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„Retweet If You Support Asexuals” - A Content Analysis of the Discourse around Asexuality during Pride Month 2019 on Twitter and Tumblr

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Zusammenfassung

*Viele Asexuelle finden erst spät zu ihrer Identität. Austausch mit Gleichgesinnten hilft ein Vokabular für eigene Erfahrungen zu finden. Soziale Medien mit hoher Anonymität bieten Raum zur Entfaltung von Identitäten und Gemeinschaft (Carrasco, 2017). Abweichende Diskriminierungserfahrungen führen zu Hierarchien zwischen den sozialen Gruppen der GSRM Community. Um die Gruppenverhältnisse sichtbar zu machen, untersuchte diese Studie inhaltsanalytisch Beiträge zu Asexualität und Pride auf Twitter und Tumblr (n=1.000). Analysiert wurden die Inhalte und Nutzer*innendaten. Die Ergebnisse stützen die vermuteten Hierarchien. Heteroromantische Asexuelle, die gegen Normen von sowohl der GSRM Community aber auch der asexuellen Gruppe verstoßen, erfahren häufiger Ausgrenzung, nicht zuletzt durch andere Asexuelle. Weitere Forschung ist nötig, um die Ergebnisse für andere GSRM Gruppen zu prüfen. Mehr Verständnis für die intra- und intergruppalen Beziehungen der GSRM Community kann zu höherer Sichtbarkeit und Akzeptanz zwischen den Gruppen führen.*

Keywords: Asexualität, Soziale Medien, Soziale Gruppen, LGBTQIA, GSRM

Summary

Many asexuals come to their identity late in life. An exchange with like-minded people helps to find vocabulary for one's own experiences. Social media sites with a high level of anonymity offer space to experience identity and community (Carrasco, 2017). Divergent experiences of discrimination lead to hierarchies between social groups in the GSRM community. To make group relations visible, this study analyzed posts and user data in the discourses around asexuality and Pride during Pride Month on Twitter and Tumblr (n=1.000). The results support the hypothesized hierarchies. Heteroromantic asexuals who violate norms of both the GSRM community and the asexual group are more likely to experience exclusion, not least by other asexuals. Further research is needed to test the findings for other GSRM groups. A better understanding of the intra- and intergroup relationships of the GSRM community may lead to a greater visibility and acceptance between groups.

Keywords: Asexuality, Social Media, Social Groups, LGBTQIA, GSRM

1. Introduction

Platforms with a high level of anonymity, such as Twitter and Tumblr, provide space for members of the Gender, Sexual and Romantic Minorities¹ (GSRM) community to explore their identity facets, find like-minded people, and experience support for their identity (Carrasco, 2017). However, while members of the GSRM community have common ground in going against heteronormative expectations, the community itself is not one homogeneous group. Distinctive and partially conflicting goals lead to competition between subgroups and can strain intergroup relations. Non-monosexual² identity groups that do not fully oppose heteronormative norms might be excluded or treated with negativity (Rubin, 1984). This is especially true for asexuals³, who, as a very young identity group, still face prejudice and erasure not only from mainstream culture but also from within the GSRM community (Cerankowski and Milks, 2010).

This study takes a closer look at the importance of social media for the GSRM community as a whole and especially the asexual community as one of the subgroups. These two discourses are of particular interest to find out more about both the discussions about asexuality as one GSRM identity in particular and how this sexual identity is embedded into the more general GSRM discourse compared to other sexual identities. The focus of this study is guided by three research questions that aim to find out: (1) who is participating in these two discourses, (2) what topics are addressed in the discourses, and (3) how asexuality is talked about in comparison to other sexual identities.

2. Theoretical background

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) positions social identity as a core element of the individual's identity construct for contexts in which the social group becomes a focal point of an individual's self-concept. The individual self-categorizes as a part of the group and derives value from their membership to the point that positive comparison with other groups boosts the self-esteem of the individual (Jaspal, 2019; Spears, 2011).

Ingroup favoritism in the presence of realistic or symbolic threats that affect the social group's positive distinctiveness may lead to group members derogating outgroup members in a protective manner (Jaspal, 2019). However, Marques et al. (1988) found that

members who reflect poorly on the group are excluded to protect the group's image and police its boundaries (Spears, 2011). Members deviating from the group's norms are judged more harshly than outgroup members in order to maintain a positive social identity for the norm-abiding members (Hutsell, 2012).

