



Editorial

Women doctors – workplace and work-life balance

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Historically, medicine has been centered around a male viewpoint. Women doctors, compared to earlier times, have necessarily been more absorbed in their workplace, but still cannot ignore the responsibilities in their home. Work and family are fundamental pillars of human life. Achieving immense success in work field cannot make them to ignore or underestimate the work at home. In major communities and societies in India, they have to fulfil family obligations, e.g., cooking, upbringing of child/children, and other household activities. In any gendered work environment, women doctors face many obstacles that hinder from making their full contributions in the workplace. For the best quality patient cares, it is necessary to understand the attitudes, work habits, overall experiences of female physicians, and above all the work culture at the workplace. Family life sustains society; work and its by products, e.g., income and other medical facilities have significant impact on the health and well-being of self, family, and the society as a whole.

While discussing about the issues of work-life balance, four things may be considered: workplace environment, practice styles, prevailing attitudes, and productivity. According to the World Health Organization, the prevalence of violence and sexual harassment among female medical staffs, especially women doctors, are on the rise, particularly in some countries and communities; the ominous signs, if not addressed at the right time, sometimes lead to the extremes of rape and murder at the workplace. In many cases, professional and institutional hierarchies facilitate these kinds of heinous activities.

Conventionally, home and workplace are perceived as separate domains, but the role played by a lady doctor at the home and the workplace are rather complementary. With globalization and rapid changes in technology as well as rapid changes in the family and societal structures, women doctors are exposed to immense pressure in the personal and family life as well as huge workload at the workplace. Working full time at the workplace, be it Government hospitals or corporate private hospitals and optimally maintaining the household activities at the same time require support and coordination. The work environment of a women doctor may not be free of gender bias, discrimination, conflicts with coworkers, physical and mental harassment, office politics, and many more. In a male-dominated society, women after the day's work at the workplace, mostly are expected to attend children, family members, relatives, and many other routine and regular household activities. Work-home conflict, stress, and job satisfaction are among the key factors affecting the work-life balance of any healthcare professional, more so

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in the case of an women doctor. In the present era of highly demanding attitude of the people in the workplace as well as in the society, women doctors have to fight hard to prove their identity in the professional life and individuality in the society. Demanding work environments and job discontent is the persistent and increasing problem, linked to physicians' burnout, extremely common in many healthcare settings, leading to cognitive difficulties and reduced productivity. To

avoid and stop further burnout, one has to maintain a healthy work-life balance; do not forget to take breaks, divide more complex activities into smaller ones, and conduct regular physical and mental exercises.

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