

Life satisfaction among female doctors vs. other female workers in Gaza

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Citation: Sulaiman Abuhaiba, Khamis Elessi, Samah Afana, Islam Elsenwar, and Arwa Abudan. (2013) Life satisfaction among female doctors vs. other female workers in Gaza.

Qatar Foundation Annual Research Forum Proceedings: Vol. , SSHP 01.

DOI: 10.5339/qfarf.2013.SSHP-01

Published online:

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Background: 50% of those who had ever used an on-line life satisfaction measurement tool were considered optimally satisfied about their lives. Categorization into age, sex, country of origin and religion did not seem to affect the results of the on-line database for life satisfaction scores. In Gaza, Palestine, most of the public believed that being a female doctor would kill any form of life enjoyment and it is a common belief here that doctors tend to wait longer than other female workers are before getting into a stable marital relationship.

Aims: The aims of our study were to quantify life satisfaction among female doctors in Gaza, compare their results with those from other work sectors and finally to prove that a medical career does not affect adversely life satisfaction for Gazian female doctors.

Methods: We used random sample tables to choose the work places for our sample groups. We have interviewed any female worker at the given facility using convenient sampling technique. 50 female doctors and 50 other workers were compared to each other using objective standard measurement tool for life satisfaction which was composed of 14 specific questions with a possible total score from (14 to 70) where 70 is the most satisfied total score and a total score of more than 50 was the cut-off for defining satisfaction. Total average scores and average scores for each question were compared between the two groups using statistical analysis methods. The frequency of use of over the counter medications was also compared between the two groups.

Results: Average age for female doctors (FD) and other workers (OW) was comparable (FD 30.16 years, OW 30.4 years). Response rate was 90% between both groups. Average age, number of children per family and matched scores for the 14 questions, were all of no statistical significant difference between married female doctors and married other workers ($p = 0.4$; 0.7 and 0.6 respectively). Life satisfaction among married female doctors and other workers was not statistically significantly different between the two groups (FD 13/25 VS OW 9/25); $p = 0.4$. Average age, matched average scores for each of the 14 questions and life satisfaction proportions were not statistically significantly different between single females of the two groups ($p = 0.2$; 0.4 ; and 1.0 respectively). Use of the over the counter drugs was statistically more commonly reported among single female doctors; $p = 0.02$.

Interpretation: We have proved that there is no real association between being a female doctor in Gaza and having a low life satisfaction score. We can assure our female doctors they do not have lower enjoyment of their lives compared to other female workers. The average age

for female singles between the two groups was not different which stands against the wide belief in our society that female doctors tend to get married later than other workers.

Finally, our single female doctors should be discouraged about the non-rational use of over the counter drugs.

Supplemental Material