

Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Diversity on Orthopaedic Journal Editorial Boards

Amit Pujari, Franchesca Anela Johnson, Milton Thomas M Little¹, David Forsh, Kanu M Okike

¹Cedars Sinai Medical Center

INTRODUCTION:

In the current era of evidence-based medicine, scientific publications play a crucial role in guiding patient care. While the lack of diversity in orthopaedics has been well-documented, little is known about the diversity of orthopaedic journal editorial boards. The purpose of this study was to assess the racial/ethnic and gender diversity of orthopaedic journal editorial boards.

METHODS:

The editorial boards of 13 orthopaedic journals were examined, including 10 subspecialty and 3 general orthopaedic journals. For each editorial board member, race/ethnicity as well as gender were determined using established techniques. The representation observed on orthopaedic journal editorial boards was compared to representation at other phases of the orthopaedic pipeline, as well as within the various subspecialty fields of orthopaedics. Logistic regression as well as T-tests were used to evaluate these comparisons.

RESULTS:

Of 876 editorial board members identified, 14.0% were Asian, 1.9% Black, 1.9% Hispanic, 2.4% multiracial/other and 79.7% White. Racial/ethnic representation was similar across subspecialty fields of orthopaedics ($p>0.05$). The representation of women on orthopaedic editorial boards was 7.9%, with differences in gender diversity observed across subspecialty fields ($p<0.05$). Among journals in the subspecialty fields of spine and trauma, female editorial board representation was lower than expected even after considering the representation of women in these subfields (2.0% vs. 9%, $p=0.002$ for spine and 3.8% vs. 10%, $p=0.03$ for trauma).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

In this study of 876 editorial board members from 13 subspecialty and general orthopaedic journals, we found that the representation of racial/ethnic minorities and women on editorial boards was similar to their representation in academic orthopaedics. However, these values remain low in comparison to the population of patients treated by orthopaedic surgeons. Given the importance of scientific publications in the current era of evidence-based medicine, orthopaedic journals should continue working to diversify the membership of their editorial boards.