

J.L.H. BIRKLAND. *Exploring information needs of older adults: Impacts on information system selection*. *Gerontechnology* 2010;9(2):265; doi:10.4017/gt.2010.09.02.130.00 **Purpose** The U.S. older adult population (those age 65 and over) is expected to increase 147% from 2000 to 2050¹. At the same time more information is becoming accessible in digital-only formats. For older populations, this is concerning because of historically lower rates of information and communication technology (ICT) usage compared to younger segments of the population². Several researchers have stated that this places older adults at risk for not receiving the vital information that they need³. This study seeks to understand why some older adults do not use digital forms of information channels, by combining the perspectives of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)⁴, Media Gratifications Theory⁵, and life course theory⁶. **Method** Currently the project is working with a model (Figure 1). This model will be expanded and then tested using a two-phase study design. The first phase of the study will involve semi-structured interviews to explore various life course impacts and possible impacts upon information channel usage. Based upon a review of the literature, life course impacts such as work history, retirement history, and educational background will be explored⁶. The second phase of the study will involve a randomized, national survey of older adults in the U.S. to test the various aspects of the model. This survey will involve several pilot tests in order to establish face, content, and construct validity⁷. From this data a regression model of channel selection will be created. **Results & Discussion** Preliminary results of the first phase of this study will be presented in the poster format. The researcher hopes to use the results of the research to revise the model in order to explain how various factors impact an older adults' information channel selection, and what impacts if an older adult chooses a digital or non-digital channel.

References

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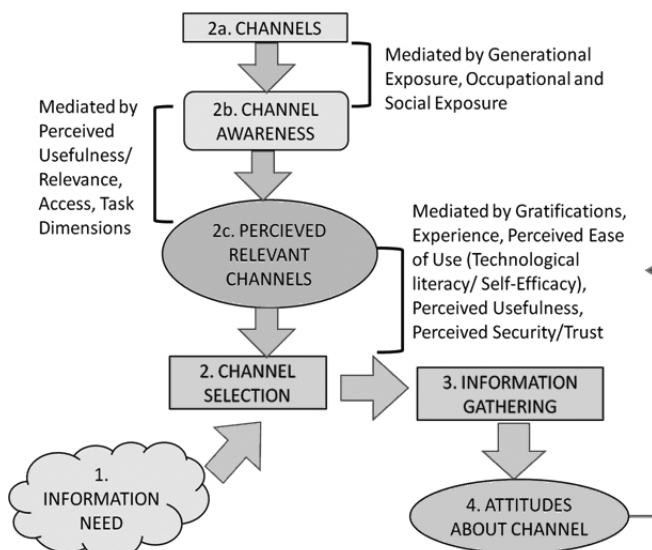


Figure 1. Model of information channel selection