BRIDGING THE GAP: GENDER EQUITY IN INTERNATIONAL CANCER AND CARDIOVASCULAR RESEARCH

Lucas-Domínguez, Rut[1-2]; Rius, Cristina[1-2]; Alonso-Arroyo, Adolfo[1-2]; Suárez, Jesica[3]; Machado, Idalina[4]; Perucchi, Juliana[5]; Ronzani, Telmo[5]

(1) UISYS Reseach Group, Unit of Information and Social and Health Research, University of Valencia. Associated Unit to INAECU.- Interuniversity Institute of Advanced Research of Science and University Evaluation.UC3M-UAM. Spain
(2) Department of the History of Science and Documentation, University of Valencia, Spain
(3) University Favoloro. Buenos Aires. Argentina
(4) Instituto Superior de Serviço Social do Porto. Porto. Portugal
(5) University of Juiz de Fora. Minas Gerais. Brazil

INTRODUCTION

Given that inequalities such as the gender gap in leadership and biases in scientific development persist, integrating a gender perspective into biomedical research is crucial. This project aims to evaluate the current level of gender inclusion in international oncology and cardiovascular research, two main causes of death and disease.

RESULTS

In Spain, 2,370 questionnaires were completed (56.67% women) giving an overall average score (OS) of 58 for including a gender perspective; 369 (62.87% women) in Portugal (52 OS); 303 (55.11% women) in Brazil (54 OS); and 217 (65.43% women) in Argentina (55 OS). In all countries, the perception of gender inclusiveness is greater when the questionnaire is completed by men (Figure 1). Both women and men perceive greater gender inclusiveness when working in female-led (Figure 2) or female-majority or gender-balanced teams (Figure 3). This trend is more pronounced between female researchers, though it has also been observed among male researchers. These findings suggest that female leadership and parity in research teams positively influence perceptions of gender in research, except among Portuguese men. In all countries, "Journal selection" (Block IV) obtained the lowest score, and in Spain, Portugal, and Brazil, the second block with low scores was "Culture and climate of the research team" (Block II) (Table 1).

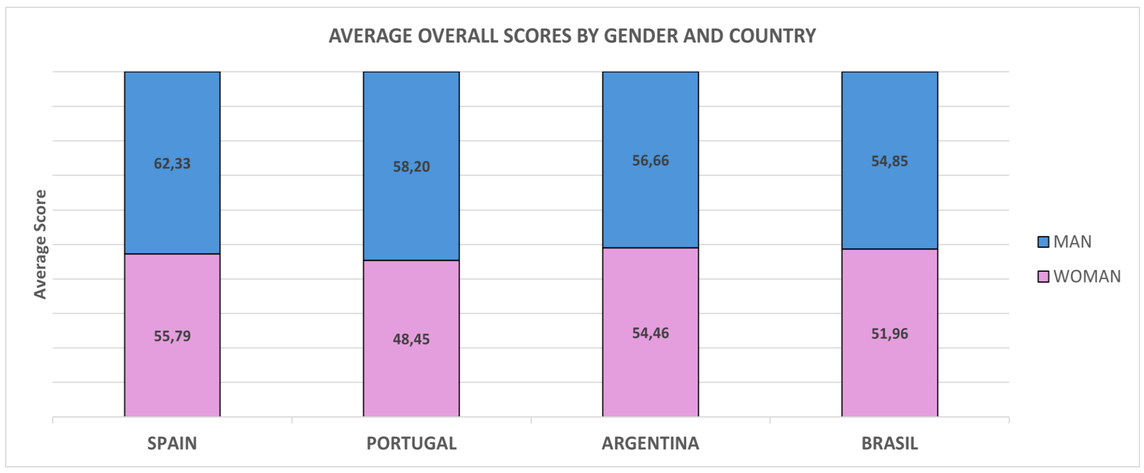

Figure 1. Average overall scores by gender.

Table 1. "Journal selection" (Block IV) received the lowest score in all countries.

	POSITIONS OF THE BLOCKS FROM BEST TO WORST SCORE				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
SPAIN	III	V	I	II	IV
PORTUGAL	V	I	III	II	IV
ARGENTINA	II	III	V	I	IV
BRAZIL	V	III	I	II	IV

METHODOLOGY

The methodology is a 41-question ethics-approved questionnaire divided into five blocks: institutional planning; research culture; scientific content; journal selection; and article writing. Global and block scores (0-100) of gender inclusion are generated once the questionnaire has been completed.
(http://bit.ly/4eRPAxm)

SCAN ME

Emails were collected from the corresponding authors of papers from the participating countries. These authors were sent a voluntary, anonymous invitation to complete the survey.

