

An older adult's perspective on social networking sites impact on loneliness

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Purpose The use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) to reduce loneliness has been studied with conflicting results (Cotton et al., 2013; Damant et al., 2016; Deters & Mehl, 2013; Neves et al., 2018). A greater understanding of why there is a discrepancy in the findings is what has compelled this research. This study examines the users' perspective on SNSs impact on loneliness. **Method** 240 participants, over the age of 65 that use SNS, gave their opinions about the subject. A qualitative approach was utilized in both the survey instrument and analysis of the data. Coding and analyzing of the data was done using NVivo. **Results and Discussion** Of the 240 respondents 18 stated that SNSs increased loneliness, 65 found no change in loneliness and 157 had a reduction in loneliness. Further, the findings allowed participants the ability to explain their opinions giving a greater understanding of the complexity of the issue. The findings suggest that the use of SNSs have the ability to reduce loneliness, although dependent on the individual along with how they interact with the technology.

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