Studies (e. g. Hutsell, 2012) have indicated the existence of a ranking between the subgroups within the GSRM community, in which homosexual identity groups are perceived as more established, and non-monosexual identity groups, such as bisexuals and asexuals, as the less established part of the community (Hutsell, 2012). MacInnis and Hodson (2012) examined attitudes toward the different groups and found a hierarchy in which „gay men and lesbians were evaluated most positively, followed by bisexuals, with asexuals being evaluated most negatively of all groups” (MacInnis & Hodson, 2012, p. 731). Both of these lower-ranked GSRM groups have reported experiencing devaluation and harsh treatment by the higher-ranked groups at times (Hutsell, 2012).

¹The more commonly known acronym is LGBTQQIAAP, which stands for „Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Allies, Pansexual” (Goodrich et al., 2016, p. 212). The acronym GSRM was chosen for this study to allow better readability by using a shorter term while also avoiding the exclusion of any sexual, romantic, or gender identity.

²Monosexual is a term describing individuals who have sexual desire for one gender only (UC Davis LGBTQIA Resource Center, 2020). Monosexuality does not describe the experience of all homo- and heterosexuals but is used in this study to contrast the difference to non-monosexual identities, i.e., a- and bisexuality.

³Asexuality describes a „broad spectrum of sexual orientations generally characterized by feeling varying degrees of sexual attraction“ (UC Davis LGBTQIA Resource Center, 2020). It is distinct from celibacy in that it is not a deliberate abstention from sexual activity. Some asexuals have healthy sexual relationships, but experience little to no physical attraction to other individuals (UC Davis LGBTQIA Resource Center, 2020)

Many individuals who now self-identify as asexual did not realize that their understanding of attraction was different from allosexual⁴ individuals until they first came across the term asexuality, usually on the internet (Scherrer, 2008). Finding words to describe an experience is essential, as the construction of identity and relationship models are limited to the resources that individuals can access (Chasin, 2011).

Social networking sites offer participation in the discourse to encounter information and voice their thoughts. The GSRM individuals who participate in online discussion groups with other GSRM individuals were found to have greater self-acceptance of their identity, be more likely to disclose this identity to their friends and families, and generally feel less estranged from society (Gomillion and Giuliano, 2011). Users often prefer to first disclose their GSRM identity on platforms that allow them to explore their identity facets anonymously, such as Twitter and Tumblr (Carrasco, 2017).

Tumblr is used mainly by people 16–34 years old and is known as a space for marginalized communities and progressives, with discourses of feminism, anti-racism, queer and gender studies, as well as post-colonialism (McCracken, 2017). Twitter, on the other hand, is used by an older, more heterogeneous group of individuals that is not necessarily as progressive (Sharma et al., 2017). Where Tumblr's focus lies on the blog-style creation of content, Twitter emphasizes the connection and discussions between people. These differences in focus and age groups, while also allowing a high level of anonymity, make these two platforms interesting to analyze because they capture different aspects of GSRM discourses.

3. Research Questions

Pride Month, which takes place annually in June, commemorates the Stonewall Riots in 1969⁵ by users expressing their identity, sharing knowledge, and organizing events (Duguay, 2016). The increased coverage during Pride Month allows for higher visibility of GSRM community members and, thus, offers an opportunity for individuals within but also outside the community to be aware of and join the discourse on social media during this month. The following research question is addressed to find out who exactly is participating from inside and outside the GSRM community:

RQ1: Who is participating in the exchanges of the

asexual and the Pride discourse?

The GSRM community is a very heterogeneous group, linking many subgroups with different norms and practices (van Anders, 2015). Thus, the range of topics shared about Pride generally and asexuality as a subgroup is another question this study wants to answer:

RQ2: What topics do the posts in the exchanges of the asexual and the Pride discourse address?

