

# Using Social Media in Social Research

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to explore issues and communicate practice in this field...

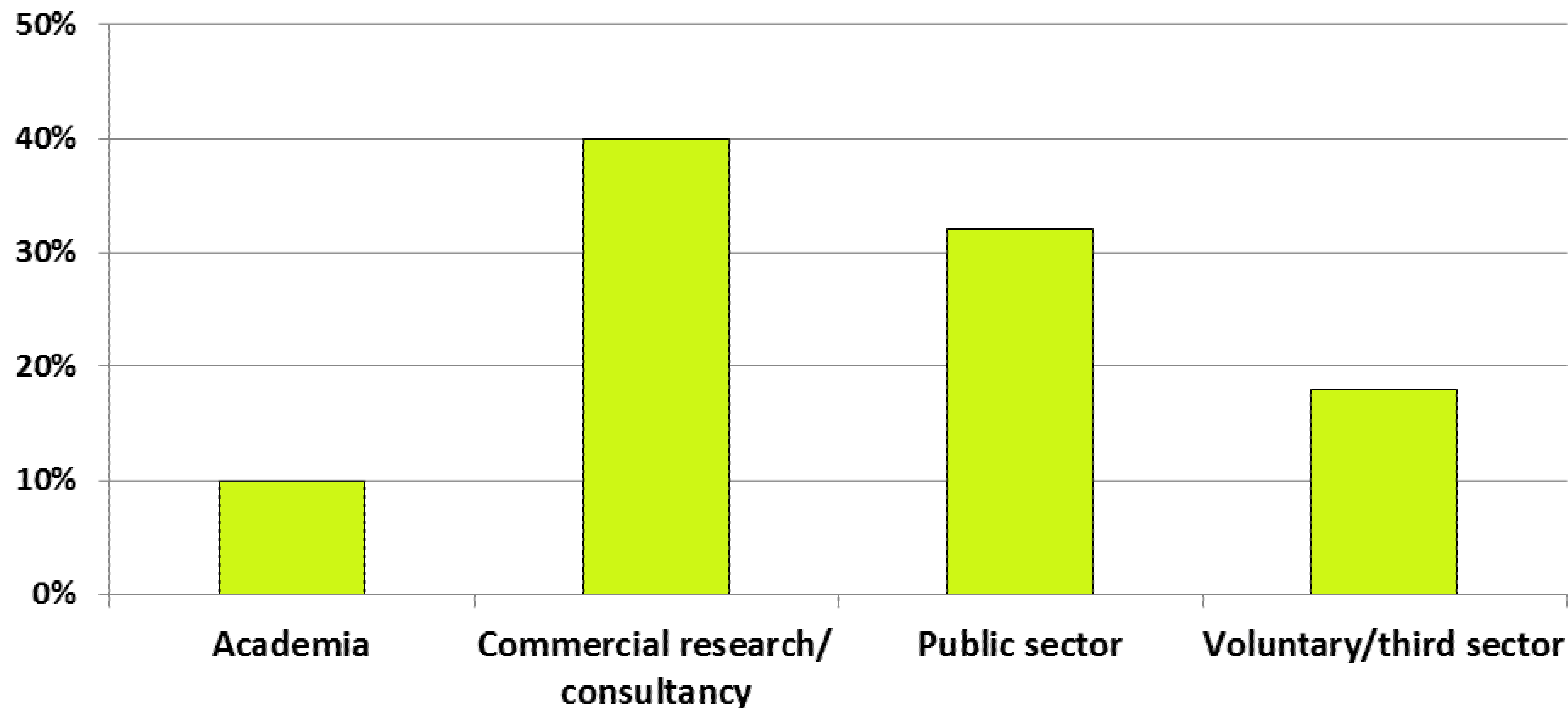
...help paint a picture of the use of social media activity in the UK social research community and provide a reference point for future comparison.

Social media are media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques. Social media is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue.

