

Workplace jealousy and its impact on competencies of under-graduate medical faculty: an institution-based survey study .

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ABSTRACT:

Objective: To investigate the influence of workplace jealousy on the professional competencies of medical faculty, focusing on understanding its implications for teaching effectiveness, collaboration, and overall institutional performance within an undergraduate medical education setting.

Methodology: A cross-sectional survey-based study was conducted at Rashid Latif Khan University and its subsidiary colleges, Rashid Latif Medical College (RLMC) and Rashid Latif Khan University Medical College (RLKUMC). A validated questionnaire was utilized to collect data online.

Results: Overall, 158 respondents submitted their experiences about the impact of workplace jealousy at the institute. The present study showed that most severely impacted competencies of medical faculty were academic collaboration with colleagues (63.4%, p=0000) and motivation for faculty development (60.4%, p=0.0002). The least impacted competency was reduction in teaching hours (23.5%, p=0.467)

Conclusion: Workplace jealousy adversely impacts and results in plummeting motivational drive for faculty development, which further deteriorates the institute's mission of achieving academic excellence in a competitive and challenging environment.

Keywords: Behavior and Behavior Mechanisms, Emotions, Jealousy, workplace.

Introduction:

Jealousy is a basic human emotional and psychological trait that affects considerable aspects of daily life, encompassing almost all the professionals at their workplace. Jealousy of any magnitude negatively affects overall behavior and attitude toward other employees. This has resulted in arousal of intrigue by many researchers to explore further its impact on the professional competencies of individuals working in various organizations. Workplace jealousy is conveniently defined as employee discontent whenever an individual perceives colleagues as extracting unfair advantages or frequent opportunities to excel and grow. Competition among medical faculty is often inherent in medical institutes due to the tedious academic schedules. Thus, the continuous pursuit of excellence evolves into jealousy, manifesting in various forms. Extant literature documents have narrated substantial evidence about the presence of workplace jealousy in undergraduate medical institutes, which accentuates stress, uncertainty, and counterproductive workplace behavior among medical teachers. One such study on the impact of workplace jealousy concluded that there is a significant rise in toxic behaviors among professionals, thus leading to reduced work quality and low performance within an organization.¹

A common observation in medical institutes is that jealousy against the professional competencies of the medical faculty results in mutual distrust, which further hinders effective collaboration, which is pivotal in medical education. Workplace jealousy has been attributed to a fear of losing something that is ours to another.² It is also defined as the experience of lacking something along with the feelings of unjustified inferiority.³ In this study, we focused on the professional competencies of undergraduate medical teachers, encompassing knowledge, skills, and overall job satisfaction in a prime medical institute situated on the outskirts of the metropolitan city of Lahore, Pakistan.

We ground our study on increasing professional competition and resulting jealousy among undergraduate medical teachers. It has been noted that jealousy becomes institutionalized when one medical teacher exhibits outstanding performance or another fellow medical teacher shows below-expected performance. In this regard, few studies in the recent past have highlighted workplace jealousy attributed to fellow medical teachers. Unethical behavioral responses from colleagues frequently serve as triggers for workplace jealousy.⁴

The competencies of a medical teacher, generally considered, are primarily based on a definite framework of teaching capabilities across the medical education continuum. This framework involves five basic domains:

1. Development: Concerned with the application of educational principles and institutional regulations and exploring the effectiveness of implementation of the curriculum
2. Organization: Concerned with exploring and planning implementation and coordination of the curriculum, and simultaneously reflect and draw conclusions about the implementation of the curriculum
3. Execution: Concerned with reflection on the overall teaching process and the role of individual medical teacher. This also encompasses exploring and applying educational principles prevailing in the institute

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4. Coaching: Concerned with suggesting and exploring coaching requirement which are appropriate with the yearly academic calendar. Coaching also re-defines learning objectives and assesses learning methodologies and provide timely feedbacks

5. Assessment: Concerned with application and exploration of assessment methodologies and simultaneous development of need-based assessment. This domain also envisages reflection on the assessments undertaken, and obtain timely feedbacks of the process.⁵

