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## **The Effects of Question Phrasing and Number of Questions on Estimates of Sexual Assault Prevalence**

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Since its initial development (Koss & Oros, 1982) and revision (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987), the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) has been widely used to assess the prevalence of sexual assault victimization and perpetration. A strength of this measure is its use of behaviorally specific items to assess aspects of sexual assault without using words that label the acts as criminal behavior. Over the years, some researchers have added items to the SES to assess tactics and types of sex not included in the original instrument. Not surprisingly, adding items increases reported prevalence rates. The goal of this presentation is to systematically summarize the results from several studies conducted by this research team which have added items to the SES. Some items fill important gaps in the SES. For example, in many U.S. jurisdictions, having sex with someone who is unable to give consent due to intoxication constitutes rape. Adding this item to the SES has consistently added unique cases to the rape group in samples of female victims and male perpetrators (Abbey et al., 1996; 2001; 2005). Questions about lying to obtain sex and using guilt or anger to obtain sex have also consistently been found to add unique cases to the sexual coercion group in samples of female victims and male perpetrators (Abbey et al., 2005; Zawacki et al., 2003). Furthermore, changing the format of the questionnaire also affects response rates (Abbey, Parkhill, & Koss, 2005). Suggestions will be made regarding future research needed to make optimal decisions as to how to measure sexual assault victimization and perpetration.

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