Why are fewer women selecting a career in radiology?
A national survey of Canadian medical students

Disclosure of Interest

I do not have an affiliation, financial or otherwise, with a pharmaceutical company, medical device or communications organization.
Background

Women:

57% of Canadian medical students

2% select a career in radiology

25% of radiology trainees

Percentage of Canadian medical students ranking radiology first in CaRMS

Purpose

Evaluate Canadian medical students:

1. Attractants to radiology
2. Deterrents from radiology
3. Differences between women considering and not considering radiology
Methods

Study population: Canadian medical students

Study tool: Multiple choice survey

Data collection: Online survey

Data analysis: Fisher Exact Test
Results

Top factors attracting students to radiology

1. Job flexibility
2. Broad knowledge
3. Salary
4. Interest in anatomy
5. Task-based work day
Significantly different attractants between genders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job flexibility</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Top factors *deterring* students from radiology

1. Lack of direct patient contact
2. Dark working environment
3. Physics knowledge
4. Competitive specialty
5. Lack of previous exposure
Significantly different deterrents between genders

Physics knowledge
- Females: 47%
- Males: 21%

Competitive specialty
- Females: 34%
- Males: 45%
Top factors **attracting females** to any specialty

1. Intellectual stimulation
2. Job satisfaction
3. Available job opportunities
4. Job flexibility
5. Direct patient contact
Significantly different attractants between women considering and not considering radiology

- Intellectual stimulation: 93% Considering, 80% Not considering
- Available job opportunities: 82% Considering, 72% Not considering
- Direct patient contact: 70% Considering, 87% Not considering
Exposure to radiology in medical school

- Observerships:
  - Male: 36%
  - Female: 23%

- Research:
  - Male: 14%
  - Female: 5%
Discussion

In USA

Top attractants to a specialty: direct patient contact\(^3\) and positive exposure to a specialty during medical school\(^4,5\)

Top deterrents from radiology: losing patient contact, physics, lack of mentors and reticence to pursue a competitive specialty\(^3\)
Conclusion

In Canada

Top attractant: Job flexibility

Top deterrent: Lack of direct patient contact, valued more by women not considering radiology
Gender differences

Attractants: Job flexibility and salary

Deterrents: Physics and residency competitiveness

Exposure: Undergraduate radiology exposure is greater for men than women
Does less exposure perpetuate misperceptions?

dark working environment
lack of patient interaction
physics expertise
Future Directions

1. Student perception of radiology

2. Impact of radiology exposure with direct patient care on women’s interest in radiology
References


