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

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I very much enjoyed this well written paper about social connectedness and social media platforms. I think this is an important subject, especially regarding the experiences as a result of the restrictions during covid as well as the potential of digital media applications to help connect people, when alternatives are not available.

What I would like to suggest is to take even more account of particular characteristics of later life stages in the introduction/discussion. Although it was explained that age comes with inconveniences and events that may decrease someone's social network whilst it increases someone's need for social support, other mechanisms also may have an effect.

For instance previous findings that indicate that elderly prefer social interactions that add to positive emotions and experiences in the present (e.g. Carstensen et al, 1999; English & Carstensen, 2014), and also seem to benefit more from them, than for instance younger generations (Birditt & Fingerman, 2003; Charles & Piazza, 2007). So in addition to life events that may decrease their social network (e.g. loss of loved ones, decreased mobility, moving to care home), elderly may actively contribute to this decrease of network whilst or maybe in an attempt to increase its quality (Simons et al., 2022a). These notions can help to better understand the potential value of social media (or in more general digital media), and what types of use or applications may have added value for the elderly (Simons et al., 2022b).

Possible concerns of social media use may also be subject to age-related and cohort characteristics. As the present elderly did not grow up with social media in the current digital world, their "physical" and "digital lives" are not as integrated as is the case for younger generations. It can therefore be argued that intensive use or cyberbullying might pose a greater problem among younger generations of users than older ones. On the other hand, this can make older generations reluctant to use new technologies. This cohort effect should indeed be addressed, as you point out as well, by both educating older generations in their use of digital media applications (Embarak et al. 2020; Kanakaris & Korres, 2021) as well as developing more accessible interfaces for older age groups (e.g. Gomes et al., 2014; Goumopoulos et al., 2017).

I was also wondering whether the included studies also illustrate the type of use by elderly? As younger generations are for instance more inclined to share their whereabouts online than older generations are (Brandtzaeg et al., 2010; Waycott et al., 2013), also possibly explained by cohort differences.

While several relevant articles have been included in this review, I believe that these more general (in addition to research focused specifically in older people in Ghana) research findings on this topic, may help solidify the introduction and discussion section.

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