Recruiting stigmatised populations and managing negative commentary via social media: a case study of recruiting older LGBTI research participants in Australia

Andrea Waling , Anthony Lyons , Beatrice Alba , Victor Minichiello , Catherine Barrett , Mark Hughes & Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen

Published online: 16 Dec 2020.

Submit your article to this journal ✎

View related articles ✎

View Crossmark data ✎

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

Recruiting stigmatised populations and managing negative commentary via social media: a case study of recruiting older LGBTI research participants in Australia

Andrea Waling[a], Anthony Lyons[a], Beatrice Alba[a,b], Victor Minichiello[a,c], Catherine Barrett[d], Mark Hughes[e] and Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen[f]

[a]Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia; [b]School of Psychology, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia; [c]School of Justice, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia; [d]Alice's Garage, Melbourne, Australia; [e]School of Arts and Social Sciences, Southern Cross University, Gold Coast, Australia; [f]School of Social Work, University of Washington, Seattle, USA

ABSTRACT

In this paper we explore methodological considerations for recruiting stigmatised populations online. Advertising for research participants via social networking sites (SNS) has increasingly become a tool of choice for both quantitative and qualitative researchers. However, such recruitment practices pose a range of challenges for researchers, especially in handling negative commentary such as trolling and its potential negative impact on prospective research participants. Using a case study involving a project on the health and well-being of older lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in Australia, we outline the types of commentary we received on our advertising campaign, as well as our strategies for managing such commentary. We seek to offer ways in which researchers working with stigmatised populations, as well as controversial issues that may attract hostile attention, can effectively manage participant recruitment as researchers increasingly utilise online technologies for recruitment advertising.

Introduction

In an era of social media, researchers are increasingly drawn to advertising and promoting their research online via the use of a social networking site (SNS). SNS advertising has become preferred by many researchers because of its affordability, global reach, and ability to engage real time with potential participants (Chu & Snider, 2013; Kapp et al., 2013; Kosinski et al., 2015; Ramo & Prochaska, 2012; Rife et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2013). Researchers can create websites as landing pages for their study to be shared across multiple SNSs, and SNSs have been consistently proven to be highly successful in attracting large numbers of research participants for quantitative and qualitative studies (Amon et al., 2014; Fenner et al., 2012; Fisher et al., 2019; Graham et al., 2008; Harris et al., 2015a; Lohse, 2013; Lyons et al., 2017).

However, such recruitment practices are not without their issues, and guidelines on how to approach recruitment via the use of SNSs are either vague or non-existent (Crawford et al., 2019; Gelinas et al., 2017; Hokke et al., 2020). The public accessibility of online recruitment tools, such as that used on SNSs, means that researchers and potential participants are able to engage in real-time with each other. While Roberts et al. (2013) view this favourably, there are emerging concerns when

---

such interactions are hostile (Vera-Gray, 2017), or may expose a potential participant as having participated in the project (Fileborn, 2016). Such concerns, however, are rarely addressed within Institutional Review Board (IRBs) and Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) ethical guidelines for recruitment (Adair, 2015; Andrews, 2012; Gelinas et al., 2017; Hokke et al., 2020; Kosinski et al., 2015), and have, up until the last few years, not been readily addressed in papers exploring methodological and ethical issues surrounding the research study. This is especially important when many studies, particularly those involving controversial issues, or populations vulnerable to discrimination and stigma, have the potential to provoke hostility from some people. This leaves researchers who recruit via online methods with a challenge: that is, what can and should they do to manage such practices and interactions?

In this paper, we explore some of the methodological challenges of recruiting stigmatised populations during a highly political and controversial time in Australia. We outline the types of commentary by users of social media in the course of interacting with our advertising campaign, as well as the strategies we used to handle negative commentary. We use a case study of recruiting through an SNS for a survey and interviews (see Alba et al., 2019, 2020; Lyons et al., 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2020d; Waling et al., 2019, 2020a, 2020b) exploring older LGBTI Australians' experiences of health and wellbeing during the 2017 marriage equality postal survey, a politically tumultuous time where Australians were tasked with voting on whether or not they thought same-sex marriage should be legal. It is our goal, as such, to offer some ways in which future researchers can think ethically and practically about the challenges of recruiting research participants via SNSs, especially involving stigmatised populations that may attract hostility.

Social media recruitment, ethics, and commentary

Social media, in the last decade, has increasingly become a valued tool in recruiting people to participate in research. Traditional methods of recruiting research participants for studies have often relied on flyers and poster advertising, various media such as print, television and radio, use of approved contact databases, randomised telephoning, and snowballing techniques. However, with the advent of the internet and digital technologies, SNSs have become preferred ways of recruiting participants for their cost effectiveness, speed and efficiency, and allowing for real-time interaction with potential participants (Andrews, 2012; Chu & Snider, 2013; Forgasz et al., 2018; Lohse, 2013; McCarthy & Mazza, 2019; Miyagi et al., 2014; Park & Calamaro, 2013). Some have noted that SNSs, such as Facebook, enable reliable data collection (Kosinski et al., 2015) and that some SNSs outperform other online advertising tools and/or traditional methods (Admon et al., 2016; Brodar et al., 2016; James et al., 2014; Kosinski et al., 2015; Middleton et al., 2014). Others have noted that SNS advertising may increase the likelihood of respondents answering sensitive questions, such as on topics of sexual health and well-being (Burkill et al., 2016; Raviotta et al., 2016). It has also been found that some SNSs enable a 'snowballing' effect that can be vital for recruiting participants online (O'Connor et al., 2014).

A range of researchers have found SNSs to be particularly effective (Pötzschke & Braun, 2017) in targeting small populations that may be spread across large geographical areas and are difficult to access in large enough numbers using traditional methods. For example, in a study of Polish migrant experiences across four European countries, 96% of survey respondents discovered the survey via Facebook. Similar experiences have been noted by others, such as a study of Argentinian immigrant entrepreneurs in Spain (Baltar & Brunet, 2012), a U.S. study of young people engaged in substance use (Ramo and Judith, 2012; Ramo et al., 2014), a study of women in their early days of pregnancy (Arcia, 2014), and research involving people with specific medical conditions (Capurro et al., 2014; Child et al., 2014; Close et al., 2013; Morgan et al., 2013). Similar findings have also been noted in attracting people from diverse gender and sexual identity populations, where SNSs have been vital in reaching specific subpopulations, such as gay and bisexual men, and trans women living with HIV (Arayasirikul et al., 2016; Buckingham et al., 2017; Martinez et al., 2014; Yuan et al.,

2014). SNS recruitment has been hailed as a preferred method of recruitment for young lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, and queer (LGBTI) people due to their use of the internet for LGBTI support and community engagement (DeHaan et al., 2013).