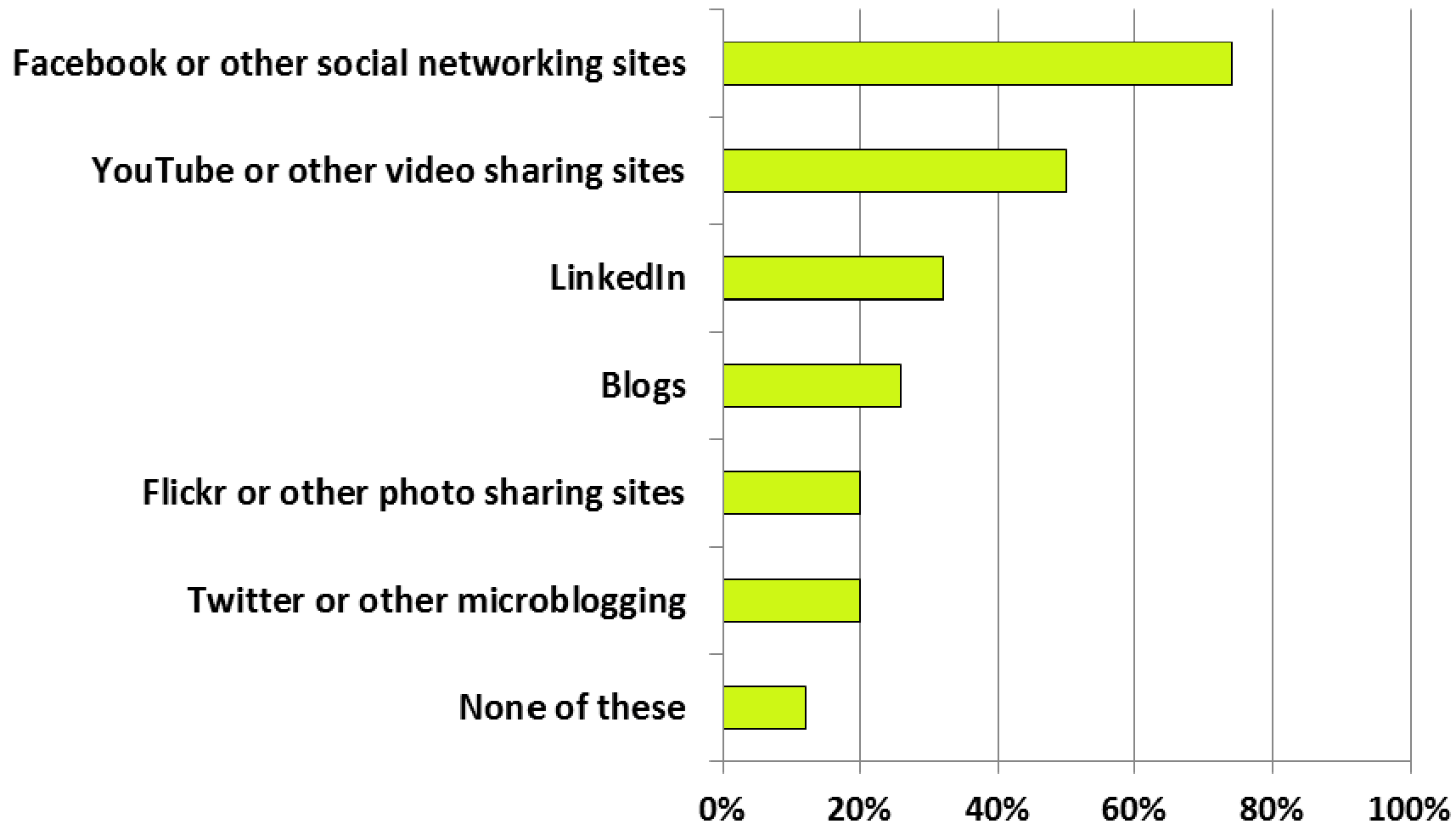
# Survey results

# Profile of respondents

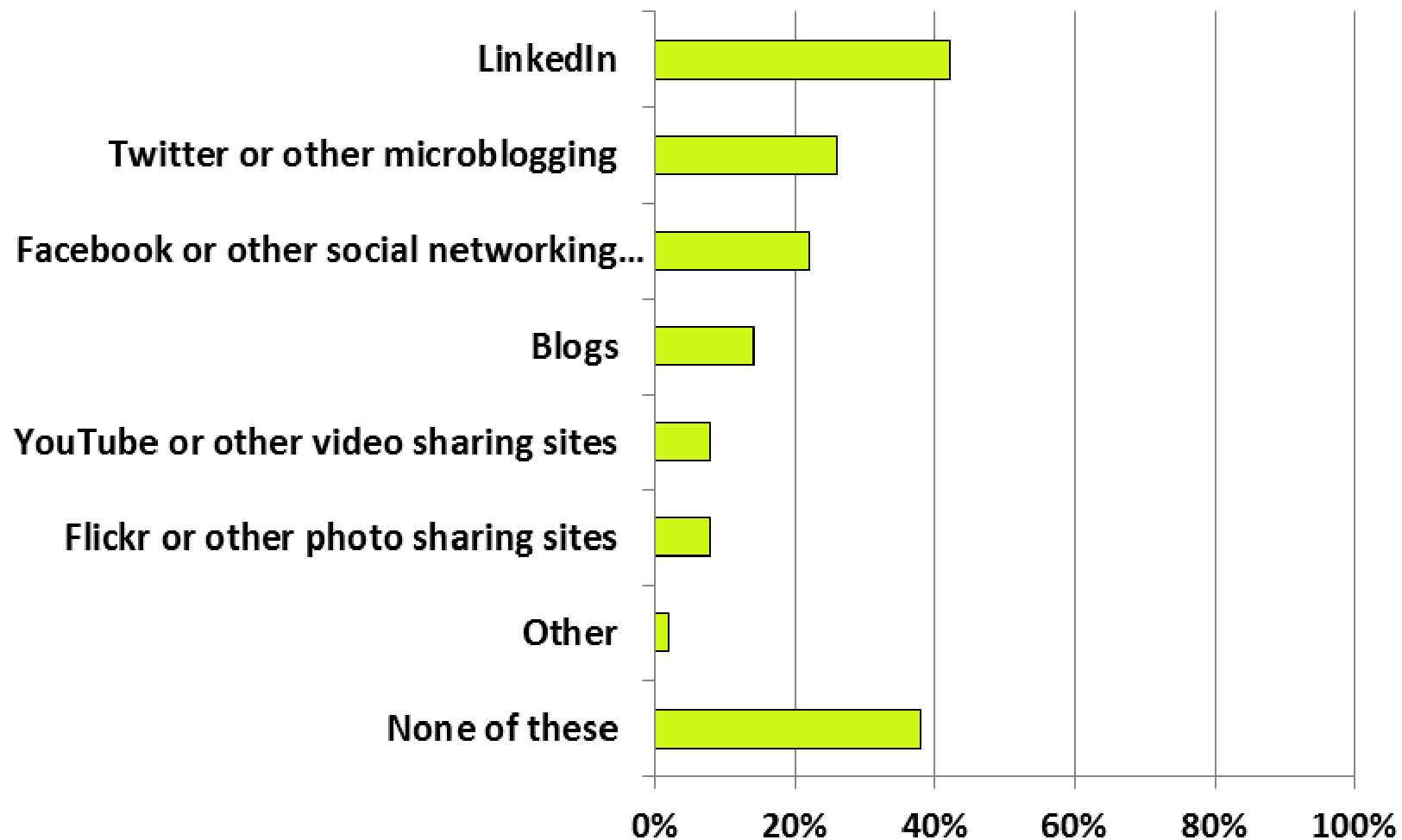
- 76% female and 24% male;
- 72% were aged between 25 and 44 and 28% between 45 and 64;
- 96% of respondents gave the UK as their principle work location;
- 92% were members of the SRA



