

Content analysis of elderly bloggers' pages based on social interactions and prevention of cognitive aging (Case study: Instagram)

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Original Article

Abstract

Background and aim: This study analyzed Instagram content from older adult bloggers, focusing on social interaction and cognitive activity. The primary objective was to examine how cyberspace represents the lifestyles of older adults and its role in promoting active aging and social participation.

Data and method: Using a qualitative approach, thematic analysis was conducted based on the Braun and Clarke model. The sample consisted of 12 purposively selected Instagram pages belonging to adults over 60. The 20 most recent posts from each page—including captions, hashtags, and images—were coded. Engagement metrics (likes and comments) were recorded but excluded from evaluating cognitive efficacy.

Findings: The findings revealed themes such as continuity of mental activity, learning and applying digital skills, maintaining social connections, sharing experiences, reminiscing, goal-setting and motivation, active participation in content creation, vitality and stress reduction, and attention to nutrition and self-care. These components were primarily related to the experiences and activities of the content-creating older adults themselves, representing an active lifestyle and mental engagement during old age.

Conclusion: Blogging by older adults on Instagram can provide a platform for representing cognitive activity, maintaining social interactions, facilitating digital learning, and fostering active participation in the digital space. While this content may hold communicative and educational potential for older audiences, the present study did not directly evaluate its effectiveness on cognitive performance or the prevention of cognitive impairments in viewers. Overall, these results confirm the capacity of social networks to support active aging and social participation.

Keywords: Senior blogger, continuous mental activity, memory sharing, digital senior, active lifestyle.

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Introduction

Aging is a natural stage of the human life cycle, accompanied by advancing age and associated physical, psychological, and social changes. Alongside certain limitations, this period can be an opportunity for transferring experience, social participation, and the continuity of mental and communicative activities (Aspinall & Lang, 2018). The use of social networks by the elderly possesses communicative, psychological, and cognitive characteristics. This space allows older adults to experience feelings of visibility, social participation, and an active identity. Content creation, narrating the past, sharing life experiences, and interacting with other users reinforce feelings of usefulness and social belonging. Furthermore, social networks provide a platform for entertainment, humor, maintaining family connections, and reducing feelings of loneliness (Moslehi, 2020). The presence of the elderly in cyberspace can foster a form of continuous mental activity; as they engage their memory, attention, and language skills in the process of learning technology, responding to audiences, producing content, and participating in dialogues. This marks the beginning of representing “active aging” on social networks, leading to increased self-esteem, the reduction of stereotypes regarding aging, and the strengthening of intergenerational interactions (Grover et al., 2018). On the other hand, population aging has numerous and broad economic, cultural, and political consequences for society and the government. In Iran, it is anticipated that this may plunge the entire social and governance system into crisis, causing disruption and inefficiency in development programs, as the economy, welfare, and development share a bidirectional relationship with the elderly population. Therefore, there is a need for government policy to promote the health of the elderly to mitigate the consequences of this crisis (Ahadi & Eyvazi, 2020).

Regarding social networks, most research has focused on young and middle-aged bloggers; however, in recent years, we have witnessed the emergence and growth of elderly bloggers on social networks—a phenomenon that has attracted the attention of communication researchers. The success of some elderly bloggers in attracting and retaining users raises important questions regarding this subject. Meanwhile, from the perspective of communication theories, age, as a demographic characteristic of the user, can influence patterns of interaction, trust, identification, and message acceptance. User Attribute Theory emphasizes that factors such as age, lived experience, symbolic capital, communication style, and the social identity of the content creator play a decisive role in message perception and audience reaction (Soltani et al., 2024).

With the expansion of social networks, the presence of the elderly in the digital space has shifted from passive consumers to active content creators. By sharing lived experiences, lifestyles, and daily interactions, elderly bloggers play a significant role in strengthening social connections and representing active aging. Demographic and governance policies are considered the macro-social and institutional context of aging, which influence how aging is represented on social networks. At

the micro-level, the elderly blogger, by utilizing the cognitive, communicative, and interactive capacities of social networks, reproduces, redefines, or challenges these discourses. Therefore, examining the cognitive mechanisms of blogging alongside aging policy contexts allows for explaining the relationship between macro-structures and the communicative action of the elderly in the digital space.

Based on psychological and neuropsychological perspectives, continuous cognitive activities, social interaction, and active participation in content production and processing can help maintain cognitive reserves in old age by engaging processes such as attention, memory, problem-solving, and cognitive flexibility. Thus, blogging by the elderly is not merely a communicative activity or content production; rather, it can be considered as a form of cognitive-social participation that, while strengthening social interactions, provides opportunities for recollection, planning, decision-making, creativity, and learning. Therefore, blogging is regarded as a potential platform for cognitive and social participation related to maintaining cognitive function.

The research questions include: Why are the virtual pages of elderly bloggers on Instagram attractive? And what is the relationship between participation in elderly bloggers' pages and cognitive aging? Therefore, examining the content produced by these bloggers, in addition to understanding the functions of social media in old age, can help develop communicative and cultural strategies to strengthen the mental and cognitive health of the elderly. Furthermore, in this research, the prevention of cognitive aging is not assumed as a proven consequence of blogging; rather, cognitive activity, social interaction, learning, and digital participation are considered as content themes and potential capacities related to the prevention of cognitive aging in the elderly.

