Reviewer's report

Title: Analyzing hidden populations online: topic, emotion, and social network of HIV-related users in the largest Chinese online community

Version: 1  Date: 03 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Adam Dunn

Reviewer's report:

The authors have produced one of the clearest and best-presented responses I have seen this year - thank you for taking the time and effort to do this properly. I only have minor comments to add.

1. I still think it would be worth presenting the p-values exactly, even if they need to be expressed in the form of 5.43x10^-21 but I am happy to leave that decision up to the journal style.

2. Figures 3 and 7 are still relatively hard to interpret but I understand the inherent difficulty with visualising these types of data and I don't have any alternatives to suggest. In Figure 7 in particular, I am not sure how the different shading in the inner and outer parts correspond to the legend given that the outer ring has different shading compared to the inner ring.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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