

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND INFORMATION-SEEKING IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

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Socioemotional selectivity theory proposes that older adults engage in less information-seeking than younger adults as future time perspective becomes more limited and expansive goals are prioritized less. However, gathering information is crucial in emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for older adults, who are particularly vulnerable to the virus. This study aims to better understand the association between age and information-seeking patterns during the current pandemic. Two hundred and sixty-six participants (age range = 18 – 84, Mage = 38.86, female = 77.06%, received postsecondary education = 83.08%, born in Canada = 73.68%) completed an online study between May and August 2020. We found that older age was associated with more information-seeking time ($b = .45$, $SE = .16$, $p < .001$). We then investigated whether perceived worries of getting COVID-19 might provide insights into this association. Findings point to a partial mediation with a significant direct effect ($b = .37$, $SE = .16$, $p = .02$, 95% bootstrap $CI = [.07, .68]$), a marginally significant indirect effect ($b = .08$, $SE = .04$, $p = .06$, 95% bootstrap $CI = [-.003, .18]$) and a significant total effect ($b = .46$, $SE = .16$, $p < .001$, 95% bootstrap $CI = [.14, .77]$). That is, older adults engaged in more information-seeking than younger adults in contexts in which information-seeking was personally relevant as indicated by perceived worries. These findings shed light on key correlates of information-seeking in older adulthood and highlight the importance for government and health organizations to make suitable information accessible for older adults.

UNSUNG HEROES: CAREGIVER EXPERIENCES DURING COVID 19

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Objectives: COVID-19 has spared no age group but is proving to be most dangerous to the elderly and individuals with more vulnerable immune systems. COVID-19 represents a unique challenge to caregivers above and beyond the ordinary stresses they experience and many informal caregivers currently providing care have not planned for the pandemic and its effect on access to health care services, respite resources, and support groups, etc. The purpose of our study is to assess COVID-19's impact on the mental health and wellness of informal caregivers. Method: An interdisciplinary collaborative of caregiving scholars created a 47-item web-based anonymous survey with quantitative and qualitative questions to assess caregiving experiences during COVID-19. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling

using social media and flyers distributed by local/national organizations. Results: Participants ($N=96$) reported an average age of 50 years old and were predominately adult children caring for parents (45%) with neurological (40%) and chronic medical conditions (25%). Only 4% cared for individuals diagnosed with COVID 19. Nearly all reported significant changes in caregiving that included increased time spent caregiving for care recipients and other family members, greater stress and worry, fewer breaks for self-care, increased isolation, and decreased access to social/emotional supports and respite services. Discussion: Unplanned changes to caregiving during COVID 19 have created an acute need for research, clinical care guidelines, and policy promoting virtual respite care, social support for caregivers, and more readily available community based resources that promote caregivers' physical and emotional wellbeing without requiring them to leave their homes.

VIEWS ON AGING AND WELL-BEING IN THE COVID CRISIS – A LONGITUDINAL STUDY IN LUXEMBOURG

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During the Covid-Crisis, stereotypes of older adults as helpless and vulnerable were spread, and intergenerational conflict was stirred more or less openly. We thus focused on perceived ageism during the crisis and its effects on well-being and health of older adults. Since views on aging are multifaceted and can be both, risk and resource for individual development, we assessed people's self-perceptions of aging (SPA) as social loss, continued growth and physical decline and subjective age (SA). We hypothesized that people with SPA of social loss and physical decline would be more susceptible to negative effects of perceived ageism, whereas those with SPA of continued growth and younger SA would be less affected. $N=611$ community-dwelling adults aged 60 – 98 (Mage = 69.92 years) were recruited in June 2020 online and via phone in Luxembourg. In September 2020, participants will be contacted again for a follow-up. Analyses with cross-sectional data show that participants who felt more discriminated reported lower life satisfaction after the onset of the crisis ($r = -.35$) and worse subjective health ($r = -.14$). SPA of social loss and higher SA increased the negative effect of ageism on well-being ($\beta = -.57$) and subjective health ($\beta = -.53$), respectively. Our results point to mid- and long-term consequences of age discriminatory and stereotype-based crisis communication for the well-being of older adults and the importance of individual SPA in critical situations.

VIRTUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN OLDER PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND FAMILIES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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People staying in hospitals need more support to cope with the lockdown and visitor restriction during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for older people with cognitive or physical impairment. Everyday technology such as a