



Gender gap in scientific research on cancer

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Abstract

In Europe, cancer is the second leading cause of death from disease, behind only cardiovascular disease. Research progress has been reported in scientific publications whose analysis has included bibliometric studies on the content and authorship of scientific activity with emphasis on gender participation in authorship. The aim of this work has been to evaluate the gender gap in Spanish cancer research over the last decade by analyzing the authorships in the derived publications and their correlation with respect to i) the integration of the sex and gender variable in the study carried out, and ii) the type of cancer investigated. Using the Web of Science database and the statistical package Genderize.io, 7,523 articles were selected, of which 30.5% were mainly signed by women compared to 58% with a majority male authorship. Only 11.5% of the papers presented gender parity in authorship. The analysis of a random sample of 150 papers revealed that the group with gender parity among its members obtained more significant percentages in the inclusion of the gender perspective in their research. At the same time, the evaluation of the most frequent types of cancer studied showed that the group of all-female signatories did more research into breast cancer than the group of all-male signatories who did more research into colorectal cancer and lung cancer. These results evidence that the gender perspective is still weak in the scientific professional field.

Keywords: gender perspective, gender bias, oncology, scientific production, Spain