Litreature Review and Theoretical Considerations

In the sociology of health, aging is conceptualized not merely as a biological process, but rather as a social, cultural, and communicative phenomenon shaped by lifestyle, social ties, media engagement, social class, and cultural support systems. Sociological approaches to health demonstrate that the quality of social relationships, sense of belonging, cultural participation, and everyday interactions can exert a direct impact on the physical, psychological, and cognitive well-being of older adults. The active aging paradigm posits that the participation of older adults in social interactions fosters their sense of utility, strengthens their social identity, and enhances their cognitive vitality. Consequently, examining older adults within the framework of the sociology of health is imperative, as it illuminates the role of socio-cultural determinants in preserving cognitive vitality, mitigating social isolation, and improving late-life quality of life (Soltani et al., 2024).

Expert perspectives regarding the repercussions of virtual social network utilization among older adults remain divergent. While some scholars argue that internet use fosters the expansion of social networks and alleviates loneliness, others contend that due to the concurrent decline in face-to-face interactions, increased internet engagement may yield adverse outcomes, precipitating exacerbated

psychological distress and deeper social isolation (Saboor et al., 2014). Nevertheless, structural digital divides persist, as certain segments of the elderly population remain devoid of access to virtual networks altogether. Social media platforms exert their influence on users across distinct structural tiers:

The Structural Level: Encompassing recommendation algorithms, visibility logic, like-centric metrics, and the architecture of participation (sharing, commenting, bookmarking). This level steers user attention and facilitates the salience of specific meanings.

The Content Level: Governed by dimensions such as personal storytelling, visual-centricity, affective arousal, and discursive polarization. Its primary function involves emotional stimulation and the shaping of social perception (Samouei & Keyvanara, 2022).

The User Level: Centered on psychological needs (belonging, visibility, identity construction), cultural and media capital, media literacy, and critical thinking. The operational function at this level entails message interpretation, dissemination, and internalization (Taghipour & Biktashi, 2024, pp. 58–61).

In certain instances, an individual's propensity for cognitively demanding activities also plays a decisive role. The theory of cognitive aging, advanced by Timothy Salthouse, suggests that while advancing age is associated with gradual decrements in specific cognitive processes—such as information processing speed, working memory, sustained attention, and problem-solving capacity—the persistence of mental activities, social interactions, continuous learning, and cognitive engagement can attenuate this trajectory and preserve cognitive functioning. Salthouse emphasizes that the reduction in cognitive processing speed represents a principal driver of late-life cognitive decline, whereas sustained mental stimulation can foster a form of “cognitive reserve” that safeguards against cognitive deterioration (Salthouse, 2004). Cognitive reserve refers to the brain's capacity to adapt and flexibly utilize cognitive networks when confronted with normative age-related neural alterations or neuropathological damage. Accordingly, aging does not unfold as a uniform, deterministic trajectory for all individuals; rather, individuals exhibit varying degrees of cognitive reserve contingent upon cumulative differences in educational attainment, occupational complexity, intellectual engagement, social involvement, and leisure pursuits throughout the life course.

Among older adults, higher cognitive reserve serves as a potent protective factor, augmenting the capacity to sustain faculties such as memory, attention, learning, and executive functioning in the presence of age-associated neurological changes. Even when structural or functional cerebral alterations manifest during senescence, individuals endowed with higher cognitive reserve may preserve operational cognitive performance for longer durations by deploying flexible cognitive strategies and recruiting compensatory neural networks. From this perspective, lifelong intellectual

endeavors, continuous learning, social participation, and active engagement within contemporary information and media environments during late adulthood can be conceptualized as vital contributors to cognitive reserve, laying the groundwork for preserving cognitive functioning and mitigating vulnerability to cognitive decline (Stern et al., 2023).

Within this theoretical landscape, “Brain and Exercise” interventions highlight the therapeutic value of cognitively stimulating activities, such as writing, critical analysis, and mediated online interactions (Wiederhold, 2020). Concurrently, the “Lifelong Learning Theory” underlines the imperatives of sustained intellectual acquisition across the human lifespan; older bloggers, by actively generating novel digital content, continually engage in self-directed learning and knowledge enhancement (Greenwood & Winocur, 2001). Furthermore, “Online Social Interaction” underscores that elderly bloggers maintain active contact with digital publics, receive feedback, respond to inquiries, and partake in online deliberative exchanges. Empirical research indicates that sustaining social networks and persistent communicative interactions can prevent cognitive decline and late-life depression, primarily because such interactions stimulate the brain, demanding complex cognitive processing and maintaining elevated levels of executive functioning (Verghese et al., 2003).

Domestic empirical investigations indicate that social networks and interpersonal interactions constitute vital determinants of the lived experience of aging. A substantial portion of this literature has concentrated primarily on passive social media participation, the broad outcomes of media consumption, or the socio-environmental conditions of older adults, while rarely positioning the older adult as an active, agentic producer of media content. For example, Momeni et al. (2018), in a phenomenological study titled “Older Adults’ Experiences of Online Social Interactions,” concluded that virtual social networks foster enhanced interaction with kin and peers, revitalize latent relationships, facilitate connections based on shared affinities, and mitigate subjective feelings of loneliness. Similarly, Khaleghi-Mohammadi and Babran (2021), in their inquiry into “The Role of Media in Older Adults’ Lifestyle Changes,” demonstrated that media significantly influence specific lifestyle dimensions, including health prevention, nutritional habits, and interpersonal relationships. However, this impact was not statistically significant concerning physical activity, recreation, or stress management. These findings indicate that the media’s function for older adults transcends rudimentary information dissemination; rather, media platforms actively structure and reinforce communicative habits and everyday lifestyle patterns.

