Queer FLINTA*'s Lived Experiences with Visibilities in the German Feminist

Movement–A Qualitative Exploration

Lea Lemke

University College Fryslân, Campus Fryslân, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

CFBGR03610: Capstone Project

Supervisor: Dr Pelin Gül

June 5, 2023

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Visibility, which can be understood as the degree to which an individual is recognized and acknowledged by others, is often described as an ambiguous concept. It can be beneficial when it allows for an individual and/or a group to speak and be heard, and when they have control over how they are perceived by other individuals, groups, media and society. However, it can also be limiting and disempowering when individuals or groups are made hypervisible by the dominating group to render them voiceless, powerless and invisible. Among others, queer FLINTA* voices have historically been excluded from the feminist movement. The continuous centring of the white, heterosexual, middle-class cis-gender woman exemplifies how the feminist movement upholds these historical hierarchies of feminist subjects today, thereby contributing to the feminist movement remaining gendered, classed, racialised, cis- and heteronormative. Based on intersectionality theory and using qualitative methods, this study explores the lived experiences of queer FLINTA* with different types of visibilities in the German feminist movement. Results show that participants were active in a range of feminist spaces, whereby most of them were queer-coded and had the aim to highlight intersectional perspectives. While some participants felt a sense of belonging to the overall feminist movement, all emphasised a strong distancing from exclusive feminist streams, such as white feminism and trans*-exclusive radical feminism. Participants emphasised the value of role models and signs of support and allyship, which contributed to creating positive visibilities. Despite many participants feeling seen and valued, some also shared experiences of alienation, fear of denial of one's identity, as well as an overall ambivalence regarding umbrella terms, which highlight a complex relationship between hyper-, invisibility and power structures. All participants regarded the visibility of queer FLINTA* in the German feminist movement to be crucial and many saw this as a stepping stone

for wider societal goals like more acceptance, less discrimination and deconstructing systems of power. Limitations of this study are discussed and future research avenues are suggested.

Keywords: queerness, FLINTA*, German feminist movement, positive visibility, invisibility, hypervisibility, queer feminism, intersectionality

Queer FLINTA*'s Lived Experiences with Visibilities in the German Feminist

Movement–A Qualitative Exploration

In many cultures, conversations concerning sexuality, gender and other feminist topics have historically been held in the private rather than the public sphere (Brighenti, 2007). As the private was seen as an invisible sphere and the public was seen as a visible sphere, discussions about sexuality and gender, especially when they were concerned with *queerness*[1], were pushed into the private sphere, rendering them invisible (Stimpson & Herdt, 2014). However, the acceptance of holding such discussions publicly has increased over the last century, establishing gender and sexuality as a topic of public interest (Botcherby & Creegan, 2009; Pateman, 1983). This shift was accompanied by the (re-)politicisation of gender, sexuality and queerness in German-speaking activist spaces during the mid-1990s (see e.g. Engel, 1996) where different marginalised groups, who were seen as deviating from the norm, were competing for (wider) societal attention, access to public visibility, and ultimately, recognition and acceptance (Brighenti, 2007). This struggle is understood as the 'politics of recognition' (Taylor, 1992).

This struggle for visibility and recognition can be seen in the context of the feminist movement in general and in Germany in particular. Historically, power structures that establish white, heterosexual, cis-gender and non-disabled people as the norm and thus superior, have been prevalent in feminist movements. In other words, queer, trans*, non-binary, Black and of colour people, as well as religious, young and disabled women have historically been cast to the margins, deprived of prominent roles within the feminist movement and overall excluded from the feminist struggle (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2022; Dean & Aune, 2015;

---

[1] In this research, queerness is understood regarding both sexual and gender identity, meaning that a queer person is someone who is not heterosexual and/or cis-gender. The author recognises that this definition of the 'queer subject' needs to be seen in a broader, more complex and politicised context that sees queerness as the radical rejection of cis-heteronormativity and the gender binary, and the embrace of gender and sexual identity as fluid and part of a spectrum (Waldmann, 2019; see also 'Guiding Theoretical Framework').

Heinrich-Böll-Stifting, 2018). Consequently, they have been rendered invisible and their efforts have historically not been recognised (Dean & Aune, 2015). Despite developments over the last decades that brought attention to intersectional struggles and approaches, the feminist movement remains gendered, classed, racialized, cis- and heteronormative (Roth, 2021), putting *queer FLINTA*[2] voices in a position important to explore further.

Drawing on intersectionality theory and using qualitative methods, this research explores queer FLINTA*'s lived experiences with visibilities in the German feminist movement. Before presenting the methods and results, literature from multiple disciplines is highlighted to conceptualize what is meant by visibilities, provide a historical overview of the German feminist context, and present the guiding theoretical framework for this study.

Literature Review

On the Ambiguity of Visibility

Though visibility as a social category is not universally understood (Brighenti, 2007), it can be conceptualised as the degree to which an individual is recognized and acknowledged by others (Brighenti, 2007; Simpson & Lewis, 2005). The concept of visibility is highly relevant for social science research, especially social engagement and activism studies (Rega & Medrado, 2021), and is often argued to be a 'trap (door)' (Foucault, 1977; Gossett et al., 2017). The literature highlights the ambiguous nature associated with visibility, characterised by recognition and control (Brighenti, 2007; Lewis & Simpson, 2010; Uldam, 2018).

---

[2] FLINTA* is an umbrella term for marginalised genders including women, lesbians, inter, non-binary, trans, agender and more (as symbolised by the asterix) people. The author recognises that this collective term for marginalised groups and identities can be used to homogenise the experiences of FLINTA* with gender marginalisation, patriarchy and cis-heteronormativity, as well as misrepresent or ignore how discrimination and oppression specifically impact the individual communities compiled in the umbrella term FLINTA* (inspired by Reggiani et al., 2023). In the context of this research, queer FLINTA* refers to FLINTA* who also identify as queer. It needs to be noted that most of the identities captured by FLINTA* are already connected to queerness with regard to gender identity. The researcher chose to go with the term 'queer FLINTA*' to eliminate the opportunity of heterosexual women to participate in this research, and hence ensure that people who face oppression at the intersection of both gender and sexuality are the focus of this study.

Visibility can be beneficial when it allows for an individual and/or group to speak and be heard, and when they have control over how they are perceived by other individuals, groups, media and society (Lollar, 2015). Within activist circles, visibility has increasingly been perceived as inherently desired (Rand, 2013), as higher visibility comes with the opportunity for stigmatised groups to be acknowledged and recognised by the dominating groups in society (Liinason, 2020). *Positive visibility*, which means having recognition and having one's value be seen (Settles et al., 2019), can relate to higher credibility and authenticity of the stigmatised group (Dergić et al., 2022), allowing them to gain recognition and power (Simpson & Lewis, 2005), which in turn could foster more diversity in wider society (Dergić et al., 2022). Based on the perceived desirability of visibility, people belonging to the minoritised group have aimed to increase their group's visibility (Rand, 2013).

However, there are also voices that challenge the thought of seeing visibility as inherently desirable (Gossett et al., 2017). These voices question "whether it should be seen as a goal, or rather a consequence of social engagement that should be avoided" (Dergić et al., 2022, p.2). They ask whether it is justified to go through the process of increasing visibility when dealing with the effects of the approach used, rather than the issue they meant to make more visible in the first place. In other words, increasing visibility and dealing with the negative repercussions of it can shift the focus away from the topic that was intended to be made visible. From this point of view, the goal of community activism should not lie in increasing visibility but rather in providing a comfortable environment for everyone engaged (Gossett, 2017). Regardless of whether one takes on this perspective, what is usually mentioned in the context of visibility as a potential goal is that increased visibility of a marginalised community "should contribute to diversity and democratisation of society" (Dergíc et al., 2022, p.14).

Visibility does not only come with positive associations. While increased credibility, recognition and acceptance can form one side of visibility, visibility can also be limiting and disempowering when individuals or groups are made highly visible (hypervisible). *Hypervisibility*, also referred to as supra- and super-visibility (Brighenti, 2007), can be described as "scrutiny based on perceived difference, which is usually (mis)interpreted as deviance" (Ryland, 2013), meaning that the recognition of someone rests on them deviating from the norm and being perceived as the 'other'. The process of a dominant group making a minoritised group (member) visible, which brings about hypervisibility, has been described as *imposed visibility* (Haile, 2020). It is important to recognise the power dynamics here: the dominant group makes the minoritised group visible, which is often supported by the social structures that legitimise, uphold and overall support the group's position of dominance in the first place (Buchanan & Settles, 2019), and allows for the dominant group to keep their authority privilege (Lewis & Simpson, 2010).

Often, imposing (hyper)visibility comes with negative consequences for the minoritised group, as the dominant group imposing the visibility renders the minoritised group invisible through this process, scrutinises and surveils them (Brighenti, 2007; Buchanan & Settles, 2019; Kanter, 1977; Lewis & Simpson, 2010), and makes them voice- and powerless (Dergíc et al., 2020). This can make them invisible in social, political and cultural spheres (Sager, 2018). Such *invisibility* means that they are "deprived of recognition" (Brighenti, 2007, p.329), which delegitimises the minoritised group in general, as well as their voice, authority and their aim for visibility and recognition in particular (Lewis & Simpson, 2010; Simpson & Lewis, 2005). Overall, this leads to a lack of control over how the minoritised group is perceived by others (Buchanan & Settles, 2019; Brighenti, 2007; Kanter, 1977; Lewis & Simpson, 2010) and runs at

the risk of reinforcing negative stereotypes about the hypervisible-made group (Settles et al., 2019). Moreover, increased visibility in mainstream media and society of, for example, the queer community can also strengthen what and rather who is seen as acceptable and who is seen as unacceptable, non-normative and "disposable" (Cárdenas, 2017).

In a queer context, Gossett (2017) exemplifies how the visibility of the trans* community is built on their invisibility and how increased visibility can be instrumentalised to further oppress. Similarly to other LGBTQIA+ people, mainstream media and politics often take a single representative of the trans* community who is then presented stereotypically. Through this process, stereotypes are reinforced and other members of the community are erased from the coverage, reinforcing their invisibility (Dergíc et al., 2020; Gossett, 2017). Hence, the recognition of minoritised groups (like sexual and gender minorities) as achieved through their visibility, runs at the risk of being complexly related to delegitimisation, surveillance and control, and thereby runs at the risk of bringing further stigmatisation and discrimination (Austin & Goodman, 2017; Fischer, 2019; Gossett, 2017; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2015;). Alongside the positive aspects of increased visibility, this demonstrates the duality of the concept of visibility.