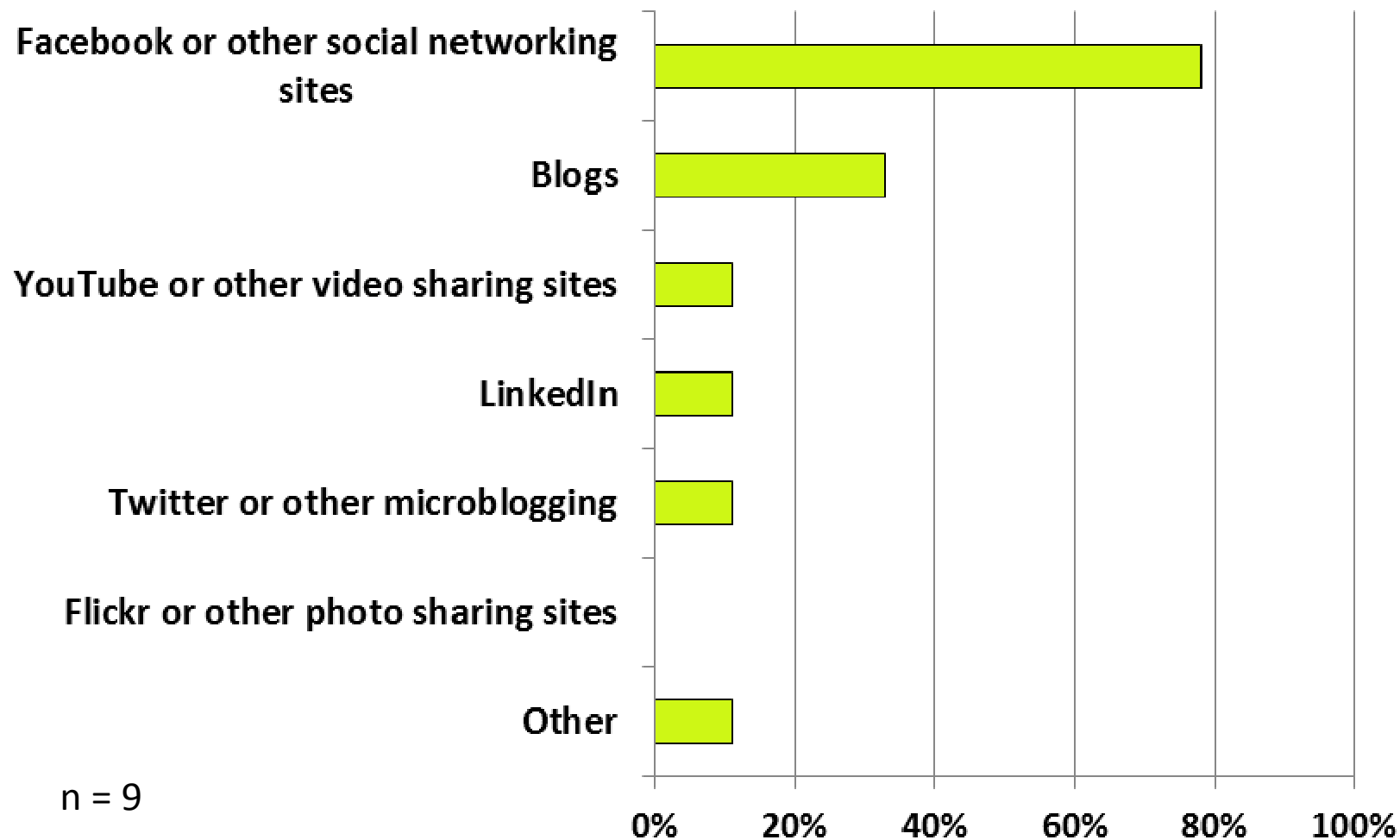
# Use of social media tools – for personal use



# Use of social media tools – for work/professional use



# Experience of social media in social research



- **Access to target group**

*“To engage young people...”*

- **As a promotional means**

*“To help drum up support for a project...”*

- **Supplementing insight**

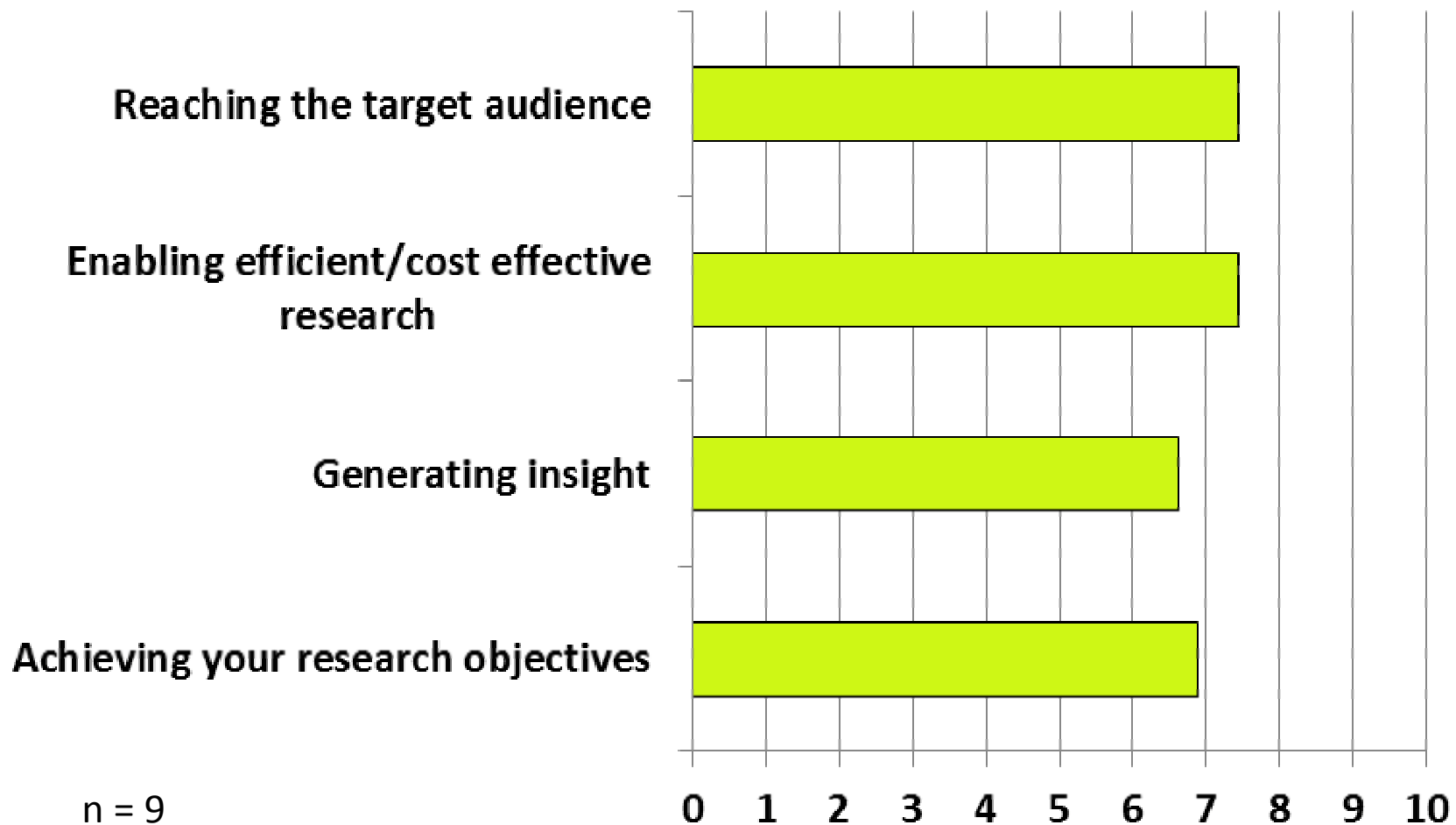
*“...enable people to record real-time info.”*

