



LGBT Content on Tiktok

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INTRODUCTION

- LGBT-related content has been shown to have significant impacts on the mental health of entertainment media consumers
- > *negative content is associated with poor mental health in LGBT people*
- The gap: there are few studies focusing on the **prevalence** of such content on social media and no studies on the prevalence of LGBT content on **Tiktok**, one of the most popular social platforms amongst teenagers

This study aimed to understand the prevalence and type of LGBT content on Tiktok, particularly mental health references.

METHOD

Design: content analysis

Subjects:

- First 25 Tiktoks from the For You page each day for 7 days
- First 10 Tiktoks from each of the top 5 hashtags on the Discover page each day for 7 days
- First 100 Tiktoks from the #lgbt hashtag

Variable/Category	Coding Criteria Examples of Key Words/Phrases
Social/political LGBT	Bill, issue, I wanted to address __, stereotype
Positive	"love is love", "___ rights", "equality"
Negative	"pronouns don't exist", "it", "snowflake", eye roll emoji, vomit emoji
Neutral	Statistics with no commentary, if there are not many positive or negative phrases
LGBT identity	#bi, #pan, #lwlw, etc., "as a trans person"
Mental illness	"depression", "anxiety", "mentally ill", dysphoria
Mental wellness	"feeling comfortable in my body", "went to therapy", "tips for mental health"
Creator's mental health	"i have depression", "i'm starting therapy for my anxiety"
General mental health	"a lot of people struggle with anxiety", "lgbt people are depressed"
Likes, shares, and comments	The number of likes, shares, and comments on a Tiktok video, as accurate as is displayed

