

Information Seeking and Sharing Among LGBTQ University Students: Dynamics Within LGBTQ Communities on Social Media

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ABSTRACT

In my dissertation research, I investigate the nuanced dynamics between LGBTQ university students and social media platform design, identifying the facilitators and obstacles they encounter while seeking and sharing information in online communities. This study serves a dual purpose: to explore the information-seeking and sharing experiences of LGBTQ students on social media, and to analyze platform design aspects that either enhance or hinder these information behaviors. By addressing both elements, the research aims to provide a holistic understanding of information practices within LGBTQ online communities and offer actionable recommendations to improve social media design, fostering a supportive environment for LGBTQ students.

Adopting an exploratory mixed-methods approach, I employ both qualitative methods (i.e., initial interviews, diaries, and follow-up interviews) and quantitative method (i.e., online survey questionnaires) to collect data. Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods ensures a thorough exploration of the topic, offering nuanced insights into LGBTQ students' online experiences.

The dissertation holds both theoretical and practical significance. It advances our understanding of LGBTQ students' information behaviors within online communities and examines the interplay between social media platform features and these behaviors. Practically, the research provides valuable insights for LGBTQ organizations, community administrators, and social media developers. By addressing the unique information needs of LGBTQ students and enhancing social media platform design, this study facilitates the creation of inclusive, supportive, and user-friendly online environments for LGBTQ individuals.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Information needs; Information seeking; Students; Social media; Information system design

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

LGBTQ students; Social media; Online communities; Information seeking; Information sharing

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