

Perceptions of the Work Environment in Cardiology can Influence Medical Students

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Abstract

Several studies have found that male medical students tend to show a greater interest in pursuing a career in cardiology compared to their female counterparts. This gender disparity in interest has been observed in multiple countries and across different stages of medical education. One factor influencing career choices is the perceived lifestyle associated with a particular specialty. Research suggests that female medical students may prioritize work-life balance and lifestyle factors more than male students. As a result, they may be less inclined to choose cardiology, which is often perceived as demanding and requiring long hours. As a result, they may be less inclined to choose cardiology as a career path. The presence of mentors and role models within a specialty plays a crucial role in shaping career choices.

Keywords: Cardiology • Societal stereotypes • Medicine • Medical student

Introduction

The presence of mentors and role models within a specialty can play a significant role in shaping career choices. Studies have shown that male medical students tend to have more exposure to male cardiology mentors and role models, which may positively influence their interest in pursuing a career in cardiology. On the other hand, female students may have fewer female cardiology mentors, potentially impacting their perceptions and career decisions. Societal stereotypes and gender bias can also influence perceptions and career choices. Cardiology has historically been male-dominated, and stereotypes about the specialty being aggressive or male-oriented may discourage female medical students from considering it as a career option. Efforts to address gender bias and promote diversity and inclusion in cardiology may help mitigate these effects. Studies have indicated that female medical students may perceive cardiology as a specialty with a less supportive work environment and a higher likelihood of facing discrimination or harassment. These perceptions can influence their career decisions and discourage them from pursuing cardiology.

Literature Review

It is important to note that these findings are based on research conducted in specific contexts and may not apply universally to all medical students. Efforts to promote gender diversity in cardiology and address the underlying factors contributing to gender disparities can help create a more inclusive and balanced workforce in the field. Medical students' career choices are influenced by various factors, including personal interests, lifestyle considerations, mentorship, and societal stereotypes. Within the field of cardiology, gender disparities in career preferences have been observed, with male students exhibiting a greater interest in pursuing a career in this specialty compared to their female counterparts. This essay explores the gender differences in medical student perceptions of a career in cardiology, highlighting key factors such as career interest, lifestyle considerations, mentorship and role models, stereotypes and gender bias,

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and the work environment. Research indicates that male medical students often demonstrate a higher level of interest in pursuing a career in cardiology compared to female students. Numerous studies conducted in various countries and at different stages of medical education have consistently reported this gender disparity [1].

Discussion

The reasons behind this difference may be multifaceted and involve a combination of personal preferences, societal expectations, and perceptions of the field. The perceived lifestyle associated with a specialty can significantly impact career choices. Female medical students, on average, tend to prioritize work-life balance and lifestyle factors more than male students. Cardiology is often viewed as a demanding specialty with long working hours, which may dissuade female students from pursuing it. The perception that cardiology requires extensive commitment and sacrifice can contribute to the gender disparity in career preferences. The availability of mentors and role models can influence medical students' career decisions. Male medical students are more likely to have exposure to male cardiology mentors and role models, which may positively shape their interest in pursuing a career in cardiology. Conversely, female students may have limited access to female cardiology mentors, potentially impacting their perceptions of the specialty. This gender disparity in mentorship and role models could influence career choices and contribute to the gender gap in cardiology. Studies have shown that male medical students generally have greater exposure to male cardiology mentors and role models, which can positively influence their interest in pursuing a career in cardiology [2].

Societal stereotypes and gender bias play a significant role in shaping perceptions and career choices. Historically, cardiology has been a male-dominated field, which may perpetuate the perception that it is a masculine or aggressive specialty. These stereotypes, combined with potential gender bias within the field, can discourage female medical students from considering cardiology as a career option. Efforts to challenge these stereotypes and promote diversity and inclusion in cardiology are crucial in addressing the gender disparities. Perceptions of the work environment and the likelihood of facing discrimination or harassment can also influence medical students' career decisions. Female students may perceive cardiology as having a less supportive work environment, which can be a deterrent. Concerns about discrimination or gender-based challenges may dissuade female students from pursuing cardiology, contributing to the gender gap in the specialty. Addressing these concerns through creating supportive and inclusive work environments is essential to attract and retain talented female physicians in cardiology. Cardiology is often seen as a demanding field with long working hours, emergency calls, and limited flexibility. These factors may deter female medical students, who place a higher emphasis on maintaining a healthy work-life balance [3].

