



Questions to Identify Gender Diversity

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ABSTRACT

Background
Transgender has been defined generally as not conforming to societal norms of gender, or specifically to having a gender identity and/or expression that is contrary to one's assigned sex at birth. The term is used to refer to a broad range of identities and expressions within the United States and other English speaking countries. There are efforts to identify study measures that are able to identify transgender populations, but little is known about how cisgender men and women will respond to those questions

Methods
The study interviewed 25 cisgender and transgender men and women to cognitively test how individuals respond to questions about transition status, gender nonconformity, and birth-sex assignment (the two-step and gender nonconformity measures). The results will help assess the utility and understanding of quantitative measures designed to people's transition status and gender nonconformity.

Results
Factors discussed include the understandability of the questions and participants ability to accurately identify people's transition status and gender nonconformity in a manner that has high reliability and validity within quantitative analysis. Generally, participants were able to easily answer questions relating to transition status but had more difficulty regarding gender expression

Discussion/Conclusion
Results will show that measures to identify transgender populations can be effectively used on cisgender populations, while still being able to identify transgender populations..

BACKGROUND

- Both the Institute of Medicine and National Institutes of Health have identified the need for greater research about the health disparities experienced by gender minorities.
- While many studies have been conducted on various populations of gender minorities, they have consisted of small samples collected through convenience or snowball sampling methods within specific geographic areas.
 - As such, the generalizability of these studies is limited.
- Another issue is how gender minority populations are conceptualized and operationalized within these studies. Health researchers have used terms like transvestite, transsexual, transgender, even conflating them with gay and lesbian populations or include them within the population of men who have sex with men without considering gender minority's unique psychosocial contexts.
 - This has resulted into lack of understanding about adequate and relevant health care needs for gender minority populations.
 - The research literature has utilized a wide range of labels to refer to the same population, while the population itself uses a wider range of labels in reference to themselves.

STUDY GOALS

- Develop questions that can be used on large quantitative studies
- Measures must be able to differentiate between nontransgender (Cis) and Transgender (Trans) individuals.
- Must be understood by Cis and Trans people.

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH WITH NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DISCRIMINATION STUDY (NTDS)

Gender Identity

- What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?
- What is your primary gender identity today

Gender Nonconformity

- People can tell I'm transgender/gender non-conforming even if I don't tell them.
- Scored from Never to Always (5 pt scale)

	Male	Female
Male/Man	Cis	Trans
Female/Woman	Trans	Cis
Part-Time	PT	PT
Gender not listed	Other	Other



Analysis utilized R (v. 3.0.1), Rstudio (v.0.97.551), and ggplot2 package.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- Those identified as **Trans** reported more discrimination and losing more of their social relationships regardless of their appearance.
- Utilizing two questions (current gender identity and assigned sex at birth) are useful in identifying those at greatest risk

COGNITIVE TESTING OF TWO-STEP GENDER IDENTITY MEASURE

- Modified version of the Center of Excellence for Transgender Health Two-Step Measure
- Reduced number of options and changed "current gender" to just "gender".

1. What is your sex or gender? (Check ALL that apply)

- Male
- Female
- Other: Please specify: _____

2. What sex were you assigned at birth? (Check one)

- Male
- Female
- Unknown or Question Not Asked
- Decline to State

SAMPLE

- 25 Cis and 25 Trans individuals were recruited from the Cleveland area.
 - Cis individuals -- 15 were female assigned and 10 were male assigned at birth. Three participants were African-American, and their average age was 32 years (range 19-61).
 - Trans individuals -- 20 were assigned male at birth and 5 were assigned female at birth. Three participants were African-American, and their average age was 45 years (range 19-81; removing the 81 year old brought the average down to 43).

METHODS

- Individuals were asked to read and answer each question out-loud and provide the reasons they answered the way they did.
- Semi-Structured questions were asked to provide additional details to their answers.
- Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed prior to analysis within a dedicated qualitative research program (NVIVO).

RESULTS Sex assigned at birth

Cis	Trans
I've never, um, seen that language before? So it's completely new to me. Um, I guess it's asking me... what a doctor or nurse said that I was when I was born. Um, yes, I guess that's what it's asking me 'what sex were you assigned at birth? Check one', uh, I'm going to assume number two, female. I'm sure, I didn't look at my birth certificate enough to pay attention to, but I-I'm sure that's what they put...	means that when someone is born, the doctor takes a look and he says male, female, and if it's not clear, there's a problem.
what body you're born in? Like, what kind of...parts you have.	when the doctor smacks you and says, "It's a boy." (Laughter) That's, I guess, what they mark off on your birth certificate
	Your sex is assigned at birth due to your genitals.

Distinction between sex and gender

Cis	Trans
So, um, so I probably think of gender, I probably, I guess I think of them as being the same, but gender is, um, um, a less sexualized word because it doesn't have the word sex in it.	sex is your biological, ahh, sex according to your physical makeup, where gender is your internal identify of who you are by your own identity.
Sex and gender. Hm. I guess, I mean when I see the words, uh, sex or gender, I-I'm, I could almost say you could use them as synonyms.	gender to me is a mental thing, a belief, a feeling, an identification if you will. Ahh, sex is really a strange term. Sex could be sexual orientation, a blend of both genders, it could be who is the bigger gender, or It could be confused with the physical stuff. Sex can be confusing.
This is embarrassing because we did go over this [...]. (laugh) Uh, let's see. I believe it's sex is biological and gender is-is what you identify more with	I heard a quote a couple of years ago, I don't remember who it was, but I was told that sex is between the legs and gender is between the ears.

CONCLUSIONS

- Two-step question was effective and easily understood by both trans and cis people.
 - Cis people were able to answer the question about sex assigned at birth even though they never heard the phrase before. They knew what it was referring too.
 - Cis Participants provided the same answer to both questions as expected.
 - Almost all trans people and many cis people see gender as an identity
 - People generally felt that these two questions were easy to answer.

Limitations

- Lack of diversity within sample
- Many Cis participants were recruited from University contexts
- English language only
- Mid Western cultural context

Recommendation

- What is your **sex-or** gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other: Please specify: _____
- What sex were you assigned at birth? (Check one)
 - Male
 - Female
 - ~~Unknown or Question Not Asked~~
 - Decline to State

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