In a related vein, Jafari et al. (2023), evaluating “Social Networks and Longevity: How Social Ties Impact Healthy Aging,” highlighted the primacy of interpersonal networks and affective support in sustaining physical and mental health among older cohorts. This insight is corroborated by Bahrevar et al. (2023), whose systematic review documented a substantial prevalence of loneliness among older adults and its direct correlation with shrinking social circles, thereby

underscoring the critical necessity of preserving and enriching communicative bonds in later life. Hence, social interaction serves as an indispensable mechanism tied to late-life subjective well-being; any media environment that enables the maintenance, reconstruction, or expansion of these ties warrants rigorous inquiry within gerontological studies.

This dynamic is not restricted to private interpersonal circles but is also rooted in socio-spatial environments. Bahrami et al. (2024), examining the role of socio-spatial qualities on elderly social interactions, revealed that maintaining community networks, neighborhood cohesion, access to “third places,” and opportunities for shared civic activities are paramount in facilitating social exchanges among older adults. This finding closely interfaces with the “Continuity Theory” of aging, which posits that older adults, in an effort to sustain identity, life satisfaction, and psychological adaptation, actively seek to preserve familiar patterns of relationships, activities, and social roles within novel life circumstances. From this standpoint, social networking platforms function as emerging communication spaces that enable the digital continuity of established social roles and communicative behaviors. Within this trajectory, Hashemi et al. (2025) examined the relationship between virtual social media usage, quality of life, and depression among older adults in Tehran, further corroborating the critical role of social media platforms in governing the psychosocial status of older adults. Taken together, these studies suggest that social media must be recognized as an integral component of the contemporary communicative ecology of aging, inherently tied to social relations, perceived loneliness, quality of life, and psychological outcomes.

Concurrently, international scholarship illustrates that older adults’ presence on social media has radically transcended traditional passive-consumption paradigms, evolving toward active content creation, digital activism, and influencer status. In this landscape, the emergence of older influencers (granfluencers) has introduced a novel modality for the visual and discursive representation of aging. Jerrentrup (2023), analyzing the presence of older influencers on Instagram, highlighted the rapid quantitative growth of this demographic, noting that themes such as fashion—particularly eccentric, vintage, and avant-garde styles—occupy a central position in their output. Jerrentrup’s findings indicate that elderly influencers, by visibly foregrounding their chronological age alongside atypical stylistic aesthetics, boldly assert autonomy, independence, lived experience, and personal agency. Consequently, digital publics perceive them as charismatic and empowered agents; such representations directly contribute to destabilizing ageist paradigms, attenuating aging anxiety among younger generations, and providing alternative blueprints for late-life living. Nevertheless, Jerrentrup notes a critical socio-economic caveat: a significant proportion of these studied influencers possess elevated socio-economic standing, advanced educational capital, and optimal health status, meaning their mediated narratives do not necessarily capture the universal lived reality of aging across diverse demographics.

Complementing these insights, Antunes, Miranda, and Gama (2022) conducted an empirical examination of five older Instagram influencers, focusing on their communicative modalities, personal branding strategies, and audience engagement dynamics. Their findings demonstrated that relational intimacy, authentic narrative framing, and platform continuity are foundational determinants of follower trust and sustained loyalty. In this respect, the influence of older creators cannot be measured solely by quantitative follower metrics; rather, it hinges upon the symbolic and social capital accumulated through continuous dialogue and meaningful engagement with audiences. Thus, older adults within these environments act not merely as recipients of media messaging, but as active cultural producers within the circulation of meaning.

This shift in media positioning was similarly examined by Ng and Indran (2023) in their investigation of elderly granfluencers on TikTok. Analyzing the factors governing positive self-presentation, their findings revealed that humor, personal storytelling, displays of subjective happiness, and the explicit assertion of personal agency serve as primary discursive strategies employed to reconfigure the cultural image of aging. These practices actively challenge internalized deficit narratives, fostering a cultural image of aging defined by activity, autonomy, and purpose. From this angle, granfluencers are not merely older platform users; they are active contributors to the ongoing redefinition of the social discourse surrounding chronological age. Arias-Montesinos et al. (2025) extended this line of inquiry through a qualitative investigation titled “Influential Elders: How Older Adults Reinvent Themselves on TikTok,” tracing the dynamics of late-life identity reinvention. Their evidence shows that through autobiographical narration, mediated embodiment, and symbolic interaction with digital audiences, older creators construct novel social roles. In doing so, the older adult breaks away from marginalizing socio-cultural positions, emerging as an active producer of meaning, entertainment, and cultural authority.