- **A research subject**

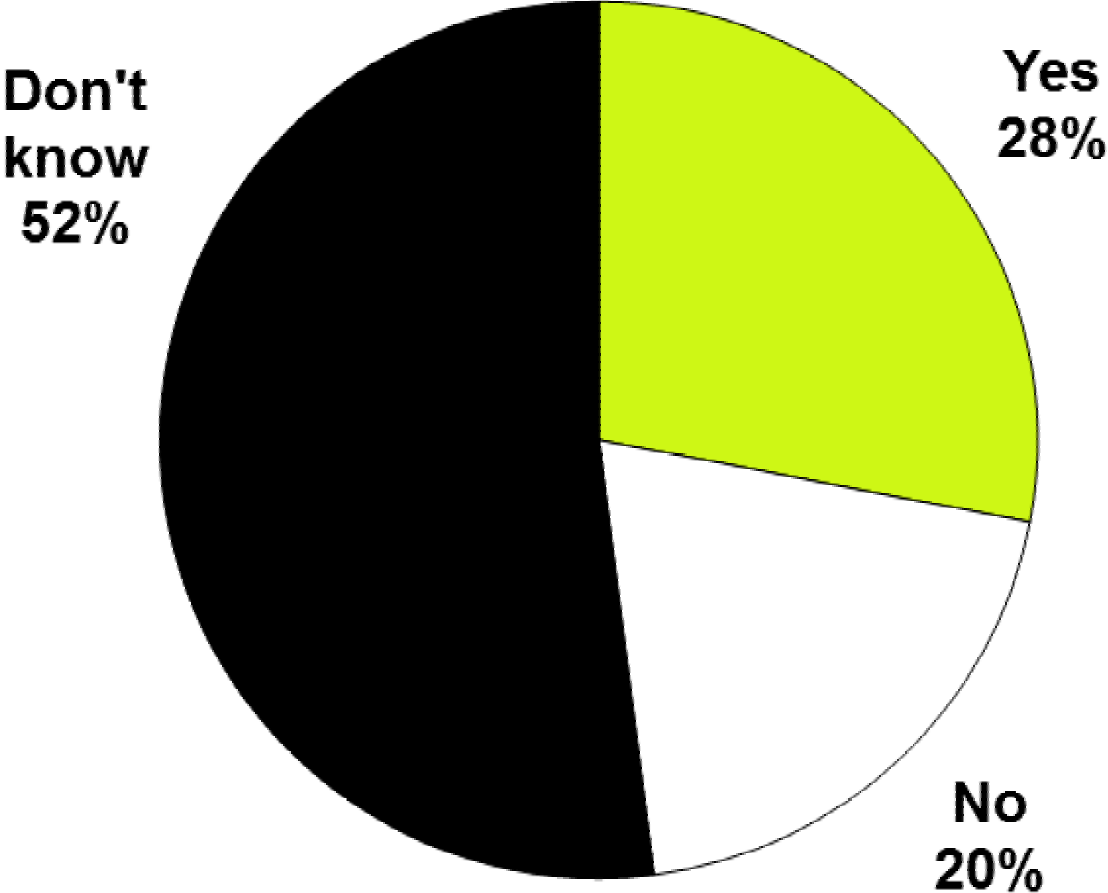
*“Facebook was the topic of my MSc research.”*

- Facebook, along with Twitter was being suggested for helping stimulate survey responses
- The same media - as a means to public opinion polling on issues as a social barometer
- Facebook - as a means of encouraging young people (as part of an evaluation/impact assessment)
- Blogs and forums - helpful in projects that sought feedback and views on issues (for example, discussion papers) and for projects with a high degree of participant involvement - a ‘virtual community.’