Workplace jealousy becomes rationally institutionalized when a senior faculty member feels threatened in cases where the co-teachers or their students perform considerably better than he or his students. This potentially generates inappropriate behavioral responses from the affected faculty and may simultaneously increase the demand for teaching appraisal in the context of financial deductions and increased risk of declining career for promotion. This adverse outcome exerts a profound debilitating effect on an undergraduate medical teacher's professional competencies and overall morale. Furthermore, another debilitating outcome of workplace jealousy in a medical institute is specifically accompanied by 'gossiping' occurring among colleagues, which aggravates the agony of alienation and marginalization. Workplace jealousy creates a negative working environment, causing increased stress and turnover, and the faculty members targeted by jealousy frequently tend to seek employment in other medical institutes, which critically leads to talent waste and plummeting institutional ranking.

A recent study reported that workplace jealousy stimulates unnecessary social comparisons among colleagues, adversely affecting the professional competencies and skills of a medical faculty.⁶ Another study in the past focused on the impact of workplace jealousy and envy among medical teachers and reported that it generates negative reflections related to skills and faculty development.⁷

Workplace jealousy within a medical institute may serve as a barrier to sharing updated knowledge and create an unhealthy competitive atmosphere where faculty members are reluctant to share their expertise, which results in decreased collective learning. Workplace jealousy among medical faculty adds anxiety and undue stress, and it was observed in a study that it considerably adds to depression among the teachers working in the institute.⁸

Workplace jealousy among medical faculty enhances the struggle for power among colleagues, by virtue of which some faculty members may exploit authority to degrade other colleagues, leading to disrupted integrity in conducting professional teaching.⁹ Workplace jealousy, in many instances, generates favoritism and undue bias, which demoralizes other faculty members and simultaneously creates an uncomfortable sense of unfairness. A study published in Harvard Business Article emphasized that jealousy among teachers in an institute can disrupt collaboration among the workers, further decreasing mutual collaboration and support within team-based learning sessions. In the same article, it was highlighted that workplace jealousy escalates mutual conflicts and generates an unhealthy, hostile working condition in an institution

A variety of available textbooks have focused on defining the attitudes of workers in an organization, such as discrimination, harassment, and workplace jealousy, and have examined techniques for the resolution of these negative impacts on the efficiencies of workers.^{10,11} The present study explores the direct impact of workplace jealousy on

the competencies of undergraduate medical teachers in a medical institute, analyzes its extent on specific domains of medical competencies, and simultaneously looks into the negative effects on teaching performance and overall job satisfaction.

Objective:

To investigate the influence of workplace jealousy on the professional competencies of medical faculty, focusing on understanding its implications for teaching effectiveness, collaboration, and overall institutional performance within an undergraduate medical education setting.

Methodology:

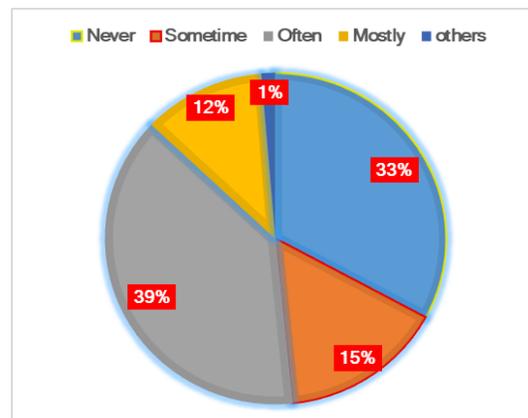
A cross-sectional survey-based study was conducted at Rashid Latif Khan University and its subsidiary colleges, Rashid Latif Medical College (RLMC) and Rashid Latif Khan University Medical College (RLKUMC). The medical faculty in these institutes comprises about 230 members, and 158 faculty members were able to complete the questionnaire. The primary tool in this study for data collection was a close-ended questionnaire. The developed questionnaire was distributed utilizing an online Google platform, and data was collected from March to November 2024. The target population was medical faculty teaching undergraduate medical students. All non-medical faculty were excluded from this research. The study was conducted during the academic session from August to October 2024 after the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Reference No: RLKUMC/IRB/0065/24). It was ensured that all data obtained from the participants was kept anonymized and securely preserved.