Visibility plays an integral part for individuals within the GSRM community. Asexuality is still lacking visibility due to its late official emergence and has to fight prejudice and erasure from not only mainstream culture but also the GSRM community (Cerankowski and Milks, 2010). MacInnis and Hodson (2012) and Hutsell (2012) have indicated a difference in attitude towards the different GSRM sexual identity groups, with asexuality at the lower end of the hierarchy. Hence, this study asks the following research question:

RQ3: How is asexuality talked about by its own and other sexual identity groups in comparison to other sexual identities?

4. Method

4.1. Material and Sampling

This study aims to take a closer look at the suggested hierarchies within the GSRM community, with asexuality as the most recent sexual identity group as the focus.

⁴Allosexual describes individuals who are experiencing sexual attraction, unrelated to the sexual identity they use to describe themselves (UC Davis LGBTQIA Resource Center, 2020). Allosexuality is often used in contrast to asexuality to mark the difference between those who do and do not experience sexual attraction.

⁵The Stonewall Riots were a series of protests by GSRM people in response to a violent police raid of the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969. The first Pride marches took place in the United States in the following year.

In order to achieve the study's aim, a total of 1.369.089 tweets and 184.506 Tumblr posts published during Pride Month in June 2019 were collected using the crawler software *TAGS v6.1.9.1* for Twitter and *TumblrTool* for Tumblr. The content collected focused on two different keyword groups: *asexuality* (,asexuality', ,asexual', ,asexuals', ,ace', ,aces') and *Pride* (,happypride', ,happy pride', ,happypridemonth', ,happy pride month', ,pride2019', ,pride 2019', ,pridemonth', ,pride month'). It was necessary to clean the data before the sampling due to the multiple connotations of the word „ace“ in different contexts.

A random sample of 1.000 publicly available posts written in English was drawn from the adjusted data (n=344.998), with 250 posts taken from each group on each platform. The percentage of total posts collected in the respective group determined the number of posts per keyword. This allowed for a sample depicting a more extensive range of topics within the discourses. Of this sample, 100 posts per keyword group and platform were analyzed qualitatively using *MAXQDA* to build viable categories for the subsequent quantitative content analysis. This approach was chosen to evaluate the quantitative distribution of the categories established with the qualitative analysis.

4.2. Measurements of Variables

Formal categories such as the *date of post*, *username*, *post type*, *URL*, the *post text*, as well as *hashtags* on Tumblr, and numbers for *followers* and *friends* on Twitter, were collected automatically; *user biography* and the *user location* (Twitter only), were added manually by opening the link provided by the crawlers. Additional *media* attached to the post were coded in ,image', ,animated gif', ,video', ,outgoing link', ,audio file', ,else', and ,multiple', and was also described by the coders in open description fields. The user reactions to a post were recorded in numbers of *reblogs/retweets*, *likes*, and *comments*, as well as a combined number of *notes* (Tumblr only).

The following categories were tested in a reliability test using Cohen's Kappa by two independent coders (n=100) and applied in a quantitative content analysis. The *valence of comments* was coded into ,more negative', ,more positive', ,balanced', ,neutral', and ,no answers'. When the binary categories *available*, *English*, or *discourse* were coded as ,negative', the subsequent categories were not coded. These filter variables were used to exclude any posts in another language or topic or that might no longer be available.

In order to answer RQ1, user-related categories were coded using the user biography and the user location as a base: *Account type* was measured in ,personal account', ,personal art account', ,personal GSRM-related account', ,celebrity account', ,community account', ,organization account', ,company account', ,movie/stage production account' and ,other'. *Gender* was coded as ,cis female identifying', ,cis male identifying', ,trans female identifying', ,trans male identifying', ,female identifying', ,male identifying', ,no gender', ,more than one gender', ,nonbinary' and ,other'. Individuals who did not state whether they identified as cis or trans were coded in ,female-identifying' or ,male-identifying' or one of the nonbinary options. *Sexual identity* was measured in ,asexual', ,bisexual', ,pansexual', ,lesbian', ,gay', ,heterosexual', ,questioning' and ,other'. Correspondingly, *romantic identity*⁶ was coded in ,aromantic', ,biromantic', ,panromantic', ,lesbianromantic', ,gayromantic', ,heteroromantic', ,questioning' or ,other'. All categories regarding a user's identity were only recorded if the information was mentioned in the user biography or location.

