

Determination of challenges faced by women working in healthcare facilities in Sokoto state, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

In the history of human development, women have been playing a pivotal role. In fact women works and breakthroughs are portends of development. Without the contribution of women in the social, economic, political and other activities, national development will be at standstill. But, ironically, women employees generally are been discriminated by their supervisors, colleagues, and even the society. This is the same similitude in healthcare. Thus, this paper intends to find out the challenges and problems faced by working women in the healthcare system of Sokoto state. A structured questionnaire was used in a survey fashion. The result obtained was analyzed to yield descriptive statistics. The most (83.3%) spotted challenges faced by women working in healthcare were: a. Lack of acceptance by the society b. Long working hours c. Lack of support systems at workplace d. Lack of promotion e. Lack of freedom of speech f. Lack of security during transport to workplace g. Lack of safety at workplace. These are the major challenges admitted by the respondents. 66.7% of the respondents said " lack of role model " is a challenge that women face while working in healthcare in Sokoto state. It is the third most agreed response. Whereas, the fourth set of challenges were : difficult work, lack of support from the family, and being married ". The fifth set of challenges were : "male dominant society, injustice from males, and conflicts with family responsibilities". The last set of stated challenges were : " conflicts with colleagues and night duties ". The sorts of violence faced by women working in healthcare were shown. The most (100%) admitted forms were : " verbal abuse by patient relatives, verbal abuse by patients ". The second (66.7%) agreed violence was sexual abuse. Then (50%), "blaming for anything that goes wrong, verbal abuse from male workers ".33.3% said" dealing with substance abusers " is also a violence. (16.7%) "giving them task not their own " was the least agreed violence they see. Devastali and Rege (n.d) reported these forms of violence in their study. The concerns of women workers were revealed. All the 60 respondents said, they are usually coopted in seminars, workshops and other programmes. Whereas, 83.39% opined that, their seniors support them. Only 4% of them admitted that night duties are "easy ".11.4% said they spent good time with family life. Whereas, 5.7% always face problem with male patients.48% admitted that workplace is safe. The government should rise up to the challenges to cancel the gender-based inequalities faced by women in the state.

Keywords: women, healthcare, challenges, violence, sokoto state.

1. INTRODUCTION

Development of human species has to do with women contributions. Historically, women have made impacts in several facets of development like their men counterparts. In fact, the progress of any society or nation is easily noticeable through weighing the contributions of women in social, political, economic and other sectors (Kumari, 2014). In the olden days, sometimes women worked outside home as surbodinates to men like helpers, labourers, clerks etc. This may not be unconnected with the believe of some scholars that only men become successful leaders or except with the use of masculine style (Radovic-Markovic *et al.*, n.d.). Even today, women have proved themselves useful in all fields of human endeavour, such as health (doctors and paramedical specialists), engineering, teaching, management, social work, agriculture etc. But woefully, the women folk are still battling with challenges, issues and problems such as, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, denial of opportunities, lack of good environment at workplace, lack of cooperation from colleagues, stress, depression, injustice, and other forms of biases and discriminations (Kumari *et al.*, 2015; Chhugani and James, 2017).

It is possible to accept that, when more women have entered the labour environment, the solid family support will wane. Albeit husbands have taken on more domestic chores than before, there are still move vacancies coupled with more needs of intensive parenting (Kumari, 2014). Women face challenges in work -life balance because there are still beliefs that they are responsible for family-related tasks. In many places the prevailing environment is not favourable to women, which in turn affects workforce even in the future (O' Carroll, 2015). There has been an increase in participation of women in the healthcare. The health is dominated with a significant proportion of women (Jong *et al.*, 2014). Women working in healthcare are agents of change within their communities, as they help in providing curative, and preventive health services. Their peer status give them room to connect with patients and social relationships more effectively than others (Zhu *et al.*, 2014). Women are essential catalysts for prosperity of many organisations, healthcare alike (World Economic Forum, 2013).

The importance of women in both house and hospital settings is enormous. Their simplicity, love, affection, merciness, and relations made them readable in family care. In the hospital they are also needed because of their inherent properties and the society's belief, religion, culture and traditions that seek women to look over women folk stressing their role in healthcare. Thus, this paper aimed to investigate the challenges encountered by women folks because of working in healthcare in Sokoto state, Nigeria. The objective of this paper was to determine the followings:

- The challenges faced by women working in healthcare
- The forms of violence encountered by women due to healthcare workplace from patients or relatives and colleagues
- The advantages earned by women working in healthcare

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study design used in this work was descriptive survey. 60 structured questionnaires were retrieved from female respondents working in healthcare settings across Sokoto state, Nigeria and analyzed to yield descriptive statistics.

