

# Review of: "Elderly social connectedness through social media platforms: a scoping review"

Paul Willis<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Bristol

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

This is an interesting paper presenting findings from a scoping review on the significance of social media for enhancing social connections amongst older populations in Ghana. There are some key areas that need further attention before this is ready for publication:

1. More comprehensive discussion and details about the review process are needed. Its currently slim on essential details and hard to appraise.
2. There's no critical discussion about the methods applied across studies included or comments on the gaps in current scholarship.
3. Its not clear if the scoping review includes international literature.
4. A number of claims in the discussion section need supporting citations.
5. There are numerous generalised statements about the vulnerability of 'the elderly' – keep in mind this sweeping term includes numerous generations of people from very diverse backgrounds, including many well-resourced older adults with high levels of social, cultural and economic capital. I would strongly recommend the authors avoid this term (suggest 'older adults') and be more specific about which populations they are referring to when making statements about vulnerability and lack of IT skills etc. in the discussion section.

More specific queries for the authors to consider:

Suggest alternative terms used to 'the elderly' and 'elderly population' throughout – very homogenising and dehumanising. Suggest authors refer to 'older people' or people in later life.

'This requirement comes at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic, with its social/physical distancing restrictions, continues to define the medium of social interactions in our society' – what pandemic restrictions/ measures remain in place in 2022? Some more background context would be helpful.

Given the vulnerability of the elderly populace, it is probable to expert' – typo 'expert'

In the last stage, the authors organized the findings into themes – how were themes developed? Some more details would be helpful.

The following aspects of the searching process are not clear:

Did the review include international literature? Or just literature based in Ghana? The FBI citation suggests international literature? If so, I'm surprised to see only 16 papers in total.

How did the authors move from 57 papers to the final selection (16?) displayed in Table 1? On what basis were papers excluded from the review? A PRISMA diagram may help show this process.

Suggest that Table 1 includes a column summarising details about study samples and methods.

Discussion section queries:

'the elderly wallows in loneliness' – suggest alternative phrasing here. Older people experience in loneliness? 'wallows' suggests some degree of pity or shame.

'Those who receive favorable responses to their posts or blogs may stay glued to these platforms and neglect other essential personal and social duties.' Is there a citation to support this claim?

'Further, the surge in cyberbullying on social media platforms is another setback to the elderly use of these platforms.' Include a citation to support this claim.

'Younger users have mastered functional jargon and abbreviations that make chats on these social media platforms more accessible.' Include a citation to support this claim.