



Gender Dimensions in Medical Practice: A Libyan Case Study,

Khalid Al-Mahdawi^{1,2}, Amina Al-Tahir^{1,3}

¹ Benghazi University

² Department of Clinical Research, Libyan Academy for Postgraduate Studies

³ Department of Public Health, Libyan Academy for Postgraduate Studies

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Correspondence: kalmahdawi@gmail.com

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Author notes

Khalid Al-Mahdawi is affiliated with Benghazi University and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Amina Al-Tahir is affiliated with Benghazi University and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Abstract

The gender dimensions of medical practice influence healthcare delivery and professional development but are under-studied in specific regional contexts. Libya, in North Africa, is frequently included in broader analyses of Sub-Saharan Africa, yet its distinct gender dynamics within medicine require separate examination. This case study aimed to analyse gender dynamics within Libyan medical practice. Its objectives were to examine workforce composition, career progression pathways, and patient-provider interactions, and to identify persistent challenges to gender equity. An instrumental, qualitative case study design was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with medical practitioners and administrators. This was supplemented by documentary analysis of institutional policies and review of workforce statistics from major healthcare facilities. A significant feminisation of the medical workforce was observed, with women constituting a large majority of new graduates. However, pronounced vertical segregation persists, with men disproportionately occupying senior roles in surgery, academic leadership, and hospital administration. Gendered expectations were found to influence speciality selection and career trajectories. While female participation in Libyan medicine has increased substantially, structural and cultural barriers continue to constrain gender equity, particularly in attaining leadership positions and within certain specialities. This disparity affects professional development and may influence the nature of care provision. Key recommendations include implementing targeted leadership and mentorship programmes for women, revising institutional policies to better support career-family balance, and integrating gender sensitivity training into medical education to address biases in professional advancement and patient care. Gender equity, medical workforce, Libya, career progression, healthcare leadership, North Africa. This study provides a detailed, contextual analysis of gender dynamics in Libyan medicine, contributing nuanced evidence to regional discussions on health workforce policy and gender equality in Africa.

Keywords: *Gender, Medical Practice, North Africa, Healthcare Delivery, Professional Development, Case Study*



ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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