JOS Seminarium 6 mars 2020:

Abstract

Improving Measurement of Sexual Orientation (SO) and Gender Identity (GI)

Nancy Bates, Senior Researcher for Survey Methodology, U.S. Census Bureau

Abstract

Part I: Improving SOGI Measures within the U.S. Federal Statistical Community

The Interagency Research Group on Measuring Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) explores the measurement of SOGI in the context of U.S. federal information collections. The collection of accurate SOGI survey data presents a number of measurement and methodological challenges. The comparatively small population of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons in the U.S. suggests that relatively small sampling or reporting errors can lead to significant errors in estimation, requiring an emphasis on precision and accuracy. Furthermore, the constructs of gender identity and sexual orientation are becoming more fluid in the U.S. as terms used by individuals to describe themselves are rapidly changing. Finally, gender and sexuality can be sensitive topics, and the privacy and confidentiality of respondents and respondent data must be handled with care. In this seminar, Nancy will discuss common challenges, best practices, current research, and outstanding research gaps regarding the measurement and collection of SOGI data across the federal statistical system.

Part II: JOS Special Issue on Measuring LGBT Populations

As co-editor of the recent JOS special issue on measuring LGBT populations, Nancy will present an overview of the issue. While much progress had been made in the U.S., Europe and beyond with regard to legislation supportive and protective of LGBT populations, compared to other minority groups, official statistics on sexual and gender minorities are collected far less often. Neither sexual orientation nor gender identity are routinely collected in nationally representative surveys sponsored by national statistical agencies. Consequently, accurate estimates of the LGBT population size are rare. A lack of standards for how best to measure the constructs of sexual orientation and gender identity presents another challenge. Nancy will highlight findings from the special issue that address these challenges with a particular focus on the article "*Are Sexual Minorities Hard-to-Survey? Insights from the 2020 Census Barriers, Attitudes and Motivators Survey*". To conclude, she will discuss additional research necessary to advance the visibility of LGBT populations in official statistics.