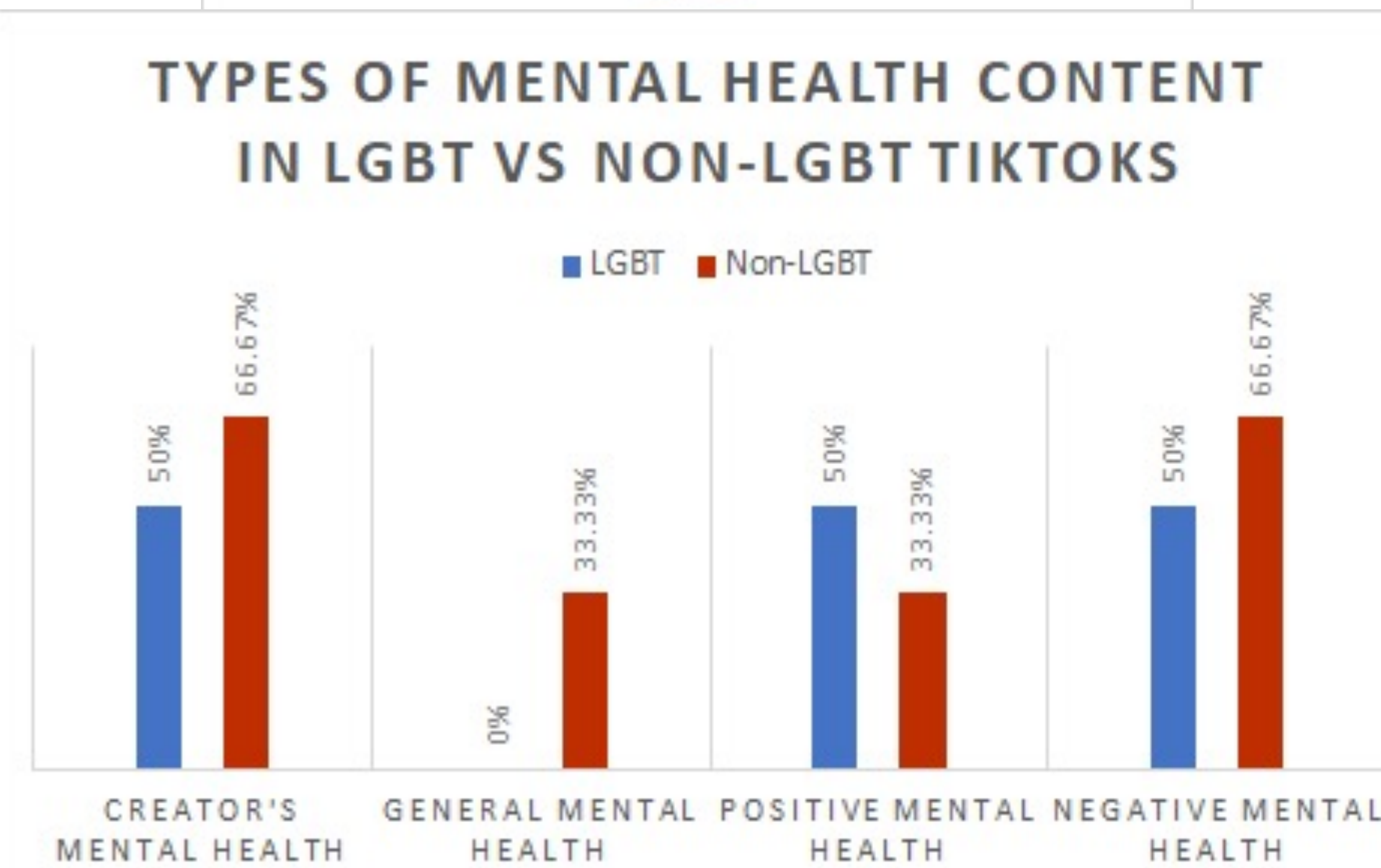
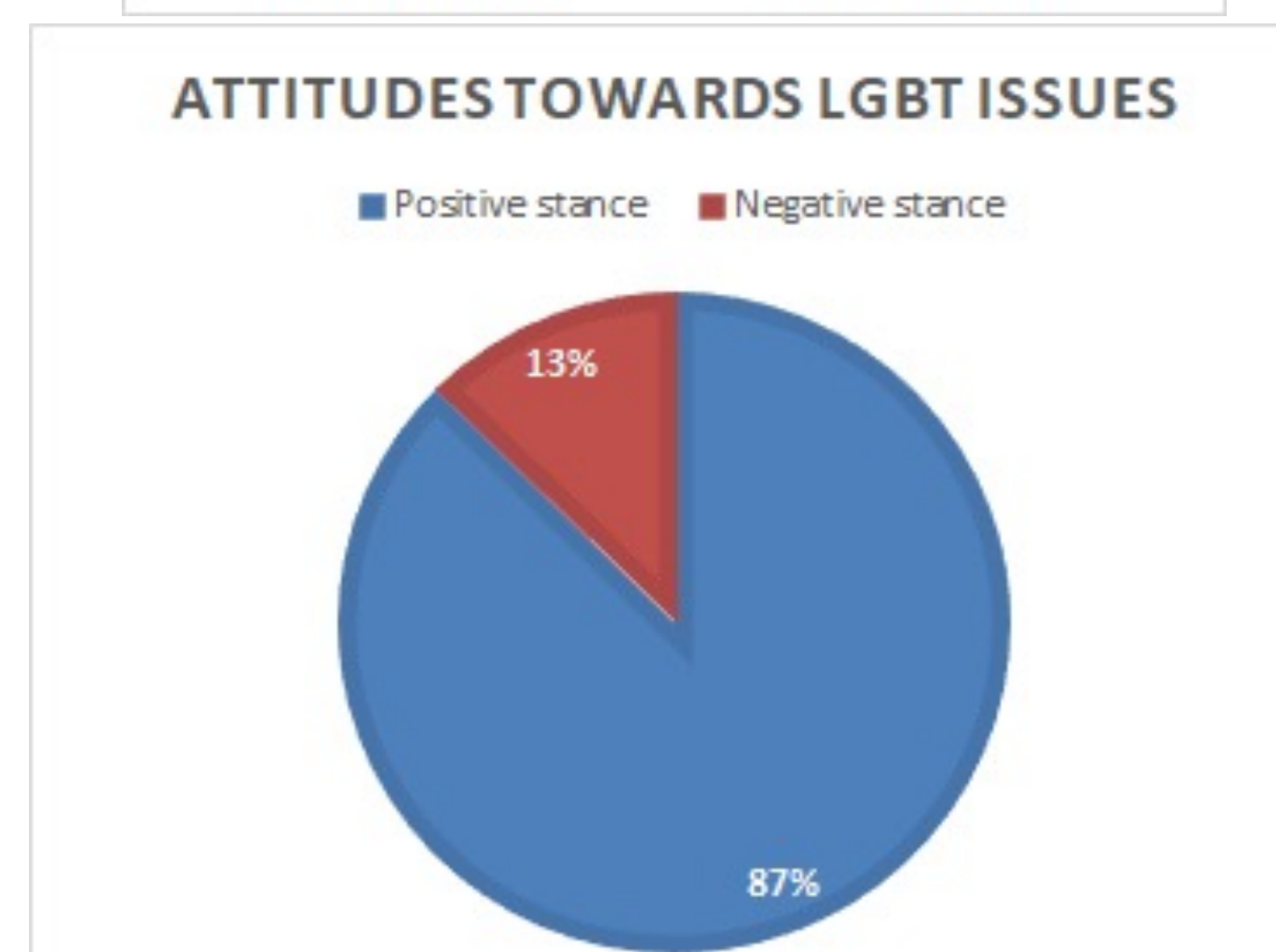
