

BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE

- ❖ Medication sharing has been documented in multiple countries, with prevalence estimates ranging from 6–42% for lending and 5–54% for borrowing.
- ❖ This practice carries potential health risks, particularly among older adults.
- ❖ However, research focusing on medication sharing among older adults remains limited.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To explore medication sharing experiences of older Korean adults and analyze their perceptions and related factors.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design and Recruitment of the Study Participants

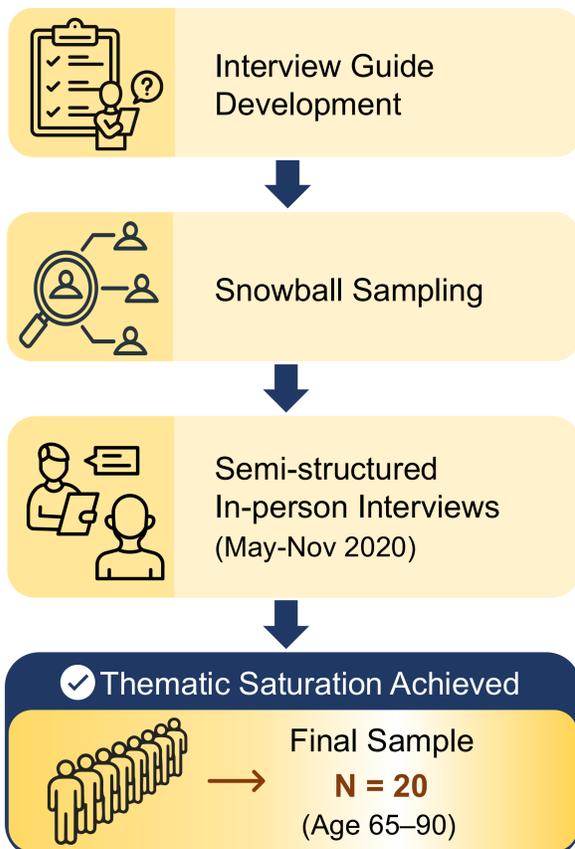


Figure 1. Study Design and Data Collection

- ❖ Interviews were conducted in South Korea between May and November 2020 using snowball sampling.
- ❖ A Semi-structured interview guide was developed to ensure consistency in data collection while allowing in-depth exploration of participants' experiences.
- ❖ Recruitment continued until thematic saturation was achieved, resulting in a final sample of 20 participants aged 65–90 years.

Data Analysis

- ❖ Participants' demographic characteristics were summarized using descriptive statistics. Interview responses were analyzed using thematic analysis with both deductive and inductive approaches.

