

Editorial

FEMINIZATION OF MEDICAL EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

Recent proposal of Pakistan Medical & Dental Council to reserve 50% seats for boys & Girls in admissions to Medical Colleges of Pakistan has generated a lot of controversy and debates in all literary circles of the country.

Some groups are advocating 50/50 quota while others are opposing it considering it against human rights and woman rights.

In early ninteies (1990s), Government of Pakistan made a decision in accordance with superior courts, abolishing quota system in the country.

Before that time, limited number of seats for admission to Medical Colleges were available to female students and merit for female candidates was higher than male. This decision changed the scenario of Medical College admissions and affected the outcome of medical graduates. For the last few years 70-80% seats in Medical Colleges have been taken up by the female students which have almost reversed 20 year back scenario. This Feminization of Medical education in Pakistan has alarmed the policy makers in the country.

The groups opposing this feminization claim (to some extent true) that female Medical graduates leave the profession after some time due to many reasons and some even don't join the profession for even a single day. Consequently these make a huge loss to the tax payer's money spent on them for their education. Another point in this context is that female doctors don't go to the periphery and usually prefer to concentrate in the cities.

The groups favoring the open merit system for boys & girls propagate that;

- 51 % of population in Pakistan is female.
- Majority of female students prefer to join Medical education because of better salary structure/employment opportunities, role models and highly respected place in society.
- This trend of increasingly female admissions in medical school is global, and not limited to Pakistan. USA, UK and Canada and other Asian Medical Schools are also showing this trend.
- Male students in our country prefer other professions like Civil services, Engineering, Marketing, Politics, Accounting and many more. Due to this reason, male aspirants for medical education are relatively lesser than female.
- Female graduates don't concentrate in big cities. They are now performing their duties in far flung areas of the country and as their number is increasing they even go to Basic Health Units.

Researcher and policy makers in every corner of the world contributed that male students are involved in playing video games, outdoor activities, movies, social media usage and waste their time while females concentrate on their studies during this time. Various studies reported, no IQ difference between male and female candidates, although some insignificant anatomical difference in brains of both gender occurs.

There is increasing trend among females in Education, Fashion designing and Marketing, Movies and Modeling, Anchor persons, Journalism, Broad Casting, Beuticians, Banking and Finance, Law and many more like Medicine and Allied fields. On the other hand their interest in

Engineering, Armed forces, Civil Services, Business, Administrative jobs, and many other is less and in these fields representation of males is more than 90%.

We in a male dominant society perhaps are not accepting with ease this rapid global change and there is hue and cry of male doctor's shortage, which probably is not true.

Medical education like other fields should not be gender based and there should be no discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, cast or religion.

In my opinion every Medical student admitted in Public Medical Colleges, should be bound to perform her/his duties after graduation. They may be fined or expenses may be recovered from them (Which were spent on their graduation) if they don't join profession. However it will be a big and difficult task, for the policy makers to devise the ways of recovery, not only from female gradates but also from those males who change the Medical profession and Join other professions.

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