The topics addressed in the post were coded in binary categories and sorted into topic groups to answer RQ2. The *affirming group* included posts talking about *identity*, *visibility*, *education*, and *connections*, and the *negative group* included the *denial*, *exclusion*, *marginalization* of, or *general negativity* towards GSRM identities or the community as a whole. Two additional groups were posts *questioning identity* and those covering *other topics* that are neither of the above.

Following the user-related categories, the *mention of asexuals*, *gay men*, *lesbians*, *bisexuals*, and *pansexuals* was measured as ,not mentioned', ,yes, positive', ,yes, negative', ,yes, neutral' and ,unsure'. These categories were used to answer RQ3.

⁶An aromantic identity is characterized by not feeling romantically attracted to any other person. Aromanticism can appear together with an asexual identity; however, an asexual individual can be romantically attracted to other people, and aromantic individuals can be sexually attracted to others as well (UC Davis LGBTQIA Resource Center, 2020).

5. Results

A total of 957 unique users posted in the two discourses, with only two accounts posting more than five posts over Pride Month 2019, both of which were community accounts posting affirmations supporting asexuals. The account types found in this sample are overwhelmingly personal accounts ($n=896$, 89.8%, $n=1.000$), of which 8.2 percent are personal art accounts ($n=82$), and 3.6 percent are personal GSRM-related accounts ($n=36$). About 5.0 percent of posts came from community accounts ($n=50$), and 2.3 percent from organizations ($n=23$). Accounts of companies ($n=14$, 1.4%), celebrities ($n=8$, 0.8%), and media productions ($n=7$, 0.7%) were also found in the sample.

5.1. Users Participating in the Discourses

Users mentioned their age in their profile in 204 posts (20.4% of the full sample, $n=1.000$), with the age ranging between 14 and 40 years ($M=22.14$, $SD=4.7$). Only 135 users mentioned their gender identity in their user details (see Table 1). Half of these individuals identified as being outside of the gender binary ($n=72$, 53.3%), and 47 individuals identified as female (34.8%). Individuals who openly identified as male make up the smallest group of the sample ($n=16$, 11.9%).

The total of users who mention their sexual identity in their profile wrote fewer than a quarter of the posts (see Table 1). Among the users who did, the majority identified as asexual. Individuals under the bisexual umbrella make up the second largest group overall, and the largest in the Pride discourse. Homosexual identities appeared less often, with only individuals openly identifying as heterosexual posting less. The majority of individuals mentioning their sexual identity in their user data, thus, identify as a non-monosexual sexual identity (i.e., asexual and bisexual identities, $n=199$, 86.9% of users mentioning their sexual orientation, $n=229$). The GSRM identity category mentioned least in this sample is romantic identity, which only 99 individuals indicated in their profile, all of whom were either asexuals ($n=88$, 88.9%) or bisexuals ($n=4$, 4.0%).

A majority of users who disclosed both their sexual identity and romantic identity consider themselves asexual, with a significant relationship between the two variables being found through a chi-square test (see Table 2). More than half of those who mentioned their

gender identity ($n=135$, 58.9%) also specified their sexual identity, most of whom identified as asexual ($n=41$, 17.9%). A chi-square test of independence found a significant association between these two variables.

5.2. Topics Mentioned in the Discourses

Most posts in the sample feature affirming topics ($n=949$, 94.1%, $n=1.000$), which is also true for either discourse; with the Pride discourse being slightly more affirmative than the asexual discourse (see Table 3). While both discourses show the same range of affirming topics, albeit with different frequencies, the same cannot be said about negativity-related topics. Not only does the asexual discourse show a higher occurrence of negative topics, but the range is also more extensive than in the Pride discourse. No mention of denial of or misconceptions about GSRM identities appeared in the Pride discourse at all. On the other hand, a few posts in the asexual discourse were found that denied the existence of specific identities ($n=5$, 1.0%) or spread misconceptions about identities ($n=6$, 1.2%). Overall, only 2.8 percent of the posts in the sample contain negativity, which is surprising considering the openness of the platforms to the public, where outgroup members could easily participate and spread negativity within the discourses.

