



Short Video Use and Information Verification among Adults Aged 50 and Older: An Exploratory Online Survey

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Abstract

This exploratory study describes short-video viewing patterns, interaction practices, and self-reported information verification among adults aged 50 and older. A brief online questionnaire yielded 35 responses reported as valid. Digital inequality and media literacy provide an analytical framework separating access and routine use from critical evaluation. The available findings identify one to two hours as a commonly reported daily viewing range, with health tips, opera clips, and humorous everyday stories among the preferred content. Liking is described as a more common interaction than commenting or producing videos. The source summary also reports encounters with health information regarded as false, some belief and forwarding, and limited source checking. These findings are retained as descriptive patterns because item-level counts, the full questionnaire, and the response dataset are unavailable. Reported exposure is distinguished from objectively verified misinformation, and limited public interaction is not equated with deficient critical thinking. The study identifies information-checking practices as a topic for further assessment and supports context-sensitive discussion of platform, family, and community assistance.

Keywords: short-video platforms; adults aged 50 and older; information verification; media literacy; digital inequality; exploratory survey

1. Introduction

Short-video platforms offer entertainment, cultural material, and information in a readily accessible format. Understanding their use requires distinguishing the ability to operate an application from the ability to evaluate a claim encountered through it. Digital inequality research examines variation in skills and uses beyond the simple presence of internet access (van Deursen & van Dijk, 2014). An individual may therefore be a regular viewer while having different information-checking practices from another equally frequent user.



Age alone is an insufficient description of those practices. Hargittai and Dobransky (2017) examine differences in digital skills and uses among older adults, supporting attention to variation within age groups. Brashier and Schacter (2020) discuss misinformation and aging in a life-span perspective that includes cognitive and social considerations. Neither perspective justifies presuming that all people aged 50 and older are unable to assess online information. Such an assumption would replace measurement with an age-based generalization.

The present study concerns a small online survey with 35 responses. The original eligibility threshold was 50 years, so the title and analysis use adults aged 50 and older rather than treating every participant as elderly. The available manuscript describes viewing preferences, interaction, encounters with questionable health content, and source-checking behavior. These domains can be organized into an exploratory account of use and verification, while recognizing that no raw frequencies or direct performance tests are supplied.

2. Research Objectives

The study has three objectives: (1) to describe the reported viewing duration and preferred short-video content among the surveyed adults aged 50 and older; (2) to describe their reported interaction practices, encounters with health information regarded as false, and approaches to checking doubtful information; and (3) to interpret the reported patterns through digital inequality and media literacy perspectives and develop bounded implications for support. These are descriptive and interpretive objectives. The study does not test causal effects, demographic differences, or the effectiveness of an intervention.

3 Literature Review and Analytical Framework

3.1 Digital inequality and differentiated use

Van Deursen and van Dijk (2014) explain the importance of differences in internet usage after access has been obtained. Their perspective informs the distinction between regular viewing and the range of activities undertaken online. Hargittai and Dobransky (2017) similarly direct attention to heterogeneity in digital skills and uses among older adults. Applied here, these perspectives motivate describing viewing and interaction separately. They do not establish a measured digital-divide score for this sample.



3.2 Media literacy and information verification

Livingstone (2004) treats media literacy as involving more than technical access, including critical engagement with mediated information. The present article uses this perspective to organize questions about source checking and information judgments. A reported checking habit is nevertheless different from demonstrated accuracy. A person may report checking a source but select an unreliable one, while another may recognize a misleading claim without describing a formal checking routine. The brief survey does not resolve these differences.

The misinformation literature also cautions against a single explanation based on age. Brashier and Schacter (2020) discuss factors relevant to how information is processed and shared. The study therefore separates encountering content, believing it, and forwarding it rather than treating them as interchangeable outcomes. It also distinguishes information that respondents regard as false from material independently classified as false by researchers. No independently verified set of health claims was used in the reported survey.

3.3 Analytical framework and alignment

The framework comprises three descriptive domains: viewing patterns, interaction practices, and information-verification practices. Digital inequality contextualizes differences between access, use, and skills; media literacy contextualizes evaluation and checking. Support implications follow from the interpretation of the reported practices. No directional path between age, viewing time, verification, and risk is statistically tested. Content preference is retained as an observed survey topic rather than recast as a measured motivation, because no motivation scale is documented.

