



SCHOOL *of* DATA SCIENCE

Understanding the Invisibility and Misrepresentation of Transgender People in Official Statistics

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CONTENT

01

Background & Introduction

02

Objectives

03

Methods

04

Results & Discussion

05

Future Steps

06

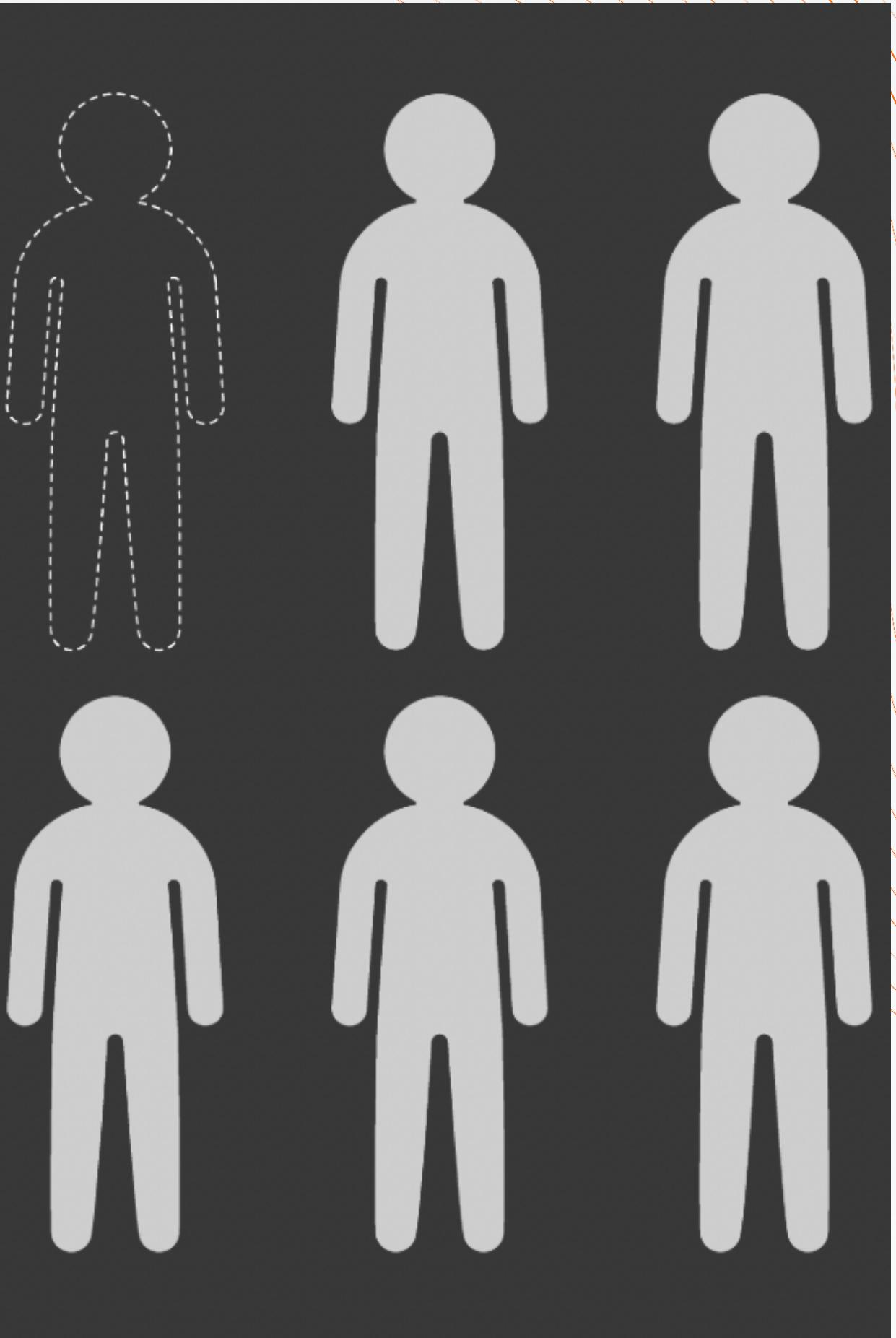
Acknowledgements



BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

DATA INVISIBILITY

- Consists of the absence or underrepresentation of certain groups or experiences in data collection efforts.
- When specific voices and perspectives remain hidden, the social imaginary becomes distorted and incomplete.
- Stereotypes and biases are reinforced, the legitimacy of marginalized experiences is undermined, and policy responses may be inadequate or insufficient.





