



Incorporating gender into research on COVID-19

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Iceland 
Liechtenstein
Norway grants

ProGender

A Digital Hub on Gender,
the COVID-19 Crisis and its Aftermath



Integrating intersectional gender perspectives in research proposals

- 18.00-18.10 Welcome and update of previous day
 - 18.10-18.30: Gender and Intersectionality in research design - Nelli Kambouri
 - 18.30-19.00: Interactive session in small groups: Integrating intersectional gender perspectives in research proposals
 - 19.00-19.15: Break
 - 19.15-19.30: Reporting of small group discussions and debate
 - 19.30-20.00 Closing remarks and final questions
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Evaluation

Please fill this questionnaire to help us improve.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNMb4SqTXJiJ1bHZD0OU-hxfD5fkFI9UdqP2rgPwxj-u8_w/viewform?usp=sf_link

Adding “women and stir”

Adding gender issues in research has often been interpreted as simply shifting focus towards women, women’s issues and positionality. However is that what gendering research is all about?

-There are some strands of research that argue that gender research should be primarily about women because they constitute more than half of the global population and yet are facing inequalities and discrimination.

-On the other hand, there are also intersectional perspectives that argue that we should look more attentively at the intersections between gender and other social categories such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability.

-Or perhaps should we be attentive to both women and intersectionality?

What do you think?

Example 1: Ethics of care- challenging the relationship between researcher and researched.

A PhD student wrote a feminist manifesto where she described how she thinks that feminist research should be conducted. She emphasised that care for the subjects of research, for their needs, desires and perspectives should be at the centre of research.

She produced a feminist manifesto about her research in which she speaks about various aspects of feminist research

- ***Principle 4: Care over Power***

“I will work to minimize harm in the research process. While the inherent power dynamics of the researcher-researched make building trust difficult, I will focus on creating non-hierarchical relationships where the researcher and the researched invest their time and share experiences.^[19] Building an ethic of care provides participants with a safe space for catharsis, self-reflection and self-acknowledgement.^[20] Caring also involves actively thinking about the well-being of participants and letting that concern guide the research project”.^[21]

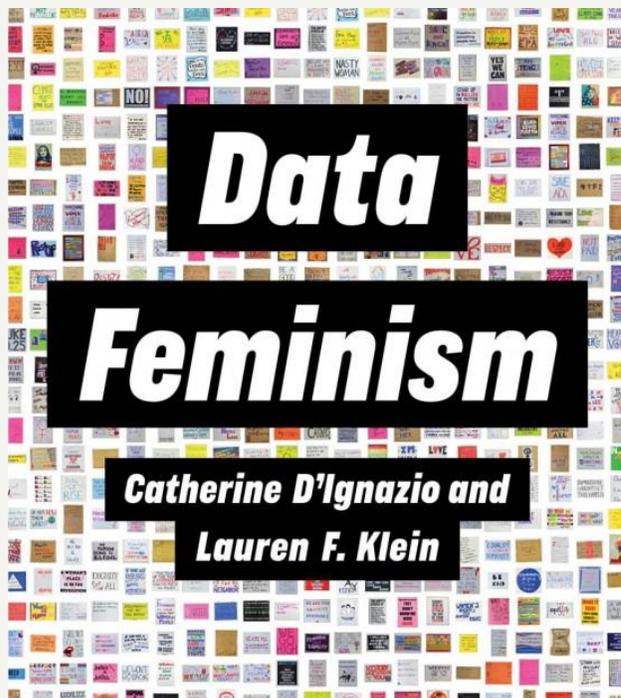
Anumol D. (2021), My Feminist Research Manifesto-in-Progress

Do you think that this type of manifesto published in a blog is appropriate for scientific research? Should she focus on more conventional publications and outputs rather than her relationship with the subjects she interacts with as part of her research?

Example 2: youth-led study on the experiences of young adults aged 18-35 managing their menstrual health during the Covid-19 pandemic

- “Our research shows that menstrual health is an important Covid-19 consideration, with far-reaching implications for young people’s physical and psychosocial wellbeing. Widespread barriers emerged in our data, with nearly 1 in 3 young people having less or much less access to period products than before lockdown. Given that 2 in 3 respondents also reported significant and sometimes severe changes in their menstrual health symptoms, it is clear the pandemic has been damaging for many menstruators”.
- “quantitative data to highlight an unprecedented and precarious environment, in which young people, already marginalised due to intersectional factors of gender, race, age, class and citizenship, were pushed further from public focus”.
- Dickins, S., Streibl, S. and Hallam L. (2021) “Data, Dignity and Self-Determination: Why We Need More Research on Young People and Menstrual Health in the Covid-19 Pandemic”
- What do you think about this type of research?
- What do you think of the topic?
- Do you think that it is useful to include intersectional factors in statistical research?