Crucial to note is that different types of visibilities are intertwined, can reinforce each other and happen simultaneously (Lollar, 2015; Stead, 2013). This means that "individuals could be visible in one context and invisible in another, or they might be simultaneously hypervisible as outsiders and invisible with regard to having authority" (Settles et al., 2019, p.2). With queerness as a concealable stigmatised identity, which means that individuals have to come out for their queerness to be seen (Busch et al., 2022), and knowing that queer individuals can have agency over when and how their identity can be observed by others (Settles et al., 2019), questions about queer feminists', especially queer FLINTA*'s, experiences with different types

of visibilities in light of their unique positioning in the structures of oppression and privilege within the German feminist movement arise.

Exploring visibilities when analysing inequalities brings advantages with it. Investigating visibilities sheds light on the relationship between identities, perception, and power among people and groups because visibilities of minoritised groups can give insights into the (mis)recognition by others and how perceptions of one and one's belonging to a group are formed across sites and subjects (Brighenti, 2007; Lewis & Simpson, 2012). In other words, exploring visibilities offers a space to better understand how people and groups relate to one another, especially in a context where the people and groups under investigation hold different powers, privileges and access to visibility and societal acceptance. In the context of this research, the individuals under investigation identify as queer (and) FLINTA* who are active in feminist contexts in Germany. Therefore, their experiences with visibilities in these spaces can tell us about the position of queer voices in German feminism today by highlighting what their presence and work look like, what their experiences in their spaces and German feminism overall are, and how these relate to dominating structures in the German feminist movement and society overall.

Historical Exclusions in Broader Society and in the Feminist Movement in Germany and the Situation Today

It is important to contextualise the visibilities of queer FLINTA* in broader society and the feminist movement, given that this group has been historically excluded from both contexts and that the feminist and queer struggle are inherently interlinked. Like in many societies, Germany's cultural and political context is coined by power structures and oppressive normativities that shape whose voices are heard, recognised and acted upon, and whose voices are more often disregarded and oppressed. Among others, prevalent structures of oppression and

privilege in the German context have been and are *patriarchy/androcentrism*[3],

racism/ethnocentrism[4], *heterocentrism/cis-heteronormativity*[5], *ableism*[6] and *classism*[7]. Overall,

this means that the 'prototypical' member of society is white, able-bodied, middle-class,

heterosexual, cisgender and male while people with other sexual, gender, racial and ethnic

identities from other classes and with disabilities are seen as 'non-normative' and 'atypical'

subjects (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). The repercussions of being perceived as

'non-normative' and 'atypical' as a queer person are observable when looking at queer history in

Germany. During Nazi times, gay prisoners were marked by having to wear a pink triangle on

their uniform (Heger, 2023) and subjected to persecution and abduction to concentration camps.

For large parts of modern history, queerness was criminalised, pathologised, and a basis for

social contempt and exclusion. However, queer history also includes the struggle for legal

recognition, social acceptance and a struggle against continuous discrimination, marginalisation

and (institutional) violence, as well as fighting the historically imposed visibility on queer

subjects (Deutsches Historisches Museum, 2018; Lesben- und Schwulenverband, n.d.;

Waldmann, 2019). Important to note is that the historical invisibility of queer subjects and queer

life especially concerned lesbian, trans* and asexual visibilities (Waldmann, 2019). This draws

---

[3] Androcentrism can be described as a form of gender bias that centres male experiences as the standard while marginalising female perspectives. This perpetuates the notion that male experiences are the norm and typical for the culture or species as a whole while women are seen as atypical representatives of that same group (Bem, 1994).

[4] In Global North contexts, ethnocentrism highlights the propensity to view whiteness (and white people as the socially dominating group) as the benchmark for all human behaviour and outgroup norms as a departure from this benchmark (Bonilla-Silva, 2000; Sue, 1999; Sumner, 1906).

[5] The concepts of heterocentrism and cis-heteronormativity highlight the hierarchies of sexualities and gender identities, whereby heterosexuality is regarded as the standard human sexuality, the gender binary is assumed and being cis-gender is the norm and "natural". Thereby, any queer sexuality like homosexuality and bisexuality, as well as trans* and non-binary gender identities are seen as deviating from that norm, often being perceived as unnatural and "lifestyle choices" (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008).

[6] Ableism is characterised by the notion that disabled people are intrinsically inferior to non-disabled people, whereby disabled people are patronised and discriminated against often using paternalistic motivations to "cure" their condition and make them "normal" (Dunn, 2021).

[7] Classism encompasses discriminatory structures and behaviour against individuals and societal groups based on their social class status, and mostly towards people and groups with lower income (Limbert & Williams, 2014).

attention to the complex (historical) positioning of FLINTA* in the queer community and gives insight into how overlapping the queer and feminist struggles are (Waldmann, 2019), making an intersectional stance for this research necessary. The outlined structures of power and the historical positioning of queer FLINTA* in the German context are relevant for understanding the historical context of feminist activism, as this does not arise in a vacuum, and activist spaces themselves also reflect societal structures along axes of domination and privilege. This becomes clear when examining the historical exclusion of certain groups in the German feminist movement.

Similar to the broader societal context, the feminist movement in Germany has been shaped by factors that influenced the status and role of minoritised groups. Over the years, different streams of German feminism with different claims and foci were established. This came with discussions about the 'feminist subject': Who counts as a feminist subject? Whose positioning are feminists trying to advance? Whose feminist subjectivity is "valued and affirmed" and whose is "erased or cast to the margins" (Dean & Aune, 2015, p.383)? Which factors besides gender and sex play a role (Frost, 2019)? Queer, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, Black and minoritised ethnic, religious, young and disabled women and people with other marginalised gender identities have historically been excluded from or been afforded less prominent roles within the feminist movement, creating invisibility of them as feminist subjects (Dean & Aune, 2015; Frost, 2019). These developments manifested in the centring of white, well-educated, middle-class, cis-gender, heterosexual women with their status and struggles, such as women's suffrage, education, and access to professions that men in the late 19th century traditionally dominated during the first wave of feminism (Dean & Aune, 2015). This was

followed by the push for reproductive rights, equal pay, and the fight against gender-based violence after World War II during the second wave of feminism (Dean & Aune, 2015).

Such centring of the white, well-educated, middle-class, cis-gender, heterosexual woman rendered intersectional struggles invisible and pushed other feminist subjects to the margins. Changes to pluralise the feminist movement started during the 1990s with the third feminist wave when *queer feminist*[8] and *intersectional*[9] approaches surfaced. Similar to other contexts, Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) became the basis of the queer feminist stream in Germany during the mid-1990s (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), 2020). Together with the queer struggle against the heteronormative gender binary and for the deconstruction of the gender order (Waldmann, 2019), topics such as LGBTQ+ rights, racism, bodily autonomy, and reproductive justice were centred more from a queer and intersectional feminist perspective (Dean & Aune, 2015). This process of broadening the demands and topics considered to be feminist were heavily pushed for by those negatively affected by the intersections of power structures—the 'non-normative' feminist subjects. Overall, the experiences of those marginalised based on gender and other dimensions were highlighted stronger and social justice became a driving force for feminist activism.

Fourth-wave feminism in Germany is heavily built on the intersectional approaches from the third wave, whereby the changes towards more inclusive feminist subjectivities (a broader range of voices and identities that count as being feminist), as well as topics considered important for the feminist struggle, are further taken up, allowing the feminist debate to move

---

[8] Queer feminism brings together the research bodies of feminist and queer theory, acknowledges the intricate intersections of gender and sexuality, and the need to see 'queer liberation' and 'feminism' as complementary movements (Prosser, 2007). Therefore, queer feminists critique the overlapping structures of cis-sexism, heterosexism, heteronormativity, patriarchy and misogyny, and study power systems using intersecting social divisions in different societies (Altay et al., 2021).

[9] Intersectionality and intersectional approaches acknowledge intersections of structures of power and privilege along the lines of identities such as race, gender, class, and more. Further explanation about intersectionality theory is given in the paragraph 'Guiding Theoretical Framework'.

away from conversations that only focus on white, well-educated, cis-gender, heterosexual women. This means that contemporary German feminisms have started to heavily connect to other 'identity politics' (FES, 2020). Especially Muslim feminism and Black feminism have gained more visibility within the feminist debate (FES, 2020; Weber, 2016). However, such developments should not suggest that the historically rooted hierarchy of voices within feminism has been flattened and the debate about different visibilities of voices has been concluded (Dean & Aune, 2015). Instead, this hierarchy persists, as the feminist movement remains gendered, classed, racialized, cis- and heteronormative (Roth, 2021), and empirical research on queer voices within the movement remains rare.

Moreover, the existence and grown media presence of trans-exclusionary radical feminists[10] (TERFs) in Germany and other contexts, who deploy trans* hostility and trans*misogyny and define 'womanhood' as exclusive to "authentic" (read: cis-gender) women (Bassi & LaFleur, 2022), pose threats to further progress the visibility of intersectional perspectives in the feminist movement and society. Apart from the continuous debate around feminist subjectivity, contemporary feminisms in Germany have seen other changes as well, such as the expansion of their repertoire using digital platforms and media alongside street presence. Thereby, 'digital feminisms' were created, which function as a new way of communication about experiences among the younger generation (FES, 2020; Scharff et al., 2016). With the emergence of digital feminisms, as well as the continuous hierarchies in the feminist movement along gender, sexuality, race and class, investigating the visibilities of historically and continuously excluded queer voices in the German feminist movement remains a topic of social and academic importance.

---

[10] Their identity as feminists is self-proclaimed and highly criticised.

Guiding Theoretical Framework

This study uses intersectionality theory, which originated in Black feminist thought within the United States legal context and social justice initiatives (Collins, 2015; Combahee River Collective, 1986; Crenshaw, 1989). It recognises the unique and multiple ways in which each person and their experiences are socially constructed due to their positioning within interlocking structures of oppression and privilege (Crenshaw, 1989). While intersectionality was first focused on primarily race/ethnicity, gender and class, it has since been expanded to sexuality, ability, and other dimensions.

Intersectionality theory is used in this study to investigate and analyse the complexities of being positioned within multiple structures of domination and privilege by centring the bodily and experiential knowledge of the queer FLINTA* participants. In other words, intersectionality theory in this research is used to understand how queer FLINTA* people experience and negotiate their visibilities while being located at interlocking systems of domination and privilege.

Considering intersectionality allows for an analysis of multiple configurations of domination and privilege (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Moradi & Grzanka, 2017), where intersectionality and identities are understood not as additive but rather as "compounded" and situated (Crenshaw, 1989). Identities are understood as "mutually constructed and fluid, continually shaping and shaped by dynamics of power" (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017, p.506), "multiple, fractured, unstable, fluid, situated in time and space, and historically constructed" (Reggiani et al., 2023) rather than "distinct or static entities" (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017, p.506) (Butler, 1990; Sedgwick, 1990). This is in line with queer theory, which approaches identities from a post-structural perspective. As pointed out by other scholars, using intersectionality

theory brings many advantages when researching queer visibility (Reggiani et al., 2023) in that it brings forward different qualities of visibilities (Benozzo et al., 2015; Butler, 1990; Halberstam, 1998) while also accounting for individual and group experiences located in the multitude of interconnected systems of oppression, domination and privilege.

