

Health and Self-Esteem

C.S. SANTANA, G. LEESON. *The stressors in the use of everyday technologies from the perspective of the elderly user: A comparative study of UK and Brazil. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):173s; <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.168.00>* **Purpose** Studies indicate that older people use new technology less and have more difficulties handling new technologies compared to younger people, both with regard to their learning, and aspects of use such as the fear of damaging the device or embarrassment using this equipment in public. Older people find themselves less comfortable in using technologies and also feel less confident in their abilities both to learn and to handle these systems effectively¹⁻³. This paper investigated the perceptions of a sample composed of British and Brazilian older adults on the use of electronic devices in their daily lives. **Method** This was an exploratory, cross-sectional, descriptive study involving 100 older adult participants, 50 Brazilian and 50 British adults. The data collection included a socio-economic questionnaire; an IADL index – the Lawton & Brody Scale (1969); and a self-reported and a structured questionnaire. **Results & Discussion** Results showed that exposure time to technology had a positive impact during the most advanced phases of usage, which was supported by reports of fewer difficulties in the use of such devices, a feeling of greater confidence, and a sense of belonging to the modern world. Regarding perceptions of the difficulty in using technology, 46% of the English group in this sample reported having difficulties using electronic equipment, and 56.5% consider that this difficulty caused daily problems. Of the group of Brazilians, 74% reported having difficulties using technology, and 70.3% acknowledged that this interfered in daily activities. The subjects perceived that the handling of electronics in public such as ATMs for banking or the use of self-service boxes for the payment of products is generally a cause for embarrassment. Their dependence on these tasks was felt by several respondents and the difficulty to use these devices lead them to depend on others. This dependence was reported by 69.2% of the English and 62.9% of the Brazilian participants. However, Brazilians reported feeling more embarrassed, pressured and nervous when they needed to use certain devices in public and also reported more feelings of incompetence and incapacity related to their use of new technologies than the English. In order to solve these problems, asking someone for help was the strategy most used by participants in the Brazilian sample (59%), followed by 48% of the English sample. The frequency in the use of electronic devices in daily life, the ability to use them, and use perception in public as a stressful experience were shown to be the main differences between the British and Brazilian groups. Both are not comfortable in modern society, complain of unsuitable appliances, and refer to their lack of contact with these devices in the past. This study concludes that difficulties associated with the use of technology should be directly related to the personal difficulties of the participants in the group of older adults who were less exposed to these new technologies and are in a transition phase, rather than the differences between countries.

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