Gender Discrepancy in Asexual Identity: The Effect of Hegemonic Gender Norms on Asexual Identification

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Gender Discrepancy in Asexual Identity: 
The Effect of Hegemonic Gender Norms on Asexual Identification

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Identifying Asexuality

- Asexual: “someone who experiences little or no sexual attraction” (Mardell 2016).
- Not to be confused with lack of romantic attraction.
- Can be an umbrella term for all identities on the asexual spectrum.
- Cited at 1% of the population (Wellsing 1994), but reported high as 4% of individuals aged 18-24 (GLAAD 2017).

Methods

- Asexual Census data for gender distribution, sex assigned at birth.
- Twelve, 15-45 minute, semi-structured interviews.
- One hour focus-group discussion.
- Data analyzed using a modified grounded theory approach (Corbin and Strauss).
- MAXQDA to code data for recurring themes.

Gender Discrepancy

- Lower stigma for not having sex, sometimes expectation that feminine people do not want/desire sex
- Greater communication/discussion of identity → more likely to be exposed to asexuality
- For genderqueer people: exposure to identities from queer community

In Progress

- Further analysis of interviews
- Coding and analysis of 600+ collected surveys
- Completion of discussion and conclusion of honors thesis paper

Future Work

- Account for more variables such as race, country, age, etc.
- Greater depth of recording individual experiences
- Capture perceptions of non-aseual identifying people of how asexuality fits with gender norms.

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