The Present Study

This research draws on the outlined interdisciplinary conceptualisation of visibilities to qualitatively explore the different types of visibilities that queer FLINTA* experience within the German feminist movement. To the knowledge of the author, no academic research has employed an empirical approach nor used the presented conceptualisation of visibilities in the context of queer FLINTA* in German feminism. The research at hand attempts to fill this gap. It is motivated by the ambition to expand the understanding of hierarchy and exclusion within the context of the German feminist movement and continue investigating the intersections of multiple minority statuses. At the same time, it attempts to further highlight the role of privilege in these discussions and analyses (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017), de-centre gender in the feminist movement and highlight intersectional struggles (Roth, 2021). Concretely, thai research aims for a qualitative exploration of queer FLINTA*'s lived experiences with different types of visibilities within the German feminist movement by highlighting and analysing how various forms of oppression and privilege are linked and manifest themselves. Therefore, the research at hand gives insight into how the participants of this study, who all identified as queer FLINTA*, experience their visibilities with their respective positioning at the intersections of gender, sexuality and politics, and its unique challenges and opportunities.

Methodology

Study Design

This research attempts to put the theoretical underpinnings (intersectionality theory) into practice methodologically in the following ways: (1) sharing how critical reflections about the researcher's position and her implicit values for the knowledge production are part of the research process, for example in the positionality statement; (2) using language that highlights how it is not identities but systems of oppression and privilege that intersect (Walby et al., 2012); (3) attempting to include an analysis of both "the intersections of multiple minority statuses" (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017, p.504), as well as the role of privilege; (4) not aiming for generalisability of the results but rather aiming to capture and map the experiences of queer FLINTA*; (5) choosing interviews as a way to encourage participants to share what *they* find important, thereby decreasing the hierarchy between researcher and participants; (6) committing to the call to action towards transformation and social justice inherent to intersectionality theory by encouraging participants and anyone who might read this thesis to use it in and for their activism (Collins, 2015; Moradi & Grzanka, 2017).

Positionality Statement

The researcher identifies as a queer cis-gender woman who was born and raised in Germany. As a queer FLINTA* person herself, she takes on the position of an insider and is able to bring a priori experience about the participants' social position to the research to a certain extent. That is that the researcher is also young, white, cis-gender, comes from a financially stable background and has had access to tertiary education about social sustainability, intersectionality and political activism in the Netherlands. Two important points arise from this. Firstly, the researcher is fluent in German and English due to her growing up in Germany and

pursuing her academic degree in English in the Netherlands. Secondly, the researcher is not able to bring her 'lived familiarity'(Griffith, 1998) into a conversation with participants who identify as for example non-binary. The researcher acknowledges the intersection of power structures that shape the lived experience of people differently, based on their identities and where these identities are located in the axes of oppression and privilege. The researcher aimed to employ 'empathetic neutrality', which is the "striv[ing] to avoid obvious, conscious, or systematic bias and to be as neutral as possible in the collection, interpretation, and presentation of data…[while recognizing that] this aspiration can never be fully attained" (Holmes, 2020, p.4).

Participants

Participation in this research was open to all people who self-identified as queer (and) FLINTA* active in the German feminist movement. Participant recruitment was done through the researcher's network, reaching out to (queer) feminist initiatives, organisations, magazines and networks active in Germany via email and social media, and using snowball sampling. In total, this study had six participants who all self-identified as queer (and) FLINTA* active in the German feminist movement. Of these six participants, five identified as cis-women and one as non-binary. Participants mostly described their sexuality with the umbrella term of 'queer'. Two used (a combination of) micro-labels like 'bisexual' and 'pansexual' in addition. All participants self-identified as white or were socially read as white by the researcher, and except for one, all participants attained or were in the process of attaining a higher educational degree.

Data Collection

Due to the methodological approach that this research takes, the participants were originally invited to participate in an unstructured interview, meaning that no questions would be shared by the researcher and the space of the interview would be entirely for participants to share

what *they* felt like was relevant in the context of this research. Despite this attempted approach, the researcher had open-ended questions at hand to fall back on in case participants did not know what to share. It became apparent in the first interview already that these questions were useful for participants and the steering of the interview. Therefore, the set-up of the interviews was changed into a semi-structured interview, whereby the questions became part of the interview guide (see Appendix II).

In total, five interviews were held online using the video applications *Zoom* and *Google Meet*. One interview was held in person (as the researcher was in geographical proximity to the participant). Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Participants were able to choose their preferred language for the interview (English or German) to ensure that they were fully able to communicate their experiences and thoughts, and all participants chose German. Participants were encouraged to share any other thoughts that might be relevant to this research after the end of the interview.

Interview Guide

The interview guide (see Appendix II) was developed based on the outlined literature and aimed to explore (1) the feminist work of the participants and their motivation for it (*"What does your feminist work look like?"* (probes: *topic*, *spaces*) and *"Why are you involved?"* (probes: *motivation*)), (2) their perception of the German feminist movement and their sense of belonging to it (*"How do you perceive the German feminist movement?"* and *"To what extent do you feel you belong to the German feminist movement? / To what extent do you feel you are part of the feminist movement?"*), (3) the perceived recognition of participants as queer FLINTA* in their feminist contexts and this context feeling welcoming (*"To what extent do you feel that you are perceived as a queer FLINTA* in feminism?"*, *"Do you feel your queerness is recognised?"*, and

"Do you feel like you (and your queerness) are wanted/are welcome in the feminist movement?"), (4) the perceived agency over influencing visibilities (*"Do you feel you can influence your queer visibility/the way you are perceived?"* (probe: *How (not)?*)), (5) potential lacks of recognition, feelings of not being welcome and tokenism (*"What are your experiences with situations in which your queerness was not recognised and/or was pushed aside?"*, *"Have you ever had the feeling of being a token in a feminist context?"* and *"Have you ever had the feeling of being unwanted in a feminist context?"*), (6) challenges in their work (*"What are the problems and difficulties you experience in your feminist work?"* (probe: *How do you deal with them? (strategies)*)), (7) visibility as *the* goal (*"Is more visibility of queer FLINTA* the/a goal for you?"* (probe: *Why (not)?*)), (8) the participants' identification with the term 'queer FLINTA*' or any other preferred self-description (*"To what extent do you feel represented by the term 'queer FLINTA*'? Are there other self-descriptions that you prefer?"*), and (9) any other thoughts and feelings the participants still wanted to share (*"Are there any other thoughts and feelings that you associate with different visibilities that have not yet found a place in this interview?"* and *"Are there things you would like to emphasise again?"*) before concluding the interview. In line with the interview design, the researcher asked participants follow-up questions depending on their answers that aimed to give deeper insight into their answers and/or give clarification.

Data Analysis

The conducted interviews were recorded to be transcribed using the transcription software *trint*. The transcript was translated from German into English using the integrated translation function in *trint*. After translation, the transcripts were anonymised by giving all participants a number based on the chronological order of the interview and stored safely in line with the University of Groningen guidelines. Recordings and all non-anonymised data were

deleted after transcriptions were completed. After these steps, the fully anonymised transcripts were thematically analysed, using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clark, 2019). All codes and themes were generated inductively and in a reflexive manner. Quantitative data like the participant count was only used to refer to some findings to emphasise patterns of experience.

Ethical Considerations

Societally, queer FLINTA* are a vulnerable group due to the marginalisation they experience as a group and individually. As this study involved sensitive topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity, oppression and privilege, as well as potential experiences with, for example, exclusion and LGBTQIA+ hostility, participating in this study came with the risk of being emotionally agitated. Participants were made aware of this and gave their informed consent for participation. As a queer FLINTA* person who has studied topics related to gender, sexuality, and activism in her degree, the researcher was able to be sensitive about the discussed topics, built rapport with participants through familiarity, and provided an interview environment where the participants reportedly felt safe to share their experiences and thoughts. To reduce the risk of the researcher imposing herself, the interviews were designed with open-ended questions that gave space for the participants to share what *they* deemed important.

In line with ethical guidelines, participants, who were all above the age of 18, were thoroughly informed about the research itself and the data handling. Moreover, it was stressed that participation could be withdrawn at any time without an explanation needed or negative consequences for the participant. Fully informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their interview (see Appendix I for the information sheet and informed consent form). This research has obtained ethical approval by Dr Pelin Gül in her function as the supervisor of this research and the Ethics Committee of the University of Groningen, Campus Fryslân.

Results and Discussion

The following paragraphs showcase the experiences participants shared regarding their engagement in feminist activist spaces, their sense of belonging to the wider feminist movement, methods for creating queer visibilities like role modelling and allyship, visibilities in the spaces that their activism targets, challenges they face and how visibility is utilised for wider societal goals. Each section describes the participants' experiences and links them to the conceptualisation of visibilities given in the literature review.

Feminist Activist Spaces and Activities: Queer-Codedness, Conscious Choice of Spaces and Positive Visibilities

The involvement and engagement of the participants of this study were broad regarding their deliberate choice of activist spaces and activities. This range is the basis of the analysis of this research, meaning that these are the contexts in which the participants experienced different types of visibilities. Many participants were involved in multiple spaces related to individual and collective, paid and voluntary action, as well as with a range of public presence of their feminist work. Overall, participants were involved in working groups in their university contexts, in a feminist reading group, in the local feminist alliance, in the local chapter of a youth party, in an LGBTQIA+ foundation, and in youth work focusing especially on girls and young women with a migratory background. Two participants mentioned that their living situation was shaped around FLINTA*, with one participant explicitly expressing that she saw this as a resource of support for her activist work. Participants' feminist work ranged from continuously learning more about issues from a feminist perspective individually and collectively, being responsible for the social media presence of their working group, hosting discussions, facilitating a space for exchange, sharing resources on their individual social media accounts, organising excursions, co-planning

protests and carrying them out, preparing for and negotiating with decision-makers in the university, sharing about queer perspectives on sex education at schools, helping out at camps, hosting poster-making sessions for demonstrations, and organising a queer club, to advising companies on how to foster more LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the workplace and showing best practices. One of the participants explicitly described the spaces she was part of as having a culture of care, which emphasises providing and receiving (emotional) support.

Several participants expressed that though the spaces they were part of were not explicitly labelled as queer feminist, they were strongly *"queer-coded" (p2)*, meaning that many queer people were active in them and open regarding their queerness. One participant mentioned that having a reference to queerness in feminist spaces, either in terms of gender identity or sexuality, was a guiding tool for her to decide which spaces to become active in. In other words, she got involved in feminist groups where such queer references as part of intersectional thinking were present. Similarly, another participant shared that getting involved in spaces with a queer feminist focus was a conscious choice: *"You are also in the rooms where you want to be. [...] I also get involved [...] where I have the feeling [that my] work is somehow appreciated or people are taking me seriously" (p6)*. In combination with high awareness about having to think feminism and queerness together as perceived by the participants, the participants often felt like the feminist activist spaces were a space where queer and other intersectional perspectives could be raised and were raised frequently, contributing to the participants feeling safe(r), welcome, recognised and appreciated. Overall, this created a positive sense of belonging to the spaces of activism for many participants. One participant had the feeling that should someone try to deny the importance of queer perspectives in feminism, then the people in her feminist spaces would protect the queer-inclusive ground rules of the space.