Table 1

Alignment of research objectives and evidence

Objective	Survey domain	Finding and interpretation
1 Describe viewing patterns	Daily viewing time and preferred content	Reported duration and content preferences
2 Describe interaction and verification	Likes, comments, posting, encounters, and checking	Reported participation and checking practices
3 Develop support implications	Synthesis of descriptive findings and literature	Proposed assistance; effectiveness not tested



4 Methodology

4.1 Design and participants

The study uses a brief online questionnaire supported by a narrative literature review. The literature is used to clarify concepts and interpret findings; no systematic-review search or selection procedure is claimed. Eligibility was defined as short-video use and age 50 years or older. The manuscript reports 35 valid questionnaires. The country or locality, recruitment channels, fieldwork dates, consent procedure, total number approached, and criteria for deeming a response valid are not specified. A probability sampling method or response rate therefore cannot be claimed.

An online survey reaches people able and willing to respond through that mode. It may omit people with limited access or those requiring assistance. The sample cannot establish patterns among all older adults, nonusers, or a national population. Age distribution, education, gender, previous digital experience, and platform-specific participation are unavailable, preventing meaningful subgroup comparisons.

4.2 Questionnaire domains and measurement limits

The reported questionnaire covers viewing duration, preferred content, encounters with false information, and ways of checking doubtful information. The results also describe likes, comments, sharing, and video production, so these practices are retained as reported topics. However, the full questionnaire and its response options are unavailable. Item wording, number of items, whether multiple responses were permitted, missing-item handling, and instrument development procedures cannot be established from the manuscript.

No validated media-literacy scale, reliability coefficient, expert review procedure, pilot study, or objective misinformation-identification task is documented. These procedures are not inserted as though completed. The measures are accordingly treated as self-reported habits and experiences. Information regarded as false is respondent-reported or described that way in the source summary; it is not a researcher-verified content category.

4.3 Analysis and reporting boundaries

The original manuscript states that simple descriptive analysis was used, but supplies no item-level counts or statistical tables. The revision therefore presents only the narrative patterns



reported in that manuscript. The expressions most, few, and nearly half are not converted into counts or percentages. With 35 responses, a percentage cannot be reconstructed without the underlying numerator and item-specific denominator. No new descriptive statistic, hypothesis test, correlation, or effect size is generated.

The empirical basis is limited to the reported survey summary. It does not include a reanalysis of the responses, interviews, platform logs, recommendation audits, or observed verification behavior. Distinguishing these sources prevents a description of survey responses from becoming an unsupported claim about cognitive ability or algorithmic influence.

4.4 Research ethics

No personal identifiers or individual quotations are included in this article. Institutional ethical review status, participant information, consent arrangements, data retention, and any assistance given while completing the questionnaire are not documented in the supplied manuscript. No ethical approval or exemption is claimed. These matters require verification against the actual study records before submission.

5 Findings

5.1 Viewing duration and content preferences

Addressing Objective 1, the source summary identifies one to two hours per day as the predominant reported viewing range. Health tips, opera clips, and humorous everyday stories are described as preferred content. These findings suggest that the reported use includes informational and recreational material. They do not establish viewing frequency for every respondent, a mean duration, differences between content categories, or the extent to which viewing meets a specific need.

5.2 Interaction practices

For Objective 2, liking is described as more common than commenting or producing videos. The summary also mentions forwarding information to family members. These practices show that visible public contribution and private circulation need to be distinguished. The available evidence does not show how many people used each interaction, how frequently they did so, or whether the same respondents engaged in multiple activities.



The pattern is described as viewing-centered participation rather than passive use or superficial engagement. Choosing not to comment or publish can reflect preference, privacy, effort, or other circumstances not measured by the survey. It cannot by itself establish a lack of understanding, agency, or critical thought.

5.3 Reported misinformation encounters and checking

The source reports encounters with health information regarded as false and indicates that some respondents believed and forwarded such material to relatives. It also describes limited checking of suspicious sources and reliance on personal impressions. These are the reported experiences relevant to information evaluation. The absence of counts prevents estimating exposure, belief, forwarding, or checking prevalence.