Ethics concerning social media research, both researching content produced by social media, and the use of social media for research participant recruitment, has not yet been fully developed in relation to online methodology (Roberts et al., 2013; Whitman, 2007). Some researchers and theorists have explored such issues as maintaining participant confidentiality (Whitman, 2007), conceptualisations of the internet regarding notions of the private and the public (D'Arcy & Young, 2012; Lange, 2007), social media policies such as terms of conditions and ethics procedures (Allsworth, 2015; Harris et al., 2015a, 2015b), ethical issues in doing research recruitment online for friends and family (Hokke et al., 2018; Robards, 2013), and obtaining informed consent for ethnographic or participant observation studies (Warner, 2009). However, very little has been said about recruitment practices in which individuals are invited to partake in more traditional forms of research, such as a survey or interview. Rather, most research regarding the ethics of social media and research has been focused on social media itself as a site of research enquiry, rather than reflecting critically on its use as a tool for research recruitment (Fileborn, 2016; Gelinas et al., 2017; Vera-Gray, 2017). Where SNSs as research recruitment tools have been examined, the concerns raised relate mainly to sampling bias or fraudulent responses (Beddows, 2008; Duffy, 2002; Kapp et al., 2013; Quach et al., 2013), ethical considerations relating to privacy and hard-to-access groups (Gelinas et al., 2017), and reducing harm to vulnerable participants relating to issues of confidentiality (Sharkey et al., 2011).

However, additional challenges can also arise, such as receiving and managing derogatory comments on research advertisements and whether or not researchers should moderate commentary. One issue, and the focus of this article, is 'trolling', the practice of individuals leaving derogatory, harmful, or abusive comments for the purpose of igniting heated discussion, or provoking further argument (Binns, 2012; Cheng et al., 2017). Trolling has been widely discussed in relation to social media practices (Ortiz, 2020), such as its use by violent hate groups and extremists (e.g., Hodge & Hallgrimsdottir, 2019). However, little attention has been paid to trolling in relation to social media recruitment. Trolling comments may be placed on an online advertisement, where this is possible, or on an SNS page that gives information about the study. In many cases, this 'trolling' is part of a broader phenomenon of cyberbullying, the use of information and communication technologies like SNSs in harassing others (Cooper & Blumenfeld, 2012).

Only a few researchers have begun to document these as incidents occurring within their research recruitment advertising. Fileborn (2016) reflects on the difficulty of managing problematic comments left on her research recruitment advert shared amongst her peers when she used an SNS, while Vera-Gray (2017) states that many individuals left derogatory comments on her SNS advertisement exploring women's experiences of men's violence in online spaces. Fileborn (2016) notes that she grappled with whether to engage with negative commentary left on her research advertisement, but ultimately left them where they were. Vera-Gray (2017, p. 69) contends that she left all comments as visible to the public apart from one in which she chose 'not to approve this comment as part of my feminist practice, as the offensive nature of it could have caused emotional distress to an unknown woman.' While focused on responses in a survey, rather than comments on a research recruitment advert, DeGroot and Carmack (2020) found that many participants left hostile comments and ad hominem attacks on the study in their online survey of the US 2016 Presidential Election results. However, currently lacking in research inquiry is what researchers could effectively 'do' in these settings, that is how to manage the public commentary, what can be perceived as evoking harm or distress to a participant, what principals to follow in making certain decisions, what is ethical, and the rationales for the strategies they employ in managing research recruitment and potential trolling.

Related to this is the question of whether or not researchers should actively censor commentary on research advertising, and how they should do so. Different advertising platforms allow for

varying levels of comment moderation, but a larger question is whether or not the researcher should actively engage in moderation practices. Often, guidelines regarding the use of social media for recruitment only advise researchers that they may need to delete any commentary that could bring the institution in which researchers are conducting research into disrepute, but do not comment or provide advice on how to manage the variety of derogatory and problematic commentary, such as negative comments about a particular population group.

Contemporary LGBTI politics in Australia

It is useful to briefly illustrate the political climate in which the recruitment of this study occurred. Over the past few decades, Australia has made steady progress toward establishing equal rights for LGBTI people. Several large reforms have occurred in recent years. In 2013, changes were made to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 to include sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex status under federal law. In 2013, law reforms were made in the state of South Australia, eventually followed by all states and territories in Australia (Northern Territory being the last to do so in November 2018) to expunge historical criminal records regarding acts of homosexuality, and public apologies were made to victims of conviction, though this is not available in every state. By 2017, LGBTI couples were able to adopt children in all states and territories (Gawthorne, 2018). Also in 2017, the Australian Government released the *Aged Care Diversity Framework* that encourages aged care services to provide environments that are inclusive, culturally safe, and supportive of older LGBTI people (Australian Government Department of Health, 2017). Furthermore, while forced conversion therapy still occurs in Australia, legislative bans are being considered by various state governments (Jones et al., 2018).

However, despite these changes and reforms, Australia has been somewhat more conservative in other areas, in particular (until recently) around marriage equality (Jones, 2017). In August 2017, the federal government made the decision that Australians would have their say, by way of a postal survey, on whether or not they felt people of the same gender should be allowed to get married. The results of this postal survey would then inform whether Australia would legislate equal marriage through a parliamentary vote. This was a tumultuous time of campaigning for and against equal marriage, with a number of LGBTI people reporting increased experiences of violence and harassment by other Australians (Ecker & Bennett, 2017). On 15 November 2017, 62% of people who completed the postal survey chose 'yes' for marriage equality (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017), and marriage equality was subsequently legislated after a parliamentary vote. Despite this outcome, there is substantial evidence that the marriage equality debate was associated with increased rates of verbal assaults and physical violence directed towards LGBTI people (Ecker & Bennett, 2017), and increased psychological distress of those exposed to negative media messages (Verrelli et al., 2019).

