

Intergenerational family online community and older adults' overall well-being

Older adults in
WhatsApp
family groups

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to evaluate the potential contribution of a membership in an online family community to older adults' overall well-being.

Design/methodology/approach – A total of 427 respondents over the age of 64 participated in the study ($M = 74.55$, $SD = 7.13$), answering a survey. To test the contributing of belonging to family online communities (WhatsApp), three hierarchical regression analyses were conducted, with well-being, self-perceptions of aging and loneliness as outcome variables.

Findings – Findings show that belonging to an intergenerational family online community was associated with higher levels of well-being, less loneliness and better self-perceptions of aging, even once demographic characteristics and using social media were controlled for.

Social implications – This study demonstrates the important role that the family online community membership plays in older adults' lives. This has significant implications that may contribute to intergenerational emotional solidarity.

Originality/value – The authors suggest that technology is not *per se*, but the intergenerational opportunities that technology facilitates that make a difference.

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