Conversely, another strand of international research has shifted focus from socio-cultural representation toward the direct cognitive and neurocognitive implications of online participation. Kim and Kim (2023), evaluating the nexus between social media usage and cognitive performance in older populations, established that moderate, balanced platform engagement is significantly correlated with superior performance in episodic memory, executive problem-solving, and lower levels of self-reported loneliness. Notably, older adults who mobilized social media specifically to sustain relationships with family and peer networks exhibited more favorable cognitive trajectories. Some researchers reached comparable conclusions, demonstrating that older adults' engagement in intellectually stimulating and social online activities positively correlates with cognitive performance via expanded communicative engagement. Furthermore, researchers, investigating active participation across Facebook and Instagram, identified a distinct relationship between proactive online engagement and psychological and cognitive vitality, noting an attenuation of cognitive depressive symptoms among active users.

In synthesis, the extant literature can be organized along two complementary thematic trajectories:

The First Trajectory: Focuses on the sociotechnical evolution of older adults' media roles, demonstrating their migration from passive consumers to active content creators, digital influencers, and agents who systematically reconstruct late-life identities.

The Second Trajectory: Examines the psychosocial and cognitive consequences of digital participation, underscoring outcomes such as network expansion, loneliness reduction, and cognitive maintenance.

The critical intersection of these two trajectories lies in the realization that content production and mediated social interaction within virtual networks serve concurrent identity-affirming, social, and cognitive functions. Nonetheless, the prevailing corpus of literature remains heavily skewed toward issues of public image, personal branding, audience perceptions, and social agency, leaving the precise intersections between the structural characteristics of elder-generated content, the communicative interactions surrounding this content, and the neurocognitive mechanisms mitigating cognitive aging largely underexplored. Consequently, an empirical investigation into the content ecosystems of older bloggers bridges this scholarly gap by simultaneously addressing content dynamics, social interactions, and the multidimensional cognitive facets of aging.

Methods and Data

This study employed a qualitative approach using thematic analysis based on the six-stage model developed by Braun and Clarke. This method allowed for the identification, organization, and interpretation of semantic patterns within the content produced by elderly bloggers, facilitating the extraction of themes related to social interaction and the prevention of cognitive aging. The research scope included Instagram pages of elderly bloggers, and the samples were selected using purposive, criterion-based sampling. The inclusion criteria were as follows: age above 60, active page status, production of personal content, a minimum of 1,000 followers, and consistent content publication for at least three months. Accordingly, 10 eligible pages were initially selected, and 20 recent posts from each page—including caption text, hashtags, post type, and engagement indicators such as the number of likes and comments—were analyzed. To ensure theoretical saturation, two additional bloggers' pages were selected and analyzed, confirming that theoretical saturation had been achieved. Adding these two supplementary pages to the sample, beyond verifying data saturation, allowed for the re-evaluation of the stability of the categories formed when confronted with new data.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis based on the six-stage model by Braun and Clarke:

1. **Familiarization:** Familiarization with the data was performed; the content of 20 posts, 10 captions, and 60 comments related to the 10 elderly bloggers was reviewed and transcribed multiple times to gain an initial understanding of patterns related to social interaction and the prevention of cognitive aging.
2. **Generating Initial Codes:** The second stage involved generating initial codes, where meaningful data units were identified and initial coding was performed.
3. **Searching for Themes:** In the third stage, themes were searched for, and similar and related codes were categorized into initial concepts and themes.
4. **Reviewing Themes:** In the fourth stage, themes and the relationships between them were reviewed by revisiting the raw data, and overlapping, irrelevant, or incoherent items were modified or merged.
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** In the fifth stage, final themes were defined and named in a way that clearly represented the core content of the data and their connection to social interactions and mechanisms related to the prevention of cognitive aging.
6. **Reporting:** In the sixth stage, the report was compiled, and the final findings—derived from the three-stage coding process—were interpreted using documentation from the checklists extracted from posts, captions, and comments.

To increase the credibility of the analysis, the resulting categories were submitted at various stages to five experts in the fields of communication, media, sociology, gerontology, and psychology, and necessary adjustments to the codes and themes were made after receiving their feedback. Regarding ethical considerations, only public and accessible page content was used, and accessing private accounts, interacting with page owners, or using information unrelated to the research objectives was avoided. In reporting the findings, the principle of maintaining privacy and the rights of content owners was observed, and the publication of unnecessary personal information or identifiable images was avoided.

The limitations of this research include the restriction of the sample to elderly bloggers and the analysis of content published on Instagram. Therefore, the generalization of the findings to other elderly populations, platforms, and cultural contexts must be done with caution. On the other hand, the online content analysis could not directly reflect the true experience and intentions of the bloggers or users, and the analysis of pages and comments was based on the produced content without conducting interviews.

The table below provides the details regarding the blogger handle, the number of followers, and the

main content of the page.

Table 1- *Characteristics of the sample of elderly blogger pages on Instagram*

No.	Blogger Handle	Approx. Number of Followers	Dominant Content of the Page
1	@baasorouh (Maman Mahin)	1.5k	Family comedy centered on the grandmother, role-playing in youthful situations, brand advertisements, emotional occasions
2	@Tannauzz (Mamanjoon)	62.1k	Lifestyle and daily advice, storytelling, light humor, simple tutorials (cooking, personal experiences)
3	@homa_nafisi	233k	Elderly lifestyle, storytelling and addressing nostalgia, travel and tourism, poetic and meaningful texts
4	@ghiami_abolfazl	1.2k	Mountaineering and nature trekking, domestic and international travel, cultural and historical tourism
5	@babajoon.ks	342k	Motivational-emotional videos, meaning-centered lifestyle, presenting wise quotes, music and sentiment
6	@farzan_haqhneqahdar	517k	Family comedy, daily life, a few cooking tutorial posts
7	@eslamiardakani	2,208	Hiking and walking, travel and nature trekking, recording moments of the path and travel experience
8	@farsheirani_academy	38.6k	Introduction to Persian carpets, professional experience in the carpet market, ethics and trust in business
9	@Tabasom Hashemi	94.1k	Life psychology, women's rights, parenting, psychological self-care
10	@azadehpakzad.ar	53.4k	Comedy/humor, romance, tourism
11	@zahrahaqhqhii	36.8k	Homeland (Vatan), tourism, advertisements
12	@ChefFarideh Beitollahi	157k	Cooking tutorials, food blogging

The research scope of this study is Iranian elderly bloggers active on Instagram.

