

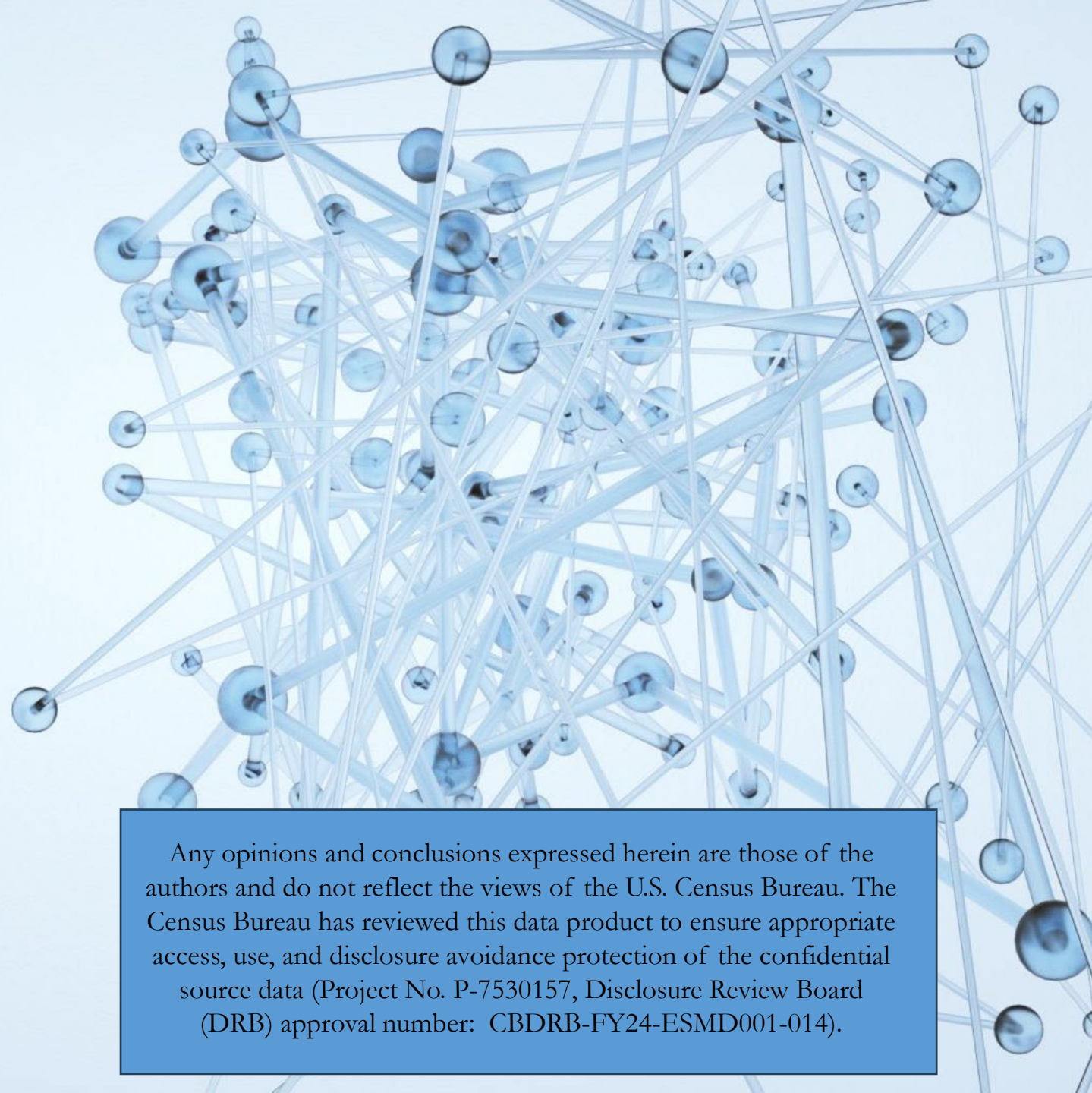
A Community-Based Study of LGBTQ+ Business Owners and Disabled Business Owners

The Annual Business Survey

Hillary Steinberg and Katie Beardall

Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology

Annual Meeting 2024



Any opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the U.S. Census Bureau. The Census Bureau has reviewed this data product to ensure appropriate access, use, and disclosure avoidance protection of the confidential source data (Project No. P-7530157, Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY24-ESMD001-014).