3. RESULTS

Table 1 : Challenges faced by women working in healthcare settings in Sokoto state

	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Conflicts with family responsibilities	Yes	20	33.3
	Yes	40	66.7
	No	30	50.0
Being married	Yes	30	50.0
	No	30	50.0
Lack of support from family	Yes	30	50.0
	No	30	50.0
Lack of acceptance by society	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Long working hours	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Lack of role models	Yes	40	66.7

	No	20	33.3
Lack of support systems at workplace	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Lack of safety at workplace	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Night duties	Yes	10	16.7
	No	50	83.7
Because of difficult work	Yes	30	50.0
	No	30	50.0
Male dominated society	Yes	20	33.3
	No	40	66.7
Lack of promotion	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Insufficient leave	Yes	100	100.0
	No	0	0.0
Injustice from males	Yes	20	33.3
	No	40	66.7
Lack of freedom of speech	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Conflicts with colleagues	Yes	10	16.7
	No	50	83.3
Lack of security at workplace	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7

Table 2 : Forms of violence women see at workplace in healthcare in Sokoto state

	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Blaming for any wrong that happened at workplace	Yes	30	
	No	30	50.0
Starring	Yes	40	50.0
	No	20	33.3
Dealing with substance abusers	Yes	40	66.7
	No	40	66.7
Physical abuse	Yes	20	33.3
	No	20	33.3
Verbal abuse by patients	Yes	40	66.7
	No	60	100.0
Verbal abuse by male workers	Yes	30	50.0
	No	30	50.0
Verbal abuse by patient relatives	Yes	60	100.0
	No	0	0.0
Giving them task not their own	Yes	10	16.7
	No	50	88.3

Table 3 : Concerns of women workers working in healthcare in Sokoto

	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Do your senior support you ?	Yes	50	83.3
	No	10	16.7
Are you inclined in seminars / workshops and relations ?	Yes	60	100
	No	0	0.0

4. DISCUSSION

The result of this study is shown in tables 1,2 and 3. In the table 1, the second most (83.3%) spotted challenges faced by women working in healthcare were : a. Lack of acceptance by the society b. Long working hours c. Lack of support systems at workplace d. Lack of promotion e. Lack of freedom of speech f. Lack of security during transport to workplace g.Lack of safety at workplace. These are the major challenges admitted by the respondents. These challenges are the ones reported by the findings of one study in India (Barati *et al.*, 2017; James, 2017).

66.7% of the respondents said " lack of role model " is a challenge that women face while working in healthcare in Sokoto state. It is the third most agreed response. Whereas, the fourth set of challenges were: difficult work, lack of support from the family, and being married ". The fifth set of challenges were : " male dominant society, injustice from males, and conflicts with family responsibilities". The last set of stated challenges were : " conflicts with colleagues and night duties ".

Women and men have different roles and responsibilities in live, families, households etc., based on their gender (World Economic Forum, 2013). Historically, women have played a very important role in the development of mankind over the years (Kumari, 2014). Recently, women are now playing a greater role in the labour sector, let alone the healthcare sector (Kumari *et al.*, 2015). A study by Kumari *et al* (2015), shows that most patients decrimates on women doctors. Male colleagues cooperation with females is poor, the views of women received less attention in the course of work. Minor opinions of women are respected.

In table 2, the sorts of violence faced by women working in healthcare were shown. The most (100%) admitted forms were : " verbal abuse by patient relatives, verbal abuse by patients ". The second (66.7%) agreed violence was sexual abuse. Then (50%), "blaming for anything that goes wrong, verbal abuse from male workers ".33.3% said " dealing with substance abusers " is also a violence. (16.7%) "giving them task not their own " was the least agreed violence they see. Devastali and Rege (n.d) reported these forms of violence in their study.

In table 3, the concerns of women workers were revealed. All the 60 respondents said, they are usually coopted in seminars, workshops and other programmes. Whereas, 83.39% opined that, their seniors support them. Only 4% of them admitted that night duties are " easy ". 11.4% said they spent good time with family life. Whereas, 5.7% always face problem with male patients.48% admitted that workplace is safe (Kumari *et al.*, 2017).

Women are faced with challenge between carrier and family, if they want they have to strive well (Radovic-Markovic *et al.*, n.d.).Some of the concerns are :

In the olden days, sometimes women worked outside home as surbodinate to men like helpers, labourers, clerks etc. This may not be unconnected with the believe of some scholars that only men become successful leaders or except with the use of masculine style (Radovic-Markovic *et al.*, n.d.).

Prior to 1990s males received more salaries than male and they are more likely to be promoted at workplace. Women working in healthcare are more likely to have one or more accident or occupational hazard than those working somewhere (Jong *et al.*, 2014).

Lifting and heavy work, prolonged standing and long working hours impacts women in prege. They have high risk of intra-uterine restrictions, reduced venous return, cardiac output. Shift work is associated with high risk of adverse previous (Jong *et al.*, 2014).

Radiation, biological microbes, and chemicals can also affect women at place of work (Jong *et al.*, 2014).

In order to attack the issues, problems, challenges and violence at workplace of women, the past works gave measures .They are : lagislations, staff capacity building, revision of medical curriculum, gender education, enhancement of work environment, reduction of workload on women (Chhugami and James, 2017).

5. CONCLUSION

From the forgone, this study found that, there exist diverse challenges faced by women folk working in healthcare in Sokoto state.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Data and materials availability

All data associated with this study are present in the paper.

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