Gender differences in medical student perceptions of a career in cardiology are evident, with male students demonstrating a greater interest in the specialty compared to their female counterparts. The variations in perceptions can be attributed to factors such as career interest, lifestyle considerations, mentorship and role models, stereotypes and gender bias, and the work environment. Efforts to promote gender diversity in cardiology should focus on addressing these factors to create a more inclusive and balanced workforce. By challenging stereotypes, providing mentorship opportunities, promoting work-life balance, and fostering supportive work environments, the field of cardiology can encourage more women to pursue careers in this important medical specialty. Gender disparities exist across various fields, including medicine. Cardiology, as a specialized medical field, has shown a notable gender imbalance, with fewer female practitioners compared to male counterparts. The factors contributing to these disparities are multifaceted and complex. This article aims to explore the gender differences in medical student perceptions of a career in cardiology and shed light on the underlying factors that influence career choices [4].

Research consistently indicates that male medical students tend to exhibit greater interest in pursuing a career in cardiology compared to their female counterparts. This disparity is observed across different countries and stages of medical education. Various factors contribute to this difference in career interest. Firstly, societal expectations and cultural norms play a role. Historically, certain specialties, including cardiology, have been associated with masculinity and perceived as more suitable for male physicians. These deeply ingrained stereotypes can influence the career aspirations of medical students, with female students often feeling discouraged from pursuing cardiology due to gendered expectations. Secondly, perceptions of competitiveness and intellectual challenge may influence career interest. Cardiology is considered a highly demanding and intellectually rigorous specialty, often attracting students who are drawn to these aspects of medicine. Some studies have shown that male medical students are more likely to perceive cardiology as a challenging and prestigious field, leading to higher interest levels. Another significant factor influencing career choices is the perceived lifestyle associated with a particular specialty. Work-life balance is an important consideration for many medical students, and it can vary across different fields. Research suggests that female medical students tend to prioritize lifestyle factors more than their male counterparts, seeking specialties that offer a better work-life balance [5].

On the other hand, female medical students may have fewer female cardiology mentors, which may impact their perceptions and career decisions. Lack of representation and limited access to female mentors in cardiology can lead to a perception that this field is not welcoming or accessible to women. Strengthening mentorship programs and providing more opportunities for female medical students to connect with successful female cardiologists can help bridge this gap and encourage greater gender diversity in the field. Stereotypes and gender bias are pervasive in society, and medicine is no exception. Cardiology, as a traditionally male-dominated field, has had its share of gender stereotypes. These stereotypes may portray cardiology as an aggressive, competitive, or male-oriented specialty, creating barriers for female medical students considering a career in cardiology. Such stereotypes can perpetuate gender bias and discourage female students from pursuing cardiology, as they may fear not fitting into the established culture or facing discrimination. Addressing these biases and challenging societal stereotypes can help create a more inclusive and supportive environment, where medical students can make career choices based on their interests and aptitudes rather than gender expectations. Perceptions of the work environment in cardiology can significantly influence medical students' career decisions [6].

Conclusion

Some studies have indicated that female medical students may perceive

cardiology as a specialty with a less supportive work environment and a higher likelihood of facing discrimination or harassment. These perceptions can deter female students from considering cardiology as a viable career option. Creating a safe and supportive work environment free from discrimination and harassment is essential to attract and retain talent from diverse backgrounds. Implementing policies and programs that promote diversity and inclusivity within the field of cardiology can help address these concerns and encourage more female medical students to pursue careers in cardiology. Gender differences in medical student perceptions of a career in cardiology are influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including societal expectations, lifestyle considerations, mentorship opportunities, stereotypes, and work environment perceptions. Recognizing and understanding these factors is crucial to address the gender disparities and encourage greater gender diversity within the field. Efforts to promote mentorship programs, increase visibility of female role models, challenge gender biases and stereotypes, and foster inclusive work environments are essential steps towards creating a more balanced and equitable cardiology workforce. By addressing these issues, the field of cardiology can attract and retain talent from all genders, ultimately enhancing patient care and advancing the field as a whole.

Acknowledgement

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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