WIMS Inaugural Leadership Forum: An Exploratory Study  
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**Introduction**

Until recent years a majority of career fields in medicine and science have been dominated by men. In the past 20 years women have increased their showing in such career fields and in doing so have raised concerns about areas of career development not covered by traditional training [1,2]. In order to facilitate these concerns, various Women in Medicine and Science (WIMS) programs are offered by many institutions. However, just because women attend these workshops and seminars are they coming away with improved skills sets or do they soon revert to their original practices? It is important to address the impact of such career development programs in order to better serve those who seek to better themselves by utilizing these programs, especially since there is little evidence regarding this concern [3].

**Statement of Problem or Question**

What impact do WIMS programs have on those who were in attendance and how do we measure that impact?

**Description of Study**

The WIMS Inaugural Leadership Forum was created to invite women scientists and physicians-in-training to a common platform offering numerous opportunities to gain insight into what it means to keep growing in the face of constant new challenges and constraints. Following the forum we conducted a survey and reviewed the responses to identify themes stressed during the program. Then five months later we performed a second survey to evaluate the impact of the forum over time.

**Objective of the Study**

To conduct a systematic assessment of the impact of the WIMS Inaugural Leadership Forum

**Findings to Date**

The results from our initial survey showed that the attendees focused on three broad skills and areas of concentration within those skills (left). The pie charts represent our five month follow-up survey.

- **Leadership:**
  - Meeting Management
  - Delegation
  - Assertiveness

- **Communication:**
  - Active Listening
  - Networking

- **Organization:**
  - Identifying Priorities
  - Time Management
  - Work-Life Balance

**Key Lessons Learned**

- Immediately following the conclusion of the forum participants were enthusiastic and motivated to implement desired changes.
- The longitudinal measure by unanimous survey indicated a great reduction in the original impact of the forum

**Questions**

Would participants benefit from programs that take place on a continuum throughout the year versus one large event once yearly?

Should these professional development forums become part of a curriculum, to benefit both faculty and students?

**References**