The Project

- Community-based qualitative approach
- Topics on the Annual Business Survey (ABS)
- Engaging LGBTQ+ business owners and disabled business owners on the best approaches for measurement and engagement with their communities

The Annual Business Survey (ABS)

Sponsored by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the National Science Foundation

Annual collection of economic and demographic characteristics for employer businesses

Purpose to measure U.S. employer businesses by sex, ethnicity, race, and veteran status of the owners

Also measures relevant business topics such as Research & Design, Innovation and Technology

Used to assess business assistance needs; allocate program resources; and analyze economic and demographic shifts over time

Research Questions

- What do LGBTQ+ business owners and disabled business owners think is the best approach for engaging with their communities?
- What might be barriers to accurate counts of both populations and how might we avoid them?
- What specific dynamics does proxy reporting create and how should the ABS handle them?

Why is this important?

- How people see themselves and salient identities
- Data quality
- Representation
- Historically Undercounted Populations in economic surveys

The Starting Point: ABS Cognitive Testing

Cognitive interviewing in 2023:

- Demographic questions about business owners
- Respondents are often business owners or proxies (accountants, HR personnel, government reporters)
- Tested existing disability measures (in line with ACS) and SOGI (in line with White House guidelines)
- Personal topics – might not be discussed in the workplace
- Less issue with measures, but with topics
- Hard to define populations
- Did not have any LGBTQ+ identified participants or owners
- Had few disabled participants and owners

SOGI Measures in Cog Testing

OWNER SEX

What is Owner X's sex?

- Male
- Female

OWNER SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Which of the following does Owner X consider themselves to be? Select all that apply.

- Straight or heterosexual
- Gay or lesbian
- Bisexual
- They use a different term: (describe) [textbox]
- Don't Know

OWNER GENDER IDENTITY

What is Owner X's gender? Select all that apply.

- Man
- Woman
- Transgender
- Nonbinary
- They use a different term: (describe) [textbox]
- Don't Know

Disability Measures in Cog Testing

Option 1:

Owner Disability

Does Owner 1 have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of their major life activities?
For this survey, major life activities can include both those in everyday and professional life.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Option 2:

Owner Disability

Does Owner 1 have a chronic physical or mental condition that they manage in everyday life?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

The Why: Cognitive Testing Findings

SOGI Measures

- Concerns that it was not relevant or necessary to report
- Depended on company culture, geography and demographics
- More break off and item nonresponse with SO
- Some cited political reasoning as barrier

Disability Measures

- First measure was based off of ACS and participants thought it was referencing ADA compliance by the business
- No set definition or factors for what counts as a disability and who we are measuring
- Looking for nuance with who is disabled, and who identifies
- Thinking about questions that capture many kinds of disabilities

The How: Data Collection and Analysis

- Internal meetings with Census Bureau experts
- 2 technical review panels
 - Measuring SOGI in economic surveys
 - Measuring disability in economic surveys
- Experts included:
 - Representatives from government agencies, including the Census Bureau
 - Academics
 - Advocates from community organizations
- Community-based methods for interviews
- Experimental question, proxy

Approach

- Community based methods appropriate for populations we don't always engage fully
- Interviews (group option)
- Recruitment working with local and national orgs
- 30-50 participants per group
- Purposive recruiting for:
 - Identities within groups (such as transgender owners, or owners with mental health conditions)
 - By industry and manufacturing status
 - Demographics like age and race
 - Geographic representation, both nationally and rural/urban
- Interviews in fall of 2024

Preliminary Findings from Experts

- Proxy complicates reporting due to disclosure
- Need explainer about why this is important
- Topics becoming more common knowledge
- Stable categories as language changes over time
- Attention to small n responses for data presentation
- Want measures where individuals see themselves reflected
 - For SOGI, this wording works
 - For disability, may need check all with types of conditions

Contact

Hillary Steinberg – Hillary.Steinberg@census.gov

Katie Beardall – Katherine.a.beardall@census.gov

Proxy Measure on ABS 2024

I.2 Proxy Reporting Status

Are you an owner of this business? *An owner refers to someone who owns 10% or more of this business.*

- Yes
- Yes, and I am answering on behalf of other owners as well
- No

SOGI Measures on ABS 2024

OWNER 1

If the business had no owners, then proceed to the instructions on the bottom of page 20.

B.1.1 Sex
What is the sex of *Owner 1*?

Male Female

B.1.2 Gender
What is *Owner 1*'s gender?

Man
 Woman
 Transgender
 Nonbinary
 They use a different term:
(specify)

Don't know

Do any of this business's owners identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

Disability Measure on ABS 2024

B.1.16 Owner Disability

Does *Owner 1* have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his/her major life activities? For this survey, major life activities can include both those in everyday and professional life.

Yes

No

Don't know