# Experience of social media in social research



# Issues around social media in social research – future use



# How social media might help

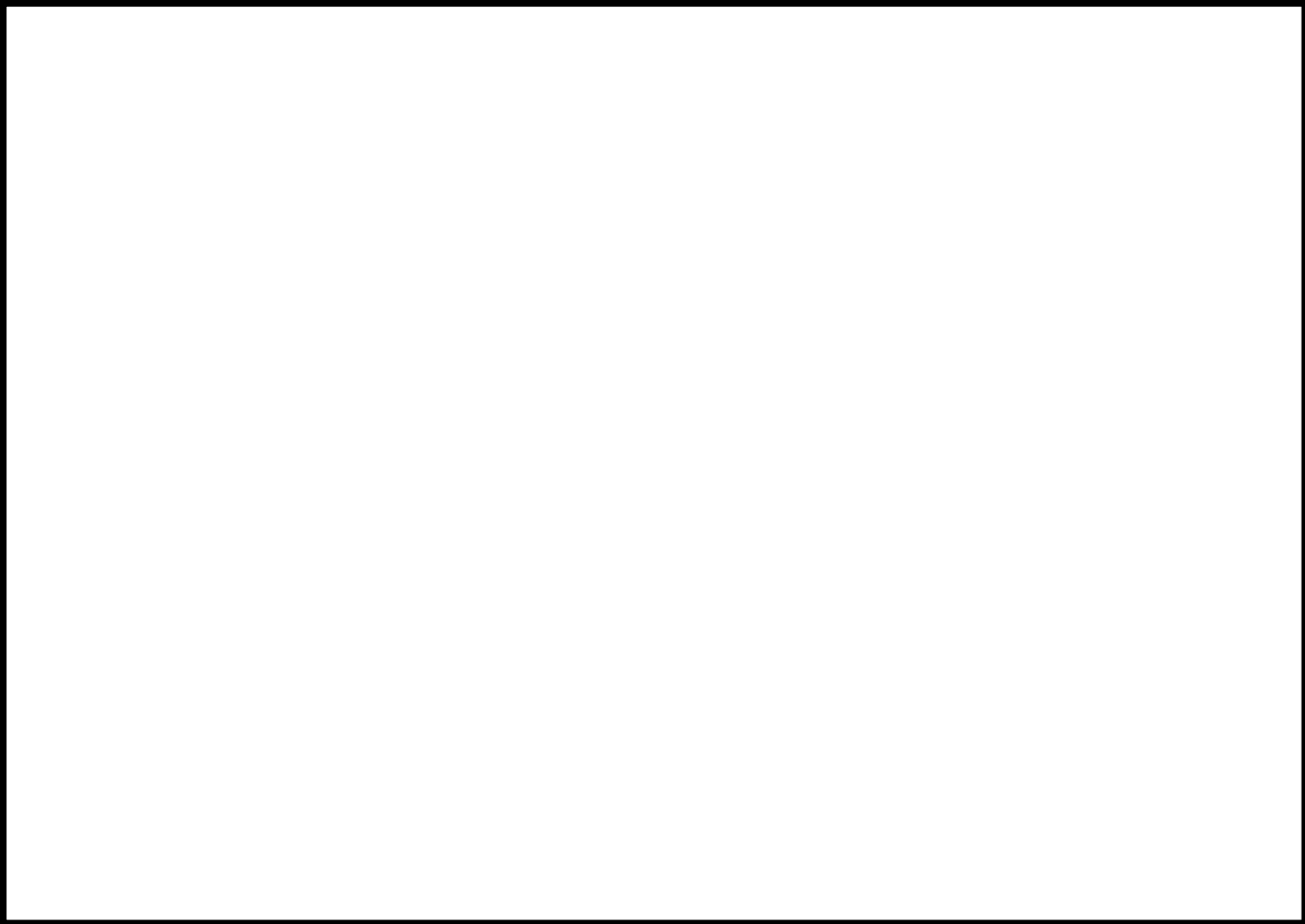
- ability to appeal to particular groups (32%)
- ability to access wide audiences (31%)
- cost of doing (21%)
- didn't offer any comment (18%)
- providing ease and speed (12%)
- innovation to research method (5%)
- 7% of respondents saw the key advantages relating to specific research design issues

# Issues for social media in social research

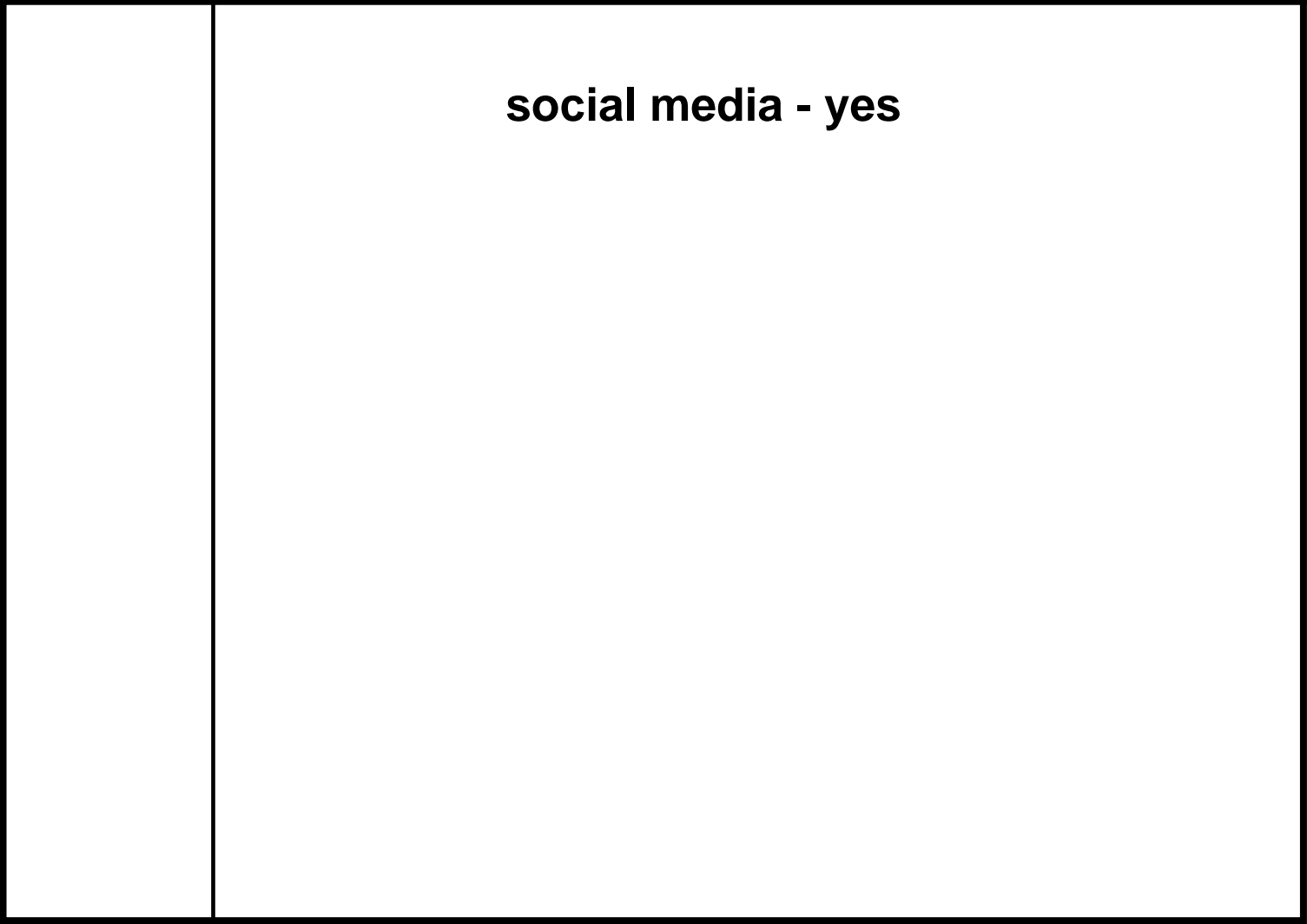
- Accessibility and bias
- Validation and verification
- Ethics and legitimacy
- Embracing the new challenges of technology
- Social media bandwagon “*what might be lost in eschewing...*”

