

# **Gender Euphoria, Pleasure, Joy, Positivity, Congruence, Or Affirmation? Towards Conceptual Clarity**

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Moving Trans History Forward 2025



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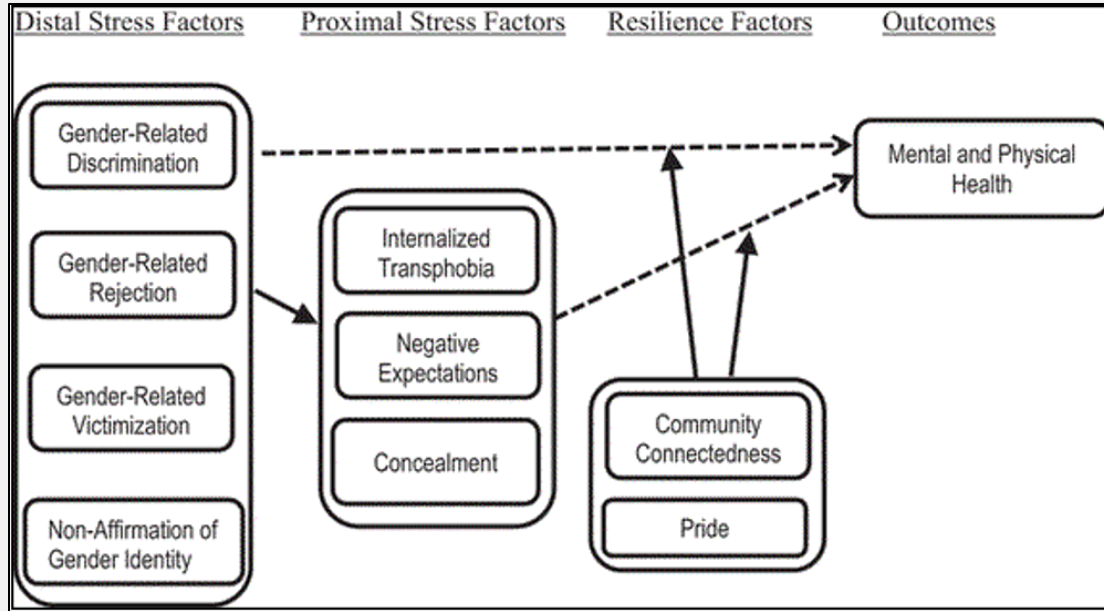
Instagram: [@transhappinessisreal](https://www.instagram.com/transhappinessisreal)



## RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODS

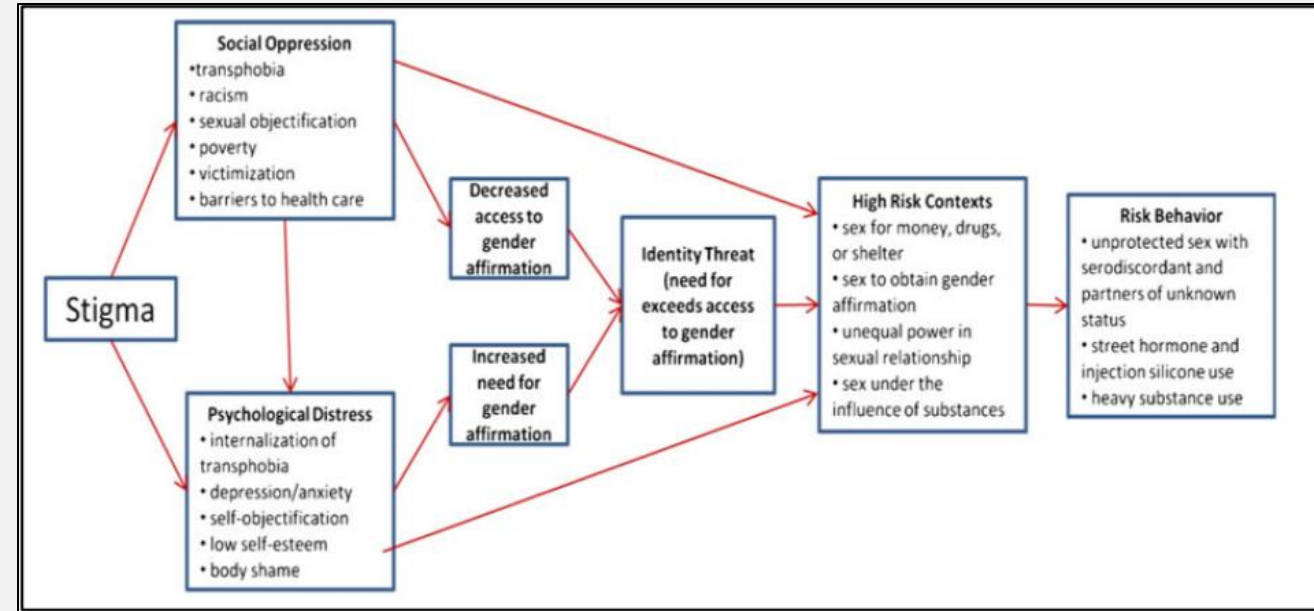
- **How are gender euphoria, gender congruence, gender affirmation, trans joy, and other positive gender-related experiences and emotions defined and operationalized in academic research?**
- **Literature review of peer-reviewed journal articles**
  - (trans OR transgender) AND (euphoria OR joy OR happiness OR pride OR affirmation)
  - Included: substantially discuss TNB experiences of positive gender-related emotions
  - Excluded: only brief mention of concepts, or used 'gender affirmation' to describe gender identity development process, gender-affirming medical care, or social support
  - **6 conceptual frameworks/models, 1 scoping review, 1 qualitative metasynthesis, 25 qualitative articles, 10 quantitative measures**

# CONCEPTUAL MODELS



## GENDER MINORITY STRESS AND RESILIENCE MODEL

(TESTA ET AL., 2015)