Findings

In this section, 20 posts, 10 captions, and 60 comments were initially selected from each page. In the subsequent stage, an equivalent dataset was sampled once more. Following the analysis and transcription of these findings, the researcher ensured the adequacy of codes and data saturation; indeed, during the third iteration, no new findings emerged to alter or augment the established categories. Below, the qualitative transcription and analysis of page content—based on the empirical cases examined across the social media profiles—are presented in congruent thematic categories.

Table 2- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on parental roles*

Code	Open Codes (Representative In-Page Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Humor • Joking about routine situations (motorcycle riding, hospital visits, praying, fasting, watching TV series) • Amusing and comical behaviors • Mispronouncing words intentionally/playfully • Iranian definitions and perceptions of age • Narrating forgetfulness and absentmindedness • Interpreting memories through modern communication frameworks	• Everyday humor • The Iranian senior/elderly archetype • User-feedback-driven storytelling	• Mental and psychological vitality • Humor as a coping mechanism • Cognitive flexibility • Social interactions
2	• The “doctor grandmother” • Selling gold and precious goods • Grandmothers in youth-oriented settings (parties, dating/boyfriends, modern marriage criteria) • Subverting youth norms	• Inverting elderly stereotypes • Engaging and attractive roles • Resolving misunderstandings between youth and old age • Bridging intergenerational differences	• Active aging identity • Deconstruction of generational stereotypes • Intergenerational cultural convergence
3	• Mother–grandmother–grandchild relationships • Family gatherings and reunions • Birthday surprises • Mother’s Day and Father’s Day gifts • 90th birthday celebration ceremonies • Renewing wedding vows in the snow • Celebrating reaching 10k followers • Fostering engagement and affinity with the younger generation	• Joy, celebration, and familial emotional bonds • Portraying multigenerational affective ties • Family rituals • Rituals of gratitude, honor, and commemoration • Love and relational continuity • The excitement of cross-generational connection	• Strengthening cognitive reserve • Sustainability of collective memory • Family identity • Reducing social isolation • Intergenerational emotional bonding

Based on the findings in Table 2, humor, everyday wit, and narrating content through the lens of contemporary social issues contribute to enhanced mental vitality. Given that elderly bloggers

actively respond to user comments, their communicative responses demonstrate substantial flexibility when interacting with the younger generation.

Table 3- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on meaning-making in life*

Code	Open Codes (Representative In-Page Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Joy of working and productivity • Not reconciling with despair / embracing life actively • Everyday micro-pleasures (tea, the sea, caf��s, traditional teahouses) • Grooming, personal appearance, attire, and aesthetics	• Occupational/productive activity • Positive attitude toward life • Everyday pleasures • Self-care and self-esteem • Healthy lifestyle	• Physical dynamism • Self-efficacy • Mindfulness-based care • Life expectancy / zest for life
2	• Gratitude (Shukr) and spiritual reliance (Tawakkul) • Blessings (Barakah) of lawful income and halal wealth • Advice regarding money, usury, and debt • Business and trade ethics • Imparting words of wisdom to youth • Utilizing concepts such as good fortune/auspicious ending (Aqibat-be-kheiri), entitlement/providence (Sahm), and patience (Sabr)	• Imparting aphorisms and wisdom to youth • Commitment to professional and commercial ethics • Emphasizing ethical livelihoods; financial counsel • Spiritual meaning-making in life	• Cognitive meaning-making • Mental resilience • Semantic memory • Spiritual identity

Active participation in occupational roles or other purposeful activities serves to sustain mental well-being. Within psychological literature, maintaining continuous mental and social activities remains a principal recommendation for forestalling cognitive decline. Elderly bloggers who underscore the value and fulfillment of work provide older adults with the impetus to establish novel objectives and meaningful engagements. Furthermore, findings such as attributing value to lawful sustenance based on the spiritual dimensions of existence foster cognitive and spiritual meaning-making, thereby contributing to the mitigation of cognitive aging. This dynamic engages specific cognitive and social mechanisms: while producing such narratives, the elderly content creator retrieves and organizes past economic and moral experiences, reflects upon religious and sociocultural concepts, and enters dialogues via audience feedback. Consequently, this practice simultaneously stimulates information recall and organization, interpretive reflection, and social engagement.

