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Review of Rosik et al. (2026)

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Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript which examined associations between sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE) and indicators of health and identity labeling.

This was a challenging manuscript to review for several reasons, so my comments below are accordingly limited in scope. More broadly, it is not clear to me how this manuscript should be treated in terms of its substantive content or added value. There is some tension evident in the manuscript as to whether the substantive contribution should be valued more over the ‘adversarial collaboration’ aspect of the project. This is most clear in the Discussion section, where the latter is disproportionately emphasized in my reading.

It is not clear to me that the question under investigation, namely voluntary SOCE among those concerned about their same-sex attraction, is widespread enough to warrant the current work. More motivation as to why empirical investigation on this topic is needed should be evident in the Introduction section.

The methodology is generally consonant with the research questions proposed. Statistical choices appear sound, albeit the constructs are rather narrow in scope, with only two very short scales of the main outcome variables. I understand that this is by design for a project of this kind nonetheless.

For all results, where possible, I want to see the results stratified by biological sex. This is a crucial variable to consider as a moderator as it is well documented that females are more likely to be bisexual than males. Moreover, personality and behavioral characteristics of males and females differ, which may also impact the results pertaining to depression especially. Biological sex does not appear to be at all considered as an important covariate, nor is it emphasized in the presentation of demographics.

While noted as a limitation, more attention should be given to biological/genetic reasons for the observed findings, especially concerning genetic liability for mental illness and the literature around genes and homosexuality, as well adjacent issues concerning the distinction of “gender

identity” from gender dysphoria etc. (see especially research by Bailey and Zucker on these issues).

As an evolutionary psychopathologist, the use of some terminology around gender identity labeling particularly in the discussion section (e.g., “bisexual erasure,” “plurisexual orientations,” “pansexual,” “heteroflexible”) strike me as constructs/labels not generally accepted as empirically legitimate, and the reference to the American Psychological Association (APA) around issues pertaining to clinical aspects of this work is somewhat concerning. The APA itself is a politically captured organization whose public statements regarding issues around LGBTQ+ issues have been heavily critiqued for being out-of-step with the empirical evidence (e.g., “gender affirming” care).