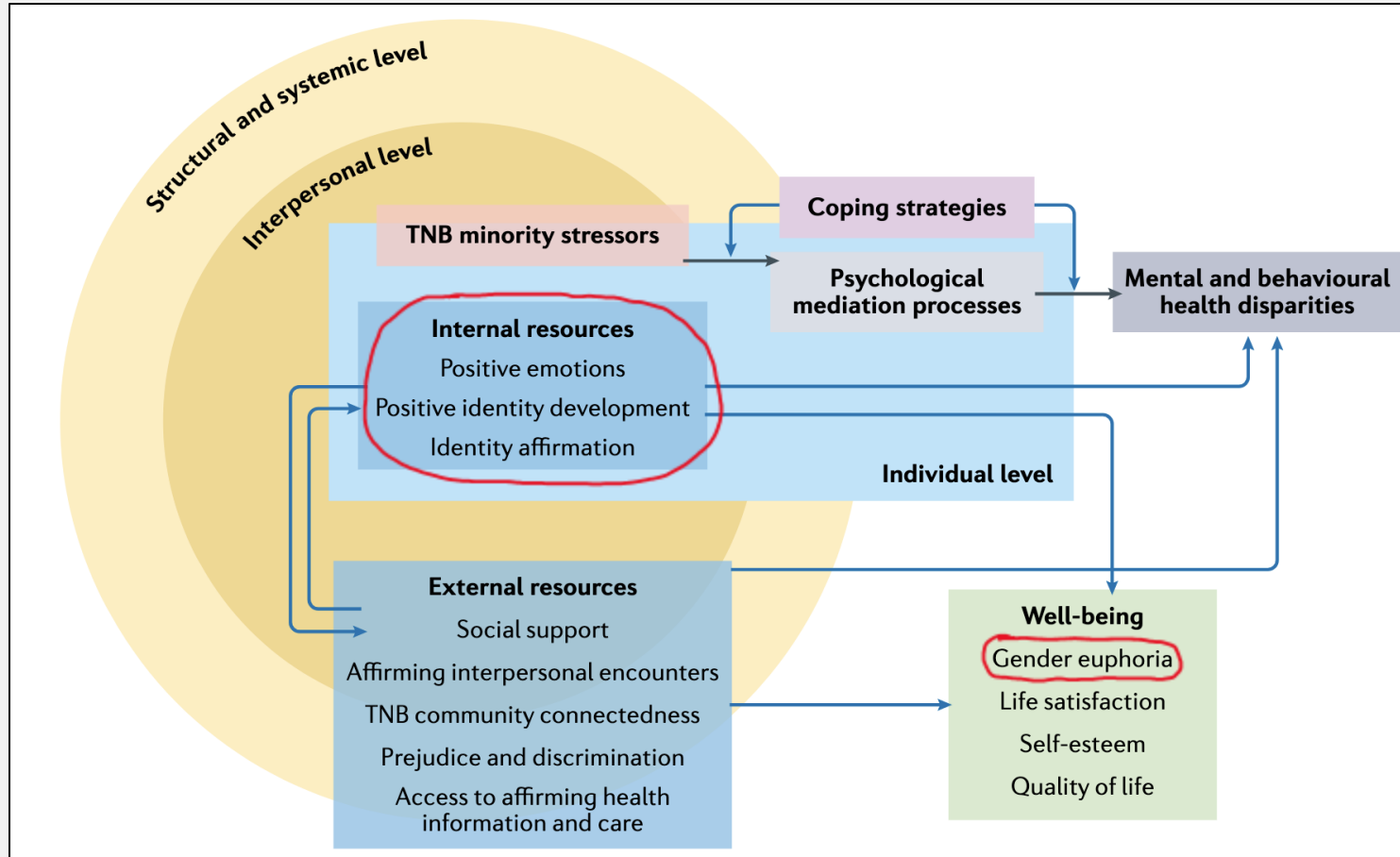


## GENDER AFFIRMATION FRAMEWORK

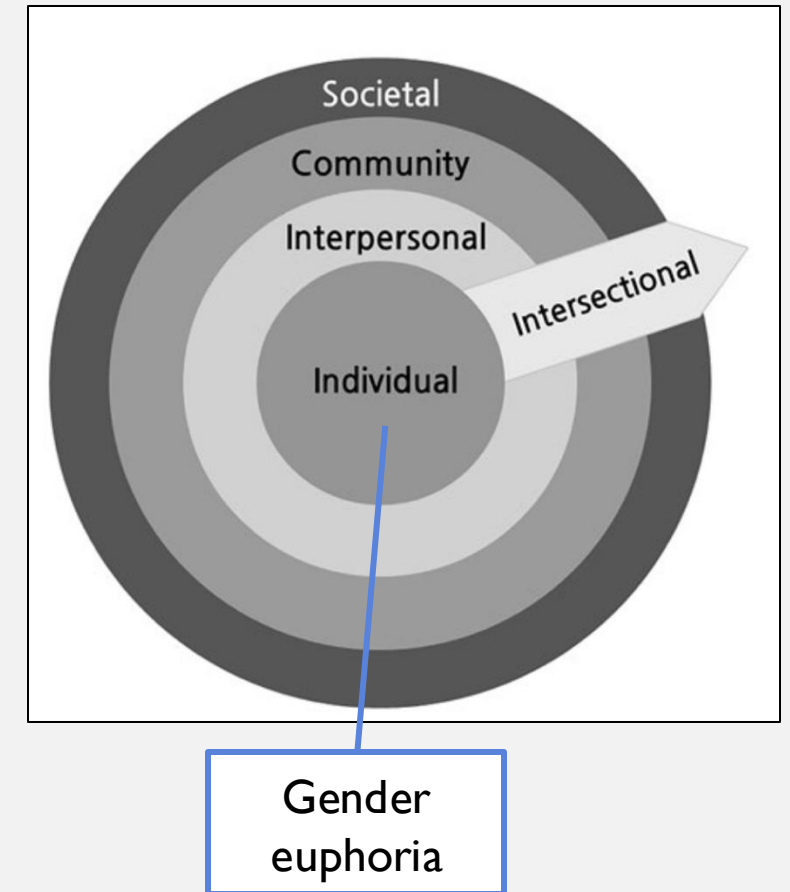
(SEVELIUS, 2013)



