

Exercise walk-through

Gender and Sexual Orientation ■ 3.3

eXercise

You must be able to

- distinguish **sex** 生理性别 from **gender** 社会性别 as the terms are used in psychology
- explain how **gender roles** 性别角色 are transmitted socially
- state what research indicates about the origins of sexual orientation
- explain why **self-report** 自我报告 data on these topics is difficult to gather

Method — Two terms

In psychology, **sex** refers to biological characteristics, and **gender** to the social and psychological categories a culture builds around them. Keeping them distinct is required to state most findings clearly.

Method — How roles are transmitted

Gender roles are the behaviours a culture expects of each category. They are learned through observation, reinforcement and the models available in family, peers and media, and they vary across cultures and over time.

Method — Origins of sexual orientation

Research indicates that orientation is not chosen and is not readily changed. Evidence points to biological influences, including genetic and prenatal factors, though no single determinant accounts for it.

Method — Why self-report is hard here

Where a topic is stigmatised, respondents may under-report. Sampling is also difficult, because the people willing to participate may not represent the population. Both problems bias estimates in the same direction.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State how psychology distinguishes sex from gender.

Solution 2.1

Method: Two terms

Worked steps

sex refers to biological characteristics **B1**; gender to the social and psychological categories built around them **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain how gender roles are transmitted and give one source.

Solution 2.2

Method: How roles are transmitted

Worked steps

through observation, reinforcement and available models **B1**; e.g. family, peers or media **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

A survey estimates the proportion of a population with a given orientation.

- (a) State one reason the estimate may be too low.
- (b) State one sampling problem.

Solution 2.3

Method: Why self-report is hard here

Worked steps

(a) stigma leads to under-reporting **B1**. (b) those willing to participate may not represent the population **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Evidence that gender roles vary across cultures indicates that they are

- A** entirely biological
- B** substantially social in origin
- C** unrelated to expectation
- D** fixed at birth

Solution 3.1

Method: How roles are transmitted

- A entirely biological
- B substantially social in origin 
- C unrelated to expectation
- D fixed at birth

Worked steps

B. variation across cultures points to socially transmitted expectations.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Research on sexual orientation most strongly indicates that it is

- A** freely chosen
- B** readily changed by instruction
- C** influenced by biological factors and not chosen
- D** determined by a single gene

Solution 3.2

Method: Origins of sexual orientation

- A freely chosen
- B readily changed by instruction
- C influenced by biological factors and not chosen 
- D determined by a single gene

Worked steps

C. evidence indicates biological influences and no element of choice.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A study recruits participants through one advocacy organisation.

- (a) State the sampling problem.
- (b) Explain how it affects the conclusions.

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

(a) a self-selected, non-representative sample **B1**. (b) the participants may differ systematically from the wider population **B1**, so results cannot be generalised beyond that group **B1**.