

Commentary

Lebanese Women and the Scientific Profession: Social Challenges and Criminal Prospects

The role of women in the scientific community, at an accelerating pace, is rising significantly (1). There is no doubt that the contribution of women in various fields of science has left a significant impact in the recent era (2). Globally, through recent studies, women's participation in the scientific field has become more and more noticed (3). International surveys addressed the reason for women's entry into the scientific community and the incentives that kept them persevering in pursuing a career that is somewhat considered a kind of challenge (4). Although some research has proven that women are credited in science less than men, this obstacle does not discourage them (5). Regardless of gender inequality in the workplace, forensic science is attractive to women for many reasons (6).

The sense of social justice, as well as family and friends, are the most important factors that encouraged women to enter this field (7). In some international surveys, it was found that the majority of students in forensic science educational programs are women (8).

As for Lebanon, an initial survey that I conducted targeted randomly 100 Lebanese women volunteers of different ages (over 18 years), regions (Capital Beirut, Mount Lebanon, South, Bekaa, North), marital status (single, married), and education levels (B.S, Masters, and PhD degrees holders).

As a Lebanese leader forensic female analyst for more than 15 years, it urges me to seek the national as well as the global forensic community collaboration in the purpose of enhancing women motivation in the forensic field.

Being one of few forensics university lecturers in Lebanon, I feel myself in charge of raising forensic science awareness among the Lebanese society. This preliminary study I led aims to shed light on the extent of Lebanese women's involvement in the field of science in general and forensic science in particular. According to some of my observations that I am sharing through this research, I detected the following.

First, the volunteers desire to enroll in the scientific educational programs is slightly higher than their desire to enroll in forensics educational programs. This fact shows that, although forensics is somehow a recent major in Lebanon, it succeeds in drawing attention to its importance especially among female students.

On the other hand, the study results illustrated that the major reason for enrolling in forensics educational programs was the sense of social justice, followed by personal reasons such as being robbed, and at a lower rate

the impact of television programs that address these topics.

Yet, while asked if they chose to withdraw from a forensic science academic major while being registered in an institution, a high percentage of volunteers replied positively.

Regarding reasons for discouraging them to pursue a forensic science career, they elucidated the following: the influence of their reluctant entourage; the specialty content itself; its relatively high economic costs; the lack of job opportunities in this field; or because it requires a great deal of technical work in the laboratory.

Finally, concerning the desire of the study participants to pursue a forensic career in the future in Lebanon, unfortunately more than the half did not show any interest.

Despite the relatively small participation, the preliminary results of this study conclude that there is a need to remove social challenges facing Lebanese women. In conclusion, I emphasize the importance of the role of Lebanese women by encouraging them to enter into the scientific profession and thus opening new forensic science horizons..

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