions requiring decision-making. The training programs should be started which must involve their mentorship as well for the purpose of their

leadership skill acquisition and preparing them for the specific roles in healthcare industry.^{2,3}

Furthermore, it is crucial to cultivate an inclusive atmosphere in healthcare environments. This entails creating and putting into effect the policies that aggressively support gender inclusion and diversity at all levels of leadership. By ensuring that decision-making bodies in healthcare facilities represent the varied demographics of the communities they serve, such policies would promote the development of more thorough and compassionate healthcare solutions.⁴ There should be an option in all health care organization for telemedicine. Those female health-care professionals who can't pursue their jobs in person, their capacity of decision making and diagnosis can be well utilized by telemedicine platform of the healthcare organizations. Moreover, especially in gynecology where long hour duty is required, daycare facilities must be provided inside their department for the peace, comfort and focused patient care by the female health care professionals. Hospitals can help female physicians and surgeons by providing the opportunity of part-time or locum tenens Work.

All these solutions will lead to a just and equal healthcare system and alleviate the apprehension of female healthcare professionals as unprivileged. Proactive and ongoing framework of these suggestions can promote leadership capabilities of healthcare professionals.

In summarizing, structured reforms and focused initiatives are required to deal with the matter of leadership capabilities undermining of female healthcare professionals. Health care systems can utilize their potential to the fullest by implementing flexible work schedules, focused professional development, inclusive culture policies, and frequent policy reviews. In addition to helping specific healthcare providers, these actions will improve healthcare delivery's general effectiveness, compassion, and quality. This will guarantee that in the future, the leadership in the field of healthcare will reflect the diversity of the populations it serves.⁵

REFERENCES

1. Dousin O, Collins N, Kler BK. The experience of work-life balance for women doctors and nurses in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*. 2022;60(2):362-80.
2. Opoku FK, Kwao IT, Johnson A-P. Human resource policies and work-life balance in higher education: Employee engagement as mediator. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*. 2023;21:13.
3. ALobaid AM, Gosling CM, Khasawneh E, McKenna L, Williams B. Challenges faced by female healthcare professionals in the workforce: a scoping review. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*. 2020:681-91.
4. Xuan Tran B, Minh HV, Hinh ND. Factors associated with job satisfaction among commune health workers: implications for human resource policies. *Global health action*. 2013;6(1):18619.
5. Morahan PS, Rosen SE, Richman RC, Gleason KA. The leadership continuum: A framework for organizational and individual assessment relative to the advancement of women physicians and scientists. *Journal of Women's Health*. 2011;20(3):387-96.



This open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0). To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>