

Sex and Gender Questions*

European
Association of
Science
Editors



Considering that the word *sex* refers to biological attributes in humans and animals, while *gender* refers to socially constructed roles, and behaviours of humans, authors of scientific articles should check if sex and gender are properly reported in their manuscript, by answering the following questions.

Research approach

- Are the concepts of gender and/or sex used in your research project?
- If yes, have you explicitly defined the concepts of gender and/or sex? Is it clear what aspects of gender and/or sex are being examined in your study?
- If no, do you consider this to be a significant limitation? Given existing knowledge in the relevant literature, are there plausible gender and/or sex factors that should have been considered? If you consider sex and/or gender to be highly relevant to your proposed research, the research design should reflect this.

Research questions and hypotheses

- Do your research questions or hypotheses make reference to gender and/or sex, or relevant groups or phenomena (e.g. differences between males and females, differences among women, seeking to understand a gendered phenomenon such as masculinity)?

Literature review

- Does your literature review cite earlier studies that support the existence (or lack) of significant differences between males and females?
- Does your literature review point to the extent to which past research has taken gender or sex into account?

Research methods

- Is your sample appropriate to capture gender and/or sex-based factors?
- Is it possible to collect data that are disaggregated by sex and/or gender?
- Are the inclusion and exclusion criteria well justified with respect to sex and/or gender? (Note: this pertains to human and animal subjects and biological systems that are not whole organisms.)
- Is the data collection method proposed in your study appropriate for investigations of sex and/or gender?
- Is your analytic approach appropriate and rigorous enough to capture gender and/or sex-based factors?

Ethics

- Does your study design account for the relevant ethical issues that might have particular significance with respect to gender and/or sex (e.g. inclusion of pregnant women in clinical trials)?

* Adapted from Coen S, Banister E, editors. 2012. What a difference sex and gender make: a gender, sex and health research casebook. Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The questions were **elaborated by the EASE Gender Policy Committee** (www.ease.org.uk/about-us/organisation-and-administration/gender-policy-committee) and are **part of the SAGER (Sex and Gender Equity in Research) Guideline** (www.equator-network.org/library/reporting-guidelines-under-development/#45)