A chi-square test of independence was utilized to observe the impact of workplace jealousy on competencies and to evaluate the statistical significance of observed variables. The statistical analysis enabled us to determine if workplace jealousy significantly impacts the perceived competencies of medical faculty.

Results:

Overall, 158 respondents submitted their experiences about the impact of workplace jealousy at the institute. Respondents were predominantly comprised of females (54.5%), whereas male respondents were 45.5%. Overall, 38.7% never experienced the impact of workplace jealousy, whereas the most experienced the impact were 15.5% (fig-1).

Figure No 1: Respondents experiencing workplace Jealousy



Regarding the intensity of experiencing workplace jealousy, 20.6% expressed moderate intensity, while 23.9% experienced only a mild impact of workplace jealousy. A strong impact of workplace jealousy was experienced by

15.5% of respondents. Impact of workplace jealousy on competencies is tabulated below, showing a conspicuous trend.

Table No1: The impact of workplace jealousy on competencies of medical faculty.

#	Competencies Affected	Yes (%)	No (%)	May be (%)	P-Values (Chi-Square)
1	Reduction in teaching hours	23.5	54.9	21.6	0.467
2	Motivation for faculty development	60.4	26	13.6	0.0002
3	Overall job satisfaction	55.8	28.6	15.6	0.0004
4	Workplace performance	57.2	29.6	13.2	0.0004
5	Interaction with medical students	58.9	29.8	11.3	0.0001
6	Academic collaboration with colleagues	63.6	24.7	11.7	0.0000
7	Mentoring the junior faculty members	54.6	38.2	7.2	0.011
8	Engagement in research activities	54.5	35.1	10.4	0.019

The results show a striking effect of workplace jealousy on academic collaboration with colleagues (p=0.000), and secondly motivation for faculty development is affected (p=0.0002).

Fig No 1: Work affected by professional Jealousy

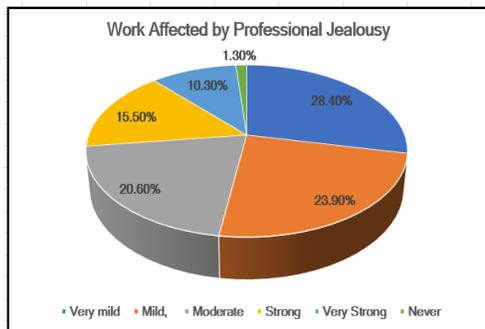


Fig No 2: Affect of Professional jealousy upon faculty development.

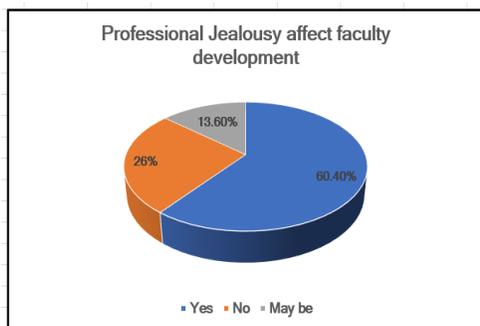
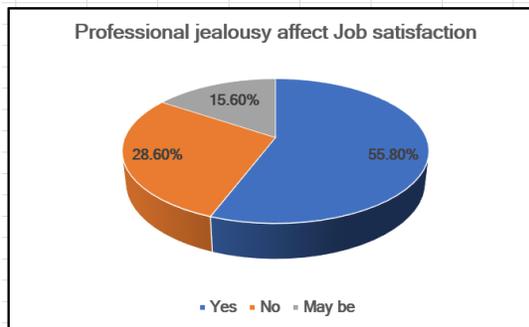


Fig No 3: Affect of professional jealousy upon overall job satisfaction



Work output of the faculty members badly affected by professional jealousy as only 1.30% participants responded by never affected. 60.4% agreed that professional jealousy adversely affect faculty development, consequently 55.80% participants were satisfied with their job. Interaction with medical students and overall job satisfaction also show a significant impact (p=0.0001 and 0.0004 respectively). The findings reflect reduction in teaching hours to be least affected by workplace jealousy (p=0.467)

Discussion:

Jealousy among professional colleagues occurs when one yearns for the other's higher qualities, achievements, or possessions. In medical institutes, the stakes are invariably high; therefore, workplace dynamics and inter-relations among faculty members play a crucial role in shaping a conducive academic environment for both the faculty and the medical students. Accentuated workplace jealousy, which is often overlooked, overshadows the mentorship and collaboration among the faculty and impacts the competencies of medical faculty. The survey highlights that workplace jealousy is generally perceived as threatening career advancement and promotion. This aspect manifests as reduced teaching hours, reduced interaction with students, and overall job dissatisfaction. The results show that the emotional burden exerted by workplace jealousy affects overall performance and encompasses all the competencies of medical faculty. A recent study on the impact of jealousy in the workplace highlighted and described complicated and interrelated changes in the competencies of medical faculty.¹² This fact is accentuated by the scarcity of resources, lack of academic coordination, and impaired motivation, leading to decreased productivity among the medical faculty.¹³

It has been documented many years ago that workplace jealousy results in decreased mutual faculty engagement and attendance in the organization.¹⁴ A recent study highlighted that once an employee in an organization perceives jealousy, there is a resultant reduced mutual helping attitudes or harmful behaviors, which adversely affect organizational performance.¹⁵

Workplace jealousy has been shown to decrease the helping behaviors of jealous faculty who are afraid of losing what they have achieved at that stage. There is associated decrease in courtesy and altruism behaviors as a result of jealousy in the workplace. These findings are coherent with findings obtained from a study conducted in year 2022. Altruism refers to voluntary attitudes of the workers in an organization, which aim at supporting other associate members of the organization.¹⁶

Our study has demonstrated that workplace jealousy great-

ly impacts academic collaboration with colleagues ($p=0.0000$), followed by impact on motivation for faculty development ($p=0.002$). This finding of decreased collaboration with other faculty members probably accounts for the institutes' effectiveness, efficacy and development. Resources within a medical institute, such as recognition for achievement, inevitably lead to competition among the faculty. Furthermore, as the competition increases with time, few faculty gains advantages or disadvantages as a result. Interestingly, the impact of workplace jealousy on reduction in teaching hours was observed to be least effected ($p=0.0467$) compared with other competencies of medical faculty. Interaction with medical students also showed a considerably adverse impact ($p=0.0001$), whereas overall job satisfaction was affected by 55.8% of respondents ($p=0.004$). This clearly exhibits that faculty members preferably tend to switch their jobs to other organizations or may prefer to work online otherwise. Faculty interacting together within an institute is necessarily affected by each other's feelings and emotion, thus, they invariably share various positive and negative emotions (such as envy or jealousy).¹⁷ More than half of the respondents submitted reduced engagement in mentoring the junior faculty (54.6%, $p=0.011$) and substantially reduced participation in research activities in the organization. Research activities in a medical institute envisage both the faculty and students' research progress and publications. Workplace jealousy is considered an important aspect of human emotions and overall behaviors.¹⁸ Despite all these negative consequences of workplace jealousy, some faculty members avoid reflecting, exhibit tolerant behavior, and openly accept less-than-ideal working conditions.¹⁹ The results obtained are in line with another recent study, which concluded that professional jealousy has significant and negative effects on altruism and overall job satisfaction, which are crucial for developing organizational behavior and mutual cooperation.²⁰

Conclusion:

Workplace jealousy is associated with all the perceived competencies of undergraduate medical faculty. Highest impact was observed in academic collaboration with colleagues, which is most adversely affected. This exacerbates the lack of mutual cooperation among the faculty. Intriguingly, motivation for faculty development was next to be impacted by workplace jealousy, leading to decreased professional performance and impaired organizational behavior. To mitigate the negative impacts of workplace jealousy among medical faculty, it appears to be of utmost importance to promote a culture of mutual respect & collaboration. Success in any specialty must be celebrated collectively rather than attributing undue recognition or advantages to any other faculty member within an organization. In this regard, the medical institutes must organize comprehensive faculty development programs (FDP), which have enormous potential to inculcate team-building and conflict resolution among the medical faculty.

Conflict of interest:

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Authors Contribution

- Conceptualization: US, AI
- Methodology: AA, SS, JA
- Formal Analysis: NF, JA
- Writing & review: UN, SS
- Editing: AI, UN