MISSING IN ACTION

- Transgender people have historically faced exclusion and underrepresentation in data collection efforts.
- The absence of transgender data in systematic power-integrated forms of governance has:
 - Contributed to marginalization and invisibility,
 - Led to distorted policy outcomes,
 - Exacerbated inequalities within society.

Averaii marches in the San Francisco Trans March on Friday, June 23. Chris Partin/Special to SFGATE

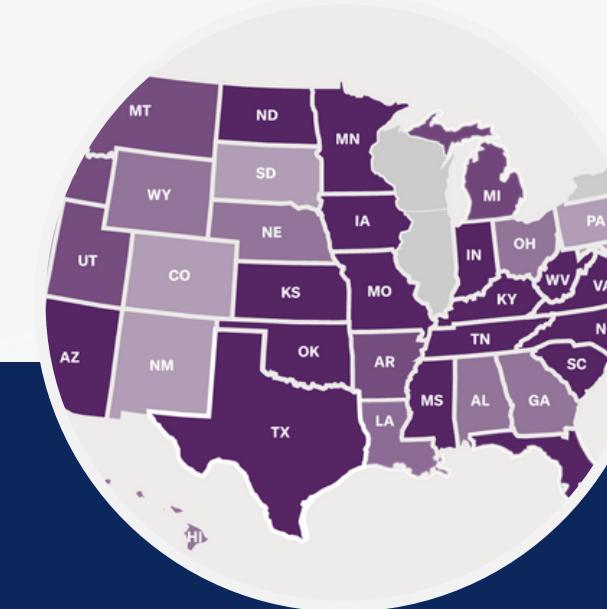
RECENT EVENTS



Canada - 2021
1st country to collect
and publish data on
gender diversity from a
national census



USA - 2022
Congress passed the
LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion
Act



ACLU - 2023
Tracking anti-LGBTQ
bills in the U.S.:
Introduced (3)
Advancing (195)
Passed into Law (78)
Defeated (216)



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the key challenges and considerations in accurately representing transgender individuals within official datasets?
- What is the current state of data representation efforts on the transgender population, who is driving these initiatives, and why are they significant?

OBJECTIVES

Identify

The key challenges and considerations involved in accurately representing transgender individuals within official datasets.

Assess

The extent of current data representation efforts regarding the transgender population, including the driving forces behind these initiatives.

Analyze

The methods and strategies employed in accurately representing transgender individuals within official datasets, focusing on their effectiveness and limitations.

Highlight

The impact of data representation and suggest appropriate data collection practices.

METHODS



A comprehensive literature review that analyzed scholarly papers and gray literature, such as reports, news articles and public commentaries.



RStudio was used to curate a list of all federally supported surveys and plot bar charts displaying the proportion of surveys collecting in specific information across different SOGI areas.





RESULTS & DISCUSSION

SELF-IDENTIFICATION LIMITATIONS

Pre-established categories



- Using pre-established categories for survey data collection ignores the fluidity of gender identity and expression.
- More than 5 in 6 LGBT adults cannot be identified by existing questions in non-experimental surveys conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau (CAP, 2022).

SELF-IDENTIFICATION LIMITATIONS

Write-in Responses

- Identify and mitigate potential measurement errors.
- It may present time burden on researchers and increase the chances of collecting unused data.
- Allows respondents to freely describe their identities beyond predefined response options.
- Allows researchers to monitor and analyze the use of terminology over time (CAP, 2022).



PRIVACY CONCERNS

How are we addressing the risks of data visibility?

Data should be collected, used, maintained, and shared while ensuring:

- Standards of privacy
- Anti de-anonymization
- Confidentiality
- Ethics — applicable legal safeguards against discrimination

Respondents should be aware that:

- Disclosing their information is optional
- They have the right to choose not to respond
- They have the right to be forgotten



TRUST-BUILDING

Building trust in governmental entities and encouraging public response



- Collaborate with community-based organizations and academia.
- These advocates have been working across time developing SOGI data collection practices that are appropriate and relevant to the communities in question.
- The collection of data in gender minorities should be informed by said minorities.
- People collecting and using the data are adequately capacitated.

WHO IS DRIVING DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS?



CIVIL-SOCIETY



COMMUNITY-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS



ACADEMIA

WHY IS DATA VISIBILITY IMPORTANT?



