

Women In Orthopedic Surgery, A Scoping Review

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Abstract : Orthopedic surgery has fallen behind when it comes to gender diversity despite medical school classes reaching gender parity. Studies have shown that orthopedic surgery would require 117 years to reach gender parity with the trainee population, the longest time than any other specialty, including neurosurgery, urology, and otolaryngology. The barriers that face women in orthopedic surgery have been well researched, with contributing factors being on-going stereotypes of the field, lack of women mentors, and gender roles outside of the hospital. Furthermore, women in orthopedic surgery face barriers to achieve promotion, publications, and leadership roles leading to a “leaky pipeline,” resulting in less and less women in key academic roles in the field. It is a complex topic with barriers and challenges faced in medical school, residency, and throughout employment. Our scoping review seeks to understand these challenges across a temporal timeline and to further characterize such barriers and the driving factors behind them. To this date, authors did not find a scoping review that seeks to look broadly at factors impacting the decreased amount of women entering orthopedics and the factors that cause women to hit a “glass ceiling”, the idea that women will not achieve the same success as men despite the same qualifications, upon entering the field. This scoping review is the first of its kind to attempt to summarize the large body of research focusing on women in orthopedic surgery from the preconceptions in medical school impacting their desire to pursue orthopedics all the way to employment, including challenges to academic success and financial success. Literature databases will be searched with the following key terms: women, gender inequity, workforce, orthopedics, and citations will be hand searched and collected. Articles included will discuss gender inequality within orthopedics with non-english, patient related articles excluded. Full-text review will seek to characterize the specific barriers faced by women across medical school, residency, and employment. Themes that are expected to be highlighted are workforce data, women in orthopedic leadership, medical student perspectives on the specialty, and gender bias and discrimination in the field.

Keywords : orthopedics, gender equity, workforce, women in surgery

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