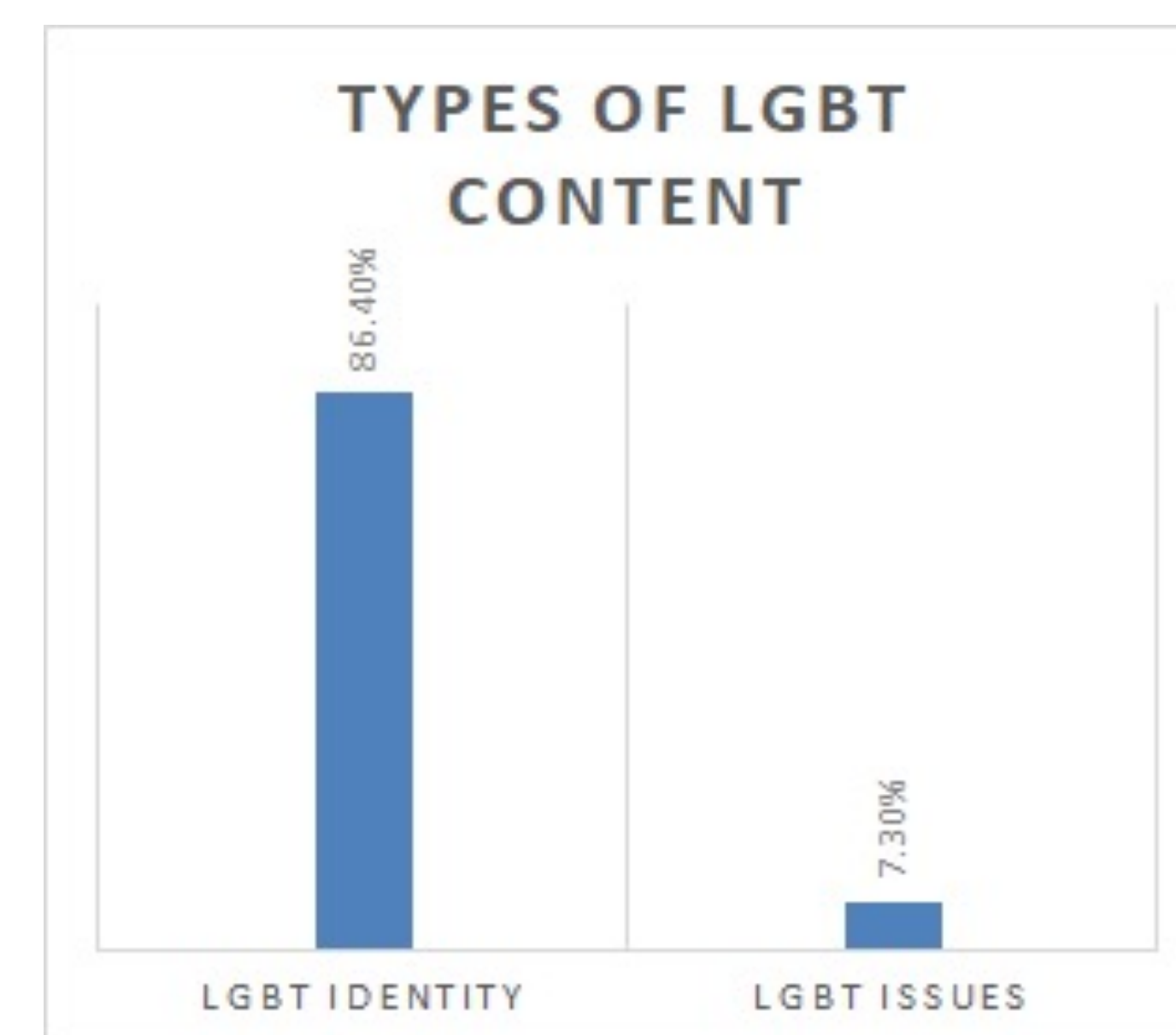
Analysis: Descriptive statistics were calculated. T-tests were used to compare engagement between LGBT and non-LGBT content.

