

# Newcomb Institute now leading EMERGE: An Open Access Repository of 900+ Gender Empowerment Survey Measures

|  
Edwin Elizabeth Thomas [newcomb@tulane.edu](mailto:newcomb@tulane.edu)

[View PDF](#)



emerge  
EVIDENCE-BASED MEASURES OF  
EMPOWERMENT FOR RESEARCH ON GENDER EQUALITY

*December 4, 2024*

[Newcomb Institute](#) (NI) at Tulane University is proud to announce its leadership of the **E**vidence-based **M**easures of **E**mpowerment for **R**esearch on **G**ender **E**quality ([EMERGE](#)) initiative as part of its growing foray of work in measurement in global health, violence prevention, and women's economic and political empowerment, and leadership.

NI takes on this role in partnership with the Center on Gender Equity and Health (GEH) at the University of California San Diego, where EMERGE began in 2016 under the direction of Prof. Anita Raj, previously the Director of GEH and now Executive Director of the Newcomb Institute. EMERGE is an open-access portal offering a one-stop-shop for survey measures focussed on gender equity and empowerment for use in research, teaching, program, advocacy, and national surveillance efforts. EMERGE was created at a time when such measures were short in availability despite their growing need under the 2015 formulation of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 3 (good health and wellbeing) and 5 (gender equality and empowerment). EMERGE aims to democratize access to best evidence survey measures on gender empowerment via its open access and psychometric scoring system and to identify and address gaps in the field in partnership with a global cadre of measurement researchers and experts from across diverse disciplines.

Today, EMERGE is a juggernaut in the gender, health, and development sectors with wide multidisciplinary use. Its focal strengths include measures on social gender norms and attitudes, legal and political empowerment, violence against women and girls, gender and environment, women's economic empowerment, family planning, and reproductive agency, maternal health, water and sanitation, and COVID/crisis-related gender measurement. Alongside its aim as a measures repository which is now touching 950 measures, EMERGE has built capacities of researchers and survey teams worldwide on the science of empirical gender measurement, has tested and validated new measures on its own and through collaborations with institutions, as well as, generated scientific knowledge through strategic partnerships with government allied-institutions, funders, NGOs and think-tanks.

**940+ measures | 1000+ weekly visitors | 35 ready-to-use survey modules**

## **EMERGE in numbers**

*“In the short term, organizations can tap into technical resources like the... EMERGE project (which is supported by the Gates Foundation). It has developed guidance and tools that can be used in already planned surveys to capture gender data on issues from unpaid work to physical and mental health...” — Melinda French Gates, co-chair, Gates Foundation ([Sexist and incomplete data hold back the world’s COVID-19 response](#))*

A recent pinnacle achievement of EMERGE encapsulating its efforts has been the integration of its created measures into multi-national surveys conducted in the areas of social and political attitudes (Afrobarometer, World Values Survey), demographic and health (Demographic and Health Surveys), and violence (Violence Against Children Surveys), working in partnership with in-country partners across South Asia and Africa. This work has resulted in more than 40 separate briefs, reports, and publications, as well as invited presentations in key forums such as for USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. We anticipate that outputs from this work will support data-driven decision-making for national policies related to women and girls’ health, economic empowerment, and positioning, and will help contribute to the development of broader SDG5 indicators.

### **A New Dawn, a New Day EMERGEs**

While EMERGE’s leadership under Dr. Raj has transitioned to NI, the web platform will continue to be hosted by its original home at GEH UCSD, paving the way for a multi-year sustained partnership on advancing the agenda of gender equity and feminist liberation in a turbulent world, rocked by COVID-19, ongoing climate crises, and growing civil unrest across world regions.

At NI, EMERGE will be able to expand its focus as a teaching and training tool for students, early career investigators, and implementers seeking to build survey research skills. We will also continue to diversify the field and build capacities of in-country researchers and community-based scholars to lead measurement while fortifying the testing of empowerment theory to advance the field of gender equity.



*“We started EMERGE in India promoting emerging researchers of gender empowerment to develop and test new measures for global health and development. Most measures at the time were developed in and by the global North for global use, and I hoped EMERGE would tip the scales to promote measurement science designed and led by the global South for local to global use. Since then we have seen tremendous success in the growth of survey measurement researchers in South Asia and Africa and a vast expansion of measures to capture gender empowerment. Our next stage of growth for EMERGE, now at Newcomb Institute, is to see the open access platform serve as an education and training tool for undergraduate and graduate students around the world, to support sustainable science in this field.”*

— **Prof Anita Raj, NI’s Executive Director**

For more information on EMERGE and Newcomb Institute, contact Namratha Rao at [nrao2@tulane.edu](mailto:nrao2@tulane.edu)