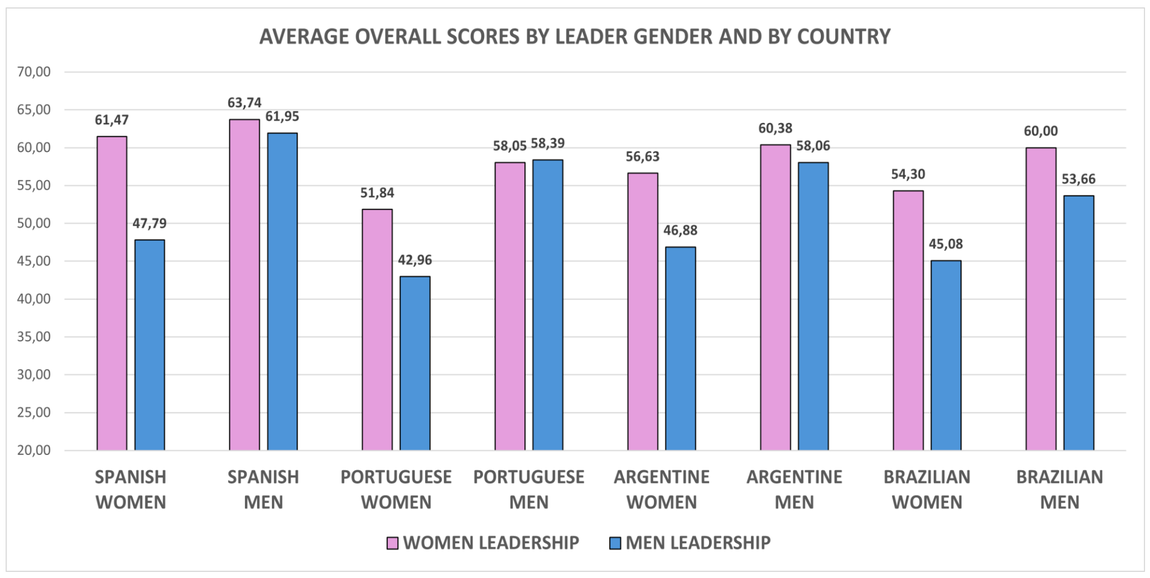

Figure 2. The average scores show that having a woman in charge leads to a greater perception of gender inclusion among both genders.

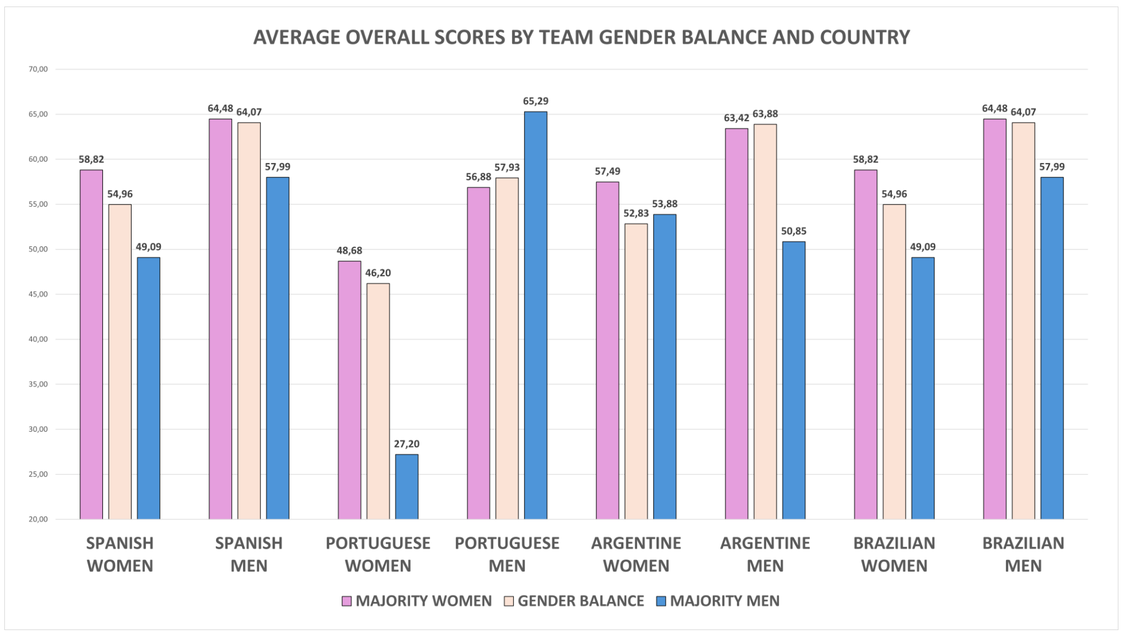

Figure 3. The average scores show a tendency for higher scores when the research team is majority women or gender balanced. Portuguese men are the only ones who do not comply.

CONCLUSIONS

Completing the questionnaire offers immediate feedback on gender equality and findings will help improve research internationally.
In all countries, men perceive their research as being gender-inclusive, whereas women do not.
In most countries, female leadership and parity improve perceptions of gender inclusiveness among male and female researchers.

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