Table 4- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on the reconstruction of the past*

Code	Open Codes (Representative In-Page Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Reviewing vintage photo albums • Photographs from youth • Childhood and youthful memories • Yalda Night reminiscences • Nostalgia and yearning for traditional/old houses • Candid portrayal of the realities and consequences of aging	• Re-reading personal memoirs • Retrospective representation of identity • Narrating prior lived experiences • Evoking shared cultural rituals • Eliciting collective nostalgia • Reviving the affective memory of place • Honest confrontation with aging	• Continuity of mental identity • Nostalgia therapy (Reminiscence) • Reactivation of emotional memory • Collective recall • Conscious acceptance of aging
2	• Attributes of trusted neighborhood elders (Motamedin) in the past • Honesty and integrity of previous generations	• Moral and localized role models • Neighborhood-centric ethics	• Reproduction of moral and social values
3	• Employing Hafez's poetry and lyrical prose in captions and videos • Gentle, traditional music accompanying nature scenes • Meaning-making across the life journey through poetic reflection	• Poetic meaning-making of the aging experience • Reflective and meaning-centered content • Triadic synergy of music, poetry, and nature	• Affinity for Persian poetry • Aesthetic sensibilities • Re-evaluating the meaning of life

According to Table 4, revisiting memories and recalling past milestones represent prominent features of online interactions among elderly bloggers. This practice is driven not merely by personal needs to reclaim the past, but also by profound psychological benefits: sustaining personal identity, bolstering purposefulness, widening social ties, mitigating loneliness, transmitting accumulated knowledge to subsequent generations, and enhancing memory performance. In addition, it facilitates therapeutic relief, psychological equilibrium, subjective well-being, genealogical continuity, and the collective reconstruction of communal heritage.

Table 5- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on the representation of cultural heritage*

Code	Open Codes (Representative Sub-Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Introduction to Persian carpets • Authentic Iranian motifs and patterns • Narratives surrounding carpet weaving • Concomitant respect and devotion to art • Interpretation of traditional customs and festive rites	• Symbolic representation • Artistic narration • Affective commitment to craft • Mirroring ritual traditions	• Transmission of Iranian cultural-artistic heritage • Manifestation of artistic values
2	• Historical accounts of the traditional bazaar	• Transmission of	• Valorizing authentic

and marketplace commerce	professional expertise	production
• Memoirs regarding commercial and mercantile ethics	• Advocating work ethics	• Reconstructing spaces of storytelling and ethics
• Mutual trust between merchant and patron	• Historical bazaar narratives	• Trust within economic exchanges
• Conviction regarding the superior quality of authentic Iranian artisanal goods	• Traditional professional ethics	• Historicized representation of the past

These findings suggest that within a healthy lifestyle framework, cultural and axiological dimensions hold paramount significance. The transmission of values such as accumulated experience, lived wisdom, lifelong learning, and self-respect represents a foremost priority, wherein the older individual is positioned as a bearer of cultural capital across temporal divides. For instance, across these profiles, Persian carpets frequently appear in travel content, home interiors, and museum tours. The visual language and semantic identity of the Persian rug transmit unspoken cultural codes via traditional patterns, motifs, and compositions, evoking ancient myths and connections to nature. Here, the rug serves as a cultural language. Concurrently, weaving narratives recall oral histories, folklore, and the lived realities of artisans, transforming the artifact into a living archive of collective memory. Such retrospective representations stimulate recall, organization, and reconstructive cognitive processes, thereby bolstering cognitive reserve and cognitive flexibility.

Table 6- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on culinary cultures*

Code	Open Codes (Representative Sub-Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Tutorials for traditional delicacies (Halva Kaseh-i, Kalam Polo, Adas Polo, soups, fish dishes) • Repeated masterclasses on traditional meatballs (Kofteh) • Strong community response to regional dishes • Seasonal meal preparations	• Instruction in authentic Persian cuisine • Universal appeal of Mazandarani and Azeri recipes • Popularity of indigenous culinary arts • Promoting seasonal gastronomy	• Culinary knowledge transmission • Gastronomic cultural diversity • Affective attachment to regional cuisine • Reviving traditional dietary patterns
2	• Highlighting nuanced details for nutritious preparation • Producing homemade, organic staple ingredients • Showcasing specialized dietary regimens (e.g., vegetarian or low-carb options) • Wholesome cooking (low fat, low sugar, minimally processed inputs) • Utilizing instructional images and step-by-step cooking videos	• Professional culinary execution • Advocacy for organic produce • Vegetarian dietary regimes • Interacting via comment responses • Adaptability to geriatric nutritional needs • Lucid instructional workflows	• Promoting healthy nutrition • Organic cooking • Wholesome, straightforward diets • Experiential culinary interactions • Nutritious gastronomy • Step-by-step instructional methods

As outlined in Table 6, instructing audiences on regional, seasonal, or endangered culinary recipes directly aids in preserving and transferring Iranian gastronomic heritage. The elderly blogger actively transfers tacit culinary craft, stimulates nutritional diversity, and revives traditional food cultures wherein nourishment signifies cultural identity, ethnic plurality, and environmental synchrony. Moreover, culinary preparation represents a complex cognitive operation requiring intact working memory, focused attention, executive planning, and sequencing. By breaking down and articulating recipes, older bloggers sustain cognitive activity, curbing cognitive deterioration. Calculating ingredient proportions, recalling cooking methods, and deciding upon aesthetic presentations continuously stimulate memory retention and critical reasoning.

