

Gender representation in authorship and expert panel membership of obstetric anaesthetic guidance: a 5-year review

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Introduction

Clinical guidelines, consensus statements and Delphi studies exert substantial influence over clinical decision-making and policy. Gender representation among their authors remains limited¹⁻².

Aim: To evaluate gender composition of authors and expert panel members in obstetric anaesthesia guidance over a 5-year period, and its changes over time.

Methods

Obstetric anaesthesia clinical guidelines, consensus statements and Delphi studies published between 01/07/20-01/07/25 in the 10 anaesthesia journals with the highest impact factors. Gender identified using first names and verified using professional affiliations. Studies were excluded in gender could not be verified. Data was analysed using X² and Fisher exact test with statistical significance defined as p<0.05.

Results

16 publications relevant to obstetric anaesthesia were identified. Women accounted for 47.1% of total authors and 45.7% of expert panel members (Figure 1). There were no significant differences between study types. Women were likely to participate in the senior authorship with a statistical increase over time (p<0.001) (Figure 2). Proportion of women as expert members also increased significantly over time from 32.5% to 47.4% (p=0.02).

Conclusion

This study provides first analysis in gender composition of authors and expert panel members of obstetric anaesthesia guidance and demonstrates a greater gender parity compared to previously reported figures². However, further progress is required to achieve a sustainable gender equity, including transparent panel selection processes and targeted support for women progressing to senior authorship roles.

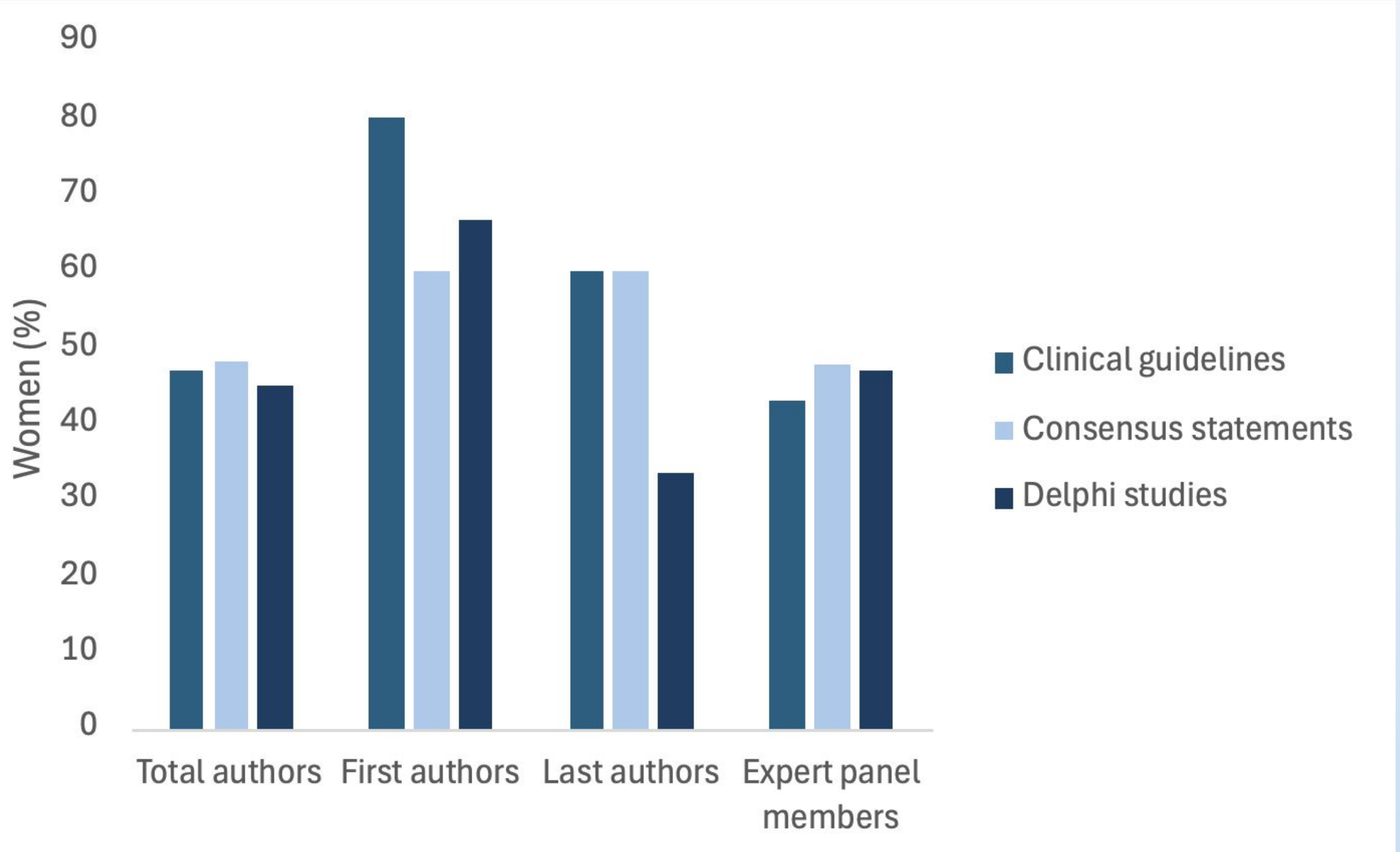


Figure 1. Representation of women as authors and expert panel members of anaesthetic clinical guidelines, consensus statements and Delphi studies.

