

Session/Poster#

Presenter

C49

Isaiah Greene

College of Medicine Student

Advisor(s): Dr. Nickisa Hodgson, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Department of Ophthalmology

Eyequality: Examining Social Justice Discussions in Ophthalmology Podcasts

Podcasting is a modern audio media tool that has become a critical component of education throughout many fields of study. Ophthalmology is a medical specialty that has an ever-growing presence in the world of podcasts. Yet, there is a lack of literature that explores the current state and subject matter of ophthalmology podcasts. This project sought to characterize the features of ophthalmology podcasts with an emphasis on their discussions of social justice issues. Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, and Google Search were queried for English-language shows relating primarily to ophthalmology. 96 podcasts and 3594 episodes were analyzed. Analysis involved examining podcast-level characteristics, such as frequency of episode release, number of hosts, theme of the podcast, etc. Episode level analysis was also done to examine the specific content presented in each episode. Ocular health disparity episodes, of which there were no more than two per year prior to 2020, nearly tripled during 2020-2022 ($P = 0.003$). Similarly, the number of episodes relating to doctor or student wellness was zero prior to 2017. The proportion of such episodes increased over fivefold during the pandemic ($P < 0.001$). Episodes relating to diversity within the field of ophthalmology also underwent an over fourfold increase ($P < 0.001$). Global outreach was the most persistent standalone special topic across the years and nearly doubled during the 2020-2022 period ($P = 0.003$). The results show that the COVID-19 pandemic coincided with a shift in the focus of discussions within the field of ophthalmology. There is a need within ophthalmology for more equal racial and gender representation, as well as for better service of the underserved. Tools like podcasts may be particularly well suited for highlighting such issues that are often missed by traditional sources of information.