RESULTS

Subjects: 625 total

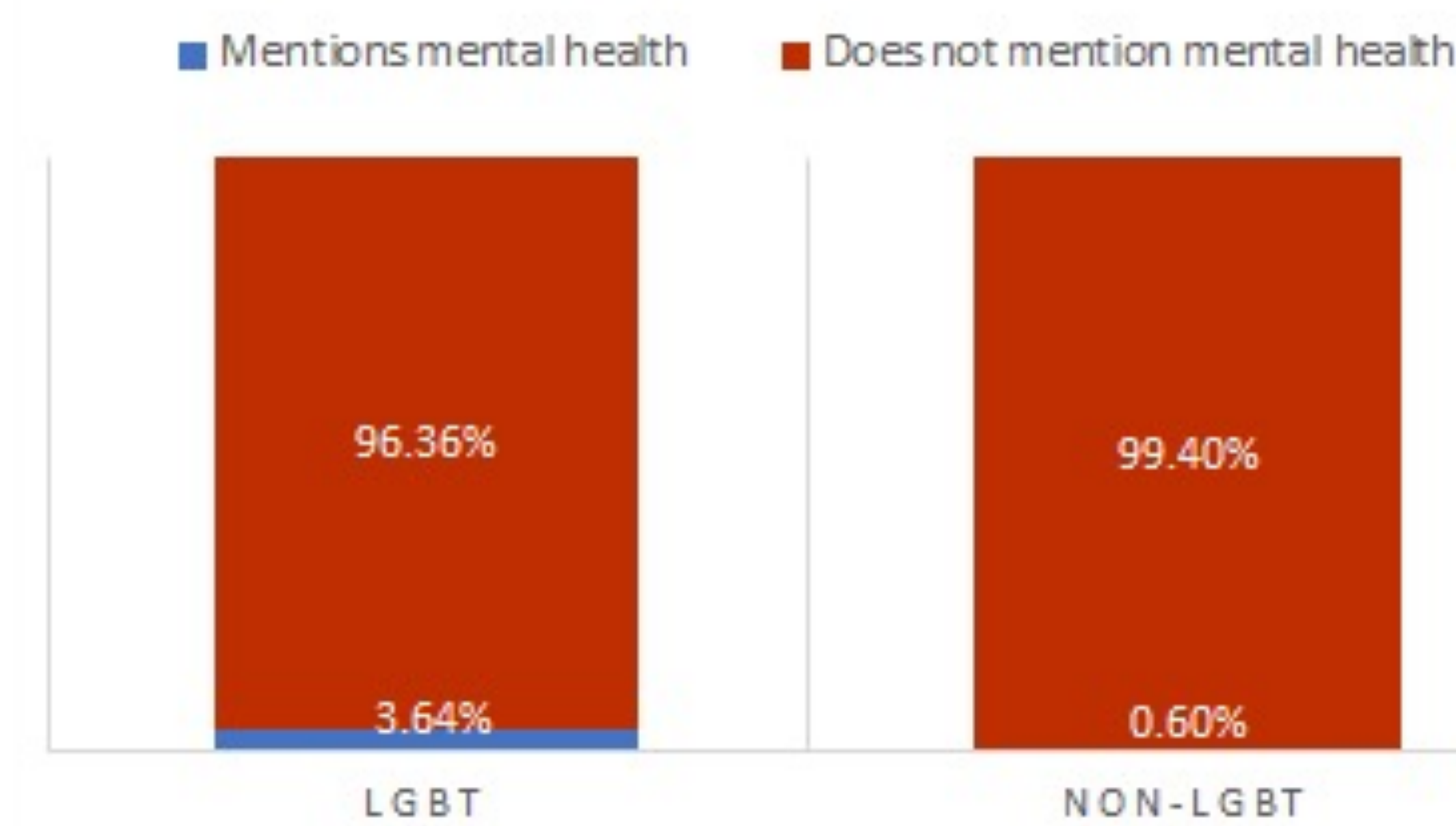
- 175 Tiktoks from the For You page
- 350 Tiktoks from the Discover page
- 100 Tiktoks from the #lgbt hashtag