The social media recruitment phase of this study coincided with the Australian Marriage Equality postal survey and campaign. One challenge of this was that because our study was focused on older LGBTI people, we needed to ensure a safe space for them during this time. We therefore needed to create a strategy for handling comments and commenters who were likely not the target population, but could express opinions against LGBTI people, encouraged by the broader debates concerning marriage equality in Australia.

Our study and managing negative commentary

Here we assess and explore the strategies of what can be done in the wake of social media becoming a more prominent space for recruiting participants. We begin with a brief outline of how we used an SNS for recruitment. This is followed by a discussion of the challenge of comment moderation that arose during the recruitment stage in a highly political time.

The study we conducted targeted older LGBTI people in Australia and focused on diverse aspects of health and well-being. Ethics approval was granted by La Trobe University. The study comprised a quantitative online survey and qualitative interviews. Recruitment for both the survey and interviews was carried out between September 2017 and December 2017. We aimed to recruit participants aged 60 years and over who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex, and were currently residing in Australia. For SNS advertising, we used Facebook. Recognising that not all older people may be using the internet or an SNS (Newman et al., 2019), this was in addition to a range of other strategies, including electronic flyers circulated via networks, promotion of the study at a conference involving older LGBTI people, and promotion by relevant aged care and community organisations. Advertising directed people to the survey. We set up a paid SNS advertisement, which had a direct link to the online survey and was also linked to a Facebook page that promoted the study. The advert depicted an image of differently coloured umbrellas and invited people to complete a survey of the health and well-being of older LGBTI people. We avoided using imagery of people, as it can be difficult to represent multiple axes of diversity that speak to all participants. Indeed, as Grov et al. (2019) noted in their study of men living with HIV in the U.S., advertising images can directly impact whether or not an individual may participate, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds.

The survey obtained a sample of 895 participants, of whom 726 (81.1%) reported that they had heard about the survey on Facebook. At the end of the survey, participants had the option of taking part in an interview. Those who expressed interest were directed to a separate short survey to collect contact details. A total of 415 people expressed interest, of whom 165 were randomly selected for an interview, and 43 went on to complete an interview. For further information about the study, see (Alba et al., 2019, 2020; Lyons 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2020d; Waling et al., 2019, 2020a, 2020b).

In some instances, advertisements can be commented on and shared with other users, which was the case for our study. All comments made on these adverts are thus public, meaning that they are accessible to anyone with the appropriate SNS account. To moderate comments, researchers may have the ability to hide comments (only being visible to the commentator and their SNS friends), report comments to SNS administrators regarding breach of community guidelines, or delete comments altogether. In some cases, users can also be banned from being able to visit a particular SNS page or account, thereby removing their ability to view any further advertisements or commentary. However, in our experience, deletion of comments does not necessarily delete the number of comments received, and so individuals can see that a number of comments have been deleted or hidden when presented with the advertisement. Overall, the research advertisement was shared 224 times and reached over 82,167 people in Australia.

Advertising on SNSs has its drawbacks, in particular the inability to control how people might react to a study (Fileborn, 2016). Our study attracted a few different types of commentary that required management, including negative commentary that might have been perceived as harassment or prejudice towards LGBTI people, and political discussion and debates concerning marriage equality. We received a total of 192 comments. Out of these comments, 134 (70%) were negative, 41 (21%) were positive, and 17 (9%) were questions about how to take the survey.

During recruitment and advertising, we avoided any mention of the marriage equality debate to minimise attracting people who were not part of the study's target population. However, despite our attempts to avoid conflation with the marriage equality vote, the advertising campaign on our chosen SNS attracted comments from people who were against marriage equality, as well as those who were against LGBTI people and the LGBTI community overall. As such, our advertisement received a number of messages that could be perceived as hateful, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, and discriminatory.

Some of the messages were linked to broader misconceptions and harmful myths about LGBTI people. Some commentators made discriminatory remarks regarding sexual practices, in particular that of sex between men. Some made references to the AIDS and HIV epidemic of the 80s and 90s, claiming that LGBTI people were diseased, or were deserving of such fates, or were unlikely to reach

the age of sixty due to disease or 'lifestyle' factors. Citing religious beliefs, some also expressed that LGBTI people did not deserve support or help.

Others claimed that the project was a waste of money, and articulated concerns for other areas of social life that they felt was more deserving of attention and research. Such concerns also included frustration that the survey did not include the health and well-being of heterosexual cisgender people. Many, however, made direct links to the marriage equality campaign, with a number leaving remarks to encourage people to vote 'no', despite the survey not being directly related to the campaign. In these cases, such comments focused on the importance of maintaining traditional marriage, as well as echoing concerns about potential harms that equal marriage might bring should it be legalised. Some chose to react, utilising the sad (tearful face, 12), the angry (angry face, 43), or the 'haha' (laughing face, 14) reactions to articulate their displeasure with the study.

Some comments, however, were positive; where people indicated that the survey was needed and appreciated, while others encouraged their peers to complete the survey. Some remarked on LGBTI issues of visibility, health, and inclusion more broadly. Many chose to either share the advert on their own SNS account or engaged with the 'like' (thumbs up) or 'love' (heart) reaction. In all, the advertisements received a total of 630 likes and 49 loves, with an additional 155 likes and 160 followers on the actual SNS page that promoted the study (as of October 28th, 2019).

Below, we provide a description of how we managed the challenge of negative commentary, and our reasoning for the strategies we used.

Free speech and comment moderation

From this commentary, a challenge arose concerning the potential and perceived harm against the LGBTI community. Research has found that negative commentary and statements, such as that found on social media, can severely affect mental health and social well-being (Nixon, 2014). LGBTI people often experience harassment, abuse and discrimination online (Abreu & Kenny, 2018). Many comments left on the SNS advertisement were derogatory, a number of which could be seen as harmful for a vulnerable person to read, especially in the wake of social issues regarding the marriage equality vote. Such comments targeted specific people, while others expressed hatred of LGBTI people more broadly. When the survey was first advertised on our chosen SNS, commentary and debates quickly followed in the comments section, ranging from supporting the project to statements that may have been perceived as abusive or distressing in nature. The advert was taken down immediately and then reposted a few days later after the research team discussed a strategy for handling the commentary.

