

# Impact of Maternity Leave and Breastfeeding Policies in Turkey on Physician Fathers: Cross-sectional Study

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## Abstract

**Background:** This study aimed to evaluate maternity leave from the point of view of physician fathers and examine the factors that affect their support for their colleagues. **Methods:** This is a descriptive research study with a self-report online survey design and was conducted among a social media group. A 20-item data-collecting tool used in this study consisted of four parts—demographic data section, questions about participant's job, questions pertaining to his wife's breastfeeding, and questions regarding his opinions and attitudes toward his female physician colleagues. **Results:** Of the total, 45.5% of the participants stated that they faced difficulties, as their female physician colleagues were on breastfeeding leave. Moreover, 60.3% of the participants asserted that they have always been supportive of their colleagues with regard to using breastfeeding leave. Furthermore, we noted an increase in the number of night shifts (negatively) and supportive attitude toward the spouse (positively) and that the status of the spouse using breastfeeding leaves (positively) affected the male physician's supportive attitude toward their female physician colleagues. **Conclusion:** The physician fathers wanted to support their colleagues in using their breastfeeding leave; however, they faced an increasing amount of workload. Although it is obvious how important it is for mothers to use maternity leave, the health of the remaining workers should not be ignored.

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