

**February 12th**

**Summary: Investigating Reddit Self-Disclosure and Confessions in Relation to Connectedness, Social Support, and Life Satisfaction**

- Author: Brandon Miller
- Year: 2020

Miller (2020) reports a survey of 628 Reddit users. The questionnaire covered Internet usage, Reddit usage (especially in relation to self-disclosure on subreddits), and a set of psychological questions relating to connectedness, social support perception, life satisfaction, narcissism, and sensation seeking.

The sharing of intimate information on Reddit’s anonymous-feeling platform was found to be significantly correlated with the sensation seeking tendency, but there was no evidence of an association with narcissism.

The findings are interpreted as evidence that intimate self-disclosure on Reddit is motivated by feeling disconnected and alone.

The research participants were approached with advertisements on Reddit, as well as with posts to related subreddits, e.g. **r/confessions**, **r/offmychest**.

Miller (2020) suggests that “[f]uture work should investigate whether engagement is driven by empathetic concern, or whether it is spurred by boredom and the tendency of confessions to have a high degree of shock value”, which is an interesting line of investigation in the context of spontaneous online advice-seeking. What drives engagement with advice-seeking posts, i.e. what drives Redditors to give advice?

**data sources**

It strikes me that threads on the subreddit **r/amitheasshole** frequently take the form of moral advice-seeking integrated into confessions. Also, the subreddit has a highly standardized lexicon for passing judgement, which may facilitate reasonably sophisticated automated tagging of posts and comments. Responses containing the following acronyms can have the following interpretation: - NTA: not the asshole, the commenter believes OP has not violated any moral rules - YTA: you’re the asshole, the commenter believes OP is in the wrong - NAH: no assholes here, no-one in OP’s situation is in the wrong - etc.

There is further structure within posts on **r/amitheasshole** that can facilitate extraction of metadata. The first reference to an individual in such posts is usually followed by a tag indicating the age and gender of the individual.

**References**

Miller, Brandon. “Investigating Reddit self-disclosure and confessions in relation to connectedness, social support, and life satisfaction.” *The Journal of Social Media in Society* 9, no. 1 (2020): 39-62