Table 7- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on psychological well-being*

Code	Open Codes (Representative Sub-Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Psychoeducational and self-care videos • Analyzing the victim mindset in interpersonal relations • Practical strategies for boosting self-esteem • Fostering inner self-respect and self-compassion • Depicting the “authentic self” rather than an idealized persona • Disclosing emotions, vulnerabilities, grief, and setbacks instrumental to personal growth	• Applied life-psychology education • Relational consciousness-raising • Affective self-care • Growth-oriented self-disclosure • Subject-centered lived experiences	• Purposeful awareness-raising • Reconstructing self-relations • Cultivating self-esteem • Charting personal development pathways
2	• Women's legal rights; anti-violence advocacy (social and domestic violence) • Reconceptualizing divorce as the conclusion of a chapter rather than an exile • Testimonies of women overcoming social, familial, and economic hardships • Addressing attention disorders and modern cognitive fatigue • Constructive parenting styles and healthy interpersonal boundaries	• Lived experience of structural inequality • Social activist vulnerability • The modern experienced woman archetype • Demands for gender equity • Psychological challenges of younger generations • Establishing healthy family boundaries	• Confronting structural inequities • Families in contemporary contexts • Restoring healthy relational dynamics

Table 7 illustrates that elderly content creators who address psychological well-being, self-care, self-worth, and authentic self-expression exert a constructive influence on cognitive health preservation. These psychological discussions promote emotional stability and provide mental stimulation that reinforces higher-order cognitive processing in advanced age.

Table 8- *Categorization of findings from elderly bloggers' content creation based on tourism and mobility*

Code	Open Codes (Representative Sub-Units)	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
1	• Documenting summit achievements in mountaineering • Solitude and mindfulness on trekking trails • Long-distance walking and hiking excursions • Displaying rigorous physical conditioning • Sharing rhythmic movements, aerobic exercises, and dance	• Peak ascent culture • Visually depicting active aging • Peak experiences and personal accomplishment • Solitude and introspective retreat • Making physical mobility visible	• Promoting mountaineering culture • Building health capital • Nature-based ecotourism • Active aging lifestyle
2	• Deliberate and positive solitude within natural landscapes • Curating photography of mountains, waterways, and urban scenes • Environmental critiques concerning drought and industrial pollution	• The individual encountering nature • Environmental civic engagement • Ecological awareness and concerns	• Conscious solitude in nature • Visual representation of ecology • Environmental stewardship
3	• Domestic travel (Isfahan, Rasht, Qom, Shiraz, Kelardasht, etc.) • International travel (Armenia, Georgia, European countries) • Visiting museums, cultural centers, and art galleries • Encounters with celebrated Iranian artisans and cultural figures • Participation in national festivities (e.g., water rituals, seasonal and religious celebrations) • Intellectual curiosity toward novel cultural settings • Eagerness to explore specialized and historical sites	• Domestic and global tourism • Exploring and experiencing new geographies • Interacting with visual arts and cultural heritage • Cultural and ritual participation • Curiosity-driven environmental learning	• The elderly traveler archetype • Cultural exploration • Interaction between culture and art • Environmental exploration

According to Table 8, mountaineering and ecotourism represent vital nature-oriented physical engagements for older demographics. Beyond reinforcing muscular endurance and aerobic fitness, these pursuits substantially benefit psychological and cognitive status. By building stress resilience and physical vigor, demanding physical activities such as trekking across varied outdoor terrains stimulate neuroplasticity, spatial navigation, and executive cognitive functioning, thereby mitigating the risk of cognitive decline.

Conclusion and Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the activities of older adults in the role of bloggers

cannot be regarded merely as a form of media presence or the production of entertaining content; rather, when sustained, such activity can lead to the formation of an active digital lifestyle in which social connection, experiential narration, mental activity, emotional regulation, physical mobility, and cultural participation are closely intertwined. From this perspective, the significance of elderly blogging lies not so much in the isolated content of each post, but rather in the continuous process of production, narration, interaction, and receiving feedback from audiences. This process lifts older adults out of the position of passive media consumers and transforms them into active agents who continue to contribute to the production of meaning, social communication, and the transmission of lived experience.

One of the prominent patterns observed is the nexus between content creation and the maintenance of social relationships, particularly intergenerational bonds. The use of humor, everyday narratives, personal anecdotes, and participation in online discussions are not merely techniques to enhance content attractiveness; rather, they enable older adults to sustain connections across different age groups. In this process, older adults do not define themselves solely on the basis of age; instead, they project an active, creative, and participatory identity. Consequently, the social network can become an arena for perpetuating social roles in later life—an environment in which “being seen,” responsiveness, dialogue, and receiving feedback reinforce a sense of belonging and usefulness. From a cognitive standpoint, the significance of this process lies in the fact that ongoing social interaction provides opportunities for language use, attending to the reactions of others, processing messages, and making decisions regarding forthcoming content. Social connection is therefore not an incidental byproduct, but rather one of the plausible pathways linking blogging to cognitive dynamism.

Across the examined pages of older bloggers, the recounting of memories, family experiences, customs, traditional cuisine, and past events demonstrates that blogging can serve as a domain for the reconstruction and continuity of individual and collective identity. When older adults recall an experience from the past, select and organize it, narrate it for an audience, and subsequently respond to audience feedback, the past is not merely reproduced; rather, it is re-signified through a communicative process. By keeping memory, language, and narrative structuring active, and by bridging past experiences with the present context, this process can generate cognitive stimulation and facilitate access to cognitive reserve. Hence, the representation of the past may be viewed as an essential mechanism through which elderly blogging interfaces with identity preservation, experiential transmission, and cognitive vitality.

