

Sex Roles: A Journal of Research

Guidelines for Reviewers

The philosophy of *Sex Roles* is about striving to make the manuscript review process as instructive, clear, and helpful to authors as possible. We ask you, as a reviewer for *Sex Roles*, to keep this philosophy in mind when writing your comments to the authors of submitted manuscripts. Below are some guidelines to keep in mind when you write your review.

What to include in your review:

1. When a manuscript is initially reviewed, the editorial team is most concerned about the **quality of the work** and the **contribution** it may make to the existing literature. Extensive style and writing improvements will be made later in the review process. *Please concentrate on commenting on the substance of the paper more so than on its form.*
2. If you are recommending rejection of a paper, outline the major weaknesses of the paper. Be sure to explain why the flaws in the paper are “fatal” (i.e., could not be addressed in a revision). It is appropriate and helpful to make suggestions for improving the author’s future research, while at the same time clearly indicating to the author that these improvements cannot be adequately addressed within the present paper.
3. However, if you are suggesting that the author revise-and-resubmit the paper (i.e., major or minor revision), be sure to explain in detail each change you believe is needed before the paper meets the standards for publication. Do not recommend revision if, in your judgment, there are serious problems with the paper that are not fixable. It often is helpful to authors to number your points so that they can efficiently respond to each.
4. If you cannot tell from the information provided in the paper whether there is a fatal flaw in the study, then indicate so clearly and explain what additional information is needed to make that judgment. It is appropriate to request revision of a paper that requires added detail, then judge the provided information in a follow-up round of review.
5. As you make your ratings for the editorial team, be sure they coincide with the seriousness of the problems you raise in your review. If you believe the paper has a “fatal flaw,” then express that judgment by giving a rating of “rejection” and explain the seriousness of the problem in your comments. It is appropriate to send more candid comments directly to, and only for, the editorial team.
6. State the extent to which the paper makes a contribution to the literature. Does the paper provide a sufficient contribution to the literature to merit publication as a full article or as a brief report?
7. Describe how well the author has developed a rationale for the study. Is the literature review adequate and complete? Do the hypotheses follow logically from the literature review? Are they stated clearly?
8. Comment on the methodology and analysis. Are they appropriate? Do they follow from the study’s hypotheses and rationale? Are they organized to parallel the order of presentation of the hypotheses?
9. Explain whether the findings have been adequately interpreted and whether the conclusions follow logically from the results. Consider the limitations of the study and its implications for the targeted audience (theorists, researchers, practitioners, teachers, etc.).

How to constructively convey your message to the author:

1. Avoid conveying your disposition recommendation (reject, revise, etc.) to the author in the text of your review. This information should be provided only to the editorial team to inform its decision.
2. Strive to provide a balanced review that appropriately addresses the strengths and weaknesses of the paper.
3. Be constructive in your criticisms; where possible, phrase your comments in terms of what would improve the paper rather than what is wrong with the paper (e.g., “These findings would be stronger if...”). Be specific and descriptive with these suggestions.
4. Avoid being emphatic. We discourage you from bolding, underlining, or capitalizing to emphasize a critical tone.
5. Phrase your critical comments in terms of the paper, not the researcher. Avoid using personal language directed toward the author. For example, rather than writing “I don’t know why the author(s) decided to run analyses in such a way,” phrase your comments in terms of what analyses should have been done.



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