2015 U.S. TRANSGENDER SURVEY

55%

Health Insurance

Of those who sought coverage for transition-related surgery in the past year were denied

33%

Discrimination

Of those who saw a health care provider this past year had at least one negative experience related to being transgender

23%

Healthcare Access

Did not see a doctor when they needed to because of fear of being mistreated as a transgender person

WHY DO WE NEED SOGI DATA?

Consistent and high-quality data is crucial to:

- Advance research agendas
- Evaluate population trends
- Identify community-based needs
- Provide high-quality services
- Track and address discrimination
- Equitably distribute funding and other resources
- Shape evidence-based policy solutions to promote equity and reduce disparities faced by LGBTQI+ populations



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO COLLECT SOGI DATA?

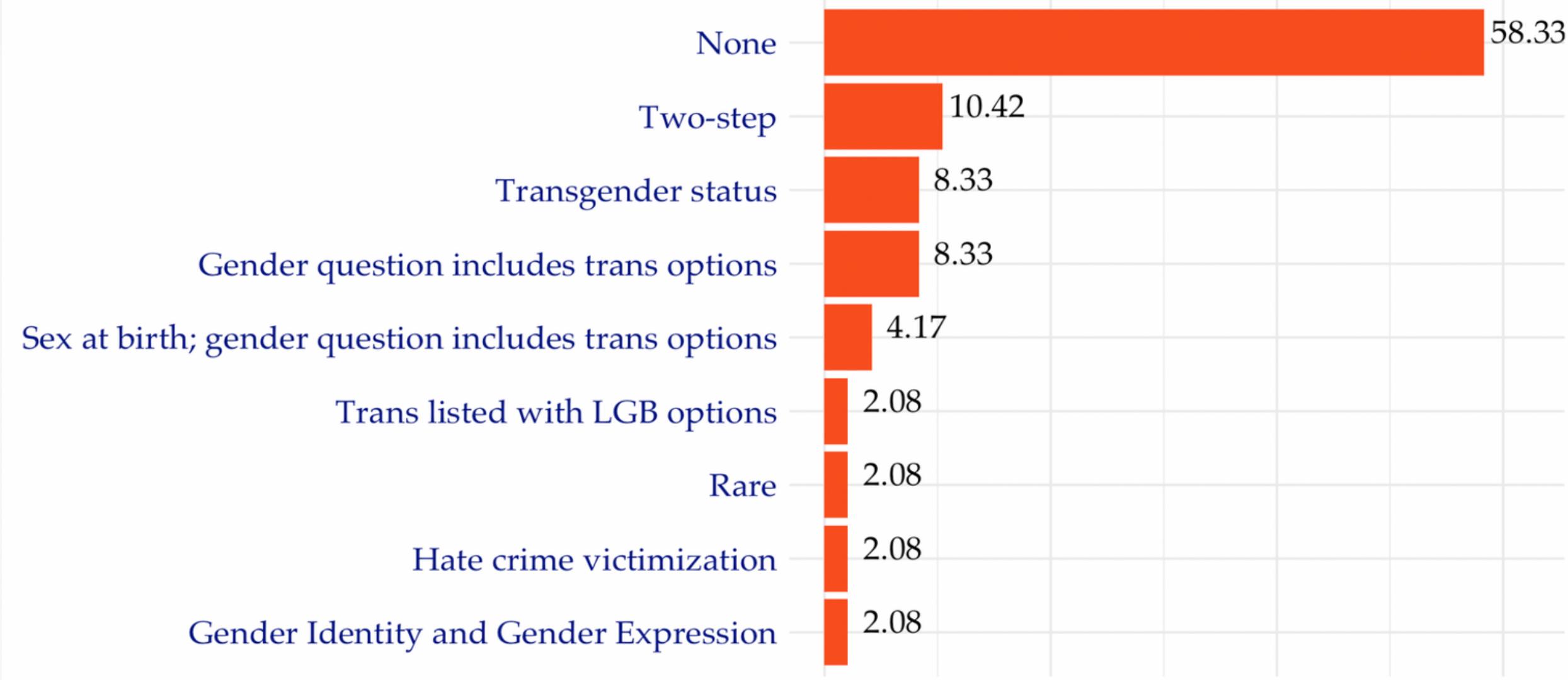
- Sexual orientation identity
- Sexual behavior
- Sexual attraction
- Gender composition of partnered and marital relationships
- Gender identity
- Sex assigned at birth
- Gender expression
- Transgender status
- Intersex status

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE'S DATA REPRESENTATION?