No example claim, external fact-check, or direct discernment task is supplied. Consequently, the study cannot verify whether a particular message was false, establish the correctness of respondents' judgments, or conclude that they generally believe false health information. Reported encounters identify an issue for investigation rather than a measured rate of susceptibility.

Table 2

Reported patterns and permissible conclusions

Domain	Reported pattern	What the evidence does not establish
Viewing	One to two hours; health and entertainment interests	Population average or ranking by verified counts
Interaction	Likes more prominent than comments or posting	Passivity or deficient critical thinking
Information encounters	Health claims regarded as false; some belief and forwarding	Objectively verified exposure or susceptibility
Verification	Limited source checks; personal impressions	Performance on a validated media-literacy test



6 Discussion

6.1 Access and viewing do not establish the full range of skills

The first two objectives distinguish reported application use from participation and verification. This distinction is compatible with digital inequality scholarship, which considers differences within internet use rather than assuming that access resolves every disparity (van Deursen & van Dijk, 2014). The current findings do not measure those disparities directly. They identify separate behaviors that a fuller instrument could examine.

Hargittai and Dobransky (2017) also support attention to variation within older populations. Because the present sample begins at age 50 and lacks a demographic breakdown, its findings cannot be attributed to aging or extended to a specific older-age category. The contribution is the organization of reported practices, not a comparison demonstrating that older people have lower competence than younger users.

6.2 Verification requires a separate evidential assessment

The source-checking concern can be interpreted through Livingstone's (2004) media-literacy perspective, while preserving the difference between self-report and tested skill. A useful next assessment would examine how participants identify the original source, inspect supporting evidence, and decide whether to share a message. These are proposed assessment tasks, not observed procedures from the present survey.

Brashier and Schacter (2020) provide context for considering misinformation across the life span. Their review does not validate the health claims mentioned by these respondents or establish a cause for their reported behavior. The original claim that recommendation algorithms create an information cocoon is also unsupported by the available data: there is no feed audit, exposure history, or diversity measure. Algorithmic explanations are therefore reserved for research using appropriate observational or experimental evidence.

6.3 Support implications

For Objective 3, the findings motivate possible support focused on practical verification rather than assuming that everyone needs basic application training. Examples include locating an original source, distinguishing a personal testimonial from substantiated evidence, and pausing before forwarding a consequential claim. Family or community assistance should respect



users' autonomy and actual preferences. These suggestions are derived implications; no intervention was conducted.

Platforms could evaluate clearer source information, accessible reporting functions, and understandable prompts for reviewing questionable claims. Community programs could test guided practice with feedback, while family support could offer help on request. The effectiveness, accessibility, and unintended effects of these approaches require evaluation. The present survey cannot show that any of them reduces misinformation exposure or improves judgment.

7 Limitations and Future Research

The small reported sample, online mode, and undocumented recruitment prevent population inference. Missing demographic data limit understanding of variation within the 50-and-older group. The absence of the questionnaire, response dataset, frequency tables, and item-specific denominators prevents verification of the narrative results. Findings rely on self-report, and the truth status of encountered information was not independently established. Survey timing, geographic scope, and ethical procedures also remain undocumented.

A stronger follow-up study should define the population and setting, document recruitment and response screening, preserve item wording and missing-response counts, and report frequencies alongside percentages. A short objective verification task could complement self-report, while interviews could investigate reasons for participation choices. Platform observations would be needed to examine recommendation effects. Support interventions should be evaluated separately with specified outcomes and a suitable comparison design.

8 Contribution and Conclusion

The study's bounded contribution is to distinguish three aspects of short-video engagement: viewing and content interests, participation practices, and information verification. In the available account of 35 respondents aged 50 and older, routine viewing and liking coexist with concerns about checking health-related information. These findings justify further assessment of verification practices, while avoiding the inference that limited posting or advanced age establishes deficient critical thinking.

The exploratory evidence supports questions and proposed assistance rather than causal or nationally representative conclusions. More complete research records are required to



validate the reported patterns and prepare a fully documented empirical submission. The framework provides a coherent basis for that work by connecting each objective to a survey domain, a reported finding, and an explicit limit on interpretation.

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