Similarly, posts in the asexual discourse educate others more often about the terms and concepts of their sexual identity and clear up misconceptions they have encountered. Thus, while affirming topics are somewhat balanced for both discourses, the asexual discourse generally covers a wider range of topics. Interestingly, while self-presentation and identity-related topics seem to be important to both discourses, they appear significantly more often in the Pride discourse than in the asexual discourse (see Table 3).

5.3. Mentions and Connotations about Sexual Identities in the Discourses

Considering the focus on asexuality in this study, it is not surprising that of all sexual identities, asexuality is mentioned the most in the full sample (see Table 4). It is, however, interesting to point out that only asexuals and bisexuals are mentioned in a negative context at all, albeit in low numbers. Remarkably, while most asexuals identifying openly in the sample write about their own sexual identity – and, thus, their ingroup – in a positive context ($n=111$, 71.6% of posts from users

that disclosed their sexual identity, $n=229$), they also mention asexuality in a negative light ($n=7$, 4.5%). The rest of the negative mentions were given by users who did not disclose their sexual identity in the user data ($n=21$).

The differences become even more telling considering the context within which sexual identities are discussed, as only asexuality and bisexuality are mentioned with a negative connotation in posts containing negative topics (see Table 4). Homosexuality is only mentioned in a neutral context of otherwise negative posts, showing that the negativity is not towards these groups but other groups, the heteronormative outgroup, or the GSRM community as a whole.

Asexuality is mentioned in all three possible connotations, with negativity taking the lead over positive or neutral connotations. This means that while all sexual identities are generally mentioned frequently in a positive, affirming context, asexuality appears more often in a negative connotation within negative posts than all other GSRM sexual identities combined.

A chi-square test of independence showed no significant relationship between posts discussing negative topics and posts mentioning sexual identities (see Table 4). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the relationship between negative topics and the mention of asexuality is more removed from the expected frequency than any other sexual identity.

6. Limitations

Analyzing the discourses of other GSRM identities could help to provide insights into the boundaries and topics of other social groups. This would place the findings from this study into a bigger picture and would help establish whether the hierarchy proposed holds up with all groups involved analyzed. Similarly, this study could benefit from a bigger sample size, as well as from an additional questionnaire to complete the missing user information and ask about the usage motives of the individuals participating. Applying the research design to a different month would be beneficial to understanding the discourses outside of a period of increased awareness.

This study was limited to posts written in English that were still online and not posted by accounts set to private at the time of coding. Similarly, the sample only contains posts shared in hashtags or using keywords

that were determined essential to the asexual and Pride discourses. Adding discourses in more languages and additional keywords could offer further insights. The high number of tweets shared around some keywords and Twitter's limit on crawling tweets for only a particular time may have led to a handful of tweets being lost in the process. Some standardized categories such as gender, sexual identity, and a few topics involving in-depth knowledge of the GSRM community necessitated additional training between coders to reach a shared level of knowledge.

For reasons of simplicity, this research does not consider other identity fragments such as gender, race, and class. Adding these factors might influence the results and possibly add more nuanced layers to the supposed hierarchy, as sexism, racism, and classism cannot separate those fragments from the individual.

7. Discussion

This study aimed to take a closer look at the suggested hierarchies within the GSRM community, with asexuality as the most recent sexual identity group as the focus. Accordingly, a sample of tweets and blog posts from the asexual discourse and the more general Pride discourse during Pride Month in 2019 ($n=1000$) was analyzed to establish (1) who was participating in these two discourses, (2) which topics were addressed in the discourses and (3) how asexuality was talked about in comparison to other sexual identities. This study contributes to broadening the understanding of social media as a space for marginalized individuals and intergroup relations between different identity groups within the GSRM community.

(1) The discourses around Pride Month and asexuality are both held by individuals between the ages of fourteen and forty, with the majority of users being young adults. While the majority of posts were posted by personal accounts, only a fifth or less of users shared their age or details about their gender, sexual, or romantic identity. This could be because users who did not disclose information about their identities might not consider this information relevant enough, or perhaps they do not want to be reduced to these fragments of their self-concept. It is also possible that some decide against sharing their identity fragments to avoid negative responses.

A majority of users disclosing their identity were part of the GSRM community in either their sexual or gender identity or both, with most identifying as

outside of the more established monosexual or binary identity groups. This supports the assumption that using labels is particularly relevant for members of less established, lower-ranking groups to show visibility and connect with other members of their group.