GENDER IDENTITY

Gender-Identity-Related Questions

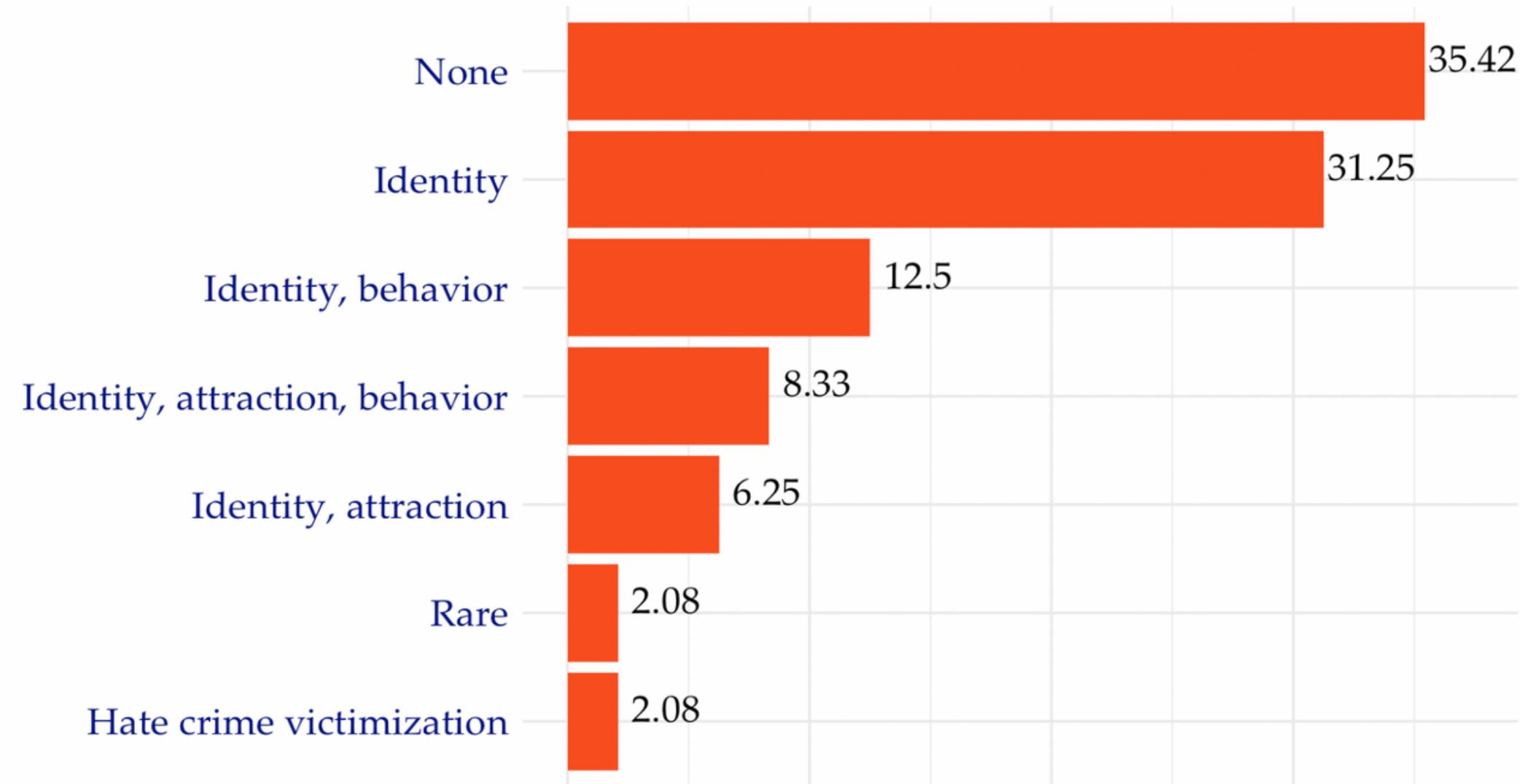


Percentage of Federally Supported Surveys

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2020.
Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations.
Washington, DC: The National Academies Press