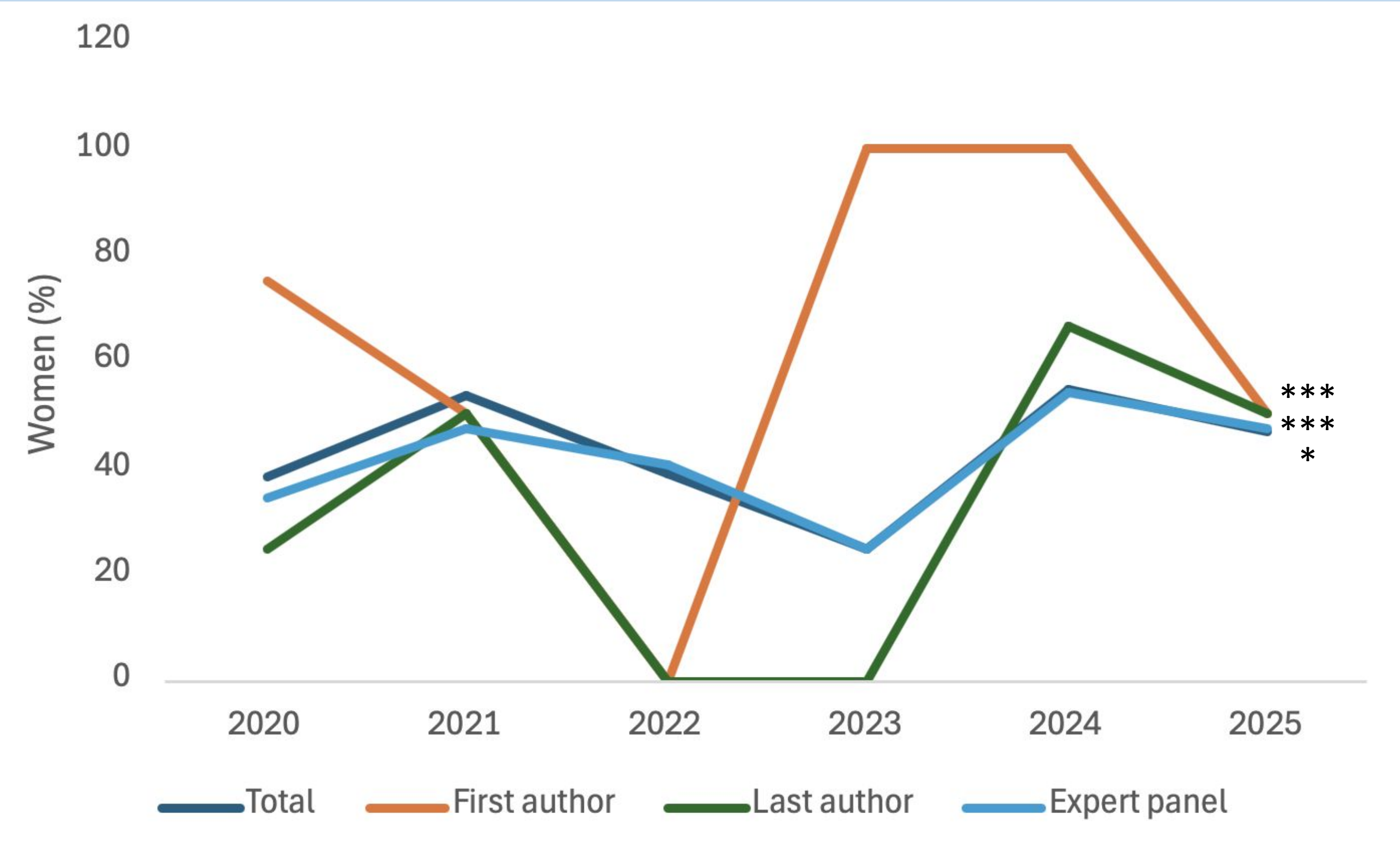


Figure 2. Temporal changes in representation of women as authors and expert panel members of anaesthetic clinical guidelines, consensus statements and Delphi studies. Statistical significance: * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

1. Flexman et al. Current status and solutions for gender equity in anaesthesia research. Anaesthesia 2021; 76: suppl:32-8 2. Rong et al. Gender differences in authorship and quality of anaesthesia practice guidelines from 2016 to 2020 using appraisal og guidelines for research and evaluation II instrument, Anesth Alang 2024| 149: 955-64