RESULTS

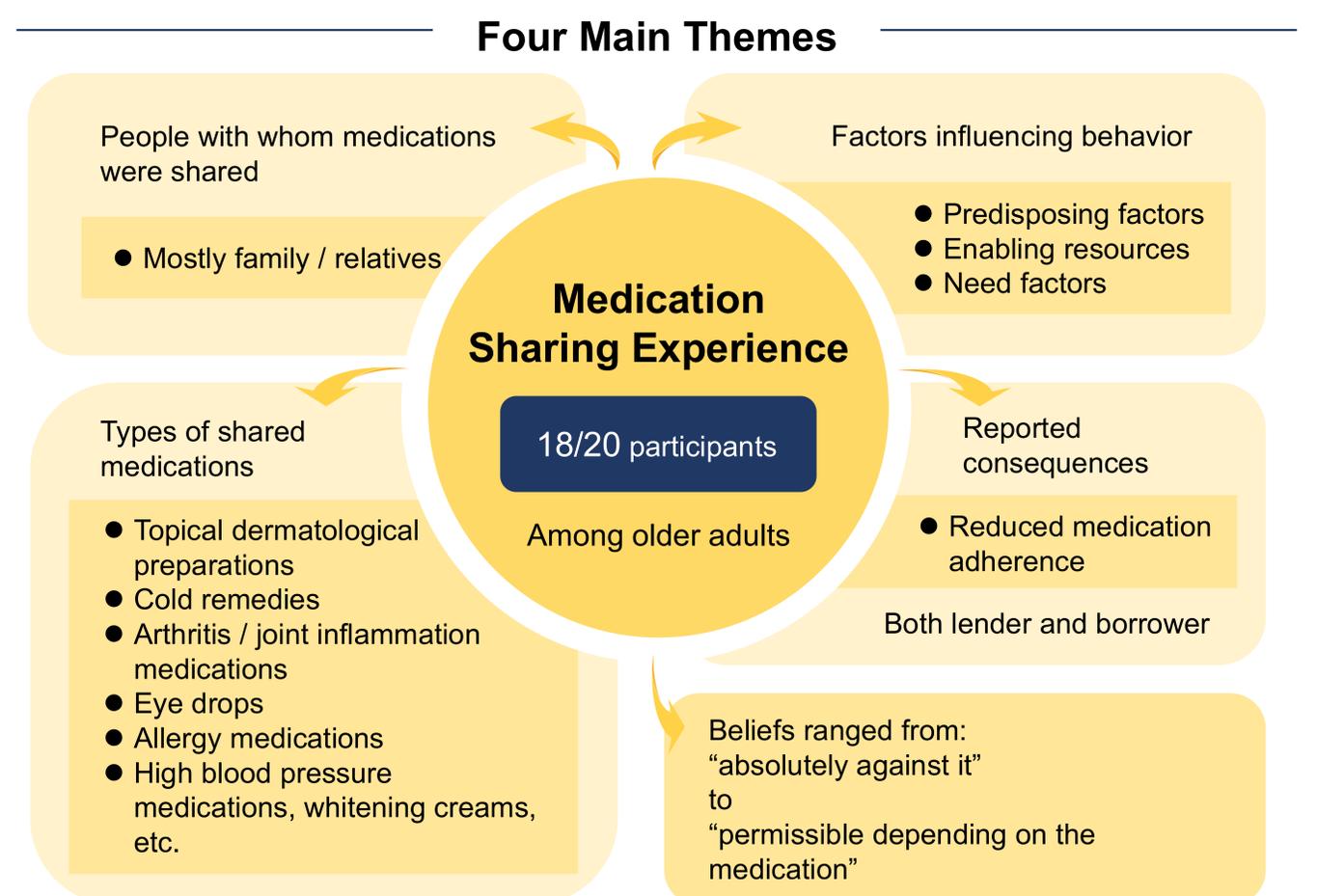


Figure 2. Main Themes Identified from the Interviews

- ❖ Four main themes emerged; sharing partners, medication types, influencing factors, and reported consequences.
- ❖ Eighteen of twenty participants reported medication sharing, primarily with family or relatives.
- ❖ A wide range of prescription medications were shared, including dermatological preparations, cold remedies, arthritis/joint inflammation medications, eye drops, allergy medications, antihypertensives, and whitening creams.
- ❖ Beliefs about medication sharing ranged from "absolutely against it" to "permissible depending on the medication."

I don't give out medications that are taken orally... But in the case of topical medication, I go, "There are no side effects when I use it..." (114, 77-year-old male)
- ❖ Influencing factors included financial hardships, surplus medications, and altruism, and medication sharing was reported to reduce medication adherence among both lenders and the borrowers.

CONCLUSION AND RELEVANCE

- ❖ The medication sharing experience of older adults was thoroughly investigated, analyzing perceptions and factors for the behavior.
- ❖ It is essential for healthcare professionals to rigorously monitor patients' medication adherence, while implementing structured educational and counseling approaches to prevent the safety risks and negative consequences of medication sharing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & DISCLOSURES

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- ❖ The authors wish to acknowledge the contributions of all the participants.

KEYWORDS & QR Code

- ❖ Medication sharing
- ❖ Older adults
- ❖ Prescription medications, over-the-counter medications
- ❖ Thematic analysis, South Korea