As negative commentary has the potential to create a spiral effect, that is, as one person comments, others can be encouraged to engage in heated discussions (Binns, 2012), the research team was concerned with how to manage the commentary in an ethical way. We were initially reluctant to moderate comments, as this could be seen as impeding on free speech in a public space (Rainie et al., 2017). However, we recognised that this had to be balanced with the need to provide a safe space for participants, and to be mindful that such commentary could be understood as forms of hate speech (Banks, 2010; Reed, 2009). Much discussion was had about whether or not we should moderate comments, and how we should do so. Moderation of commentary has not been discussed in relation to research advertising and research ethics. Indeed, the few who have discussed moderation of negative commentary (Fileborn, 2016; Vera-Gray, 2017) have ultimately opted to leave the discussions on recruitment pages.

However, Markham and Buchanan (2012) note that researchers are encouraged to consider the situated contexts in which the participant/potential participant and researcher reside. This includes how a researcher might approach a participant, the perception of privacy (see Henderson et al., 2013), and whether a chosen course of conduct is ethical in practice, which can be extended to public commentary on research advertising. Further, Gelinas et al. (2017) contend that researchers using social media as a form of participant recruitment should be able, and willing, to engage in

transparency and if appropriate, discussion. The research team discussed at length their role as moderators of SNS discussions and comments. As researchers are meant to remain impartial, neutral, and objective in their research (Cupples, 2002), the moderation of commentary could be seen as choosing a side rather than allowing representation of multiple viewpoints, or not engaging in objective practice. It is also possible that engaging in commentary, and how individuals perceive that engagement, could deter some potential participants from participating in the project.

However, as Binns (2012) notes, 'trolling' may be used to provoke argument, lure others into circular discussions, and engage in personal insults and abusive language. While claiming to be representing an opposing view, Binns (2012) contends that trolling practices are generally meant to invoke rage and hostility online, and negatively affect individuals. As such, engaging in discussions with individuals posting negative, hateful or derogatory commentary could be counter-productive (a common phrase, 'Don't Feed the Trolls').

We decided that allowing such commentary to remain on the advertisement and to be visible might bring harm to participants. Older LGBTI people are considered a vulnerable and stigmatised population (Lyons et al., 2019). Participants were likely to be feeling in some ways angry, frustrated, or distressed, among other emotions, regarding the marriage equality vote, alongside a potential history of having experienced marginalisation, violence and discrimination throughout their lives. Many users of SNSs were reported to have been avoiding social media during the marriage equality debate due to negative commentary and hostility directed towards LGBTI people (Ecker & Bennett, 2017). Reflecting the negative climate more broadly, funding was provided by the state government in Victoria to assist crisis support service lines in dealing with an increased uptake of their services (Perkins, 2017).

Therefore, to leave such comments on the advertisement could potentially add to experiences of distress and harm, and further alienate an already marginalised and stigmatised population group. As this was a study focused on the health and well-being of older LGBTI people, we also felt that to leave negative commentary could be regarded as being unsupportive to this community and could perhaps be seen as a form of research abuse (see Roffee & Waling, 2017). Further, this was a specific advertisement for the research study, and there were a number of other forums in which people could participate to express their views on marriage equality, or LGBTI+ people more broadly. To address this, we employed a particular strategy by which we made the following statement as a comment on all SNS advertisements:

> Please note that this is a research study. Any comments of a political nature, or could be viewed as harmful or offensive will need to be removed.

Keeping in mind Binns's (2012) caution concerning trolling behaviour, we took a case-by-case approach for this project, assessing each comment and the appropriate response. However, this was not without its challenges. While it made sense for us to delete negative commentary, we also had to consider comments that were not directly hostile but had the potential to provoke hostility. We were selective about which comments we would delete, and carefully discussed the kinds of comments that we felt would need to be deleted. Comments that fit our criteria included:

- Derogatory and demeaning comments about LGBTI people;
- Comments that were deemed threatening, obscene, inappropriate, insulting, or used offensive language;
- Comments that were intended to incite violence or hatred against LGBTI or other stigmatised population groups; or individual persons;
- Defamatory comments about the university, research centre, and researchers involved in the study;
- Comments discussing the postal survey on marriage equality in Australia;
- Comments of a political nature such as comments on laws and regulations;
- Comments promoting commercial content/their businesses;

- Comment exchanges between two or more people that engaged in one or more of the above.

We then deleted those comments that fit our criteria, as soon as possible, as well as banned perpetrating individuals from accessing the SNS page. We then made sure to respond quickly to negative comments in order to prevent a spiral effect (i.e., as one user leaves a comment, others will contribute), and to discourage individuals from leaving further negative commentary. This involved authors AL, AW and BA to monitor the SNS page of which the advertisement was hosted during the day, evenings, and weekends. The SNS page provided notifications when a new comment was posted, thus enabling them to act in a relatively short amount of time. This proved effective; as the survey ran its course, we received fewer negative comments overall.

Managing social media recruitment

Gelinas et al. (2017) provide a highly useful series of ethical questions and guides regarding social media recruitment outlined in Appendix A of their paper. These include:

- Providing the IRB/HREC a statement that describes the proposed social media recruitment techniques, including sites to be used, where recruitment will be active or passive, and how participants will be approached if active;
- Ensuring that all recruitment strategies comply with relevant law and legislature;
- Ensuring that recruitment respects all relevant ethical norms, which includes not fabricating online identities, research team members are not 'lurking' (i.e., not making participants aware), and that recruitment will not involve techniques that will embarrass or stigmatise participants;
- Considering whether a communication plan is needed for managing social media activities among participants, such as the potential for participants to jeopardise validity of a study if they do not follow appropriate blinding, and triggers for when researchers are needed to intervene in relation to correcting misinformation, or blinding study results.

However, in the communication plan, they do not address the issue of comment moderation in relation to trolling and harmful comments. In addition to Gelinas et al.'s (2017) work, we offer a number of suggestions and strategies for researchers in reflecting on social media recruitment regarding controversial topics and vulnerable and stigmatised population groups.