## TEBBE & BUDGE (2022)



## PUCKETT ET AL. (2024)



# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

## **Gender Euphoria - *In general***

- 1) Austin et al. (2022)
- 2) Beischel et al. (2022)
- 3) Hall et al. (2024)
- 4) Jacobsen & Devor (2022)
- 5) Skelton et al. (2024)
- 6) Leitch et al. (2025)
- + Kulesza et al. (2025) metasyntesis

## **Gender Euphoria - *In specific contexts***

- 1) Barras & Frith (2024) – sports & exercise
- 2) Burstall et al. (2024) – nonbinary body image
- 3) Barborini et al. (2024) – youth cannabis use
- 4) Ussher et al. (2023) – cancer survivors
- 5) Pehlivanidis & Anderson (2024) – chest binding
- 6) Easterbrook-Smith (2024) – bodily smell
- 7) Goetz & Arcomano (2023) – gender-affirming care

## **Gender Affirmation**

- 1) Sevelius (2013)
- 2) Coburn et al. (2013)
- 3) Dorsen et al. (2022)
- 4) Ussher et al. (2022)
- 5) Mullen and Moane (2013)
- 6) Goldenberg et al. (2021)

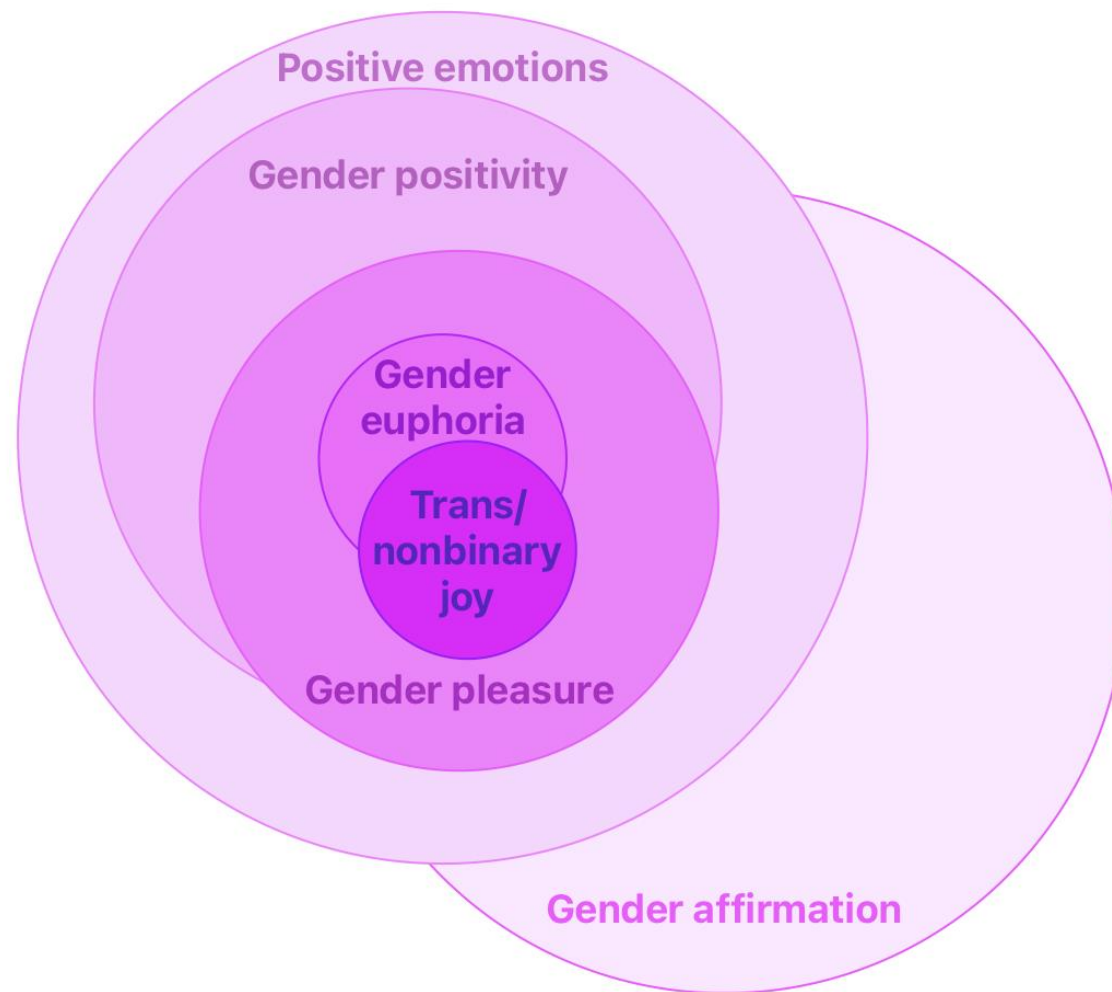
## **Trans & Nonbinary Joy**

- 1) Otter (2024)
- 2) shuster & Westbrook (2022)

## **Other concepts**

- 1) Beischel et al. (2024) – gender pleasure
- 2) Kinney et al. (2023) – gender positivity
- 3) Tebbe et al. (2022) – TNB happiness
- 4) Sinnard et al. (2022) – nonbinary emotions
- 5) Budge et al. (2015) – trans men's positive emotions





# QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

## QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

### Gender euphoria

- Ask participants if they have ever experienced gender euphoria (Grant et al., 2024)
- Likert scale - “I am happy that I have the gender identity that I do” and “I have accepted my gender identity.” – dichotomized into high vs low gender euphoria (Reisner et al., 2023)
- Nonbinary Minority Stress and Resilience Model – Gender Euphoria subscale (Matsuno et al., 2024)
- Gender Euphoria Scale (Blacklock et al., 2025)

### Gender affirmation

- King and Garamel (2013) scoping review identifies lack of consistency in measurement of social/legal gender affirmation
