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GEOGRAPHIC

Continent
Europe (EU)

Country
Sweden

BASIC DETAILS

Language
English

Sector: Health

Title (EN): A theoretical model for analysing gender bias in medicine

Abstract description (EN):

During the last decades research has reported unmotivated differences in the treatment of women and men in various areas of clinical and academic medicine. There is an ongoing discussion on how to avoid such gender bias. We developed a three-step-theoretical model to understand how gender bias in medicine can occur and be understood. In this paper we present the model and discuss its usefulness in the efforts to avoid gender bias. In the model gender bias is analysed in relation to assumptions concerning difference/sameness and equity/inequity between women and men. Our model illustrates that gender bias in medicine can arise from assuming sameness and/or equity between women and men when there are genuine differences to consider in biology and disease, as well as in life conditions and experiences. However, gender bias can also arise from assuming differences when there are none, when and if dichotomous stereotypes about women and men are understood as valid. This conceptual thinking can be useful for discussing and avoiding gender bias in clinical work, medical education, career opportunities and documents such as research programs and health care policies. To meet the various forms of gender bias, different facts and measures are needed. Knowledge about biological differences between women and men will not reduce bias caused by gendered stereotypes or by unawareness of health problems and discrimination associated with gender inequity. Such bias reflects unawareness of gendered attitudes and will not change by facts

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only. We suggest consciousness-rising activities and continuous reflections on gender attitudes among students, teachers, researchers and decision-makers.

Keywords: gender bias, theory, medical research

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

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