

COMPARISON OF OLDER AND YOUNGER ADULTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS AND ABILITIES WITH COMPUTER: IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING AND LEARNING

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INTRODUCTION

REVIEW OF THE **SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN** THE ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES OF **OLDER AND YOUNGER** USERS OF COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- MANY CONFLICTING RESULTS ABOUT OLDER USERS' ATTITUDES AND TRAINING OUTCOMES EXIST.
 - Older people's attitudes & experiences towards technology are generally negative vs. age has no effect on such things.
 - Some researches even indicate a positive regard toward technology

OLDER ADULTS AS TECHNOLOGICALLY INADEQUATE

OLDER PEOPLE GENERALLY HAVE MORE NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPUTERS THAN YOUNGER PEOPLE.

- NEGATIVE SELF-BELIEFS HELD BY OLDER ADULTS MAY NOT JUST BE DUE TO POOR PERFORMANCE,
 - Negative stereotypical views held by tutors may also be a factor.
- EVEN AFTER CONTROLLING FOR DIFFERENCES IN PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE LEVEL,
 - Older adults reported feeling less comfortable and less competent

THE OLDER PERSON'S DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE THAT OLDER ADULTS HAVE DIFFICULTY LEARNING NEW TECHNOLOGY

- MORE CAUTIOUS
 - Choosing to respond more slowly to increase accuracy
- OLDER NOVICE USERS TAKE LONGER TO TRAIN AND MAKE MORE ERRORS UPON TESTING
 - Evidence of cognitive decay
- OLDER EXPERIENCED USERS
 - Number of errors is uniform across age groups; however, they do perform slower.
- LACK OF PRIOR KNOWLEDGE, RATHER THAN NEGATIVE ATTITUDE, INHIBITS AN OLDER PERSON FROM GREATER ACQUISITION OF COMPUTER RELATED SKILLS AND USE.

OLDER ADULTS' SELECTIVE COMPUTER USE

OLDER PEOPLE ARE NOT NECESSARILY AVOIDANT OF TECHNOLOGY

- THEY AVOID MAKING ERRORS BY LIMITING THE TASKS
- RATHER THAN BE NEGATIVELY DISPOSED TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY, OLDER USERS ARE SELECTIVE IN WHAT THEY SEE AS BENEFICIAL AND NECESSARY.

OLDER ADULTS AS EQUALS TO YOUNGER ADULTS

“DESPITE THE PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED SPECIFIC FINDINGS OF OLDER PEOPLE FEELING LESS COMFORTABLE AND COMPETENT IN COMPUTER USE,”

- SOME STUDIES FOUND THERE WERE NO AGE DIFFERENCES
 - Despite experiencing more difficulty in using computers and having lower estimations of their abilities to use them.
- OLDER ADULTS START TO PERCEIVE TECHNOLOGY AS NECESSARY AND THUS DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES.

OLDER ADULTS' POSITIVE VIEWS TOWARDS COMPUTERS

OLDER PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPUTERS SHOWED THAT DESPITE HAVING LESS COMPUTER EXPERIENCE THAN THEIR YOUNGER COUNTERPARTS, THE OLDER PARTICIPANTS (MEAN AGE = 67.7 YEARS) WERE FOUND TO BE LESS ANXIOUS ABOUT COMPUTERS AND HAVE MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND LIKING FOR THEM THAN THE YOUNGER PARTICIPANTS

BARRIERS TO THE OLDER PERSON'S ACCEPTANCE TECHNOLOGY AND OVERCOMING THEM

SOME BARRIERS THAT ARE APPARENT FOR OLDER USERS

- LACK OF KNOWLEDGE
- CONFUSION REGARDING USAGE PROCEDURES
- FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN
- LACK OF CONFIDENCE
- LACK OF UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- MAJOR INFLUENCE THAT POSITIVELY IMPACT ATTITUDES
- HOW ONE IS VIEWED AND TREATED BY OTHERS

YOUNGER ADULTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY

YOUNGER PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPUTERS ARE MORE CONSISTENT

- UNIFORM POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPUTERS
 - Regard computers as useful tools and important
 -

INFLUENCES ON YOUNGER ADULTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY

MANY FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES AND USAGE PATTERNS ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE INFLUENCING OLDER PEOPLE.

- LEVELS OF CONFIDENCE
- COMPUTER EXPOSURE
- EXPERIENCE WITH COMPUTERS
- YOUNGER USERS ARE ALSO INFLUENCED BY ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS, JUST LIKE HOW OLDER USERS ATTITUDES & ACCEPTANCE & UTILIZATION ARE IMPACTED BY HOW THEY ARE VIEWED (STEREOTYPES) AND TREATED

CHANGES IN AGE-RELATED ATTITUDES OVER TIME

GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPUTERS HAVE BEEN CHANGING OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS.

- A STUDY CONDUCTED IN 2004 WAS COMPARED WITH A SIMILAR STUDY DONE IN 1997 : UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HAD
 - Greater appreciation of the benefits of computers
 - Less fear of computer power
- THE GAP BETWEEN OLDER ADULTS AND YOUNGER ADULTS' ATTITUDES SEEM TO BE CLOSING