

## **Research Assessment #1**

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Subject: Women Still a Rarity in High-Paying Surgical Specialties

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Castellucci, Maria. "Women Are Still a Rarity in High-Paying Surgical Specialties despite Efforts to Boost Their Numbers." Modern Healthcare, [www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20180728/NEWS/180729922?utm\\_source=modernhealthcare&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=20180728-NEWS-180729922&utm\\_campaign=am](http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20180728/NEWS/180729922?utm_source=modernhealthcare&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20180728-NEWS-180729922&utm_campaign=am).

Assessment: Women Still a Rarity in High-Paying Surgical Specialties

In many high-paying professional positions, there is a discrepancy in the number of males and females employed, holding leadership positions, and even in their salaries. Surgery is no different and the unfairness of the workforce is especially apparent in surgical fields like cardiovascular surgery and orthopedic surgery with the latter having the least number of women in the field. 100 years after women gained the right to vote, the sexism, sexual harassment, and disrespect are still largely apparent.

One thing that Maria Castellucci mentioned in her article on women in high paying surgical specialties was that many healthcare facilities and other high-paying workplaces lack an in-house daycare system for female employees. Especially in a hospital, where many nurses are females with children, the lack of an easily accessed child care facility makes starting a family hard and even caring for an established one with sick younger children that cannot go to school and cannot be left at home alone. It is not fair that women are being penalized professionally for being gifted with the ability to give birth.

Adding on to the lack of childcare facilities in the workforce, the large wage gap is astounding to me as well. Castellucci mentions Michigan Medicine which is "one of the few institutions that has addressed pay inequity. "Physician faculty members are paid a salary based on nationally competitive pay for their specialty. Further, all faculty members for that specialty are paid the same depending on their position as an assistant, associate or full professor." However, one of the problems that I see with this attempted solution is that not every member that holds the same position will be equally successful. Some surgeons and administrators are better at their jobs than others and this method provides little incentive to those professionals that are performing above the average.

My mentor works on a team of all women so I get a lot of exposure to professional women making a difference in their workforce. Despite her team being all women, I still get to observe interactions with male professionals and male surgeons when meetings are held at the office. For the most part, the interactions that I see are

mutually respectful and constructive. However, Ellie and Traci, the registry manager on the team, have told me that it was not at all like this even 20 years ago and that they had to prove their worth to their workplace before they gained even the barest shreds of respect from their male counterparts. Ellie mentioned that when she was a flight nurse, there were many instances where she would get pushed to the ground, spat on, and cursed out just for the fact that she was a woman. Thankfully, having grown up in a pretty sheltered area, I have never had to experience this degree of treatment and I cannot imagine ever having to. However, just because I have evaded the degrading treatments doesn't mean that I don't have an opinion. I doubt that by the time I enter whatever competitive field I choose it will have drastically changed so I hope to be a pioneer for the change when my time comes.