Gender distribution of invited speakers at major ophthalmology conferences:

A retrospective open cohort study

Maria W Georgi, *Kristie Hing Chi Leung, Arslan Raja, Sara Raja, Nain Tara Raja, Aqua Asif, Arjun Nathan, Rashmi G Mathew*

Background & Aims

Females are disproportionately underrepresented in ophthalmology despite upward trends in women entering the medical profession[1]

Royal College of Ophthalmologists census in 2022 reports only **36% of consultant ophthalmologists in the UK are female**

Visibility of female ophthalmology at academic meetings provides a cross-sectional view of inclusion within the field

Aims → to quantify the proportion of:

1. Female faculty
2. Prevalence of **manels** at major international ophthalmology meetings

Methods

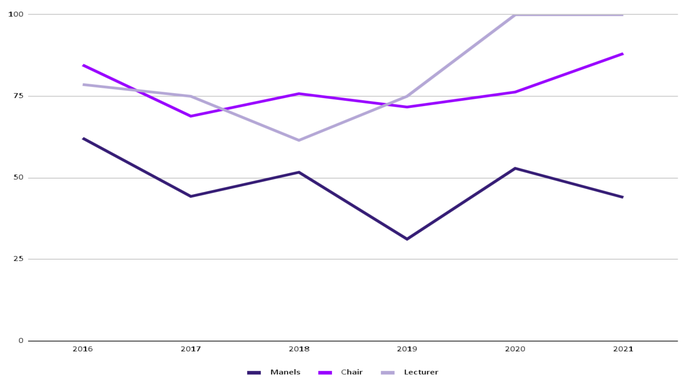
Data collection →
analysis of major ophthalmology annual meetings between January 1st 2016 – December 31st 2021

Data analysis and stratification →
FOR EACH SPEAKER:
H-index | # of Publications | # of Citations

Gender identification →
Conference programme | Online autobiography | Gender Balance Assessment Tool (GBAT)

'MANEL' = session with ≥2 speakers, all identifying as men

Figure 1: Trend of manels over time (2016 to 2021)



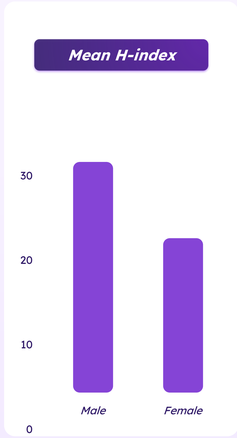


Figure 2: Mean H-index of speakers

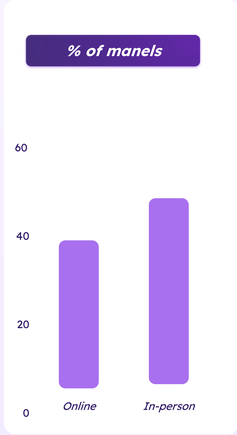


Figure 3 Proportion of manels (online vs. in-person conferences)

Results

16 conferences | **581 sessions** | **3000 speakers**

Overall 24.7% were female (*n*=637)

Out of 581 panels → 42.6% manels (*n*=193)

Male speakers demonstrated **significantly higher H-indexes** than **female** speakers (24.9 *vs.* 18.5; $p<0.05$)
Manels online demonstrated fewer manels *vs.* **in-person**: 34.9% *vs.* 42.7 %; $p = 0.14$
Manels over time have significantly reduced: 62.2% in 2016, 44.0% in 2021; $p<0.0001$

Conclusions

- Despite the **encouraging findings** that manels are becoming less prevalent with time at major ophthalmology meetings…
- ***…male speakers continue to comprise the majority and female representation remains poor***
- Thus, we advocate for **greater active encouragement** of females within the ophthalmology field

1. Rakestraw, S. L. *et al.* (2022). Closing the gap: Increasing female representation in surgical leadership. *The American Journal of Surgery*, 223(2), pp. 273-275. DOI: 10.1016/j.amjsurg.2021.03.051