

Review of: "Patterns of Social Dynamics Surrounding Suicide Notes on Facebook Platforms: A Netnographic Approach"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The topic is fascinating and scarcely explored despite the many people it involves every year. I particularly appreciated the portrayal of the struggle of users wanting to offer support but lacking expertise. Along the same lines, netnography is a promising methodology allowing researchers to access a large amount of uniquely interesting data.

Here are some comments for each section:

Social Networks and Netnography

I would consider moving the first half of the section "Social Networks and Netnography" (i.e., from "Similar biases affect" to "quantitative or qualitative camp") to the Conclusion section as final remarks regarding the method, as I feel like it takes away from the main point of describing netnography in this specific study's context.

Participants, sampling, and procedure

It would be interesting to know more about the two selected Facebook groups ("Suicide Notes" and "Survivor Warriors"), e.g., their privacy settings (public, private, hidden) and descriptions, as group names alone might be non-informative.

I would consider moving down the sentence "This analysis helped identify....user interventions" as it describes results before presenting the connected information. Moving this section to the Discussion and Implications section would make better sense.

Case Study 1

Knowing the language in which these messages are written would be better. Has someone translated them, or were they originally written in English? In the former case, it should be stated in the paper.

Responses from the Facebook community

Please clarify the "and mine". Is the author speaking?

Be mindful of closing quotation marks when needed.

Case Study 2

There are some inconsistencies with how the two cases are presented (e.g., a date is provided here but not in case 1). Be mindful of closing quotation marks when needed.

Responses from the Facebook community

Be mindful of closing quotation marks when needed.

Both cases and relative responses would be easier to read if presented schematically, e.g., in a table. If possible, please clearly state the gender and approximate age of both group members.

Analysis of Results

The first two and a half paragraphs (from “The fact that the majority of people” to “further encouraged the posters’ happiness and relief”) should be part of the previous section, as more comments from group members and posters’ responses are presented here. I would only keep the actual analysis themes in this section (from “Here” onward).

The “surprise” described in the first statement should be evidence-motivated. Is there evidence of group members not engaging with such content in other published papers?

Also, be mindful that the author used “him” in connection with Case 2 (“advises him”), yet it was previously stated the user is a woman. I’d also suggest not using the word “Clearly” in this context, as in qualitative research and without direct contact with the user, certainty is never an option.

Discussion and implications

I suggest moving the first paragraph to the end of this section, as the verbs are in the past tense, yet social dynamics and intervention opportunities are only described later in the text.

“Feelings of Vulnerability:” and “The significance of supportive reactions:” are difficult to notice as topics change. Consider using them as titles or points in a bullet list.