

Updates on Terminology of SOGI Survey Measures

Amy Symens Smith
U.S. Census Bureau

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Background and Purpose

- Little is known about the Sexual and Gender Minority (SGM) population and methodological considerations for collecting such data exists.
- Research group suggested an agenda to improve sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) measures in federal surveys.
- A primary research priority is terminology and ordering of response options for SOGI questions.

Describing the Challenge

- Response options that enable one to identify the response appropriate for them or their household. “Seeing themselves in the data.”
- Challenge is that SOGI terminology is fluid and evolves over time.
- Difficult to select question and response terminology that resonates in both the general and SOGI populations.

Gender Identity Key Findings

- Survey measures generally use the two-step approach first asking about sex at birth with a follow up question about current gender identity with response options “male,” “female,” and “transgender.”
- Question format and terminology are evolving but not understood the same way across the entire transgender community.
- Qualitative research shows:
 - Some gender minority groups do not see transgender as an identity distinct from male or female; others prefer genderqueer to female or male.

Gender Identity Key Findings Continued

- Sexual and gender minority respondents self-identify using a variety, and in some cases multiple, terms that might change over time.
- Sex labels such as “male” and “female” are preferred over gender labels such as “man” and “woman”.
- Gender identity terminology seems to vary by age, sex assigned at birth and educational attainment

Gender Identity Future Research

- Survey questions might benefit from consideration of the variation in how transgender people identify over time and by demographic group.
- Respondents point out that:
 - Some do not want to identify with a term that stabilizes gender identity.
 - Others do not identify as transgender because they do not see themselves as “man” or “woman.”