# Interpretation of results

# FMR RESEARCH

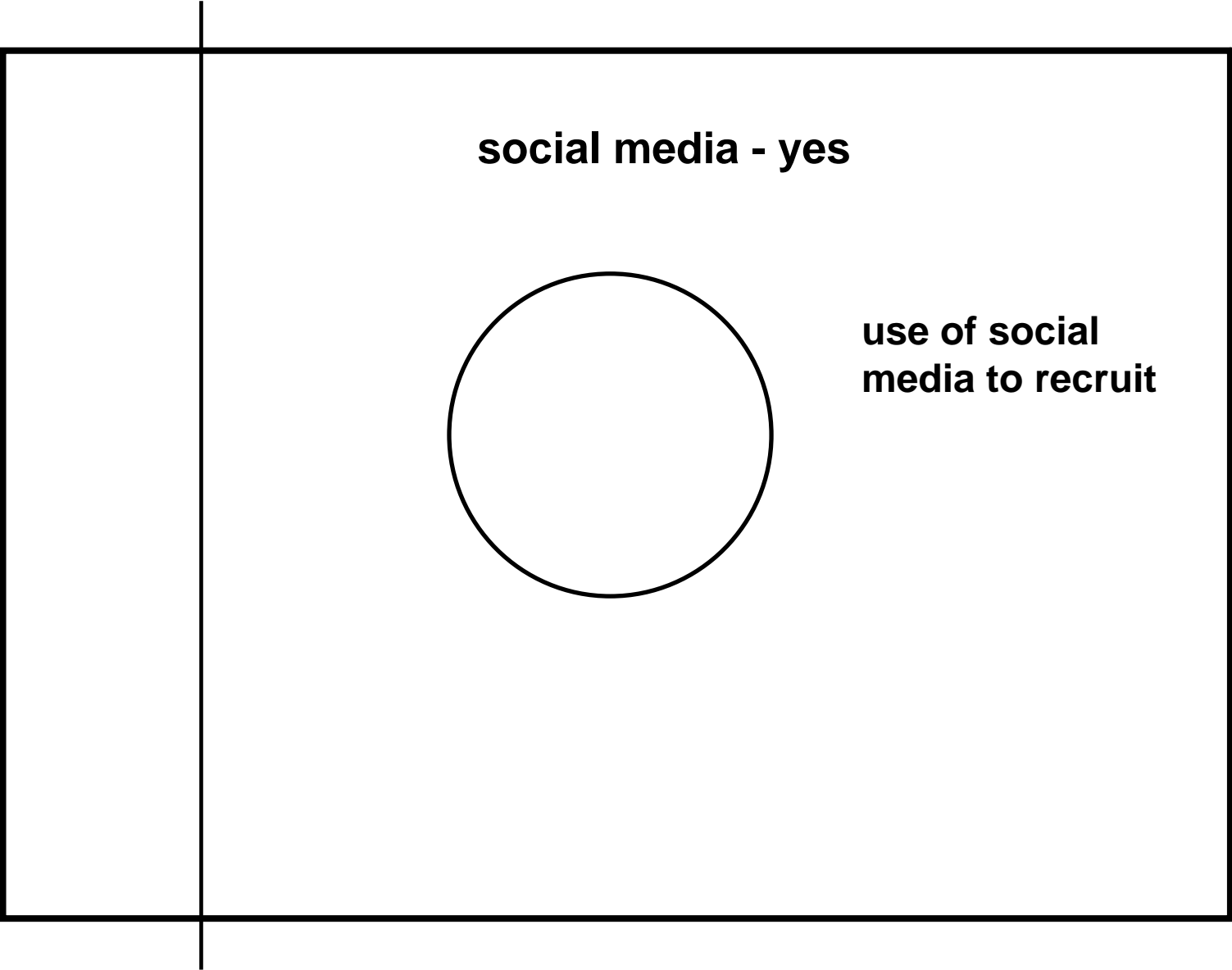


**social researchers**



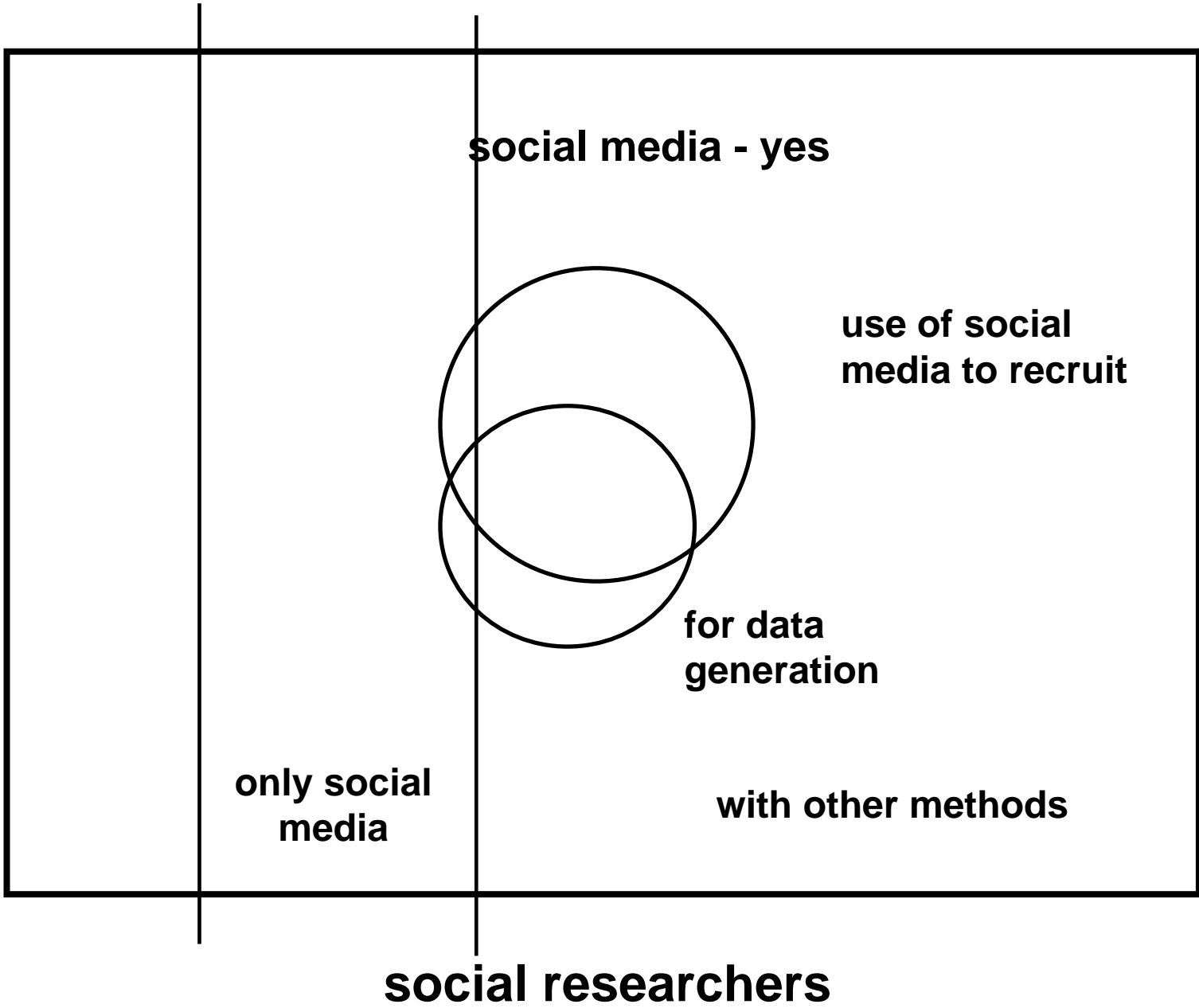