Data Feminism



- There is new research that emphasizes the need to change our perspectives of quantitative research and include more categories than men and women and try to understand also race, ethnicity, age, sexuality.
- D'Ignazio and Klein argue that Data is about power and the way in which we collect data and use it is highly gendered. For example, if we focus on paid work only and collect no data on housework we ignore the double burden that women face. In the same sense, if we focus on how COVID-19 has impacted on women and men in general we ignore intersectional inequalities of race, ethnicity, age and sexuality.
- D'Ignazio, C. and Klein L.F. (2021) "Data Feminism"
<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/data-feminism>
- Hankivsky, O. and Kapilashrami, A. (2021) "Beyond sex and gender analysis: an intersectional view of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and response"

European policies on gender in research and innovation

- A lobby of feminist scientists have put a lot of pressure on the European Commission to introduce gender issues as part of research funding.
- This has resulted into adding a “gender aspects section” in research proposals. This includes:
 1. The composition of research teams
 2. The topic of the research
 3. The methodology used.

Initially proposals got extra points for adding gender considerations, but now it has become a prerequisite. Research should be gendered and multi-disciplinary.

European Commission (2021) Gender equality in research and innovation

- “the integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content is a requirement by default, an award criterion evaluated under the excellence criterion, unless the topic description explicitly specifies otherwise”
- “increasing gender balance throughout the programme is another objective, with a target of 50% women in Horizon Europe related boards, expert groups and evaluation committees, and gender balance among research teams set as a ranking criterion for proposals with the same score”
- https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en

Gender equality in research institutions

- Universities who apply for European Research Funding under the new funding programme should have a Gender Equality Plan and a Gender Equality Committee.
- They should make sure that gender equality is promoted into the institutions and gender based discrimination and violence are dealt with.
- They should collect data on gender equality in the institution and do training and capacity building to promote gender equality.

Do you know about the Gender Equality Committee at your University? Have you ever used it?

Does your institution have and Gender Equality Plan?

Do you think they are helpful? Have you seen any actual changes because of the GECs or GEPs?

Why is gender equality important for the EC

- Firstly, data in the She Figures illustrates that women are entering research in larger numbers but are still under-represented in higher, well paid positions. They do not make the decisions and so the system is perpetuated.
- Secondly, the EC considers the exclusion of women from academia as a waste of valuable talent. Women scientists are capable, strong and powerful, but are facing structural obstacles that prevent them from reaching their full potential. And this is a waste, the EC argues.

European Commission “She Figures-2018”

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/61564e1f-d55e-11eb-895a-01aa75ed71a1>

Do you think that men and women are the only categories that the EU should consider in policy making on gender inequalities in research and innovation?

What do you think are the most important variables to consider when thinking about gender in research? Age, precarity, ethnicity, race, sexuality?

Why is gender equality important for the EC

- Thirdly, there is the concept of gendered innovations. A project developed in collaboration with historians of science has shown that when gender variables are integrated into research new and innovative findings emerge.
- This is the case not only in social sciences but also in natural sciences. For example
- **De-Gendering the Knee: Overemphasizing Sex Differences as a Problem**
- **Heart Disease in Diverse Populations: Analyzing Sex and Gender**
- **Extended Virtual Reality: Analyzing Gender**
- **Gendering Social Robots: Analyzing Gender and Intersectionality**
- **Climate Change: Analyzing Gender, and Intersectional Approaches**

- European Commission (2021) GENDERED INNOVATIONS 2: How Inclusive Analysis Contributes to Research and Innovation”
https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/research_and_innovation/strategy_on_research_and_innovation/documents/ki0320108enn_final.pdf
- Stanford University, “Gendered Innovations”
<http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/what-is-gendered-innovations.html>

Activity
Group one
Domestic
Violence
during
COVID-19

- What is the main topic in one sentence?
- How do you address gender?
- What is your methodology: Quantitative/qualitative or both?
- What are the subjects of the research?
- What is the composition of the research team?
- Are you using feminist methodologies to address issues of coordination of the research team, senior-junior members, collaboration amongst members of the team, self-reflection, care for research participants?
- What is new or innovative about your research?

Activity
Group two:
Work and care
during COVID-
19

- What is the main topic in one sentence?
- How do you address gender?
- What is your methodology: Quantitative/qualitative or both?
- What are the subjects of the research?
- What is the composition of the research team?
- Are you using feminist methodologies to address issues of coordination of the research team, senior-junior members, collaboration amongst members of the team, self-reflection, care for research participants?
- What is new or innovative about your research?