A Rose By Another Other Name May Not Be As Sweet: Use of Descriptors in Obstetrics and Gynecology Grand Rounds Introductions

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Introduction

- Gender inequities persist in Academic Medicine
- This bias has been previously demonstrated in Grand Rounds introductions and national conferences
- Descriptors used by introducers amplify the professional status of the speaker and create a connection with the audience
- Descriptors are more commonly used to characterize men presenters, heightening their perceived expertise

Objective: Assess gender dynamics used during Obstetrics and Gynecology (Ob-Gyn) Grand Rounds introductions

Methods

- IRB-exempt retrospective cohort study
- 62 grand rounds introductions reviewed from Dec 2016 - Feb 2020 at UW Madison Department of Ob-Gyn
- Exclusion Criteria:
  - Presenters without a doctorate degree
  - Audio/video of introduction unavailable
  - Self introductions
- Chi-squared Test and Student’s T-test, Statistical significance p < 0.05

Subclassification of Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Descriptor</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Professional</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Career</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male-Gendered</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-Gendered</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

- The majority of introducers (N=53, 85.5%) and presenters (N=42, 67.7%) were women
- 132 descriptors were used with an average of 2.1 descriptors per Grand Rounds introduction
  - Men and women presenters were described using a similar number of descriptors (2.6 vs 1.9, p=0.065)
  - Men presenters were more commonly introduced with female-type gendered descriptors (25.0% vs 2.4%, p=0.011)
  - Men introducers were more likely to use the professional descriptor “productivity” then women introducers (55.6% vs 15.1% p=0.015)

Conclusions

- Differences were identified in the use of both personal and professional descriptors during Ob-Gyn Grand Rounds introductions.
- The use of descriptors during Grand Rounds introductions illustrates gender inequities whereby men are portrayed with an emphasis both on their personal characteristics and productivity.
- Conversely, women tended to be introduced using less overall descriptors, though this difference approached but did not reach statistical significance.
- This suggests an expectation of women to achieve a higher performance standard in the professional environment.
- This further supports a bias of not only how men are viewed but also how men view their colleagues.
- Based on this study, there is a need for a deliberate reframing of Grand Rounds introductions to amplify the presenters expertise, independent of their gender.

Resources


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