N. Sato. Exploring barriers to computer and Internet use among female older adults with focus group interview. Gerontechnology 2010;9(2):326; doi:10.4017/gt.2010.09.02.180.00 **Purpose** Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are all-pervasive in most industrialized countries and offer much opportunity for us to improve our quality of life. However, for older adults, opportunities to become familiar with ICTs are less available than for other populations[1]. For example, in Japan, only 28.1% of those over the age of 65 were Internet users as compared with about 95% of 20 to 49 in 20082. With regard to gender differences in the over 65 age group, 23.4 % of women used the Internet, compared to 33.0% of men[2]. Thus, there is a digital divide in terms of age and gender. The purpose of this study was to qualitatively explore barriers on computer and Internet use among female older adults based on focus group interviews. **Method** Seventeen female adults ranging in age from 65-75 years participated in this study. Participants reported having very limited or no experience with computer and Internet use. Three focus group sessions (six in the first and second and five in the third session) were conducted. Each session lasted approximately 1 hour. The core topics of focus group interviews included: (i)) the extent to which participants have positive/negative attitude towards computer and the Internet, (ii) the extent to which they have perceived needs for computer and Internet use, (iii) what barriers exist to using a computer and the Internet, (iv) the extent to which they are interested in learning how to use a computer and the Internet, (v) for what purposes they would like to use a computer and the Internet if they are available, and (vi) what concerns they have using a computer and the Internet. The sessions were recorded using an IC recorder and a digital video camera recorder. For the analysis, each session was transcribed and content analysis performed. **Results & Discussion** Overall, participants had positive attitudes towards computers and the Internet. The majority of participants were concerned about security of information. The barriers mentioned to using a computer and the Internet often included lack of training opportunity, less confidence in acquisition of computer skills, anxiety about using technology, and costs. The main purposes for computer and Internet use if they were available were seeking health-, or travel-related information, word processing, and viewing and printing digital camera image. Participants who were interested in learning computer literacy emphasized that repeated training programs at short-term intervals could be helpful to reinforce what they learned.

References

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