First, we urge researchers not to think of their research recruitment as existing in a vacuum, but rather, to readily consider the broader political, social, and cultural contexts surrounding them when they are recruiting in online spaces (Markham & Buchanan, 2012). Researchers should think carefully about how their advertisement may be received and shared in public, especially when conducting potentially controversial research, and strategise on how they will manage potential hostility towards prospective research participants. They should be aware of the political, social and cultural climate to which they are recruiting, which can affect participation, and research dissemination. Researchers need to consider whether hostility towards a research study may have a negative impact on participants, or when it is directed at participants. This includes preparing a set of protocols, or plans, to put into place when hostility may arise, and determining how researchers may respond to hateful, or other kinds of commentary. For example, Vera-Gray's (2017) study explored women's experiences of men's violence in online spaces, which attracted hostility from male users. As such, for Vera-Gray (2017), it could be said to be more appropriate to leave hateful commentary on her research advertising, as it spoke directly to the issues she was researching and may have encouraged individuals to participate as a result. In the case of our study, with recruitment occurring during the marriage equality postal survey campaign period, the research team felt it was necessary to reduce the impact of hateful commentary on potential participants, noting that some might have been experiencing this in other areas of their lives at the time of recruitment. We

note that these are not easy decisions to make and require researchers to balance potential positive and negative consequences of the range of decisions that could be made. In the case of our study, we were faced with similar decisions and removed negative commentary, particularly in light of research showing that experiences of stigma and discrimination are strongly linked to poorer mental health for LGBTI people (Lyons et al., 2019; Meyer, 2003).

Second, researchers should think carefully about what kinds of comments they will respond to, how they will respond, and what comments warrant potential deletion. It can be a difficult task at times to judge whether a comment should be left alone, if the team should respond, or if it should be deleted, while also weighing this against the principle of free speech. Each of these carries outcomes that can potentially affect the project, such as public perceptions of the study, participant engagement, researchers, and the research institution supporting the study. The case-by-case approach we took was effective in deterring negative commentary. As such, we emphasise the need for researchers to clearly articulate their own protocol for managing negative commentary. This is especially important if there is a team of researchers handling commentary to ensure consistency across all responses.

Third, while researchers are often expected to remain impartial and objective in the research process, it is becoming more important, and vital, to be empathetic and understanding when working with stigmatised population groups. Researchers have an ethical duty to their participants, and this includes addressing potential harms, such as those that can emerge through internet commentary. While it may be regarded as a form of censorship in deleting negative commentary, the welfare of the research participants ought to be a high priority for research recruitment. Moderation of commentary could also be viewed positively by participants who may already feel disenfranchised and unsure about participating, by providing a sense of a safe space. Ethics committees and researchers thus need to consider how they will intervene in regard to potential negative commentary.

Lastly, we encourage researchers to prepare protocols for managing negative commentary in relation to promoting studies via social media and ensuring a safe space for participants. These protocols should include the types of commentary a study is likely to attract, strategies for identifying problematic commentary, and the steps required to respond accordingly. Having a strategy in place prior to recruitment advertising would enable greater preparedness for handling commentary that might pose challenges for creating a safe space for participants.

Conclusion

The accessibility and scope of mobile and web technology for conducting surveys and recruiting potential interview and focus group participants means that researchers have greater opportunities for engaging and reaching individuals and communities than ever before. However, this is not without its challenges, and researchers should be mindful of the environment in which they conduct their research. Greater access also means greater potential for commentary by the general public. In this article, we have considered challenging questions relating to how to recruit via SNSs for projects that may be viewed as controversial, or with stigmatised populations. We have offered examples, our strategies, and rationales for these strategies, and have noted some considerations that researchers could think about when using SNSs for advertising their research project. As many scholars have already noted, the popularity of using SNSs for recruitment will only grow as we continually move into a digitally focused world, and we need to think carefully about how to most effectively manage online research advertising.

Acknowledgments

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

Notes on contributors

Andrea Waling, PhD, is an ARC DECRA Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University.

Anthony Lyons, PhD, is an Associate Professor and Deputy Director at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University.

Beatrice Alba, PhD, is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology at Deakin University, Australia.

Victor Minichiello, PhD, is a public health researcher and gerontologist and an Adjunct Professor in the School of Social Justice at Queensland University of Technology in Australia.

Mark Hughes, PhD, is a Professor of Social work, and Dean of Arts and Social Sciences at Southern Cross University, Australia.

Catherine Barrett, PhD, is the Director of Celebrate Ageing, a social enterprise challenging ageism and building respect for older people - the program includes Alice's Garage, a project empowering LGBTI Elders.

Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen, PhD, is a Professor and Director of Healthy Generations at the University of Washington in the United States.

References

Abreu, R. L., & Kenny, M. C. (2018). Cyberbullying and LGBTQ youth: A systematic literature review and recommendations for prevention and intervention. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, *11*(1), 81–97. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-017-0175-7

Adair, C. (2015). Establishing IRB review policies for social media participant recruitment and retention programs. *Quorum Review Institution Bulletin*, *5*, 1e. http://www.quorumreview.com/2015/03/05/irb-review-policies-social-media-recruitment

Admon, L., Haefner, J. K., Kolenic, G. E., Chang, T., Davis, M. M., & Moniz, M. H. (2016). Recruiting Pregnant Patients for Survey Research: A Head to Head Comparison of Social Media-Based Versus Clinic-Based Approaches. Journal of Medical Internet Research, *18*(12), e326. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.6593

Alba, B., Lyons, A., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Barrett, C., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., Blanchard, M., & Irlam, C. (2019). Demographic and psychosocial predictors of housing security in older lesbian and gay Australians. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *89*(1), 57–76. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091415019843449

Alba, B., Lyons, A., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Barrett, C., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., Blanchard, M., & Irlam, C. (2020). Health, well-being, and social support in older lesbian women and gay men who are caregivers. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, *28*(1), 204–215. https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12854

Allsworth, J. E. (2015). Invited commentary: Recruiting for epidemiologic studies using social media. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, *181*(10), 747–749. https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwv007

Amon, K. L., Campbell, A. J., Hawke, C., & Steinbeck, K. (2014). Facebook as a recruitment tool for adolescent health research: A systematic review. *Academic Pediatrics*, *14*(5), 439–447. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acap.2014.05.049

Andrews, C. (2012). Social media recruitment. *Applied Clinical Trials*, *21*(11), 32–42. https://www.appliedclinicaltrialsonline.com/view/social-media-recruitment

Arayasirikul, S., Chen, Y., Jin, H., & Wilson, E. (2016). A web 2.0 and epidemiology mash-up: Using respondent-driven sampling in combination with social network site recruitment to reach young transwomen. *AIDS Behaviour*, *20*(6), 1265–1274. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-015-1234-4

Arcia, A. (2014). Facebook advertisements for inexpensive participant recruitment among women in early pregnancy. *Health Education & Behaviour*, *41*(3), 237–241. https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198113504414

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *1800.0 - Australian marriage law postal survey*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Bureau of Statistics. http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1800.0.

