#ILookLikeASurgeon: What are the Delayed Trends of This Social Media Trend?

Mallory White BMSc, Michael Amendola MD MEHP
Virginia Commonwealth University Health System

Objectives: The "#ILookLikeASurgeon" (LLAS) campaign on Twitter was the beginning of a movement that empowered female surgeons to express themselves and increase their visibility in a historically male dominated field. To date there are over 500,000 LLAS tweets. We set forth to examine the impact of these Tweets in 2019 some two years after the initial launch of the trend.

Materials and Methods: Twitter was examined in November 2019 for LLAS tweets from 1/1/2019 to 7/1/2019. Tweets were filtered by 100 likes, as a minimum limit of engagement and examined for gender of tweeter, date tweeted, geography and content. Tweets were examined by a single viewer (MW) and Microsoft Excel was used to compute the results.

Results: A total of 59 tweets containing the LLAS hashtag were examined. Each tweet had an average of 400 ⎯ 475 likes and 62 ⎯ 122 retweets Approximately 90% of the tweets examined were posted by females. Additionally, we found broad distribution of geographical locations with the United States averaging 66% of the tweets. Interestingly, 93% of the tweets used the hashtag to promote gender equality and 7% of the tweets used it to promote ethnic equality in surgery. Finally, we found 90% of the tweets with the hashtag depicted a day in life (lifestyle content) of a surgeon. Whereas, the other 10% of the tweets with the hashtag were educational (educational content) in content.

Conclusions: Our study indicates that tweets containing LLAS obtained a large amount of social engagement. The majority of tweets were by females, expressing their day in a life as a female surgeon. The hashtag was used to promote both gender and ethnic equality in the field of surgery. It is important to acknowledge that gap and address underlying issues as to why women are underrepresented in the surgical field.