**social media - yes**

**social researchers**

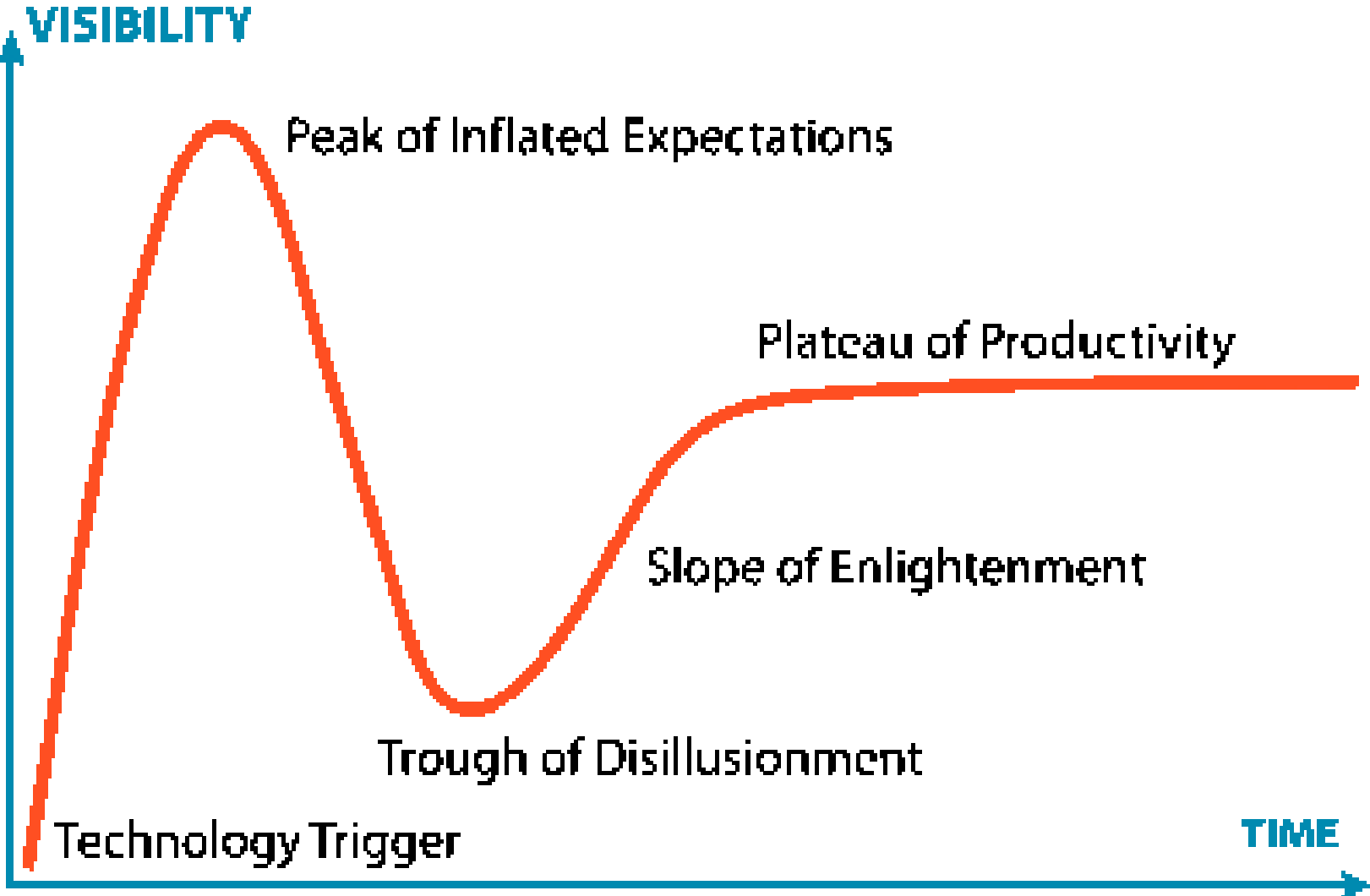


social researchers

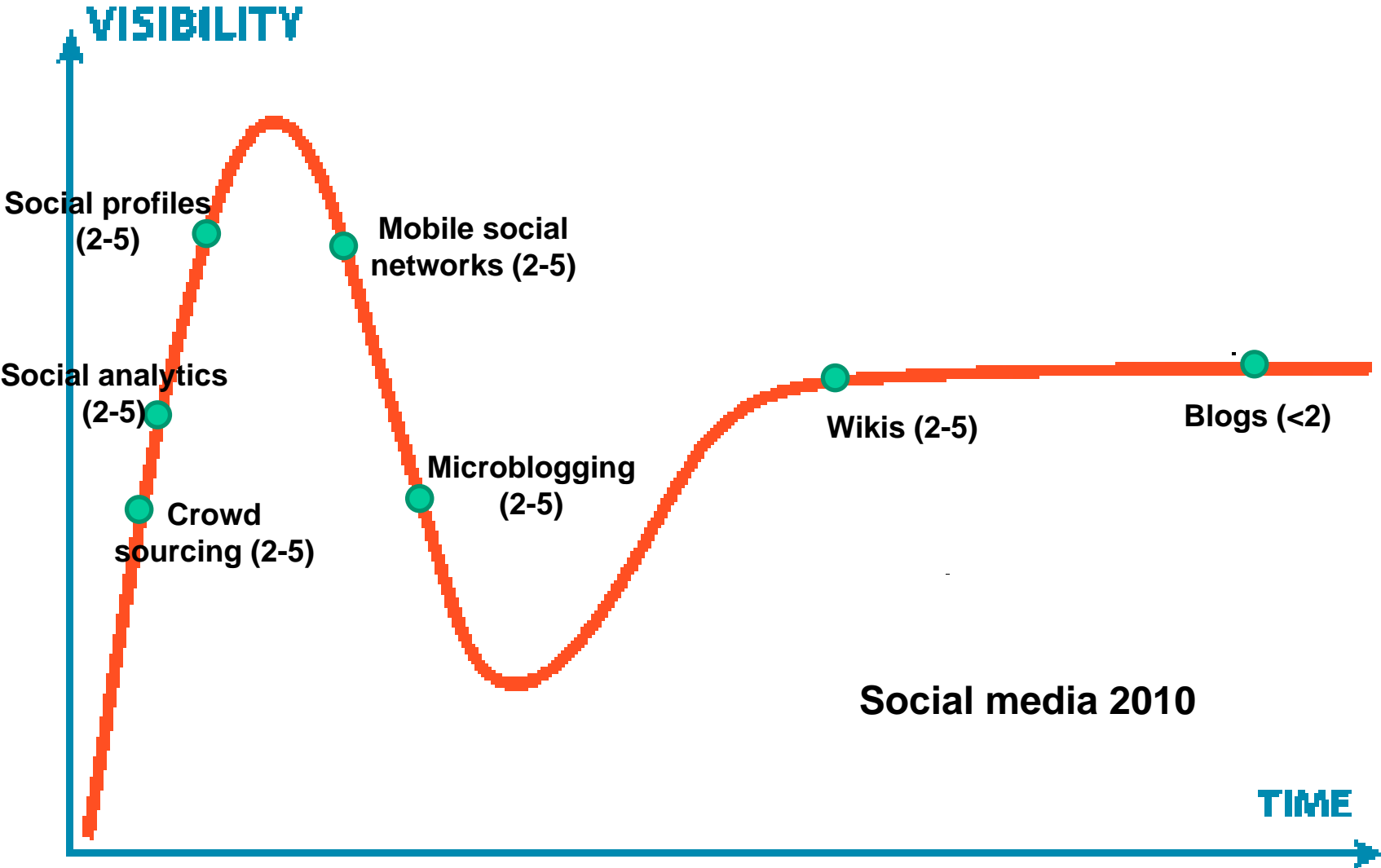




# Gartner hype cycle



# Gartner hype cycle



# Conversations we might wish to continue

- what are social media?
- acceptance of its continuing role?
- methodological exploration/practice
- guidelines regarding ethics

