

Asexuality and the Politics of Queer Identity: Prejudice and Discrimination within the Community

Asexuality: A lack of sexual attraction, this is demonstrated by a spectrum which accounts for varied degrees of sexual attraction.

(1)

Acephobia: Discrimination against asexuals (1)

Examples of statements and actions to discriminate against Asexuals

- Implicit
 - Passive aggressive statements i.e. “You will find someone eventually” or “Have you gone to the doctor to get your hormones checked?”
 - Ignoring and discrediting asexual people’s voices (Casual Conversation)
- Explicit
 - “You don’t belong here, you are essentially straight”
 - “Everyone is sexual that can’t be natural”
 - Offensive jokes

Causes and Consequences

- Intergroup relations theory: Asexuality is seen as too different to be a part of some queer spaces and due to that there is a lack of communication between asexuals and other queer identities. Possible differentiation due to the ‘lack’ of discrimination that asexual people have (1)
- Lack of belonging in the queer community or the straight community, facing discrimination from both sides because of a lack of real life safe spaces
 - This leads asexuals to feel out of place and distanced from others in all situations

Strategies to reduce prejudice

Intergroup Contact:

- Increasing contact in queer spaces to increase familiarity and empathy (1)

Perspective taking:

- The goal here is to get the other queer identities to understand as much as they can how much an asexual person can be discriminated against

Education:

- Education for asexuality in the queer community to clear up any misconceptions

This will lead to recategorization with the ‘us vs them’ mindset changed to a ‘we’ in which the asexual community are no longer outsiders (1)

Why the Queer community?

- As the community will already understand prejudice it will be easier to reduce prejudice than non-queers. It also will be easier for asexuals to find a place where they feel safe to be themselves.
- The prejudice against asexuals in queer spaces is a problem and this strategy would attempt to fix that

How to put the strategy into action:

- Give a modified modern racism scale to a queer group and measure the amounts of prejudice (after getting permission) (2)
- Have asexual people join the space and create quality relationships with individuals in the group
- Using the established relationships have the asexual people give the other queer people their perspective, educating them on the type of discrimination that they have to deal with
- After two weeks have the group take the survey again
- The results should show less prejudice and more understanding
- **Ideally asexual people should be seen as part of the queer community by the group**
- It is the job of others in the queer community to:
 - Take the initiative to learn about asexuality and the discrimination that comes with it
 - Taking the perspective of the asexual community.
 - Create connections with asexual community and vice versa

(1) Canning, D. A. (2015). Queering Asexuality: Asexual-Inclusion in Queer Spaces. *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, 8(1), 55–74.,
 (2) Simeoni, B. Z. (2005). Testing Tests : Determination of the Efficacy of Prejudice Measures. *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*.