Gender differences in qualifying to practice: International Medical Graduates in Canada

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1. Memorial University
2. Canadian Post MD Education Registry
3. Health Canada
4. University of Ottawa
5. Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
International Medical Graduates

- Physicians who graduated from medical school outside Canada
- IMG must realize a number of milestones to acquire a full license (independent practice)
  - Obtain post graduate (residency) position
  - Pass general physician licensing exam (MCCQE2)
  - Passed specialist licensing exam
Gender and qualifying for practice

- Previous studies suggest that women IMG have greater difficulty qualifying for practice in Canada because of
  - Family caring role
  - Longer time out of practice
  - Discouraged from pursuing medical career
Data Source

National IMG Database

- College of Family Physicians of Canada
- Medical Council of Canada
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- College des Medicins du Quebec
- Skills Assessment and Training Programs
- Provincial Colleges
- Faculties of Medicine
- CAPER
Study Cohorts

• Cohort 1:
  – 6,925 IMG eligible to apply for post graduate training position
    • 3,185 (46%) female, 3,739 (54%) male
  – outcome: obtain training position

• Cohort 2:
  – 1,214 IMG who obtained post graduate training position, AND able to complete training in period covered by database
    • 673 (55.4%) female, 541 (44.6%) male
  – outcomes: pass general exam; pass speciality exam
Gender

Women outperform men in realizing milestones

Training seat: Controlling for age, skills assessment participation, IMG type
General exam: Controlling for age, skills assessment participation, first rank
Specialty exam: Controlling for skills assessment participation, specialty, first rank
Why do women IMG fare better than male IMG?

• Cultural competency
  – understanding of the Canadian health care system; a patient-centred model of care; ethical and legal issues; communication skills; and the roles played by the patient, family, and religion in decisions about care

• Gender roles and expectations may influence cultural competency and the acquisition of cultural competency

• Women IMG may adapt better than male IMG, more research needed
Conclusion

• Gender has an impact on IMG acquisition of credentials for independent practice in Canada
  – Females IMG outperformed male IMG in 3 re-certification milestones in Canada

• More research needed to understand role of gender in IMG integration processes
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