

B. BOUDIN, J. GAUCHER. *Social alarm acceptance by frail elderly people: is TAM relevant?* *Gerontechnology* 2012;11(2):156; doi:10.4017/gt.2012.11.02.277.00 **Purpose** Falls among the elderly are a major issue in gerontology, because the human and economic costs are considerable<sup>1</sup>. Social alarms—portable switches linked to the telephone that can dial a 24-hours emergency station if activated—have great potential<sup>2</sup>. But even a classical technology such as this suffers from poor usage<sup>3</sup>. Thus the acceptance of this technology by elderly people is a central issue. The technology acceptance model (TAM, *Figure 1*) was proposed by Davis in 1989<sup>4</sup> and it is currently one of the most documented models<sup>5</sup> but it is seldom adapted to elderly people, especially frail elderly. In this study a TAM-questionnaire was used to assess the acceptance of social alarms by frail elderly people. **Method** A total of 240 elderly participants using social alarms were interviewed by phone for study 1 (M=83.7 years; SD=7.39) and 201 participants (M=84.1 years; SD=7.33) for study 2. They used social alarms proposed by distinct providers. We used the 4-constructs final version of the TAM<sup>6,7</sup> because of its parsimony. A questionnaire was translated and adapted to frail elderly using social alarms<sup>3</sup>. The data was factor-analysed using principal component analysis. The model was then tested using hierarchical regression analysis and finally mediation was assessed<sup>8</sup>. **Results & Discussion** Results show that the theorized linkages cannot be ruled out on the basis of our data. The explained variance is about 32% (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=0.321) in study 1 and 40% (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=0.407) in study 2. This difference can be accounted for by a change in response format between the two studies. These results confirm the interest of using TAM in frail elderly people to predict their use of social alarms and argue for the inclusion of other theoretical constructs.

**References**

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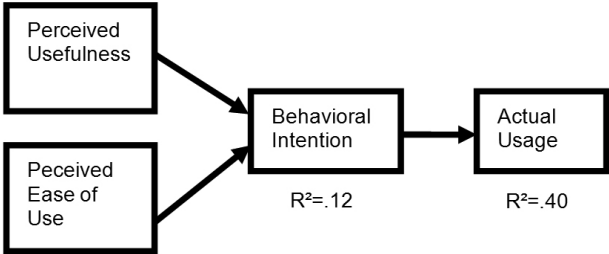


Figure 1: Model and explained variance for study 2