Women in the Physician Workforce
Creating Work-Life Satisfaction for Women Physicians

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Part-time or Reduced-hours Careers

• What do we know?
  • Numbers of part-time physicians are increasing
    • Pediatrics: 11-15% between 1993 and 2000
    • Likely due to more dual-earner couples
Brandeis Study Database

- Random sample of female physicians
  - Massachusetts Registry of Board Certification
  - Between 25 and 50 years of age
  - Twenty-minute mailed questionnaire
  - Sixty-minute closed-ended interview (face-to-face)
  - 51 full-time and 47 reduced-hours physicians
Sample Demographics

• No difference in:
  • Age
  • Number of years as a physician
  • Mean household income
  • Number of children
  • Presence of an infant in the home
Sample Demographics

• Reduced-hours physicians
  • More likely to be in a generalist specialty (40% vs. 12%, p = 0.001)
  • Spend a greater proportion of their time in patient care (64.5% vs. 50.1%, p = 0.003)
  • Less time in research (4.9% vs. 18.0%, p = 0.002)

• No difference in:
  • Perception of work interfering with family (1.8 vs. 1.7, p = 0.17)
  • Family life interfering with work (1.4 vs. 1.5, p = 0.62)
Work Hours

• Physicians who worked their preferred number of hours:
  • 25% of full-time
  • 57% of reduced-hours

• Better job-role quality (p = 0.001)
• Schedule fit (p ≤ 0.001)
• Lower burnout (p = 0.03)
• Better marital-role quality (p = 0.006)
• Higher life satisfaction (p = 0.005)
• Women who worked their preferred number of hours had the best balance of work and family outcomes.
Value of Part-time or Reduced-hours Physicians

- Higher productivity than full-time physicians
- Equal to higher performance
- Similar patient satisfaction
- Similar ambulatory costs
Value of Reduced-hours Physicians

• Conflicting data on visit based continuity of care
• Brigham and Women’s study
  • Reduced-hours physicians scored higher on the HEDIS (Health Employer Data and Information Set) quality measure, including:
    • Access
    • Availability of care
Studies of Other Professions

• Reduced-hours employees are also more productive.
Reduced-hours Physicians

• Compared to full-time counterparts there is little difference in:
  • Job role quality
  • Career satisfaction
Working the Preferred Number of Hours for Both Full-time and Reduced-hours Physicians

• Greatest impact on
  • Job-role quality
  • Burnout
  • Marital-role quality
  • Life satisfaction
Physician Health Study

- Strong association between work control and career satisfaction
- Lack of control a strong predictor of burnout in women
  - This is not true for men.
Relationship of Family Experience to Career Satisfaction

• Reduced-hours physicians
  • Greater correlation of family experience to career satisfaction
• Full-time physicians
  • No correlation
Effect of Marital-Role Quality on Career Satisfaction

- ■ ■ full-time
- ▲ ▲ reduced-hours

Marital-Role Quality vs. Career Satisfaction

Low and high levels of marital-role quality are plotted against career satisfaction. The graph shows a positive correlation, with career satisfaction increasing as marital-role quality increases.

- Full-time employment (■) shows a slight increase in career satisfaction.
- Reduced-hours employment (▲) shows a more significant increase in career satisfaction.

The y-axis represents career satisfaction, ranging from 0 to 6, while the x-axis represents marital-role quality, categorized as low and high.
Marital-role Quality and Intention to Leave the Job

- Reduced-hours female physicians
  - When marital-role quality low = greater intention to leave the job
  - When marital-role quality high = less intention to leave the job
- Full-time female physicians
  - Suggestion that when marital-role quality is high, there is a greater intention to leave the job
Effect of Marital-role Quality on Intention to Leave Job

![Graph showing the relationship between marital-role quality and intention to leave job. The x-axis represents low to high marital-role quality, and the y-axis represents intention to leave job. The graph shows a negative correlation between the two variables, with full-time workers having a lower intention to leave at higher quality levels compared to reduced-hours workers.](image-url)
Parent-role Quality and Intention to Leave the Job

- High parent-role quality
  - No difference in intention to leave the job
- Low parent-role quality
  - Reduced-hours physicians had greater intention to leave the job than full-time counterparts
Effect of Parent-role Quality on Intention to Leave Job

![Graph showing the effect of parent-role quality on intention to leave job. The x-axis represents parent-role quality (low to high), and the y-axis represents intention to leave job (0 to 3.5). The graph includes two lines: one for full-time and one for reduced-hours. The full-time line shows a slight increase in intention to leave as parent-role quality increases, while the reduced-hours line shows a decrease.]
Work-Family Interference and Intention to Leave Job

- Full-time physicians
  - No relationship
- Reduced-hours physicians
  - High work-family interference correlated with higher intention to leave the job
Effect of Work-Family Interference on Intention to Leave Job

![Graph showing the relationship between work interfering with family and intention to leave job for full-time and reduced-hours employees. The graph indicates a positive correlation, with higher levels of work interfering with family leading to a greater intention to leave.]
Academic Medical Careers

• This data is largely on women physicians in practice who are not in academic medical careers.

• Still a poor understanding of:
  • The factors related to choices for reduced-hours
  • Generally lumped under “for family reasons”
  • The affects on academic careers of reduced-hours
  • Need a national study to evaluate this issue