Australian Government Department of Health. (2017). *Aged care diversity framework*. https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019/12/aged-care-diversity-framework.pdf

Baltar, F., & Brunet, I. (2012). Social research 2.0: Virtual snowball sampling method using Facebook. *Internet Research*, *22*(1), 57–74. https://doi.org/10.1108/10662241211199960

Banks, J. (2010). Regulating hate speech online. *International Review of Law, Computers & Technology*, *24*(3), 233–239. https://doi.org/10.1080/13600869.2010.522323

Beddows, E. (2008). The methodological issues associated with internet-based research. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, *6*(2), 124–139. http://www.journals4free.com/link.jsp?l=27489192

Binns, A. (2012). Don't feed the trolls! *Journalism Practice*, *6*(4), 547–562. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2011.648988

Brodar, K. E., Hall, M. G., Butler, E. N., Parada, H., Stein-Seroussi, A., Hanley, S., & Brewer, N. T. (2016). Recruiting diverse smokers: Enrollment yields and cost. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *13*(12), 1251. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph13121251

Buckingham, L., Becher, J., Voytek, C. D., Fiore, D., Dunbar, D., Davis-Vogel, A., . . . Frank, I. (2017). Going social: Success in online recruitment of men who have sex with men for prevention HIV vaccine research. *Vaccine*, *35* (27), 3498–3505. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2017.05.002

Burkill, S., Copas, A., Couper, M. P., Clifton, S., Prah, P., Datta, J., Erens, B., Johnson, A. M., Erens, B., & Conrad, F. (2016). Using the web to collect data on sensitive behaviours: A study looking at mode effects on the British national survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles. *Plos One*, *11*(2), e0147983. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0147983

Capurro, D., Cole, K., Echavarria, M. I., Joe, J., Neogi, T., & Turner, A. M. (2014). The use of social networking sites for public health practice and research: A systematic review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *16*(3), e79. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.2679

Cheng, J., Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, C., Leskovec, J., & Bernstein, M. (2017). Anyone can become a troll. *American Scientist*, *105*(3), 152. https://doi.org/10.1511/2017.126.152

Child, R., Mentes, J., Pavlish, C., & Phillips, L. (2014). Using Facebook and participant information clips to recruit emergency nurses for research. *Nurse Researcher*, *21*(6), 16–21. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.21.6.16.e1246

Chu, J. L., & Snider, C. E. (2013). Use of a social networking web site for recruiting Canadian youth for medical research. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *52*(6), 792–794. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.12.002

Close, S., Smaldone, A., Fennoy, I., Reame, N., & Grey, M. (2013). Using information technology and social networking for recruitment of research participants: Experience from an exploratory study of pediatric Klinefelter syndrome. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *15*(3), e48. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.2286

Cooper, R. M., & Blumenfeld, W. J. (2012). Responses to cyberbullying: A descriptive analysis of the frequency of and impact on LGBT and allied youth. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, *9*(2), 153–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2011.649616

Crawford, S. B., Hokke, S., Nicholson, J. M., Zion, L., Lucke, J. C., Keyzer, P., & Hackworth, N. (2019). "It's not black and white": Public health researchers' and ethics committees' perceptions of engaging research participants online. *Internet Research*, *29*(1), 123–143. https://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-07-2017-0278

Cupples, J. (2002). The field as a landscape of desire: Sex and sexuality in geographical fieldwork. *Area*, *34*(4), 382–390. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-4762.00095

D'Arcy, A., & Young, T. M. (2012). Ethics and social media: Implications for sociolinguistics in the networked public. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *16*(4), 532–546. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2012.00543.x

DeGroot, J. M., & Carmack, H. J. (2020). Unexpected negative participant responses and researcher safety: "Fuck your survey and your safe space, trigger warning bullshit". *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, *44*(4), 354–375. https://doi.org/10.1177/0196859920921752

DeHaan, S., Kuper, L. E., Magee, J. C., Bigelow, L., & Mustanski, B. S. (2013). The interplay between online and offline explorations of identity, relationships, and sex: A mixed-methods study with LGBT youth. *The Journal of Sex Research*, *50*(5), 421–434. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2012.661489

Duffy, M. E. (2002). Methodological issues in Web-based research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, *34*(1), 83–88. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2002.00083.x

Ecker, S., & Bennett, E. (2017). *Preliminary results of the Coping with marriage equality debate survey: Investigating the stress impacts associated with the Australian marriage equality debate during the lead up to the postal survey results announcement*. The Australia Institute & National LGBTI Health Alliance.

Fenner, Y., Garland, S. M., Moore, E. E., Jayasinghem, Y., Fletcher, A., Tabrizi, S., & Wark, J. D. (2012). Web-based recruiting for health research using a social networking site: An exploratory study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *14*(1), e20. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.1978

Fileborn, F. (2016). Participant recruitment in an online era: A reflection on ethics and identity. *Research Ethics*, *12* (2), 97–115. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747016115604150

Fisher, C., Mikołajczak, G., Ezer, P., Kerr, K., Bellamy, R., Brown, G., Waling, A., & Lucke, J. (2019). Study protocol: 6th national survey of Australian secondary students and adolescent sexual health, 2018. *Frontiers in Public Health*, *7*, 217. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2019.00217

Forgasz, H., Tan, H., Leder, G., & McLeod, A. (2018). Enhancing survey participation: Facebook advertisements for recruitment in educational research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 41(3), 257–270. https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2017.1295939

Gawthorne, A. (2018, April 20). *Australia now has adoption equality*. Human Rights Law Centre. Retrieved June 21, 2018, from https://www.hrlc.org.au/news/2018/4/20/australia-now-has-adoption-equality

Gelinas, L., Pierce, R., Winkler, S., Cohen, I. W., Lynch, H. F., & Bierer, B. E. (2017). Using social media as a research recruitment tool: Ethical issues and recommendations. *The American Journal of Bioethics*, 17(3), 3–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2016.1276644

Graham, A. L., Milner, P., Saul, J. E., & Pfaff, L. (2008). Online advertising as a public health and recruitment tool: Comparison of different media campaigns to increase demand for smoking cessation interventions. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 10(5), e50. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.1001