The illustrated experiences highlight how (anticipated) appreciation, recognition, and a sense of being taken seriously were determining factors for being in the chosen feminist spaces in the first place. In other words, knowing that queer perspectives were welcome and taken made participants choose to enter and stay in certain feminist spaces. This can be seen in line with positive visibility as described by Settles et al. (2019), which includes having recognition and having one's value be seen. The examples also highlight how support and allyship from other people in the space in case of some people challenging the need to consider queer perspectives is crucial in keeping up the feeling of a safe(r) space and the possibility of positive visibilities, limiting the chances for people to enforce hyper- and invisibility. Despite the general emphasis of the chosen feminist activist spaces being positive, some participants also raised challenges and critical perspectives. These are shared and discussed in later sections.

Sense of Belonging to the Feminist Movement: Feelings of Togetherness and Clear Distancing From Certain Feminist Streams

The participants' felt sense of belonging to the wider feminist movement was nuanced and based on identifying stronger with some feminist streams while distancing oneself from other feminist streams. Some participants described having a positive sense of belonging to the overall feminist movement, especially on occasions like the 8th of March. One participant shared: *"I find that when you go to demonstrations [...] with a huge group of [...] FLINTA* people and also everyone else who is simply active in a feminist way, then I feel very much part of it [the feminist movement]. [...] [In] that moment it's like 'we're all here together and we're a group of people who want something better'" (p3).* Another participant mentioned: *"I already feel [a sense of belonging to the movement] in part because these are battles that you simply don't fight alone. You bring these struggles together with other people and so you are always*

part of the group" (p6). Both examples highlight how the feeling of being part of a bigger feminist movement is especially created when people come together physically at a demonstration and when there is a realisation of the feminist struggle as being a collective one. Moreover, many participants described how they perceive a trend in the feminist movement whereby the movement is becoming *"more diverse and inclusive" (p6)*, which participants regarded as positive. The trend to give attention and thereby visibility to intersectional struggles and approaches perceived by participants is harmonious with the literature described earlier (e.g. Dean & Aune, 2015; FES, 2020; Roth, 2021).

Despite the exemplified positive sense of belonging to the feminist movement, five participants described the feminist movement in Germany as splintered, often opposing, and all participants clearly distanced themselves from certain streams of the feminist movement, namely white and trans*-exclusive feminism. This can be illustrated with the example that participant 1 gave regarding the 8th of March. In her city, three big demonstrations were organised. One of them was framed as 'International Women's Day' with a narrow, bio-essentialist (and hence trans*-exclusive) definition of womanhood. Another demonstration was framed as bieng on the 'International Day of Feminist Struggle' where speeches not only focused on (cis-gender) women's rights but also on for example trans* topics. The participant described that *"[the organisers of the different demonstrations] criticized each other and ultimately distanced themselves from each other and said 'Our demo has this focus and we don't agree with the other demo that has this focus'" (p1)*, exemplifying a strong divide regarding their understanding of feminism and its translation into associated topics, claim-making and actions taken by the groups. Linking this to visibilities, it can be seen that the stance of trans*-exclusive perspectives

on feminism negates the existence of trans* people and their important role in feminism, thereby creating and defending trans* invisibility.

Across all conducted interviews, all participants saw differentiations between different streams of feminism regarding inclusivity, whereby white feminists, TERFs and other non-intersectional feminisms were regarded as being the ones strongly upholding exclusive structures within the feminist movement, and participants strongly criticised the self-identification of TERFS as feminists in the first place. When asked about whether queer voices find their place within feminism, one participant mentioned: *"I'd say less. Especially when it comes to trans* people. I think they are more disadvantaged in the feminist movement, I'd say neglected. But I don't think bisexual people are perceived either. I think it's very much about 'woman' achieving something [...]. But it's not just heterosexual women. There are non-binary people. There are homosexuals. There are bisexuals. And I think visibility is definitely less there" (p4)*. This clearly highlights how participants perceived the overall feminist movement to continue to centre the white, heterosexual cis-woman and give less attention to those people disadvantaged by the intersections of power structures. These findings highlight the continued invisibility of non-white, queer people in the bigger feminist movement as described by, for example, Roth (2021) and Dean & Aune (2015).

Based on the centring of white, heterosexual cis-women, most participants explicitly distanced themselves from TERFs, white feminism and non-intersectional feminisms overall, meaning that when talking about their felt sense of belonging to the feminist movement, they indicated how their positive sense of belonging is not directed at these streams. Instead, it is directed at the feminist streams that take intersectional approaches or the values associated with

intersectional feminism. This gives insight into the importance participants placed on intersectional perspectives in their feminist work throughout the interviews.

Creating and Encouraging (Spaces of) Visibility

Being a Role Model

Participants were often motivated by their ambition to be role models, thereby creating visibility and encouraging others to be visible as well if they choose to. Four participants shared that a way to influence their own felt visibility was through opening up about being queer, often in a casual way. For example saying *"'I see it this way and from my queer perspective,...'" (p6)* during a discussion in the activist space. Hence, the creation of visibility for queer perspectives in the spaces was tied with bringing up queer perspectives by the people who are able to bring forward first-hand experiences. Participant 3 gave an example of the impact of being a role model by openly stating one's queer identity in the spaces one is in: *"In youth work, [...] there are sometimes a few people who are a bit shy and don't really come out of their shells. If you are an example to them and are simply open and proud [...], then they come out of their shells a bit over time, then perhaps they also tell their own experiences. [At a camp that I was part of], there was a 17 or 16-year-old trans* person who didn't say much the whole time. [...] [When] I was very open and [...] went to the front to give a speech [during an exercise in small groups], this person also stood up and came to the front and dared to express their own point of view and it was very nice" (p3)*. This example demonstrates the possible impact on other queer people, especially queer youth, whereby having someone be outspoken, confident and proud about their queerness helps to encourage others to come out on their own terms, creating a snowball effect of self-determined visibility. In the words of one participant: *"If you make yourself visible, then it also helps other people to make themselves visible" (p3)*.

Signs of Support and Allyship

Two participants stated that having visible signs of support and allyship contributed to their feeling of being in a safe(r) space, thereby making a difference in their perception of visibility. Participant 5 shared that in a previous job in the context of diversity management in a large corporation, the participant did not openly talk about being in a relationship with a woman. This meant that the participant talked about a 'roommate' instead of a 'partner' *"and it caused me a lot of stress because I was thinking maybe someone [from my workplace] saw me in town [with my partner], or how should I answer this question now so that I don't have to go into too much detail" (p5)*. To the participant, this felt like *"extremely unpleasant situations due to invisibility" (p5)*. Over time, the participant came out and founded a network that LGBTQIA+ people and allies could join. *"We gave everyone who joined the network rainbow cards that they could then hang up at the tables as a sign that they're part of the network. And then I went into the office once and there [...] were almost 200 people [out of the 240 in the corporation who] joined the network. [...] I just saw these rainbow colors everywhere at once. That was a moment when I said and thought to myself that had it actually been like this when I started my career, then I would never have worried whether I should talk about my partner or rather about my roommate. That's why it was important for me to stand up for this issue, to set visibility, visible signs and in such a way that people know that this is an environment where you don't have to hide if you don't want to" (p5)*. This example demonstrates that visible signs of allyship would have made a difference in the participant's decision to step into visibility earlier. In other words, having visible signs of support can help to signal to LGBTQIA+ people that their invisibility—may that be out of fear of a negative reaction or other reasons—can be changed into visibility with a supportive environment. It needs to be noted, however, that having the signs of

support in an environment does not automatically translate into reality, as will be highlighted when talking about the challenges that participants faced.

Activism in Spaces Targeted for Change

Letting Those Affected Speak: Deliberate Invisibility of One's Own Queerness

Participants recorded the importance of letting those affected by the issues tackled speak to ensure authentic representation and visibility in the process of working towards change. The case of participant 1 exemplifies this. She was involved in a working group, which organised for anti-discrimination and trans* solidarity. Among other things, they worked on the official recognition of the supplementary ID[11] by the university participant 1 was enrolled at. This process involved talks with the university praesidium and the equal opportunities office, in which *"people who [were] affected by the demand we [were] demanding, [...] want[ed] to talk about it themselves, then they [could] always do it first before others [spoke] for them" (p1)*. She elaborated: *"I have the feeling that I or my opinion was never unwanted, but that I think there was some kind of awareness in our group that maybe it's just cool when people who are affected by things can talk for themselves" (p1)*. In other words, the working group organised itself through "*a kind of positioning as allies and non-allies" (p1)*; in that case trans* people and trans* allies. The participant further reflected on how though she was not trans* herself, her queerness in terms of sexuality still created a feeling of solidarity with trans* people and their realities. She highlighted: *"Such an allyship perhaps also results from the fact that I also call myself queer. [With this,] maybe you call yourself somewhere outside the norm, and it's of course not the same as being trans*, but I think it's still like a relationship or reality to the norm that you then share [with trans* people]" (p1)*.

---

[11] The supplementary ID is a document frequently used by trans* and non-binary people whose preferred and legal name (as indicated on their ID or passport) and/or gender entry do not match.

This example demonstrates how though not directly affected, a sense of felt togetherness in the queer community, based on a shared superordinate group identity, motivated the participant to fight for visibility of and positive change for the trans* community. Furthermore, the example can be interpreted in the way that the participant's queerness in terms of sexuality was irrelevant in the context of her working group because she was not affected by trans* hostility. In the case of the participant, this irrelevance translated into a deliberate choice for invisibility of her own queer sexuality, meaning that she did not share about her queer sexuality. Overall, this example demonstrates that even though allies can be marginalised themselves through oppressive systems like cis-heteronormativity (as experienced through their queer sexuality), they might choose to put their queerness aside to amplify the voices of differently-affected people (like trans* people) who are the focus of a certain dedicated space. This is an interesting finding as the literature typically describes invisibility in the context of forces of domination that do not allow or suppress visibility, hence creating invisibility (Brighenti, 2007; Buchanan & Settles, 2019; Kanter, 1977; Lewis & Simpson, 2010). Therefore, participant 1's deliberate choice for making one's queerness invisible here gives insight into how invisibility can be used strategically to amplify the visibility of a specific group and their demands. Arguably, it can help in creating a supportive environment where allies have strong commitments to the work for the LGBTQIA+ sub-group but are yet in a supporting role to the people willing to talk and demand from a first-hand perspective.