1.9% of the content found on the For You and Discover pages was LGBT-related. The graphs and charts below represent all content evaluated in the study unless stated otherwise.

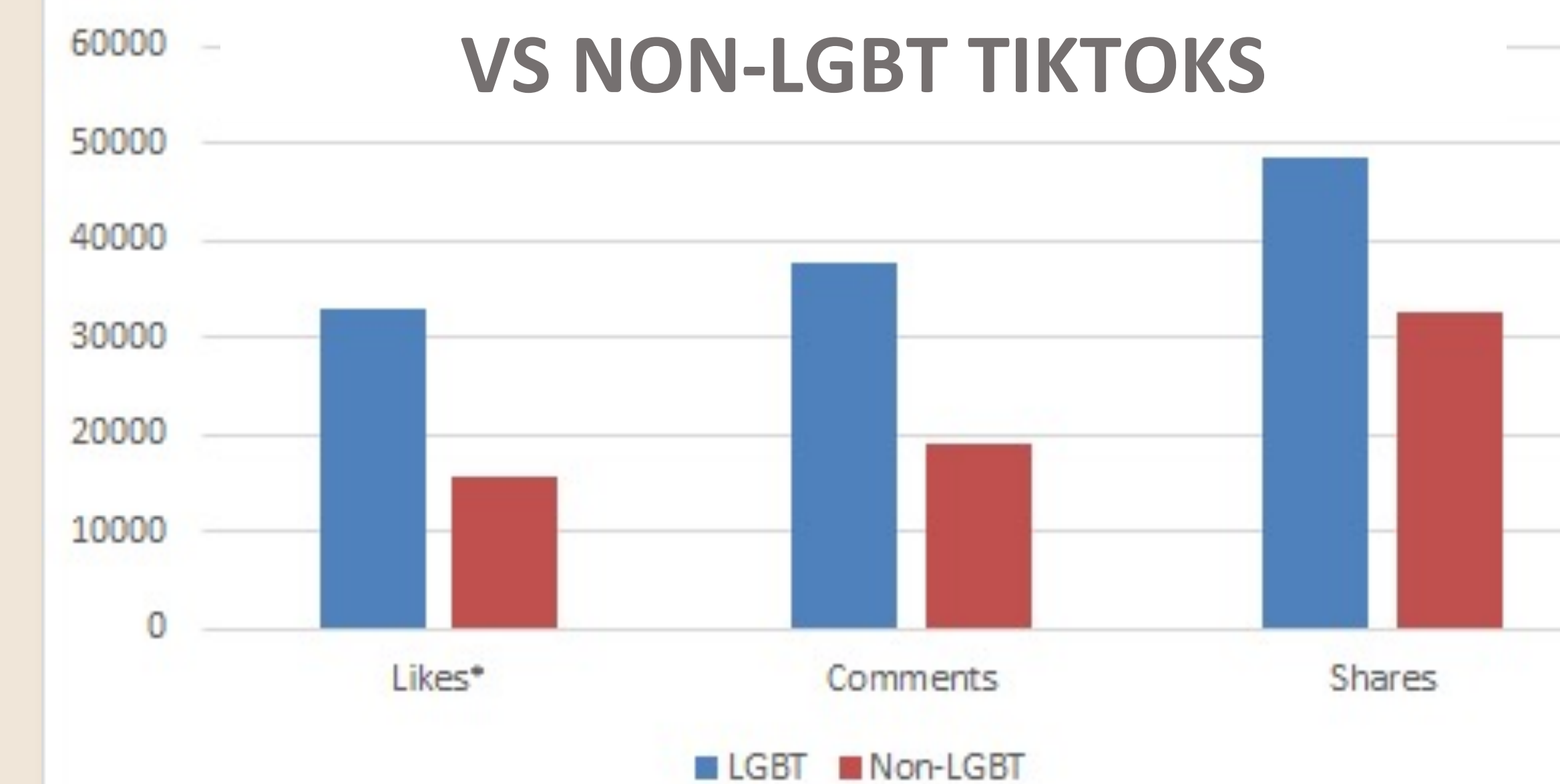


RESULTS

MENTAL HEALTH MENTIONS IN LGBT VS NON-LGBT CONTENT



AVERAGE ENGAGEMENT ON LGBT VS NON-LGBT TIKTOKS



*Likes are shown in hundreds for purposes of scale.

The t-test suggested that the mean like count was significantly higher for content with LGBT references (M = 3299267.49, SD = 1465207.120) than non-LGBT content (M = 1582509.19, SD = 3459387.347, t = - 8.298, p < 0.001).

The t-test suggested that the mean comment count was significantly higher for LGBT content (M = 37699.16, SD = 35318.207) than non-LGBT content (M = 19104.65, SD = 53162.894, t = -3.506, p < 0.001).

The t-test suggested that the mean share count was significantly higher for LGBT content (M = 48452.50, SD = 53004.091) than non-LGBT content (M = 32599.45, SD = 74882.434, t = -2.110, p = .035).

CONCLUSIONS

Findings:

- The average user on Tiktok may rarely be exposed to LGBT content.
- Popular LGBT content is uncommonly focused on social or political LGBT issues and commonly focused on LGBT identity. Popular Tiktoks on social/political issues are largely supportive.
- Mental health references were very uncommon in both LGBT and non-LGBT TikToks, despite that LGBT individuals are more commonly affected by mental illness
- Engagement results suggest people are more interested in LGBT than non-LGBT content, or more ready to share their opinions on it.

Limitations:

- All non-LGBT content was sampled from Tiktok's For You and Discover pages, while most LGBT content came from #lgbt. Differences found between LGBT and non-LGBT content may be affected by selection bias.
- Less than 10 Tiktoks evaluated in the study referenced mental health. Such a small number means that findings about the types of mental health content in those Tiktoks may not be broadly applicable.

Implications:

- Many Tiktok users no longer see the generic content of the new user For You page once they begin interacting with videos. Studies on the nature of content suggested to users of different identities and interests would be beneficial.
- There were few mental health related Tiktoks in the study. Further research on the nature of LGBT posts with mental health references is necessary to gain a greater understanding.
- Later studies should remove selection bias by sampling LGBT and non-LGBT content with methods as identical as possible.

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CONTACT

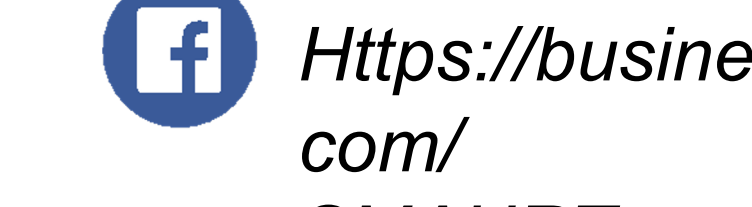
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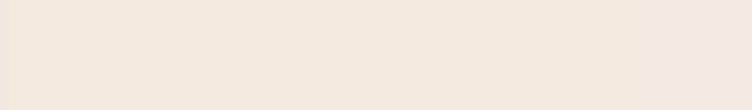
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