A substantial portion of the examined pages addressed how older adults confront emotions and life challenges. Gratitude, patience, spiritual reliance (Tawakkul), self-acceptance, articulating setbacks, navigating adverse circumstances, and eschewing the victim role constitute a constellation of themes that, at a deeper level, signify efforts to maintain psychological equilibrium and impart meaning to the experience of aging. Within this framework, humor is not merely an instrument of

entertainment; it serves as a modality for redefining the aging experience and distancing oneself from passive, vulnerable stereotypes of late adulthood. When grounded in authentic lived experiences, such content can foster self-worth, resilience, and self-acceptance. The relevance of this finding to cognitive aging lies in the fact that cognitive health cannot be detached from one's psychological and social well-being; mitigating stress, preserving participation, and experiencing a sense of purpose and agency establish a more conducive ground for sustained mental activity. This finding aligns with Jerrentrup's research regarding how older influencers navigate life challenges.

In another dimension of the findings, the older adult's body and daily routines are embedded within their digital narratives. Mountaineering, walking, dancing, grooming, culinary arts, and daily activities demonstrate that old age on these platforms is portrayed not as a period of inertia, but as a life stage defined by action and choice. The importance of this finding lies in the intersection of physical activity, mental health, social interaction, and cognitive stimulation. For instance, producing athletic or fitness-related content necessitates physical execution, planning, capturing video or photography, content selection and editing, and subsequently interacting with followers; hence, a seemingly simple activity simultaneously engages multiple tiers of physical, executive, communicative, and cognitive participation. The same pattern is evident in cooking: selecting ingredients, retrieving recipes from memory, preparation, instructing others, and engaging with audience queries transform mundane daily routines into experiences imbued with mental and social stimulation.

Furthermore, an older adult's presence on Instagram signifies a form of adaptation to new communication environments. Older adults who utilize smartphones, videography, editing, publishing, responding, and audience relationship management in order to generate content are exposed to a novel set of tasks requiring learning, attention, decision-making, and problem-solving. Thus, the "digital senior" in this study does not merely refer to an older individual who operates technology; rather, it denotes an older adult who has integrated technology into their social, identity-related, and daily activities, utilizing it to sustain active participation. This technological integration can afford continuous learning opportunities and mental engagement, thereby serving as a potential pathway supporting cognitive dynamism. This finding is consistent with the research of Hashemi et al. regarding the impact of social media use among older adults.

At a cultural level, content generated by older bloggers indicates that social networks can function as channels for transmitting experience and cultural memory across generations. Narrating traditional gastronomy, family memoirs, regional lifestyles, ethical values, and past experiences establishes a bridge between "individual memory" and "collective memory." In this context, the older adult is not merely a cultural consumer, but a custodian and reproducer of culture. The connection between this finding and cognitive health manifests in the continuation of social roles, the utilization of memory and language, and the preservation of a sense of identity and belonging.

In other words, transmitting lived experience to younger generations can cultivate a meaningful social role for the older adult while offering younger audiences an indirect engagement with the lived realities and cultural heritage of preceding generations.

The association between elderly blogging and the prevention of cognitive aging should not be interpreted as a direct, linear cause-and-effect relationship. What was observed across the analyzed profiles comprises a constellation of interlocking processes, including social interaction, storytelling, recall and experiential transmission, digital learning, physical activity, emotional regulation, self-acceptance, and cultural engagement. These factors possess the capacity to mutually reinforce one another. For example, recounting a memoir can mobilize memory and language, elevate audience interaction, and simultaneously reinforce identity and perceived utility. Likewise, creating fitness-related content can merge physical exertion with planning, technology adoption, and social dialogue. Consequently, the cognitive affordances of elderly blogging depend less on any single content type and more on the active, sustained, and multidimensional character of this media participation. Kim and Kim highlighted the positive impact of cyberspace engagement on cognitive functioning, a finding that corroborates the present results.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that within the experience of elderly bloggers, social networks transcend conventional communication tools and evolve into participatory environments that bolster cognition and social interaction. Within this space, by producing and narrating content, sustaining interpersonal connections, acquiring digital literacy, revisiting past experiences, engaging in physical pursuits, and transmitting culture, older adults find the opportunity to sustain their social and mental roles. This outcome corresponds with the findings of Bahrami et al. regarding the enhancement of social interactions and modalities of social media utilization. Nonetheless, these findings do not constitute proof of a direct preventative effect of blogging on cognitive decline; rather, they demonstrate that blogging can cultivate a portfolio of behaviors and experiences historically linked to the maintenance of social participation, mental activity, psychological well-being, and an active lifestyle in gerontological scholarship. Thus, the primary contribution of this study can be articulated as a multidimensional pathway wherein digital engagement—by bridging cognitive activity, social connectedness, meaning, identity, emotion, and lifestyle—fosters and ultimately advances the capacity to sustain cognitive dynamism in older adulthood.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was not required for this study as it relied entirely on publicly available data, including public social media pages and user comments. To respect user privacy, all data were fully anonymized, and no personally identifiable information (PII) was collected, stored, or reported.

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Authors' Contributions

Faezeh Taghipour: Conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, investigation, data curation, writing – original draft, and writing – review & editing.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest related to this study.

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