Feeling Like an Alien: The Entanglements of Hyper- and Invisibility

One participant brought forward how she felt like an alien in the spaces that her feminist activism targeted, namely her university with its structures. She described: *"I have the feeling that I am hypervisible, that I am like an alien because I express myself in a completely different*

way and other things are important to me, […] especially […] at my university, which is very conservative, very clean and very straight. And when I get there, I have the feeling that everything I say is immediately stamped on in some way. And I think that hypervisibility always creates invisibility. So when I become a kind of spectacle and when I become a stereotype, people don't see most of me, but only what they expect. […] People notice me and listen to me, but people don't understand what I'm saying. So when I talk to some cis-het old man for example, they see some kind of blatant feminist, such a funny blue-haired woman, who cares about completely different things than I [the 'cis-het old man'] do. […] For them, problems immediately become one of "these", a single demand for something they don't understand."
(p2).

In this quote, the participant reflects on how her becoming a spectacle and stereotype has to be seen as a mechanism of hypervisibility to in turn create invisibility. As she further elaborated throughout the interview, the hypervisibility of her as a "blatant feminist" and queer person, which can be interpreted as imposed visibility (Haile, 2020) by the dominating cis-hetero university structures and staff, carried the consequences of the people she was talking to for changing the university incorrectly assuming her beliefs, and the topics she wanted to discuss with them as part of her feminist activism. Their assumptions made it less possible for her to bring forward her actual demands and topics, which demonstrates a lack of control over how she was perceived by others and what topics she could discuss. This is harmonious with descriptions of the mechanisms and entanglements of hypervisibility and invisibility described in the literature (Brighenti, 2007; Buchanan & Settles, 2019; Gossett, 2017; Kanter, 1977; Lewis & Simpson, 2010), whereby hypervisibility is used as a mechanism to create invisibility, which benefits those holding power and privilege based on their social status (persons with

decision-making power at the university) and gender and sexual identity (cis-hetero). Important to note is that the participant shared that her being white assumedly meant that she was still taken seriously to a certain degree. This gives a small insight into the role of whiteness and how, according to the participant, the situation and the associated experiences might look very different for a (queer and feminist) person of colour.

Challenges

(Fear of) Denial of One's Identity

Two participants shared situations where their queerness regarding gender and sexual identity was purposefully not seen and negated. These examples bring forward challenges that the participants faced and demonstrate mechanisms of invisibility. For example, participant 5 worked in diversity management at a large corporation before entering the current job. At this time, the participant identified as genderqueer. When opening up about this, the participant was met with a reaction *"that there was no such thing" (p5)*. Hence, the participant was denied the recognition of one's identity. This mechanism of denial can be seen as a way to render genderqueer realities invisible by denying their existence, which is based on genderqueer people being perceived as the 'other' and therefore deprived of recognition (Ryland, 2013). After being met with this reaction, the participant hid the own gender identity for over five years and did not express it anymore until the person was in a different work environment. The participant now uses 'non-binary' to describe the own gender identity. Though the environment of the feminist work is now different, the fear of having one's identity be negated partly stayed. For example, when the participant gives workshops: *"I have this fear [of disrespectful comments and questions] and I carry it within me since I had these bad experiences. But it [disrespectful comments] never really happened. So that's just something I'm afraid of because I also know that*

there are people like that in this world who would like to say something like that. I sometimes think that there are definitely people in these sessions who might think something like that, but they don't say it. [...] [Dealing with this] is an internal struggle for me" (p5). The participant also elaborated on how from experience, there seems to be a strong difficulty for people to understand identities outside the gender binary, such as non-binary people, which feeds into the participant's experience with being misgendered and having to constantly affirm one's identity and explain oneself, also in the person's space of activism with a focus on LGBTQIA+ inclusion. This example demonstrates mechanisms of invisibility also within the chosen spaces, emphasises the importance of allies affirming identities and hence protecting from invisibility, and hints at a bigger discussion regarding a felt ambivalence about umbrella terms like 'queer' and 'FLINTA*', which is discussed in the following section.

Ambivalence of Umbrella Terms

In five interviews, participants reflected on the value of umbrella terms like 'queer', 'LGBTQIA+' and 'FLINTA*' and expressed their feeling of ambivalence about them. The consensus among the participants was that while having terms that (attempt to) capture the experiences of different sub-groups, the umbrella terms also carry hierarchies within themselves. For example*: "The G in LGBTQIA+ is actually almost the only one that is really represented. And the visibility of lesbian women is extremely low. Bisexual people don't exist, [...] especially bisexual men. It is also important to give this group [bisexual people] a stage. [Also] intersex [people]. [...] So there is a huge, huge space for enlightenment. You have to close this gap. And I think that's why it's very important to simply show that these people exist and who they are and what that means" (p5)*. Another participant reflected on how *"often when people say FLINTA*, they only mean women. Somehow I have the feeling that this has become such a modern term for*

women" (p2). Adding to this line of thought, one participant shared: *"I have the feeling that the term 'FLINTA*' [...] or 'queer' is too broad. [...] I think it is cool to use these [umbrella] terms and also to mobilise them in order to somehow do justice to the demands of inclusion and intersectionality. But I partly think that it's important for visibility that the terms become more specific" (p1)*. All three examples highlight how the visibilities of some sub-groups (e.g. gays or women) can come at the expense of other sub-groups (e.g. lesbians, bisexuals, intersex people) when framed as increased visibility of an umbrella group (queer, LGBTQIA*, FLINTA*). In other words, when an umbrella term is used, though a stronger emphasis and hence visibility is placed only on some sub-groups (e.g. gays or women), it comes at the risk of disregarding and hence contributing to invisibility of others (e.g. intersex, LINTA* people).

Participants expressed how sub-group-specific action like in the case of participant 1 who was active for trans* recognition and against trans* hostility, was more effective in creating visibility for the specific group and topics. In the eyes of the participants, this made their feminist work more successful. Overall, participants expressed the need to embrace the sharedness of 'the queer struggle', yet to also make space and acknowledge differences and challenges unique to each sub-group.

Strategic Challenges

All participants talked about strategic challenges within and outside their spaces, including limited reach, a bubble effect, little involvement, limited societal visibility, trying to change structures and this taking a lot of time and energy and causing frustration, as well as limited cooperation between aligned initiatives and continuous patterns of exclusion and invisibility of queer perspectives in mainstream feminism. All participants identified stronger intersectional perspectives and visibility as necessary and important. Moreover, many

participants saw the need to foster more cooperation between initiatives and actions to create a

wider reach and therefore a stronger impact on societal visibility.

Visibility as a Stepping Stone

All participants emphasised the importance of visibility of queer FLINTA* within the

feminist movement and societally, and many saw this as a stepping stone for wider societal

goals. Showing queer realities in the feminist movement and in society in general and thereby

affirming their existence and importance, was raised as crucial for other advancements, as

"everything starts with visibility" (p5). Fighting discrimination and injustices, breaking systems

of power, deconstructing gender roles and gender overall, fostering basic social acceptance,

seeing people in their fullness and authenticity, and educating society and especially the younger

generation, were wider goals that participants mentioned. According to the participants, these

come through positive visibility, which underlines the importance of such visibility. Moreover, it

highlights how, though many participants described visibility as a valuable goal in itself, they

also shared how visibility can be a tool for wider societal change.

These findings can be seen in the context of the discussion happening around whether

visibility is inherently desirable and should be seen as a goal. Some critical voices argue that

queer activists' goal should not be to increase visibility but to provide a comfortable environment

for everyone engaged in this activism (Gossett, 2017). As participants described visibility as a

goal in itself and its connections to wider societal goals, the findings from this study support the

academic voices that support visibility as inherently desirable (Rand, 2013). However, the

findings on participants' choice to enter and stay in the spaces where they feel like positive

visibilities are kept up, where a safe(r) environment is created and queer and intersectional

perspectives are taken also underline the importance of a comfortable environment for those

engaged. Therefore, the findings of this study demonstrate that focusing on the people engaged while also seeing visibility as a goal in itself is not mutually exclusive. Moreover, they underline how visibility is considered to be a stepping stone for wider societal goals.

Strengths, Limitations and Future Research

This research has three main strengths. Firstly, the developed framework for visibilities was found to be useful in analysing queer FLINTA*'s experiences in the German feminist movement. Secondly, the study considered literature from multiple disciplines, namely sociology, philosophy, psychology, social movement, youth, communication, media, queer and intersectionality studies, highlighting a successful use of interdisciplinarity. Thirdly, as reported by the participants, the researcher successfully provided a safe space to share experiences, increasing the credibility of the mapped experiences.

Despite its strengths, this study also has three limitations, which inform future research. Firstly, with six participants, the sample size was small and saturation was not reached. Therefore, future research is needed to enhance the results found in this study by reaching saturation. Secondly, not all sub-groups bundled under 'queer FLINTA*' were represented in this study. While there was a range of queer sexualities, representation of queer gender identities was limited to one participant only. Moreover, participation was homogenous regarding class, ethnicity and class. Due to this, the results from this study mostly reflect experiences from a group of people marginalised based on their gender and sexual identity and privileged based on their race, ethnicity and class. Future studies should investigate the role of whiteness, race and ethnicity overall, and class stronger with regard to gender and sexual identity, and thereby create a stronger analysis of the power dynamics of race and class in the experiences of queer FLINTA* with visibilities.

Thirdly, based on the raised ambivalence of the umbrella terms in capturing the experience of every sub-groups equally and the associated hierarchies in visibilities within the umbrella term, it is advised that future research focuses on one group only, for example, non-binary people, to get a deeper understanding of their lived reality, and be able to make stronger claims about potential shared experiences within this group.

Conclusion

This study set out to qualitatively explore the lived experiences of queer FLINTA* with different types of visibilities in the German feminist movement and found that these could be interpreted using the developed conceptualisation of visibilities. Participants were active in a range of feminist spaces, whereby most of them were queer-coded and had the aim to highlight intersectional perspectives. While some participants felt a sense of belonging to the overall feminist movement, all emphasised a strong distancing from exclusive feminist streams, such as white feminism and TERFs. Participants emphasised the value of role modelling and signs of support and allyship, which contributed to creating positive visibilities. Despite many participants feeling seen and valued, some also shared experiences of alienation, fear of denial of one's identity, as well as an overall ambivalence regarding umbrella terms like 'queer' and 'FLINTA*', which highlight a complex relationship between hyper-, invisibility and power structures. All participants regarded visibility of queer FLINTA* in the German feminist movement to be crucial, and many saw this as a stepping stone for wider societal goals like more acceptance, less discrimination and deconstructing systems of power.

The study demonstrated that the developed visibilities framework, which was created using literature from multiple disciplines, was useful for describing experiences within the feminist movement, and highlighted the importance of taking an intersectional approach to the

studied topic. Based on the outlined limitations of this study, future research should consider

focusing on sub-groups of queer FLINTA* and take other axes of oppression and privilege like

race or class into stronger account for analysis.

