

Measuring Sex, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation

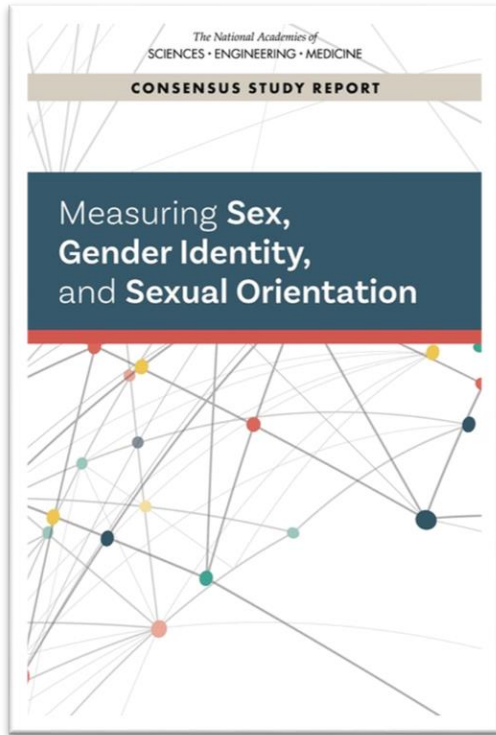
A Discussion

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The views expressed here are those of the author.

Job well done!



- Incredible contribution providing insights on measurement of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation in diverse settings
- Recommendations for consistent measurement anchored in science
- Explicit guidance for question wording, fielding, and tabulation
- Research recommendations to refine measures

Highlights

- Collecting and reporting data on gender should be the standard
- Existing, validated measures of sexual orientation and gender identity (with minor modifications) are recommended for surveys and other collections
- A stand-alone measure should be used to identify people with intersex traits (differences of sex development)
- Research is needed to improve quality and inclusivity of these measures

Summarizing Measurement Challenges

No official standards

Labels/definitions are fluid
and rapidly changing

Many terms are unfamiliar to
sexual majorities and
cisgender populations

Official statistics require time-
series, repeated measures
over time

Lack of production survey
vehicles to conduct
experiments

Need for translations into
languages other than English

Questions must work for
interviewer and self-
administered response
modes, as well as when
asking proxies to respond for
other household members

Dearth of research on
measuring intersex condition
or difference of sex
development

Questions for the Panel

1. How explicit should the option to “opt-out” of answering an item be?
2. Do you recommend including the response category “I use a different term” if free-text is not offered?
3. (When) should a confirmation item be used to reduce measurement error (false positives/false negatives) for the gender identity item?
4. How might gender identity responses be aggregated should disclosure of the full cross tabulation of the two items be prohibited due to small cell sizes?
5. Should these measures be asked each time a longitudinal survey is administered?