(2) Despite negativity appearing in the sample, both discourses are overwhelmingly positive towards all GSRM sexual identities, including asexuality. The Pride discourse seems to be the more positive of the two discourses, with a slightly higher amount of affirming content and a lower number of posts including negativity. It appears that the rules, concepts, and boundaries of social groups around GSRM identities are negotiated within the social group and their specific discourse, while the more general GSRM community and the discourse around Pride particularly focus on affirming and connecting individuals from all GSRM identities through events celebrating the achievements of the community as a whole.

(3) While all sexual identities are discussed in a positive or neutral connotation more often, only non-monosexual identities are mentioned in a negative context at all, which mirrors the hierarchical ranking of social groups within the GSRM community suggested by Hutsell (2012) and MacInnis and Hodson (2012). Correspondingly, asexuality was mentioned in a negative context more often than all other sexual identities combined. These negative mentions, however, originated either from asexuals or users who did not disclose their own sexual identity, but not from users with other openly stated sexual identities. All of the mentions from asexuals were towards heteroromantic asexuals.

Heteroromantic asexuals conform with their romantic attraction to heteronormative expectations of desiring a partner of the opposite gender, which can be perceived as a threat to the boundaries of the GSRM community. As asexuality in itself has not yet been accepted as part of the GSRM community due to the sexual identity's lack of representation, asexuals of any other romantic identity might be more prone to exclude heteroromantic individuals to secure the group's membership in the GSRM community and police the boundaries of the group to achieve positive distinctiveness.

Being a late-emerged sexual identity, research on asexuality has still a lot to offer regarding discussions about intergroup relations, the nature of sexual attraction and behavior, alternative relationship models,

and a differentiation between distinct forms of attraction. This research aimed to suggest a way to make these group relations visible and more generally to discover the topics and participants in the discourses around Pride Month and asexuality in particular. The categories built for this study provide a good starting point for future research analyzing different periods and comparing this study's results with discourses around other GSRM identities. This could lead to a better understanding of GSRM intergroup relations and help to further awareness and tolerance between the different subgroups – and possibly increased visibility and acceptance of lower-ranking groups, such as pansexuality or asexuality, as part of the community.

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Table 1. User Information Shared in Sample and Discourses.

User Information	Total in %	Asexual Discourse in %	Pride Discourse in %
Gender^a			
Female Identifying	34.8 (n=47)	17.8 (n=24)	17.0 (n=32)
<i>Cis Female Identifying</i>	5.2 (n=7)	1.5 (n=4)	3.7 (n=3)
<i>Trans Female Identifying</i>	5.2 (n=7)	3.0 (n=4)	2.2 (n=2)
<i>No Further Distinction</i>	24.4 (n=33)	13.3 (n=18)	11.1 (n=15)
Male Identifying	11.9 (n=16)	8.1 (n=11)	3.7 (n=5)
<i>Trans Male Identifying</i>	4.4 (n=6)	3.0 (n=4)	1.5 (n=2)
<i>No Further Distinction</i>	7.4 (n=10)	7.4 (n=7)	2.2 (n=3)
Outside Binary Gender	53.3 (n=72)	38.5 (n=52)	14.8 (n=20)
<i>More Than One Gender</i>	8.1 (n=11)	5.9 (n=8)	2.2 (n=3)
<i>No Gender</i>	6.7 (n=9)	5.2 (n=7)	1.5 (n=2)
<i>Non-Binary</i>	38.5 (n=52)	27.4 (n=37)	11.1 (n=15)
Sexual Orientation^b			
Asexual	67.7 (n=155)	59.8 (n=137)	7.9 (n=18)
Bisexual	14.8 (n=34)	4.8 (n=11)	10.0 (n=23)
Pansexual	4.4 (n=10)	2.2 (n=5)	2.2 (n=5)
Lesbian	7.9 (n=18)	2.6 (n=6)	5.2 (n=12)
Gay Men	3.9 (n=9)	1.3 (n=3)	2.6 (n=6)
Heterosexual	1.3 (n=3)	1.3 (n=3)	-
Romantic Orientation^c			
Aromantic	55.6 (n=55)	51.5 (n=51)	4.0 (n=4)
Biromantic	11.1 (n=11)	8.1 (n=8)	3.0 (n=3)
Panromantic	20.2 (n=20)	16.2 (n=16)	4.0 (n=4)
Lesbianromantic	9.1 (n=9)	8.1 (n=8)	1.0 (n=1)
Gayromantic	1.0 (n=1)	1.0 (n=1)	-
Heteroromantic	2.0 (n=2)	2.0 (n=2)	-
Questioning	1.0 (n=1)	1.0 (n=1)	-

