

Theory Application Presentation TMIM
Reflection Paper
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The overall purpose of the study I presented was to understand the factors that influence a couple to discuss end-of-life (EOL) care; and understand information seeking behaviors. This study examined different factors that influenced an individual's intention to seek information about EOL preference from a spouse. It also identified relational-quality variables that may have influenced the context of the EOL conversation.

This study utilized the Theory of Motivated Information Management (TMIM). Therefore it was an examination of four relational-quality variables (of people's motivation) that may have influenced a person's plan to seek EOL information (to manage their uncertainty) from their spouse. The framework from the TMIM provided a way to explain the spouse's intention to avoid the EOL information or discussion, and it identified relational-quality variables that may have significantly influenced the context of the EOL conversation that occurred. TMIM is commonly applied in conducting health studies.

The hypotheses said the TMIM will explain spousal information seeking or avoidance of EOL preferences. It utilized a 7-point Likert scale. A sample question was, it is important to know my spouse's preference for end-of-life care. 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.

This data was collected using a 28-item online survey. Researchers also used some research collected from Afifi and Morse, 2009; and Afifi and Weiner, 2004.

The researchers surveyed 170 married participants. They completed an online survey. They were at least 50 years old or older. 58.8% were females; with an average age of 56.5 years old. The average age group of the spouses was 56.5 years old; their ages ranged from 37 to 86 years old. This sample group was 84.6% White, 8.3% Asian, 4.7% Black, 1.8% Hispanic, and 0.6% Native American. The majority of this study group was highly educated, 19% held a master's degree and 32.7% had a college degree and 13% completed some type of college degree, and 17% had a high school diploma. The average reported income of the participants was \$118,151.

The Likert scale data was collected and analyzed, and the research also examined other TMIM measures that were previously researched. It examined information-seeking behaviors within the context of marriage. The TMIM measures included name, reliability score, standard deviation, mean, scale, and item. Additional variables were added, such as end-of-life preference, topic avoidance, communicative responsiveness, empathy, quality of marital relationship, and marital satisfaction.

The findings from this study indicated spouses discussed three of the five end-of-life topics listed in the survey.

Some limitations identified by the authors were concerned about participants' self-reporting. Responses may have been over or under-reported; these responses may only be reflective of people, who on average, have a higher income and higher education; such as college degrees (based on the group that was surveyed); this study focused on middle-aged married couples, and it was a communication-based study of this age group; which is rare. Therefore, survey outcomes may be different with different age groups; it is possible participants may have sought out EOL preference after the

media emphasized the importance of EOL preference; and finally, participants may have engaged in EOL discussion out of precaution.

Overall, I felt the powerpoint presentation I gave to the class provided a great overview of the information from this study regarding end-of-life communication and how these researchers applied the Theory of Motivated Information Management.

Works Cited

Rafferty, K. A., Cramer, E., Priddis, D., & Allen, M. (2015). Talking About End-of-Life Preferences in Marriage: Applying the Theory of Motivated Information Management. *Health Communication*, 30(4), 409–418.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2014.889555>