References

Altay, T., Al-Ali, N., Galor, K., & Yurdakul, G. (2021, November 30). *What do queer feminist perspectives have to tell us about our current political moment?* Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. https://www.boell.de/en/2021/11/30/what-do-queer-feminist-perspectives-have-tell-us-about-our-current-political-moment.

Austin, A., & Goodman, R. (2017). The impact of social connectedness and internalized transphobic stigma on self-esteem among transgender and gender non-conforming adults. *Journal of homosexuality*, *64*(6), 825-841. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2016.1236587

Bassi, S., & LaFleur, G. (2022). Introduction: TERFs, Gender-Critical Movements, and Postfascist Feminisms. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *9*(3), 311-333.

Bem, S. L. (1994). *The lenses of gender: Transforming the debate on sexual inequality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-9836008

Benozzo, A., Pizzorno, M. C., Bell, H., & Koro‑Ljungberg, M. (2015). Coming out, but into what? Problematizing discursive variations of revealing the gay self in the workplace. *Gender, Work & Organization*, *22*(3), 292-306. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12081

Bonilla‑Silva, E. (2000). "This is a White Country" 1: The Racial Ideology of the Western Nations of the World‑System. *Sociological Inquiry*, *70*(2), 188-214. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-682X.2000.tb00905.x

Botcherby, S., & Creegan, C. (2009). *Moving forward: putting sexual orientation in the public domain*. Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health*, *11*(4), 589-597. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Brighenti, A. (2007). Visibility: A category for the social sciences. *Current sociology*, *55*(3), 323-342. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392107076079

Buchanan, N. T., & Settles, I. H. (2019). Managing (in) visibility and hypervisibility in the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *113*, 1-5. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.11.001

Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. (2022, February 2). *Frauenbewegung*. bpb.de. https://www.bpb.de/themen/gender-diversitaet/frauenbewegung/.

Busch, C. A., Supriya, K., Cooper, K. M., & Brownell, S. E. (2022). Unveiling Concealable Stigmatized Identities in Class: The Impact of an Instructor Revealing Her LGBTQ+ Identity to Students in a Large-Enrollment Biology Course. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, *21*(2), ar37. https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-06-0162

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.

Cárdenas, M. 2017. "Dark Shimmers: The Rhythm of Necropolitical Affect in Digital Media." In *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by R. Gossett, E. A. Stanley, and J. Burton, 161–181. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Choo, H. Y., & Ferree, M. M. (2010). Practicing intersectionality in sociological research: A critical analysis of inclusions, interactions, and institutions in the study of inequalities. *Sociological theory*, *28*(2), 129-149. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2010.01370.x

Collins, P. H. (2015). Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas. *Annual review of sociology*, *41*, 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112142

Combahee River Collective. (1986). *The combahee river collective statement : black feminist organizing in the seventies and eighties* (1st ed.). Kitchen Table : Women of Color Press.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *u. Chi. Legal f.*, 139.

Dean, J., & Aune, K. (2015). Feminism resurgent? Mapping contemporary feminist activisms in Europe. *Social Movement Studies*, *14*(4), 375-395. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2015.1077112

Dergić, V., Dähnke, I., Nartova, N., Shilova, A., Matos, R., & Carneiro, A. (2022). When visibility becomes political: visibility and stigmatisation of young people. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2021.2022109

Deutsches Historisches Museum. (2018, May 3). *Geschichte(n) aktuell: Queer History*. DHM Blog - Deutsches Historisches Museum. https://www.dhm.de/blog/2018/05/03/queer-history/.

Dunn, D. S. (2021). Understanding ableism and negative reactions to disability. *American Psychological Association*. https://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/psychology-teacher-network/introductory-psychology/ableism-negative-reactions-disability. https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v37i1.5061

Engel, A. (1996). Verqueeres Begehen. In S. Hark, *Grenzen lesbischer Identitäten* (S. 73-95). Querverlag.

Foucault, M. (1977). Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Tr. A. Sheridan. *London: Allen Lane Penguin.*

Fischer, M. (2019). *Terrorizing gender: Transgender visibility and the surveillance practices of the US security state*. U of Nebraska Press.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. (2020). *Feminismus und Geschichte der Frauenbewegung in Deutschland*. https://www.fes.de/onlineakademie/interaktive-infografiken/zeitstrahl/feminismus.

Frost, G. (2019). The Subject (s) of Feminism: Gender Identity, Emotion, and Deconstruction in Contemporary Feminist Politics.

Gossett, C. 2017. "Blackness and the Trouble of Trans Visibility." In Trap Door: *Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by R. Gossett, E. A. Stanley, and J. Burton, 183190. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Gossett, R., E. A. Stanley, and J. Burton. 2017. *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*. Cambridge: MIT Press. https://doi.org/10.1080/0740770X.2018.1473988

Griffith, A. I. (1998). Insider/outsider: Epistemological privilege and mothering work. *Human studies*, 361-376.

Haile, S. (2020). Voices to be heard? Reflections on refugees, strategic invisibility and the politics of voice. *Refuge in a Moving World: Tracing Refugee and Migrant Journeys Across Disciplines*, 32-40.

Halberstam, J. (1998). *Female masculinity.* Duke University Press.

Heger, H. (2023). *The men with the pink triangle: The true, life-and-death story of homosexuals in the Nazi death camps*. Haymarket Books.

Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. (2018, July 3). *Von Welle zu Welle | Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*.

https://www.boell.de/de/2018/07/03/von-welle-zu-welle#:~:text=1918%20%E2%80%93
%20Frauenwahlrecht,Prozent%20weibliche%20Abgeordnete%20im%20Parlament.

Holmes, A. G. D. (2020). Researcher Positionality--A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in

Qualitative Research--A New Researcher Guide. *Shanlax International Journal of
Education*, *8*(4), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.34293/ education.v8i4.3232

Kanter, R. M. (1977). Men and women of the corporation. New York: Basic Books.

Lesben- und Schwulenverband. (n.d.). *Von 1933 bis heute: Lesben und Schwule in Deutschland
und der DDR*. LSVD : Lesben- Und Schwulenverband.

https://www.lsvd.de/de/ct/934-Von-1933-bis-heute-Lesben-und-Schwule-in-Deutschland-
und-der-DDR.

Lewis, P., & Simpson, R. (Eds.). (2010). *Revealing and concealing gender: Issues of visibility in
organizations*. Springer.

Liinason, M. (2020). Challenging the visibility paradigm: Tracing ambivalences in lesbian

migrant women's negotiations of sexual identity. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, *24*(2),

110-125. https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2019.1623602

Limbert, W., & Williams, W. (2014). Classism. *Encyclopedia of critical psychology*, 244-249.

Lollar, K. (2015). Strategic invisibility: Resisting the inhospitable dwelling place. *Review of
Communication*, *15*(4), 298-315. https://doi.org/10.1080/15358593.2015.1116592

Moradi, B., & Grzanka, P. R. (2017). Using intersectionality responsibly: Toward critical

epistemology, structural analysis, and social justice activism. *Journal of counseling
psychology*, *64*(5), 500. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000203

Pateman, C. 1983. "Feminist Critiques of the Public Private Dichotomy." In Public and Private in

Social Life, edited by S. I. Benn and G. F. Gaus, 281–303. New York: St. Martińs Press.

Prosser, J. (2007). Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory. *Self-Transformations*, 38.

Purdie-Vaughns, V., & Eibach, R. P. (2008). Intersectional invisibility: The distinctive

advantages and disadvantages of multiple subordinate-group identities. *Sex roles*, *59*(5),

377-391. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-008-9424-4

Quinn, D. M., & Chaudoir, S. R. (2015). Living with a concealable stigmatized identity: the

impact of anticipated stigma, centrality, salience, and cultural stigma on psychological

distress and health. *Stigma and Health, 1*(S), 35–59.

https://doi.org/10.1037/2376-6972.1.S.35

Rand, E. J. (2013). An appetite for activism: The Lesbian Avengers and the queer politics of

visibility. *Women's Studies in Communication*, *36*(2), 121-141.

https://doi.org/10.1080/07491409.2013.794754

Rega, I., & Medrado, A. (2021). The Stepping into Visibility Model: reflecting on consequences

of social media visibility–a Global South perspective. *Information, Communication &*

Society, 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2021.1954228

Reggiani, M., Gagnon, J. D., & Lunn, R. J. (2023). LGBT+ academics' and PhD students'

experiences of visibility in STEM: more than raising the rainbow flag. *Higher Education*,

1-19. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-00993-2

Roth, S. (2021). Intersectionality and coalitions in social movement research—A survey and

outlook. *Sociology Compass*, *15*(7), e12885. https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12885

Ryland, M. (2013, August 8). Hypervisibility: How scrutiny and surveillance makes you

watched, but not seen. [Tumblr blog]. Retrieved from

http://thebodyisnotanapology.tumblr.com/post/57763238146/hypervisibility-how-scrutiny
-and-surveillance.

Sager, M. (2018). Struggles Around Representation and in/Visibility in Everyday Migrant
Irregularity in Sweden. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, *8*(3).

Scharff, C. (2016). *Repudiating feminism: Young women in a neoliberal world*. Routledge.

Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the closet.* University of California Press.

Settles, I. H., Buchanan, N. T., & Dotson, K. (2019). Scrutinized but not recognized:(In)
visibility and hypervisibility experiences of faculty of color. *Journal of Vocational
Behavior*, *113*, 62-74. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.06.003

Simpson, R., & Lewis, P. (2005). An investigation of silence and a scrutiny of transparency:
Re-examining gender in organization literature through the concepts of voice and
visibility. *Human Relations*, *58*(10), 1253-1275.
https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726705058940

Stimpson, C. R., & Herdt, G. (Eds.). (2014). *Critical terms for the study of gender*. University of
Chicago Press.

Stead, V. (2013). Learning to deploy (in) visibility: An examination of women leaders' lived
experiences. *Management Learning*, *44*(1), 63-79.
https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507612470603

Sue, S. (1999). Science, ethnicity, and bias: Where have we gone wrong?. *American
psychologist*, *54*(12), 1070. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.12.1070

Sumner, W. G. (1906). *Folkways: A study of the sociological importance of usages, manners,
customs, more, and morals.* Boston, MA: Ginn & Co

Taylor, Charles (1992). Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition. Princeton, NJ:

Princeton University Press.

Uldam, J. (2018). Social media visibility: challenges to activism. *Media, Culture & Society*,

40(1), 41-58. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443717704997

Walby, S., Armstrong, J., & Strid, S. (2012). Intersectionality: Multiple inequalities in social

theory. *Sociology*, *46*(2), 224-240. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038511416164

Waldmann, M. (2019). *Queer/Feminismus und kritische Männlichkeit: Ethico-politische und*

pädagogische Positionen. Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Weber, B. M. (2016). Kübra Gümüşay, Muslim digital feminism and the politics of visuality in

Germany. *Feminist Media Studies*, *16*(1), 101-116.

https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2015.1093123

Appendices

Appendix I: Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

English Version

Title Study: An Exploration of Queer FLINTA* Persons' Experiences with (Hyper/In)Visibilities in the German Feminist Movement

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research. This letter explains what the research entails and how the research will be conducted. Please take time to read the following information carefully. If any information is not clear kindly ask questions using the contact details of the researchers provided at the end of this letter.

WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT?

- This study is about getting a deep qualitative insight into queer FLINTA* persons' experiences with visibilities in the German feminist movement. That is, this study explores how queer FLINTA* persons might feel invisible, hypervisible or differently visible in the context of feminist activism. Thereby, it aims to gain insights into how exclusion and queer erasure might prevail. Moreover, the study tries to get insights into how queer FLINTA* persons navigate the intersection of gender, sexuality and politics to understand the unique challenges and opportunities queer FLINTA* persons face in German feminist activism.

- You have been chosen as a participant as you fit the participant description (queer

  FLINTA* person) and are active in the German feminist movement. In total, 3-7

  participants will be interviewed in this study.

- This study is done in the context of the researcher's capstone project (thesis), which is

  the final research project before attaining the BSc Global Responsibility &

  Leadership degree of the University of Groningen, Campus Fryslân.

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

- Participation in this study means that you will be interviewed as a study participant.

  This interview will most likely be held online, will be loosely structured (very few,

  very open questions) and is estimated to be between 30-60 minutes long. It will focus

  on your experiences with different types of visibilities as a queer FLINTA* person in

  the German feminist movement. The aim is to have you share what you feel is

  important and give you the space to thereby steer what is talked about in the

  interview.

- As a participant, you are invited to read over the draft of the research paper before it

  is submitted as the final thesis to ensure that your anonymity was ensured.

DO YOU HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?

- Participation in this study is fully on a voluntary basis.

- As a participant, you are fully informed about the research and how ethical

  considerations are handled. You have the space to ask for any clarification and/or

  raise concerns before the interview is carried out.

- As a participant, you have to give your full informed consent before the interview is

  conducted.

- As a participant, you can withdraw from the study at any moment and choose not to answer questions without consequences or the need to provide reasons. In the case that you withdraw your participation and thereby withdraw your consent, the collected data from the interview will <u>not</u> be used.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS IN PARTICIPATING?

- This study will involve the discussion of sensitive topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as potential experiences with for example exclusion, queerphobia, invisibility and hypervisibility.

- As a participants, you are <u>not </u>at the risk of having your identity and experiences be exposed and/or traceable. This is because all of the data collected in the interviews will be anonymised.

- As this study talk about sensitive topics, participating in this study comes with the risk of being emotionally agitated. As a queer FLINTA* person myself who has studied topics related to gender, sexuality, and activism in her degree, the researcher is able to be sensitive about the topics. She hopes to provide a safe interview environment where you as a participant can safely share experiences and thoughts.

- As a participant, please remember that everything you share will be anonymised, that you can pause and/or terminate the interview at any point without the need to explain, and that you can withdraw your consent and participation in this study at any time without penalties or any negative consequences. In the case that you as a participant withdraw your consent and participation, what you have shared to this moment will <u>not </u>be used for this (or any) study.

- In the case that you as a participant feel like you forgot to mention something you find important for the researcher to know or something came up, you are encouraged to reach out to the researcher after the interview was held.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS IN PARTICIPATING?

- There are no direct benefits from participating in this study.

- By participating in this study, you may contribute to further academic knowledge on the topic of queer FLINTA* persons' experiences in German feminist activism, and how structures of power shape one's experience in feminist activism.

- The hope is that this research can be used by feminist activism groups and initiatives.

HOW WILL INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE BE RECORDED, STORED AND PROTECTED?

- The interviews will be voice-recorded for the purposes of creating an anonymised interview transcript. The recordings will be deleted after successful transcription. The transcripts and consent forms will be stored in line with the GDPR rules of the University. Only the researcher will have access to the data storage space.

- The transcripts of the interview will <u>not</u> include any information that makes it possible to track what was said to the individual participant and will thereby be anonymised.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

- The results of this study will be included in the researcher's final thesis (capstone), which is in the form of a research paper.

- The thesis will be shared with all participants and they are free to use it in their activist work.

- Though the researcher is not specifically aiming for it, the thesis might get published in an academic journal in the future.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

- This research has obtained ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of Campus Fryslân, University of Groningen (ethics-cf@rug.nl).

- The researcher upholds herself to relevant ethical standards that centre the safety of the participants.

- In the case that the participant feels like their safety or privacy rights as a participant were violated, the researcher encourages the participant to contact the researcher (l.lemke@student.rug.nl), who will then be in touch with the Ethics Committee of Campus Fryslân

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

- Please sign the informed consent forms. By signing, you agree that you have the intention to participate in this study. Please remember that participation can be withdrawn at any time.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

- The primary contact for you as a participant is the researcher herself.

- Researcher: Lea Lemke, l.lemke@student.rug.nl

- Supervisor: dr. Pelin Gül, p.gul@rug.nl

Name participant:

Assessment

- I have read the information sheet and was able to ask any additional question to the researcher.

- I understand I may ask questions about the study at any time.

- I understand I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

- I understand that at any time I can refuse to answer any question without any consequences.

- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

Confidentiality and Data Use

- I understand that none of my individual information will be disclosed to anyone outside the study team and my name will not be published.

- I understand that the information provided will be used only for this research and publications directly related to this research project.

- I understand that data (consent forms, recordings, interview transcripts) will be stored and retained in correspondence with the university GDPR legislation.

Research output

- I wish to receive a copy of the scientific output of the project.

- I consent to the scientific output being shared with all participants.

- I consent that the scientific output is kept in the University's repository for capstone theses.

- I consent to all participants of this study being allowed to use the scientific output of this study for their activism.

Having read and understood all the above, I agree to participate in the research study (please circle)**: yes / no**

Date:

Signature:

To be filled in by the researcher:

- I declare that I have thoroughly informed the research participant about the research study and answered any remaining questions to the best of my knowledge.

- I agree that this person participates in the research study.

Date:

Signature:

German Version

Studienname: Eine Untersuchung der Erfahrungen von Queeren FLINTA* Personen mit (Hyper-/Un)Sichtbarkeiten in der Deutschen Feministischen Bewegung

Liebe Teilnehmer*in,

vielen Dank für Ihr Interesse an der Teilnahme an dieser Studie. In diesem Schreiben wird erläutert, worum es bei der Studie geht und wie sie durchgeführt wird. Bitte nehmen Sie sich die Zeit, die folgenden Informationen sorgfältig zu lesen. Sollten Ihnen Informationen unklar sein, wenden Sie sich bitte mit Ihren Fragen an die am Ende dieses Schreibens angegebenen Kontaktdaten der Forscherin.

WORUM GEHT ES IN DIESER STUDIE?

- In dieser Studie geht es darum, einen tiefen qualitativen Einblick in die Erfahrungen queerer FLINTA* mit Sichtbarkeiten in der deutschen feministischen Bewegung zu bekommen. Das heißt, diese Studie untersucht, wie sich queere FLINTA* Personen im Kontext des feministischen Aktivismus unsichtbar, hypersichtbar oder anders sichtbar fühlen. Dadurch sollen Erkenntnisse darüber gewonnen werden, wie sich queere Ausgrenzung und Auslöschung bestehen können. Darüber hinaus versucht die Studie

herauszufinden, wie sich queere FLINTA* Personen an der Schnittstelle von Geschlecht, Sexualität und Politik bewegen, um die besonderen Herausforderungen und Chancen zu verstehen, denen sich queere FLINTA* Personen im deutschen feministischen Aktivismus gegenübersehen.

- Sie wurden als Teilnehmer*in ausgewählt, da Sie auf die Teilnahmebeschreibung (queere FLINTA* Person) passen und in der deutschen feministischen Bewegung aktiv sind. Insgesamt werden 3-7 Teilnehmer*innen im Rahmen dieser Studie befragt.

- Diese Studie wird im Rahmen des Capstone Projektes (Bachelorarbeit) der Forscherin durchgeführt, das das letzte Forschungsprojekt vor Erlangung des BSc Global Responsibility & Leadership-Abschlusses der Universität Groningen, Campus Fryslân, darstellt.

WAS BEINHALTET DIE TEILNAHME?

- Die Teilnahme an dieser Studie bedeutet, dass Sie als Studienteilnehmer*in befragt werden. Das zugehörige Interview wird höchstwahrscheinlich online stattfinden, locker strukturiert sein (sehr wenige, sehr offene Fragen) und schätzungsweise zwischen 30 und 60 Minuten dauern. Es wird sich auf Ihre Erfahrungen mit verschiedenen Arten der Sichtbarkeit als queere FLINTA* Person in der deutschen feministischen Bewegung konzentrieren. Das Ziel ist es, dass Sie das, was Sie für wichtig halten, mit der Forscherin teilen und Ihnen so den Raum geben, das Gespräch zu lenken.

- Als Teilnehmer*in sind Sie eingeladen, den Entwurf der Bachelorarbeit zu lesen, bevor er als Abschlussarbeit eingereicht wird, um sicherzustellen, dass Ihre Anonymität gewahrt wurde.

SIND SIE ZUR TEILNAHME VERPFLICHTET?

- Die Teilnahme an dieser Studie ist völlig freiwillig.

- Als Teilnehmer*in werden Sie umfassend über die Studie und den Umgang mit ethischen Aspekten informiert. Sie haben die Möglichkeit, vor der Befragung um Klärung zu bitten und/oder Bedenken zu äußern.

- Als Teilnehmer*in müssen Sie vor der Durchführung des Interviews Ihre vollständige, auf Kenntnis der Sachlage gegründete Einwilligung geben.

- Als Teilnehmer*in können Sie jederzeit von der Studie zurücktreten und sich dafür entscheiden, keine Fragen zu beantworten, ohne dass dies Konsequenzen hat oder Sie Gründe angeben müssen. Wenn Sie Ihre Teilnahme und damit Ihre Einwilligung zurückziehen, werden die erhobenen Daten aus dem Interview nicht verwendet.

GIBT ES IRGENDWELCHE RISIKEN BEI DER TEILNAHME?

- Im Rahmen dieser Studie werden sensible Themen im Zusammenhang mit sexueller Orientierung und Geschlechtsidentität sowie möglichen Erfahrungen mit Ausgrenzung, Queerphobie, Unsichtbarkeit und Hypervisibilität diskutiert.

- Als Teilnehmer*in laufen Sie nicht Gefahr, dass Ihre Identität und Ihre Erfahrungen offengelegt werden und/oder rückverfolgbar sind. Dies liegt daran, dass alle in den Interviews erhobenen Daten anonymisiert werden.

