

# Research Poster Awards 2023



## Gender Diversity within Australian surgery: The challenges and underrepresentation of females within Australian surgical research

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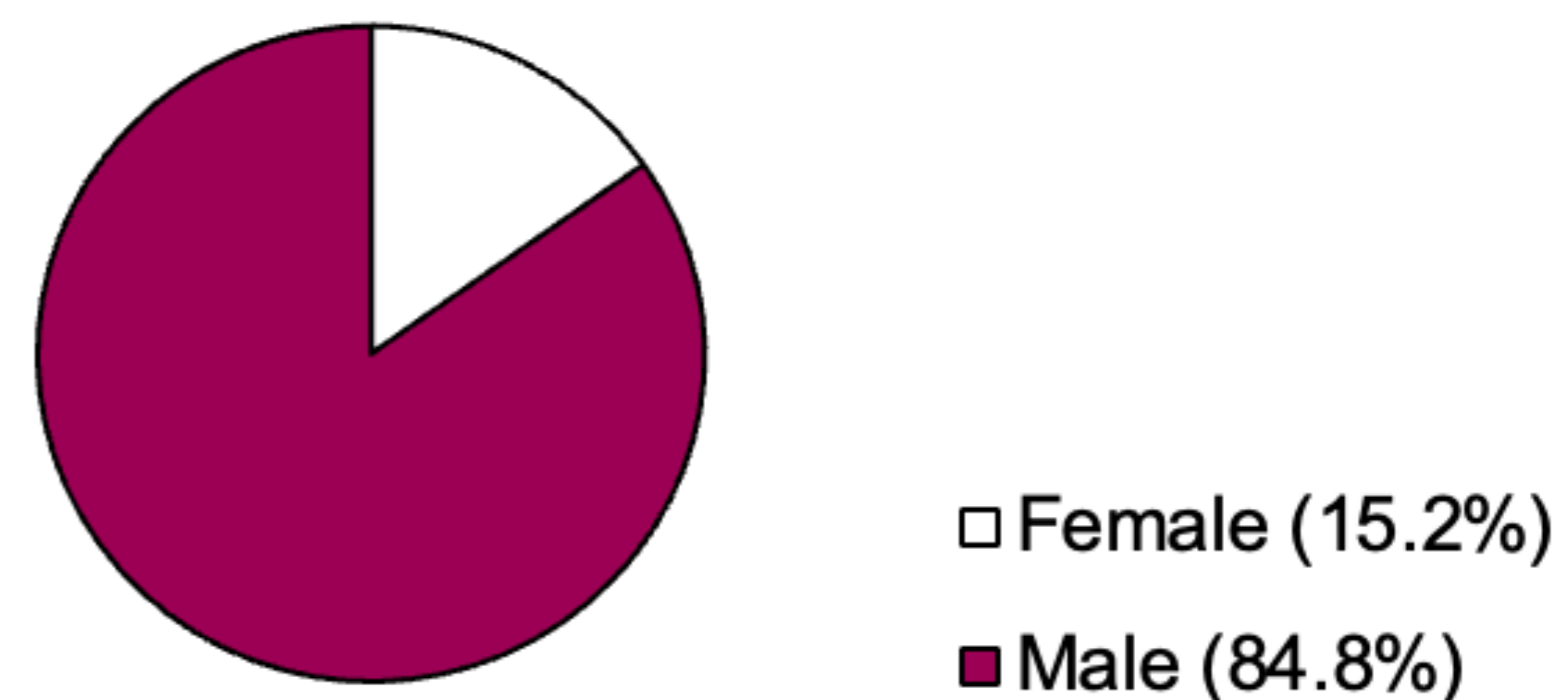
### Background/Objectives

Gender diversity is a vital component of Australian healthcare. The Diversity and Inclusion plan set out by The Royal Australian College of Surgeons (RACS) is committed to achieving equity in gender representation.<sup>1</sup> Significant progress has been made yet barriers remain. Previous qualitative studies describe the challenges facing women in surgery however few have quantified them. This review quantifies the barriers to equitable female representation in the surgical literature.

### Results:

A total of 16 challenges were identified. Most prevalent was an excessive workload (limited training flexibility, long hours) (n=10). Gender bias (n=5), bullying and sexual discrimination (n=4) were common. A lack of mentorship (n=4) and sexual harassment (n=3) were documented. Pregnancy was listed twice (n=2). Cumulative demographic data from the search revealed females represented only 15.2% (2,121/16,080) of study participants.