Note. ^an=135. ^bn=230. ^cn=99. Percentages are given per category of user information.

Table 2. Sexual Identity Disclosed Together With Romantic or Gender Identity.

	Asexuals	Bisexuals	Pansexuals	Lesbians	Gay Men	Heterosexuals	χ^2 (1)	<i>p</i>	<i>w</i>
Total in %	67.7 (n=155)	14.8 (n=34)	4.4 (n=10)	7.9 (n=18)	3.9 (n=9)				
Romantic Identity	38.4 (n=88)	1.3 (n=3)	0.4 (n=1)	-	-	-	55.6	<.001	.493
Gender Identity	17.9 (n=41)	15.2 (n=12)	3.1 (n=7)	4.8 (n=11)	0.4 (n=1)	0.4 (n=1)	17.9	.003	.279

Note. *n*=229. Percentages are denoting the 229 users who mentioned their sexual identity in the user data. Two-tailed significances are given for χ^2 -values. *df* = 5.

Table 3. Posts Discussing Fields of Topics in the Discourses.

	Asexual Discourse in %	Pride Discourse in %	χ^2	<i>p</i>	<i>w</i>
Affirming Topics	91.2 (n=456)	97.0 (n=484)	15.1	<.001	.123
Identity	50.0 (n=250)	62.2 (n=311)	15.1	<.001	.123
Visibility	21.2 (n=106)	18.0 (n=90)	1.6	.202	.040
Education	32.6 (n=163)	15.6 (n=78)	39.5	<.001	.199
Connection	28.8 (n=144)	51.6 (n=258)	54.1	<.001	.233
Negative Topics	4.2 (n=21)	1.4 (n=7)	7.3	.007	.085
Denial	1.0 (n=5)	-	5.0	.025	.071
Exclusion	2.4 (n=12)	1.8 (n=4)	4.1	.044	.064
Marginalization	2.0 (n=10)	0.2 (n=1)	7.5	.006	.086
General Negativity	1.8 (n=9)	0.6 (n=3)	3.0	.081	.055
Questioning	3.4 (n=17)	0.2 (n=1)	14.5	<.001	.120
Sexual Behavior	2.2 (n=11)	-	11.1	.001	.105
Other Topics	4.2 (n=21)	5.2 (n=26)	0.6	.455	.024

Note. The percentages describe the percentages of posts within each discourse (*n*=500). Numbers do not add up to total post number per discourse, as posts can contain more than one field of topics. Two-tailed significances are given for χ^2 -values. *df* = 1.

Table 4. Sexual Identities Mentioned in Posts Overall and Containing Negative Topics.

Sexual Identities Mentioned	n	Connotation Overall			Connotation Posts Containing Negative Topics			χ^2 (1)	p	w
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Negative			
Asexuals	508	78.0 (n=396)	16.5 (n=84)	5.5 (n=28)	0.8 (n=4)	0.8 (n=4)	2.2 (n=11)	3.4	.067	.058
Bisexuals	119	73.9 (n=88)	15.2 (n=30)	0.8 (n=1)	0.8 (n=1)	-	-	1.9	.167	.044
Pansexuals	77	79.2 (n=61)	15.6 (n=12)	5.2 (n=4)	-	-	3.9 (n=3)	0.4	.546	.019
Gay men	138	47.1 (n=65)	52.9 (n=73)	-	-	1.4 (n=2)	-	1.1	.299	.033
Lesbians	86	69.8 (n=60)	29.1 (n=26)	-	-	1.2 (n=1)	-	0.9	.334	.031

Note. Percentages are based on the total amount of mentions (n) per row. Two-tailed significances are given for χ^2 -values. $df = 1$.