- Da es in dieser Studie um sensible Themen geht, birgt die Teilnahme an dieser Studie das Risiko, emotional aufgewühlt zu werden. Als queere FLINTA* Person, die sich in ihrem Studium mit Themen wie Gender, Sexualität und Aktivismus beschäftigt hat, ist die

Forscherin in der Lage, sensibel mit diesen Themen umzugehen. Sie hofft, ein sicheres Interviewumfeld zu schaffen, in dem Sie als Teilnehmer*in Ihre Erfahrungen und Gedanken sicher mitteilen können.

- Bitte denken Sie als Teilnehmer*in daran, dass alles, was Sie der Forscherin mitteilen, anonymisiert wird, dass Sie das Interview jederzeit unterbrechen und/oder beenden können, ohne dass es einer Erklärung bedarf, und dass Sie Ihre Einwilligung und Teilnahme an dieser Studie jederzeit zurückziehen können, ohne dass es zu Sanktionen oder negativen Folgen kommt. Sollten Sie als Teilnehmer*in Ihre Einwilligung und Teilnahme zurückziehen, wird das, was Sie bis zu diesem Zeitpunkt mitgeteilt haben, nicht für diese (oder eine andere) Studie verwendet.

- Sollten Sie als Teilnehmer*in das Gefühl haben, dass Sie etwas vergessen haben, das Sie für die Forscherin wichtig finden können Sie sich nach dem Interview an die Forscherin wenden.

GIBT ES EINEN NUTZEN FÜR DIE TEILNAHME?

- Die Teilnahme an dieser Studie bringt keine direkten Vorteile mit sich.

- Durch Ihre Teilnahme an dieser Studie können Sie zu weiteren wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen über die Erfahrungen von queeren FLINTA* Personen im deutschen feministischen Aktivismus beitragen und darüber, wie Machtstrukturen die Erfahrungen im feministischen Aktivismus prägen.

- Die Hoffnung der Forscherin ist, dass diese Studie von feministischen Aktivismusgruppen und Initiativen genutzt werden kann.

WIE WERDEN DIE VON IHNEN GEMACHTEN ANGABEN AUFGEZEICHNET, GESPEICHERT UND GESCHÜTZT?

- Die Interviews werden aufgezeichnet, um ein anonymisiertes Interviewprotokoll zu erstellen. Die Aufzeichnungen werden nach erfolgreicher Transkription gelöscht. Die Interviewtranskripte und Einverständniserklärungen werden in Übereinstimmung mit den GDPR-Vorschriften der Universität gespeichert. Nur die Forscherin hat Zugang zu dem Datenspeicherplatz.

- Die Interviewtranskripte enthalten keine Informationen, die Rückschlüsse auf einzelne Teilnehmer*innen zulässt, und sind daher anonymisiert.

WAS WIRD MIT DEN ERGEBNISSEN DER STUDIE GESCHEHEN?

- Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie werden in die Abschlussarbeit (capstone) der Forscherin einfließen, die die Form einer Bachelorabeit hat.

- Die Abschlussarbeit wird allen Teilnehmer*innen zur Verfügung gestellt, und sie können sie in ihrer aktivistischen Arbeit verwenden.

- Obwohl die Forscherin dies nicht ausdrücklich anstrebt, könnte die Arbeit in Zukunft in einem akademischen Journal veröffentlicht werden.

ETHISCHE GENEHMIGUNG

- Diese Studie wurde von der Ethikkommission des Campus Fryslân der Universität Groningen (ethics-cf@rug.nl) genehmigt.

- Die Forscherin hält sich an die einschlägigen ethischen Standards, in deren Mittelpunkt die Sicherheit der Teilnehmenden steht.

- Sollte eine teilnehmenden Person das Gefühl haben, dass die Sicherheit oder das Recht auf Privatsphäre verletzt wurde, fordert die Forscherin sie auf, sich mit der Forscherin (l.lemke@student.rug.nl) in Verbindung zu setzen, die sich dann mit der Ethikkommission des Campus Fryslân in Verbindung setzen wird.

EINWILLIGUNGSERKLÄRUNG

- Bitte unterschreiben Sie die Einwilligungserklärung. Mit Ihrer Unterschrift bestätigen Sie, dass Sie die Absicht haben, an dieser Studie teilzunehmen. Bitte denken Sie daran, dass Sie Ihre Teilnahme und Einwilligung jederzeit widerrufen können.

WEN SOLLTEN SIE FÜR WEITERE INFORMATIONEN KONTAKTIEREN?

- Die Hauptansprechperson für Sie als Teilnehmer*in ist die Forscherin selbst.

- Forscherin: Lea Lemke, l.lemke@student.rug.nl

- Betreuerin: Dr. Pelin Gül, p.gul@rug.nl

Studienname: Eine Untersuchung der Erfahrungen von Queeren FLINTA* Personen mit (Hyper-/Un)Sichtbarkeiten in der Deutschen Feministischen Bewegung

Name der Teilnehmer*in:

Bewertung

- Ich habe das Informationsblatt gelesen und konnte der Forscher*in für mich offene Fragen stellen.

- Ich weiß, dass ich jederzeit Fragen zur Studie stellen kann.

- Ich weiß, dass ich das Recht habe, jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen von der Studie zurückzutreten.

- Mir ist bekannt, dass ich jederzeit die Beantwortung von Fragen verweigern kann, ohne dass dies irgendwelche Konsequenzen hat.

- Mir ist bekannt, dass ich aus der Teilnahme an dieser Studie keinen direkten Nutzen ziehen werde.

Vertraulichkeit und Datenverwendung

- Mir ist bekannt, dass keine meiner persönlichen Daten an Personen außerhalb des Studienteams weitergegeben werden und mein Name nicht veröffentlicht wird.

- Mir ist bekannt, dass die zur Verfügung gestellten Informationen nur für diese Forschung und für Veröffentlichungen, die direkt mit diesem Forschungsprojekt zusammenhängen, verwendet werden.

- Mir ist bekannt, dass die Daten (Einverständniserklärungen, Aufzeichnungen, Interviewtranskripte) in Übereinstimmung mit der GDPR-Gesetzgebung der Universität gespeichert und aufbewahrt werden.

Forschungsergebnisse

- Ich bin damit einverstanden, dass ich eine digitale Kopie der Bachelorarbeit erhalte.

- Ich bin damit einverstanden, dass die Bachelorarbeit mit allen Teilnehmer*innen

  geteilt wird.

- Ich bin damit einverstanden, dass die Bachelorarbeit im Repositorium der Universität

  für Bachelorarbeiten aufbewahrt wird.

- Ich bin damit einverstanden, dass alle Teilnehmer*innen dieser Studie die

  Bachelorarbeit für ihren Aktivismus nutzen dürfen.

Nachdem ich die obigen Informationen gelesen und verstanden habe, stimme ich der

Teilnahme an der Studie zu (bitte einkreisen)**: ja / nein**

Datum:

Unterschrift:

Von der Forscherin auszufüllen:

- Ich erkläre, dass ich den Forschungsteilnehmer gründlich über die Forschungsstudie

  informiert und alle noch offenen Fragen nach bestem Wissen und Gewissen

  beantwortet habe.

- Ich bin damit einverstanden, dass diese Person als Teilnehmer*in an der Studie

  teilnimmt.

Datum:

Unterschrift:

Appendix II: Interview Guide
English Version

Intro / Feminist work:
- Can you tell me how you do feminist work / What does your feminist work look like?
  - Topic
  - Spaces (online / offline; niches of resistance)
- Why are you involved?
  - Motivation

Belonging / Queerness:
- How do you perceive the German feminist movement?
- To what extent do you feel you belong to the German feminist movement? / To what extent do you feel you are part of the feminist movement?

Visibilities:
- To what extent do you feel that you are perceived as a queer FLINTA* in feminism?
- Do you feel you can influence your queer visibility/the way you are perceived?
  - How (not)?
- Do you feel your queerness is recognised?
- Do you feel like you (and your queerness) are wanted/are welcome in the feminist movement?
- What are your experiences with situations in which your queerness was not recognised and/or was pushed aside?
- What are your experiences of situations where you have been outed by others within your feminist work?
- Have you ever had the feeling of being unwanted in a feminist context?
- Have you ever had the feeling of being a token in a feminist context?
  - How did you deal with it?
- What are the problems and difficulties you experience in your feminist work?
  - How do you deal with them? (strategies)
- Is more visibility of queer FLINTA* the/a goal for you?
  - Why (not)?

Outro:
- Are there any other thoughts and feelings that you associate with different visibilities that have not yet found a place in this interview?
- Are there things you would like to emphasise again?
- For my paper: To what extent do you feel represented by the term 'queer FLINTA*'? Are there other self-descriptions that you prefer?

German Version

Intro / Feministische Arbeit

- Kannst du mir erzählen wie du dich feministisch einsetzt? / Wie sieht deine feministische Arbeit aus?
  - Thema
  - Spaces (online / offline; niches of resistance)
- Warum setzt du dich ein?
  - Motivation

Zugehörigkeit / Queerness

- Wie nimmst du die deutsche feministische Bewegung wahr?
- Inwieweit fühlst du dich der deutschen feministischen Bewegung zugehörig? / In wieweit hast du das Gefühl, dass du Teil der feministischen Bewegung bist?

Sichtbarkeiten

- Inwieweit hast du das Gefühl als queere FLINTA* im Feminismus wahrgenommen zu werden?
- Hast du das Gefühl deine queere Sichtbarkeit(en) beeinflussen zu können/beeinflussen zu können wie du wahrgenommen wirst?
  - Wenn ja: Wie beeinflusst du diese?
- Hast du das Gefühl deine Queerness ist anerkannt?
- Inwieweit hast du das Gefühl, dass du im deutschen Feminismus (mit deiner Queerness) gewollt/wilkommen bist?
- Was sind deine Erfahrungen mit Situation in denen deine Queerness nicht wahrgenommen wurde und/oder bei Seite geschoben wurde?
- Was sind deine Erfahrungen mit Situationen in denen du innerhalb deiner feministischen Arbeit von anderen Personen geoutet wurdest?
- Hattest du schonmal das Gefühl ungewollt in einem feministischen Kontext zu sein?
- Hattest du jemals das Gefühl ein 'token' im einem feministischen Kontext zu sein?
  - Wie bist du damit umgegangen?
- Was sind Probleme und Schwierigkeiten, die du in deiner feministischen Arbeit erlebst?
  - Wie gehst du damit um? (Strategien)
- Ist mehr Sichtbarkeit von queer FLINTA* für dich das/ein Ziel?
  - Warum (nicht)?

Outro

- Gibt es Gedanken und Gefühle, die du sonst noch mit verschiedenen Sichtbarkeiten verbindest, die bisher noch keinen Platz in diesem Interview gefunden haben?
- Gibt es Dinge, die du nochmal bestimmt betonen möchtest?
- Für mein Paper: Inwieweit fühlst du dich repräsentiert durch den Begriff 'queere FLINTA*'? Gibt es andere Selbstbeschreibungen, die du vorziehst?