Grov, C., Westmoreland, D. A., Carneiro, P. B., Stief, M., MacCrate, C., Mirzayi, C., Pantalone, D. W., Patel, V. V., & Nash, D. (2019). Recruiting vulnerable populations to participate in HIV prevention research: Findings from the Together 5000 cohort study. *Annals of Epidemiology*, 35, 4–11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annepidem.2019.05.003

Harris, M. L., Loxton, D., Wigginton, B., & Lucke, J. C. (2015a). Recruiting online: Lessons from a longitudinal survey of contraception and pregnancy intentions of young Australian women. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 181 (10), 737–746. https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwv006

Harris, M. L., Loxton, D., Wigginton, B., & Lucke, J. C. (2015b). Respond to "Social media recruitment". *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 181(10), 750–751. https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwv008

Henderson, M., Johnson, N. F., & Auld, G. (2013). Silences of ethical practice: Dilemmas for researchers using social media. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 19(6), 546–560. https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2013.805656

Hodge, E., & Hallgrimsdottir, H. (2019). Networks of hate: The Alt-right, "troll culture", and the cultural geography of social movement spaces online. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 35(4), 564–580. https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2019.1571935

Hokke, S., Hackworth, N. J., Bennetts, S. K., Nicholson, J. M., Keyzer, P., Lucke, J., ... Crawford, S. B. (2020). Ethical considerations in using social media to engage research participants: Perspectives of Australian researchers and ethics committee members. Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics, 15(1–2), 12–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/1556264619854629

Hokke, S., Hackworth, N. J., Quin, N., Bennetts, S. K., Win, H. Y., Nicholson, J. M., Crawford, S. B., Keyzer, P., Crawford, S. B., & Zion, L. (2018). Ethical issues in using the internet to engage participants in family and child research: A scoping review. *PLoS One*, 13(9), e0204572. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0204572

James, A., Taylor, B., & Francis, K. (2014). Researching with young people as participants: Issues in recruitment. *Contemporary Nurse*, 47(1–2), 36–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/10376178.2014.11081904

Jones, T. (2017). The marriage equality survey is won, but the battle against discrimination continues. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/the-marriage-equality-survey-is-won-but-the-battle-against-discrimination-continues-85828

Jones, T., Brown, A., Carnie, L., Fletcher, G., & Leonard, W. (2018). *Preventing harm, promoting justice: Responding to LGBT conversion therapy in Australia*. GLHV@ARCSHS and the Human Rights Law Centre.

Kapp, J. M., Peters, C., & Oliver, D. P. (2013). Research recruitment using Facebook advertising: Big potential, big challenges. *Journal of Cancer Education*, 28(1), 134–137. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-012-0443-z

Kosinski, M., Matz, S. C., Gosling, S. D., Popov, V., & Stillwell, D. (2015). Facebook as a research tool for the social sciences: Opportunities, challenges, ethical considerations, and practical guidelines. *American Psychologist*, 70(6), 543–556. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039210

Lange, P. G. (2007). Publicly private and privately public: Social networking on YouTube. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), 361–380. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00400.x

Lohse, B. (2013). Facebook is an effective strategy to recruit low-income women to online nutrition education. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour*, 45(1), 69–76. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2012.06.006

Lyons, A., Alba, B., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Hughes, M., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., Edmonds, S., & Blanchard, M. (2019). Recent versus lifetime experiences of discrimination and the mental and physical health of older lesbian women and gay men. Ageing & Society, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X1900153

Lyons, A., Alba, B., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Barrett, C., Fredriksen-Goldsen, F., & Edmonds, S. (2020a). Older Lesbian and gay adults' perceptions of barriers and facilitators to accessing health and aged care services in Australia. Health and Social Care in the Comunity. https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.13125

Lyons, A., Alba, B., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Barrett, C., Fredriksen-Goldsen, F., Edmonds, S., & Pepping, C. (2020b). Comfort among older lesbian and gay people in disclosing their sexual orientation to health and aged care services. Journal of Applied Gerontology. https://doi.org/10.1177/0733464820925330

Lyons, A., Alba, B., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Fredriksen-Goldsen, F., Edmonds, S., Blanchard, M., & Irlam, C. (2020c). Volunteering among Older Lesbian and Gay Adults: Associations with Mental, Physical , and Social Well-Being. Journal of Aging and Health, https://doi.org/10.1177/0898264320952910

Lyons, A., Alba, B., Waling, A., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Hughes, M., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., & Edmonds, S. (2020d). Mental health and identity adjustment in older lesbian and gay adults: Assessing the role of whether their parents knew about their sexual orientation. Aging & Mental Health, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2020

Lyons, A., Heywood, W., Fileborn, B., Minichiello, V., Barrett, C., Brown, G., Hinchliff, S., Malta, S., & Crameri, P. (2017). The sex, age, and me study: Recruitment and sampling for a large mixed-methods study of sexual health and relationships in an older Australian population. Culture, Health & Sexuality, 19(9), 1038–1052. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2017.1288268

Markham, A., & Buchanan, E. (2012). Ethical decision-making and internet research: Recommendations from the AOIR ethics working committee. AOIR. https://aoir.org/reports/ethics2.pdf.

Martinez, O., Wu, E., Shultz, A. Z., Capote, J., Lopez, R. J., Sandfort, T., Manusov, J., Ovejero, H., Carballo-Dieguez, A., Chavez Baray, S., Moya, E., López Matos, J., DelaCruz, J. J., Remien, R. H., & Rhodes, S. D. (2014). Still a hard-to-reach population? Using social media to recruit Latino gay couples for an HIV intervention adaptation study. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 16(4), e113. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.3311

McCarthy, E., & Mazza, D. (2019). Cost and effectiveness of using Facebook advertising to recruit young women for research: PREFER (Contraceptive preferences study) experience. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 21(11), e15869. https://doi.org/10.2196/15869

Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual issues and research evidence. Psychological Bulletin, 129(5), 674–697. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.5.674

Middleton, A., Bragin, E., Parker, M., & Study, D. D. D. (2014). Finding people who will tell you their thoughts on genomics-recruitment strategies for social sciences research. Journal of Community Genetics, 5(4), 291–302. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12687-014-0184-2