Total Cohort Representation by Gender



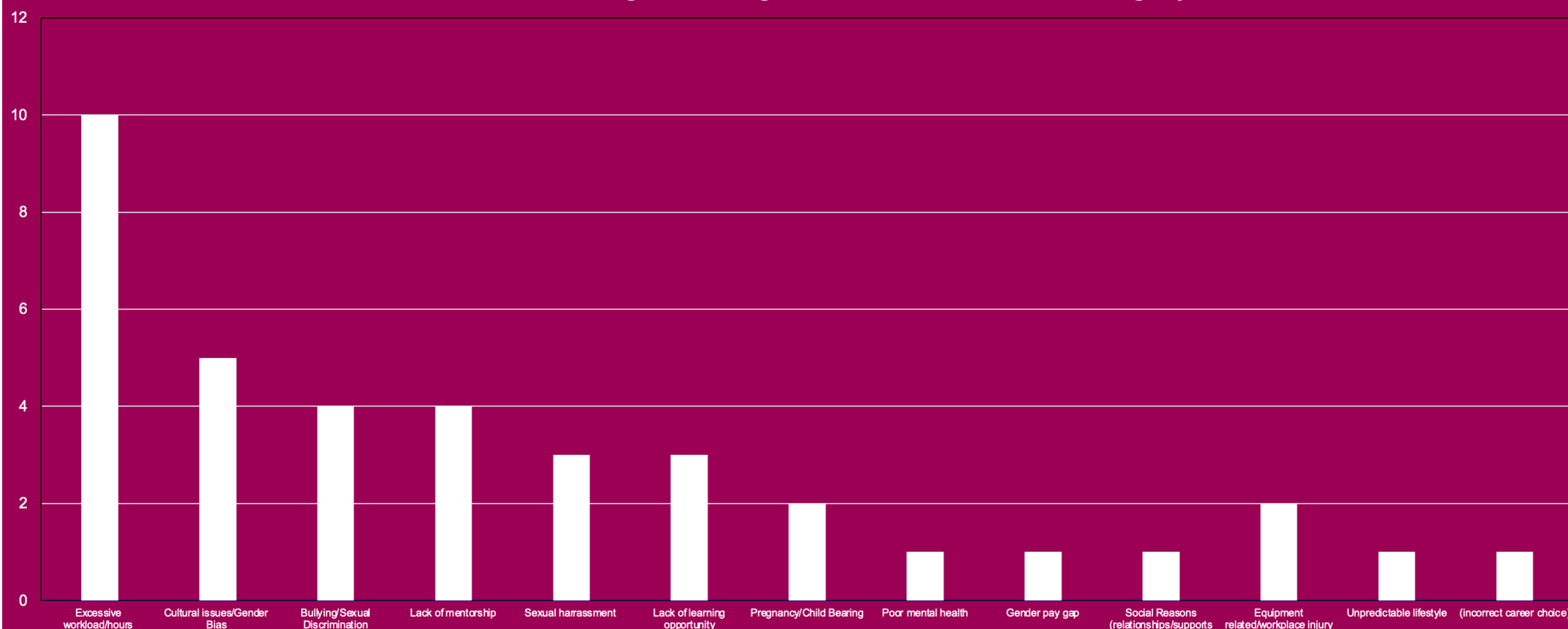
### Methods

This systemic review was performed in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. Primary outcomes investigated the challenges RACS accredited female surgeons and trainees face. Secondary outcomes explored female representation in the published literature. MEDLINE, PubMed, SOCPUS, Cochrane Reviews, and CINAHL were searched for articles published from 2005 yielding 82 results. Articles were then screened by two independent reviewers. 36 articles were included.

### Conclusion:

Females remain a minority in Australian surgery and surgical research. To achieve gender equity the identified barriers must be fully addressed. Unfortunately, these barriers may lead to underrepresentation in the published literature. Additional research is required to investigate the effects this gender biased research has on clinical surgical practice.

### The Challenges Facing Females in Australian Surgery



### REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. RACS Diversity and Inclusion Plan, <https://www.surgeons.org/-/media/Project/RACS/surgeons-org/files/operating-with-respectcomplaints/building-respect/diversity-and-inclusion-plan-2019.pdf?rev=7e1f6c1e120b4ffa9de790eab331dae5&hash=B879F32E416DDAD2A038ED464C0F2ED3>