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

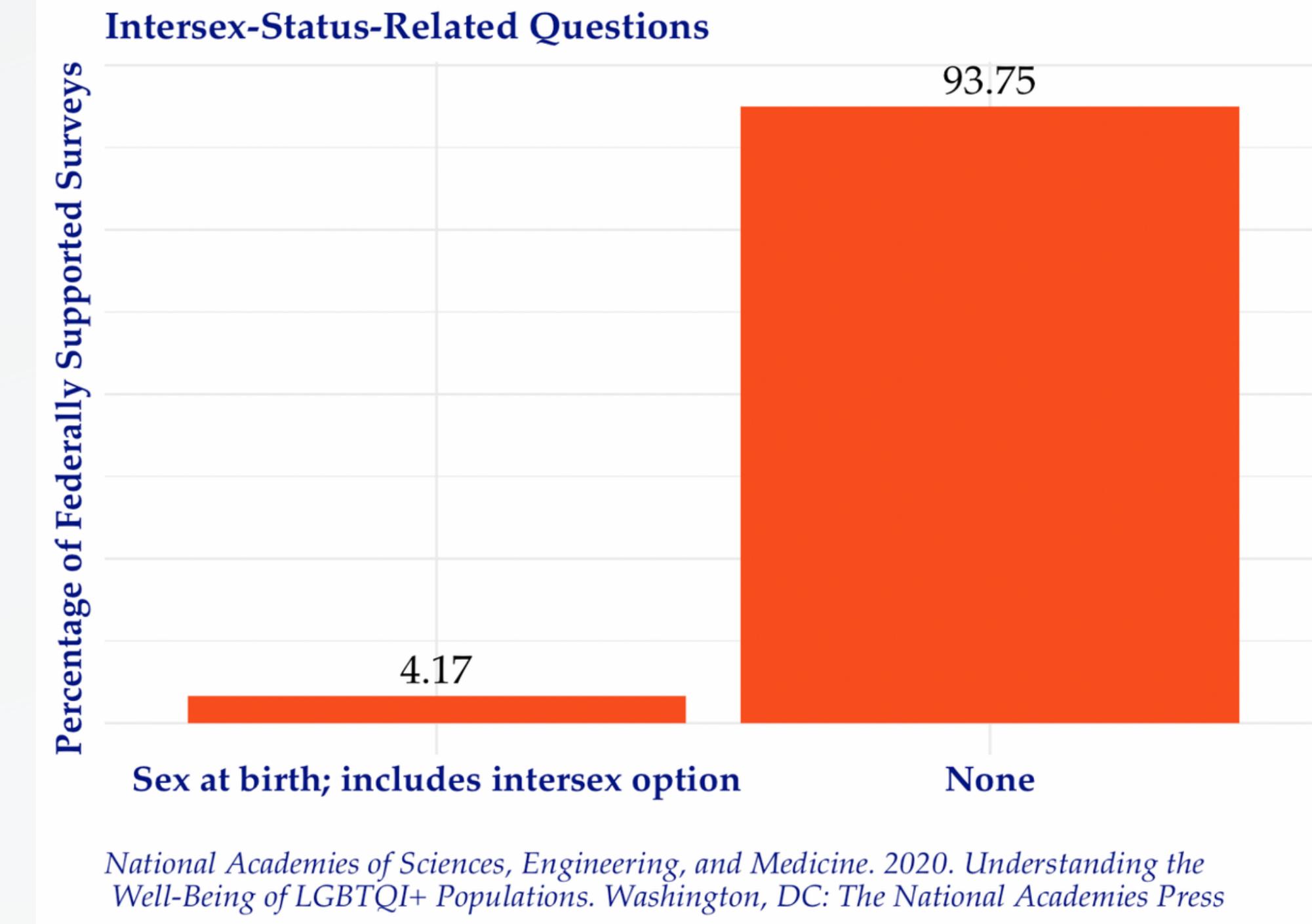
Sexual-Orientation-Related Questions



Percentage of Federally Supported Surveys

*National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2020.
Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations.
Washington, DC: The National Academies Press*

INTERSEX STATUS



FUTURE STEPS

Incorporating findings into the report being developed for the CGHE at UVA

Accessing and exploring wider data sources

Continue to contribute to the global conversation on SOGI data collection and responsible data science.

THANK YOU...

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- UVA's School of Data Science 2023 Data Justice Academy
- Capital One and Deloitte AI Institute for Government
- Center for Global Health Equity (CGHE) at UVA, and my mentor Dr. Jess Reia.



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