Miyagi, E., Motoki, Y., Asai-Sato, M., Taguri, M., Morita, S., Hirahara, F., Wark, J. D., & Garland, S. M. (2014). Web-based recruiting for a survey on knowledge and awareness of cervical cancer prevention among young women living in Kanagawa prefecture, Japan. International Journal of Gynaecological Cancer, 24(7), 1347–1355. https://doi.org/10.1097/IGC.0000000000000220

Morgan, A. J., Jorm, A. F., & Mackinnon, A. J. (2013). Internet-based recruitment to a depression prevention intervention: lessons from the Mood Memos study. Journal of medical Internet research, 15(2), e31. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.2262

Newman, L., Stoner, C., Corbett, A., Megalogeni, M., Khan, Z., & Spector, A. (2019). Development of the 'SNS older adults measure' (SNS-OA) to examine social network site use in older adults. Aging & Mental Health, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2019.1673700

Nixon, C. L. (2014). Current perspectives: The impact of cyberbullying on adolescent health. Adolescent Health, Medicine and Therapeutics, 5, 143–158. https://doi.org/10.2147/AHMT.S36456

O'Connor, A., Jackson, L., Goldsmith, L., & Skirton, H. (2014). Can I get a retweet please? Health research recruitment and the Twittersphere. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 70(3), 599–609. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.12222

Ortiz, S. M. (2020). Trolling as a collective form of harassment: An inductive study of how online users understand trolling. Social Media + Society, 6(2), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120928512

Park, B. K., & Calamaro, C. (2013). A systematic review of social networking sites: Innovative platforms for health research targeting adolescents and young adults. Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 45(3), 256–264. https://doi.org/10.1111/jnu.12032

Perkins, M. (2017). Same-sex marriage: LGBTQ agencies prepare for sharp rise in calls for help. The Age. https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/samesex-marriage-lgbtq-agencies-prepare-for-sharp-rise-in-calls-for-help-20170820-gy079b.html

Pötzschke, S., & Braun, M. (2017). Migrant sampling using Facebook advertisements: A case study of Polish migrants in four European countries. Social Science Computer Review, 35(5), 633–653. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439316666262

Quach, S., Pereira, J. A., Russell, M. L., Wormsbecker, A. E., Ramsay, H., Crowe, L., Quan, S. D., & Kwong, J. (2013). The good, bad, and ugly of online recruitment of parents for health-related focus groups: Lessons learned. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 15(11), e250. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.2829

Rainie, L., Anderson, J., & Albright, J. (2017). The future of free speech, trolls, anonymity, and fake news online. Pew Research Centre.

Ramo, D. E., & Prochaska, J. J. (2012). Broad reach and targeted recruitment using Facebook for an online survey of young adult substance use. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 14(1), e28. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.1878

Ramo, D. E., Rodriguez, T. M., Chavez, K., Sommer, M. J., & Prochaska, J. J. (2014). Facebook recruitment of young adult smokers for a cessation trial: Methods, metrics, and lessons learned. Internet Interventions, 1(2), 58–64. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.invent.2014.05.001

Raviotta, J. M., Nowalk, M. P., Lin, C. J., Huang, -H.-H., & Zimmerman, R. K. (2016). Using Facebook[TM] to recruit college-age men for a human papillomavirus vaccine trial. American Journal of Men's Health, 10(2), 110–119. https://doi.org/10.1177/1557988314557563

Reed, C. (2009). The challenge of hate speech online. *Journal Information & Communications Technology Law*, *18*(2), 79–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/13600830902812202

Rife, S. C., Cate, K. L., Kosinski, M., & Stillwell, D. (2016). Participant recruitment and data collection through Facebook: The role of personality factors. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *19*(1), 69–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2014.957069

Robards, B. (2013). Friending participants: Managing the researcher–participant relationship on social network sites. *YOUNG*, *21*(3), 217–235. https://doi.org/10.1177/1103308813488815

Roberts, S., Hine, C., Morey, Y., Snee, H., & Watson, H. (2013). *Digital methods as mainstream methodology: Building capacity in the research community to address the challenges and opportunities presented by digitally inspired methods*. National Centre for Research Methods Networks for Methodological Innovation.

Roffee, J., & Waling, A. (2017). Resolving ethical challenges when researching with minority and vulnerable populations: LGBTIQ victims of violence, harassment and bullying. *Research Ethics*, *13*(1), 4–22. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747016116658693

Sharkey, S., Jones, R., Smithson, J., Hewis, E., Emmens, T., Ford, T., & Owens, C. (2011). Ethical practice in internet research involving vulnerable people: Lessons from a self-harm discussion forum study (SharpTalk). *Journal of Medical Ethics*, *37*(12), 752–758. https://doi.org/10.1136/medethics-2011-100080

Vera-Gray, F. (2017). 'Talk about a cunt with too much idle time': Trolling feminist research. *Feminist Review*, *115*(1), 61–78. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41305-017-0038-y

Verrelli, S., White, F., Harvey, L., & Pulciani, M. (2019). Minority stress, social support, and the mental health of lesbian, gay, and bisexual Australians during the Australian marriage law postal survey. *Australian Psychologist*, *54*(4), 336–346. https://doi.org/10.1111/ap.12380

Waling, A., Lyons, A., Alba, B., Minichiello, V., Barrett, C., Hughes, M., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., & Edmonds, S. (2020a). Trans women's perceptions of residential care for older people in Australia. British Journal of Social Work, 50(5), 1304–1323. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcz122

Waling, A., Lyons, A., Alba, B., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Barrett, C., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., & Edmonds, S. (2019). Experiences and perceptions of residential and in-home care services among older lesbian women and gay men in Australia. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, *27*(5), 1251–1259. https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12760

Waling, A., Lyons, A., Alba, B., Minichiello, V., Hughes, M., Barrett, C., Fredriksen-Goldsen, K., & Edmonds, S. (2020b). Older lesbian and gay men's perceptions on lesbian and gay youth in Australia. Culture, Health & Sexuality, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1696984

Warner, F. (2009). Ethical considerations for digital fieldwork: Cyberethnography and IRBs. *Anthropology News*, *50*(6), 27. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1556-3502.2009.50627.x

Whitman, E. (2007). Just chatting': Research ethics and cyberspace. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *6*(2), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690700600209

Yuan, P., Bare, M. G., Johnson, M. O., & Saberi, P. (2014). Using online social media for recruitment of human immunodeficiency virus-positive participants: A cross-sectional survey. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *5*(5), e117. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.3229