- Psychological Gender Affirmation Scale (Sevelius et al., 2021)

### Gender congruence

- Transgender Congruence Scale (Kozee et al., 2012)
- Gender Congruence and Life Satisfaction Scale (Jones et al., 2019)

### Other concepts

- Trans Youth CAN! Gender Positivity Scale (Bauer et al., 2021)
- Transgender Positive Identity Measure (Riggle & Mohr, 2015)

## MEASUREMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Define your terms! Ask participants what words they use!
- Remember:
  - Absence of negative emotions  $\neq$  presence of positive emotions
  - Congruence and contradiction can both be euphoric
  - Same experience can prompt different emotions for different people
- Consider what you want to measure:
  - Gender-affirming experiences vs resulting emotions
  - Intensity vs frequency
- Consider complex multidirectional relationships between positive gender feelings and health/wellbeing

## **FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

Clarify relationship between existing scales and constructs

Strategies for strengthening and increasing positive gender feelings

Importance of autonomy, empowerment, and control in gender euphoria and other positive gender feelings

## CONCLUSION

- Simply replacing gender dysphoria with gender euphoria as the defining trans emotion will not liberate us
- Gender euphoria is not just an internal experience, but an unequally distributed resource
- Fighting for the social and material conditions that enable gender euphoria is a worthwhile political goal
- For more on the possibilities and pitfalls of joy as a political strategy in queer, trans & disabled communities, read:
  - Ingram, M., & Jacobsen, K. (2024). Both because of and in spite of: Towards the reclamation of queercrip joy. *Sexualities*, 0(0), 1–16.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/13634607241264319>



# THANK YOU!

## REFERENCES



<https://bit.ly/4INuwSP>

## CONNECT WITH ME



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